

POLICY COHERENCE: EAST AFRICAN STAKEHOLDERS CALL FOR BUILDING ON RECENT ADVANCES

In April 2015, CUTS International and its partners in East Africa hold the final national meetings of food security, climate change and trade stakeholders under the PACT EAC project. Stakeholders took stock of the project's recent successes in shaping policy synergies between the three areas, and contributing to their informed participation at the WTO. With a view to build on this momentum, high-level officials called for a second phase of the project for continued support.

● Climate, food, trade: addressing the policy interplay

For over three years, CUTS International and its partners in East Africa have been at the forefront of advocating for policy and institutional synergies across three key policy areas: climate change, agriculture and trade. It is expected that better policy coherence on these issues would help mitigate the observed worsening impacts of climate change on food security, including by harnessing the potential of regional trade to move food from surplus to climate-hit areas. CUTS' project "Promoting Agriculture–Climate–Trade Linkages in the EAC" (PACT EAC) therefore brought together, informed, trained and moved to advocacy action over 400 East African stakeholders. In April 2015, they took stock of the progress achieved on the occasion of their last national meetings under the project.

At these meetings, governments presented a number of policy synergies inspired by the project which will enable more coordinated responses to climate-related hunger. Several high-level officials also thanked the Government of Sweden for funding this initiative, calling for continued support through a second phase in anticipation of two important international deadlines in the areas of trade and climate change.



In Rwanda, Climate officials have become members of the National Trade Policy Forum. This led to a decision to mainstream climate change issues in the upcoming Trade Policy.

● New policy synergies

Among the advances in policy coherence presented in April, Rwanda announced the inclusion of the Environment Management Authority as a member of the National Trade Policy Forum. This led to a decision by the Ministry of Trade to mainstream climate change issues in the upcoming Trade Policy revision. In Tanzania, the government presented its new draft Forest Policy, which will strengthen the regulation of the charcoal trade industry to reduce deforestation and mitigate climate change.

📌 QUICK FACTS

» Since 2011, the PACT EAC project has been at the forefront of advocating for policy and institutional synergies across climate change, agriculture and trade in East Africa.

» At the final national meetings in April 2015, governments presented a number policy synergies inspired by the project which will enable more coordinated responses to climate-related hunger.

» At the meetings, EAC WTO negotiators briefed stakeholders about ongoing talks on a Post-Bali Work Programme and the support of the project in their WTO-related work.

» High-level officials thanked the Government of Sweden for funding the project, calling for continued support through a second phase after the current initiative ends this year.

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“ The draft Forest policy better regulates the charcoal trade sector which the PACT EAC project among others identified as a threat to environmental sustainability.”

Gladness Mkamba, Director of Forestry & Beekeeping, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania

The Ugandan government, through its new National Trade Sector Development Plan (NTSDP), has also undertaken to mainstream climate change into the national trade agenda, particularly considering its negative effects on agricultural supply chains. The document provides for harmonizing any overlapping positions in both trade and climate change negotiations.

In Kenya, the April meeting witnessed the announcement by two counties of the launch of communications programmes on agro-climatic information for farmers, which will integrate activities recently piloted under a PACT EAC advocacy campaign. Already in 2013, the project had contributed to the new Environment Policy, whereby the Kenyan government has undertaken to address new environmental challenges arising from trade liberalization. This will include mainstreaming environmental considerations into the National Trade Policy, as well as ensuring that environmental issues are integrated into international and regional trade negotiations.

● **WTO negotiators: better connected to ground realities**

Leveraging trade as an instrument to secure food security in the face of climate change not only requires coordination of national policies, but



“ When I come back from the project's national meetings, I participate in WTO discussions more confidently with up-to-date information.”

Leonard Minani, First Secretary, Mission of Burundi to the UN and the WTO in Geneva

also effective participation in relevant multilateral negotiations which determines policy space for tomorrow's policies. This is why, besides building capacities in the countries, the project established a forum for East African WTO negotiators in Geneva which has provided them with technical analysis and connected them to the grassroots.

At the national meetings, trade negotiators could brief stakeholders about the status of the ongoing talks at the WTO on a Post-Bali work programme which is expected to be adopted at the 10th WTO ministerial conference this December in Nairobi, Kenya. On this occasion, Ambassadors and negotiators lauded the PACT EAC project for connecting them to trade realities back home, which has helped them focus their negotiating interests and positions at the WTO. Some reported consulting capital-based project stakeholders regularly on WTO-related work.

The briefing session also updated participants on their country's stake in global climate talks, particularly as the upcoming UNFCCC COP21 conference of December is expected to result in the first climate agreement since the Kyoto Protocol.

● **Stakeholders' call for continued support**



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“ We are thankful to the government of Sweden for supporting this project, and request their renewed support for a second phase.”

Modest Jonathan Mero, Ambassador of Tanzania to the UN and the WTO in Geneva

Finally, high-level officials expressed their appreciation of the PACT EAC project for its contributions at the interplay of climate change, food security and trade over the past three years. Several of them urged CUTS International to continue its support to the various stakeholders thought implementing a follow-up project.

In a speech made on her behalf, the Honourable Ugandan Minister of Trade, Amelia Kyambadde said *“We are of the view that more still needs to be done in this area, and we trust that follow-up projects of a similar nature will be initiated until Uganda and the region have gained the necessary capacity to holistically deal with these important issues.”*