

Towards a new partnership between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries after 2020

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Common global interests in a multi-polar world

1. To which degree has the partnership been effective in tackling global challenges?

The long term cooperation between the EU and ACP has led to a partnership with shared values and principles. The Cotonou agreement includes firm commitments to address global challenges such as climate change and natural resource management and governance, with specific references to the need for mainstreaming environmental issues across all ACP-EU cooperation programmes and at the highest level. Rightly so, these articles reflect the fundamental link that exist between conserving natural resources and ecosystems and efforts towards poverty reduction and increased human wellbeing.

This basis has contributed in putting climate change and environmental challenges high on the political agenda of the EU-ACP partnership, and led to the adoption of several policy initiatives. For instance joint declarations were approved on climate change (2006 and 2009) stressing the need for the two parties to cooperate towards the successful conclusion of UNFCCC negotiations and in the implementation of their respective commitments. More recently (June 2014) a joint declaration on the Post2015 framework was adopted, highlighting key principles and vision for a fair and equitable global sustainable development framework, such as: being transformative and people centered, addressing the 3 dimensions of sustainability, promoting good governance, human rights, gender equality, integrating climate change issues throughout and focusing on most vulnerable countries.

In December 2015, the EU and African, Caribbean and Pacific countries revealed their joint vision for an ambitious binding deal climate deal.

Jointly they have called for the Paris Agreement to be legally binding, inclusive, fair and ambitious and setting out clear long-term goal is in line with science; the future agreement must establish a mechanism for reviewing progress made by countries every five years and include a transparency and accountability system to track progress on the delivery of national commitments. This joint commitment contributed to the signing of the Paris Agreement.

On the development cooperation side, several programmes addressing Climate change adaptation and mitigation in ACP countries, natural resource management, DRR, sustainable fisheries management, biodiversity protection, water and energy, and other environmental priorities have been supported by EDF funds, both at the national, regional and particularly Intra-ACP level. Some of these have also benefitted directly Civil Society organizations

However, this support has not been sufficient to reverse the negative trend and ACP countries increasingly face environmental challenges due to unsustainable and inequitable natural resource management which undermine sustainable and inclusive development efforts. Small Island Developing States (SIDS), particularly in the Pacific and Caribbean, and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), remain the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change such as rising sea level, increased natural disasters, natural resource scarcity, while they remain the countries who have contributed the least to emissions.

Whatever the outcome, it is crucial that these shared values and principles are kept as a good basis for a renewed partnership between EU and ACP, and should continue to be promoted.

2. What would be needed to strengthen results in this respect and on which global challenges could the partnership add most value in the future, in the context of the new SDGs framework and in relevant international fora?

It is important to recognize that any future partnership between the ACP-EU will have to be framed in the context of the new Agenda 2030 and should contribute to its implementation at all levels. The new sustainable development goals address global challenges in an integrated way and provide a great opportunity for further tackling them jointly, moving away from the donor-recipient dynamic as they are universally applicable.

In line with this, Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development (PSCD) should be further promoted, as an important mechanism for improving delivery of sustainable development and for the protection of human rights. PSCD is taken forward in current article 12 of the Cotonou Agreement and should continue to guide future relations as it serves the purpose of addressing the impacts of EU policies on the achievement of

sustainable development in other countries.

The EU should continue to support ACP countries efforts in implementing Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) and their commitments. Support should go to promoting adaptation to climate change, especially for LDCs and SIDS; this includes providing increased, stable and predictable source of climate finance, while addressing loss and damage associated with impacts of climate change, promoting technology development/transfer and capacity building in line with ACP countries priorities and needs.

Any future partnership should be supportive of a development model that is people and planet centered, addresses all dimensions of sustainable development and is respectful of human rights; a path that meets the needs of today, without limiting the opportunities available to future generations. This should recognize the importance of preserving natural resources and ecosystems, including the precious ecosystem services they provide, as underpinning poverty reduction efforts and being fundamental for human well-being.

It is equally important that EU and ACP countries continue to cooperate and promote the appropriate policy framework and governance systems that can lead to inclusive green economies, where resource efficiency, low carbon development pathways become the norm and where renewable energy sources are spread, contributing to ending energy poverty in line with a 100% access to safe, clean and affordable energy services for all target.

In an interconnected world, the future EU-ACP cooperation should also target drivers of ecosystem loss and degradation such as population growth, accelerating urbanisation, changes in consumption patterns, investments and growing resource demands.

In order to fight the global challenges of inequality, the revised partnership will have to rethink economic indicators chosen and adopt measures of progress that better reflect people's well-being by focusing on inequality and inequity. The partnership should define a set of interventions that promote equitable access to resources and services, with a focus on basic social services, in addition to inclusive growth with decent jobs and livelihoods for all people.

The partnership should also identify fundamental global public goods (GPG) to be provided, and ensure these are served through a division of labour and resources. Attention should be given to those GPG lacking support, particularly for those sectors that support human, economic and environmental development.

Finally, the future framework should continue to support and encourage CSOs to play a decisive role in addressing global challenges. Sustainable development is at the core of CSOs business and can provide the expertise, knowledge and innovative solution that can support the

transition towards sustainable, low carbon and inclusive development paths for all.

Human rights, democracy and rule of law, as well as good governance

3. Have the mechanisms provided for in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) (i.e. political dialogue, financial support, appropriate measures, suspension of the agreement) achieved meaningful improvements on human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance, including the fight against corruption? Should the future partnership do more in this regard, and in what way?

4. Has the involvement of local authorities and non-state actors (i.e. civil society organisations, the media), national parliaments, courts and national human rights institutions in the partnership been adequate and useful to promote human rights, democracy and rule of law as well as good governance? Could they contribute more and in what way?

Peace and security, fight against terrorism and organised crime

5. Are the provisions on peace and security in the CPA appropriate and useful and has the balance between regional and ACP involvement been effective?

6. Should the future partnership provide for more effective joint action on conflict prevention, including early warning and mediation, peace-building and state-building activities, as well as on tackling transnational security challenges? Should this be done in the EU-ACP context?

Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, investment and trade

7. How effective has the partnership been in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development?

Our vision of sustainable and inclusive economic development starts from people rights, needs and aspirations and is based on a wide range of economic, social and environmental policies that respond to them and concentrate on how the local economy can be put at the service of the people. Our definition of a sustainable economy is one that is viable and socially equitable. It is inclusive, underpinned by gender justice, resilient to shocks and stresses, and brings benefits to all. It is also an economy that is environmentally sustainable, and does not undermine the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

This vision is not reflected in the CPA for which "[e]conomic and trade cooperation shall aim at fostering the smooth and gradual integration of the ACP States into the world economy and the ultimate objective of economic and trade cooperation is to enable the ACP States to play a full part in international trade".

Contrary to the consultation paper, we don't think that economic performance in the ACP region has been remarkable, creating larger domestic markets and providing for new economic opportunities. On the contrary we observe the following structural problems in the economy of a majority of ACP countries:

- Growing inequalities between and within countries
- Minimal floor of social security and decent work standards not enforced and respected
- Raw material extraction not environmentally and socially sustainable
- High vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters (LDCs, SIDs)
- Illicit financial flows depriving ACP economies of great share of potential domestic resources
- Economies vulnerable to external shocks and markets due to their high dependency on a few commodities and raw material extraction
- Focus on global value chains at the expenses of local value chains and local small scale producers and farmers
- Poorly developed and protected local and regional markets and lack of storage capacities
- Many ACP countries lagging behind the MDGs targets, poor quality and coverage of public services
- Growing instability related to social and economic conflicts related to the use of natural resources

By promoting an economic development model almost exclusively based on international (or rather ACP-EU) trade and extractive industries, the CPA did not substantially contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic development.

8. Taking into account the new SDGs framework, should the future partnership do more in this respect, and what?

As mentioned above, all countries will be developing their SDG implementation plans and strategies. In line with the principles of ownership and alignment, the EU should not be deciding on the top issues or sectors it wants to support in ACP countries. Rather it should engage in a multi-stakeholder dialogue to find out how best to support the SDGs in accordance with country needs and gaps. The 17 goals are indivisible, so it is not a question of cherry picking individual goals but agreeing where to prioritise over time and where support is most needed.

The future partnership has to recognize the interlinked nature of the SDG framework and pay greater attention to Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development. Only by promoting PCSD is it possible to ensure that economic development is truly sustainable and inclusive. This requires more balanced approach to different policy sectors and disbanding the breaking economic development free from the silo of investment and trade policy.

9. How effective has the partnership been in supporting macroeconomic and financial stability? In which areas would there be added value in ACP-EU cooperation on macroeconomic and financial stability?

10. How effective has the partnership been in improving domestic revenue mobilisation, in promoting fair and efficient tax systems and in combatting illicit financial flows? Would there be added value and more efficiency in stronger ACP-EU cooperation on these matters?

11. Has the partnership been able to contribute substantially to mobilising the private sector and attracting foreign direct investment?

12. How could the potential of the EU and ACP private sector be better harnessed? What should be the main focus of EU and ACP private sector cooperation in a post-Cotonou framework, and what might be the role of ODA in this?

In the area of private sector cooperation, the post Cotonou framework should recognize the various forms of private sector in both EU and ACP countries. While harnessing the potential of private sector cooperation, the focus seems often be in the larger scale, multinational type of companies, whereas it should be in the micro, small and medium enterprises that employ more people. Thus the role of ODA should be in supporting the local private sector in ACP countries.

For example in the agriculture or rural development sector, the focus should be on small scale producers and farmers and on securing an enabling environment for micro, small and medium size enterprises. EU-ACP cooperation and EU ODA should focus on that category of actors instead of investing growing amounts of ODA into big infrastructures and investments funds through the blending facilities that do little to support SMEs. Civil society actors, including NGOs, producers cooperatives and microcredit initiatives should be fully involved and supported in EU-ACP cooperation on private sector.

Beyond more secured, predictable and user friendly legal obligations, a better enabling environment and support should provide access for MSMEs and small-scale farmers to:

- resources and means of production
- land and property with a particular focus on women and young farmers and entrepreneurs
- information including on legal framework, markets and governmental decisions and negotiations that have a direct or indirect impact on the local economy
- knowledge and results of research including on sustainable models and techniques of production such as agroecology or renewable energy
- tools for learning and exchanging good practice
- infrastructures adapted to their needs (in particular in rural areas) and storage facilities
- credit facilities adapted to their needs and capacities

The EU should also be bold and put forward clear steps and initiatives to address the responsibility of its private sector companies operating abroad and ensure they adopt sustainable, equitable and responsible practices all throughout their supply chain. Private sector has a big responsibility in terms of contributing to challenges such as climate change and environmental degradation. These initiatives should also address fair taxation and illicit financial flows that are directly linked to use of natural resources.

13. In this setting, what opportunities do you see for the new, digital economy?

14. To what extent has the partnership been able to contribute to increase agricultural development and trade?

The important question here is what agricultural development? The agricultural development we want to see is one that is based on and supports the small scale family farmers in the ACP countries. There has been too little focus on this in the implementation of the CPA (less so in the 9 and 10th EDF than in the 11th).

The EU also has not offered much support for sustainable family farming in ACP countries in the FAO and CFS and other relevant international institutions.

As for agricultural trade: the first priority should be to enable local and domestic trade of agricultural products and food and then regional trade.

15. What has been the contribution of the partnership trade preferences to the integration of ACP countries in the world economy and to its development goals?

16. Is there still a need for specific provisions on trade cooperation in the post-Cotonou framework, also taking into account the ACP countries which have not signed an EPA? If so, what could/should they cover?

Human and social development

17. Has the partnership delivered on its human development objective in an effective and efficient way, in particular on poverty eradication, and also concerning gender equality and empowerment of women? How could it be improved?

18. Taking into account the new SDGs framework, what are the main challenges related to human development that the future partnership should focus on?

Migration and mobility

19. Has the partnership been a useful vehicle for discussing migration issues and has it positively contributed? Has Article 13 CPA been fully applied?

20. Should a future partnership do more in this regard, and on which particular aspects should it focus (legal migration and mobility, addressing root causes of migration, return and readmission, tackling human trafficking and smuggling, international protection)?

A stronger political relationship

21. How effective has the political dialogue been and at which level is it the most effective: national, regional and through the joint EU-ACP institutions? Should the scope of political dialogue be widened or narrowed?

22. Would a stronger involvement of EU Member States, associating their bilateral policies and instruments to the political dialogue at national level, enhance the dialogue's effectiveness and efficiency?

23. Has the fact that the agreement is legally binding been instrumental to its implementation as compared to other regional partnerships based on political declarations?

Coherence of geographical scope

24. Could a future framework be usefully opened up to other countries than the current members of the ACP Group of States? Which countries would that be?

The basis of the ACP-EU relationship is a post-colonial one. In the 21st century this can no longer be the reason for an agreement as the Cotonou Agreement. Therefore a broader geographical scope could be considered, with special attention for countries with a lower level of socio-economic development (LICs and LMICs). On the other hand, one must take into account the history of the ACP-EU relationship and not throw the baby away with the bathwater.

25. What kind of framework should govern EU and ACP relations? How could an ACP-EU successor framework relate to the more recent EU regional partnerships with Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States? Could a future ACP-EU framework include distinct partnerships with regional partners?

26. Is there scope for building in more structured relationships with Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa?

Cooperation tailored more towards groups of countries with similar development level

27. Is the current system of allocation of development resources, based on need and capacities as well as performance, sufficient for channelling funds towards those countries where the highest impact can be obtained? Should allocation of resources continue to prioritise countries most in need, including fragile states?

28. What kind of cooperation could help to cover the specific needs of more developed ACP countries with a view to attaining more equitable and sustainable growth?

Strengthen the relationship with key actors

29. Has the current model of stakeholder engagement been conducive to attaining the objectives of the partnership in an efficient way? Which actors could play a more significant role in the implementation of the partnership? How could this be addressed?

30. What could be done to promote effective and efficient involvement of both international and domestic private sector, civil society, social partners and local authorities in the partnership?

31. Should the partnership be open to new actors as referred above?

32. In this regard, should the possibility of opening up the partnership to 'associated members' or 'observers' be considered?

33. How could a new framework promote triangular and South-South cooperation, including the increased involvement of ACP States as development actors in support of other ACP countries?

Streamline the institutional set-up and functioning of the partnership

34. Has the joint institutional set-up (with the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, and the Joint Parliamentary Assembly) been effective in debating and promoting common views and interests and in providing political guidance and momentum to the EU-ACP partnership and the implementation of the CPA?

35. What is the added value of the joint ACP-EU institutions as compared to more recent regional and regional economic community frameworks for dialogue and cooperation?

36. What institutional arrangements would most effectively help address common challenges and promote joint interests?

37. Should a higher degree of self-financing of this functioning (ACP-EU Joint institutions and ACP secretariat) by the ACP States be required?

Better adapted and more flexible development cooperation tools and methods

38. Is there added value in having a dedicated financing instrument in support of the ACP-EU partnership? If so, what are the reasons and how would it differ from other external financing instruments funded by the general budget of the Union? Is this instrument flexible enough, especially to address crisis situations? Can this instrument be deployed differently?

39. What is the added value of the EDF's co-management system involving national authorities in the programming and management of aid programmes, as compared to other EU cooperation instruments in non-ACP countries?

40. Does the current set-up of the programming process and implementation of activities lead to real ownership by the beneficiaries? What could be improved? How can the EU and Member States maximise the impact of joint programming?

41. Does the variety of existing tools adequately support the EU and ACP common principles and interests and are there gaps that should be addressed? How do you assess the effectiveness and efficiency of various implementation modalities?

42. Should a higher degree of self-financing from the ACP States be required for activities to ensure ownership? Would this apply to all countries? On which principles should this be based?

43. How can the expertise of the EU and its Member States be better mobilised, particularly in the middle-income countries?

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