

**REPORT ON THE AFRICA/EUROPEAN COMMISSION DIALOGUE
7 NOVEMBER 2008 IN BRUSSELS, BELGIUM**

PREPARED BY NRF & ADEME

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1. AIMS OF THE DIALOGUE

The EC-Africa dialogue had the objective to help identify research topics of a strategic nature and of a regional dimension which would attract the mutual interest of the EU and Africa for S&T collaboration. It was envisaged that these topics could be used as an input to the Environment roadmap, with a view to addressing common problems, enhancing scientific excellence and promoting the participation of African researchers in European projects.

The EC/Africa dialogue took place on 7 November 2008 in Brussels.

About 10 representatives of the European Commission gathered with more than 20 African experts representing Sub-Saharan Africa (including NEPAD, AUC and UNEP) and 10 Interlink partners, to discuss mutual environmental research priorities.

- *See List of African experts is available in Annex.*

2. INTERLINK CONSORTIUM ROLE

INT-ER-LINK (or 'Interlink') is a specific support action coordinated by ADEME (FR). Its overall objective is to promote and facilitate International cooperation (or 'Inco') in the Environment theme of FP7. The Interlink project focuses on 2 regions i.e. **sub-Saharan Africa** and the **new independent states (NIS)**. Indeed, enhanced cooperation with these third countries would have a high impact on the implementation of both the Research and Sustainable Development policies of the European Union.

Interlink consists in a network of EU and associated states national contact points (NCP) together with national information points (NIP) and environmental networks located in the 2 targeted regions. Thus, the promotion of the Environment theme is part of the daily activity of most Interlink partners. The Interlink project also goes one step further in **setting-up a coordinated approach between Interlink partners to enhance 'Inco' activities visibility.**

In order to achieve this overall objective, the Interlink consortium is implementing a two-fold approach which includes:

- **A downstream approach** which requires promoting inco-oriented topics (e.g. SICAs) towards the scientific community during the implementation of annual calls.
- **An upstream approach** consisting in identifying **topics of mutual interests between EC and ICPC** and in particular **African stakeholders.**

Therefore, within this upstream approach, the role of the Interlink consortium is only to **facilitate the EC-Africa stakeholder dialogue.** Thus, the Interlink coordinator and relevant partners have organized the 7 November 2008 meeting, identified the African experts and supported them in the formalization of projects that could fit to the Environment roadmap (dialogue preparation meeting was held on 6 November 2008).

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3. SUMMARY OF MAJOR DISCUSSION POINTS FROM THE DIALOGUE

- The EU was **committed to international co-operation** with **developing countries** including Africa where the focus is on working towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals within the context of the Africa-EU strategic partnership and other political contexts. Therefore the EU would benefit from a **better understanding** of Africa's needs/priorities in terms of environmental issues and potential research topics that would address them.
- African countries remain committed to S&T advancement in Africa where there are inherent **cross-cutting issues** between (e.g.) environment, health, agriculture, security, and indigenous knowledge. This is apparent in NEPAD CPA, ICSU RoA GCR Science Plan, AfricanNESS GCR Science Plan- all to which the research priorities identified by the African experts align.
- The African experts identified 10 topics under the two themes
 - Climate Change, Pollution and Risks
 - Sustainable Management of Resources

Environmental Technologies, and Earth Observation and Assessment Tools were considered as cross cutting within the above two themes.

4. TOPICS IDENTIFIED BY AFRICAN EXPERTS UNDER THE CLIMATE CHANGE, POLLUTION AND RISKS ACTIVITY

Five research areas were identified as follow:

A. Early warning systems for air pollution, climate change and risk activities in urban areas in Africa

Topic description and motivation

Due to the increasingly high levels of traffic, waste disposal and burning sites in Africa urban cities, and dependence on old technology/ reconditioned vehicles and inefficient waste management systems, emissions are becoming a major source of concern with implications on human health.

The project concern is modelling and assessment of vehicular, waste burning and land fill emissions and their impact on human health (respiratory or comfort index). A major contribution could be the reduction of sources of uncertainty in emissions inventories characterized in Africa by missing/ poor/ wrong information on activity data, fuel type etc. Special emphasis will be placed on emission inventories of various pollutants arising from incomplete combustion of fuel in vehicle, waste burning and land fills that pose great health danger to human health in urban areas, such as carbonaceous particulate matters, black carbon (BC), organic carbon (OC)

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and ozone precursors (NO_x and VOC). This is a prerequisite for air quality and climate change impacts modelling in Africa, a necessary starting point for a better knowledge of emission sources, their space and time variability.

The research project will among others undertake the following activities:

- Build improved high resolution emission inventories of anthropogenic pollutants (gaseous and particulate) as inputs to regional climate modelling activities, mitigation and risk reduction measures in Africa.
- link or correlate the emissions levels with the number of respiratory illness (admissions) in urban areas.
- model the impact through road density, number of waste burning sites and land fills sites vs. illness incidences.
- Take advantage of what is available from AMMA and APINA projects.
- Take advantage of what is being done with other EU projects (MEGAPOLI, CECILA etc ...)

Result from this research will:

- provide an informed knowledge base for air pollution control related to the transport sector, waste disposal and the land fill management in urban areas.
- provide basis for design and information dissemination system for decision support mechanisms on the related emissions.
- Create solutions that are as universal as possible.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Enforcement of air pollution control legislation
- Effective **decision making**
- Creation of a Single Environment Information Space and to INSPIRE
- Integration of upcoming GMES downstream services
- Contribution made to the EU strategy for Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

Comments made on proposed research area

- The proposed issue differs geographically which needs to be taken into consideration.
- Similar research done has been done in the EU already but we need common methodologies to improve models already available in Europe.
- Complement and improve existing methods to address this issue in growing urban areas.
- It was important to compare between EU and Africa hence this research area was of common interest and considered to be important.

B. Waste management, sanitation and impact on human health in urban environments

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Topic description and motivation

By 2030, nearly two-thirds of the world's population will live in cities, almost 70% of them in Africa and Asia. Most of them will be poor, living in unplanned settlements. Already, nearly 1 billion people live in slums around the world, including 80% of Africa's urban population.

Slums present one of the greatest challenges to equitable and sustainable development. The problematic issues include overcrowding emphasizing violence; social disorganization resulting in a lack of political voice and abuse; poor urban governance and planning resulting in difficult access to services such as clean water and sanitation, waste treatment system, schools and health services; unemployment and poor labour conditions. Moreover, since slums often crop up in marginal areas prone to flooding and landslides, these challenges are inextricably linked to environmental problems.

To ensure urban health solutions in slums are sustainable, researchers must examine how all issues—including lack of capacity—are connected.

This research is focused on improving sanitation in an urban ecosystem, as well as on understanding how better sanitation would affect health. This project will: (1) analyze hygienic practices, (2) access to drinking water, (3) sanitation system, (4) waste management system and their impact on the health. Two diseases will be used as indicators: the diarrhoea and intestinal parasites. The project will use the epidemiological approach to analyze the consequence of these practices on the health of the children.

By making explicit the links between health and the environment, this project will generate knowledge that can get to the heart of a complex issue. The research also tries to strengthen community groups and other concerned stakeholders (municipal authorities, government, NGOs, and other donors), empowering them to take charge of their own environment and health. The project offers a holistic way to examine the problem and identify sustainable solutions, hence protecting population's health.

By looking at the urban environment as an ecosystem, researchers can better understand the tensions between ecology, social inequities and health. Working with affected communities, they can help policymakers transcend artificial barriers between sectors.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- A contribution to the UN Millennium Development Goals
- Improved human health by improving sanitation
- Indigenous knowledge included in possible solutions

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Comments made on proposed research area

- Participatory research between scientists, society, and policy makers was important because this would improve decision making and result in behavioural changes.
- The link between environment and health needed to be strengthened in terms of economic and financial benefits for decision makers.
- The indigenous knowledge-western science interface must be taken into account.

C. Valorisation of indigenous knowledge (IK) to adapt to the impact of climate change**Topic description and motivation**

Climate change is a continuous process that has been taking place gradually over the years and African communities have, over time, developed indigenous strategies to adapt to these changes. In recent years, phenomena of climate change have become more intense and more widespread, affecting communities previously not affected. Such newly affected communities are more vulnerable to the climate change induced events and may need to learn the adaptation strategies from communities prone to these events. However, such indigenous knowledge is often difficult to transfer and frequently facing distortions and erosion. Such knowledge needs to be verified scientifically, standardized, documented and communicated.

Indeed, most valuable knowledge among African communities is not documented but only transmitted from generation to generation by oral communication with the increasing scope of events; some communities that may suddenly need some vital information do not get it due to language and cultural barriers. Documentation and validation of such knowledge will increase its value and applicability. Rural communities in Africa as a whole, national governments, social scientists, universities and research institutions, as well as regional and international research and development agencies and institutions.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Accurate documentation of IK and general enrichment in understanding and management of climate change driven events
- Widespread adaptation and coping capacity of communities to the impacts of climate change through knowledge and experience sharing
- Enhanced reliability and transferability of indigenous adaptation strategies

Comments made on proposed research area

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- The EC was interested in studying the links between IK and western research (i.e. the interface).
- It was stressed that a multidisciplinary approach must be adopted.
- Indigenous communities must be participants and not just subject matters.
- This research area was of relevance to other areas within the environment theme e.g. Biodiversity as well as other FP7 Programmes.
- An area of possible interest also included IK and urban sprawl.

D. Sustainable adaptation to climate change for food security in rural Africa

Topic description and motivation

Climate change increases vulnerability of rural agro-ecological systems.

The research activities will focus on the impacts of climate change on rainfall patterns / distribution / variability changing agroecological zones, shifting agricultural patterns and resulting impact on water resources on food security and demography (migration). One concrete output of such a project could be a harmonised international standard for measuring climate change **impact on land degradation** since no such method exists on a global scale.

In Africa strong dependence on rain fed agriculture and change in weather patterns cause shifts in agricultural practices which impact negatively on food security.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Improved adaptive capacity and resilience of socio-ecological systems
- Reduced conflicts as agro patterns and people migrate (within the context of African land tenure systems)
- Development of strategic tools for adaptation rather than just reaction to changes to social and ecological systems

Comments made on proposed research area

- The EC considered this as an important area given that it straddles the Environment and Agriculture Themes of FP7.
- There was substantial research already being conducted in this area, therefore we need **co-ordination and follow up to prevent duplication**.
- At present there was no universal tool to measure land degradation hence this would be **IMPORTANT** for such a research project.
- Aspect of scale- landscape broadly versus plot scale also needed careful consideration.

E. Vulnerability assessment and risk management for extreme weather events (floods/droughts/cyclones/etc) in Africa

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Topic description and motivation

Africa has been prone to natural hazards during very recent years, causing unpredictable damages, loss of lives, and required millions of euros in terms of humanitarian aid. The pattern and frequency of occurrence of these natural hazards requires an early warning model that could activate vulnerability.

The research activities would aim at developing early warning system models to predict natural hazards in Africa to provide data, to enable predictions based on frequent past occurrences.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Improved meteorological data models
- Effective adaptation strategies to climate change
- Effective risk management by planners and decision makers
- Behavioural changes/precautions undertaken by society
- Established decision-making mechanisms for coping with extreme weather events

Comments made on proposed research area

- o This area was of great **relevance and benefit to other sectors** e.g. childcare/home care issues, health etc.
- o Existing systems are problematic and inadequate however Africa does **not want to reinvent the wheel but wants to advance and improve on existing systems already available in other regions of the world-** This point was supported by the EC who indicated that we need to separate research for improved application of existing tools versus research for new tools.
- o The EC agreed that this was an important topic for both Africa and EU where new management strategies were required.

5. TOPICS IDENTIFIED BY AFRICAN EXPERTS UNDER THE SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES ACTIVITY

Five research areas were identified as follow:

A. Integrated research on sustainable management of mining sites (marine and terrestrial)

Topic description and motivation

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For many African countries, mineral exploitation constitutes significant contributors to their economies and remains a key to their future economic growth. The mineral industry is an important source of export earnings for many African nations. It is estimated that mining investments in Africa will be increase from 5 billion € in 2006 to 10 billion € in 2010. The major mineral resources of concern include gold, diamonds, phosphate, and zinc...

This activity generates a large quantity of potentially toxic waste during the industrial process. This can be due to the use of toxic chemicals (e.g. cyanide) for extraction, the use of large quantities of water during the extraction process (250l – 400l per kg of gold produced).

The environmental problems due to mining industries are:

- Potential for ground and superficial water contamination (e.g. cyanide compounds and heavy metals are extremely toxic, even in small concentrations)
- Landscape damage
- Increased stress on water resources in areas of limited water supply

These environmental problems pose a risk to humans, plants and animals and may lead to socio-economic consequences in terms of displacement of humans due to consumption and/or exposure risks.

Therefore, research activities including development of sanitation and cleaning technologies should lead to sustainable management of mining sites as well as landscape restoration, water management and governance (e.g. participation of civil society organizations). In addition, the effectiveness of governance systems for waste management needs to be investigated to ensure that sustainable management is achieved.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to

- Reduced effect of mining on natural resource including biodiversity (in both the terrestrial and marine environments) during exploitation and post exploitation phases
- Effective (local, national and transboundary) governance systems for the management of natural resources in exploited systems
- Improved local population health and wealth

Comments made on proposed research area

- o The EC commented that there were overlapping topics open in the 2009 FP7 Environment Call.

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- This research areas was well researched in EU but very often based more on ad hoc events, therefore it was essential that continuous monitoring of the system should occur.
- The issues of both the pollution itself and the governance need to be addressed (the EC placed emphasis on the governance issues which could be seen as a barrier to sustainable management of these activities).
- Furthermore exploitation and post-exploitation activities need to be addressed.
- Coastal aspects of mining especially in Africa (e.g. off the west coast of southern Africa) need attention.

B. Biodiplomacy, long-term data collection and management, capacity building

Topic description and motivation

The main objective is to link science to policy and ensure maximization of scientific results, networking across disciplines, and secure long-term data beyond the project life cycle through: (i) informed negotiations by African policymakers, (ii) networking, (iii) ecological information management and data sharing, (iv) promoting long-term site-based observations, (v) environmental science education, (vi) promotion of science-to-policy dialogue and (vii) collaborative research amongst regional and international scientists.

This self- explaining research area covered a number of cross-cutting issues. The link between science and policy, the promotion of cross-discipline networking and the security of long-term data beyond the project life cycle were flagged as issues of concern in Africa. Africa and its diverse ecosystems and biodiversity continue to be a scene of a silent but persistent ‘gold rush’ for indigenous knowledge (IK) and genetic resources. Bioprospectors continue to comb Africa for unique genetic resources and IK to feed their industries. The scramble for Africa’s genetic resources and IK now threatens to cause new forms of biological refugees driven by genetic dispossession, conflict, displacement and the search for new habitats. Africa’s genetic resources and IK are being exploited due to unfair trading practices and IPRs protocols. To reverse this trend, Africa must use a new type of initiative- biodiplomacy. Elsewhere, biodiplomacy has now emerged at the confluence of the global debate on access to genetic resources and IK, benefit sharing, intellectual property rights, and biotechnological governance. Unfortunately, many African policymakers, diplomats and negotiators are still not well versed in issues of biodiversity, access to genetic resources and IK, and benefit sharing. This is because these biological issues are different from those in normal political and trade negotiations.

In the case of long-term data collection and management, the **SUSTAINABILITY** of projects beyond their lifecycle was also of a major concern given the lack of resources in Africa to maintain systems once project funding has ended.

A continent-wide approach to strengthen skills in the area of biodiplomacy could help reduce biopiracy and gain strategic advantage of the continent’s biodiversity and IK.

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Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to

- Adoption and implementation of science-based solutions for development issues, particularly the adaptation to global change including climate change;
- Increase data availability and accessibility for planning and decision making
- Increase the relevance of science for development and decision-making process
- African countries effectively negotiate in the forums of global change science and policy
- Conflicts effectively mediated
- Effective knowledge brokerage (science/policy interface)

Comments made on proposed research area

- The EC commented that the scope of the DG-Development scope was to make results available to policy makers.
- The issue of data accessibility had strong links to GEO and GEOSS and there were current activities in Africa to address this issue.
- Issue of data property (location) and IPR need to be properly addressed though.
- The issue of information access will in part be addressed through FP7's policy on access to results of projects in open access peer-reviewed online publications.
- Policy issues should therefore also be included in such a project.

C. Long-term monitoring strategies for adaptive management and governance within coastal zones and large marine ecosystems (LME)**Topic description and motivation**

Effective management and governance of LMEs require an adaptive management approach based on comprehensive and comparable updates of the science (data and information) relating to oceanography, ecosystem health and environment variability (including climate change). This data and information needs to address both those parts of the marine ecosystem that fall within the national jurisdictions as well as those parts of the ecosystem that are beyond national jurisdiction. Long-term scientific monitoring will require north-south participation and partnerships between Africa, EU countries as well as participation from other countries which may have special expertise in appropriate areas. These partnerships will not only assist in supporting long-term monitoring and assessment of LMEs but will also aim at the transfer of technologies and skills for handling and analysing data, and provide support in terms of specialised equipment (including moored arrays, drifters, gilders, etc) and platforms for data collection (ships and remote sensing satellites). This would also provide a mechanism for measuring environmental variability and could thus link into an early warning system for climate change and threats to community

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welfare and stability. This initiative would provide a pilot also for developing protocols and standards for data ownership, access and management and for evolving better processes for feeding such data into management decisions and policy-making.

Coastal zone components e.g.:

- Coastal erosion
- Urban development and the coast
- Coastal habitats degradation (e.g. biodiversity loss)
- Resource use conflicts in coastal areas

This initiative is cross-cutting between all four activities (Climate Change and Pollution; Sustainable Management of Resources; Environmental technologies: Earth Observation Systems). It is, however, rooted in Activity 6.2 (Sustainable Resource Management) and sub-activity 6.2.2 (Management of Marine Environments). The initiative will provide vital information on ocean conditions, the well-being and sustainability of LMEs, and their linkages to environmental variability (particularly climate change) and thus to coastal community welfare. The ecosystem approach encourages integrated management of ecosystems and this would be an integral part of the monitoring and sustainability indicators developed for the activities. The activities will provide information on episodic, large-scale events and how these are driving ecosystem change and how they might threaten human communities. In this context it also addresses issues of bio-diplomacy and requires the negotiation for dealing and coping with the effects on communities of ecosystem changes and damage (both predicted and actual).

Effective management and governance of LMEs require an adaptive management approach based on comprehensive and comparable **updates of the science** (data and information). This data and information needs to address both those parts of the marine ecosystem, coastal zones and continental shelf that fall within the national jurisdictions as well as those parts of the ecosystem that are beyond national jurisdiction.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Adoption of a long-term monitoring approach for Large Marine Ecosystems to guide and advise adaptive management which will address 'ecosystem' governance in terms of coordinating management and governance for those areas within and beyond national jurisdiction. This will recognise the need to incorporate the concept of Integrated Coastal Zone Management into the overall LME process
- Improved Capacity Building and Training in data collection, analysis as well as the translation of such information into management guidelines and policy briefs

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- Development of more effective and appropriate technologies (taking into consideration cost and user-friendliness) including in-field and remote techniques for overall LME monitoring and assessment
- Adoption of stronger long-term partnerships between African institutions and EU counterparts as well as with specialist institutions elsewhere in the world that can provide specific expertise and resources
- Development of effective data ownership, access and management agreements to cover these partnerships.

Comments made on proposed research area

- Coastal management was important given the major stresses (e.g. climate change) and development challenges.
- We need to integrate marine and inland components of coastal zones to obtain a truly ecosystem approach.
- Issues of urban and agriculture also need to be integrated and the EC has not yet integrated the urban aspects into this approach.
- Long-term observation and monitoring systems should possibly be a future focus.

D. Sustainable water management (and climate change)

Topic description and motivation

Issues for consideration include:

- Sustainable access to clean water and sanitation
- Effect of climate change on water resource, water quality and governance
- Securing water resources
- Food production technologies in the face of drought, floods- linked to previous topic
- Rain water harvesting technologies
- Food security, health, governance, bio-refugees, gene bank
- Water recycling and storage

We need to build and sustain scientific capacity to cope and mitigate against the effects of water stress given that a huge proportion of sub-Saharan Africa is considered to be arid.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Security of drinkable water supplies
- Reduced vulnerability to floods and drought
- Reduced conflict and movement of people
- Increased food security during floods/drought

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Comments made on proposed research area

- Very often the above identified issues were often more an issue of management and not technological.
- Some duplication exists with projects already undertaken under previous FP projects hence we need to assess state of the play and identify gaps. The group should consult with the EU Water Initiative.

E. Conservation and sustainable utilisation of biodiversity**Topic description and motivation**

Issues for consideration include:

- Conservation of sustainable utilisation of biodiversity
- Bioprospecting, access and benefit sharing
- Intellectual property rights and biopiracy,
- Useful genes, endangered species, loss of genetic diversity and gene banks
- Environmental refugees (socio-economic issues) migrating in search of new habitat

Africa is losing its biodiversity through genetic erosion, biopiracy, and the general overexploitation of its genetic resources. Africa's loss of income due to unlicensed bioprospecting and biopiracy of its genetic resources and indigenous knowledge (IK) is feared to outstrip economic losses from pre-independence colonialism and the brain drain. If left unregulated, free-for-all bioprospecting and biopiracy of Africa's IK and genetic resources will rob Africa of its unique blueprint for survival and sink the continent deeper into poverty.

Notes on expected impact

This project should lead to:

- Protection of endangered species
- Stronger control of biodiversity loss
- Stakeholders effectively share information
- Enhanced access and equitable benefit sharing
- Enhance biodiversity conservation and ecotourism and crop improvement

Comments made on proposed research area

- The research area also lends itself to the link between environment (e.g. biodiversity) and energy (biofuels).
- Sustainable utilisation of forests needs to be considered and we need to calculate the tangible and non tangible costs e.g. the medicinal and cultural values of forests.

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- Effective marketing approaches were needed to promote the value of ecosystem services.
- The EC indicated that there was a current call open on ecosystem services however it would be important to accommodate regional dimensions e.g a focus on Africa in future calls.

6. DIALOGUE FOLLOW-UP

It was envisaged that the outputs of this event would be 1) to ensure that the future calls addressed African priorities identified by African stakeholders and 2) to raise awareness among African researchers of FP7 environment theme and.

These objectives are dependent on the following milestones:

1. Completion of the dialogue report

This report is a first version of the dialogue report which compiles data and comments accumulated prior and during the dialogue.

Further refinement by African experts of the proposed research areas is needed which would take cognisance of general discussions and comments in terms of:

- o European Commission's priorities
- o Contextualisation of concepts in terms of the state of the play
- o Relevant policies and framework documents

A final report with more context and key words is to be compiled by the INTERLINK partners with further input from the African experts.

Deadline for delivery to the EC: **End January 2009**

2. Awareness raising and capacity building of potential African project partners

As mentioned by Mrs Manuela Soares, Head of the Environment directorate at EC/DG RTD, some of the research priorities which were discussed could be included as SICAS in the Environment roadmap and particularly in 2010 call. Therefore, the African research community should be prepared to participate to FP7 calls as ICPC partners of future collaborative projects.

This is partly the objective of Interlink project to ensure such awareness-raising activities and specific workshops will be organized with African researchers as soon as the targeted SICAs are known. Additional budget will be sought for in order to deal with capacity building issues.

3. Consortium building

Moreover, in order to facilitate consortium building between Europe and Africa, The interlink consortium can cooperate with the newly ENV-NCP Together project which has a brokerage event work package. It was suggested by FFG (WP leader in ENV-NCP Together) to focus the first brokerage event to be held in 2009 on potential African

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SICAs. African researchers potentially involved in these SICAs would be invited to attend this BE and meet potential EU partners and coordinators.

7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Interlink coordinator and partners would like to thank the European Commission for initiating this dialogue and the African experts for their commitment and valuable scientific input.

Hopefully, this dialogue in return would facilitate interests and participation in FP7 to address Africa's S&T needs.

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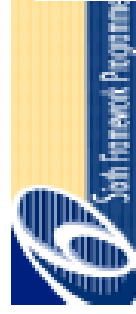
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Annex

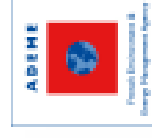
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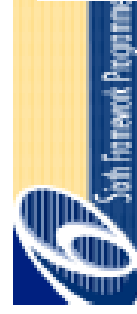
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