



## AGCC AND AFRICA

In early April 2007, the United Nations Scientific Panel on Climate Change confirmed that, while Africa has accounted for less than three percent of global emissions of carbon dioxide since 1900, its 840 million people face some of the biggest risks, especially drought and disrupted water supplies. An article in the New York Times (01.04.07) quoted Professor Henry Miller of the Hoover Institution as likening the phenomenon of global warming, in its effects, to the sinking of the Titanic: impacting most heavily on those in the cheaper decks.

The first need of Africa, at least on the first phase of global warming, will therefore be for aid and support in mitigating the effects of climate change and meeting the natural catastrophes it faces. This will mean new arrangements: the much-trumpeted Clean Development Mechanisms (CDM) has delivered an average of \$30m a year to Africa, which is far less than Africa had hoped for. The fact is that the more developed countries among developing countries are gaining a disproportional amount of the resources available.

AGCC, working closely with organisations representing civil society in Africa, believes that Africa should take a full part in the negotiations which will lead to a new system of climate governance which will replace the Kyoto agreement after 2012. AGCC believes that Africa, therefore, should participate fully with other regions in new governance arrangements for the global atmosphere.

Here leadership will be crucial. Perhaps the most important contribution that AGCC can make is, in general terms, to help such leadership to emerge and develop. In Africa, there is a strong conviction that the equity and fairness agenda (for eg. Contraction & Convergence and strong governance arrangements with equal participation by all states, including African states) is right for Africa. Another argument is that a future climate regime must be universal because there is no saying what the future might hold (for example, emitters might relocate to Africa under future arrangements) and all human beings should have equal access to the atmosphere, and take part fully in its governance.

Securing African participation in the post-Kyoto process will require coordinated political effort and donor finance. It will come up against the assumption, which was inherent in the Kyoto process, that most of Africa is marginal to a process seen as a negotiation on GHG emissions among serious emitters. The assumption by many governments in the developed world is that traditional power politics will be the guiding feature of the process leading to the negotiation of a future climate regime. To alter these assumptions will take time and effort as independent African leadership emerges. AGCC's first target is therefore African governments, leaders and organisations, including the Africa Union, sub-regional organisations and organisations of civil society including legislators. More broadly AGCC seeks to engage with UNEP, including its civil society forum, and with European governments (including the British Government) and the European Union. Both in its contacts with the British Government, and in its work with representatives of other parts of

the world (India/Germany/France etc) AGCC is an advocate of involving Africa in a fairer and more equitable system of climate governance.

AGCC therefore believes that there should be a serious dialogue, in particular, with Nigeria and with the West African sub-regional organisation ECOWAS, whose headquarters is in Abuja. AGCC also encourages the setting-up of a high-level, independent Commission to spell out how the issues of climate change, global warming and the role of GHG emissions affect Africa, and to advocate appropriate responses. This would involve commissioning a working paper akin to a Stern Report for Africa, though not concentrating on economic and financial costs but on human impact. At the working level, there is a need to disseminate reliable, clear and up-to-date information about climate change and its effects in Africa to opinion-formers throughout the continent. Capacity-building in the broadest sense is needed for enhancing Africa's capacity to obtain justice for itself and its people.

David Stephen  
April 2007