

**Talking Points for Jean-Paul Adam, Director, Technology, Climate Change
and Natural Resource Management Division, ECA**

Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Welcome to the second session of the 3rd Africa Climate Talks (ACT!) on the theme of *Climate change, COVID-19 and development in Africa and its SIDS – from vulnerability to building resilience*.
- We are very pleased to be organising this session of the talks in collaboration with the University of Cabo Verde and with the support of our key partners – the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank, and the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance.
- The African Climate Policy Centre of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa conceived the Africa Climate Talks in 2015 as a series of interconnected sub-regional and Africa-wide events that engage Africans from all spheres of life to stimulate a wide-ranging discourse on climate change and development in Africa, within the context of the global climate governance framework.
- The idea of the Africa Climate Talks is to democratise the discourse and narrative on climate change and development in Africa beyond state actors.
- ACT! aims to create platforms for the discussion of African perspectives on key issues in the linkages between climate change and Africa's transformative development trajectories.
- In this way ACT! enhances public awareness of climate change; its implications, challenges and opportunities for Africa and facilitates critical reflection on the global dynamics of climate governance and the possible implications of the outcomes of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change – in the case of 2021, the outcomes of COP26.
- The democratisation of climate discourse agenda of ACT! is the reason why we organise these talks with academic institutions, recognising that these institutions are the foundations of free thinking, innovation and critical enquiry.
- We are therefore very grateful to be organising the session of the 3rd Africa Climate talks with the University of Cabo Verde.

- We particularly thank Dr Isaurinda Baptista – Dean of the School of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences - and her team. They have worked tirelessly with us to conceive this second session of ACT! - framing the theme, sessions and breakout topics.
- Together, we felt that the talks should be premised on what lessons we learn globally from the COVID-19 pandemic and how Africa can build resilience going forward through green and blue economy strategies.
- Out of every crisis we must emerge stronger. The COVID-19 pandemic has exposed so many vulnerabilities and structural challenges, especially in the case of Africa.
- The pandemic is probably the last warning that together we must take urgent action to tackle the climate crisis and build resilience.
- The response to the pandemic has also shown the limitations of international development architecture to respond effectively. The challenges faced by African countries to have access to vaccines is the first indicator of the inequities of global development structures.
- The UN is working hard with partners to develop mechanisms that recognise the vulnerabilities of countries.
- We recognise the particular challenges faced by Small Island Developing States, which include the lack of economies of scale, geographic isolation, human resource challenges as well as inadequate access to development finance in an environment characterised by mounting debt levels.
- The climate impact on SIDS is particularly severe, as the engines of growth in islands are even more directly linked to the health of natural environments- whether it be in terms of tourism, fisheries as well as local agricultural production.
- Among some of the proposed ways that we can better deliver sustainable development to address the needs of SIDS include directly linking the provision of resources to the source of vulnerability- and climate change remains perhaps the most significant threat.
- We are aiming to support debt for adaptation swaps in countries such as Cabo Verde, whereby existing debt can be repurposed and reinvested towards climate resilience. We are beginning with a capacity building project and hope in particular that we can identify transformative investments in Cabo Verde's natural capital that can boost resilience.

- During these discussions, we must build on the fact that green investments deliver more meaningful results in terms of job creation and value addition. Analysis done by ECA jointly with Oxford University has shown in case studies in RSA that green investments deliver 250% more jobs and 420% more value addition than in equivalent investment in fossil fuel based sectors.
- Given the strong nexus between climate change and the pandemic, we are hopeful that action can be accelerated on investing to tackle climate change and provide developing countries with the means of implementation. The Covid-19 crisis creates an opportunity to accelerate green investment, and these investments need to be made sooner rather than later to maximise impact..
- Tackling the financing required for the climate crisis requires also a rebuilding of trust. The commitment of 100 billion USD per annum by developed countries since COP15 in Copenhagen in 2009 has not materialized, adding to the Paris Agreement requirement of a floor amount of USD 100 billion per year from 2020. The UN Secretary General is calling for a doubling of resources available for tackling climate change as part of the commitments that need to be delivered.
- Realistic commitments need to be made which are linked to African priorities that will create jobs and value addition including: energy, sustainable transport infrastructure, climate smart agriculture and nature-based solutions among others.
- With meaningful support from developed countries, including support for credit enhancement, African countries can mobilize the private sector finance needed to invest in energy access, industrialization and climate ambition.
- But tackling the health, climate and economic crises to build resilient economies going forward requires a strong multilateral framework.
- In this context, the outcome of COP26 is very critical. What should Africa demand for and expect from COP26 and get more ambitious commitments for emissions reduction and provision of means of implementation by developed countries? What is Africa taking to COP26? How can Africa leverage a strong multilateral framework for strong ambition on climate action at COP26 towards effective implementation of the Paris

Agreement? How Africa can build resilience going forward through focus on green and blue economy?

- These are some of the questions that we will be asking and discussing during this session of the Africa Climate Talks.
- We encourage you to be critical, provocative and think out of the box so that we can have strong key messages that feed into the forthcoming Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA) conference in August 2021 that the Government of Cabo Verde has kindly agreed to host and take the African messages therefrom to COP26.
- The engagement of non-state actors in ACT will enrich these key messages, and we look forward to very fruitful discussions.