



Inauguration of the First Conference on Accelerating Agriculture Adaptation In Africa

PRESS RELEASE

Abuja – Nigeria, October 16, 2023 – Hundreds of Government representatives, Policymakers, Civil Society organizations and other partners from Africa have convened for the first conference on the acceleration of Agricultural Adaptation in Africa. The four-day conference organized by the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance and the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria together with other partners seeks to galvanise a critical mass of Actors towards accelerated agricultural adaptation, including stimulating smallholder farmers’ proactive engagement in international climate dialogue and intervention processes.

During the opening ceremonies, Dr. Sadiq Wanka, the Special Advisor to the Vice presidents of the Federal Republic of Nigeria thanked the organizers and reminded them that it takes place at the moment Africa’s agriculture is still depending on rain and while farming communities are plunging into further uncertainty as a result of climate-inspired erratic rainfall and shifting seasons, pastoralist communities have lost much of their livestock, including camels, cattle, goats and sheep to the raging weather events. He said that *“the inaugural conference on accelerating agriculture adaptation is key to galvanizing the critical mass of Actors towards accelerated agricultural adaptation, including stimulating smallholder farmers’ proactive engagement in international climate dialogue and intervention processes”*.

Dr. Salisu Dahiru, the Director-General of the National Council on Climate Change (NCCC) and Head of the Secretariat, Federal Republic of Nigeria reiterated the importance of the conference as it is expected to be the space for exchange and innovation. *“The importance of this conference cannot be overstated. It stands as a crucial platform where we can unite, share knowledge, and engage in fruitful discussions on strategies and solutions that will pave the way for sustainable agricultural practices in Africa, even in the face of climate adversities.*

we hope to embark on a journey towards securing the future of food production and ensuring the well-being of our communities.”

Speaking about Accelerating Agricultural adaptation in Africa, Prof. Anthony Nyong, the Director of Climate Change and Green Growth at the Africa Development Bank said that the bank has set four pillars to ensure change in the agriculture sector happens with success. He said that to address the social economic and sustainable agenda in agriculture AfDB set four pillars namely climate smart digital technologies for agriculture and food security, Africa infrastructure resilience accelerator; empowering youth for entrepreneurship and job creation in climate adaptation and resilience; and innovative finance initiatives.

He reiterated that *“the African Development Bank recognizes that achieving sustainability in our countries hinges upon the development of crucial sectors, with agriculture emerging as one of the most significant avenues for success”*.

Mrs. Drita Dade, the Senior Natural Resources Management Specialist who represented the World Bank country office in Nigeria commended the conference and asserted that *“inaction in addressing climate challenges not only jeopardizes food security but also heightens susceptibility to extreme weather events, places rural communities’ livelihoods at risk, and intensifies the strain on already stressed natural resources”*.

The African Development Bank estimates that adaptation and resilience costs for the continent will reach up to \$30 billion per annum by 2030. Augustine Njamnshi, the chair of Technical and Political Affairs, at PACJA, stressed that it’s imperative to think of adaptation but also look beyond the simple concept of adaptation.

“Adaptation in the agriculture sector is an urgent priority for our region. It is a matter of survival, protecting the livelihoods of millions of farmers, ensuring food security for our growing population, and preserving our rich natural resources for generations to come. We must act with a sense of urgency, with a recognition that the time for action is now”, said Augustine Njamnshi.

This is the first agricultural conference taking place in Africa with a focus on shaping the future of the sector in the climate-changing context. For four days participants will engage in deep discussions and presentations focusing on the levelling of capacities and context setting; policy and funding landscape for accelerating adaptation in the sector; pathways to low carbon resilient agricultural systems in Africa; advancing inclusions in agriculture for women, youth, pastoralists, and other excluded groups in the context of current climate realities; Just transition in African adaptation agriculture and food systems; and Raising ambition and visibility of African Agricultural Adaptation in Abu Dhabi.

Ministries of agriculture, UN and AU agencies/departments, and regional economic integration communities dealing with agriculture, smallholder farmers’ organizations (national and regional), agricultural research and policy organizations, academic institutions and think tanks, key policymakers (parliamentarians networks), outstanding women’s associations/start-ups and innovators, youth start-ups and innovators, civil society organizations with agricultural

programs, agribusiness (small, micro-enterprises), agricultural financial institutions and others.