

3.2. African Union

3.2.1. *The African Union⁵² as a partner of the EU*

Africa is a unique partner for the EU for historical and geographical reasons. The high degree of interdependence between Africa and Europe as well as the shared principles of equal partnership and joint ownership have contributed to the development of a long-term, broad and evolving partnership across various policy areas.

Since the adoption in 2007 of the Joint Africa-EU Strategy (JAES) and the launch, at the 2010 Africa-EU Summit, of the High Level Policy Dialogue on science, technology and innovation, cooperation between the African Union and the EU has grown. At the 2014 EU-Africa Summit, the EU and African Heads of States and Governments agreed on the crucial role of science and innovation in boosting employment, competitiveness and growth, and in addressing pressing societal challenges such as food security, infectious diseases, energy efficiency and climate change. Africa needs to strengthen its capacity for innovation to participate more effectively in the global economy.

Positive achievements of EU-Africa cooperation are also the result of effective synergies between EU Research and Development policies and instruments in addressing the region's local scientific and technological capacities needs.

3.2.2. *Priorities for S&T cooperation*

During the last two years, important efforts have been deployed to pave the way towards an EU-Africa Research and Innovation Partnership on food and nutrition security and sustainable agriculture. The Research and Innovation Partnership aims at using a food systems' approach with a focus on sustainable intensification, nutrition, trade and markets, linking research to innovation, and involving all stakeholders, from research organisations to private sector (including farmers), civil society, and local and national authorities. A roadmap⁵³ towards this Research and Innovation Partnership, comprising a research agenda, short to medium-term actions towards implementation (2014-2017) and reflections on long-term options for implementation (by 2020 and beyond) has been adopted at the 3rd meeting of the EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue on 4-5 April 2016, in Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia. To date, the European Commission has committed 47.5 MEUR between 2014 and 2017 into this Research and Innovation Partnership, 30 MEUR from Horizon 2020 and 17.5 MEUR from the Pan-African Instrument and welcomes similar commitments from European and African countries.

At this 2016 EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue meeting, general discussion on potential future activities also took place with a focus on "global change" (climate change and renewable energy) and "global health". The EU-Africa High Level Policy Dialogue Bureau was tasked to come forward with a proposal by 2017.

'Global change' such as climate change and renewable energy demand a cross-cutting focus on earth observation tools and research infrastructures, i.e. the use of climate information and other data to support decision-making at various levels for administration, business and citizens' needs. With the Copernicus Climate Change Service and with the related European earth observation and climate service capabilities, the EU is already supporting climate services' developments in Africa through various actions of the European and of Member States development cooperation. These can be strengthened and further helped to reach operational capabilities through future scientific

⁵² <http://www.au.int/en/countryprofiles>

⁵³ http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/policy/eu-africa_roadmap_2016.pdf

cooperation activities, jointly supported by Horizon 2020 and the development cooperation programmes, also contributing to the Global Framework for Climate Services. The aspect of renewable energy will built on a recent study⁵⁴ on renewable energy and research and innovation capacity in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Closer cooperation is also sought in the context of the Belmont Forum. The Belmont Forum, created in 2009, is a global partnership of 21 research funding organisations and science councils investing in the advancement of interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research in the field of global environmental change challenge.

In terms of global health, the second phase of the European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership⁵⁵ (EDCTP2) is working with a budget of nearly € 2 billion (2014-2024), of which € 683 million come from Horizon 2020. Today, 14 African countries and 14 Member States of the EU are part of EDCTP2 in which members work together against infectious and parasitic diseases such as AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, sleeping sickness, hookworm diseases and Ebola. Closer cooperation with African countries is sought in Global Health research initiatives such as on non-communicable diseases (Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases), growing at a fast pace in Africa; Anti-Microbial Resistance (AMR) and emerging infectious diseases (Global Research Collaboration for Infectious Disease Preparedness).

Cooperation with Africa through the Group on Earth Observation (GEO) and its 10 year strategic plan to 2025 will continue. AfriGEOSS as the African segment of the Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), should enhance earth observation and climate monitoring capacities in Africa, as part of the global system to deliver services in priority domains for Africa, such as for food security and health. In this context, the GEO governments, when they agreed to adopt the GEOS strategic plan to 2025, resolved to strengthen engagement with developing countries and foster regional cooperation. The Commission is supporting GEOSS activities in Africa through several projects based on earth observation, in particular to provide projection for food production and assessment of biological resources. The Commission will continue its research and innovation efforts to increase earth observation capacity in Africa (in particular in North Africa).

Cooperation also takes place on raw materials research and innovation diplomacy with the African Union.

Cooperation with Africa in ICT focusses on the co-design, adaptation, demonstration and validation (e.g. pilots) in of ICT related research and innovation, including in Content Technologies and Societal Challenges. To date, about €11 million worth of grants have been awarded in e-health, Big Data and geospatial data for land tenure. The ICT WP 2016-2017 call for "partnerships with to low and middle income countries" offers additional opportunities for cooperation with sub-Saharan Africa being one of the regions targeted and a total budget of €13 million.

3.2.3. *Framework Conditions*

There is concrete commitment on both sides to strengthen the overall cooperation framework in the field of science, technology and innovation. Several activities have been undertaken in support of the participation of entities established in Africa to Horizon 2020, namely training activities and information days were provided both to third country national contact points (NCPs) and to researchers and academics in African

⁵⁴ <http://www.ecorys.com/news/study-renewable-energy-and-research-and-innovation-capacity-sub-saharan-africa>

⁵⁵ www.edctp.org/

countries. In the future, the cooperation will continue to address the factors that are hampering the cooperation such as the low level of research intensity in most African countries, the low level of awareness about Horizon 2020, unequal access to information about cooperation opportunities, difficulties in finding European partners, institutional weakness, the uptake of research results and the visibility of successful collaborative research projects.