

Boost expected for Africa carbon offset projects

NAIROBI – Brimming with potential and attracting strong interest from the private sector, Africa is closer to securing its fair share of the global carbon market, say organizers of the second all-Africa Carbon Forum, taking place in Nairobi, Kenya, 3-5 March.

“The groundwork has been laid for Africa to boost its participation in the carbon market, which is growing as an important commodity market worldwide,” said John Kilani of the Bonn-based United Nations climate change secretariat speaking on behalf of the organizers of the forum.

Under the Kyoto Protocol’s Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions can earn valuable saleable credits. There are now more than 2060 projects in 63 countries, everything from electricity generation from solar, wind and waste, to reforestation, to incineration of harmful industrial gases. The CDM is thus stimulating investment, assisting countries in achieving their sustainable development goals, and generating funds for adaptation to climate change.

However, despite its success, the CDM projects in Africa account for less than 2 per cent of the projects registered to date worldwide.

“Is this problem due to a lack of potential for CDM in Africa? No. Research suggests that there is a great deal of untapped potential for CDM on the continent. The overwhelming response of industry to this event is perhaps an even more compelling statement of the interest in, and potential for, CDM in Africa,” said Mr. Kilani.

More than 700 people have registered for the all-Africa Carbon Forum, which will bring together project developers, buyers, service providers, national CDM representatives and various other private and public sector stakeholders. It is taking place under the umbrella of the Nairobi Framework, launched by the then UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan in 2006 to extend the reach of the CDM, especially in Africa.

“You are bound to do business when you bring all of the key market players together: the investors, buyers and sellers. This forum is therefore bound to boost the number of carbon offset projects in Africa,” said Mr. Kilani.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), African Development Bank (AfDB) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat have joined to implement the Nairobi Framework together with private sector partner International Emissions Trading Association (IETA).

For more on the all-Africa Carbon Forum visit
<<http://www.africacarbonforum.com/2009/english/index.htm>>.



Catching the sun. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project 0079 – Kuyasa low-cost urban housing energy upgrade project, Khayelitsha, Cape Town, South Africa. Under the CDM, projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to sustainable development can earn valuable, saleable credits. Photographer: Nic Bothma.



Creating jobs, saving fuel. Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project 2711 – Efficient fuel wood stoves for Nigeria. Under the CDM, projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to sustainable development can earn valuable, saleable credits. Photographer: Yahaya Ahmed.