

Report of the 19th SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY
COMMITTEE SESSION (SACOM-19)
ACMAD, NIAMEY. May 06-08, 2019

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Introduction

The nineteenth session of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SACOM-19) of the African Centre for Meteorological Applications for Development (ACMAD) was held in Niamey, Niger, from 06 to 08 May 2019. The meeting was held under the theme “*ACMAD's strategic planning for 2019-2022 in support of Sustainable Development Goals in Africa*”.

This report is divided into two parts. Part I: The organisation of the meeting and Part II: Account of proceedings.

PART I

I. Organization of the meeting [agenda item 1]

1.1. Attendance

The meeting was attended by the following members of SACOM:

1. Professor Hamani DAOUDA (President)
2. Professor Yamna DJELLOULI (Member)
3. Mr. Steve PALMER (Member, via skype)
4. Professor John MUTHAMA NZIOKA (Member)

The following ACMAD staff members were in attendance as secretariat support:

1. Dr. Andre Kamga FOAMOUHOUE , Director General
2. M. Leon Guy RAZAFINDRAKOTO, Weather Watch and Prediction Department
3. M. Ali AHMED ABANI, IT Department
4. Mme. Nafisa MOUSSA, HR
5. M. Bizo ZABAIROU , Monitoring and evaluation Officer
6. Dr. Bob Alex OGWANG, Support Expert

1.2. Opening statements

The DG of ACMAD, Dr. Andre KAMGA FOAMOUHOUE in his welcome remarks at 9:00am, thanked the SACOM members for their availability and tireless efforts to contribute to strategic planning at ACMAD. He highlighted the end of the last ACMAD strategic plan in 2015 and indicated that the meeting is a response to requests made by SACOM and the Board of Governors members over the past few years to develop a new strategy for the Centre.

The President of SACOM, Professor Daouda HAMANI, welcomed and thanked his colleagues and ACMAD Secretariat for attending the meeting. He highlighted the advisory role of SACOM and expected support to examine the draft strategy and make relevant recommendations to the Board of Governors.

1.3 Organizational matters and adoption of the agenda

The meeting started with the consideration of working arrangements for the meeting and agreed on the following schedule:

Morning: 09:00 - 13:00

Afternoon: 15:00 - 18:30

The meeting then went on to consider the provisional agenda and unanimously adopted the following:

1. Organization of the meeting
2. Strategic plan
3. SACOM activities: status and future perspectives
4. Closing of the meeting

PART II

II. Account of proceedings

2. Strategic Plan [agenda item 2]

2.1 Presentation

The secretariat of the committee provided a synthesis of the draft strategic plan highlighting the long term outcomes, strategic objectives, major axis of intervention and monitoring indicators for

each strategic objectives. Details on these elements are available in the draft strategic plan set out in document SACOM2019/DOC2. Despite efforts on capacity building, more than half of African National Meteorological and Hydrological Services are in category 1 on a scale of 4 or cannot be classified. Basic activities including making observations, managing observations collected and exchanges with data users are still challenging for a significant number of African NMHSs. Identifying and addressing weaknesses and gaps in NMHSs is the main long term goal. For NMHSs with autonomous forecasting capabilities, the quality of products and services is still a challenge. Therefore demonstrating and providing quality services to support resilient development and climate adaptation is the second long term goal. The observing network and data exchange infrastructure are sub optimal and WMO reports indicate that only 25% of observing stations are functioning in Africa. Support for meteorological research in Africa is limited, leading to few scientific findings generated by research institutions. Improving access to data and strengthening research are additional long term goals of the strategy. With the rationalization of institutions created by UNECA, ACMAD has been lacking a tutelage body. Moreover, administration and financial management support provided by UNECA Bureau for West Africa are no longer available. Therefore, an important long term goal on improving governance and modernizing of ACMAD's management system will address this challenge.

2.2 Discussions

SACOM members noted that investments in meteorology in Africa is lacking along the meteorological value chain from observations to valuable service through data management, modelling, processing and forecasting. Members expressed the need to modernize African NMHSs by harnessing more effectively the significant potential provided through international cooperation under the leadership of WMO. They further expressed the need to strengthen links with WMO programmes and networks. They noted the need to strengthen collaboration and coordination with Regional Centres and advanced NMHSs. Further, they observed that ACMAD should not only engage in provision of weather and climate services, but also focus on developmental aspect, based on its mandate. They noted that the use of social media is key in the

provision of weather and climate information. ACMAD needs to engage and/or mobilise NMHSs to utilize social media effectively.

SACOM members considered the Strength, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) of ACMAD during the discussion of the draft strategic plan for the centre. The followings were considered under SWOT after a thorough discussion.

The **STRENGTH** of ACMAD were highlighted as follows:

1. Continental Mandate of ACMAD
2. Evidence based provision of services (agenda 2063)
3. Operation of ACMAD as a WMO designated RCC
4. The 34 years' experience in weather and climate services
5. Provision of support services to developing countries in Africa
6. Management of the centre by experienced professionals
7. Networking level established over time with national, regional and global centres
8. Capability to provide on the job training to staff on secondment

The **WEAKNESS** of ACMAD were highlighted as follows:

1. Ambiguous framework involving UNECA and continental position
2. Limited interplay between ACMAD and NMHSs
3. Limited collaboration with private sector and civil society for value addition
4. Lack of communication and outreach strategy
5. Sub optimal state of basic observing and data management infrastructure in Africa makes it difficult to provide ideal services

6. Low capacity at ACMAD to source funds for infrastructure, technology and staff on the meteorological value chain
7. Continental strategic leadership yet to reach mature state
8. Limited integration of ACMAD's work with other programs
9. Unsustainable collaborative linkages

The **OPPORTUNITIES** for ACMAD were identified to be the following:

1. Growing awareness of the importance of weather and climate
2. Growing demand for environmental services
3. Availability of development partners and funding agencies with resources to operate the centre
4. Strong partnerships with UN agencies
5. Room for development opportunities for NMHSs through ACMAD
6. Enabling institutional and policy framework to deliver climate services

The **THREATS** to ACMAD were listed as follows:

1. Visibility
2. Competition from unregulated and un-validated alternative sources of information
3. Globalization (Minimization of roles at continental level)
4. Lack of appreciation and recognition in the weather and climate value chain
5. Increasing competition from commercial entities
6. Limited awareness of ACMAD's member states on the values of ACMAD's products

All the Sections of the draft strategic plan for ACMAD were discussed and several modifications made. The updated version of the document is: [sacom2019&doc2n.doc](#)

2.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

In light of the discussions, SACOM members made the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. NMHSs should remain at the core of ACMAD's strategy and activities
2. The priorities, goals and main axis of interventions will address the challenges highlighted in the context of the strategy
3. ACMAD should play a significant role in enhancing coordination with NMHSs and Regional centres to optimize use of resources mobilized in Africa and around the world for meteorology and development
4. The strategy should be submitted for approval to ACMAD's Board of Governors
5. ACMAD should develop and implement a resource mobilization strategy
6. SACOM members observed that ACMAD should endeavour to tap from the Green Climate Fund by partnering with institutions which are already accredited. The centre was also encouraged to endeavour to work towards being accredited
7. ACMAD should work closely with NMHSs to maximize use of the resources available at national level

3. SACOM: current status and future activities [agenda item 3]

3.1 Presentation

The secretariat presented the functions behind the advisory role of SACOM; providing proposals and recommendations to the Board of Governors. Proposals on scientific developments, science based products, ACMAD's objectives, services and staff requirement review, user needs

identification and assessment of benefits realized through the use of the centre's products are expectations from SACOM activities.

3.2 Discussions

The SACOM members discussed the activities entrusted on them by the UNECA Conference of Ministers' decision 2 in 1996 and noted the need to strengthen the committee. SACOM noted difficulties in organizing its meetings and to get the required quorum. Members made recommendations for improving SACOM's effectiveness.

3.3 Confirmation of minutes of the last meeting and matters arising

Minutes of the last meeting was read and confirmed. The followings are the discussions that ensued: It was noted that SACOM members bring a broad range of experience for the benefit of ACMAD. Apart from the meeting in 2013, an informal meeting was held in 2015, which raised a number of issues regarding membership of SACOM. SACOM members discussed about the membership of the committee, given that some of the members have been inactive for a while. It was then proposed that SACOM members should make use of the available teleconferencing tools in future meetings.

It was proposed that SACOM should hold at least one virtual meeting, every 3-6 months. SACOM highlighted the need for ACMAD's services to be attractive to all National Ministries.

ACMAD should provide regular updates to SACOM members on activities, projects and/or new products. The proposed frequency of this communication is 3 months.

4. ACMAD's programs

SACOM members appreciated the preparation and presentation of the document on ACMAD's five years' achievements. Programs, products and emerging issues are available in ACMAD's five years achievement:2014-2018 document.

The secretariat highlighted the running programs at ACMAD, including the following.

The Satellite and Weather Information for Disaster Resilience in Africa (SAWIDRA) project which aims at strengthening regional and national weather and climate centres to meet the needs of disaster management and socio-economic sectors through effective use of early warnings for building resilience. It is expected to provide a High Performance Computing system and a reception station for polar satellite that will be useful for generating input datasets for weather forecasting using WRF model for the African continent. The project is expected to end in 2020.

African Science for Weather Information and Forecasting Techniques (African SWIFT) project purpose is to develop an African tropical forecasting science capability. The project has three major components namely User engagement and forecast evaluation, physical science research, knowledge exchange training and documentation.. It is expected to end in year 2021.

The Department of Climate and Environment has been supporting the establishment of the National Framework for Climate Services (NFCS) in line with the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS). It is running the WMO designated Regional Climate Centre for all Africa. A project on GFCS, established through the African Union Commission is expected to start by the end of 2019.

5. ACMAD's products

Selected products were presented to the members, including products from the Annual State of Climate Report e.g. Precipitation trends, with areas of significant increase or decrease hatched and temperature trends and related rates of rise for African negotiator at UNFCCC COPs. This provides the extent of climate variability and climate change to guide in planning and decision making. Other products include Technical Note on long range forecast (meant for climate experts), Long Range Forecasting bulletins, meant for experts in sectors like water resources, agriculture, etc...; summaries and briefs tailored for DRR in Africa meant for policy and decision makers, drought monitoring and Meningitis vigilance bulletins, Dekadal and monthly climate diagnostic bulletins, as well as weather and flood forecast bulletins.

Other products include pilot bulletins for vigilance of meningitis over Niger, which needs to be up-scaled to cover other countries across the continent.

6. User needs and benefits

SACOM members noted that there is need to develop a questionnaire in line with the strategic objectives, targeting users across the continent for improved ACMAD's appreciation of their emerging needs. Additionally, there is need for stakeholder analysis to further establish the needs and the benefits.

7. Staff requirements

Members noted the current limited manpower and encouraged ACMAD to explore all opportunities for partnerships on human resource mobilization.

8. Emerging issues

SACOM members highlighted the availability of potential funding sources and encouraged ACMAD to endeavour toward accreditation as an executing agency for these funds.

9. ACMAD's strategy

The draft strategic plan was elaborately discussed and amended, consequently generating the herewith attached document [sacom2019&doc2n.doc](#).

10. A.O.B

SACOM members appreciated the efforts so far towards constructing ACMAD's headquarters and encouraged the centre to pursue the initiative substantively in a phased format.

11. Conclusion and recommendations

SACOM members made the following recommendations.

11.1 Members recommended that agenda of SACOM meetings should cover the following as derived from their ToRs:

1. Confirmation of the report of the last meeting and matters arising

2. ACMAD's programs
3. ACMAD's products
4. User needs and benefits
5. Staff requirements
6. Emerging issues
7. ACMAD's strategy
8. A.O.B

11.2 SACOM members noted the need to ensure quorum with one virtual meetings every 3-6 months, and therefore proposed that three positions be filled as soon as possible.

11.3 Members further proposed that SACOM be included in project coordination or steering bodies.

12. Closing remarks

In closing the meeting, the President of the 19th session of SACOM, on behalf of the members, thanked the ACMAD secretariat for the high level of organization and team work that led to the success of SACOM meeting. He similarly appreciated the committee members for their unwavering support and commitment to serve the institution. The meeting ended at 6:30pm, Wednesday 8, 2019.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE 19th SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE SESSION (SACOM-19) ACMAD, NIAMEY. May 06-08, 2019

In the year two thousand and nineteen, on the 6th, 7th and 8th of May, the 19th meeting of the Scientific Advisory Committee (SACOM) was held at ACMAD headquarters in Niamey-Niger, chaired by Professor Daouda HAMANI, the President of the 19th SACOM session, with participation of four SACOM members.

The SACOM members examined the items on its agenda including the draft ACMAD strategy for 2020-2023 and discussed the current status and perspectives for the committee. Presentations and discussions led to the following conclusions and recommendations:

With regard to its overall view of ACMAD's strategic plan for the 2020-2023 period, SACOM:

1. congratulated ACMAD on the relevance of facts and findings justifying the strategy.
2. acknowledged the level of effort put in identifying the main priorities, including building resilience, combating climate change by strengthening adaptation to impacts and enhancing applications and value of meteorological services for development.
3. examined and amended the structure of the strategy with a context and vision, long term outcomes, medium term mission and priorities, strategic objectives and major areas of intervention.
4. was pleased to see efforts to define monitoring indicators as requested by previous ACMAD Governing Board and SACOM meetings.
5. noted critically, the consideration of capacity development as the first strategic objective, given the findings from WMO assessments highlighting that more than half of African NMHSs are at category 1 or below in a scale of 4.
6. appreciated the inclusion of research focus on weather and climate predictability and applications at ACMAD and partnerships with universities and research institutes to improve understanding of processes and phenomena, model development and prediction.
7. welcomed the emphasis put on quality services in Africa focusing on resilience and adaptation to climate change applications.

8. recommended to submit the SACOM adopted strategic plan to ACMAD's Governing Board for consideration and adoption.
9. Pleaded with NMHSs of AU members states, WMO, UNECA and partners to support and facilitate implementation of this strategy.
10. Recommended the development and implementation of resource mobilization strategy.
11. SACOM members recommended that agenda of SACOM meetings should cover the following as derived from their ToRs:
 1. Confirmation of the report of the last meeting and matters arising
 2. ACMAD's programs
 3. ACMAD's products
 4. User needs and benefits
 5. Staff requirements
 6. Emerging issues
 7. ACMAD's strategy
 8. A.O.B
12. SACOM noted the need to ensure quorum with one virtual meeting, every 3-6 months, and therefore proposed that three positions be filled as soon as possible.

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The SACOM Secretariat
Dr. Andre KAMGA FOAMOUHOUE

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The President of the SACOM Session
Prof. Daouda HAMANI