

## **I. Introduction**

This “progress report” was kindly elaborated by the two Commissions services on behalf of Member States. The report has been distributed to the European and African Member States for consideration.

The "Africa-EU Joint Strategy" was adopted by the Lisbon Summit the 9 December 2007 together with its First Action Plan (2008-2010) for the implementation of the Africa-EU Strategic Partnership, including the Partnership 8 on "Science, Information society and Space". In the framework of Partnership 8, (P8), the two Commissions worked together towards its implementation and in the process established the Joint Taskforce, (JTF), and the Joint Expert Group (JEG). Through mutual and inclusive consultation the Commissions widely publicised P8 in the EU and AU Member States. Described herein is the Implementation Roadmap of this Partnership.

## **II. The road so far**

### **1. Process**

The mechanism for implementation of the Africa - EU Joint Strategy is the Partnership 8 Joint Expert Group (JEG) bringing together experts from the two Commissions and AU and EU Member States. This Group reports directly to the Africa-EU Troika (overseeing the overall Africa-EU Joint Strategy implementation). It is composed of two sub groups: the African Expert Group 8 (AEG8); and the European Expert Group 8 (EEG8).

A Commission-to-Commission Dialogue, notably through the six-monthly meetings of the JTF feeds into and drives this mechanism

The African Expert Group 8 (AEG), *de facto* chaired by Tunisia has Senegal, South Africa, Togo, Egypt and Kenya (AMCOST Chair) as African country representatives. The only P8 AEG meeting held so far took place in Addis Ababa 5<sup>th</sup> Nov 2008 to prepare for the 1<sup>st</sup> JEG. On the African side given its well established and fully functional AMCOST and CIT as AU Specialised Technical Committees, the Steering Committee (10 Members) and the Bureau (5 Members) could be considered as the AEG8. These Committees have already deliberated on the book of lighthouse projects and subsequently supported the initiative in the context of P8.

Meanwhile, the European experts Group (EEG) - which met the first time the 23<sup>rd</sup> of June 2008 - has met 6 times in all. It is chaired by France (IRD President, J.F. Girard). EEG8 Meetings have been attended by a variable number of EU Member States with a maximum number of 9 countries and an average of 7. Regularly present are France, Germany, Portugal, Belgium, Finland, Sweden and

the Czech Republic.

The first P 8 JEG was held in Addis Ababa on 13-14 November 2008 and was attended by the following AU and EU Member States (AU: Tunisia, South Africa, and Kenya. EU: France and the Czech Republic) It recommended to the Troika that the existing financial instruments should be exploited in an optimum manner in order to demonstrate the potential of this partnership. However JEG8 further requested the Troika to consider setting-up a common dedicated financial instrument for P8.

## 2. Content

As a result of this mutual consultation and based on African well defined strategies (ARAPKE and CPA) and existing initiatives from both continents in the areas of information Society, Science and Space a *Book of Lighthouse Projects* was prepared. This book is a comprehensive document that contains well defined projects that have been identified as Africa's priority. The Book was widely disseminated to all Member States whose comments were taken into consideration.

The Book of Lighthouse Projects has 19 priority projects (12 in Science, 5 in Information Society, and 2 in Space) for the short-medium term implementation of the Partnership.

The 5 projects on Information Society were formally endorsed by the CIT Ministerial Conference during its meeting in Cairo in May 2008.

The College to College meeting of 1-2 October 2008 identified six of the Lighthouse Projects as "Early Deliverables" (2 for each P8 component) as officially announced in the joint statement of Commissioners Ezin, Michel, Verheughen, Potocnik and Reding.

The *Book of Projects*, including the 6 Early Deliverables were officially supported by the AMCOST (African Ministerial Conference on Science and Technology) Bureau in Abuja on 5th December 2008.

While the two Commissions will concentrate on the implementation of the six Early Deliverables, all *the Lighthouse* projects are open for in-kind and financial contribution from all sources.

Concurrently, a mapping exercise (ongoing on the EU side and incipient on the African side) will eventually identify, as comprehensively as possible, other activities under way and establish other priority gaps which might need to be addressed.

The six Early Deliverables are: in the Information Society domain: *Africa Connect* and the *African Internet Exchange System*; in the Science domain: *African research Grants* and *Water and Food Security in Africa* and in the Space domain: *The African Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES-Africa)* and *the Implementation of the African Reference Frame (AFREF)* – see in

annex for summaries.

### **III. Where we are now (April 2009)**

#### *The six early deliverables*

##### **1. Information Society**

It is expected that *Africa Connect* (€ 12 million) and the *African Internet Exchange System* (€ 3 million) will be financed from the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF Intra ACP Indicative Programme but whether they can be part of the 2009 EDF Annual Action Plan (AAP)<sup>1</sup> depends on ongoing arbitration and negotiation with the ACP Secretariat.

##### **2. Science**

Things are somewhat clearer in the Science domain, where it is expected that the two Early Deliverables *African research Grants* and *Water and Food Security in Africa* can be financed in 2009, the first with € 15 million drawn from the 10<sup>th</sup> EDF Intra ACP Indicative Programme. It should be noted in this connection that the project management unit for the *African research Grants* is already being recruited with funds drawn from the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF AUC Capacity Building Programme and that a first pilot call for proposals<sup>2</sup> for approx € 1 million could be issued in November of this year.

It should be further noted that the first year of the *Popularisation of Science and Technology and Promotion of Public Participation 'Lighthouse Project'*<sup>2</sup> is being funded with approx USD500k from the AUC Capacity Building Programme. Notably, the first continental *African Scientist Award* can be made on *Africa Day*, 9th September 2009 for the Regional Award and in January Summit for the Continental Award).

##### **3. Space**

The *African Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES and Africa)* will reinforce Africa's use of and contribution to remote sensing science, especially building operational services for sustainable development. The "GMES and Africa Action Plan", thematic priorities, infrastructure needs and financial instruments will be submitted to the third EU-Africa Summit, foreseen early 2010 in Libya. Under Framework Programme 7 -(DG Enterprise) approx. € 3 million were earmarked in the 2008 call for three projects aimed at supporting GMES and Africa. The action plan is being drafted based on a thorough consultation with the African community throughout 2009, led by pairs of African and European experts across different application areas.

---

<sup>1</sup> Mandatory annual AIDCO submission to the EDF Committee for opinion prior to Commission Decision

<sup>2</sup> Which was combined with the African research Grants as an Early Deliverable at the October 2008 College to College meeting

As to the *Implementation of the African Reference Frame (AFREF)*, the AUC and JRC are finalising a project proposal for an AUC Capacity Building Programme for using Geospatial data via a “*Pan-African geo-information observatory in support to sustainable development*”.

#### *Implementation Status of the Remaining Lighthouse Projects*

#### **Information Society**

- The AUC is jointly with UNESCO implementing *African Virtual Campus project* which initial phase was partially funded by Spain. National virtual campuses are being established in 11 countries in West Africa. A progress implementation report will be submitted to the upcoming sectoral Ministerial meetings “CIT and science and technology”.
- The AU Commission is also making efforts to raise resources for the African Leadership ICT Program and Harnessing information & Knowledge for Youth Development projects.

#### **Science and Technology**

The AUC has submitted proposals under the 9<sup>th</sup> EDF € 35 million *ACP Science and Technology Programme* for 2 Lighthouse Projects: *Building Africa’s Scientific and Institutional Capacity (BASIC) in Agriculture* and *Natural Resource Management and Harnessing Biotechnology for the Advancement of African Agriculture*. Whether these proposals are accepted depends on the competitive evaluation currently under way.

- The Constitutive Act for the setting up of the *Pan African Intellectual Property Organization (PAIPO)* is now in place.
- The AU, in consultation with UNESCO, is working on the modalities of establishing the *African Observatory on Science, Technology and Innovation*. The Government of Equatorial Guinea offered to host, champion and allocate a seed fund of US\$ 3.6 million.
- On the *Development of a Common African Union Science and Technology Policy Framework and Reviews of AU Members States*, the AUC is working closely with UNESCO. One Review was done for the SADC countries in 2008 and one for the Eastern and some Northern Member States was launched in April 2009.
- On the *Development of African Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and support business incubator networks* project, the AUC is consulting with InfoDev and UNIDO to finalise the project document to be submitted for consideration by Partnership 8.

- The projects "*African Pole of Excellence on Desertification and Forestry*", "*African Union Initiative on Climate Change*" and "*Securing and Using Africa's Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge*" are still under consideration for implementation.

#### *Non Lighthouse activities*

Upon the initiative of The French chair of the European Implementation Team, IRD (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement) jointly with the European Parliament's STOA (Science and Technological Options Assessment), organised a Conference at the European Parliament the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009. The conference, gathered around 200 attendants. It was aiming at popularizing the 8<sup>th</sup> partnership with Africa among the European and Member states Parliament representatives and to boost the Member states support to its implementation.

On Information Society, two ICT/FP7 support actions (EuroAfrica-ICT and IST-Africa) have organised a number of workshops in all African regions to mobilize stakeholders (public authorities, private companies, research community, civil society) on the P8 implementation. The EuroAfrica-ICT Forum was held in Brussels on 25-26 March 2009 and gathered around 350 participants to address implementation issues and opportunities. The IST-Africa 2009 Conference to be held in Kampala on 6-8 May 2009 will further strengthen this mobilisation.

In the Science domain, health issues are being combined with the *Water and Food Security in Africa* early deliverable to produce an African Scientific Initiative in excess of € 50 million to be drawn from FP 7.

There is also progress to report with the implementation of the *Pan-African University (PAU)* initiative which seeks to enhance links with industry as well as identification and strengthening of networks of *Centers of Excellence* with a view for science and technology to contribute to the global pool of knowledge and innovation. The *PAU* aims to promote Science and Technology on the continent and link scientific research to economic development. In essence the PAU will be a network of thematic universities and satellite campuses identified from existing institutions. The thematic priorities suggested, are Science, Technology and Innovation, Water and Energy, Life and Earth Sciences, Space Science and Social and Human Sciences.

#### **IV. The road ahead**

##### *Early deliverables*

##### **Information Society:**

The ACP Group will have to be persuaded to support *Africa Connect* (€ 12 million) and the *African Internet Exchange System* (€ 3 million) immediately if these two projects are to be approved in 2009.

### **For Science:**

- € 15 million for the *African Research Grants* have been incorporated into a € 20 million *All-ACP Research for Sustainable Development Programme*. A formal request for this Programme must now be made by the ACP Committee of Ambassadors. It will then be possible to submit the *ACP Research for Sustainable Development Programme* to the EDF Committee for opinion in September 2009 so that a Commission Decision can be obtained in October and a Financing Agreement in November. A contribution agreement with the AUC might then hypothetically be signed in December 2009.
- the *Water and Food Security in Africa* early deliverable is being incorporated into a broader FP 7 Africa Scientific Initiative and should go through the relevant comitology at about the same time. A call for Proposals for the implementation of this Programme would then be launched in 2010.

### **For Space:**

The initial version of the Action Plan, expected by the end of May 2009 will be subject to a wider inclusive consultation, both at African and European levels. The schedule for the several steps of the consultation of the Action Plan has been defined from June to end 2009. There is a need to ensure adequate financial support for conducting regional consultation. Under FP7-GMES, there are three projects worth approx. € 3million supporting GMES and Africa. Another call is expected in 2010 and will address in particular the advanced requirements stemming from the consultation under the Lisbon Process.

#### *Process Issues*

**In Information Society**, on the European side, Finland has volunteered to initiate a working group of EU Member States on the implementation of the P8 Information society component. The objective will be to pool resources regarding the 5 ICT lighthouse projects and more generally on the support to ARAPKE. This first meeting was held on 24 March 2009, prior to the Euro Africa-ICT Forum organised by the EC. Follow-up with the African side can be expected on 6-8 May at the *IST-Africa 2009* Conference to be held in Kampala on 6-8 May 2009. This is a promising development for this Partnership component.

The AUC formally requested EC assistance for the preparation of the January 2010 African Union Summit that will be focused on ICT for African Development. A number of EU MSs have been similarly contacted.

**On Science**, much more needs to be done with the mapping exercise so that Member States on both sides can identify those areas where they can engage both technically and financially. So far, the focus has been on the Book of Lighthouse Projects and the Commission-to-Commission early

deliverables in particular. Equatorial Guinea has shown how the Book can help by availing a seed fund of USD3.6 million and hosting the *African Observatory on Science, Technology and Innovation*. However, much more is being done which does not always appear and much more must be done by Member States and Civil society (including the private sector) if the Africa -EU Partnership on Science, Information Society and Space Partnership is to reveal its true potential.

No JEG8 has been possible this time round whereas it is important that this Roadmap be fully owned by the P 8 JEG which is ultimately responsible for reporting to the Africa-EU Ministerial Troika.

It is also fundamental that the JEGs include representatives from all 3 domains for the Partnership. It is equally important that interaction is not only planned with AMCOST (currently chaired by Kenya) on the African side, but also with the CIT (currently chaired by Nigeria) which manages ARAPKE implementation.

Meanwhile,; it is important to acknowledge that EU Member States such as Germany and Finland have expressed direct interest in some projects such as Forestry and climate change.

**On Space**, developments are satisfactory with Portugal leading on *GMES and Africa* on the European side with the two Commissions, the RECs, Member States and the European Space Agency and EUMETSAT involved. This is a good example

## V. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that Partnership 8 has got off to a good start in terms of project implementation, but most of the 'additional' (post-December 2007) results so far are the outcome of the work of the two Commissions and it is clear that Member States and Civil Society (including the private sector) must become much more involved on both sides. The objective of setting up, in due course, a high-level Africa-EU policy dialogue with the possible creation of a common decision-making platform however, shows that Member States on both sides are determined to join their efforts in the domain of Science, Information Society and Space.

## **ANNEX**

### Early Deliverables: Project Summaries.

#### 1. Information Society:

##### **Africa Connect**

The AfricaConnect project will support the development of regional research and education networks in Sub-Saharan Africa and their interconnection with the European GEANT2 network, building on a similar initiative, EumedConnect, implemented in North-Africa (currently interconnecting around 1,5 Million users across more than 500 research organisations). The objective will be to contribute integrating the African research community both at regional and international levels, through interconnection with the most cost-effective high bandwidth capacity.

##### **The African Internet Exchange System (AXIS)**

This project aims to support the establishment of a continental African internet infrastructure through national and regional internet exchange points. Such deployment is considered crucial for the development of the internet in Africa, generating huge costs savings by keeping local traffic local and offering better quality of service and new applications opportunities. AXIS activities will include technical assistance on planning, regulatory/policy issues, as well as human training to achieve this objective.

#### 2. Science and Technology

##### **Africa Research Grants**

This project will set up a continent-wide research programme focused on developing sustainable science and technology research responding to Africa's technical, economic and social development. The challenge for African researchers will be to work together creating supranational consortia complementing their scientific competences. Proposals by consortia will be selected via open and competitive selection procedures. The capacity of the AUC to manage and implement the programme itself will be developed so that it can launch, implement and monitor calls for proposals, in different thematic areas related primarily to the earth and life sciences.

##### **Water and food security in Africa**

The main aim of this project is to strengthen the capacity in science and technology in order to cope with food security problems while promoting sustainable management of land and water

resources. In this context, demonstration activities in one or more African river basin, such as the Nile basin, will be considered to consolidate the research and work methodology.

### 3. Space

#### **The African Global Monitoring for Environment and Security (GMES and Africa)**

The *GMES and Africa* initiative will reinforce Africa's use of and contribution to remote sensing science, especially building operational services for sustainable development. The "GMES and Africa Action Plan", thematic priorities infrastructure needs and financial instruments will be submitted to the third EU-Africa Summit, foreseen early 2010 in Libya. Under Framework Programme 7-(DG Enterprise) approx. €3million were been earmarked in the 2008 call for three projects aimed at supporting GMES and Africa. The action plan is being drafted based on a thorough consultation with the African community throughout 2009, led by pairs of African and European experts across different application areas.

#### **Implementation of the African Reference Frame (AFREF)**

The EC Joint Research Centre's Africa Observatory exploits geospatial science for sustainable development focusing on natural resources, food security, crisis management and renewable energies. Capacity building will identify modalities for implementing a mirror of the Observatory at AUC so as to increase the use of scientific information for decision-making.

\*\*\*