

Ethiopia is Trailblazing in Climate-Resilient Green Economy



Ethiopian Prime Minister H.E. Dr. Abiy Ahmed kicked off a mission to plant four billion trees

Ethiopia has inarguably taken the lead in the implementation of Climate-Resilient Green Economy to protect itself from the adverse effects of climate change with significant resources being deployed towards reducing Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. The key success stories are in afforestation and land rehabilitation; generation and distribution of electricity from clean and renewable sources and investment in improved transportation systems.

As many countries took time to weigh the consequences of signing the Paris Agreement on climate change, Ethiopia was decisive and was among the first signatories to the Agreement, committing to cut carbon emissions by 64% by 2030. Since then, it has not looked back. Leading from the front, the government has pressed ahead with ambitious development plans, and clean energy is the core of the mission.

COMESA Climate Change Advisor, Dr Mclay Kanyangarara, describes Ethiopia as having the most ambitious climate change response strategies on the African continent.

"Achieving a 64% reduction in GHG emissions in 15 years is a mammoth undertaking by any standard. The cornerstone of their strategy is to substitute fossil fuels with clean renewable energy for transport, industry, household

use etc. coupled with a most ambitious and aggressive tree planting programme to remove and store carbon dioxide," he notes adding, "The country is on course as all the promised interventions have been started and they are not so much seeking aid to achieve their targets."

According to a status report on Ethiopia, the country's plan and action to mitigate GHG emissions is built on four pillars; improving crop and livestock production practices for greater food security and higher farmer incomes while reducing emissions. The others are protecting and re-establishing forests for their economic and ecosystem services, while sequestering significant amounts of carbon dioxide and increasing the carbon stocks in landscapes.

Power Generation

Expanding electric power generation from renewable sources and leapfrogging to modern and energy efficient technologies in transport, industry and building sectors are the other core pillars.

The forestry sector is perhaps where Ethiopia has had the greatest shine with a major national reforestation programme of planting four billion trees in 2019. A more ambitious target of five billion trees by 2020 is underway.

The government and different programmes in the forestry sector are also promoting fuel-efficient and alternative-energy sources to improve ecosystem services and increase carbon sequestration in forests and woodlands.

In the Agriculture sector several large-scale sustainable development programmes are ongoing to building resilience to climate change in the natural resources sub-sector.

They include community mobilization integrated watershed management campaign and a sustainable land management programme.

In the Energy sector, the country is ramping-up development of its massive hydropower potential estimated to be 15,000 - 30,000 MW, which is one of the highest in Africa. Billions of dollars have been ploughed into megaprojects such as the Grand Renaissance Dam, which will be the largest dam in Africa, and the newly inaugurated Gibe III Dam.

The report states that maximizing energy efficiency allows for green development of other sectors of the economy, such as the replacement of trucks by electric rail or diesel pumps by electric pumps for irrigation that enabled the sectors to reduce their GHG emissions.

Ethiopia shares its green development to other countries in the region to replace electricity generated from fossil fuels, which has significantly higher average costs and GHG emissions. To reduce emissions from solid and liquid waste, Ethiopia constructed a waste-to-energy plant, a first in Africa. The plant incinerates 1,400 tons of waste every day, which is about 80 per cent of its resident city's waste.

An electric rail network powered by renewable energy has substituted fossil fuel powered road transport in the country thus leapfrogging to modern and energy efficient technologies in transport.

Full report:

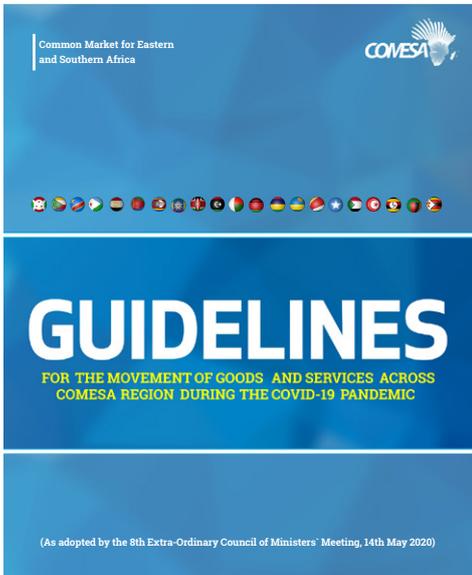
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Guidelines on Free Movement of People and Goods Published

COMESA has published and gazetted the regional guidelines on the movement of goods and services across the region. This heralds the beginning of implementation of the guidelines across the 21 member States. The guidelines were endorsed three weeks ago by the COMESA Ministers responsible for regional trade.

Regional trade has consistently faced difficulties as regional States put in place strict measures to keep the Coronavirus away from crossing into their borders, resulting in disruption of cargo movements. The overriding principle of the guidelines is to apply common measures on trade corridors and border points to safely maintain the flow of goods and services within the region.

With the publishing of the guidelines, the regional States are expected to domesticate them as part of their national response measures to Covid-19. In this regard, the



ministries responsible for coordinating implementation of COMESA programmes in member States will lead in the application of the guidelines and ensure their provisions inform decision-making at the national Covid-19 response committees.

The regional private sector including freight companies are some of the core stakeholders that have been adversely affected by the Covid-19. The guidelines thus provide a basis for them to engage respective governments to implement the recommendations to address the current challenges affecting flow of goods

and services within the region.

"The COVID-19 crisis brought to the fore the challenge of protecting the health of the population whilst avoiding undue disruptions to the free movement of persons and the delivery of goods and essential services across the region," says COMESA Director of Trade, Dr Christopher Onyango.

In adopting the Guidelines, the Ministers acknowledged that despite the incidence of the pandemic, the implementation of the Common Market policies on the movement of goods, services and persons should continue to be governed by the principle of market integration and regional cooperation between the Member States.

They stated: "Amidst responses to combat COVID-19, COMESA Member States should continue to be guided by a collective commitment of maintaining open and connected supply chains working collaboratively to identify and address trade disruptions with ramifications on the flow of goods and essential services within the region."

With the development and issuing of the Guidelines, COMESA expects to rally the collective interest of all its Member States to ensure that trade routes (road, rail, air and sea freight) remain open to facilitate the flow of goods including essential supplies.

Given the overlapping membership of regional countries to other regional economic communities, the COMESA Guidelines considered similar guidelines developed by EAC and SADC in response to the COVID-19 to ensure they complement and not conflict.

Full Report on:

<https://www.comesa.int/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Guidelines-for-the-Movement-of-Goods-Services-Across-COMESA-Region.pdf>

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Rwanda, Uganda Record Reduced Trade Flows

Rwanda and Uganda have recorded a reduction in trade flows in April and May 2020, according to the latest report from the COMESA Statistics on 'COVID 19 Impact on Trade'. The report was prepared in the first two months in which COVID-19 spread to the region.

Imports into Rwanda declined by 32 % in April compared to March. Rusumo and Airport borders posts recorded declines in imports of 35% and 16% respectively. In Uganda a drop in imports were recorded at 30% in April compared to March. Malabo, Busia and Entebbe border posts recorded declines in imports of 35%, 28% and 24% respectively. Imports for the month of May were projected to decline by 20%.

Exports for Rwanda also declined by 8% in April compared to March 2020 while Uganda recorded a decline in Exports by 15% in April compared to March.

According to the report, reduction in customs duties are listed as among the critical challenges faced by the Rwanda Revenue Authority. Customs duty receipts declined by 55% in April compared to March. Rusumo, Kagitumba and the Airport border posts recorded declines in customs duty receipts of 52%, 71% and 41% respectively.

For Uganda, a reduction in customs duties was listed among the critical challenges faced by the Uganda Revenue Authority with declines of 42% recorded in April compared to March. Malaba, Busia and Entebbe recorded declined duties of 43%, 36% and 21% respectively.

Both countries have however put in place measures to respond to the COVID-19. In Rwanda for example, a dry port has been established near the border that operates 24/7. It is extended to all customs services to facilitate faster clearance of essential and relief goods at the first point of entry in an effort to contain the spread of the pandemic.

The country has also intensified the use of online services available in the Rwanda Electronic Single Window System through



Regional States Show Remarkable Resilience to Covid-19, Defying Earlier Predictions

At the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was predicted that most of the health systems in Africa, and in COMESA region would be overwhelmed by unprecedented spread of the virus. Anecdotal evidence based on country specific interventions however indicates that countries in the region have demonstrated remarkable resilience defying earlier predictions.

According to an analysis conducted by Governance, Peace and Security Unit at the COMESA Secretariat, stringent measures that regional States put in place including mandatory quarantine, curfews, closure of social and entertainment venues, closure of schools, encouragement of basic hygiene measures among other interventions played a big role in containing a surge.

"For the COMESA region with relatively weak health systems characterised by inadequate health personnel, inadequate equipment, inadequate budgets and a high burden of infectious diseases (such as Malaria, TB, HIV, Ebola), it was expected that the continued spread of the virus would overburden the health systems in the region," the report says.

According to the analysis, reforms in the health

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sector, whereby governments have made policy commitments to implement Universal Health Care (UHC), have also worked well towards forestalling the earlier predicted surge. The UHC is premised on the idea that every citizen should receive health services they need without financial burden.

COMWARN regional data indicates that most governments in the region have introduced health reforms that have led to improvements in health services. For example, Tunisia, Seychelles, Rwanda, Mauritius and Egypt have already rolled the UHC programme with positive impacts on reduction in mortality rates, improved life expectancy and public health

expenditure.

The report notes that majority of the regional States have strived to allocate 15% of public expenditure to the health sector and with the continued spread of the Coronavirus, this has triggered more financial investments in the sector.

"Countries in the region have increased health funding to deal with the emergencies associated with the spread of the Covid-19," the GPS report states. "Extra budget allocations have been provided by governments to enhance for instance surveillance, purchase of medical supplies, construction of isolation centres, recruitment of more health personnel among others."

Notwithstanding, countries in the region have registered important milestones in the improvement of healthcare, since the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 and the launch of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 as part of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

Reforms in the health sector have further led to improvement in life expectancy from an average of 61.60 years in 2010 to 66.07 years in 2018. In the context of the COMESA Early Warning System's (COMWARN's) Structural Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) model, life expectancy is the number of years a new-born infant would live if prevailing patterns of mortality at the time of its birth were to stay the same throughout its life.

By 2017, Libya, Tunisia, Mauritius, and Seychelles had reduced child mortality to 1.4%, the lowest in the region. Other countries that have made tremendous progress are Egypt 2.3% Madagascar 4.2%, Kenya 4.5%, Uganda 5.2% and Comoros 6.9%.

The GPS analysis was based on four World Health Organization health delivery framework, which covers service delivery, health workforce, access to essential equipment and medication and adequate resources/finance. This framework is in tandem with the COMWARN's SVA model that seeks to support long term vulnerability of member states towards sustained peace and prosperity by identifying projected vulnerabilities in respective countries.

Full Report on:
https://www.comesa.int/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/COVID-19-Potential-Impact-on-the-Health-Sector_final.pdf

COMESA Congratulates President -Elect of Burundi

COMESA has congratulated the Burundi President -elect Gen. Evariste Ndayishimiye (in picture), following his election and subsequent affirmation by the Constitutional Court. In a message delivered last week, COMESA Secretary General Chileshe Kapwepwe commended the efforts made by the Government of Burundi to hold the elections within the constitutional time frame.

"I also wish to congratulate the Government of Burundi for funding the elections from its own resources, which is a best practice for our region," she said in the statement also issued on behalf of the Chair of the COMESA Authority President Andry Rajoelina of Madagascar. She added: "We are aware that the just concluded election marks a very important phase in the history of Burundi in reaffirming the consolidation of democracy since the signing of the Arusha Accord in 2005,"

Burundi is an active member of COMESA and has continued to support the regional integration programmes.

The SG concluded: "We look forward to enhanced collaboration and partnership with Burundi as we continue to implement various programmes aimed at deepening the integration of our region."



Business Council's to Support Regional Production



Voice of the Private Sector in the Region

BUILDING REGIONAL GOING GLOBAL

In light of the various disruptions to business and supply chains across the region due to COVID-19, the COMESA Business Council has committed to support regional production and trade of essential supplies such as masks and sanitizers and to address the challenges regarding air cargo logistics within the region.

According to CBC Chairperson, Mr. Marday Venkatasamy, local production capacity should be enhanced as Africa can be an alternative source market for essential medical supplies. He cited the production of masks within COMESA countries as sufficient to meet the regional demand. Subsequently, the CBC has recommended for the development of a regional database of suppliers of essential products and medical supplies to address the gaps within the countries.

Mr. Venkatasamy was speaking during the 14th meeting of the CBC Board of Directors recently, whose agenda was to review the performance of the Council including the current challenges that the regional business community was facing as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Board welcomed the development of harmonized guidelines adopted by COMESA Council of Ministers last month, which have reinforced the CBC's regional Business Position Statement issued earlier. Among key recommendations of the Board was the implementation of instant border measures inquiry and reporting and monitoring platform. This will consist of border coordination platform that supports notification and resolution of impediments in light of the increase in challenges at the border.

Affirming the CBC position, COMESA Secretary General, Chileshe Kapwepwe, is an

ex-official member of the Board, underscored the need for harmonized approaches towards addressing the Covid-19 response measures in place to address the border corridor impediments.

She said under the coordination of the African Union, COMESA and other regional economic communities are consolidating efforts to facilitate increased production capacity and trade of pharmaceutical products and essential supplies within the region. She emphasized the importance of increased information-sharing in order to promote business linkages and regional sourcing of essential supplies in COMESA.

During the meeting, key issues on the CBC policy agenda were discussed including the reports on: Promoting Agro-Industry Supply Chains along the Transport Corridors of Eastern and Southern; the Business Trader Observer (BTO): An Annual Survey of Business Impediments Along Trade and Transport Corridors in COMESA; the Regional Code on Anti-Corruption Compliance for Enterprises; and the Digital Financial Inclusion- Business Case report on a regional digital common payments scheme for MSMEs.

CBC Chief Executive Officer Ms. Sandra Uwera said the CBC will support training programs on the implementation of the Regional Code on Anti-Corruption Compliance for Enterprises to empower the Associations on compliance. The Code was developed to inform national anti-corruption compliance policies within the operations of enterprises and associations.

The meeting was attended by Presidents and CEOs of national apex private sector Associations and Chambers of Commerce from the COMESA region.

Rwanda, Uganda Record Reduced Trade.....



engagement with stakeholders both private and public (Clearing and forwarding Association, importers, exporters, warehouse operators and the general public to facilitate clearance of essential goods).

The country has also introduced flexible terms of payment for duties and taxes for essential goods by granting instalment facility.

In Uganda, the government has also introduced measures to facilitate the movement of goods, transport, persons and services. Some of the strategies include testing of drivers prior to transiting through Uganda and using online engagement with clients.

This report is part of a series that provides initial results on tracking trade flows in the COMESA region to demonstrate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on trade.



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