



Climate Change Conference Kicks Off in Dar es Salaam

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Some of the worlds leading experts on Climate Change have joined the countrys decision makers and opinion leaders gathered today in Tanzanias business capital to participate in a major two-day conference to deliberate on climate resilient economic growth.
Under President Kikwetes leadership, Tanzania has been playing a leading role globally in defining the regional climate change agenda, and the country has recently consolidated its position with the 2013 adoption of the National Climate Change Strategy and the Zanzibar Climate Change Strategy in addition to other key interventions such as the 2014 Agriculture Climate Resilience Plan.
Coming on the heels of the New York Climate Summit in September and just prior to the next round of global climate negotiations, which will be held in Lima this December, the goal of the Dar es Salaam conference is to fast-track action on climate change here at home at all levels of society. The conference has attracted more than 140 participants including key decision makers, thought leaders, and innovators from around the world who will discuss and propose practical actions on what needs to be done to position Tanzanias policies, plans, and investments towards an inclusive, resilient growth trajectory.
This conference is a great opportunity for dialogue on how Tanzanias development pathway can flourish despite the changing climate, says Philippe Dongier, the World Bank Country Director for Tanzania. "It is tempting to imagine that we are located remotely from the climate change phenomenon but this is erroneous. Climate change will affect all Tanzanians - be they in the growing urban areas, where populations are expected to triple by 2030, and climate-related flooding is expected to increase; along the coast, where changing wind and temperature patterns are leading to erosion and marine impacts; or in agricultural areas where rising temperatures will affect crop survival and livelihoods.
The poverty rate in Tanzania is currently estimated at about 28% of the population with the majority of the poor living in rural areas where they are entirely dependent on climate-dependent natural resources. As an example, agriculture, a dominant sector of the economy, generates 25% of GDP and 24% of exports and is the mainstay of 75 - 80% of livelihoods in the country - including the majority of the poor, who are largely smallholder farmers dependent on rainfed agriculture. Climate change is expected to result in changing weather patterns, which could have important impacts on this rainfed agriculture: rainfall decreases of 10% have been correlated with a 2% decrease in national GDP,[1] and temperature rise of 2C could reduce maize yields by 13% and rice by over 7%. [2]
Tanzania has begun to take important actions in addressing the risks associated with climate change. We are proud to be working with the Vice Presidents Office Division of Environment and the UK Department for International Development in supporting this important conference, which highlights the work being done in the country and areas for future action, said Ann Jeannette Glauber, World Bank Senior Environmental Specialist.
The conference was opened by His Excellency Dr. Mohammed Gharib Bilal, the Vice President of the United Republic of Tanzania, with closing remarks by PM Pinda and will feature several special guest speakers.
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[1] Seitz and Nyangena (2009)
[2] Manneh et al (2007)
The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
DC 20433 Washington
USA
Telefon: (202) 473-1000
Telefax: (202) 477-6391
Mail: investigations_hotline@worldbank.org
URL: <http://www.worldbank.org/>


Pressekontakt

The World Bank

DC 20433 Washington

worldbank.org/
investigations_hotline@worldbank.org

Firmenkontakt

The World Bank

DC 20433 Washington

worldbank.org/
investigations_hotline@worldbank.org

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