THE EAST AFRICAN SUSWATCH E-BULLETIN

(FORMERLY *THE LVEMPII CIVIL SOCIETY WATCH E BULLETIN*)

A Monthly from the East African Sustainability Watch Network founded by Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and SusWatch Kenya

How to Embrace a *Decent Work Agenda* alongside Economic Growth in East Africa

Target 8.4: Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and Endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, with developed countries taking the lead

Target 8.5: By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value

The 2030 Agenda calls for integrated and transformative policies to tackle development challenges. The promotion of more and better jobs is a central element that cuts across many of the Sustainable Development Goals with SDG 8 at its core. The Agenda is a commitment to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development by 2030 world-wide, ensuring that no one is left behind. With this Agenda, the global community has recognized that decent work is both a means and an end to achieve sustainable development. Consequently, *the Decent Work Agenda* – an integrated policy framework in and of itself – features prominently across the SDGs and Agenda 2030. SDG 8 will be reviewed in-depth during the forthcoming UN High Level Political Forum in July 2019.

The East African Community with a population of 172 million (2017), like other regional economic blocs, is focused on widening and deepening the integration process among its six member States so as to enhance growth and development. The majority of this population depend on agriculture for all or part of their livelihood. Therefore, fostering sustainable agricultural growth will boost income and improve the living conditions for the population, the majority of whom are poor. However, food security in East Africa has worsened in the past five Years (SDG Center for Africa, 2017).

The *Decent Work Agenda* starts with providing opportunities and options for the above millions in the agriculture, sustainable energy and other sectors. According to the International Labour Organisation, poor communities have a low capacity to cope with sudden climate disasters such as typhoons and hurricanes or the more gradual effects of climate change such as droughts, sea level rise and changing weather patterns. These effects of climate change can cause catastrophic damages to public and private assets, as well as to infrastructure. They can also disrupt business operations, displace workers and negatively impact working conditions, occupational health and safety and labour productivity, while threatening lives, homes and social stability. Adequate social protection systems will be an important component of adaptation to climate change as part of a *Decent Work Agenda*

Access to clean energy is critical for development processes, productive employment, and the eradication of poverty and helping to provide basic human needs. Access to clean and affordable energy (creation of green jobs) is a powerful way to overcome social exclusion, provide new economic opportunity for workers and businesses, and reduce reliance on carbon intensive energy sources (ILO, SDG Note). At present, 1.3 billion people lack access to electricity. Poor households spend a much higher proportion of their income on energy and energy-related goods such as food and are less able to reduce this expenditure when prices rise.

Read more about SDG 8: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg8

East Africa Needs to Integrate Sustainable Transport in its Regional Policies on Climate Change – Global Report

Vehicular pollution: A major challenge to East African Cities (Photo: @KampalaTraffic)

Transport is the third-largest source of CO_2 emissions after the power sector and other industrial combustion. The sector is responsible for 23% of the greenhouse gas emissions and any global attempt at limiting global average temperature rise to less than 2°C without including transport sector will not be successful. In alignment with its missions, the Partnership on Sustainable, Low Carbon Transport (SLoCaT) promotes the integration of sustainable transport in global policies on climate change. Although sustainable transport is not represented by a standalone SDG in the 2030 Agenda, it is mainstreamed in a direct or indirect manner into many of the proposed SDGs, especially those related to food security, health, energy, infrastructure, cities and human settlements, and climate change.

According to SLoCaT, transport services and infrastructure are essential to achieving most, if not all, SDGs. Specifically, transport contributes directly to five targets on road safety (Target 3.6); energy efficiency (Target 7.3); sustainable infrastructure (Target 9.1), urban access (Target 11.2), and fossil fuel subsidies (Target 12.c) emphasize that sustainable transport is not needed solely for its own sake, but rather is essential to facilitate the achievement of a wide variety of SDGs. Transport also contributes indirectly to seven SDG targets on agricultural productivity (Target 2.3), air pollution (Target 3.9), and access to safe drinking water (Target 6.1), sustainable cities (Target 11.6), and reduction of food loss (Target 12.3), climate change adaptation (Target 13.1), and climate change mitigation (Target 13.2).

According to the *Transport and Climate Change 2018 Global Status Report* prepared by SLoCaT, the rate of emissions from transport is increasing faster than from any other sector. The Report notes that Africa's contribution to global transport demand has historically been low, and remained so relative to other regions in 2017, though rapid growth in demand was seen in some African countries, and latent demand is likely to be significant, especially in the face of rapid urbanization. In 2018, Dar es Salaam and eight other African cities (Accra, Addis Ababa, Cape Town, Dakar, Durban, Johannesburg, Lagos and Tshwane) have committed to cutting carbon emissions to zero by 2050, yet low-carbon transport policy measures in Africa trail other regions (despite a few emerging Bus Rapid transport - BRT systems and freight corridors). 13% of transport climate finance instrument projects are in the region. By the end of 2017, only three regional low carbon transport studies had been completed for Africa, and only six of 54 African countries had completed low carbon estimates for transport. Furthermore, compared with other regions, Africa experienced the second highest growth of absolute transport emissions (84%) between 2000 and 2016, driven primarily by increases in passenger and freight transport activity. Transport emissions in Sub-Saharan Africa increased 75% from 2000 to 2016 to a level of 156 million tonnes (Mt) CO_2, Total transport CO_2 emissions increased in major economies of Africa between 2000 and 2016, including 123% in Kenya, 73% in Egypt, 40% in South Africa and 19% in Nigeria.

In in mitigation measures, such as managing transport demand, implementing urban rail systems, Africa trailed other regions in 2017. It has only 353 km of BRT, light-rail transit (LRT), and metro across the continent, summing to only 1.5 km per million urban residents (cities over 500,000 population). 70% of this was built since 2007. 'Shift' measures included BRT systems emerging in several African cities in recent years, including Dar es Salaam, Cape Town and Johannesburg, as an option to increase capacity in urban public transport, with Dar es Salaam carrying 160,000 passengers daily in 2017. In 2017, Kenya opened a 480 km-long rail line connecting Nairobi to Mombasa. In 2016, Marrakech became the first African city with a bikesharing system, and in 2017, El Gouna, Egypt launched Africa's first electric bike (e-bike) share system. In 2017 Mobike and UN Environment announced plans for a dock less bike sharing system in Nairobi, which was launched in May 2018. In East Africa, the Northern Corridor Master Plan was launched in 2017 to improve logistics and ease cargo congestion in East Africa, by connecting the port of Mombasa in Kenya, to landlocked Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and D.R. Congo.

Read the full *Transport and Climate Change 2018 Global Status Report*: https://tinyurl.com/y78dx4ha

Current Man-Made Loss & Decline of Biodiversity Undermines Human Well-Being in Africa – Report

Colorful Bird @ Serengeti N/Park- Tanzania. Photo: Serengeti N/Park FaceBook

More than 62 per cent of the Africa population depend directly on these services in rural areas, while the urban and peri-urban population supplement their incomes, as well as their energy, medicine and other essentials, from ecosystem based resources. Tangible and intangible assets such as food, water, medicinal plants, sacred rituals, as well as religious and cultural spaces, underpin nature's contributions to the economy and are central to a multitude of other livelihood strategies. Nature's contributions to people are generally of immense benefit to the inhabitants of the continent and others across the globe, although their impact may occasionally be detrimental, as in cases of diseases, and where there is conflict over their uses.

Biodiversity and ecosystems underpin many national and global economic activities, including those related to agriculture, forestry, fisheries and aquaculture, energy, tourism, transport and trade. Biodiversity conservation and sustainable use can lead to higher productivity, more efficient resource use, and long-term viability of resources (CBD Policy brief).

A Regional Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Africa produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) provides a critical analysis of the state of knowledge regarding the importance, status, and trends of biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.

The assessment analyses the direct and underlying causes for the observed changes in biodiversity and in nature's contributions to people, and the impact that these changes have on the quality of life of people. The assessment, finally, identifies a mix of governance options, policies and management practices that are currently available to reduce the loss of biodiversity and of nature's contributions to people in that region.

The assessment also addresses terrestrial, freshwater, and coastal biodiversity and covers current status and trends, going back in time several decades, and future projections, with a focus on the 2020-2050 period.

On a sad note, the Assessment notes that the current loss and decline of biodiversity, which is due to human activities, is reducing nature's contributions to people, and undermining human well-being. Unregulated land cover change for instance, habitat change and over-exploitation, has been the primary cause of biodiversity loss to date, but given Africa's extreme vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, is likely to be a dominant driver of change in the future. The likely doubling of Africa's population by 2050, coupled with rapid urbanization, will place tremendous additional pressure on the continent's biodiversity and nature's contributions to people.

The Assessment notes that many African countries are implementing their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) and are making some progress in meeting the Aichi Biodiversity Targets (a set of 20 global targets under the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020), but that progress in many of these actions is insufficient.

In conclusion the Assessment notes that biodiversity and nature's contributions in Africa are economically, socially and culturally important, essential in providing the continent's food, water, energy, health and secure livelihood, and represent a strategic asset for sustainable development and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Assessment identifies a range of possible options for more effective multi-stakeholder and multi-level adaptive governance, recognizing the value of local and indigenous knowledge.

Read the Report: Regional assessment report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services for Africa (Summary for Policy Makers) from: https://tinyurl.com/yycareb6