



WASCAL climate news

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF WASCAL

WASCAL Alumni Converge in Accra. PAGE 6



IN THIS ISSUE

WASCAL Supports the Scientific Pillar of the Alliance Sahel 5

WASCAL Alumni Converge in Accra 6

Project Retrograde — Imagine Earth Rotated in the Opposite Direction 7

The Federal Government of Germany has Set Aside 230,000 Euros for Renewable Energy Development in Ghana 8

Estimating Farmers' willingness to Pay for Weather Index-Based Crop Insurance Uptake in West Africa: Insight From a Pilot Initiative in Southwestern Burkina Faso 10

Impacts of Climate Change 10



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CHALLENGE TO ALL WASCAL ALUMNI

Just as every father is always excited to see their children grow to pursue excellence, so is WASCAL filled with joy on remarkable occasions where all the hundreds of students it had churned out gather at one place for experience sharing, reminisce good old day, and build strong networking systems while telling the success stories of their relationship with WASCAL. That was the essence of the just ended Alumni Homecoming. It is also important to note that at WASCAL, we are committed to providing information and knowledge services at the local, national and regional levels to its West African member countries to cope with the adverse impacts of climate change. We do this through Capacity Building support to young West African Scholars in fields of natural and social sciences and by strengthening West African universities and climate service departments in member countries.

While expressing our indebtedness to the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Germany (BMBF) for making this dream a reality, I would also like to thank all those who have been directly involved in the success story of WASCAL's agenda.

I would now like to take time to challenge all WASCAL alumni. The German Government has done its part by creating the platform for all to be able to play very critical roles in combatting climate change in West Africa. Continue to maximize the opportunities created for you. I also take time to implore you all to influence your societies, impact your communities, and make the most of the knowledge acquired to effect positive change in West Africa. As you are fully aware, West Africa has been unbridled by several challenges, of which climate change plays key role.

Your countries are waiting for you. ECOWAS, your first Universities, academia and entire West Africa is counting on your manifestation to address the critical climate change issues in West Africa. The time is now for you to go out there and make it happen.

I also implore you all to deepen relationships amongst yourselves, and also build strong ties with other colleagues for the purposes of networking, ideas sharing and opportunities.



Dr. Moumini Savadogo Executive Director, WASCAL

“CLIMATE CHANGE HAS GAINED GLOBAL ATTENTION - Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy to Ghana”



Mr. Hans-Helge Sander, the Deputy Head of Mission, German Embassy, Accra, has indicated that issues of Climate Change has gained much global attention. He cited examples to the current heat waves being experienced in Germany and forest fires in the USA. He, therefore, called for urgent interventions to effectively address the challenges.

Mr. Sander was speaking at the WASCAL Alumni Homecoming held in Accra. He affirmed Germany's commitment towards ensuring the development of the necessary data and techniques, to inform policy decisions and ensure that Climate Change did not become a stumbling block to development in West Africa as they had already introduced adaptation and mitigation measures for climate change risks into policies and strategies of countries so they adapt as they developed.

“That is why we need to raise issues of climate change high on the political agenda to a level that politicians could make informed decisions based on good data that WASCAL had over the last six years developed,” Mr Sander emphasized.

WASCAL LOSES FORMER BOARD CHAIR

The Board and management of WASCAL regret to announce the passing away of its former board chair, Professor Modibo Haïdara. The sad incident occurred on Sunday 26th August 2018, in Frankfurt, Germany. Until his demise, Prof Haïdara was a member of the governing board after serving as the first board chair of WASCAL. He was the chairman of the WASCAL Fundraising Steering Committee of the Board.

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FUT MINNA COMMITTED TO THE SUSTAINABILITY OF WASCAL- VICE CHANCELLOR OF FUT MINNA, NIGERIA

The Vice Chancellor of the Federal University of Technology, Minna in Nigeria, Professor Abdullahi Bala has expressed his appreciation to the of the investment BMBF continue to make through WASCAL in sponsoring the Masters Programme in Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (CCALU).

Professor Bala said this when the Executive Director of WASCAL, Dr. Moumini Savadogo paid a courtesy call on him to deepen the bilateral relationship between WASCAL and the University. He expressed his gratitude to WASCAL for the upgrade to a doctoral programme.



He also indicated the commitment of the university towards the sustainability of WASCAL.

He further congratulated WASCAL for the quality of graduates it has churned out.

Dr. Moumini Savadogo on his part expressed his delight at the high standards set by the university. He announced the upgrading of the Master's programme to a doctoral programme when the next batch of students are enrolled. He called on the university to have even deepen the bilateral relationship between the two institutions.



WASCAL SUPPORTS THE SCIENTIFIC PILLAR OF THE ALLIANCE SAHEL



The Executive Director of WASCAL, Dr. Moumini Savadogo has co-signed the declaration of Ouagadougou to build the foundation of the scientific pillar of the Alliance Sahel.

The groundbreaking event was held together with 11 other scientific organizations active in the Sahel region. The declaration contained eight Research Priority Areas proposed as follows:

The declaration seeks to support territorial development through foresight analyzes, strengthening local participatory approaches, developing action frameworks in favor of inclusive innovation while building ecological intensification of all sectors through agro-ecological management of crop systems, agriculture-livestock integration, reduction of post-harvest losses, development of food processing and markets.

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WASCAL ALUMNI CONVERGE IN ACCRA



Over 50 trained West African Climate Change alumni from WASCAL's Graduate Studies Programme in ten West African lead Universities converged in Accra, for the maiden Alumni network and homecoming conference which was organized towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in West Africa.

The participants formed part of the 195 trained graduates under the WASCAL's Graduate Studies Programme (GSP).

The two-day conference was used to share knowledge, build partnerships, and ensure participation in fund raising, quality assurance, capacity building and scaling up their Climate Change adaptation solutions in a bankable way.

“West Africa is counting on your manifestation to address the critical climate change issues in the Region,” he said.

The conference was under the theme: “Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in West Africa: The Footprints of WASCAL.” It also emphasized paths taken by the organization to ensure Climate Change adaptation and mitigation strategies in the Region.

Dr Moumini Savadogo, the Executive Director, WASCAL, thanked the German government who through its Federal Ministry of Higher Education

and Research (BMBF) had provided 50 million Euros, to support capacity development, and other key interventions towards achieving the SDGs.

This, he said, had created the platform for the scientists and researchers to play critical roles in combating climate change in West Africa and urged the beneficiaries to continue to maximise the opportunities created for them, to influence their societies, impact their communities, and make the most of the knowledge acquired to effect positive change in the Region.

“As you are fully aware, West Africa has been unbridled by several challenges, of which climate change plays a very key role. Your countries are waiting for you. “West Africa is counting on your manifestation to address the critical climate change issues in the Region,” he said.

Dr Savadogo implored members of the Alumni to deepen the relationship that existed among them, and build strong ties with other colleagues for the purposes of networking, idea sharing and opportunities.



PROJECT RETROGRADE — IMAGINE EARTH ROTATED IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION

The rotation of Earth shapes our climate system in various ways: It controls the major wind directions, lets the weather systems swirl, and, together with the topography, it creates strong ocean currents. Many other features of the climate system, like the monsoon systems and the meridional overturning circulation in the ocean arise from complex interactions within the climate system, and their exact dependency on the topography is hard to pinpoint.

To further improve our fundamental understanding of the effects of the topography and rotation on the climate, a team of scientists performed and analyzed simulations with the Max Planck Institute Earth System Model (MPI-ESM), in which the rotation of Earth is reversed (retrograde). This reversal equals the creation of a mirror-image of the topography. The reversal conserves all major properties like the sizes of continents and ocean basins while creating vastly different conditions for the interactions between topography, weather systems and ocean currents.

[Read more](#)



STUDENTS & ALUMNI VOICES

Dr. Martial Amou

Thanks to WASCAL, I am now a Ph.D. Research Scholar of Climate Change Lab, Institute of Environment and Sustainable Development in Agriculture (IEDA) of Chinese Academy of Agricultural Sciences (CAAS).



Mawulolo Yomo

Thanks to WASCAL Research program on Climate Change and Human Security at the Université de Lomé - Togo, I am currently taking a Masters in water policy at the Pan African University Institute on Water and Energy sciences (PAUWES), Algeria.



ESTIMATING FARMERS' WILLINGNESS TO PAY FOR WEATHER INDEX-BASED CROP INSURANCE UPTAKE IN WEST AFRICA: INSIGHT FROM A PILOT INITIATIVE IN SOUTHWESTERN BURKINA FASO



William M. Fonta, Safietou Sanfo, Abbi M. Kedir, and Djiby R. Thiam

Weather index-based crop insurance is increasingly becoming important as a risk mitigation strategy that farmers may use to mitigate adverse climate shocks and natural

disasters encountered during farming. While Europe, North America, and Asia account for 20.1%, 55%, and 19.5% of the total agricultural insurance premium worldwide, respectively, Africa accounts for only 0.5% of the world insurance industry.

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IMPACTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Ulrich Jacques DIASSO

ABSTRACT

Drought is a threat to food security and water availability in West Africa. As part of efforts to improve drought early warning systems, this study investigates the characteristics of West African droughts, evaluates the ability of CORDEX regional climate models to simulate the droughts and examines the impacts of future climate change (2031-2060, under the scenario RCP45) and reforestation on the characteristics of droughts. The Standardized Potential Evapotranspiration Index (SPEI) was used to define drought occurrence.

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CAN SOCIAL CAPITAL INFLUENCE SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' CLIMATE-CHANGE ADAPTATION DECISIONS? EVIDENCE FROM THREE SEMI-ARID COMMUNITIES IN BURKINA FASO, WEST AFRICA



Thomas B. Yaméogo, William M. Fonta, and Tobias Wünscher

Abstract

This study examines the influence of farmers' social capital on their decisions to deal with climate change and climate variability in Burkina Faso. The study is based on a household survey conducted among 450 households, randomly selected from three communities in Burkina Faso. Two indexes were constructed to capture farmers' structural and cognitive social capital; and using generalized Poisson regression (GPR) and a multivariate probit model, the study probes the effect of farmers' social capital on their choice of adaptation alternatives, the number of adaptation practices used, and the extent to which adaptation measures were applied.

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UPCOMING EVENT

BMBF-Sponsored Seminar on Climate Change & Renewable Energy
Climate Change & Land Use
Date: 12th-15th November 2018 . Kairaba Beach Hotel, The Gambia