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EUROCLIMA: Science and policy jointly fighting Climate Change

*By Euroclima**

EUROCLIMA, a regional EU programme funded from the Development Cooperation Instrument (DCI) facilitates the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and measures into Latin American public development policies and plans.

The programme is the result of dialogue between the governments in the two regions during the 2008 EU-LAC Summit in Lima. The Brussels Declaration following the latest EU-CELAC summit in June 2015 reiterates its support for climate change and environmental issues: *"We have continued to strengthen our bi-regional cooperation on environmental and climate change-related challenges, through among others, the EUROCLIMA programme..."*. Implemented since 2010, the Programme will end in December 2016.

How is EUROCLIMA implemented?

National Focal Points designated by Latin American governments facilitate and guide the implementation of the programme in their countries. The Unit for Regional Operations Continental Latin America and Caribbean of the European Commission's Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development is responsible for the overall management of the Programme with support from Technical Assistance. The United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and Caribbean (UN-ECLAC) provides countries with proposals for public policies to address the socio-economic problems caused by climate change. The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) reinforces the agricultural sector's resilience to climate change and mitigate its effects. The European Commission's Joint Research Centre (JRC) provides governments and scientists in the region with computerized modelling on agricultural systems and land degradation, desertification and drought. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) supports high-level policy dialogue, partly through the regional parliament, PARLATINO, and promotes national climate change debate and legislation.

Key achievements

In the 2010-2015 period, EUROCLIMA published **more than 40 studies** of interest to the region on matters such as green tax policy, adaptation and mitigation strategies in the rural and urban environment, mitigation and adaptation measures with additional benefits, a Soil Atlas for Latin America and the Caribbean, and compendiums of climate legislation in the region. Patricia Velazco, of the Ministry of the Environment in



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Ecuador, commented: *"EUROCLIMA provides an opportunity to ensure that studies carried out with a regional perspective result in recommendations for programmes at a local level. They serve to strengthen decision-making in our specific national context."*

Until October 2015, 42 seminars and workshops were organized at a regional level, allowing the exchange of best practices, learning and training in various areas linked to climate change. *"EUROCLIMA strengthens South-South cooperation, providing a platform for discovering and exchanging experience from other Latin American countries. At the same time, the Programme provides us with tools and knowledge that are not easily available in any other way,"* explained William Alpizar, Director for Climate Change at the Costa Rican Ministry of Environment and Energy.

Around 2,000 people have been trained in on-site and online courses, forums and webinars run by EUROCLIMA. One example is a tool to allow municipal planning for adaptation to climate change, which has been promoted in municipalities in Chile, Argentina and Uruguay, and is being extended across the region.

And after COP21?

EUROCLIMA will continue in its last year to support the countries of Latin America within the framework of the Paris Agreement. Technical Assistance of EUROCLIMA will continue with the process of supporting the 18 countries participating in the Programme to draw up bankable proposals to apply mitigating and/or adaptation "no-regret" measures or with co-benefits. Within this framework, capacity building activities, promotion of inter-ministerial coordination, participation of multiple stakeholders and the promotion of South-South cooperation, will also serve as experiences to facilitate implementation of the INDCs.

UNEP plans to carry out three studies focused on relevant policies for implementing the Paris Agreement in the region, based on the countries' requests following the conclusion of the COP21. In addition support will be given to various countries for formulating climate change legislation and the work with PARLATINO on promoting the adoption of initiatives to tackle climate change will continue.

JRC and IICA will promote innovation for adaptation and mitigation in agriculture and soil management. Both will also provide the countries of Latin America with models that will allow the development of more appropriate crop varieties according to the expected changes in climate.



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CEPAL will focus on studies on green tax policy, low-carbon growth, the economy of climate change, and the effects of global warming on employment, income and national economies. In addition, technical assistance to the governments of Latin America through specific studies, training and consultations will continue to be provided.

Preparations have commenced in 2015 for a new EU programme in support of initiatives to mitigate and to adapt to climate change in Latin America. It is foreseen that the funding decision for this new programme will be taken in early 2016.

***EUROCLIMA** is a regional cooperation programme between the European Union and Latin America, focused on climate change. The Programme's objective is to facilitate the integration of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and measures into Latin American public development policies and plans. Through its actions, the Programme aims contribute to poverty reduction of the Latin American population by reducing their environmental and social vulnerability to climate change and reinforce resilience of the Latin American region to climate change and promote opportunities for green growth.

EUROCLIMA is implemented by five partners: Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Joint Research Centre of the European Commission (JRC), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and EuropeAid (European Commission's DG Development and Cooperation) supported by the Technical Assistance.

This paper was prepared for the EU-LAC Foundation's Newsletter of December 2015 on the theme "Climate Change". This article gives the views of the author, and not the position of the EU-LAC Foundation.