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Leading academic and research institutions form global network to accelerate climate action

A partnership to better connect the research and decision-making communities and provide decision-makers with timely, relevant, and useful information for effective climate action.

Marrakech, Thursday, November 17, 2016 - A consortium of leading academic and research institutions today joined forces to form Research for Climate Action (RCA), an international network connecting world-class research and analytical capabilities with key decision-makers in efforts to inform and spur action on climate change.

The coalition was announced at the 22nd session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), where the global community is working to develop next steps in the path to implementing the Paris Agreement and achieving Sustainable Development Goals.

“There is unprecedented demand from decision-makers for robust technical and analytical input to guide action on climate change,” said Dr. Robert Orr, dean of the School of Public Policy at the University of Maryland and special advisor to the UN secretary-general on climate change. “RCA will help bridge the gap between knowledge and decision-making processes by harnessing the power of networks and information sharing among leading research institutions and global policy leaders.”

RCA brings together institutions actively engaged in advancing the research of climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, and connects them with decision-makers seeking to develop analytical expertise. “The United Arab Emirates is proud to support the Research for Climate Action initiative,” His Excellency Dr. Thani Al Zeyoudi, UAE minister of climate change and environment, said. “This global network aligns with the objectives of the forthcoming UAE National Climate Change Plan and will help to strengthen our policies and actions through greater information gathering/collection and data analysis.”

Lord Nicholas Stern, IG Patel professor of economics and government, chairman of the Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment, and head of the India Observatory at the London School of Economics, emphasized that, “RCA’s focus on the demand side of the policy equation is both needed and timely. By directly offering decision-makers ideas for tailored products they should seek from the climate research community, this initiative will ensure a strong supply of cutting-edge climate knowledge which can translate effectively into ambitious action.”

Reflecting on her experiences as both a practitioner and academic, high-level climate champion Dr. Laurence Tubiana noted the important role that the research community has in supporting action: “Academic and research institutions need to acquire the capacity to provide strong analysis to inform action, and to share this with the wider community, including governments, the private sector, and civil society. Networks like Research for Climate Action will play an essential role in implementing the Paris Agreement.”



Dr. Ajay Mathur, director of The Energy Research Institute (TERI) in India, echoed the importance of knowledge sharing. “The implementation of the Paris Agreement and related SDGs requires multiple policy actions at different levels, and in different sectors. RCA would provide cross-country learning to these policy actions, as well as a robust relationship with local development goals.”

The need for better partnerships between research institutions worldwide was observed by Dr. Xue Lan, dean of the School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University. “We are excited that this initiative is launching just as the implementation of the Paris Agreement starts. Tackling climate change is knowledge-intensive, and collaboration among researchers in different countries is much needed.” This sentiment was similarly reflected by Dr. Daniel Kammen, director of the Renewable and Appropriate Energy Laboratory at the University of California, Berkeley. “The Research for Climate Action network is precisely what we need to meet our sustainability challenge: innovation, competition, and partnership on the road to a transformed, inclusive, and equitable energy and water system.”

Dr. Harald Winkler, director of the Energy Research Centre at the University of Cape Town, captured the importance of RCA moving forward. “The focus on implementation of adaptation and mitigation actions, together with the required finance and technology, is an urgent priority, now that the Paris Agreement has entered into force. The RCA network is an exciting initiative to provide rigorous research on implementation and adaptive management.”

RCA brings together academic and research institutions that are actively engaged in advancing the research and practice of mitigation, adaptation, and resilience, and those seeking to develop analytical expertise in support of decision-makers. RCA partners reflect the commitment to being a global network addressing global challenges, with current engagement from research units in:

- *Blavatnik School of Government, University of Oxford*
- *Energy Research Centre, University of Cape Town*
- *The Energy and Resources Institute (India)*
- *Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), Alberto Luiz Coimbra Institute of Graduate Studies and Research in Engineering (COPPE)*
- *Grantham Research Institute for Climate Change and the Environment, London School of Economics*
- *Institute for the Study of International Development at McGill University*
- *International Center for Climate Change and Development (Bangladesh)*
- *International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (Austria)*
- *Peking University, National School of Development*
- *Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research*
- *Pontifical Catholic University of Chile*



- *Regional Centre for Climate Change and Decision Making (an initiative of UNESCO and AVINA)*
- *School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University*
- *Tufts University Center for International Environment and Resource Policy*
- *University of California at Berkeley, Renewable & Appropriate Energy Laboratory*
- *Institute for Environment and Sanitation Studies, University of Ghana*
- *University of Maryland Center for Global Sustainability*
- *University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and the Environment*
- *University of São Paulo*
- *Yale University Center for Green Chemistry and Engineering*

RCA will work to identify high-priority areas for analytical support and leverage the capacity and capabilities of partners in meeting these needs. The rollout of projects is planned to begin in 2017.

For more information: www.researchforclimateaction.org

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