

## UN-backed gathering aims to identify climate change adaptation actions



Climate change threatens Africa

11 October 2010 – Hundreds of people have gathered at a United Nations-backed meeting in Addis Ababa to identify actions that will promote sustainable development in Africa in the face of climate change.

The five-day gathering, which kicked off in the Ethiopian capital yesterday, will focus on strategies to adapt to global warming.

Africa contributes less than 4 per cent of total global greenhouse gas emissions, but the continent's countries are among the most vulnerable to climate change in the world, according to Josue Dione, Director of the Food Security and Sustainable Development Division of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (**ECA**).

He pointed to Gambia, whose Government has spent millions of dollars in recent years to build back beaches that had been washed away to support the country's tourism industry.

"Today, the sea has fought back, repossessing the reclaimed land and the sea is now a few metres away from many hotels," Mr. Dione noted.

According to the Nobel Peace Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (**IPCC**), one quarter of Africa's population lives within 100 kilometres of the coast. Most of the continent's cities are along coasts, making them vulnerable to sea level rise, coastal erosion and extreme weather events.

"Africans will not wait for the next Conference of Parties [to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**)] before taking action," Mr. Dione stressed.

The next Conference of Parties is set to kick off later next month in Cancún, Mexico.

The forum under way in Addis Ababa has been organized by ECA, the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the African Union Commission (AUC).

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