

ENERGY-CLIMATE: 2 INTERRELATED STRATEGIC ISSUES

Summary

On the eve of COP23 in Bonn, the Royal Institute for Strategic Studies (IRES) continued its work on the "energy/climate" strategic issues. This subject, that concerned the international community, deserves more in-depth consideration all over Africa. Morocco has realized the importance of the energy and climate issue, through the renewable energy development program and the national strategy for sustainable development.

The anthropogenic dimension of current climate change is no longer in debate. Human-caused greenhouse gases are a major contributor to global warming, most notably carbon dioxide (CO₂) from burning fossil fuels and methane (CH₄).

Moreover, humanity currently consumes in one year more than 1.5 times the supply of biocapacity over the same period. Carbon, which is derived from the consumption of fossil fuels, is the main component of our ecological footprint (60%).

Nearly 2.8 planets will be needed by 2050 in order to meet the growing demand for global resources. Ecological and carbon footprints will increase in the future due to: the sharp rise in the world's population, the expansion of the global middle class, unsustainable development models, which until recently, were perceived of as exclusive growth models, the rapid pace at which emerging countries are catching up as well as strong growth in international trade, which has enabled countries with ecological deficits to import the energy and natural resources they need.

Climate change is undoubtedly the greatest threat ever to the future of humanity. It is combined with a major degradation of the planet as a whole, given the sheer scope of the global ecological footprint, thus jeopardizing the very survival of the human species on this planet.

An integrated approach to climate change and ecological footprint is the only way to provide substantive answers to current issues and to address the scale of ongoing transformations. New economic models, which are both profitable and focused on preserving the legacy of future generations, must be adopted.

Restoring the biosphere's balance will not be possible without the rise of a new mindset, in radical break with the predatory posture of humans in relation to the environment. Our whole relationship with nature needs to be rethought, to achieve a better, healthier and more equitable world.

The twenty-first century will be a crucial period during which, at worst, the survival of humankind could be devised and, at best, its model of development could be determined, hence the imperative need to :

- Implement proactive anticipatory strategies that would make it possible to evolve from a society that consumes fossil fuels to a more energy-efficient society, for the sake of climate stability,
- Deploy adaptation policies in the interest of political and social stability, particularly in developing countries
- Pay special attention to the issue of oceans that play a climate-regulating role and are threatened by mass extinction.

Africa is the continent most threatened by climate change, although it did not much contribute to it. The challenge for Africa is more one of adaptation to climate change than mitigation.

Africa's ecological footprint has exceeded its biocapacity, while its carbon contribution is very low (30%). Its development needs are considerable and a very high proportion of Africans to this day do not have access to power.

As the significant potential of renewable energies is only marginally tapped in Africa, its mobilization would make it possible to both secure the continent's energy needs for development purposes and meet the requirements of environmental preservation.

Climate change has multiple effects on Morocco, including increasing aridity. Although Morocco is a small emitter of greenhouse gases, it is strongly committed to the development of renewable energies, which currently account for nearly 5% of its national energy mix and whose share will reach 14.2% by 2025.

The Kingdom of Morocco aims to increase the share of renewable energies to 42% by 2020, and to 52% by 2030.

In terms of adaptation policies, the ongoing efforts include the integration of climate change into the Green Morocco Plan, the preservation of forests, biodiversity and the fight against desertification, coastal protection through the integrated management of coastal areas and their adaptation to rising sea levels as well as the protection of oases. The National Sustainable Development Strategy has recently been implemented.

During COP21, Morocco pledged to "reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 32% by 2030, compared to projected emissions for the same year under a "business as usual" scenario. This commitment, embodied, inter alia, by the launch of an energy efficiency policy will, however, only be fulfilled if Morocco has access to new sources of funding and additional support, as compared to what was received in recent years, within the framework of a new binding agreement under the auspices of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.