SWITCH Africa Green brought together about 80 stakeholders from six African countries for a Regional Policy Dialogue meeting in Accra, Ghana on 23-24 March 2017. The objective of the dialogue was to create a common understanding of policy landscape to enable countries strengthen their institutions with appropriate tools and legal instruments for green business development in the four priority sectors of SWITCH Africa Green – Agriculture, Integrated Waste Management, Manufacturing and Tourism.

The second day of the forum saw each country select its policy priorities and develop action plans, outlining the roadmap to be taken and the next steps for the policy interventions and implementation. This was a continuation of Session 3 from Day 1. The documents developed shall be used as a guide for the implementation phase. Each country selected sectoral priorities spanning the four main priority sectors: Agriculture, Integrated Waste Management, Manufacturing and Tourism. Participants were guided on how to prioritize policy interventions, define indicators and timelines that will be used to measure progress of policy implementation.
Following the session on policy priorities and action plan policy, there was a high level session on regional priorities (Session 4) moderated by Dr. Jenitha Badul, Senior Policy Advisor, Department of Environmental Affair, South Africa. Panelists for this session were Mr. Yao Bernand Koffi (Head of Environment Division, Economic Community of West African States – ECOWAS), Mr. Abebe Haile-Gabriel (Deputy Regional Representative for Africa, Food and Agricultural Organization – FAO) and Mr. Frank Turyatunga (Deputy Regional Director Africa Office, UN Environment). On behalf of ECOWAS, Mr. Koffi stated that the SWITCH Africa Green priority sectors are in line with regional policy needs, noting that there was need to mainstream these priorities to be able to reap benefits and built synergies. He appreciated SWITCH Africa Green’s initiative that is facilitating policy interventions in integrating green economy as a national priority. Mr. Gabriel, on behalf of FAO, spoke about the good prospects and the benefits the region stands to benefit from the implementation of these policies, stating that it will significantly contribute to ending hunger and malnutrition by 2025, one of FAO’s commitments. Mr. Turyatunga, on behalf of UN Environment, reiterated the need for the development of a regional standard on green economy and ensuring that green economy is part of doing business in Africa. There was a general goodwill on promoting this agenda from this session.

The afternoon session was on Financing Green Business Development (Session 5) that focused on the need for adequate funding for transformational impact in green business development in Africa. Representatives from Ecobank, Ghana and the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ghana led the discussions. Both panelists acknowledged the existing challenges to financing green business noting that the cost of credit was very high. Mr. Solomon Tettey, representing Ecobank, stated that they are committed to looking into developing products to meet the needs of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs). So far, trade financing and contract financing were the two main avenues of providing finance for businesses, noting that they were involved in a solar project which aimed at providing energy to 25,000 households including MSMEs. Mr. Kwesi Ofori Antwi on behalf of the Ministry of Trade and Industry, Ghana, reiterated the government’s support to greening businesses by sharing the available avenues for accessing domestic public financing in Ghana, including the Green Climate fund and the National Board for Small Scale Industries (NBSSI).
Mr Dirk Wegener (UN Environment) conducted the last session (Session 6), giving a summary of the discussions and actions to be taken. One of the key actions include the countries validating the action plans during their national networking forums. Participants are required to further fine tune the draft roadmap by consultation with their National Technical Coordination Committee (NTCC). The policy action plans once adopted and validated by the six countries will receive further support and facilitation by SWITCH Africa Green. Steps on how the gain and build on momentum from the policy dialogue was shared with the participants.

**FINALIZING COUNTRY POLICY ACTION PLANS**

- **6 Country action plans by NTCC (drafts)**
  - 23 - 24 March, 2017

- **SAG Secretariat to review and provide feedback**
  - 1st week April 2017

- **Country SAG team to revise the action plan based on feedback received**
  - April 2017

- **Country NTCC validate Action Plan during National Networking Forum**
  - April - June 2017

- **Start Implementation**
  - > June 2017

Illustration showing the next steps after the Regional Policy Dialogue.
About SWITCH Africa Green

The overall objective of SWITCH Africa Green is to support 6 countries in Africa to achieve sustainable development by engaging in transition towards an inclusive green economy, based on sustainable consumption and production patterns, while generating growth, creating decent jobs and reducing poverty. SWITCH Africa Green is developed and funded by the European Commission and implemented by UN Environment in partnership with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS).

For more information, please visit www.switchafricagreen.org or email info@switchafricagreen.org