



## Restitution Side-Event « Innovation 360°: The Crossroads of Reflection and Innovation at the COP 22 » - Blue Zone, Africa Pavilion, November 7th 2016

### Speakers:

- **Hakima El Haite**, Minister Delegate in charge of the Environment of Morocco, High-Level Climate Champion for Morocco
- **Joël Ruet**, Chairman of The Bridge Tank
- **Simon Ngure**, Regulatory Affairs Director, KenGen (Kenya Electricity Generating Company), Member of the Kenyan Delegation at COP22

### Introduction : The spirit of InnovaCOP, a platform relevant for Africa

As Joel Ruet, President of the Bridge Tank, mentioned, InnovaCOP is a « club of innovators », created to promote innovative solutions, with the belief that finance and technology help each other to develop and fasten the solutions, especially in Africa. The speakers of the event represented both the governmental and business sides of the InnovaCOP platform, and gave their multi-faceted perspective on innovation.

This side-event showed that if climate change is an issue for Africa, it is also an opportunity to foster innovation on the continent, for a green transformation.

### Innovation at the heart of accessing clean and viable energy in Africa

Mr. Ngure noticed that the access to clean energy on the ground and in communities is very important. It is crucial to develop the process to meet that need.

In the case of Kenya, geothermal energy is an accessible and clean source of energy that KenGen has managed to exploit. It has allowed them to reduce the cost of energy in Kenya by 30%. To lower the cost of energy, they needed technical innovation. Mr. Ngure believes that it is possible to go to zero-carbon technologies. To reach this goal, **innovative technologies are necessary, and innovation requires sufficient financing**. As a consequence, technological and financial innovation, two main areas of study of InnovaCOP, are deeply interconnected.

Mr. Ngure highlighted that for the first time 30% of their revenues as power generation company and financial inputs are coming in through innovation. « **The role of innovation can't be overstated : innovation works, and it's relevant for Africa**”

Mr. Ngure also addressed the role of policies and governments in the energy field in Africa. Cooperating with politicians and understanding their thinking is key to successfully restructuring the electricity system. This is particularly pertinent in Africa, where politicians are at the heart of economic activity because 97% of the continent's business is facilitated by national governments, compared to only 30% in the United States. As an example, Kenya's economic growth fluctuates from 5% to zero growth each election year.

Mr. Ngure suggests that actors who are proposing policies ensure that the proposals are amenable to the government and are multi-faceted: **engaging communities, strengthening capacity, and facilitating financing**. This enables the policy proposals to be more financially independent and less dependent on government facilitation.

**Innovation is one way to ensure government's help and cooperation in transforming energy systems.** KenGen for example used UN and think tank data to demonstrate to policy makers the heavy cost of climate change on development and to offer innovative solutions.

### **Engaging local communities to fight climate change**

The next step to fight climate change and develop low-carbon markets in Africa is a **community-based and community-centered strategy**. It is the reason why KenGen uses processes that engage the communities first. Their strategy is to divide the community into three groups: economic benefit, increasing employment, and environmental mitigation and adaptation.”

KenGen's is engaged for example with the Massai community in Kenya. Through a process of education and formation, they took them from no knowledge of climate change, to going across the world with KenGen to talk about it. The Massai community also receives 1% of profits from each KenGen project and the company provides medical care, access to water, and builds schools in local communities. KenGen taps into the local talent by sponsoring students to attend university then employing them if they receive high honors.

All those projects correspond to the **behavioral innovation dimension of InnovaCOP. Behavioral Innovation through education, evolution of mentalities and changes of consumption patterns is crucial in the fight against climate change.** This strategy has proven effective for Kenya, and is increasingly prevalent in Africa.

### **From Speeches to Implementation : the importance of COP22 for Africa**

Minister Hakima El Haite, a patron of the InnovaCOP platform, acknowledged that **the COP 22 in Marrakesh is both a COP of action and of innovation.** In her words, « *we need to give*

*answers, we need to switch from speeches to realization* ». Africa is not a major emitter of greenhouse gases and is bearing the brunt of the effects of climate change. African people will need to adapt to climate change in the next decades, with a lot of consequences on the economy and societies (climate refugees for example, is an increasing reality).

She urged that the parties at COP give answers to Africa's challenges in facing climate change, and solutions to fulfill the promises of the Paris Agreement. The implementation of the Paris Agreement begins with the most vulnerable countries, and most of them are in Africa. She highlighted that **South-South cooperation, another working axis of InnovaCOP, can help to develop the continent.**

Furthermore, **Africa's development delay is an opportunity to make the right choices and to choose the right technologies**, in order to create green jobs in Africa. Development in Africa will also be based on know-how that must accompany technology transfers

Last but not least, Ms El Haite mentioned the **key issue of financing**, at the heart of COP22 and made particular note of the fact that a road map for finance is necessary.