

# Research Infrastructure / Africa Connect

**1<sup>st</sup> Euro Africa  
Cooperation Forum on ICT Research**

**Brussels, 25 March 2009**

*Boubakar Barry  
Research and Education Networking Unit Association of  
African Universities*



# Africa Connect at a glance

- Early deliverable (one of the 19 identified lighthouse projects)
  - Other important project related to ICT: the African Internet Exchange Point (AXIS)
- Project will support the development of regional research and education networks in Sub-Saharan Africa
  - Interconnection with the European GEANT2 network
- Objective: contribution in integrating the African research community both at regional and international levels



# Why is Africa Connect important for the African R&E community? (1)

- Bandwidth most expensive in the world (average of US\$4,000 per Mbps/month!)
  - Need join effort and resources for pressure and bargain power
- African scientists and researchers are isolated
- Generally no critical mass for successful research activities
  - Need to network and collaborate (at national, regional, continental and international levels)



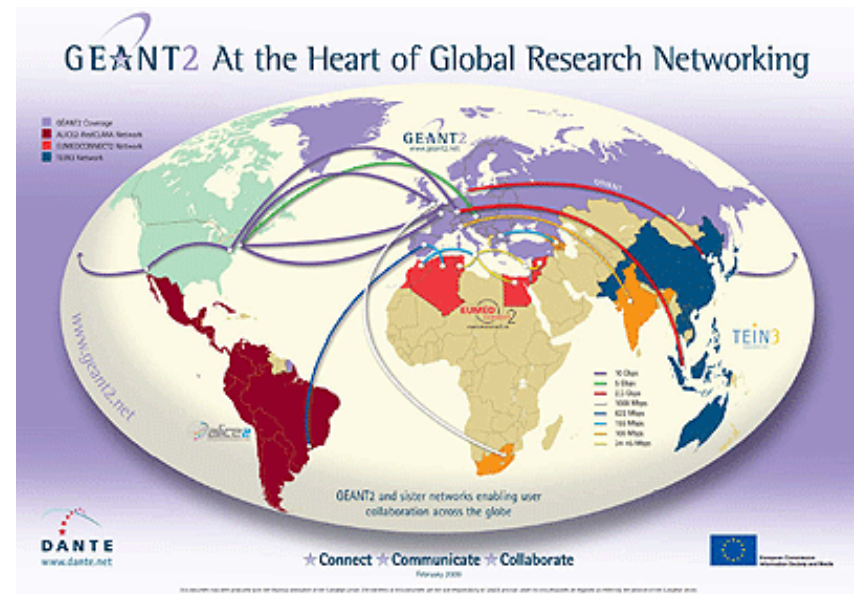
# Why is Africa Connect important for the African R&E community? (2)

- Brain drain
  - Need to reduce brain drain as result of frustration (lack of intellectual reward due to isolation)
- Brain gain
  - Tap potential of diaspora for its contribution to African development from where it is – see COREVIP 2007
- Massification
  - Blended distance learning as part of the solution
- Scarce resources
  - Need to share (not only information, knowledge, pedagogical resources, etc. but also human resources)
- Regional/continental integration
  - HEIs must spear-head and catalyze this process

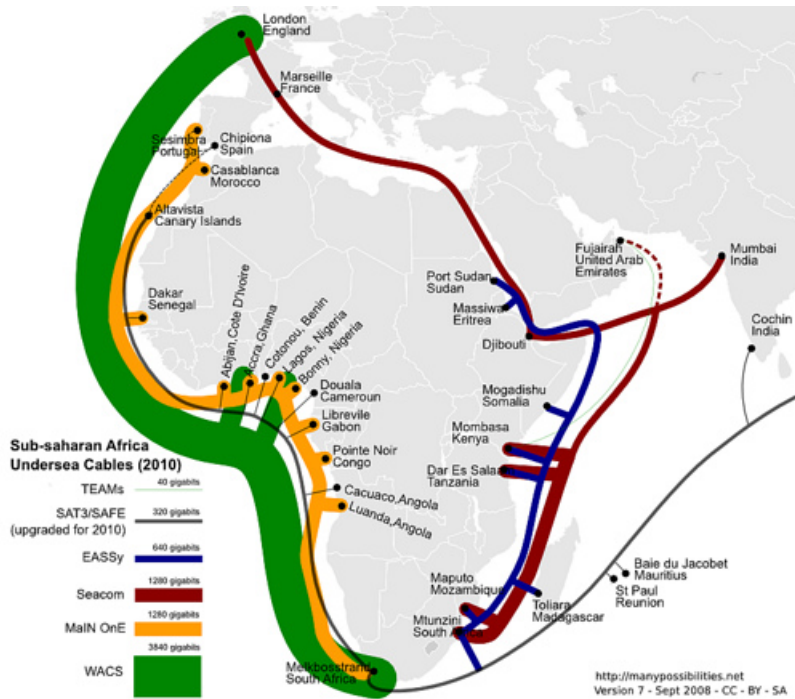


# AfConnect not only important. It's possible

- Similar projects already carried out with success in other regions
  - ALICE (Latin America)
  - EUMEDCONNECT (North Africa & Middle East)
  - TEIN (Asia/Pacific)



# Supporting infrastructure



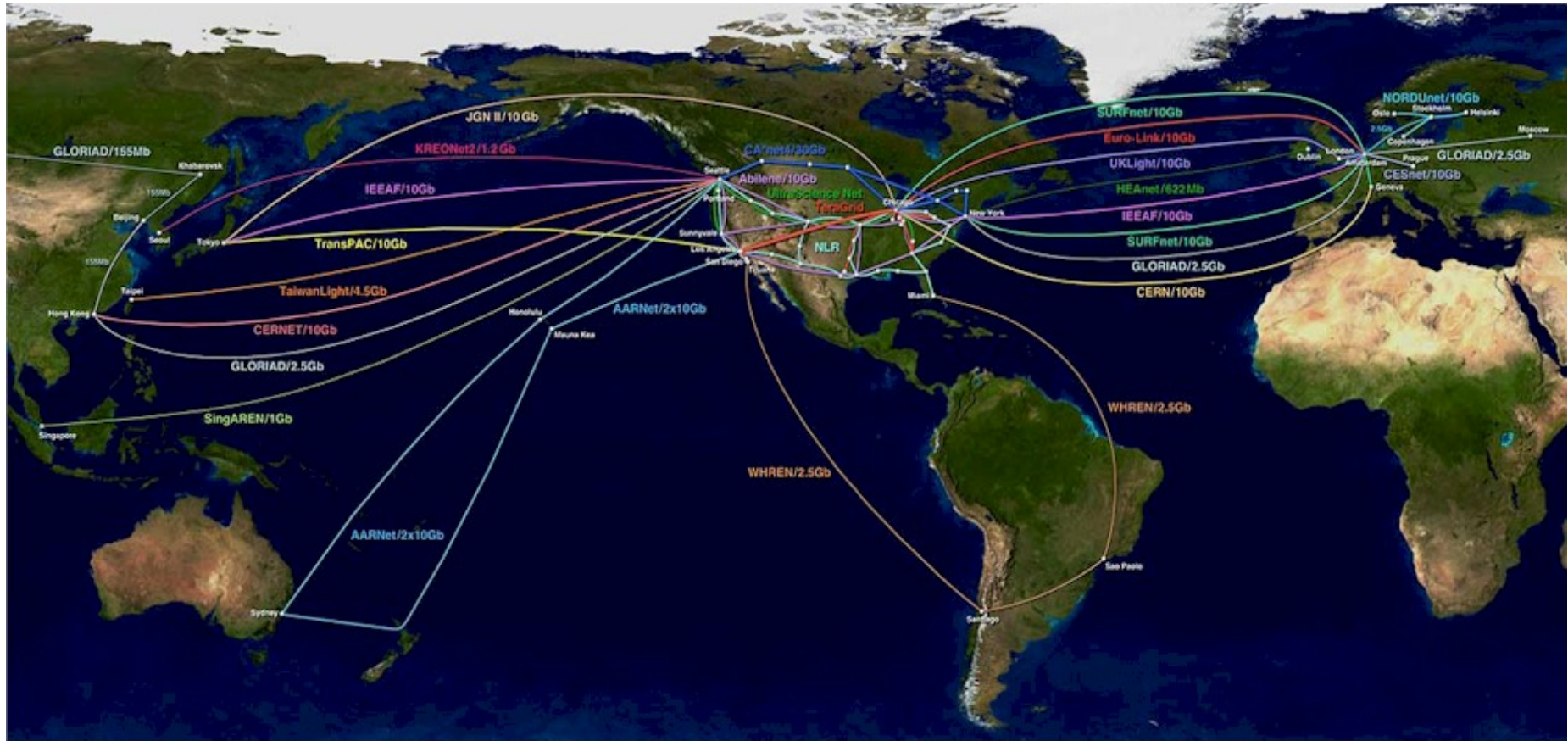
Source:

<http://www.manypossibilities.net>

Legend	Cable
	SAT-3 (WASC-SAFE) 2003. Operator Club
	SEACOM (E. Africa to London) 2009. Investors. Open access.
	TEAMS (Mombasa to Fujairah) 2009. Kenyan Govt.
	EASSy (E. Africa to Port Sudan) 2010. Operator consortium
	WACS (Cape Town to London) 2010. Operator consortium
	MaIn OnE (W. Africa to Portugal) 2010. Investors. Open access Phase 2: Luanda, Cape Town



# Urgent action needed to change this!





***THANK YOU !***

Boubakar Barry - ***barry@aaun.org***

Website: ***www.aau.org***