



SUMMARY OF THE AFRICAN LEADERS NAIROBI DECLARATION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND CALL TO ACTION

The Africa Climate Summit
4th - 6th September 2023
Nairobi, Kenya

The African Heads of State and Government gathered for the inaugural Africa Climate Summit in Nairobi, Kenya, from 4th to 6th September 2023. The Summit was attended by other global leaders, intergovernmental organizations, Regional Economic Communities, United Nations (UN) agencies, private sector, civil society organizations, indigenous peoples, local communities, farmer organizations, children, youth, women and academia.

The Africa Climate Summit was convened pursuant to two AU Summit Decisions, Assembly/AU/Dec.723 (XXXII) and Assembly/AU/Dec.764 (XXXIII). The Summit started with a keynote address intended to set the scene on climate change context of Africa. **Climate change was highlighted as the single greatest challenge facing humanity and the single biggest threat to all life on Earth.** The 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), referenced as indicating that the world is not on track to keeping within reach the 1.5°C limit agreed in Paris and that global emissions must be cut by at least 43 percent in this decade. It was emphasised that **Africa bears the brunt of climate change, and is warming faster than the rest of the world, despite not being historically responsible for greenhouse gas emissions.**

The Summit underscored the need to **adhere to the principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and those of the Paris Agreement, which include equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.**

It also reiterating the concern that **many African countries face disproportionate burdens and risks arising from climate change-related weather events and patterns which cause humanitarian crises with detrimental impacts on economies, health, education, peace and security,** among other.

The summit also noted with concern that **Africa still has a long way to go in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, and that extreme weather events and changes in water cycle patterns are undermining the continent's development efforts.**

Other **key areas of concern were centred on the rapid rate of urbanization and the need for investment in renewable energy.**

- It was highlighted that the **rapid growth of African cities, which by 2050 will be home to over 1.0 billion people,** limits planning capacities which increase people's exposure and vulnerability to climate hazards resulting in cities becoming disaster hotspots across the continent.
- Despite Africa having an estimated 40 percent of the world's renewable energy resources, **only US\$60 billion or two percent of US\$3 trillion renewable energy investments in the last decade have come to Africa.**

In light of the above, it was reiterated that **Africa is ready to create an enabling environment, enact policies and facilitate investments necessary to unlock resources to meet climate commitments, and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development including decarbonisation of the global economy.**

The summit recognised Africa's significant natural capital wealth such as the Congo River Basin, Miombo woodlands, coral reef, peatlands and mangroves, which contribute to the reduction of global carbon emissions and this value needs to be translated into monetary gain. Furthermore, it was noted that Africa's commitments to developing the blue economy including the sustainability of oceans as demonstrated in fora such as the Second UN Oceans Conference in 2022, and the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa in 2023 will be critical in climate action.

The Declaration emphasises that Africa possesses both the potential and the ambition to be a vital player in the architecture of global climate change solutions. As a home to the world's youngest and fastest-growing workforce, coupled with massive untapped renewable energy potential, abundant natural assets and an entrepreneurial spirit, Africa has the fundamentals to spearhead a climate compatible development pathway.



AGENDAS FOR URGENT COLLECTIVE ACTION AT THE CONTINENTAL AND GLOBAL LEVEL

The African Heads of State and Government call upon the global community to act with urgency in reducing emissions, fulfilling their obligations, honouring past pledges, and supporting the continent in addressing climate change, specifically to:

- **Accelerate all efforts to reduce emissions to align with the goals of the Paris Agreement;**
- **Honour the commitment to provide US\$100 billion in annual climate finance**, as promised in 2009 at the UNFCCC 15th Conference of the Parties (COP15) in Copenhagen, Denmark; and
- **Uphold commitments to a fair and accelerated process of phasing down unabated coal power and phase out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies** while providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable in line with national circumstances and recognizing the need for support towards a just transition.

The summit emphasised the need for climate-positive investments that catalyse a growth trajectory anchored in the industries poised to transform our planet and enable African countries to achieve stable middle-income status by 2050.

Of critical importance, the Summit emphasised the operationalization of the Loss & Damage fund as agreed at COP27 and the resolve for a measurable Global Goal on Adaptation with indicators and targets to enable assessment of progress against negative impacts of climate change.

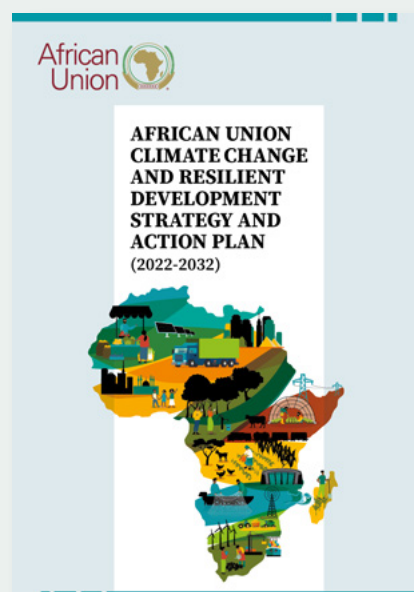
COMMITMENTS MADE BY THE AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT

In recognition of the scale, urgency and importance of the collective actions, the African Heads of State and Government committed to:

- **Develop and implement policies, regulations and incentives** aimed at attracting local, regional and global investment in green growth, inclusive of green and circular economies;
- **Propel Africa's economic growth and job creation** in a manner that reflects commitments to the Paris Agreement;
- **Focus economic development plans on climate-compatible growth**, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity;
- **Promote clean cooking technologies** and initiatives for just energy transition and gender equality for African rural women, youth, and children;
- **Strengthen actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation, and desertification**, as well as restore degraded lands including implementation of the Abidjan Declaration on achieving gender equality for successful land restoration;
- **Strengthen continental collaboration**, which is essential to enabling and advancing green growth, including but not limited to regional and continental grid interconnectivity, and further accelerating the operationalization of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area Agreement;
- **Advance green industrialization** across the continent by prioritizing energy-intensive industries to trigger a virtuous cycle of renewable energy deployment and economic activity, with a special emphasis on adding value to Africa's natural endowments;
- **Promote investments in reskilling** to unlock the human capital that will power Africa's inclusive green transition;
- **Redouble our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices**, to enhance food security while minimizing negative environmental impacts;
- **Contribute to the development of global standards, metrics, and market mechanisms** to accurately value and compensate for the protection of nature, biodiversity, socio-economic co-benefits, and the provision of climate services;
- **Finalise and implement the African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan**, with the view to realizing the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature;
- **Provide all the necessary reforms and support required to raise the share of renewable energy financing to at least 20 percent by 2030**;
- **Promote the production of green hydrogen** and hydrogen derivatives such as green fertilizer and synthetic fuels;
- **Integrate climate, biodiversity and ocean agendas into national development plans** and processes to increase resilience of local communities and national economies;
- **Promote a regenerative blue economy** and support implementation of the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa, and the Great Blue Wall Initiative, whilst recognising the circumstances of Africa's Island States;



- **Support smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples, and local communities** in the green economic transition, given their key role in ecosystems stewardship;
- **Identify, prioritize, and mainstream adaptation into development policymaking** and planning, including in the context of Nationally Determined Contributions;
- **Build effective partnerships between Africa and other regions**, to meet the needs for financial, technical and technological support, and knowledge sharing for climate change adaptation;
- **Promote investments in urban infrastructure** including through upgrading informal settlements and slum areas to build climate resilient cities and urban centres;
- **Strengthen early warning systems and climate information services**, as well as take early action to protect lives, livelihoods and assets and inform long-term decision-making related to climate change risks. Indigenous knowledge and citizen science needs to be embraced in both adaptation strategies and early warning systems;
- **Support the implementation of the Africa Water Investment Programme**, which aims to close the Africa water investment gap by mobilising US\$30 billion by 2030;
- **Enhance drought resilience systems** to shift from crisis management to proactive drought preparedness and adaptation, to significantly reduce the drought vulnerability of people, economic activities, and ecosystems;
- **Further enhance the inclusive approach** through engagement and coordination with children, youth, women, persons living with disabilities, indigenous people, and communities in climate vulnerable situations; and
- **Accelerate implementation** of the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032).

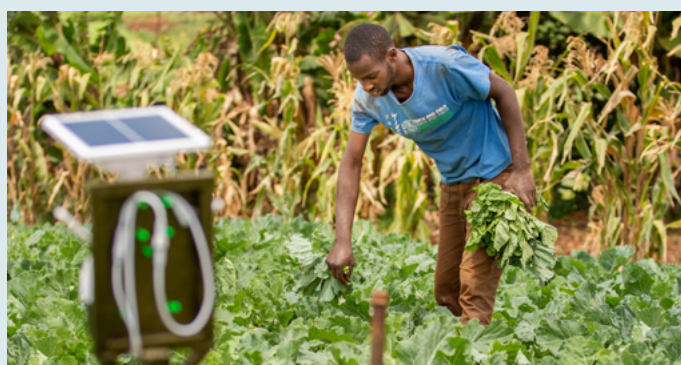


CALL TO ACTION

The African Heads of State and Government urged world leaders to recognise that decarbonizing the global economy is an opportunity to contribute to equality and shared prosperity. Development partners from the global north and south were invited to align technical and financial support to sustainable utilization of Africa's natural assets for low carbon development. To achieve this economic transformation, the international community was requested to contribute to the following:

Economic Transformation – Decarbonisation

- **Increase Africa's renewable generation capacity** from 56 Giga Watts (GW) in 2022 to at least 300 GW by 2030, both to address energy poverty and to bolster the global supply of cost-effective clean energy for industry.
- **Shift exports of energy intensive primary processing of Africa's raw material back to the continent**, to serve as an anchor demand for renewable energy and a means of rapidly reducing global emissions.
- **Access to, and transfer of environmentally sound technologies**, including technologies to support Africa's green industrialisation and transition.
- **Design global and regional trade mechanisms in a manner that enables products from Africa to compete on fair and equitable terms.**
- **Request that trade-related environmental tariffs and non-tariff barriers be subject to multilateral discussions and agreements** and not be unilateral, arbitrary or discriminatory measures.
- **Accelerate efforts to decarbonize the transport, industrial and electricity sectors** through the use of smart, digital and highly efficient technologies such as green hydrogen, synthetic fuels and battery storage.
- **Design industry policies that incentivize global investment to locations that offer substantial climate benefits**, while ensuring benefits for local communities.
- **Implement a mix of measures that elevate Africa's share of carbon markets.**



Mobilising the necessary capital for both development and climate action

The Declaration highlights decision 1/COP27 which states that global transformation to a low-carbon economy is expected to require investment of at least US\$ 4 - 6 trillion per year and delivering such funding in turn requires a transformation of the financial system and its structures and processes, engaging governments, central banks, commercial banks, institutional investors and other financial actors. As such, there is a need for collective global action to mobilise the necessary capital for both development and climate action. This led to the call for **concrete, time-bound action on proposals to reform the multilateral financial system**.

Addressing borrowing costs

It was highlighted that Africa faces inordinate borrowing costs (typically 5 to 8 times what wealthy countries pay) which are the root cause of recurring debt crises in developing countries and an impediment to investment in development and climate action. As such, a call was **made for the adoption of principles of responsible sovereign lending and accountability encompassing credit rating, risk analysis and debt sustainability assessment frameworks** and a request for financial markets to commit to eliminate this disparity by 2025.

Global Carbon Taxation Regime

The world leaders were urged to consider the proposal for **a global carbon taxation regime including a carbon tax on fossil fuel trade, maritime transport and aviation**, that may also be augmented by a global financial transaction tax to provide dedicated, affordable, and accessible finance for climate-positive investments at scale, and establish a balanced, fair and representative global governance structure for its management, with **an assessment of the financial implications** on socio-economic impacts on Africa. The Summit proposed to establish **a new financing architecture that is responsive to Africa's needs including debt restructuring and relief**, and the development of a new Global Climate Finance Charter through UN General Assembly and COP processes by 2025.

Re-evaluating Africa's GDP

A call was made **for the revaluation of the Gross Domestic Product of Africa through the proper valuation of its abundant natural capital and ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration**. This would entail the use of natural resource accounting and the development of national accounting standards.

GLOBAL STOCKTAKE



It was noted that the **first Global Stocktake, which will conclude at COP28, offers a pivotal opportunity to correct course** by including a comprehensive outcome, both backward and forward looking.

AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT



Countries agreed to establish the Africa Climate Summit as a biennial event, convened by the African Union and hosted by African Union Member States, to set the continent's new vision. The **African Leaders Nairobi Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action** was adopted to serve as a strong contribution from the African continent to the global climate change process including COP28 and beyond. The pledges and commitments made at the Summit, to a tune of US\$ 26 billion, aimed at providing support to Africa especially in the areas of renewable energy and adaptation were welcomed.

The African Union Commission was requested to develop an implementation framework for the Declaration and to make Climate Change an African Union theme for the Year 2025 or 2026.



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