

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

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## AFRICAN UNION LAUNCHES A CONTINENTAL GREEN RECOVERY ACTION PLAN

**Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) 15 July 2021:** The African Union Commission launched a new five-year continental Green Recovery Action Plan 2021-2027. The launch was officiated by H.E Felix Tshisekedi, Chairperson of the African Union and President of the Democratic Republic of Congo, with interventions by Heads of State and several dignitaries from AU member States, International Organizations UN Agencies, bilateral and multilateral partners.

In his opening statement **H.E President Felix Tshisekedi** highlighted that a clean and resilient recovery in Africa will not only create jobs in the industries of the future but also overcome challenges related to public health, prosperity and climate change. He also emphasized that the challenges confronting us today are a reminder of the need to think of a recovery that is both inclusive and respectful of the environment and in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Speaking in his capacity as chair of the African Islands Climate Commission, **H.E Wavel Ramkalawan**, President of the Republic of Seychelles, applauded the Recovery Action Plan as being complimentary to the African Islands' commitment and efforts to reduce carbon emissions across all sectors, build resilience in our communities and play a part in supporting the transition to a net-zero carbon emissions economy. "As chair of the African Islands Climate Commission, I look forward to working with all member States and partners to fulfil the objectives of the Green Recovery Action Plan" he added.

In his statement, **H.E Denis Sassou Nguesso**, reaffirmed that Climate Change is one of the biggest threats facing our planet and efforts by the continent to build resilience to its impacts. The President recalled the creation of the Congo Climate Commission at COP 22 in Marrakech and the subsequent Congo Basing Blue Fund. He highlighted the important role played by the Congo Forest in carbon sequestration, regulation of climate, environmental conservation and protection of biodiversity. He called for innovative financial mechanisms to build the capacity and resilience to climate change, reduce greenhouse gas emissions while transitioning towards an equitable and sustainable development.

Pillar two of the Green Recovery Action Plan is on supporting Renewable Energy, energy efficiency and national just transition programmes. In his message, **H.E President Alpha**



**Conde**, Chair of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) expressed his appreciation to the fact that actions under Pillar two of the Action Plan aim to support the implementation of AREI.

Speaking on behalf of H.E Moussa Faki Mahamat, **H.E Amb. Josefa Sacko**, Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment (ARBE) expressed her gratitude to AU Member States and partners that set aside time to participate at the launch and the countries and partners that came forward to offer support in the operationalization of the Action Plan, as well as to champion the different Pillars. “The African Union Commission stands ready to work with the relevant partners and stakeholders to support the implementation of the Action Plan in contribution to the achievement of the AU Agenda 2063, *Africa We Want*”, she reiterated.

COVID-19 has triggered the deepest economic recession in nearly a century and the impacts on Africa have been particularly stark. Food insecurity and debt has been rising, and hard-won development gains are being lost. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolds in Africa, the situation remains fluid and rapidly evolving, with measures needed to ensure the trajectory of the recovery remains in line with the Paris agreement and the ambition of COP26.

The intention behind the Green Recovery Action Plan is to embolden action on five priority areas that include: - (i) improving climate finance, (ii) supporting the just transition to renewable energy, (iii) nature-based solutions and a focus on biodiversity, (iv) resilient agriculture, and (v) green and resilient cities.

“It is essential that we build back better and greener from the COVID-19 pandemic. The African Union’s Green Recovery Action Plan for Africa will help deliver a clean, sustainable recovery that builds a prosperous and secure future for all African nations, **H.E. Rt Hon. Alok Sharma**, COP26 President Designate of the United Kingdom said. “From developing climate finance flows to championing nature-based solutions, this roadmap will ensure African priorities and initiatives are supported on the road to COP26 and beyond”, the COP26 President Designate added.

By bringing together champions from across the international community and AU Member States, the initiative will utilise existing AU mechanisms to streamline and amplify green recovery action in partnership with Regional Economic Commissions (RECs) and regional stakeholders. During the launch, different stakeholders voiced their support to the implementation of the Action Plan.

In her remarks, **Ms. Inger Andersen**, Executive Director of UNEP highlighted that, like all other economies, Africa’s economies have been hit hard by the pandemic. “As we call for solidarity and justice on vaccine access, so must we call for financing through traditional and innovative models. The United Nations Environment Programme strongly supports the AU Green Recovery Action Plan. Green recovery for Africa is in the best interests of all. International solidarity and support is essential to make this recovery a reality” she stated.

“I am proud to announce that Sweden will co-champion the biodiversity pillar of the AU Green Recovery Action Plan. Sweden looks forward to collaborating with African partners to bring this plan to life on the ground, and to showcasing positive examples globally”,



affirmed **H.E. Janine Alm Ericson**, State Secretary of International Development Cooperation, Sweden.

“We have a climate crisis where solutions mean new jobs and economic opportunity. Leading companies get it. And right now what we need is a growing chorus of leaders from every sector speaking out and acting together about the critical importance of delivering stronger ambition to address this climate crises”. **Ms. Sherry Zalika Sykes**, Senior Advisor, US Office of the Special Envoy for Climate, John Kerry.

To kick off the implementation of the Action Plan, the NDC Partnership, in a video message by the Global Director, **Dr. Pablo Vieira** announced that the Partnership would provide technical support, through staff secondment to the Commission to support the implementation of the Action Plan. In his remarks, **Abebe Haile-Gabriel**, FAO Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative for Africa pledged support for the implementation of the AU Sustainable Forestry Management Framework, while **Ms. Wanjira Mathai**, the WRI Regional Director for Africa and a friend of COP 26, pointed out that “Africa’s green recovery will be about building a resilient future for small holder farmers based on transformations of food, trade and forest systems”.

In a statement delivered on his behalf, **H.E Olusegun Obasanjo**, Fmr. President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Patron of AfroChampions underscored Africa’s current existential goal towards industrialization. “We do not however have the luxury others had to industrialize at the expense of the environment. Greening our industrialization and investing in Green Cities are our true existential duty. That is why AfroChampions is so proud to be partnering with the African Union on this urgent and powerful Green Recovery Action Plan for Africa’s looming future”, he said.

Statements were also delivered by senior representatives from Angola, Ethiopia, the Kingdom of Morocco and Zimbabwe. The ECCAS Commissioner in charge of Environment, Natural Resources, Agriculture and Rural Development, **Dr. Tanbuna Honore** and a representative from the Indian Ocean Commission also spoke on behalf of their Commissions.

The Action Plan will contribute towards attaining the targets contained in Agenda 2063: ‘The Africa We Want’ and to support the Continent to get back on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Work on the Plan is already underway and will continue until 2027.

**#AU\_GRAP #AUGreenRecovery**

Learn more about continental launch of AU-GRAP on <https://au.int/en/pressreleases/20210715/african-union-launches-continental-green-recovery-action-plan>

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