

African Union Launches Transforma Platform to Boost Clean Gas Use in Africa at COP 27



Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, 09 November 2022: The African Union (AU), on the sidelines of COP 27 Climate Change Conference launched the Transition Fuels Oversight & Regulatory Management Accelerator (Transforma Platform), a new combined business, governance, and digital platform to connect African energy regulators, industry actors, and consumers around a common interface to advance Africa’s clean energy and green transformation agenda.

The well-attended event held at Cleopatra Hotel was opened by Their Excellencies, Vice Presidents Esperanca Maria Francisco da Costa of Angola, Eve Bazaiba of the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Yemi Osinbajo of Nigeria, and hosted by AU Commissioners, Their Excellencies, Amani Abou-Zeid and Josefa Correia Sacko, marked a major highlight of the Africa program at COP 27. President Hakainde Hichilema of Zambia was represented by Hon. Collins Nzovu, Minister of Green Economy and Environment.

The launch of Transforma platform by the continent’s political and technocratic leadership signals the AU’s commitment to coordinating the search for durable and practical pathways to Africa’s sustainable future. This is germane considering 600 million people, or 43% of the total population, lack access to electricity, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa. About 970 million people in Africa lack access to clean cooking with the attendant deaths and other health risks.

Transforma is a critical module of the 4D Digital Green Corridor jointly promoted by the AU and its strategic partners mobilized by AfroChampions. In the words of H.E. Yemi Osinbajo, “innovations like the 4D Digital Green Corridor and TRANSFORMA are critical to finance and more broadly, resource mobilization on the continent.”

The Digital Green Corridor (<https://green.4dcorridor.org/>) creates an “integration highway” for African countries to harmonize regulatory and investment policies in ways that advance the continent’s green transformation by leveraging existing interstate



legal frameworks such as the AfCFTA and supranational policy instruments such as the AU-led Green Recovery Action Plan for Africa (GRAP).

As an agile implementation vehicle, Transforma is focused on the innovative adaptation of already existing instruments to practically speed up actions in the value chains of transition fuels, especially natural gas, and its derivatives, across Africa rather than putting up new policies and legal instruments.

Digitalization of natural gas regulatory & safety frameworks, distribution networks, marketplace clearing and settlement mechanisms, and tokenization protocols should greatly advance the long overdue modularization of infrastructure needed to accelerate the rapid uptake of cleaner, cheaper, gas products across the services and manufacturing sectors. By further linking the Transforma platform to the AfCFTA Hub (www.afcfta.app) and the Trillion Dollar Framework, strong synergies with pre-existing AU-backed strategic initiatives to boost regional trade linkages while mobilizing and leveraging trans-frontier capital for Pan-African energy reform.

Many African countries have instituted policies to promote the switch from unsustainable biomass to liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) for household energy needs. Others are exploring the use of clean gas for public and private transport applications. The transition of thermal power plants to gas from high-emission fuels like HFO and crude oil has intensified in a growing number of African countries.

The pace of these shifts is unfortunately not quick enough to meet critical timelines in Agenda 2063, the SDGs framework, and other continental development blueprints for transformation. In particular, production infrastructure at the *meso-level* has lagged behind the gas adoption trend even though “embedded generation” opportunities have seen some uptake in a few industrial enclaves in Africa.

Through the combined regulatory and innovation exchanges and the unified digital ecosystem created by Transforma, an active implementation corridor will simplify gas trading between emerging hubs in Africa and major consumption centers whilst mitigating the safety and quality risks of gas distribution.

By lowering prices, boosting value discovery, intensifying trade networks, and cutting the costs of regulatory action whilst alleviating the burden of compliance on the industry, Transforma is poised to open a new era for gas and transition fuels mainstreaming in Africa’s quest to eliminate energy poverty whilst future-proofing its industrial base through strategic mastery of green alternatives for fast, high and just economic growth.

The launch partners of the Transforma Platform include the Africa Refiners & Distribution Association, the Cleopatra Group, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa (BADEA), and Afrochampions. The United Nations Development Program, through its Africa Influencers for Development initiative, is supporting the ongoing rollout of Transforma in two African regions: West and East Africa, with others to follow.



A selection of the numerous organizations that have pledged assistance to advance the Digital Green Corridor and Transforma strategies are listed below along with their representatives at the event.

1. Mohammed Abou El Enein - Vice President of the Egyptian Parliament.
2. Massamba Thiolye. - Project Executive UNFCCC Global Innovation Hub at UN Climate Change Secretariat
3. Dr. Mustapha Lamorde - Executive Director - Nigerian Midstream & Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA)
4. Daniel Kiptoo Bargarora - Energy & Petroleum Regulatory Authority (Kenya)
5. Paulo Gomes - Co-Chair of AfroChampions & Executive Chairman, Orango.
6. Dr. Amany Asfour - President, Africa Business Council
7. Hon. Mohammed Amin Adam - Deputy Minister of Energy (Ghana)
8. Salaheddine Mezouar - Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Morocco & President of COP 22