

The African Union's first climate strategy

And EU-Africa climate cooperation

SUMMARY

African countries, which disproportionately suffer from the adverse impacts of climate change, are aiming to strongly voice their position at the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27, 6-18 November 2022) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is hosted by one of them, Egypt. African states and the African Union (AU) insist that richer industrial countries, which bear greater responsibility for greenhouse gas emissions, should do more to tackle them. According to the African parties to the UNFCCC, Africa's special circumstances should be taken into account when it comes to phasing down the exploitation of fossil fuels. At the same time, the AU is aware that following the same path as richer industrial countries is unsustainable. It has recently made public a comprehensive strategy to address climate change.

While non-binding for AU members, this strategy aims to develop resource-efficient industry and make key sectors such as agriculture and food systems, water resources, energy, infrastructure and transport more climate-resilient. This would imply stronger governance of national and regional climate-related programmes, improving climate literacy and setting up efficient early-warning systems and climate information services. It also highlights the need to build on local and indigenous knowledge, and to create safety nets so that no one is left behind in the green transition.

With this blueprint, the AU proposes a vision it hopes will rally both its member states and other UNFCCC parties. While the European Union (EU) is among the main supporters of African climate policies, the AU calls upon the EU and international donors to scale up climate finance to help Africa achieve the ambitions laid down in its climate strategy. The European Parliament requests that the EU and its Member States align their policies with the EU's international commitments on climate action, to improve cooperation with Africa in this matter.



IN THIS BRIEFING

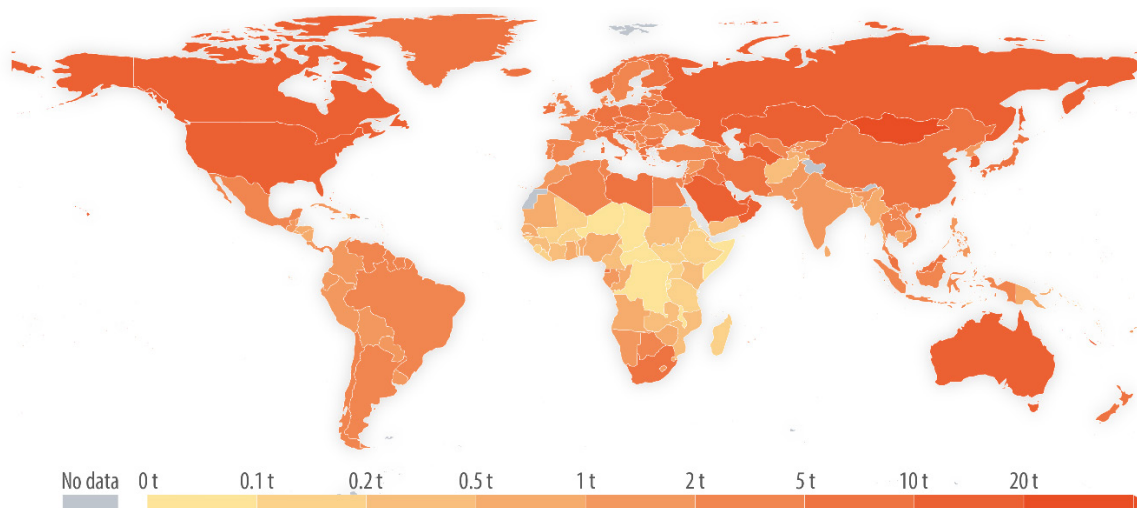
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Africa's climate challenges and assets

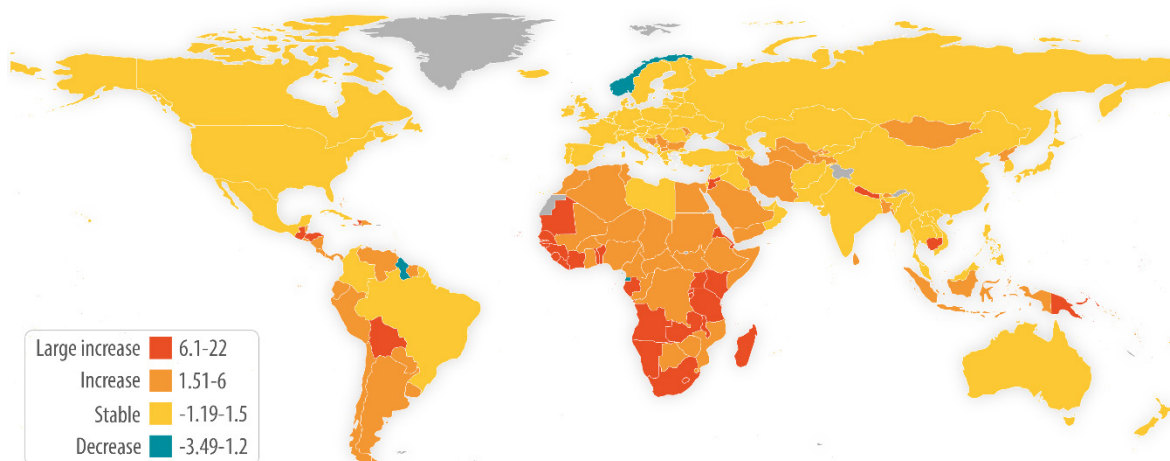
African countries have collectively contributed to [only 3 %](#) of global carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions since the industrial revolution, and most of them are still among the lowest emitters (see Figure 1). However, Africans are particularly [vulnerable to climate change](#) as a majority of them [depend highly on nature](#) to fulfil their basic human needs.

Figure 1 – Per capita CO₂ emissions



Per capita CO₂ emissions, 2020. Data source: [Our World in Data](#), based on the [Global Carbon Project](#), accessed 7.10.2022.

Figure 2 – Climate change vulnerability



Change in vulnerability gap scores by 2050 based on projected climate and socio-economic trends ([RCP8.5-SSP3 scenario](#)). Data source: [INFORM Climate Change](#), European Commission Joint Research Centre, accessed 20.10.2022

In its [sixth assessment report cycle](#), the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has concluded that, in the future, global warming will continue to seriously impact living conditions in most [African regions](#). In particular:

- temperature rises will continue to lead to decreases in [crop yields](#) and [fish harvests](#);
- increased rainfall variability and unpredictability will put an additional [strain on fresh water](#);

- several [animal and vegetal species](#) are at risk of sharp population decrease or extinction (the IPCC projects that biodiversity loss will escalate with every 0.5°C increase);
- above 1.5°C global warming (it is currently +1°C), vector-borne disease and heat-related deaths will increase sharply;
- more people will be exposed to climate hazard risks, such as floods and heatwaves, and to a longer term rise in sea levels.

The IPCC points out that this will most probably degrade the livelihoods of many people, particularly fishermen and farmers, aggravate food insecurity, and cause health issues. The upsurge in mortality and morbidity will bring [health systems](#) to the brink. Combined with the increased population – notably in informal settlements and rapidly developing cities, with insufficient infrastructure – a growing number of people will be exposed to the effects of climate change. For example, while 54 million people in Africa were exposed to sea level rises in 2000, at least 108 million would be exposed in 2030, and up to 245 million by 2060. The IPCC notes that heatwaves (i.e. more than 15 days above 42°C) would affect 360 to 440 million fragile people (children under 5 and adults over 64) in cities by 2100 – compared to 27 million in 2010. In addition, this may contribute to at least 17 million African people (with warming of 1.7°C above the pre-industrial period) and up to 86 million (with warming of 2.5°C) migrating by 2050, mostly within Africa.

The [COVID-19 pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine](#) have exacerbated the impact of climate change, notably by increasing food and energy prices and reducing their availability. This might bolster [investment in the exploitation of fossil fuels](#) in several African countries, although it would trigger a further increase of global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

African countries nevertheless have untapped assets to help them [mitigate and adapt](#) to climate change. They can implement [nature-based solutions](#) with benefits for economic development. African peatland, grassland and forest preservation and restoration benefit both local population's livelihoods and global climate goals (as carbon sinks). They can also build on sectors such as [renewable energy](#), [sustainable agriculture](#) and the [circular economy](#). This requires cooperation at regional level, as Africa's ecosystems stretch beyond borders and because synergies between countries are needed to leverage sufficient financing. To this end, the African Union (AU) adopted its first comprehensive [climate change strategy](#) in 2022, a few months before the 27th conference of the parties ([COP27](#)) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)), hosted in an African country, Egypt, from 6 to 18 November 2022.

Adaptation: The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects. In human systems, adaptation seeks to moderate or avoid harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. In some natural systems, human intervention may facilitate adjustment to expected climate and its effects.

Mitigation: A human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases (GHGs) [or] human interventions to reduce the sources of other substances [having] an indirect effect on climate.

Nature-based solutions (NbS): Actions to address societal challenges through the protection, sustainable management and restoration of ecosystems, benefiting both biodiversity and human well-being.

Sources: [IPCC](#); NbS: [IUCN](#).

The African Union's response

A comprehensive strategy

Achieving a 'prosperous Africa, based on inclusive growth and sustainable development' is one of the aspirations enshrined in [Agenda 2063](#), the AU's¹ strategic framework adopted in 2013 and later linked with the 2015 [Sustainable Development Goals](#). However, the February 2022 [Agenda 2063 implementation report](#) acknowledged that climate adaptation policies and frameworks were not

well implemented throughout the continent. One reason is that these policies and frameworks are often country-based, while climatic regimes and natural assets extend beyond borders and call for coordinated action.

In fact, at sub-continental level, some of the African regional economic communities ([RECs](#)) have devised climate change [adaptation and mitigation frameworks](#). These include, notably, the Common Market for Eastern and South Africa ([COMESA](#)), the Eastern African Intergovernmental Authority on Development ([IGAD](#)) and the Southern African Development Community ([SADC](#)) – but these often lack the institutional and financial capacity for research, advice and coordination that would trigger buy-in from their member states.

African leaders also [launched](#) three [Climate Commissions](#) during the 2016 COP22 in Marrakesh: for the [African Island States](#), [the Congo Basin](#), and [the Sahel](#) ('climatic Sahel': from the Atlantic Ocean to the Horn of Africa). They are tasked with coordinating cross-border climate initiatives, drafting investment plans and raising the needed funds from international donors.

In February 2022, the AU heads of state [adopted](#) the first continental [climate change and resilient development strategy and action plan \(2022-2032\)](#) – referred to below as the '**AU climate strategy**'. The fruit of a [long process](#), the AU climate strategy builds on its [green recovery action plan \(2021-2027\)](#), launched on 15 July 2021 as a response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the continent. The strategy is aligned with climate change mitigation provisions laid down in pre-existing continental frameworks, such as the [Africa Renewable Energy Initiative](#), [the Africa Blue Economy Strategy](#) and the [African Continental Free Trade Area \(AfCFTA\)](#). Recognising 'common but differentiated responsibilities', the strategy is not meant to supersede national or sub-continental strategies but to provide a framework for action based on African countries' common challenges and assets. It aspires to trigger 'African-led and African-owned' partnerships not only between governments, but also with other stakeholders, such as international organisations, development partners, technical institutions, research centres, local communities, the private sector and non-governmental and civil society organisations.

The African Group position at COP27

The [main priorities](#) of the African Group at COP27 as proposed by the African group of negotiators (see box on governance below) include:

- [Scaling up climate finance](#) to match the [need for adaptation](#) in developing countries. Climate finance should, furthermore, be clearly distinct from official development assistance (see below: 'Mobilising climate finance and resources'). Half of the climate funds should be dedicated to adaptation.
- Operationalise a [loss and damage funding facility](#) for the most vulnerable countries (see below: 'Mobilising climate finance and resources').
- The recognition of Africa's [special circumstances](#) for a [just energy transition](#) – i.e. adjust the pace of the phasing down of fossil fuel use to the evolution of Africa's energy needs. However, the African Group acknowledges that only low-carbon development is sustainable in the medium and longer term (see box below: 'The energy conundrum').
- COP27 participants should agree on measurable means to [review progress](#) towards the [Global Goal on Adaptation](#).

The AU climate strategy has four strategic axes that aim to:

- improve coordination and governance (Axis 1: 'Strengthening policy and governance');
- transform key sectors to face climate challenges (Axis 2: 'Adopting pathways towards transformative climate-resilient development' and Axis 4: 'Leveraging regional flagship initiatives');

- mobilise climate finance and resources (Axis 3: 'Enhancing the means of implementation towards climate-resilient development').

It also envisages a monitoring and evaluation plan, which will define benchmarks and indicators to measure progress, as well as means to get feedback and involve stakeholders.

Improving coordination and governance

Pointing to the various levels of climate legislation and implementation across African countries, the strategy advocates better knowledge-sharing and institutional coordination. Harnessing [climate information services](#) and policy to improve [climate literacy](#) would help to anticipate and adapt better to future climate challenges. The strategy highlights the need for security institutions to develop a climate-sensitive approach, to better prevent and address conflicts linked to climate change. This is in line with the African Union Peace and Security Council [position](#) reiterated in November 2021, after the UN Security Council [failed](#) to adopt a resolution on climate change as a [threat to peace](#).

African Union climate governance

AU institutions and advisory bodies

[AU organs](#) such as the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the AU Commission, the Pan African Parliament and the Economic Social and Cultural Council participate in devising, implementing and overseeing climate policies. In addition, the AU comprises several specialised technical committees (STCs) at ministerial and senior official level, such as the Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment STC, which deals with food security, biodiversity and climate change issues. The AU development agency ([AUDA-NEPAD](#)) coordinates REC- and AU-level priority projects in line with Agenda 2063.

Jointly steered by the [AU Commission](#), the African Development Bank ([AfDB](#)) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa ([UNECA](#)), the Climate for Development in Africa Programme ([ClimDev-Africa](#)) provides advice, technical support and funding for streamlining climate governance in AU, REC and national policies and programmes.

Technical and negotiating bodies

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment ([AMCEN](#)) prepares the African common position after consultations involving national governments, RECs and the African Group of Negotiators ([AGN](#)). The AGN is one of the UNFCCC [groups with a regional focus](#) and includes all African states.

After every COP, the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change ([CAHOSCC](#)) endorses the revised African common position on climate change. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya, currently (2022-2024) coordinates the CAHOSCC.

Informed by the African common position, the AGN takes part in the discussions within the UNFCCC at various levels. Ephraim Mwepya Shitima, a senior official in Zambia's Ministry of Lands, Natural Resources and Environmental Protection, currently chairs the AGN.

The Africa climate strategy advocates for clarifying the role of the various AU structures and agencies involved in climate policy, and for strengthening collaboration between the AGN, AMCEN and CAHOSCC.

The AU climate strategy pledges to take into account countries' and individuals' various circumstances. It calls for integrated responses and a 'whole of economy approach'; it is founded, notably, on the notion of [intersectionality](#), which acknowledges that oppression or vulnerabilities often overlap on one individual, based on their multiple 'identity markers' (e.g. poor women from minority communities). Climate change makes [no exception](#), as research has amply shown that it [disproportionately affects](#) vulnerable groups.

The AU climate strategy underlines that women and youth are particularly vulnerable to climate change, as the former are often less educated and the latter will experience the worst impacts of climate change during their lifetime. The strategy therefore calls for them to be more involved in

decisions that affect their lives, notably by institutionalising their participation in decision-making, providing climate change education, and dedicating targeted funds to that effect.

Transforming key sectors to face climate challenges

The strategy identifies nine areas ('systems') where appropriate transformation would leverage climate change mitigation while at the same time providing for sustainable and inclusive growth. Dealt with in a cross-sectoral manner, the policies and actions to transform these systems would also contribute to helping Africa achieve the sustainable development goals. These key systems are:

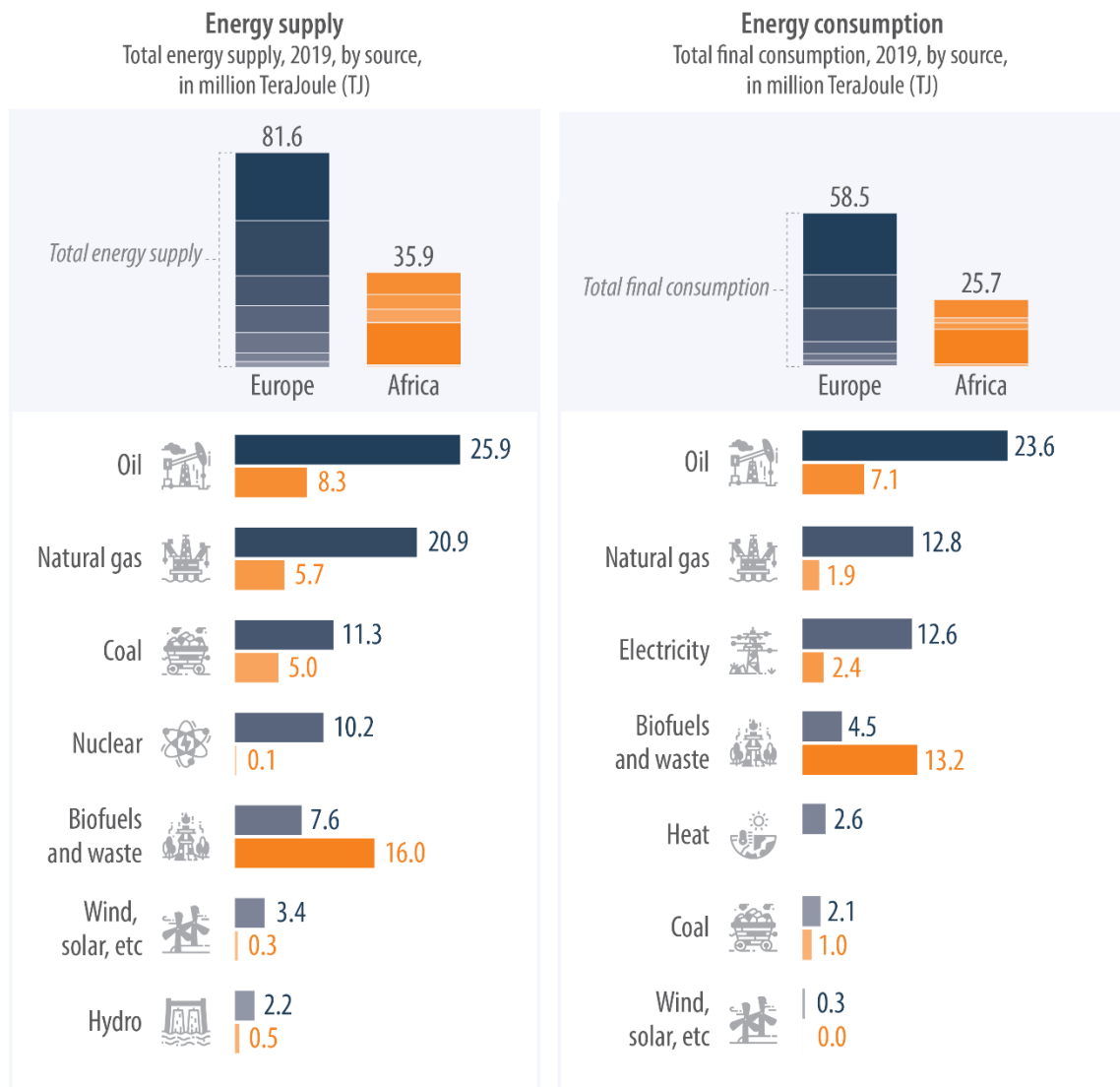
- **Food systems**, which have to diversify and [adapt](#) to match the food demand and means of livelihood of a growing population, while being put under pressure by climate change and biodiversity loss.
- **Land-based ecosystems**: forests, soils and water systems, which need to be protected and restored, notably in their role as [carbon sinks](#).
- **Energy and infrastructure**: only half of Africans access electricity in their homes, with the challenge of enabling access while increasing the share of [sustainable energy](#) generation and consumption (see box on Energy below).
- **Industry**: [Industrialisation](#) is a key target of Agenda 2063; however, the strategy acknowledges that Africa cannot follow the same path as industrialised countries but should 'leapfrog' to a resource-efficient industry.
- **Transport and mobility**: in addition to the need to expand [transport networks](#), electrifying public transport and making roads more climate-resilient (e.g. built above expected flood levels) are notable adaptation and mitigation targets.
- **Urban areas** and urban-rural linkages that would help control [urban growth](#).
- **Water systems** and management cooperation on [shared water resources](#) (such as [rivers](#) or [lakes](#)).
- **Blue economy**, which [requires](#) combating overfishing, pollution and unsustainable coastal development while restoring biodiversity and preserving the livelihood of many coastal residents.
- **Digital innovations**, notably to boost [climate data-informed](#) policies and practices, set up early-warning systems and improve information services and climate literacy.

The energy conundrum

One human in five is African; however, Africa represents only [6 % of global energy demand](#) (3 % of electricity demand). In 2020, half of the population in Sub-Saharan Africa did not have [access to electricity](#) and less than one in five had access to [clean fuels and technologies for cooking](#). There is a wide need to improve the energy grid and access to cleaner energies. Analysts believe renewable energy development will help meet these challenges and provide for new jobs (in 2021, less than 3 % of jobs in renewables worldwide were in Africa). However, between 2000 and 2020 only US\$60 billion was invested in renewables in Africa (2 % of the global total). Forty African countries' Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change include renewable energy targets.

At the same time, fossil fuel exports provide revenues to many African countries and African leaders have blamed [richer countries](#) for not supporting Africa's climate adaptation objectives enough. The [oil and gas shortage](#) induced by Russia's war on Ukraine and [strategic considerations](#) relating to COP27 might lead African countries to [invest more in fossil fuels](#) – putting at risk the +1.5°C target to limit global warming. [Reports](#) suggest that this option could be backed by some developed countries during COP27, [including EU ones](#), a move contrary to the pledge by 20 countries at COP26 to [stop financing fossil fuel](#) projects abroad. Between 2015 and 2020, international funding for fossil fuels in Africa was 36 times higher than for air quality, a [recent report](#) finds.

Figure 3 - Total energy supply and consumption by source, Europe (43 countries) and Africa



Data source: [International Energy Agency](#).

For each of the systems, the strategy suggests a number of priority intervention areas and related actions. The suggested transformations include reducing GHG emissions and dependencies on external inputs (such as fertilisers, fuels and manufactured items), and engaging [academia](#), [civil society](#) and [private](#) actors in this direction. Supporting these transformative pathways implies designing and implementing [appropriate legislation](#) and research-based management, dedicating sufficient human resources, and raising enough finance.

The AU is faced with [structural weaknesses](#). Despite these, it has been successful in steering the [African states' collaboration](#) on a number of initiatives and programmes it has launched or supported. As part of its climate strategy, the AU therefore promotes them as a model for the methods and means of implementation it advocates. It also proposes to strengthen the climate dimension of these flagships.

Among these programmes, which involve 'coordinated regional action and effective collaboration between AU structures, RECs, non-state actors, national governments and a variety of other stakeholders [including civil society and the private sector]', are:

- the Climate for Development in Africa programme ([ClimDev-Africa](#)) to enhance climate observation systems;
- the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa ([PIDA](#));
- the African Continental Free Trade Area ([AfCFTA](#));
- the Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Programme ([CAADP](#));
- the [Great Green Wall](#) for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI, see box below);
- the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative ([AREI](#));
- the Africa [Blue Economy](#) Strategy.

The Great Green Wall

In the Sahel-Saharan region, from Senegal to Djibouti, since the 1970s a succession of droughts and intense rainfall has seriously degraded the landscape, leading to food insecurity, competition for resources and land, and displacement. Other factors aggravate the impact of climate change: the [rapid demographic growth](#) increases resource scarcity, [unsustainable agricultural practices](#) contribute to land degradation, and [ill-managed allocation of resources](#) lead to conflict.

The idea of re-greening the Sahel has been around since the 1980s, but it really [kicked off](#) in 2007, when the African Union endorsed the [Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative](#) to grow 8 000 km of plants and trees across Africa, from Dakar to Djibouti. This project now involves over [20 African countries](#) and, according to its promoters, it could help restore 100 million hectares of land, sequester 250 million tonnes of CO₂ and create 10 million jobs [by 2030](#). Local communities, informed by [research](#), manage the areas designated by the participating States. They plant drought-resistant tree species and use traditional techniques to collect high annual rainfall and distribute it through the irrigation systems.

In 2016, the European Commission's Joint Research Centre performed a '[basic assessment](#)' of selected Great Green Wall restoration projects in Senegal and found 'slight positive changes' or 'no positive effects'; it proposed to perform further studies to better monitor and guide restoration projects. At the end of 2021, the Great Green Wall initiative – so far, more a mosaic than a continuous barrier – had restored 18 million hectares and created 350 000 jobs, '[far off the target](#)', according to the Deputy Executive Secretary of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). To strengthen the initiative, the [Great Green Wall Accelerator](#) – led by the UNCCD to match available funds with Great Green Wall projects and to trigger new financing – raised US\$19 billion in pledges at the One Planet Summit 2021; the EU [provides €700 million annually](#) to the initiative.

Mobilising climate finance and resources

According to the AU, African governments spend 3.4 % of their gross domestic product (GDP) on adaptation to the impacts of climate change; however, this is falling short of the needs. The [Africa Adaptation Summit](#) on 5 September 2022 reaffirmed the aim of raising [US\\$25 billion of investment by 2025](#), to half of which the [AfDB has already contributed](#).

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) [estimates](#) that the finance needed by developing countries to implement programmes for adaptation to the impacts of climate change will rise up to US\$300 billion per year by 2030, and up to US\$500 billion per year by 2050. The AU climate strategy points out that the target of richer countries to mobilise US\$100 billion annually by 2020 is outdated. Yet this target was missed: the finance flows targeting climate adaptation or mitigation in developing countries were only [US\\$83.3 billion in 2020](#), mostly because of a lack of progress in private finance mobilisation – due to high-risk environments and low return on investment. While the COP26 [climate finance delivery plan](#) reaffirms the pledge by richer countries to scale up climate finance, the UN Development Programme has warned that the focus on [post-](#)

[pandemic recovery](#) risks diverting financial resources from climate mitigation or adaptation actions, unless they are mainstreamed into broader development programmes.

In the same vein, the AU climate strategy states that well-managed climate finance 'enables the delivery of multiple development outcomes such as food and water security, energy security, good health, employment, and other benefits'. The strategy points out that loans are not adapted to many African countries, which are already [overly indebted](#), and indicates its preference for grants. It also calls for improved regulations and conditions for blended finance, private-public partnerships, or innovative financial instruments (such as '[green bonds](#)') to leverage more private finance in climate projects. Reaching an agreement on a dedicated [loss and damage](#) fund for the most vulnerable countries, financed by the richer ones, is an item that Africa and other countries (the UN [Group of 77 and China](#)) wish to put on the COP27 agenda, after [COP26 overruled it](#).

The AU climate strategy also acknowledges the need to address structural issues on the side of African countries. One issue is that many African countries fail to appraise efficiency in their climate-related expenditure, due to the lack of an appropriate [measurement, reporting and verification](#) mechanism. Another issue is the lack of safety mechanisms to reduce [loss and damage](#), such as [early warning systems](#), [social transfers](#) to promote livelihood diversification, or adapted [insurance](#) mechanisms. The strategy also identifies the need to better support '[climate empowerment](#)' for the various stakeholders – schools, the private sector, non-governmental and civil society organisations – as well as [technology transfer](#) and the development of local technologies to help African countries better mitigate and adapt to climate change.

The EU contribution to the AU and African climate policies

Broad EU support

The AU acknowledges the technical and financial support of the EU, among other institutions, to develop its climate strategy. This is part of the EU's broader support. The long-term EU budget, the 2021-2027 multiannual financial framework (MFF), includes a spending target of 30 % on [climate adaption and mitigation](#), including in the programming for third countries. In the context of its Green Deal and [strategy on adaptation to climate change](#) (COM(2021) 82), the EU has committed to 'promote sub-national, national and regional approaches to adaptation, with a specific focus on adaptation in Africa, Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and Least Developed Countries (LDCs)'. The EU Global Climate Change Alliance Plus initiative ([EU GCCA+](#)) channels the relevant technical expertise and funding to this end.

The EU and the Organisation of (Sub-Saharan) African, Caribbean and Pacific States ([OACPS](#)) have long shared [common concerns and objectives](#) in the field of climate change. The newly [negotiated agreement](#) on a future OACPS-EU partnership includes a title on environmental sustainability and climate in its 'foundation' priorities. The provisions on environmental sustainability and climate change span eight articles, much more detailed than in the current framework, the [Cotonou Agreement](#). The future agreement also includes a regional protocol for Africa, which highlights the challenges the parties have agreed to cooperate on in the areas of the environment, sustainable management of natural resources and climate change. This includes phasing out 'inefficient fossil fuel subsidies'; cooperating on preventing and mitigating climate-induced conflicts; addressing loss and damage; strengthening climate research and monitoring; and providing adequate financing for climate-resilient development. However, this OACPS-EU agreement is [not in force](#) yet.

One pillar of the new [EU-Africa Strategy](#) is a '[partnership for green transition and energy access](#)'. It builds on existing partnerships such as the Africa-EU energy partnership ([AEEP](#)) and the Africa-EU renewable energy cooperation programme ([RECP](#)).

In the 6th EU-AU Summit's [Joint Vision for 2030](#) (February 2022), African and EU heads of state or government committed to 'support Africa in its transition to foster just and sustainable pathways towards climate neutrality' while 'recognis[ing] that Africa's energy transition is vital for its

industrialisation and to bridge the energy gap'. The [European Investment Bank \(EIB\)](#), for example, has stopped financing fossil fuel projects but provides funds for decarbonisation and easing Africans' access to renewable energy.

AU and EU leaders also announced a €150 billion Africa-Europe [investment package](#); this funding, contributed by the EU, its Member States and the [EIB](#), will be channelled through the [Global Gateway](#), a strategy to leverage investment in sustainable infrastructure projects, in particular through its climate and energy pillar. This includes supporting Africa's transition to [sustainable and renewable energy](#), including developing clean hydrogen production. The EU and AU also jointly fund [research and innovation](#) projects on [food and nutrition security](#), [sustainable agriculture](#), and [renewable energy](#). The EU also contributes to satellite- and ground-based [earth observation](#) to monitor and mitigate the impacts of climate change in Africa.

Different views?

Despite common commitments, several observers note [discrepancies](#) between the EU and African approaches. One concerns the timeline for the phasing-out of investments in fossil fuels, as renewable energy development might not be enough to meet Africa's growing needs for trade revenues, access to electricity, and industrialisation (see box on Energy above). Macky Sall, the AU chair, pointed out during the 77th UN General Assembly that it would not be fair to [prevent African countries](#) from exploiting their oil and gas reserves, and to reduce the [EIB](#) and multilateral banks' funding for the [ones recently discovered](#). Developing alternative energy solutions and other adaptation projects will [depend on the scale](#) of EU and other partners' financial support to African projects, Macky Sall stressed.

The EU Green Deal and related policies that aim to achieve climate neutrality by 2050 will have spill-over effects on Africa. However, precisely [measuring these spill-overs](#) and whether they will have positive or adverse effects is challenging. Among others, research cites the following repercussions for Africa:

- The EU's growing demand for [clean hydrogen](#) has led it to support its [production in Africa](#). This will provide new jobs, generate export revenues, and help develop infrastructure for transport and shipping in Africa. However, a balance must be sought so that hydrogen production also improves energy access for the African population and is not only used for export.
- Electronic vehicles, renewable energy generators and other green technologies often have at their core [critical minerals](#) of which Africa is one of the main producers. The EU's green transition therefore increases the [demand](#) for these materials. However, this will benefit African countries only if [due diligence](#) is harnessed, and if the environmental, labour and social conditions of their extraction are monitored and improved.
- The EU 'farm to fork' and biodiversity strategies aim to make the EU food system more sustainable and promote this model globally. In the short term, new EU standards could [hinder imports](#) from Africa, while in the longer term this could help develop more [climate-resilient](#) African agriculture and food systems.
- The EU is currently discussing a [carbon border adjustment mechanism](#) (CBAM), under which imported CO₂ emission-intensive products would be subject to a carbon tax comparable to EU-made products. This might incentivise third-country producers to invest in cleaner processes, but it puts at risk the competitiveness of vulnerable economies, especially in [Africa](#). Some countries consider this as [contrary](#) to the Paris Agreement's principle according to which poorer countries should contribute less than richer ones to reducing CO₂ emissions. Similarly, some companies fear that the EU initiative to require due diligence to minimise the [risk of deforestation](#) associated

with products placed on the EU market distorts competition, even though it is considered a positive step to preserve biodiversity.

European Parliament position

The European Parliament has long been calling for the EU to spearhead the response to climate change. In November 2019, it declared a '[climate emergency](#)' and, while praising the EU and its Member States for being the main providers of climate finance, it [called on them](#) to harness this commitment by aligning all EU policies with its international commitments on climate action, notably the Paris Agreement.

The resolution on a new EU-Africa strategy – a partnership for inclusive and sustainable development ([25 March 2021](#)) considers that 'a successful Africa-Europe Climate Alliance could become a new driving force in global climate diplomacy'. It calls for a joint assessment of the EU Green Deal's external impacts, to find a common pathway towards a green transition.

In a debate with the EU High Representative/Commission Vice-President, Josep Borrell, on [15 February 2022](#), Members of the European Parliament again highlighted climate change as one of the top challenges Africa and Europe should discuss during the EU-AU summit that would take place two days later.

The European Parliament debated and adopted its position on [COP27](#) on [20 October 2022](#). The Parliament 'believes that the transition to a sustainable society has to be undertaken in an inclusive, fair and equal manner' and highlights the need to further involve local and regional governments and communities, notably young people and women, in addressing the impacts of climate change. It notes that EU internal and external policies should be coherent with the Paris Agreement on climate change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; requests that tackling the climate crisis take a central place in the EU's development, migration, agriculture, fisheries, trade and industrial policies; and welcomes the fact that the EU initiatives on due diligence and deforestation-free products include provisions on protecting environmental defenders.

On funding, the resolution points to the growing finance gap and calls for the US\$100 billion climate finance goal to be met in 2022. In particular, it calls for EU development cooperation and humanitarian policies to better support (including financially) developing countries in adapting to climate change, building resilience, responding to emergencies and reducing disaster risks. The Parliament points out that adaptation to climate change 'is an inevitable necessity', especially for the least developed countries and small island developing states 'if they are to minimise the negative effects of the climate and biodiversity crises and achieve climate resilience and sustainable development'. Therefore, the resolution calls for increasing grants-based finance for adaptation in those vulnerable countries.

On [15 September 2022](#), the Parliament called for the EU to contribute to the definition of a global goal for adaptation and to advocate in multilateral fora for reducing the climate finance gap. It also encouraged the EU and Member States to help equip third countries with early warning systems, and to cooperate on the definition of an international framework on climate migration.

According to the resolution on COP27, the EU, its Member States and G7 donors should deliver new investments to ensure that developing countries phase out fossil fuels at a sustainable pace ('just energy transition'). Parliament also requested [on 22 June 2022](#) that the EU compensate least developed countries' efforts to de-carbonise their manufacturing industries, at least at the level of revenues generated by the sale of carbon-border adjustment mechanism certificates.

Assessing the European External Action Service's Climate Change and Defence Roadmap, a resolution of [7 June 2022](#) promotes a climate-sensitive approach in peace and security missions and operations in African regions, such as the Sahel, where the impacts of climate change interact with other conflict factors. It recommends strengthening cooperation with the AU and other partners to address this climate-security nexus.

African coasts are particularly affected by overfishing, unregulated fishing, deep-sea mining and pollution. These degradations of ocean health compromise its central role in the fight against climate change. The European Parliament's resolution on 'Momentum for the Ocean' of [6 October 2022](#) calls for a long-term EU strategy and global governance aimed at restoring marine biodiversity. It also called on the EU and Member States to respect the principle of policy coherence for development, particularly in their agricultural and fisheries policies.

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ENDNOTES

- ¹ The African Union has [55 members](#): it comprises all African states and Western Sahara (listed by the UN as a [non-self-governing territory](#)).

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