



POLICY BRIEF

NOVEMBER 2023

Accelerating implementation of the **African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032)** through the Nairobi Declaration commitments

Summary

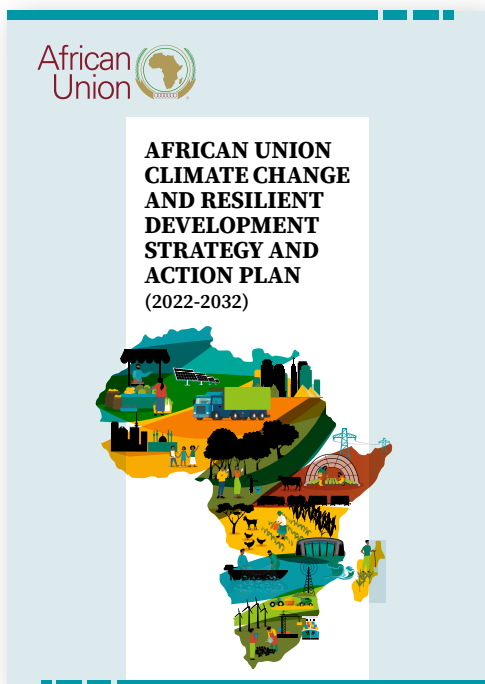
- The Nairobi Declaration specifically states the need to accelerate the implementation of the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022-2032).
- Many of the commitments and calls to action in the Declaration reinforce those given in the Strategy's intervention axes, particularly those focused on renewable energy development, green industrialisation and employment creation, and the need for an increase in climate finance, and the restoration and conservation of land-based ecosystems.
- Although the Strategy is well supported by the Declaration through alignments in core action areas, there needs to be committed financing to support implementation.

Background

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 global leaders, intergovernmental organisations, regional economic communities, United Nations agencies, private sector, civil society organisations, indigenous peoples, local communities, farmer organisations, children, youth, women and academia. The Summit sought

to launch a new climate ambition for Africa and to invite supportive partnerships to pursue the continent's climate-resilient, low emissions development pathways. It provided a platform to showcase progress, exchange perspectives, and to collaborate on common priorities for global events such as the 28th Conference of Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the G20. The Summit focused on climate change and development in Africa, and the need for improved global investment in climate action. African countries were able to detail their plans and investment needs, and push for reform of international financial architecture.

Importantly, the Summit mobilised support for the implementation of sustainable development and climate change related continental programmes and policies. It concluded with the [Nairobi Declaration](#) which specifically states the need to accelerate implementation of the [African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan \(2022-2032\)](#).



BOX 1. WHAT IS THE AFRICAN UNION CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN?

In February 2022, the African Union Heads of State and Government adopted the Strategy. The Strategy forms the foundation for joint climate action in Africa. It provides a framework for African countries to act on their climate change and resilient development agendas, to establish partnerships, and foster support. The Strategy provides a key resource for negotiators and other key stakeholders to determine and prioritise actions for climate-resilient development in Africa. It addresses the mitigation and adaptation challenges faced by African countries in responding to climate change and moving toward low-carbon, climate resilient growth. Such challenges relate to areas including governance and policy (Axis 1), means of implementation (Axis 3), and supporting Africa's existing regional initiatives (Axis 4). Nine transformative pathways for climate-resilient development are given (Axis 2) including:

- Transforming food systems;
- Transforming energy systems;
- Enhancing inclusive, low-emission industrialisation;
- Transforming the blue economy;
- Enhancing the resilience of urban centres.
- Protecting land-based ecosystems;
- Transforming mobility and transport;
- Transforming water systems;
- Digital transformation; and

(African Union, 2022)



This policy brief presents the key outcomes and commitments from the Summit, as detailed in the Declaration, which strengthen and support the proposed intervention and action areas given in the Strategy and the overarching climate resilient and sustainable development goals which they aim to achieve.



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

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

Commonalities between the Nairobi Declaration commitments and the intervention and action areas of the AU Climate Strategy

The Summit focused on green growth and climate finance solutions for Africa and the world. It also called for the rapid operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund and progress on the Global Goal for Adaptation, including through the establishment of indicators, targets and metrics. The Declaration commits African leaders to addressing biodiversity loss and promoting green industrialisation, whilst recognising the continent's rich natural capital and its contribution to climate change mitigation. The Declaration's commitments and their commonalities with the Strategy's intervention and action areas relating to governance and policy, means of implementation, regional flagship initiatives and the nine transformative pathways are elaborated below in the Annex of this briefing.



PRIORITISING GREEN GROWTH

Green growth was a central theme of the Summit, focusing on Africa's significant renewable energy potential and rapidly growing, young workforce. Green industrialisation and technological innovation with a strong focus on youth entrepreneurialism were core priorities. The Declaration commits African countries to develop and implement policies, regulations and incentives aimed at attracting investment at all scales in green growth. It commits leaders to focusing economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate smart and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity. It states that African countries must ensure economic growth and job creation is aligned with commitments made in the Paris Agreement. These commitments are aligned with the Strategy's pathway on 'Enhancing inclusive, low-emission industrialisation' which states that African countries need to adopt a new path of industrialisation which creates jobs and livelihoods for its people, whilst simultaneously responding to climate change and maintaining the sustainability and integrity of its natural ecosystems. A key intervention area in this regard is to 'Develop distributed renewable energy systems for decent job creation and wellbeing' with relevant recommended actions including:

- The development of distributed renewable energy systems as drivers for sustainable local and regional value addition and job creation.
- Facilitating digital technology application to enhance the economic empowerment and inclusivity of communities, with particular focus on youth on women.
- To catalyse its renewable energy potential, Africa is looking to build strategic partnerships to promote the development of its critical minerals and to ensure equitable, just transition energy pathways



ADOPTING CLIMATE FINANCE SOLUTIONS

International financial architecture reform

The Declaration urges developed countries to honour their commitment to pay US\$100 billion in annual climate finance, as pledged at COP15 in Copenhagen. It calls for the restructuring of the global finance architecture, including debt relief, to make funds more accessible for climate change action and to support Africa's net zero transition. The need to implement structural reform priorities was underscored. These priorities are detailed in the Bridgetown Initiative, the Accra-Marrakech Agenda, the United Nations Secretary-General's Sustainable Development Goal Stimulus Proposal and the International Financial Architecture reform roadmap defined at the Paris Summit for a New Global Financing Pact (Steves et al., 2023).

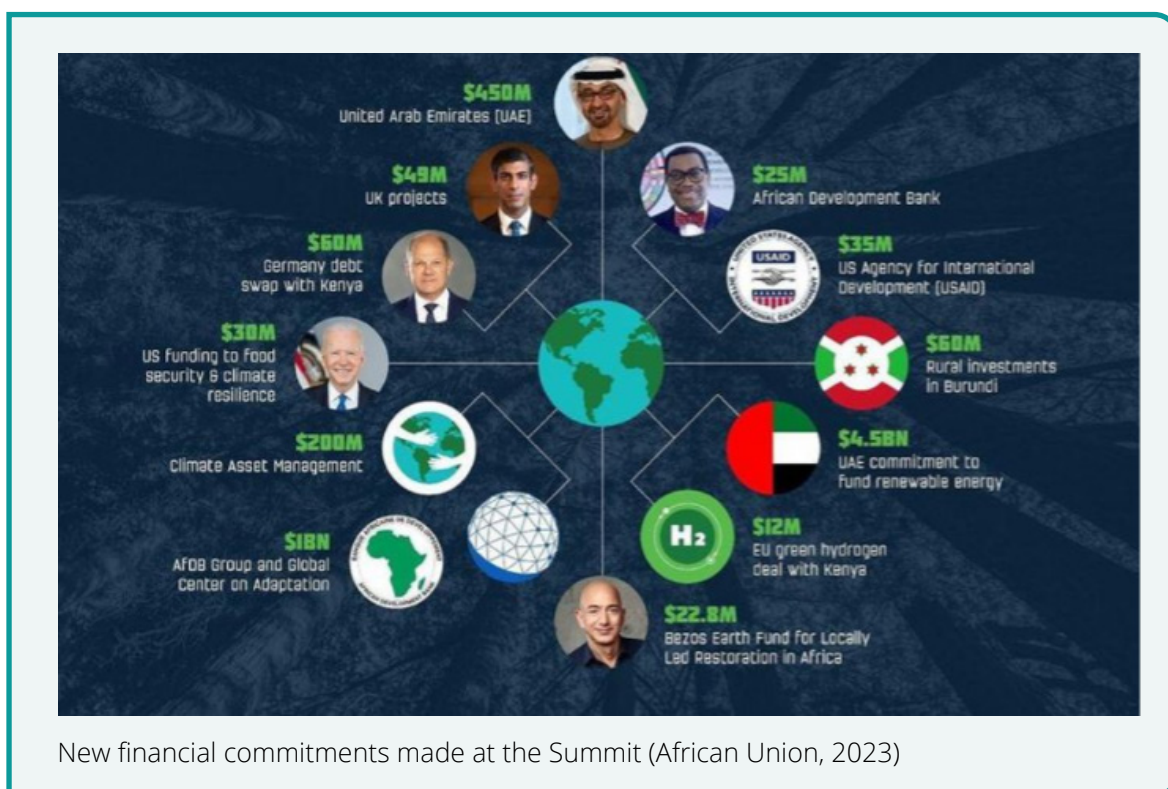
The Strategy's means of implementation (Axis 3) on 'Enhanced finance flows and resource mobilisation', echoes the need for developed countries to provide financial support to developing countries as per the Paris Agreement, and the need to balance mitigation and adaptation finance. It describes how Africa is struggling to access climate finance which is needed to deliver sustainable and transformative responses to climate-change impacts at scale. Key intervention areas include strengthening Africa's readiness and capacity to access and absorb international climate finance and to establish mechanisms to mobilise climate finance at scale in Africa.

BOX 2. NEW FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS

At the Africa Climate Summit, several governments and organisations committed financial resources and made pledges in support of Africa's adaptation and mitigation action agenda against climate change. Among others, these include:

- The **European Union committed US\$156 billion** in a **Global Gateway Investment Plan for Africa** (van Hal, 2023).
- The **United States of America announced several investments**, including **US\$20 million** to the Africa Adaptation Initiative Food Security Accelerator (van Hal, 2023).
- The **United Arab Emirates (UAE) pledged US\$4.5 billion** to develop **renewable energy** across Africa with the aim to develop 15GW of clean power by 2030. It also committed to **purchasing US\$450 million in carbon credits** from the newly established **Africa Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI)** (Steves et al., 2023).
- **Denmark committed US\$203 million towards the Africa Green Climate Fund** (Steves et al., 2023).
- **Norway committed US\$25 million for Ethiopia's forest sector** (Steves et al., 2023).
- **Belgium allocated US\$24 million for climate adaptation projects** over the next two years, and a £25 million cooperation agreement with Mozambique (Steves et al., 2023).
- **Germany announced a US\$65 million debt swap with Kenya for clean energy projects** (Steves et al., 2023).
- **Portugal guaranteed €400 million to support investment** in priority sectors in six African countries (Steves et al., 2023).
- **China launched the African Solar Belt Programme committing US\$13.7 million for solar projects** in areas without power grids, with the aim to support 50,000 households (Steves et al., 2023).
- **The Bezos Earth Fund announced US\$22.8 million towards the restoration of essential carbon sequestration landscape areas** in Kenya, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi (Steves et al., 2023).
- **The African Development Bank (AfDB) allocated US\$23 billion for green growth, mitigation and adaptation efforts** up to 2025 and a **US\$1 billion facility to accelerate climate finance for African youths' businesses** (Steves et al., 2023).
- **Climate Assets Management announced a US\$200 million investment in projects that will produce ACMI credits** (Steves et al., 2023).

In terms of financing from within the continent, Kenya pledged US\$ 49.7 million in funding for regional county partners through the Financing Locally Led Climate Action Programme (FLLoCA). Additionally, the African Heads of State Panel for the Development of a Regenerative Blue Economy and implementation of the Great Blue Wall Initiative was established with the goal of mobilising at least US\$15 billion by 2030 (Steves et al., 2023).



Debt relief

Progress on debt relief for Africa has been slow. The Declaration highlights the excessive borrowing costs faced by African countries and states that the costs are the cause of the recurring debt crises which affects 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. In a similar light, the Strategy's Axis 3 brings the debt crisis to the fore front by explaining how public finance targeting adaptation in Africa has mostly been issued as loans, rather than as concessional finance such as grants. It describes the debt distress faced by African countries, particularly post-COVID-19, and how it impedes adaptive capacity. It emphasises the need to decrease debt levels to allow governments to invest domestically in climate resilience. It is noted that the total external debt servicing payments across African countries exceeds committed levels of near-term climate finance for adaptation. The Strategy calls for the need to 'Address the decline in grant finance and the climate-related increasing debt burden of many African countries'.

Carbon markets

Some African leaders support the growth of the carbon credit market, and the Declaration calls for the elevation of Africa's share. The Strategy's pathway on 'Protecting land-based ecosystems and carbon sinks' suggests the development of national policies and mechanisms to allow for carbon credit trading and benefit sharing for communities that implement rangeland restorative practices. It should be noted that some stakeholders within civil society groups oppose the carbon credit market, viewing it as a 'neocolonial' policy which permits pollution and places the burden of action on Africa (Steves et al., 2023).

Adaptation funding gap

At the Summit, leaders indicated the need to accelerate climate adaptation at scale in Africa. It was noted that the adaptation finance needed to deliver the continent's Nationally Determined Contributions is the highest globally. Africa needs a minimum of US\$56 billion annually for adaptation by 2030. However, these funding needs are likely underestimated, and Africa may actually need up to US\$1.7 trillion for climate adaptation to 2035 (GCA, 2023). Currently, Africa's adaptation finance flows are vastly inefficient, for example in 2019-2020, only US\$ 11.4 billion was committed to adaptation activities in Africa and it is projected that international climate adaptation finance will only amount to US\$ 182.4 billion by 2035. Such a failure in adaptation funding is expected to cost Africa US\$6 trillion in economic benefits by 2035 (GCA, 2023).

Furthermore, it was indicated that over half of adaptation finance committed to Africa in 2019–2020 was in the form of loans, which exacerbates the debt crisis. This also means that Africa is paying back the adaptation finance. The need for grant-based funding was noted as being particularly important as well as funding support from the private sector (GCA, 2023). Commitments around adaptation funding in the Declaration included the need to prioritise, and mainstream adaptation into development policymaking and planning and to build effective partnerships between Africa and other regions to meet financial support needs.

The Summit reflects the adaptation finance needs outlined in the Strategy. The Strategy explains Africa's struggle in accessing climate finance for adaptation and how the Paris Agreement is clear on the need for developed countries to provide financial support to developing countries and the need to balance mitigation and adaptation finance. It is noted that international finance allocated for the period 2014-2018, predominantly targeted mitigation (US\$30.6 billion) as opposed to adaptation (US\$16.5 billion). And, as highlighted in the Summit, adaptation-related finance was largely provided as loans (57%), as compared to grants (42%). The intervention area of Axis 3 on

enhanced finance flows and resource mobilisation indicates the need to balance mitigation and adaptation finance with the following suggested actions:

- Prioritise predictable and sustainable finance for adaptation at scale.
- Ensure that adaptation finance is delivered on a grant basis.
- Address the decline in grant finance and the climate-related increasing debt burden of many African countries.

Private sector funding

At the Summit, leaders discussed the dearth of private sector contributions to climate adaptation finance which constitutes only 3% of total flows, of which 90% comprise private grants to the agri-food sector alone (GCA, 2023). This presents a missed opportunity, for example, in South and East Asia, the private sector invests approximately 40% of total climate finance flows, creating jobs and fostering climate-smart economic growth (GCA, 2023). Similarly, in Axis 3, the Strategy highlights the need to promote investment from non-state actors, such as the private sector, in climate action, this involves the following suggested action areas:

- Build capacity for local, small and medium private sector engagement and win-win contracting.
- Identify barriers to private sector investment and promote the use of policy and financial de-risking instruments.
- Develop capacity for formulation of investment ready project pipelines and enhance matchmaking platforms.

Furthermore, the Strategy's intervention area on mobilising new financial instruments and accountability structures to support climate adaptation and mitigation indicates the need for the mobilisation of finances from the private sector to reduce risk and enhance the quality of existing urban infrastructure.

BOX 3. STRENGTHENING INNOVATIVE FINANCING AND NOVEL PARTNERSHIPS TO SUPPORT AFRICA'S CLIMATE RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT AMBITION

The Africa Climate Summit was not the only event in 2023 targeting international finance mobilisation. On the 22nd of June 2023, the Summit for a New Global Financing Pact was held in Paris, France. The Summit brought together around 40 heads of State and government, more than 120 non-governmental organisations (NGOs), over 40 international organisations and more than 70 partners from the private and philanthropic sectors (Focus2030, 2023). The aim of the Summit was to provide a platform to discuss the reform of multilateral development banks, the mobilisation of private capital, climate finance, green infrastructure and debt solutions.

The African Union Commission, in partnership with the Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) programme, participated in a side event of the Summit namely, 'Strengthening innovative financing and novel partnerships to support Africa's climate resilient development ambition', as targeted investment, partnerships, collective action and the scaling of innovative financing is critical to the implementation of the African Union's Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan's intervention axes. Panellists from the public and private sectors and the research for development arena met to address the key strategic financing priorities and implementation alignment. Ana Maria Loboguerrero, Director of the AICCRA programme, spoke on the challenges faced by a lack of data in Africa and the climate research agenda. She highlighted four important areas of the climate change agenda in Africa:

- **The need for demand driven research.** The need for demand driven research that fills important gaps in the knowledge base and targets the end users with appropriate solutions.
- **Research needs to be participatory** to ensure the voices of the most vulnerable populations are heard, as they are the worst affected by climatic shocks.
- **Solutions must be tailored to the local contexts** and the specific situations faced by local communities.
- **The need to invest in technologies** which respond to the climate challenge and bundling the technologies with effective enabling environments is key.

She also addressed the **need for coordinated research and how it is best achieved through partnerships** between local communities, the private sector, governments at different levels, and research institutions and organisations. Furthermore, she stressed the **need for foresight planning** to ensure policy is effective and does not result in maladaptation. Lastly, she spoke of **climate change research having the potential to mobilise resources to implement climate-related policies**. She gave the example of the AICCRA programme which, in partnership with African organisations, has delivered technical climate-smart agricultural criteria which has improved climate risk assessments and has bettered the process for screening and prioritising investments for climate-smart agriculture. This has already helped to accelerate the flow of finance to Africa, with a focus on women and youth led enterprises.



TRANSFORMING FOOD SYSTEMS

Despite agriculture employing the majority of the African population and providing the primary source of income for the poor, it does not feature prominently in the Declaration. The Declaration commits African countries to renew their efforts in enhancing agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices so as to improve food security and minimise negative environmental impacts. It emphasises the need to focus economic development plans on climate-positive growth, such as through climate-smart and restorative agricultural practices and to support smallholder farmers in their roles as land stewards.

Food systems are a core area of the AU Climate Strategy. In Axis 2, the Strategy stresses the importance of food systems transformation to address food insecurity and poverty in the face of climate change. It indicates the need to intensify efforts to meet international commitments such as those relating to biodiversity and land health (e.g. Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and the Convention on Biological Diversity) and it describes how the continent's food systems are under increasing pressure from climate change and yet the demand for more food of better quality is increasing. The Strategy underscores the need for national and regional organisations and governments to address the negative impacts of food systems on the environment and natural resources, and the need for biophysical, social and ecological performance indicators to be monitored to ensure progress towards the continent's food system targets. It also states that research and innovation needs to focus on addressing the challenges faced by farmers, and that farmers should be at the centre of transformation agendas. Suggested actions which are reinforced by the Declaration include:

- Promote the equitable sharing of climate risk and reward amongst all food system actors, especially small-scale, rural farmers.
- Enhance the resilience of food systems against climate effects, whilst emphasising nutrition outcomes and integrated planning.
- Emphasise production toward agro-ecological transition.



PROTECTING LAND-BASED ECOSYSTEMS

The Declaration calls for the revaluation of Africa's Gross Domestic Product by incorporating its rich natural capital and ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration. This entails the use of natural resource accounting and the development of national accounting standards. Such action would enhance awareness on the value of Africa's natural assets and the benefits and services they provide and would further justify the need for investment in conservation initiatives. The need for enhancing and conserving biodiversity was recognised and reiterated across multiple commitments, and a call was made to finalise and implement the African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with the view to realising the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature. The Declaration addressed land degradation by committing countries to halt and reverse deforestation and desertification and to restore degraded lands to achieve land degradation neutrality. The need for climate-smart, sustainable and restorative agricultural practices was indicated as well as the need for gender equality in realising successful land restoration.

The Strategy aligns with the Declaration's commitment on sustainable intensification of agricultural systems. It emphasises the importance of regenerative agricultural practices that limit land clearing, improve groundwater recharge and enhance biodiversity outcomes. It mentions the need for African governments to prioritise investment in the protection and restoration of the continent's natural assets and ecosystems to build green economies. It also calls for the need to develop bankable measures for ecosystem protection and restoration, sustainable water resources management and regenerative agriculture. Biodiversity is also frequently cited in the Strategy's intervention areas and recommended actions, for example, the need to invest in biodiversity positive agricultural systems, to encourage zero loss of biodiversity in commodity supply chains, and to promote and expand biodiverse areas. Land degradation is recognised as a major barrier to raising the

continent's agricultural productivity and the need to align food system visions with the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification net-zero land degradation targets is emphasised.



TRANSFORMING ENERGY SYSTEMS

Increasing renewable energy capacity

Renewable energy was a focal area of the Summit, with leaders emphasising Africa's potential for accelerating the global renewable energy agenda. The leaders committed to increase renewable energy capacity from 56 to 300 GW by 2030 (Steves et al., 2023). However, they indicated a need for additional finance to transition from fossil fuels to meet the ambitious renewable energy target. The Declaration states that despite Africa having an estimated 40% of the world's renewable energy resources, only US\$60 billion or 2% of US\$3 trillion renewable energy investments in the last decade have come to Africa. As a result, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) pledged to increase renewable energy in Africa in partnership with Kenya, Denmark, UAE and Germany; and the Accelerated Partnership for Renewables in Africa (APRA), comprising Kenya, Ethiopia, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and Zimbabwe, will focus on mobilising finance, providing technical assistance and capacity building, and engaging the private sector (see Box 2 for other pledges related to renewable energy development).

Other commitments related to renewable energy in the Declaration include expanding just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, the promotion of clean cooking technologies, prioritising energy-intensive industries to trigger renewable energy development and raising renewable energy financing to at least 20% by 2030.

As with the Declaration, renewable energy production features prominently in the Strategy. The Strategy's Axis 2 pathway on 'Enhancing climate-resilient and low-carbon energy and infrastructural systems' also emphasises Africa's

wealth of renewable resources (e.g. river systems, bioenergy, sunshine and wind) which can be harnessed to meet the region's current and future electricity needs. In the IRENA Roadmap 2030 scenario, renewable energy contributes 58% of Sub-Saharan Africa's electricity mix by 2030, with non-hydro renewables contributing 23%. However, such a scenario is based on a considerable increase in investment, with both public and private finance needed to close the funding gap. The use of renewable energy in agriculture is also highlighted in the suggested actions of the transforming food systems pathway. More specific intervention areas on renewable energy include strengthening power sector reforms to enable renewable energy; expanding renewable energy capacity through competitive auctions; and strengthening finance and risk mitigation for efficient and renewable energy. The Strategy also supports a just energy transition, to enhance equitable access to energy efficient solutions for all. Furthermore, it calls to address the challenges of cooking with solid biomass with the adoption of improved stoves and modern cooking fuels.

Phasing down fossil fuels

The Declaration calls on the global community to maintain their commitments to a just and accelerated energy transition, phasing down coal and phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies. In the Summit, the commitment to move away from fossil fuels as an energy source was not extended to oil and gas. The President of the African Development Bank indicated the need for many African countries to use gas alongside renewable energy as a transition fuel (Steves et al., 2023).

The Strategy also supports the transition away from fossil fuels, mentioning that through active engagement with partners and mandated continental and regional organisations, African countries could bypass fossil fuel technologies and adopt more climate-friendly and needs-based power strategies which are better aligned with the Paris Agreement and low-carbon growth. However, it must be noted that both the Strategy and the Declaration acknowledge the different capabilities and differing responsibilities of African countries in addressing climate mitigation.



TRANSFORMING MOBILITY AND TRANSPORT

The Declaration touches on the transport sector with a commitment to accelerate efforts to decarbonise the sector through the use of smart, digital and highly efficient technologies such as green hydrogen and synthetic fuels. In Axis 2 of the Strategy, the pathway on low-carbon, resilient mobility and transport systems also highlights the potential for green hydrogen in Africa and recommends investment in its research. As in the Declaration, the Strategy promotes the transition towards low-carbon mobility, with recommendations focused on research and the establishment of a continental knowledge platform.



ENHANCING LOW-EMISSION INDUSTRIALISATION

Low-emission industrialisation is a key theme of the Declaration. Commitments speak to the avoidance of traditional industrial development with the need to foster green production and supply chains on a global scale. This is echoed in the Strategy which states that **'industrialisation in Africa, however, does not necessarily need to follow the same path of polluting and inefficient industrialisation process that had been followed by countries in other regions' with the opportunity for 'learning from the mistakes made by developed countries and transition economies'**. The Declaration emphasises the need for just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for low-carbon industrial activities. This is similarly reflected in the intervention areas of Axis 2 of the Strategy on 'Inclusive, low emission and resource efficient industrialisation' which indicate the needs to develop distributed renewable energy systems and to promote energy efficient industrial development by providing incentives and institutional support for industries to increase the share of renewable energy in the overall energy mix.

The Declaration commits African leaders to accelerate efforts to decarbonise the industrial sector through the use of smart, digital and highly efficient technologies and to design industry



policies that incentivise global investment to locations that offer climate benefits. This is reinforced in the Strategy, which talks to the development of effective industrial policy through the anticipation of long-term technology trends and suggests the development of coherent and integrated industrial development policies and strategies for low-emission and resource-efficient industrialisation.



TRANSFORMING WATER SYSTEMS

The Declaration commits African leaders to supporting the implementation of the Africa Water Investment Programme, which aims to close the Africa water investment gap by mobilising US\$30 billion by 2030. Although the programme is not specifically mentioned in the pathway for resilient water systems in Axis 2 of the Strategy, it is reflected in the more general intervention area of 'Increase water investment' with suggested actions including the mobilisation of financial

and other resources for water investment and the need to strengthen capacities for developing, implementing, operating and managing water investment programmes.



TRANSFORMING THE BLUE ECONOMY

The Declaration addresses Africa's blue economy through a commitment 'to 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'. The pathway on building a climate-resilient African blue economy in Axis 2 of the Strategy also emphasises the need to ensure economic production and consumption processes do not degrade the continent's natural marine and freshwater assets. It underscores the need for governance that is integrated, adaptive and inclusive in addressing climate related impacts and ensuring that Africa's maritime and freshwater

ecosystems are resilient to support an equitable and sustainable blue economy. The Moroni Declaration and the Great Blue Wall Initiative are not specifically mentioned in the Strategy, but the commitment supports the more general intervention areas of supporting sectoral and integrative blue economy interventions and promoting climate-resilient coastal development.



DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The Declaration makes no mention of the need for digital transformation which forms one of the nine development pathways in Axis 2 of the Strategy. The Strategy promotes digitalisation to enhance climate resilience through the provision of timely climate data for informed decision-making and service provision. It highlights how digital innovations are critical to agricultural transformation through the provision of climate advisory services. It promotes a holistic approach to digital transformation taking into consideration capacity development, inclusivity, the enabling environment and investment needs. Some of the key intervention areas and recommended actions given in the Strategy include:

- Governments should coordinate their national digital climate-related data infrastructure.
- Engage private sector digital innovators and service providers as business partners.
- Strengthen community engagement and digital inclusion.
- Recognise and expand African capacity for climate-conscious digital transformation.



ENHANCING THE RESILIENCE OF URBAN CENTRES

The Declaration commits African leaders to invest in urban infrastructure, specifically the upgrading of informal settlements and slum areas, to work toward climate resilient cities and urban centres.

Similarly, Axis 2 of the Strategy provides a pathway on building low-emission, more resilient urban areas. It also emphasises the need for improved infrastructure such as hybridised blue-green-grey infrastructure, to help regulate water flow, reduce the heat island effect, treat wastewater, reduce stormwater runoff, and improve water supplies. It includes an intervention area on investing in net zero carbon buildings with actions including the adoption of renewable energy in new or existing infrastructure designs. The Strategy also focuses on enhancing the resilience of informal and peri-urban settlements with a suggested action on upgrading informal settlements and slum areas and the need to incorporate the activity in policy.



AREAS WHERE THE OUTCOMES OF THE AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT COULD BE ENHANCED:

The Summit allowed for African leaders to adopt a unified and progressive collective continental stance under the leadership of the African Union Commission and the Kenyan government. However, several gaps were identified including:

- **Limited discussions on adaptation** - Some observers highlighted that discussions on mitigation, such as decarbonisation and energy transitions, were at the fore front of discussions, with adaptation mentioned more as a peripheral issue (Koringo, 2023). As a result, the Summit missed an opportunity to strongly call for increased finance for adaptation and for developed countries to double adaptation finance as committed to in the Glasgow Pact. Additionally, the need for locally led adaptation, should have received greater attention, even though only a small portion of climate finance goes to local initiatives and programmes. Additionally, Loss and Damage was mentioned alongside adaptation, but commentators note that these are two important and different issues that require their own prioritisation and attention (Adeniyi, 2023).

- Market versus a human-centred approach**
 - The concerns of vulnerable people and the critical food security challenges they face was not at the centre of discussions which tended to focus on businesses, engaging the private sector and big investments including carbon markets (Adeniyi, 2023; Koringo, 2023).
- Emphasis on the need for reparations and an approach to addressing financial flows**
 - Addressing the climate crisis requires compensations and financing on a scale of trillions, rather than the billions that have been pledged but remain undelivered. The Declaration would have benefited from a stronger delivery of the need for compensation and a detailed approach to directing financial flows related to climate change (Koringo, 2023).
- Need for climate financing infrastructure**
 - Funding is typically skewed towards countries with capacity to develop credible and bankable projects. The Declaration omitted the urgent need to develop this capacity in other nations to enable them to attract additional climate finance (Adeniyi, 2023).
- Limited mention of food systems and food security**
 - Measures to address the impacts of climate change on the agri-food sector were limited and food security was referenced only once in the Declaration (Adeniyi, 2023).
- Controversy surrounding the promotion of carbon credits**
 - The emphasis on carbon credits was criticised by civil society organisations and climate activists. Carbon credits are seen as a means for foreign corporations to continue to pollute, while bringing limited benefits in terms of African development. Further, an overreliance on carbon credits in the absence of more ambitious action to phase out fossil fuels, may progress the long-term climate risk faced by African countries. There is a need to prevent corporate capture of carbon credits and to guarantee that they will benefit local communities and vulnerable populations (Adeniyi, 2023).

Conclusion

The Summit was a critical event for building consensus on climate action priorities for Africa. The resulting Declaration calls for concrete climate action with a focus on green growth and a new financing architecture that is responsive to Africa's needs. As part of the climate action, the Declaration specifically states the need to accelerate implementation of the Strategy and many of its commitments reinforce those given in the Strategy's intervention axes, particularly those focused on renewable energy development, green industrialisation and employment creation, and the restoration and conservation of land-based ecosystems. Unexpectedly, food systems and food security did not feature prominently in the Declaration given the current food security crisis faced in Africa, which is largely attributed to climate change, as well as the recent focus on the continent's agrifood systems in the United Nations Food Systems Summit of 2021 and COP27. Although the Strategy is well supported by the Declaration through alignments in core action areas, without adequate financing African countries are limited in their capacity to implement them. As such, the focus of the Declaration on climate finance solutions and the new financial commitments pledged at the Summit may provide a chance for African countries to afford the implementation of the commitments and suggested actions thereby progressing their climate resilient development and adaptation agendas.



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Annex

Matrix indicating action areas common to the Declaration and the Strategy

Theme	Nairobi Declaration Commitments and Call to Action	AU CCRDS Intervention Areas/ Suggested Actions
Resilient food systems 	Support smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples, and local communities in the green economic transition, given their key role in ecosystems stewardship.	Promote the equitable sharing of climate risk and reward amongst all food system actors, especially small-scale, rural farmers.
	Focus our economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate smart and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity.	Enhance resilience of food systems against climate effects, while emphasising nutrition outcomes and integrated planning.
	Redouble our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices, to enhance food security while minimising negative environmental impacts.	Emphasise production toward agro-ecological transition, to reduce greenhouse gas intensity (including methane and other gases), and dependencies on external inputs.
	Develop and implement policies, regulations and incentives aimed at attracting local, regional and global investment in green growth, inclusive of green and circular economies.	Strengthen finance, investment and resource allocation interventions.

Theme	Nairobi Declaration Commitments and Call to Action	AU CCRDS Intervention Areas/ Suggested Actions
<p>Managing and protecting land-based ecosystems</p> 	<p>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.</p>	<p>Develop bankable measures for ecosystem protection/ restoration, sustainable water resources management and regenerative agriculture.</p>
	<p>Promote investments in reskilling to unlock the human capital that will power Africa's inclusive green transition.</p>	<p>Build technical capacity for implementing and investing in regenerative and biodiversity positive agricultural systems across the region.</p>
	<p>Strengthen actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation, and desertification, as well as restore degraded lands to achieve land degradation neutrality; and implement the Abidjan Declaration on achieving gender equality for successful land restoration.</p>	<p>Avoid further degradation of and enhance sustainable management of all ecosystems.</p>
	<p>Redouble our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices, to enhance food security while minimising negative environmental impacts.</p>	<p>Restore and sustainably manage agricultural systems (including crop and livestock systems) to reduce and remove greenhouse emissions, reduce human-wildlife conflict, enhance food security and water regulation benefits.</p>
	<p>Focus our economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate smart and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity.</p>	<p>Integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable management in climate change actions.</p>
	<p>Finalise and implement the African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with the view to realising the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.</p>	<p>Integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable management in climate change actions.</p>
	<p>Redouble our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices, to enhance food security while minimising negative environmental impacts.</p>	<p>Ensure focus on food security, land-use rights and protection of biodiversity in projects for ecosystem-based approaches to carbon removal.</p>
<p>Climate-resilient and low-emission energy and infrastructural systems</p> 	<p>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.</p>	<p>Increase power capacity by harnessing the regional potential of river basins to strengthen resilience to droughts and get renewable electricity to markets.</p>
	<p>Focus our economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate smart and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity.</p>	<p>Strengthen power sector reforms to enable renewable energy.</p>

Theme	Nairobi Declaration Commitments and Call to Action	AU CCRDS Intervention Areas/ Suggested Actions
Climate-resilient and low-emission energy and infrastructural systems CONT. 	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.	Expand renewable capacity through competitive auctions.
	Provide all the necessary reforms and support required to raise the share of renewable energy financing to at least 20 percent by 2030.	Strengthen finance and risk mitigation for efficient and renewable energy.
	Focus our economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate smart and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity.	Enhance access to energy efficient solutions for all.
	Promote clean cooking technologies and initiatives for just energy transition and gender equality for African rural women, youth, and children.	Enhance access to energy efficient solutions for all.
	Promote clean cooking technologies and initiatives for just energy transition and gender equality for African rural women, youth, and children.	Increase adoption of new low-cost, energy saving technologies.
	Access to, and transfer of environmentally sound technologies, including technologies to support Africa's green industrialisation and transition.	Increase adoption of new low-cost, energy saving technologies.
	Focus our economic development plans on climate-positive growth, including expansion of just energy transitions and renewable energy generation for industrial activity, climate smart and restorative agricultural practices, and essential protection and enhancement of nature and biodiversity.	Build climate resilience and a just transition with a focus on women, girls and young people.
	Promote clean cooking technologies and initiatives for just energy transition and gender equality for African rural women, youth, and children.	Build climate resilience and a just transition with a focus on women, girls and young people.
Inclusive, low-emission and resource-efficient industrialisation 	Propel Africa's economic growth and job creation in a manner that reflects our commitments to the Paris Agreement and also aids global decarbonisation efforts, by leapfrogging the traditional progression of industrial development and fostering green production and supply chains on a global scale.	Develop distributed renewable energy systems for decent job creation and wellbeing.

Theme	Nairobi Declaration Commitments and Call to Action	AU CCRDS Intervention Areas/ Suggested Actions
Low-Emission, Resilient Mobility and Transport Systems 	Accelerate efforts to decarbonise 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.	Support the adaptation of road standards and transport planning guidelines to include resilient designs, as well as prioritise the needs of the most popular and lowest carbon transport modes – walking and cycling.
Low-Emission, Resilient Urban Areas 	Promote investments in urban infrastructure including through upgrading informal settlements and slum areas to build climate resilient cities and urban centres.	Promote resilient, nature-based solutions and urban green infrastructure.
	Develop and implement policies, regulations and incentives aimed at attracting local, regional and global investment in green growth, inclusive of green and circular economies.	Invest in the circular economy, smart mobility, decarbonisation and net zero carbon buildings.
	Accelerate efforts to decarbonise 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	Invest in the circular economy, smart mobility, decarbonisation and net zero carbon buildings.
Resilient Water 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.	Increase water investment.
Climate-Resilient African Blue Economy 	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 sectoral and integrative blue economy interventions.
Inclusive Participation, Especially of Gender and Youth 	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.	Improve gender and youth participation in policy co-design, co-development processes, co-implementation and M&E. Empower and engage young people and women in climate adaptation planning and implementation through inclusive and participatory approaches. Enhance education and sensitisation on gender and youth responsive approaches Increase financial and technical support for youth and gender organisations



About this AICCRA POLICY BRIEF

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About AICCRA

Accelerating Impacts of CGIAR Climate Research for Africa (AICCRA) is a project that helps deliver a climate-smart African future driven by science and innovation in agriculture. It is led by the Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT and supported by a grant from the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank.

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