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ABOUT JOTO AFRIKA

Joto Afrika is a series of printed briefings and online resources about adapting to climate change in sub-Saharan Africa. The series will help people understand the issues, constraints, and opportunities that poor people face in adapting to climate change and escaping poverty. Joto Afrika is Swahili; it can be loosely translated to mean 'Africa is feeling the heat'. Please tell us what you think about this 28th issue of Joto Afrika and what you would like to read in future issues.

COP29

Baku Azerbaijan





Editorial

The world is gathering in Baku, Azerbaijan, from the 11th to the 22nd of November for the 29th Conference of Parties (COP 29). This COP has been dubbed the “finance COP.” Parties are expected to set and adopt a “new collective quantified goal on climate finance” (NCQG) to replace the existing goal of US\$100 billion annually. The new finance goal will channel funds towards accelerated climate action in developing countries. The funds will help developing countries reduce emissions and adapt to climate change impacts. Additionally, the funds will support the implementation of climate-resilient solutions in key sectors such as agriculture, energy, and transport, among other systems. Coming out of the Bonn Conference in June 2024, parties emphasised the need for NCQG to consider concessionality, accessibility, predictability, and effectiveness as key attributes.

In this issue, writers underscore the need for Parties to produce firm commitments and actions on all thematic themes at COP 29. These include the new goal on climate finance, loss and damage fund, mitigation and just transition, global goal on adaptation, including health, and operationalisation of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. The publication emphasises that with climate impacts on the African continent increasing by the day, ambitious adaptation financing is more urgent than ever and that commitments must be matched with tangible actions.

This publication also focuses on agriculture and food systems which are essential components of climate action. It presents a case for ensuring agriculture and food systems agenda is progressed at COP 29 while acknowledging the key outcome at Bonn conference in June on

Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security. Additionally, authors have presented the need to ensure that Indigenous People, local communities, People with Disabilities, among other marginalised groups are not left behind in this climate change discourse and that their concerns form part of the conference outcomes.

The current issue also emphasises the need for African continent negotiators and delegations to be aware of the need for more action and ensure that the outcomes of the conference, especially on the new climate finance goal, the loss and damage fund, and the global goal on adaptation, are fair, equitable, and fit-for-purpose.

As the world faces loss of trust in international institutions and mechanisms, this editorial is a call to action- all hands on deck. It is a reminder to all stakeholders, including governments, private sector businesses, civil society, and individuals, to put more effort into combating climate change. Amidst the many global challenges, COP 29 provides us with yet another chance to bring back hope in multilateralism. A new collective quantified goal on climate finance would be a good place to start.

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What is Conference of the Parties (COP)?

The COP is the supreme decision-making body of the Convention. All States that are Parties to the Convention are represented at the COP, at which they review the implementation of the Convention and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts and take decisions necessary to promote the effective implementation of the Convention, including institutional and administrative arrangements.

More Background on the COP

A key task for the COP is to review the national communications and emission inventories submitted by Parties. Based on this information, the COP assesses the effects of the measures taken by Parties and the progress made in achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention.

The COP meets every year, unless the Parties decide otherwise. The first COP meeting was held in Berlin, Germany in March, 1995. The COP meets in Bonn, the seat of the secretariat, unless a Party offers to host the session. Just as the COP Presidency rotates among the five recognized UN regions - that is, Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Central and Eastern Europe and Western Europe and Others - there is a tendency for the venue of the COP to also shift among these groups.

See also:

<https://bit.ly/4frNjbJ>



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African Group of Negotiators Put Forward COP29 Positions

The African Group of Negotiators has settled on a set of positions it will take to COP29 in November in Baku. Reaching a fair, equitable, and fit-for-purpose new finance goal remains front and centre. The group is also keen to agree on key elements to operationalize the Global Goal on Adaptation, the Loss and Damage Fund, and Article 6 on carbon markets.

Ahead of COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, in November and following global climate talks in Bonn in June, the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) met in Nairobi to outline the Group's positions ahead of the negotiations. It did so ahead of the meetings of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) and the Committee of the African Heads of State on Climate Change (CAHOSCC), where the positions were put forward for consideration and adoption.

The points of negotiation cover an array of thematic areas but broadly centre around the need for an ambitious New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance (NCQG), operationalising the global goal on adaptation (GGA) and the Loss and Damage Fund, and resolving unfinished business under Article 6 on carbon trading mechanisms.

Finance

In respect of climate finance, incoming AGN co-chair and Kenya's climate envoy, Ali D. Mohamed, underscored that COP29 "must deliver on an ambitious [new finance goal] that responds to the needs of developing countries, especially Africa, is consistent with 1.5 degree Celsius pathways for both mitigation and adaptation and

that does not exacerbate debt distress." The AGN is focusing on the need for the NCQG to provide the clarity and predictability for further ambition and action by developing countries, on international financial support, ensuring that the amount is always adequate to cover Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) implementation.

Finance discussions are not limited to the NCQG. They span multiple thematic areas such as loss and damage, mitigation, and adaptation. The AGN lamented the continued lack of appetite to discuss finance, capacity building, and technology transfer, noting pronouncements about urgency of action were not accompanied by actual action. Speaking at the AGN preparatory meeting in Nairobi, Kenya's Cabinet Secretary at the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry Hon. Adan Bare Duale, highlighted that "as countries are building momentum towards a new set of [NDCs] the African continent has not received sufficient financial and technical support to effectively implement, track and report on [them]". For this reason, "finance will lie at the heart of climate diplomacy at COP29".

Adaptation

At COP28 last year, parties agreed on the UAE Climate Resilience Framework on the GGA and established the UAE-Belem work programme. Part of this process is reaching an agreement on indicators to track the GGA. Coming out of Bonn, countries agreed that a new, more representative, and technically proficient team of experts would map potential indicators for the GGA. The AGN supports operationalizing the GGA and is keen to

have finance (and, more broadly, means of implementation) included as a component and meaningfully recognized.

Health is also fast becoming a key agenda item in the climate talks. It has come up under the GGA discussions, with the AGN keen to operationalize the GGA sub-goal that seeks to build resilience to climate-related health impacts, promote climate-resilient health services, and significantly reduce climate-related morbidity and mortality. This would include support for mainstreaming health into climate policies and plans.

Loss and Damage

With the recent flooding in East Africa, drought in Southern Africa, and fatal heat waves in the Sahel, the AGN has been focusing on what the fund can and cannot do for countries facing climate-induced losses and damages in the region. A priority remains the need for modalities to get it up and running, and the AGN is focused on reaching an agreement with other countries on what these might be.

The AGN also expressed displeasure on the recent decision to host the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (a technical assistance body) in Geneva, Switzerland. The decision runs contrary to a report recommending that the United Nations Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, would be the most cost-effective venue. In his remarks at the opening plenary of the Bonn climate talks in June, Mohamed registered these concerns.

Mitigation and Just Transitions

In the June climate talks in Bonn, countries had diverging views on what should be included in their draft decision text, particularly on whether they should reflect and build on the mitigation-related aspects of the COP 28 Global Stocktake outcome. Ultimately, no decision was reached. The AGN is keen to see more progress on this item, and is looking to engage in the work programme, to achieve greater support (particularly finance) for mitigation measures, most notably for expanded access to low carbon energy and clean cooking.

Article 6

Article 6 of the Paris Agreements as relates to carbon markets creates a framework for countries to cooperate in achieving their mitigation goals. It also provides for the establishment of a successor to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), now known as the Article 6.4. mechanism. The AGN's lead negotiator for carbon markets, El Hadji Mbaye Diagne, said that Africa is seeking the urgent operationalisation of Article 6. "We need a decision on Article 6.2 as well as on Article 6.4 in Baku to allow those mechanisms to be operational and see the different actors starting to develop real projects on the ground."



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Food Systems Actions: The Place for Agriculture during COP 29

As the world gathers for COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, from November 11 to 22, 2024, the spotlight has increasingly focused on agriculture and food systems as essential components of Climate Action. The discussions at the sixtieth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), set the stage for significant developments in this area. A key outcome from SB 60 was the agreement on the Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security (SSJW), which will be pivotal in shaping the agriculture and food systems agenda at COP 29.

Agriculture and food has traditionally been a challenging topic within climate negotiations. The sector's dual role in contributing to and being affected by climate change creates a complex landscape for policymakers. During the SB 60 negotiations, one of the main points of contention was including food systems as part of a holistic approach to agriculture. While developed countries pushed for this broader perspective, developing nations expressed concerns that it could shift the focus away from adaptation—critical for food security—and towards mitigation efforts that may not align with their immediate needs.

The agreed text at SB60 covers the inclusion of food systems in the negotiations, set to be a primary focus in a workshop scheduled in mid-2025. This represents a shift towards a more integrated approach encompassing the entire food value chain, from production to consumption and waste management. The integrated perspective is essential for long-term food security and the sustainable development of agricultural practices. However, as the negotiations move

forward, it will be crucial to address the voices of developing countries and their concerns about the potential shift towards a mitigation-centric approach.

Another significant outcome from SB60 concerning food and agriculture negotiations is the agreement to develop an online portal based on SSJW outcomes. The secretariat will report on this initiative's results at COP31. However, discussions on the portal will continue leading up to COP31, including at COP29.

COP29 will drive significant food and agriculture actions in both mitigation and adaptation. One of the key initiatives at this COP is the *Harmoniya Initiative* by the COP29 Presidency, which focuses on harmonizing agri-food actions and enhancing climate finance for inclusive food systems.

In the negotiation rooms, crucial discussions on climate finance will focus on new modalities through the *New Collective and Quantified Goal (NCQG)*. Stakeholders in food and agriculture should pay close attention, as the outcome will impact future activities, with climate finance being a critical tool for implementation in all climate actions.

Other key negotiation areas of interest for food and agriculture actors include the *Gender and Climate Change* workstream, which will finalize the discussions on the *Gender Action Plan* based on texts from SB60. This is particularly important for smallholder farmers, most of whom are women. Additionally, discussions on the *Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA)* will focus on developing indicators crucial for tracking food and agriculture actions and reporting on *Climate Action effectiveness*.

Outside the negotiation rooms, various events will focus on food and agriculture, including side events. These will occur in plenary rooms led by UNFCCC-accredited organisations and in pavilions within the Blue Zone, with many events at the Action Hub. The Action on Food Hub is divided into three key spaces: the plenary space (managed by the Food Systems Partnership), the roundtable space (managed by the Future Economy Forum), and the policy zone (managed by the Food4Climate Community). The Food Systems Pavilion is an initiative of the Food Systems Partnership, with EIT Food as its secretariat. This year, these three organisations have merged their efforts for more significant impact and dialogue, which will foster stronger conversations and outcomes. Additionally, innovative approaches related to food and climate will be showcased in the Green Zone.

Beyond the formal conference areas, various actors will organize food and climate activities in Baku. One such series is the Solutions Dialogues by the Future Economy Forum, which aims to provide a platform for global leaders committed to advancing regenerative solutions worldwide.

It is wonderful to see that food systems frontliners will play a key role in COP29, participating as negotiators, panellists, event organisers, and advocates. Supported by organisations like KAIROS Canada and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food, they will amplify the voices of marginalized communities and work to ensure that the outcomes of COP29 are inclusive and representative of those most impacted.

Therefore, COP29 offers diverse and important opportunities for food systems stakeholders. All aim to advocate for equitable and effective policies that build resilient food systems for the future. Let us hope we can all engage meaningfully and leave the COP with impactful outcomes for both people and the planet.

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COP Youth Agripreneurship Working Group

The CoP Youth Agripreneurship initiated a working group on Market Access consisting of VSO, GAIN, SNV, EAFF and CABI. The Working Group combines their knowledge to better understand the context, opportunities and potential leverage points with an aspired impact of facilitating better market access for small and medium-sized youth-led agri-businesses.

In a series of meetings, the Working Group identified the key challenges of young agripreneurs in accessing local and regional markets, as well as local institutions, like county governments, chambers of commerce and sector and producer associations, as key actors in improving market access for youth. These served as a basis to develop a common knowledge and action agenda

The main insights and findings of the Working Group activities in 2024, which included a Youth Consultation Meeting and a Hybrid Policy Dialogue, are summarized in this report.

Read more

<https://bit.ly/3O9RnkX>



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Nothing for Us Without Us: A COP That Works for Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities (PWDs) represent 15% of the global population, with 80% residing in the Global South. Many live in poverty, a situation worsened by the impacts of climate change. The interconnectedness of climate and disability is undeniable: PWDs face heightened vulnerability to climate-related risks such as floods, heat waves, fires, and food insecurity. Despite this, their voices and needs are often marginalised in international climate discussions, such as the annual Conference of Parties (COP) on climate change.

As the world strives to mitigate climate change and transition to a low-carbon economy, it is crucial to ensure that PWDs are not only considered beneficiaries but are also active participants in shaping climate solutions, the principle of "Nothing for Us Without Us" demands that persons with disabilities be directly involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Disproportionate Impact of Climate Change on PWDs

Climate change does not affect everyone equally. PWDs face increased risks during extreme weather events due to impairments that may limit their ability to access emergency information, evacuate, or find shelter. These vulnerabilities are further compounded for those with intersecting

identities—women, Indigenous Peoples, refugees, and those with psychosocial or intellectual disabilities face additional barriers to employment, safe working conditions, and healthcare.

Furthermore, climate change itself is likely to increase the incidence of disability. Extreme weather events, such as floods, hurricanes, and heatwaves, result in injuries and health conditions that can lead to permanent disabilities. The spread of climate-induced diseases like malaria and dengue may also raise the global prevalence of disability. In this context, any climate response that overlooks persons with disabilities is incomplete and unjust.

COP and the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

The Conference of Parties (COP) is a pivotal platform where global climate policies are negotiated. Historically, however, the voices of PWDs have been underrepresented in these discussions. If the world is to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)—particularly SDG 13 (climate Action) and SDG 10 (reducing inequalities)—COP must be more inclusive of persons with disabilities.

One strategy to achieve this is through the Just Transition Guidelines, which aim to ensure no one is left behind during the global shift to a low-carbon economy. These guidelines emphasize creating decent jobs, ensuring rights at work, and promoting social protection. Integrating the concerns of PWDs into this framework would contribute to their social inclusion, ensure access to decent work, and help eradicate poverty among them.

COP29 will be a crucial opportunity to drive this change. To make it more effective for persons with disabilities, several steps are essential:

- **Accessible Participation:** All aspects of COP29, from physical venues to online platforms, must be fully accessible. This includes providing sign language interpretation, live captioning, and accessible documents.
- **Inclusive Decision-Making:** Persons with disabilities and their representative organisations should be included in all levels of climate policy discussions. Their lived experiences offer valuable insights into developing equitable climate solutions.
- **Targeted Climate Policies:** Climate policies must consider the unique needs of persons with disabilities, such as making emergency response plans accessible and ensuring that disability-inclusive social protection measures are part of the transition to a green economy.
- **Data and Research:** Governments and organisations must present disaggregated data on how climate change affects persons with disabilities. This data is essential for designing effective policies that respond to their specific vulnerabilities.

A critical priority at COP29 is agreement on a new global finance goal to support climate change mitigation and adaptation. The previous goal—US\$100 billion per year—expires in 2025, but discussions about a new goal and other priorities have been slower than anticipated. Delays in financial commitments are particularly harmful to communities most affected by climate change, including persons with disabilities, who are often excluded from crucial budget planning. Without adequate resources, disability-inclusive measures will be delayed, worsening the situation for PWDs.

Key Issues in Disability-Inclusive Climate Action Policy Development and Implementation: It is essential to integrate disability-inclusive language and measures in climate agreements and national policies. Documents related to climate

finance and goals must be accessible and account for the most vulnerable, including persons with disabilities.

Intersectionality and Inclusion: Addressing the intersecting risks faced by PWDs, particularly women, girls, Indigenous People, and youth with disabilities, is vital. Barriers to accessing essential services, emergency preparedness, and adaptive technologies must be addressed.

Collaboration: Cooperation with other stakeholders to promote inclusive climate action is crucial. This includes ensuring resources for organisations of persons with disabilities (OPDs), enabling them to engage in advocacy, policy development, and monitoring. Recognition of Disability Constituency within the UN Climate Action structure would allow persons with disabilities to participate equally in negotiations, dialogues, and consultations.

Arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings (AIM): Disability inclusion should be a standard in all intergovernmental meetings. This includes fulfilling obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, such as ensuring accessibility and meaningful participation.

Nothing for Us Without Us is more than just a slogan—it is a call to action. As the world tackles the climate crisis, persons with disabilities must have a seat at the table. Only by working together can we build a world that is not only sustainable but also inclusive and just for all.

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The Stakes at COP 29

As the world gathers at the 29 Conference of Parties (COP 29) at Baku Stadium in Baku, the capital city of Azerbaijan, expectations are high for this pivotal conference to address the growing climate crisis. Set against the backdrop of increasing climate-related disasters such as heatwaves, floods, and droughts, COP 29 will be a critical moment for governments and stakeholders to reassess their climate commitments and chart a path forward. This conference could significantly influence global climate policies as nations grapple with the urgent need for more ambitious actions to mitigate and adapt to the changing climate. All eyes will be on world leaders to see if they can move beyond rhetoric and take meaningful steps to tackle the challenges ahead.

A major focus at COP 29 will be on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The conference is expected to push for stricter mitigation targets to keep global warming below 1.5°C. Many nations will need to present stronger plans, especially as current efforts are falling short. The science is clear: emissions need to be drastically reduced, and time is running out. For countries struggling to meet their targets, this conference will likely be a moment of reckoning.

Adaptation will also be a key issue on the agenda. As climate impacts become more severe, many countries, particularly those in the Global South, will seek increased support to build resilience. Nations vulnerable to rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and drought will emphasize the need for financial and technical aid to help them adapt to these changes. The focus will not just be on pledges but on practical, implementable solutions to ensure that these communities can withstand the immediate threats of climate change.

An important issue likely to dominate discussions at COP 29 will be the financing of loss and damage. Developing countries have long argued that those most affected by climate change are the least responsible for causing it. At this conference, there will be strong calls for developed nations to provide compensation for the irreversible losses experienced by vulnerable nations. This conversation will test the willingness of wealthier countries to take responsibility for their historical emissions and commit to meaningful financial support.

Climate finance, in general, will be a central topic of debate. In 2009, developed nations promised \$100 billion per year in climate finance by 2020, but this target has not been fully met. COP 29 will bring renewed attention to this unfulfilled commitment. Beyond the past pledges, there will be discussions on how to scale up climate finance to match the growing severity of the crisis. Governments will be pressed to unlock additional funds, particularly for developing countries looking to transition to greener economies and implement adaptation measures.

The phasing out of fossil fuels, especially coal, will also be a pressing issue. While some countries have made significant strides in transitioning to renewable energy, others remain heavily dependent on coal and other fossil fuels. The challenge at COP 29 will be finding a consensus on how to reduce this dependency while ensuring energy security, particularly for developing nations. There will also be a focus on ensuring that this energy transition is just, protecting workers and communities reliant on fossil fuel industries from economic instability.

Nature-based solutions will play a prominent role in discussions as well. Forests, wetlands, and oceans are essential in absorbing carbon and protecting biodiversity, and COP 29 will likely explore how to scale up these efforts.

Governments will look at policies that incentivize reforestation, sustainable land management, and ecosystem restoration. These solutions are often viewed as cost-effective and offering multiple benefits, making them an attractive option for countries seeking to address both climate change and environmental degradation.

Despite the potential for significant progress, COP 29 will face its share of challenges. Geopolitical tensions, particularly around energy security, could complicate negotiations. The influence of fossil fuel industries may also slow down efforts to set ambitious targets. Moreover, the gap between promises and action, which has been a consistent criticism of previous COPs, will remain a concern. There will be growing scepticism if world leaders fail to deliver concrete outcomes.

The COP29 Presidency's plan is based on two mutually reinforcing parallel pillars. The first pillar, "enhance ambition," combines key elements to ensure all parties commit to ambitious national plans and transparency. The second pillar, "enable action," reflects the critical role of finance, a key tool to turn ambition into action and reduce emissions, adapt to climate change, and address loss and damage.

The world will be watching closely, as the stakes at COP 29 are immense. This conference is expected to test the global community's commitment to tackling climate change, not only in terms of ambitious pledges but also in tangible, enforceable actions. The outcomes of COP 29 will likely influence international climate policy for years to come, and the pressure on decision-makers to act decisively will be greater than ever.

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Read more: <https://bit.ly/3YQYgFX>

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Importance of Including Local Voices at the Global Decision-Making Level towards COP29

As we head to Conference of Parties (COP) 30 and 10 years after the Paris Agreement, civil society in the Global South should use COP 29 to review whether the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process is fit to facilitate the delivery of the Paris Agreement.

The world faces weakened multilateralism and a loss of trust in international institutions and mechanisms. These systems and processes must be reconfigured to create a balanced platform to mobilise collective action towards a just climate response. One consideration in this process is to ensure the adequate representation of Global South voices and Southern Leadership in global decision-making processes. The mean global temperature has increased by 1.1 degrees Celsius above the pre-industrial baseline with increasingly frequent and extreme climatic events, threatening to drive another 100 million people into poverty by 2030.

COVID-19 greatly exacerbated these impacts, significantly backsliding against the Sustainable Development Goals. Climate change affects the enjoyment of indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated human rights, hitting the most vulnerable and the hardest and increasing inequalities. We are at a critical juncture in our fight against the climate crisis and addressing the economic and social challenges to transform our

societies in a sustainable, just and inclusive manner. Civil society must engage and have a voice to influence climate change policies. Business as usual will no longer suffice and is no longer appropriate.

According to IPCC estimates, approximately 3.3–3.6 billion people live in highly vulnerable contexts to climate change. Most of these people live in Global South countries. Therefore, the participation of Global South representatives in the decision-making process at the UNFCCC is more urgent than ever. Currently, actors from the Global South face significant challenges participating in UNFCCC negotiations and decisions, contrasting sharply with the substantial representation from organisations and countries in the Global North. Although most of the world's population lives in the Global South, they still represent the minority of voices within the negotiations.

There are two main avenues for including local voices within the UNFCCC. At local and national levels, it is crucial to have a permanent mechanism for multi-stakeholder dialogue to ensure that the parties arrive at the UNFCCC negotiation table with strong positions that reflect the realities, proposals, and needs of their countries and people. The participation of Global South observer organisations at COPs is also a key avenue for local voices to be heard.

Even though Global South observers represent groups that are highly vulnerable to the climate emergency, they only represent 32 - 45% of the total participation of observers in recent important international events like the COP. Furthermore, compliance with diversity and gender commitments is crucial for effective and equitable participation in the international UNFCCC spaces. For example, in the last two COPs, there has been a decrease in gender balance. When women lead and influence the political arena, there is a high tendency for more progressive policies and, thus, the process to advance. A renegotiation of already unequal rights and a reimagining of the relationship between people and nature is urgent.

Civil society, especially marginalised groups (Indigenous Peoples, women, urban poor, youth, etc.), must be more involved in international processes like the UNFCCC. For example, while the UNFCCC provides for a farmers' constituency, large-scale commercial farmers take up the constituency's space.

Participation of Indigenous People and local communities strengthens climate negotiations in the favour of the most affected. They have been ancestral protectors of Nature, are proactive in the current climate crisis context, and hold valuable ancestral knowledge from and within their territories.

The Voices for Just Climate Action (VCA) has developed the COP 29 Position Paper to capture the voices and experiences of this southern alliance on the importance of amplifying local voices at the global level towards COP29. The VCA Programme is led from the bottom up, with strong, legitimate local CSOs representing their constituents' experiences, voices, and needs. The Position Paper is available here .

Charlotte Scott



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“The Global South represents the vast majority of the world’s people, and it is where the majority of climate impacts will be felt. Yet Global South communities are still a minority of the voices heard within the UNFCCC system. Access to the COPs and other spaces is only one part of the solution; we need decision-making that is driven by the Global South and finance that flows to the Global South and is accountable to local people.”

Charlotte Scott, SouthSouthNorth





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African Ministers call for \$1.3 trillion Climate Finance Target

At the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), Ministers called for a new climate finance target of not less than US\$1.3 trillion annually. This aligns with numbers put forward by India and the Arab Group, but developed countries have been overwhelmingly silent on what amounts they intend to propose.

At the recently concluded AMCEN 10th special session in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire on 6 September, African Environmental Ministers called for the adoption of target of US\$1.3 trillion of mobilised and provided climate finance. This amount is to be regularly reviewed to reflect the evolving needs of developing countries, particularly those expressed in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and other climate instruments like National Adaptation Plans. They argued that it should be responsive to other financial estimates, such as the Standing Committee on Finance's needs determination report, which provides that developing countries need US\$5.8 trillion by 2030 to implement their NDCs. AMCEN's position is that "developed countries must provide leadership to provide the scale of climate finance required as trillions of dollars are needed annually to tackle the climate crisis and restore trust in the multilateral system."

COP29 in Baku has been labelled the "finance COP" where countries will look to agree on a new climate finance target (NCQG) that will replace the current \$100 billion/year target. Over the past two years, negotiators have been locked in debates around how to refine the qualitative elements of the goal to overcome some of the challenges experienced with it over the past decade and more. Discussions have mostly focused on how it should be determined, who should contribute, the form of finance that will be provided, principles

and objectives, what it should finance, the role of financial institutions and climate funds, and how to address developing country needs. But up until now, little has been said about the actual amount (quantum) that developed countries will commit to. At COP 29, countries will need to work closely to agree on a quantum that is big enough to meet developing country needs, but that is of a scale that developed countries feel is financially feasible. Surprisingly, little has been said about this topic.

Understandably, many countries want to first agree on basic principles and a framework for the target before they get to hard numbers, but at the same time, negotiating around the trillions cannot be done in the High-Level Ministerial Dialogue and two weeks at the COP. Rightfully, in Bonn this year, some countries argued that key elements such as time frame, scope, and contributors must be decided before engaging with actual amounts. Some parties (including African countries), want the goal to be based on the needs and priorities identified by developing countries. This can be through their NDCs or investment plans. However, not all countries have financially quantified their needs in these instruments yet, and many lack the data to do so. This makes an initial amount challenging to determine based on needs alone. Accordingly, some (including African countries) have proposed that the goal be reviewed periodically and adjusted based on needs as they evolve and as more data and information become available. To overcome this dilemma, African countries have been arguing for a needs-based approach, but they have also come forward with an initial number of \$1.3 trillion, which can then be reviewed over time.

The amount proposed by AMCEN aligns to some degree with the Arab Group's amount proposed last year of US\$ 1.1 trillion, excluding historic arrears for the previous \$100 billion target. India has also supported a target of US\$1 trillion/year. The AILAC group representing various South American countries has called for an NCQG "in the trillions." However, developed countries have been relatively silent on the amount. Instead, they have been pushing to expand the contributor base to include other wealthier developing countries and arguing for a more significant role in private sector finance (read more here).

A discussion of numbers was glaringly absent from the latest meeting on 6-9 September of the working group tasked with coming up with a draft new climate finance goal. In the meeting's reflection document by the co-chairs, no mention is made of any amount. Amounts are discussed in the synthesis report by the co-chairs of the written submissions they received before the meeting, but these were primarily based on submissions from NGOs and think tanks. Of those submissions, one group had suggested US\$1 trillion in grant finance, another US\$5 trillion, and a further US\$6.9 trillion with disaggregated sub-goals for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage. The written inputs from Canada and the EU, which were one of the few countries to have made submissions, do not appear to have included any proposal on the quantum.

It is likely that the quantum question was pushed onto the plates of Ministers at the Ministerial High-Level dialogue and ultimately at COP29 in November. In the interim, the working group stated it will focus its next meeting on challenges with accessing climate finance.

Access is certainly an issue that African countries will be looking to build on. In the outcomes document from AMCEN, Ministers called for an NCQG that addresses the obstacles African countries face in accessing and attracting climate finance and trade, resulting in the continent spending 5% of GDP on climate responses and unsustainable debt levels. In their view, the NCQG should address the unsustainable debt burden, high cost of capital, and increasing use of non-concessional finance. They pointed to the fact that the current financial instruments provided to developing countries are increasing debt stress, and the share of loans to Africa in total Overseas Development Assistance in 2022 increased by 29%. As such, they believe that the NCQG framework should address the types of finance instruments and their relative contribution to the quantum, with a clear share for public grant finance.

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Tax Cooperation and Climate Finance -Kicking the Can Down the Road to COP

At the end of the 79th UNGA, the global community remains divided on addressing the climate finance gap. Despite some progress on framing an international tax convention, the discussion on taxation and climate finance continues to be sidestepped.

The 79th United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) closed on 30 September, with world leaders delivering statements to tackle current global challenges as part of the meeting's theme of leaving no one behind. While marginal progress appears to have been made on some of the advertised policy issues, climate finance was not featured as a key issue. With it, there were only sparse discussions around mechanisms for cooperating on international tax to raise the needed finance for climate action. This is contrary to the expectations of some leaders in the global south, who anticipated strong strides to have been made in advance of COP29 toward finalising the new collective quantified goal on climate finance (NCQG). Perhaps this was deliberate to make room for other geopolitical and development constraints. But the high-level plenary on existential threats posed by rising sea levels subtly deferred the decision on climate finance to COP29. As a result, COP29 is expected to deliver an ambitious NCQG, and other instruments for raising climate finance.

Tax – the most potent vehicle for climate finance

New taxes provide a finance line to support climate action. The global south is being pushed in this direction given the lack of climate finance that has been provided. The global north has also been quick to exact its pound of flesh at the expense of the south on carbon taxes, particularly on the inequities from the EU's CBAM, and deliberations by the UK, and the US for their own version of a CBAM. This leaves taxation and cooperation on taxation of wealthy individuals and corporations, as perhaps the most credible alternative to climate finance mobilisation.

At the Bonn climate conference, low-income countries and small and island nations called for a minimum US\$1trillion to be agreed for the NCQG in grants and grant-equivalent instruments, which advanced countries pushed back on (preferring the more conventional climate finance measures). New evidence suggests that by simply taxing the wealthy and their lifestyle, we could raise five times (an additional US\$5trillion) every year the amount requested by the global south to finance climate action. For context, Oil Change International estimates that a wealth tax could generate US\$483 billion, while sales of big-tech, arms, luxury fashion, military spending will generate US\$566billion. Throw in the removal of

fossil fuel subsidy of about US\$1.116 trillion, and taxes on fossil fuel production of US\$618 billion, and we are way beyond the ask of the global south.

International tax convention – where are we?

The process for an international tax convention has been in the works for nine years since it was mooted in Addis Ababa in 2015. Having completed the first round of negotiations in May 2024, the approved terms of reference for the convention commits countries to a fair allocation of taxing rights, dealing with evasion and avoidance by high-net-worth individuals, cooperation on tax that will contribute to economic social and environmental development, transparency and illicit financial flow related issues.

As progressive as these appear, 44 countries – primarily advanced economies including the EU, abstained, while key members of the G-20 – the UK, the US, Japan, Canada, Australia, Korea, New Zealand and Israel, all voted against the framework. The EU cited a lack of inclusiveness, transparency and consensus as their justification. But their real push was for the framework to adopt the work of the EU and OECD instead of international tax cooperation. It has been argued that this framework will work disadvantageously to the interests of developing countries.

Regardless, the protocols to be developed are legally binding instruments and will provide substantive tax measures for the commitments above. Curiously, countries have not yet agreed to develop a protocol on environmental challenges (which may provide a direct pathway for climate finance), as the terms of reference indicates such a

protocol might only be considered in subsequent negotiations. For Africa, however, this does not appear to be a setback as the Africa Tax Administration Forum considers the framework inclusive and will pave the way for better negotiation towards the final convention in 2027. This optimism may hold true for other tax handles, but certainly not on raising needed finance for climate action through tax.

The road to COP29 and beyond

Between now and December 2024, a series of meetings will be held which will culminate in the approval of resolutions on the Committee for official negotiations, while the first half of 2025 is devoted to a possible draft convention. It is unlikely that COP29 will substantively deal with the issue of international tax cooperation for climate action. The focus will be on the new climate finance target, which has despite prior discussions in Bonn, been a thorny issue. Perhaps there will be an opportunity to iron some access features which are vital for ensuring fairness and equity in climate finance distribution.

Growing the climate finance goal by a factor of ten from the previous US \$100 billion as expected by the global south will not be possible without considerations to some form of tax cooperation, complimenting conventional finance mechanisms. This is a responsibility that global south negotiators must take seriously, and negotiators from advanced countries must engage with progressively.



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Out of State, Out of Mind: African Civil Society Voices, what will it yield?

At the 29th Conference of Parties (COP 29), the urgency for cohesive, impactful climate action has reached a critical juncture. Africa, with its 1.2 billion people—many reliant on climate-sensitive sectors like agriculture—faces increasingly severe consequences from climate change. The continent continues to grapple with severe droughts, floods, and rising temperatures, directly threatening food security and social stability. This year's COP 29 stands as a crucial opportunity for Africa to assert its climate priorities, ensuring that outcomes align with those of the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP CBD) and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) for a more integrated approach to sustainability and resilience.

Africa's role in driving international discussions on biodiversity was fortified at COP CBD by establishing a permanent Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities body. This mechanism highlights the central role of traditional knowledge in biodiversity protection and sustainable land use, particularly in ecologically sensitive areas. Recognizing Indigenous knowledge as a foundation of resilience, Africa can pioneer people-centred climate solutions that harness these longstanding sustainable practices. In COP 29, this approach will prove essential, as Africa champions both the protection of biodiversity and the urgent financing required for adaptation and resilience. Climate finance remains a critical focus.

Addressing climate-related Loss and Damage in Africa demands urgent, substantial funding. A structured approach under the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance could provide a clear pathway for funds dedicated to adaptation and resilience projects, particularly as updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under NDC 3.0 arrive early next year. These enhanced commitments present Africa with a key moment to advance its ambitions, address immediate needs, and build toward long-term sustainability.

Despite the global dialogues, pledges continue to fall short of the estimated USD 200 billion needed annually to tackle the biodiversity crisis alone, highlighting a significant gap between commitments and action. At COP CBD, the establishment of mechanisms like the Cali Fund and the ongoing development of the Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) Fund aimed to bridge this divide. However, consistent underfunding has left critical biodiversity goals unmet, with numerous countries struggling to fulfil their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). For Africa, where many ecosystems are in dire need of preservation and restoration, these financing challenges underscore the necessity of aligning climate and biodiversity funding across all COPs, ensuring that adaptation and resilience financing reach frontline communities.

In 2024, the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) on

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) added further urgency to climate justice, particularly in Africa, where climate change is already deepening social inequities. Key African convenings such as the Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA XII) forum, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), and the Food Systems Summit have become essential platforms for uniting African voices ahead of COP 29. Through these forums, African leaders can advocate for financing mechanisms that respond to regional needs, while amplifying calls for adaptation support and more equitable resource allocation from high-emitting nations. In an era marked by geopolitical uncertainty and economic priorities often misaligned with sustainable goals, Africa's path to climate justice faces challenges. Nonetheless, this complexity reinforces the need for a just and inclusive approach that prioritises communities most affected by climate impacts. Africa's push for greater multilateralism and a collective commitment to shared goals must transcend short-term national interests, calling wealthier nations to recognise their historical responsibility and support adaptation and resilience in vulnerable regions.

At the heart of Africa's agenda for COP 29 lies the call for climate justice. With climate impacts disproportionately affecting the continent, the need for ambitious adaptation financing, gender-responsive policies, and local resilience projects is undeniable. Recent extreme weather events have underscored the urgency of these demands, as African communities face floods, droughts, and displacement with alarming

frequency. Africa's adaptation agenda thus highlights the importance of local knowledge and frontline leadership in crafting policies that are equitable, responsive, and impactful. At COP 29, Africa can champion a cohesive, transformative strategy that draws on past achievements and addresses current challenges in climate action. The intersection of climate, biodiversity, and land conservation—unified by outcomes from COP CBD, COP 29, and UNCCD—can provide the foundation for a holistic framework, one that safeguards ecosystems, promotes sustainable land management, and bolsters climate resilience. Through the integration of Indigenous knowledge, committed funding for Loss and Damage, and bolstered climate finance flows, Africa has an opportunity to steer the global climate agenda toward justice and sustainability.

COP 29 represents a pivotal moment for Africa to voice its unique challenges and solutions, advancing a vision of resilience, justice, and opportunity for a sustainable future. The convergence of multilateral partnerships, local wisdom, and international ambition can enable Africa to endure the challenges of climate change and foster a resilient, thriving continent.

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What is the aim of COP29?

The overall aim of COP29 is for states to agree, develop and share plans for addressing climate change. This means preventing further global warming, and also helping those who have been most affected so far to adapt or to rebuild their lives.

In 2015, the Paris Agreement made it a legal requirement for all states to set targets for reducing their greenhouse gas emissions, in order to limit the global temperature increase to 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Since then, however, the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change (IPCC) has stressed that the most catastrophic effects of climate change can only be avoided if we limit global warming to 1.5°C by the end of this century.

At COP29, countries' progress on addressing climate change will be measured against this 1.5°C goal. It is important to note that even 1.5°C of warming will entail mass displacement, harm to livelihoods, and loss of life, with lower-income countries the worst affected. At present, the world is on track for an increase of 2.6 to 3.1°C this century.

Source: Amnesty.org



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Youth Perspectives on Loss and Damage

Living in one of the most climate-vulnerable regions, African youth are pushing their governments to better prepare for climate impacts and leverage the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage. We reached out to the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition to learn more about their views on the Fund's role, their expectations for loss and damage and how their countries are preparing for the effects of climate change.

What are your expectations for the Loss and Damage Fund?

Isaac Mureithi, Kenya:

"Given the urgency of the climate crises, funds must be made available as soon as possible to support vulnerable communities, particularly in the Global South, who are severely affected by droughts and flooding. The timeline for disbursement should be realistic; ideally, initial funding allocations should be seen by 2025, as highlighted in discussions surrounding the fund's establishment. I also hope the Fund will be integrated into broader climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. This means aligning it with national policies and local initiatives to ensure a comprehensive approach to climate resilience. The fund should complement existing efforts, fostering collaboration among governments, NGOs, and community organisations, rather than operating in isolation."

Ahmed Vall Boumouzouna, Mauritania:

"The funds must be made available to NGOs and civil society organisations to implement loss and damage projects. It must ultimately benefit the communities that need help the most. Creating opportunities for women, young people, and other vulnerable groups will fight against poverty and inequality linked to climate change."


Lyse Nancy Irakenuye, Burundi:

"We hope that the fund will reach all victims of climate change and prevent environmental crises. Additionally, we expect dispersed funds to be able to support the recovery of victims' businesses which have been disrupted."

Tarcizio Kalaundi, Malawi:


"I hope that it will reduce the requirements for access so as to benefit the youth led organizations working with grassroots communities. I hope for increased funding that matches the estimates of over \$400 billion by 2030. I want it to incorporate institutional capacity strengthening for organisations that seek funding rather than disregarding them because of capacity."

Emmanuel Baffoe Bonney, Ghana:


 "I hope that small and medium NGOs are going to have access to the fund in their various restoration processes."

How do you view the role of the global loss and damage movement after the creation of the Loss and Damage Fund?


Jibril Sani Gambo, Nigeria:

 "The global loss and damage movement will continue to advocate for effective fund implementation, ensure equitable distribution, and push for increased support and transparency in addressing climate impacts."


Lyse Nancy Irakenuye, Burundi:

 "The role of the global loss and damage movement is to intervene [by] reinforcing the implementation of relevant policies and stand for the beneficiaries so that the funds can be more effective."

Marhegane Kashamba Pascal, Democratic Republic of Congo:


 "After the creation of the Loss and Damage Fund, we see the role of the world loss and damage movement as supervising the distribution of these funds."

Yves Rugondera, Burundi:


 "The movement should support the establishment of a clear mapping of partners, support a rebalanced and equitable allocation of funds under a participatory approach, and their accountability for the prevention and awareness of young communities and women in situations of multifaceted crises."

How is your country preparing for climate losses and damages?

Nzanzu Mulimirwa, the Democratic Republic of Congo:


 "From 2019 until 2023, the State has worked on a project called 'A Billion Trees', a project which consists of planting a billion trees throughout our country. There is also a policy to protect the forests of the Congo Basin. There is youth involvement in my country through local organisations. Our government should do better by involving the youth because we do not really feel their actions in our respective local communities."

Posset Kokou Romaric, Benin:


 "Benin has launched its first National Adaptation Plan (NAP). This plan involves analysing current and future climate impacts, assessing vulnerabilities, and

implementing adaptation options. To combat coastal erosion, Benin has undertaken projects to replenish beaches with sand, effectively pushing back the ocean and protecting coastal communities. The government is focusing on sustainable growth and climate adaptation to reduce poverty and enhance the resilience of the economy. This includes investments in climate-resilient infrastructure and policies aimed at reducing the economic impact of climate change. Benin is also looking forward to international support, particularly through the Loss and Damage Fund, to help finance these adaptation measures and support affected communities."

Promise Ibrahim Heindolo Yorpoi, Sierra Leone:

 "Sierra Leone's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) is a key part of its climate strategy, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, energy, forestry, and waste management. The government is prioritising coastal zone management, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development. One of the major projects aimed at addressing climate losses is the Sierra Leone Coastal Resilience Project. This project seeks to protect vulnerable coastal communities from the impacts of sea-level rise and extreme weather. It focuses on restoring 1,500 hectares of mangrove ecosystems, which are crucial in mitigating storm surges and enhancing biodiversity. The country is [also] investing in climate-resilient infrastructure to protect key economic zones and reduce vulnerability of its citizens. This includes improving early warning systems, developing emergency response plans, and reinforcing critical infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and water management systems."

Jibril Sani Gambo, Nigeria:

 "Nigeria is preparing for climate losses and damages through policies like the National Policy on Climate Change, adaptation strategies such as the National Adaptation Strategy and Plan of Action (NASPA), disaster risk reduction efforts via the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), and securing climate finance, though challenges remain in funding and enforcement."

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COP29: The Finance COP Must Deliver for Africa – A Call to Action for African Negotiators

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As COP29 approaches in Azerbaijan, African negotiators have been urged to seize the moment to secure equitable climate finance for the continent. Greenpeace Africa and climate justice movements have presented a document to the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) demanding a push for an ambitious, needs-based climate finance framework.

Amos Wemanya, Responsive Campaigns Lead at Greenpeace Africa, said:

“Climate negotiations have perfected the act of kicking the can down the road. COP29 must put a stop to kicking the poor in the stomach. The climate crisis is biting in Africa. Communities’ lives and livelihoods are on the line. For this COP29 to succeed, an ambitious and needs-based new collective and quantified goal on climate finance must be established.”

Among the key Demands presented to African negotiators are calls for a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) that prioritises increased public climate finance, backed by a Climate Damages Tax (CDT) on fossil fuel extraction to generate the necessary funds. The campaigners also demanded for public and debt-free financing which would avoid further burdening Africa’s economies. They also rejected support for fossil fuel production and other dangerous distractions that prolong the climate crisis.

Charity Migwi, Senior Africa Campaigner at Oil Change International, added:

“Climate finance should not be used to finance fossil fuel expansion. Fossil-driven development contradicts Africa’s visions and sustainable

development goals. Under the New Collective and Quantified Goal on climate finance, funding should not go to dangerous distractions that are expensive, speculative, a proven failure, or unproven at scale, typically serving to prolong the lifetime of fossil fuel assets”

Adding a voice from the frontline, Antony Madilschy Otieno, a Greenpeace Volunteer, recounted a recent climate disaster in his community:

“What happened in the early hours of April 29, 2024, in the Mai Mahiu area must never be allowed to happen again. Where human greed, profits-over-lives mentality, and a wanton disregard for human life through continued fossil fuel production and their excessive greenhouse gas emissions, causing freak and unmitigated weather patterns, coupled with human negligence, resulted in a disastrous and highly preventable calamity that needlessly took the lives of so many innocent people on that morning.”

“Never again. We are calling for an end to fossil fuels, for polluters to pay for the damages they have caused, such as the destroyed land, lost livelihoods, and the loss of human life experienced in the Mai Mahiu area, and for urgent climate reparations NOW.” **concluded Otieno.**

At COP29, Greenpeace African urges negotiators to advocate for a financial plan that genuinely addresses Africa’s climate challenges. Wealthy nations and fossil fuel companies must contribute their fair share, supporting Africa’s transition to a sustainable future. This is the moment for action. Finance is the lifeblood of Africa’s climate action and survival.

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Africa Must Remain Relentless in Demanding Fair Financing at CoP 29

The time has come for African countries to step up their strategies for demanding fair treatment from developed countries that are responsible for causing global warming and, therefore, climate change. For the last decade and a half or so, African countries have had a unified voice, being too aware that the adverse impacts of climate change cause the most damage to the Continent, yet it contributes negligible Green House Gas (GHG) emissions totalling only 4 percent. Taking a unified position during global meetings such as the annual Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), forces industrialised countries to pay better attention. Hopefully, this will compel them to take concrete action to fulfil their obligations to compensate Africa for the loss and damage emanating from climate change.

To be sure, most industrialised countries have acknowledged this reality. In response, the global consensus, in the context of the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC, is that industrialised countries must support African countries to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. According to the Agreement, African countries must be supported to enhance their adaptive capacity. This means to strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change in the context of the temperature goal of the Agreement: to keep the rise in global surface temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels.

Delayed dues for adaptation and mitigation

Despite there being no denial by developed nations that they are responsible for the climate change now being experienced and even voicing commitments to finance African countries to adapt accordingly, this commitment has never been fulfilled. Quoting a 2023 article by Fanning and Hickel, Kenya's Daily Nation e-Paper on September 4, 2024 reported that the climate debt owed by the Global North to the Global South is at a staggering 193 US trillion dollars. This according to the article, makes the 700 US million dollars pledged for loss and damage so far, a drop in the ocean. Excluding China, India and the rest of the Global South, Sub-Saharan Africa is owed 45 US trillion dollars. African countries must therefore remain relentless in their demand for these dues.

That is why it is encouraging that African negotiators have called for a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) that prioritises increased public climate finance, backed by a Climate Damages Tax (CDT) on fossil fuel extraction to generate the necessary funds. They have gone further and demanded for public and debt-free

financing which would avoid further burdening Africa's economies. They have rejected support for fossil fuel production and other dangerous distractions that prolong the climate crisis.

The mitigation injustice

Besides adaptation the other climate dimension that has remained a major point of contention is mitigation. The industrialised countries have made commitments to compensate African countries by paying them carbon credits. Countries or even companies, commit to pay a certain amount of money in order to be allowed to continue emitting GHG to certain agreed levels. In a sense, carbon credits compensate Africa and other developing regions for the burden they bear to capture or remove the carbon dioxide being emitted by those buying carbon credits. Pricing of carbon credits has been another frustrating issue for Africa because amounts payable as carbon credits are never commensurate with the benefits that those being paid have to forego to earn them.

The most practical way of removing carbon dioxide involves increasing the area of the earth under the green cover of plants. Plants capture carbon dioxide through photosynthesis and produce oxygen as a by-product. This includes trees, shrubs, grasses and even mangroves. Generally, greening for carbon removal involves restoration of forests, wetlands, and other green ecosystems, including marine plants such as seaweed and microscopic ocean plants (Phytoplankton). Like other plants that grow on land, phytoplankton perform photosynthesis and therefore capture carbon dioxide.

So far, the African voice in demanding that targets set for the global adaptation and mitigation funds be fulfilled have not been honoured. Commitments made at past COP meetings have remained mere intentions as opposed to obligations. Africa is, however, hopeful that this will change sooner than later and that the polluters can finally put their money where their mouths have been. Whether this will happen will become evident from the achievements of COP 29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

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What CSOs Expect on Climate Adaptation at COP29 – Negotiator

The 29th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP29) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) holding in Baku, Azerbaijan, must accelerate the integration of adaptation into local, national and regional planning, including the development and implementation of participatory, inclusive and gender-transformative National Adaptation Plans.

Kulthoum Omari, lead adaptation negotiator with African Group of Negotiators (AGN), who made the submission at the Africa Journalists Climate Training (AJCT) held from July 29 to 30, 2024, in Mombasa, Kenya, noted that adaptation finance channels must be reformed to increase the allocation and access for those who need it most by reducing administrative barriers.

Speaking on civil society organisation (CSO) expectation on adaptation in COP29, Ms. Omari also laid emphasis on funding and supporting local institutions and women-led groups, including through operationalising key principles.

“Developed countries must keep their promise at COP26 to at least double adaptation finance by 2025 – this commitment has not been met yet even as we are talking about the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) [on climate finance],” she

said, adding that, according to the GAP Report, adaptation finance flows and finance gaps are running up to \$370 billion per year.

While expecting that progress on mapping of existing indicators mapping is concluded at COP29, she stressed that adaptation must be premised high up as a global priority, with secure-grant based funding at global level for accelerated adaptation action at scale, through new and additional finance, capacity and technology transfer across developing countries.

According to her, the CSO community is likewise expecting advance decisions that promote the realisation for Locally Led Adaptation (LLA) Actions for greater responsiveness of climate action to those at the frontline of climate. She called on global leaders to demonstrate leadership in advancing LLA.

The AJCT, which focused on climate change adaptation, was organised by PowerShift Africa.



Michael Simire

Environ News, Nigeria

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Kenya's Path to Climate Resilience through Nationally Determined Contribution

Kenya is one of the African countries that are keen on implementing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) with the hope of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 32% by the year 2030 compared to the business-as-usual scenario.

The NDCs are the climate action plans and commitments by individual countries under the Paris Agreement on climate change. The main aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the atmosphere while adapting to the impacts of the changing climatic conditions.

In Kenya, the NDC is extremely important because the country's economy is deeply intertwined with climate-sensitive sectors such as agriculture, tourism, and energy. Prolonged droughts, erratic rainfall, and rising temperatures have significantly affected crop production, food security, and livelihoods, particularly among the rural population.

"In this country, climate change is estimated to cost between 3% to 5% of GDP annually – this hampers us and makes it difficult for the country to take the opportunity to give its citizens the services they require," said Michael Okumu of the Ministry of Environment and Forestry Climate Change Directorate during a workshop organised by UNDP in Nairobi.

So far, Kenya has developed several policies that will be instrumental in the implementation of the NDC. The National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) III 2023 – 2027 for example, is the third five-year plan that presents the detailed priority actions that Kenya will embark on to address climate change in the medium-term planning period and contribute to the achievement of Kenya's NDC under the Paris Agreement.

According to President William Ruto, the government of Kenya is keen to continue implementing the Climate Change Act (No. 11 of 2016), which provides the framework for compliance with the Paris Agreement, and Kenya's (2020) updated NDC.

"The Climate Change Act is central to our climate actions at both the national and county government levels," said President Ruto in a statement. "It is important to note the progress made by county governments in the last five years in the enactment of county-level climate legislation that establishes Climate Change Funds and ward climate change committees and provides for the allocation of a minimum percentage of development budgets to finance locally-led climate actions," he said.

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is another policy instrument that seeks to identify medium- and long-term adaptation needs, informed by the latest climate science.

Kenya's NAP process objectives are to highlight the importance of adaptation and resilience-building actions in development and to integrate climate change adaptation into national and county-level development planning and budgeting processes.

The process is also used to enhance the resilience of public and private sector investment in the national transformation, economic and social pillars of Vision 2030 to climate shocks, to enhance synergies between adaptation and mitigation actions to attain a low carbon climate resilient economy, as well to enhance the resilience of vulnerable populations to climate shocks through adaptation and disaster risk reduction strategies.

According to the UNDP, countries can utilize the NAP process and its outcomes to update and improve the adaptation elements of the NDC, which is a central part of the Paris Agreement.

The country aims to ensure an enhanced resilience to climate change towards the attainment of Vision 2030 by mainstreaming climate change adaptation into Medium-Term Plans (MTPs) and County Integrated Development Plans (CIDPs) and implementing adaptation actions.

Kenya is committed to enhancing its adaptation ambition by committing to bridge the implementation gaps which include enhancing uptake of adaptation technology especially among women, youth and other vulnerable groups, while incorporating scientific and Indigenous knowledge, as well as strengthening tools for adaptation monitoring, evaluation and learning at the national and county levels, including non-state actors.

The country also seeks to enhance generation, packaging and widespread uptake and use of climate information in decision making and planning across sectors and county level with robust early warning systems, and through exploring innovative livelihood strategies for enhancing climate resilience of local communities through financing of locally-led climate change actions.

However, according to Hillary Korir, of the National Treasury, Kenya, NDC is ambitious and will require significant amounts of funding. So far, the country does not have a dedicated budget for climate change.

He noted that there was a lack of a unified approach for tracking and reporting climate finance flows and that capacity was needed to originate and design innovative climate change-related proposals.

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Kenya's National Climate Change Action Plan: Paving the way for a Sustainable and Prosperous Future.

Climate change poses a significant threat to Kenya, a country characterised by diverse ecosystems and high vulnerabilities. As global temperatures rise and weather patterns become increasingly unpredictable, Kenya faces various challenges, from prolonged droughts and flooding to shifts in weather patterns. These changes directly impact agriculture, water resources, infrastructure, health, and food security, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities among its population. The country's rich biodiversity is also at risk, with wildlife and natural habitats facing disruption. Addressing climate change in Kenya is essential not only for preserving its natural resources but also for the well-being and livelihood support of its citizens. Implementing effective adaptation and mitigation strategies will be crucial for fostering resilience against the adverse effects of climate change.

Kenya increasingly recognises the urgent need to address the impacts of climate change. In this regard, the government has put in place requisite policies, strategies, plans, and legal instruments to support an enabling environment for all stakeholders to respond to climate change impacts accordingly. At the core of the planning instruments is the National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP), which serves as a comprehensive action plan for integrating climate considerations across all sectors in the country.

The Climate Change Act 2016 provides for the development of NCCAP to prescribe measures and mechanisms for mainstreaming adaptation and mitigation actions in the sectoral functions of the national and county governments. The NCCAP outlines a visionary approach to enhance Kenya's climate-resilient and low-carbon development pathway while promoting sustainable development. The plan focuses on all sectors of the economy since, according to Kenya's National Climate Change Response Strategy, 2010, all

sectors are vulnerable to climate change. By prioritising adaptation and mitigation strategies, the NCCAP aims to guide the country towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting resilience building.

The Act requires the Cabinet Secretary responsible for climate change affairs to review and update the NCCAP every five years. The NCCAP provides a framework for Kenya to deliver and report on its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, its National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2015–2030, and its National Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy. The NCCAP is a summary of two detailed technical reports: Adaptation Technical Analysis Report and Mitigation Technical Analysis Report, each developed by adaptation and mitigation technical working groups, respectively.

Kenya is now on its third iteration of the NCCAP, having developed NCCAP 2013-2017, 2018-2022 and 2023-2027. The NCCAP timeframe is synchronised and aligned with the Country's development blue print, Vision 2030 through the five-year Mid Term Plans and County Integrated Development Plans (Sub National level) with the same timelines as NCCAP. The development of the NCCAP is coordinated and led by the Climate Change Directorate, which is the Government's lead agency on climate change and is domiciled at the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change and Forestry.

Kenya developed and launched its first five-year NCCAP in 2013. The NCCAP 2013-2017 identified 38 priority actions in five components, namely: mitigation actions, climate finance, enabling policy and regulatory framework, knowledge management and capacity development, and national performance and benefit measurement.

The second NCCAP 2018-2022 outlined seven strategic objectives namely; Disaster Risk Management; Food and Nutrition Security; Water and the Blue Economy; Forestry, Wildlife, and Tourism; Health, Sanitation, and Human Settlements; Manufacturing; and Energy and Transport. The Action Plan included 22 adaptation actions, 9 mitigation actions, and five actions that met both adaptation and mitigation goals in 7 priority sectors. Enabling actions were identified for each sector and 28 enabling actions were prioritised in 6 cross-cutting areas. The enabling actions included supporting policy and regulatory framework, capacity development and knowledge management, technology and innovation, climate finance, and Measurement, Reporting, and Verification Plus (MRV+).

Unlike the first NCCAP, Kenya made progress in tracking the implementation of the second NCCAP 2018-2022. The government tracked climate action progress and identified learnings by preparing two annual NCCAP implementation progress reports (2018/2019 and 2019/2020). The final implementation status report for the NCCAP 2018-2022 is being finalised. This forms the core of Kenya's monitoring, evaluation, and learning, especially for adaptation since it tracks the targets and indicators as provided by all the sectors in the NCCAP.

The third NCCAP 2023-2027 builds on the previous two plans. It presents the detailed priority actions Kenya will embark on to address climate change during the 2023–2027 medium-term planning period. Apart from the seven strategic objective areas in NCCAP 2018-2022, the NCCAP 2023-2027 included Youth and Children as the eighth strategic objective area. This was to provide for the inclusion of the priority actions to respond to youth and children's actions because of the disproportionate impacts of climate change on this population category, as well as ensuring that intergenerational equity is attained. Children and youth have ten enabling actions under priority 8 and are mainstreamed across the other seven priority areas.

The preparation of the NCCAP involves extensive stakeholder consultation and engagement, recognising the importance of their inputs for a plan that is owned and implemented by all stakeholders across the country. The stakeholders include ministries, departments, government agencies, subnational governments, Indigenous groups, the private sector, youth and children, and civil society. Gender experts are involved throughout the process to ensure strong mainstreaming of gender issues in the NCCAP.

As Kenya continues to confront the challenges posed by climate change, the NCCAP represents a significant step forward. With its comprehensive, inclusive approach, the NCCAP tackles immediate climate-related issues and lays the groundwork for sustainable economic growth and environmental stewardship for future generations. Although Kenya continues to turn back the tide on climate change impacts like many other developing countries, it will only succeed if it receives adequate, predictable, and timely means of implementation.

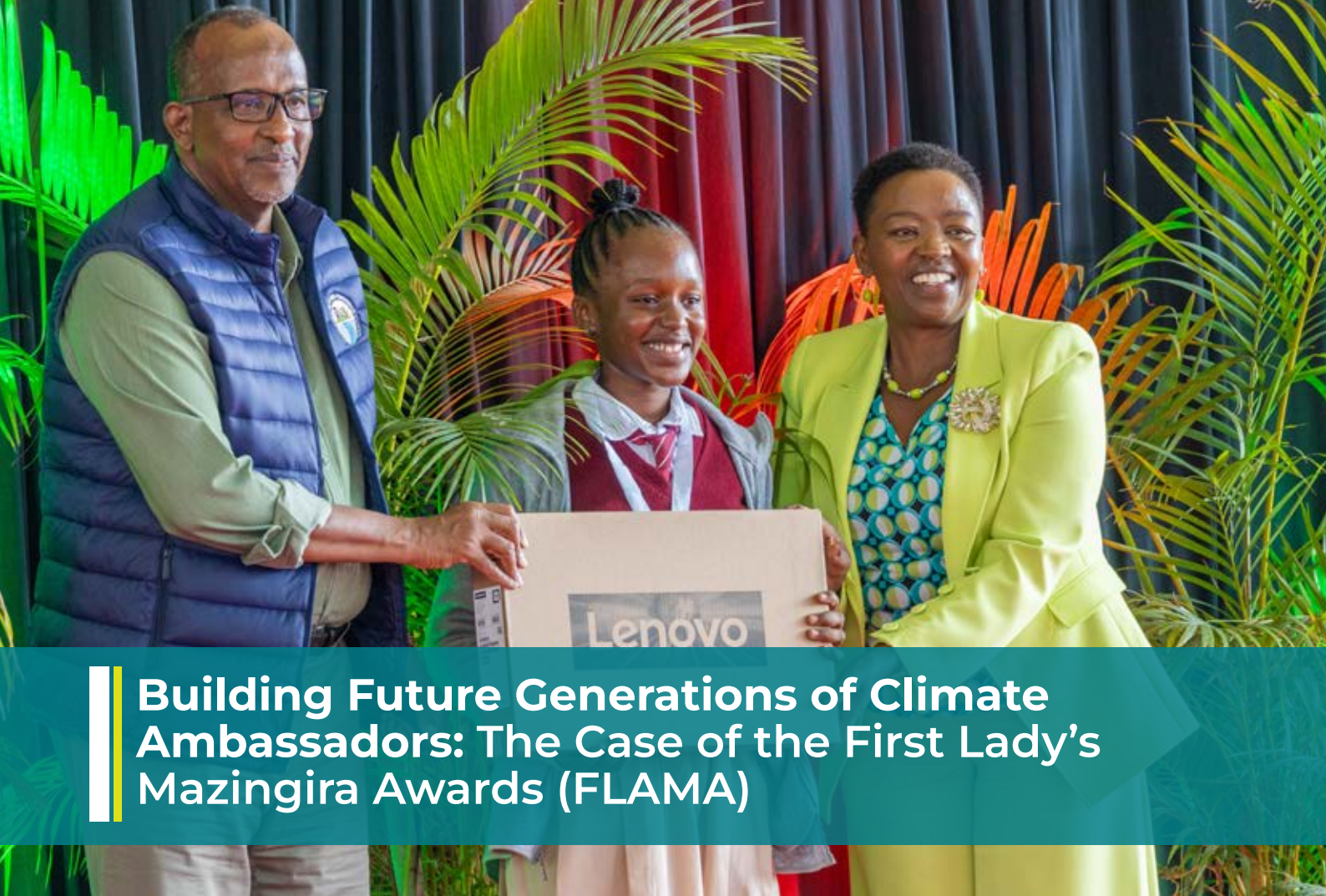
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Building Future Generations of Climate Ambassadors: The Case of the First Lady's Mazingira Awards (FLAMA)

The journey of growth and care for people and trees is strikingly similar. Just as trees must be nurtured right from the nursery before they grow tall and strong, so too our young learners should be taught to become champions of the environment from a young age. Kenya has brought these two paths together in a historic move by launching the First Lady's Mazingira Award (FLAMA), an initiative spearheaded by Her Excellency Mama Rachel Ruto, to inspire young learners to become Climate Ambassadors, Environmental Stewards and Sustainability Champions.

Mama Rachel Ruto assembled a diverse team of technical experts from sectors such as environment, climate change, forestry, and education with support from various stakeholders and partners to co create a national annual environment and climate change competition designed to tap into the creativity and innovation of young learners. The competition aims to cultivate environmentally conscious, and climate ready learners equipped to act as agents of change and play a vital role in safeguarding the environment for future generations. With a vision of fostering environmental stewardship and building adaptive capacity, this initiative is poised to make a long-lasting impact.

The competition provides a platform for children to; learn to learn, learn to do and learn through creative expression, empowering them to take action and

also promote a culture of environmental entrepreneurship. FLAMAs objectives include nurturing young leaders for environmental conservation, encouraging climate action, and contributing to Kenya's ambitious goal of planting 15 billion trees in the next decade. This is captured in FLAMA's tagline; Mazingira Yetu, Jukumu Letu ~ Our Environment, Our Responsibility

One of the standout aspects of the competition is its learner-centred, learner-driven approach. The journey began in 2023 with a national call for students to design the competition's name, tagline and logo. The winners of the name, tagline and logo competition were unveiled and personally awarded by Mama Rachel Ruto during the inaugural African Climate Summit in September 2023, marking the official launch of FLAMA.

The 2024 FLAMA competition was rolled out nationally in all Primary and Junior schools from February to July 2024. Learners creatively expressed themselves through painting, drawing, English and Swahili essay and spoken word. The fully digital competition allowed teachers to guide students through the submission process. Learners submitted their views and solutions under the theme; Restore our Land, Secure our Future; Turejeshe Ardhi Yetu; Tuhakikishe

Mustakabali Wetu which mirrored the 2024 World Environment Day theme. Over 1,000 schools participated from across the 47 counties including special need learner schools. A panel of 40 judges, developed a robust judging criteria, trained to use the digital assessment platform, evaluated the entries, validated the scores and selected winners and runners-up in each category.

Over 60 Mazingira Champions were recognized and celebrated on October 10, 2024, during the Mazingira Day celebrations at State House including special need learners. They were recognized by the First Lady, alongside key government officials, including Hon. Aden Duale, Cabinet Secretary for Environment, Climate Change, and Forestry, as well as Principal Secretaries, Dr. Belio Kipsang of Basic Education, Mr Mugambi of Forestry and Ms. Aurelia Rono of Parliamentary Affairs. Schools that produced winning entries were also honoured to recognize the efforts of teachers and the support of the school community. In a heartwarming gesture, one of the partners, NCBA Bank awarded each winner a savings account with KES 10,000 as part of their commitment to nurturing future leaders and nurture financial literacy from a young age. The following day, all the 250 learners and teachers accompanied Her Excellency on an eco-learning trip to the Nairobi National Park, saw Kenya's amazing wildlife and learnt their role in environmental conservation.

The flame of FLAMA continues to burn bright, with plans to engage over 18 million learners, including those with special needs, from more than 89,000 schools across Kenya. Every year the FLAMA theme will align, make reference to and focus on global and national environmental and climate change discourse allowing learners to creatively express their understanding of global issues and provide national contextualized solutions. Future editions of FLAMA will include a secondary school category and will be integrated into the school academic calendar and promoted nationwide. Other forms of creative expression will be included such as photography, recycled art and use of technology.

By fostering creativity, empowering young minds, and driving environmental and climate action, the First Lady's Mazingira Awards (FLAMA) is nurturing a generation ready to lead the fight against climate change—one tree, one idea, and one action at a time. Mazingira Yetu ni Jukumu Letu ~ Our Environment is Our Responsibility!

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