The negative effects of climate change are projected to be increasingly devastating for the African continent. Africa is the least prepared to address the current and projected climate change risks and impacts, given its high level of climate vulnerability. Adaptation costs are projected to rise significantly by 2050 because of growing climate risks and Africa needs to accelerate more effective solutions to limit unavoidable impacts of climate change on the continent. The IPCC’s Working Group of the sixth assessment report on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, acknowledge that Nature-based Solutions (NbS) play a major role in helping Africa to adapt to climate change, thereby offering major co-benefits for transformative adaptation and long-term climate resilience.

Africa is at the frontline to deliver measurable NbS interventions to support adapting to climate change, but to date, this concept is still not fully understood and implemented within the continent at the scale it required.

The UNEA consultations on Nature-based Solutions for supporting sustainable development, provided a much-needed opportunity for Africa to raise awareness of NbS benefits and develop a framework for their large scale implementation. The upcoming UNFCCC COP28 presents a pivotal moment for Africa to elevate the important role that Nature-based Solutions can play in climate adaptation and building climate resilience on the continent, benefitting both communities and biodiversity. This high-level policy event is a critical juncture to reiterate the importance of leveraging NbS to address the climate crisis and reduce the vulnerability of Africa’s people, biodiversity, and ecosystems.

1 https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2023
3 https://www.unep.org/events/working-group/first-regional-consultations-nature-based-solutions
CALL TO ACTIONS TO ESCALATE NATURE-BASED SOLUTIONS FOR ADAPTATION IN AFRICA (NbSA⁴) AT COP 28:

1. Valuing and strengthening the role of nature in building Africa’s resilience to climate change within the Glasgow–Sharm El-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation

African leaders, policy makers and practitioners at COP28 should advocate for the need to have a comprehensive framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) which takes into account the role of NbS in delivering tangible adaptation benefits and building the resilience of people and biodiversity to climate change. This framework should follow the guided structured approaches as outlined at COP27, with defined global, mid- and long term targets (2030, 2040 and 2050), metrics, and indicators to meet Africa’s adaptation needs and associated cost to address those needs.

2. Scaling up Nature-based Solutions for adaptation financing

The adaptation finance gap is likely 10–18 times as great as the current international adaptation finance flows – at least 50 per cent higher than previous range estimates. Current estimates of the adaptation finance gap in Africa are five to ten times more than the current international flows to Africa⁵. On NbSA, the amount of public international funding is still relatively small, accounting for only US$3.8–8.7 billion, or approximately 0.6–1.4 percent of total climate finance flows and 1.5–3.4 percent of public climate finance flows, in 2018⁶. This is mainly due to the absence of clear definitions, guidelines, metrics and methodologies to track, quantify, and value NbSA benefits which could significantly inhibit the development and financing of a robust pipeline of NbSA-related investments. Clear mechanisms need to be in place to channel more funding to NbSA through public, development and private sector investments. The mechanisms should be structured to ensure targeted funding towards NbSA projects origination, technical development, investment viability analysis and implementation off-take. Additionally, there needs to a move towards consolidation of fragmented NbSA funding mechanisms being implemented by different agencies. A stock take of these instruments needs to take place globally with an aim of deciding on the best criteria for consolidation (e.g. geographic, thematic, etc.).

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⁴ NbSA are intended to preserve ecosystem services that are necessary for human life in the face of climate change and to reduce the impact of anticipated negative effects of climate change, thereby using biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. (WWF definition)

⁵ https://sdg-action.org/africas-call-for-action-on-adaptation-at-cop28/

3. Leveraging the role of Nature-based Solutions for adaptation in National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process presents both opportunities and challenges to shaping a viable future for people and nature. To date, 19 African countries have submitted their NAPs. NAPs provide an opportunity to better shape the role of NbS in addressing climate risks and impacts on people and biodiversity. Efforts should be focusing on strengthening NbS in the implementation of the 19 NAPs and the development of other African NAPs. Since 2020, Parties to the UNFCCC have also had the opportunity to increase their climate ambition by integrating NbS in their revised NDCs. COP28 should promote the relevance of NbS in the next revision of Africa NDCs. The first Africa Protected Areas Congress - Kigali Call to Action highlighted the need to value the role of nature in the implementation and revision of Africa NDCs. In an effort to foster African countries’ NDCs and NAPs enhancement, special consideration should be given to the integration of NbS in these two policy instruments.

4. Speeding up the implementation of large scale Nature-based Solutions for adaptation interventions

Africa needs to escalate adaptation solutions for the next seven years. More transformative solutions are needed to embrace the current and future climate impacts on nature and people. Regional cooperation and cross-countries interventions are required to support implementation of large scale NbSA interventions. This large scale engagement should be targeting knowledge, finance, policy, partnership and ground implementation.

7 https://napcentral.org/submitted-naps
5. **Enhancing Africa’s capacity and technology in delivering transformative Nature-based Solutions for adaptation at scale**

The discussions on implementation tend to ignore the importance of overall capacity building and technology needs in developing countries, particularly in African countries. Limited technical capacity among all stakeholders has been identified as a major barrier impeding the development, design, funding, and implementation of NbSA. Africa should therefore stress on the need to strengthen institutional capacity as well as technology in delivering transformative NbSA at local, national and regional levels.

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