



WWF AFRICA

**UNFCCC COP28
EXPECTATIONS PAPER**



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WWF COP28

AFRICA EXPECTATION PAPER

UNFCCC COP28, FROM SHARM TO DUBAI: - BUILDING A CLIMATE RESILIENT AFRICA

Introduction:

Africa is eager for COP28 to yield more positive results than those achieved at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, in 2022. Africa's position for COP28 is clearly articulated in the [Addis Ababa Declaration of the 19th Session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment \(AMCEN\)](#) and reaffirmed by African leaders in the Nairobi Declaration adopted at the inaugural African Climate Summit (ACS) in Nairobi. COP28 in Dubai is being touted as the “COP of transformation” where parties must deliver. Building on the outcomes of the African Climate Summit, COP28 presents Africa with the unique opportunity to reshape its narrative as a “continent of solutions” to the climate crisis. It also provides global leaders the opportunity to reaffirm their commitments made in various fora throughout the year¹

Since COP27, WWF has continued to engage with African governments and other stakeholders to ensure that COP28 comes up with an “enhanced implementation strategy” which will entail the following actions:

- ***Moving from target-setting to coordinated policies and implementation of actions***
- ***Aligning regimes and institutions to support implementation***
- ***Strengthening accountability and credibility.***

For these actions to yield the necessary outcomes at COP28:

1. Developed country Parties should deliver on their promises to mobilize US\$100 billion per year for climate action in developing countries to support both adaptation and mitigation.
2. Tangible commitments should be made on the urgent need to enhance Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for increasing the ambition for emissions reduction goals for 2030 and new ones for 2035, through the Global Stocktake and the Work Programme on pre-2030 mitigation ambition and implementation
3. Parties should state upfront the need for enhancing institutional capacity as a critical enabling condition and create a forum to share lessons and identify resources for enhancing institutional capacity.



Africa's Priorities for COP28

1. Strengthened implementation of the New NDCs

Africa's climate responsibility arising from historical and current greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions is extremely low. With total emissions accounting for just over 6% of the global greenhouse gas footprint, Africa is the most vulnerable continent to climate change impacts, but the continent is nevertheless committed to providing solutions to the climate crisis[1].





As the world heads to COP28, a key focus will be on the first global stocktake since the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015. African countries have, through their renewed NDCs, proposed additional actions to increase their ambition to keep global temperature increase below 1.5°C by the end of the century. WWF in 2021 published the report on the “*Africa NDCs: Recommendations for Decision makers*”. According to the report, most of the African countries that have submitted their reviewed NDCs have increased their mitigation ambition. Implementation of these new or updated NDCs is the point of departure for delivering on the ACS objective “To raise the ambition of Africa for low carbon climate resilient development pathways” but also providing the opportunity to get this cut across the four thematic areas of the Africa Climate Week (ACW).

2. Primacy of Adaptation, more urgent than ever

African leaders at the African Climate Summit called for the need to “identify, prioritize and mainstream adaptation into development policy making and planning...”. It is important to note that building resilience and responding to climate related disasters is expected to cost African countries 3-5% of their GDP annually by 2030, but in certain scenarios this can rise to over 15% of GDP. Africa will consequently need to focus on leveraging adequate funding to finance its adaptation efforts.

It is expected that between 2020 - 2030, Africa needs an estimated US \$579.2 billion in adaptation finance. There are already some opportunities that Africa can leverage like the African Development Bank (AfDB) Climate Action Window aimed to “boost climate finance flow to support Africa’s development and promote a resilient and low-carbon development pathway”. There is also the African Adaptation Acceleration Program launched at COP26 in Glasgow by the AfDB and the GCA with its objective of mobilizing US\$ 25 billion to accelerate and scale climate adaptation action across the continent by 2025. However, these funds fall far short of what is needed.

At COP28, Africa on climate adaptation should:-

- stress the further elaboration of adaptation planning and implementation, including reaching an agreement on the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GlaSS) to meet Africa’s adaptation needs and associated costs. This should entail the development of a framework that helps African countries to identify adaptation gaps and needs, and accelerate the development and implementation of transformative adaptation actions at scale.
 - As of October 2023, only 18 countries in Africa have submitted their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) to the [UNFCCC Secretariat](#). The Work Programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation should define and put in place enabling conditions to support African countries in speeding up the development and implementation of their NAPs in line with their NDCs’ adaptation commitments.
- Advocate for stronger commitments and actions on adaptation finance; with clear outcomes to match the annual cost of adaptation in developing countries estimated to range from \$140 billion to \$300 billion by 2030. Africa should push for an agreement on a roadmap for doubling the adaptation finance commitment by 2025, with the baseline of 2019 as a minimum, and allocating at least 50% of public climate finance for adaptation, as grants to support adaptation measures in developing countries. The Adaptation Finance goal needs to be a separate goal in the New Collective Quantify Goal.
- Pledge for the implementation of large-scale nature-based solutions for adaptation (NbS4A) interventions which is needed to embrace the current and future climate impacts on nature and people. Regional cooperation and cross-country interventions are required to support the implementation of large scale NbSA interventions. This large scale engagement should target finance, policy, knowledge, and ground implementation.



3. Global Stocktake (GST)

The science is clear: countries' mitigation efforts are collectively far off track to limit global warming to 1.5°C and they are under-prepared for climate impacts. At COP28, the Global Stocktake will address critical gaps and is tasked with laying out a 'course correction' for global climate action on mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, and means of implementation. Africa can provide the following policy direction to this process which addresses their specific circumstances.

WWF believes that the world is still way off track, with implementation falling short of the current inadequate climate ambition. WWF Africa consequently sees COP28 as a critical moment to turn this around, putting up an ambitious response to correct the course and get the world back on track. For Africa, the GST process provides specific opportunities to link addressing the ambition gap to leapfrogging its development, capitalizing on its significant endowment of land, natural resources, and untapped renewable energy potential. Given high levels of energy poverty on the continent, and the current levels of dependence on consumption of biomass for cooking and heating, there is a significant energy gap that must be filled through the provision of modern climate-friendly technologies.

The GST process will be an opportunity for Africa to showcase its contributions to curbing the impact of climate change, by underscoring its significant natural resources including its vast forests, grasslands, peatlands and mangroves. The GST also offers Africa new economic and development opportunities to unlock the potential of its significant critical mineral resources to support the global green transition. The GST will also be a platform for Africa to push for strong commitments on climate finance that will support the effective implementation of the NDCs.

Notwithstanding enhanced ambition, Africa needs an estimated USD 2.8 trillion between 2020 and 2030 if it has to implement its conditional commitments as spelled out in the current Nationally Determined Contributions (UNDP Climate Promise). According to the AfDB, to close Africa's climate financing gap by 2030, an estimated USD 215 billion will need to be mobilized annually from the private sector to complement public funds.

4. Clear operationalization for Loss and Damage funding facility

COP27 scored a win in Egypt when it successfully secured a "loss-and-damage fund" facility for people struck by climate disasters. Studies have estimated that, by 2030, climate-related disasters, such as hurricanes and sea-level rise, could cost developing countries at least \$400bn each year. This sits within the broader context of developed countries failing to provide sufficient climate finance and a general lack of trust between parties around these issues.

The COP27 loss-and-damage decision involved setting up a transitional committee to develop both the fund itself and other "funding arrangements" to support relevant action. WWF Africa hopes to see the loss-and-damage fund set up as an operating entity of the UNFCCC, funded by contributions from developed countries and delivering grants rather than loans.

The Nairobi Declaration adopted by African Leaders in September 2023 at the end of the African Climate Summit, reiterated a call for a collective action at COP28 to swiftly operationalize the Loss and Damage facility agreed at COP27. Enhancing adaptation actions alone will not be sufficient to avoid and reduce all the loss and damage from the impacts of climate change we can expect if we do not sufficiently reduce emissions immediately. Loss and damage has been specifically mentioned in around 54% of global NDCs, including 14% of African NDCs[1]. Vulnerable countries should set clear targets in their respective NDCs to advocate for the increased technical and financial assistance needed. For COP28;



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- Africa should push for an ambitious outcome on loss and damage and ensure a solution for financing within the climate negotiations. A loss and damage finance facility should be established under the UNFCCC financial mechanism with a dedicated fund and be included as an element of the New Collective Quantified Goal, in addition to mitigation and adaptation finance.
- Parties should also ensure the full operationalization of the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, with dedicated funding and capacity needed to effectively implement its functions.



5. Tangible finance commitments

At present, Africa receives only about US\$30 billion of climate financing. In contrast, full implementation of African nations NDC will require an estimated US\$ 2.8 trillion between 2020 and 2030, or US\$242.4 billion a year according to the African Development Bank. Last year, at COP27, parties agreed to increase financing to facilitate global transformations to a low-carbon economy. This requires at least \$4 trillion to \$6 trillion a year. Unfortunately, developed countries still have not fulfilled their pledged \$100 billion since Copenhagen. At the African Climate Summit, African leaders reiterated their demand for developed countries to not only deliver on their promise of US\$100 billion annually, but also for an overhaul of the global financial architecture to meet Africa's needs. They equally called for the doubling of climate adaptation financing by 2025. It is important to note that only about 4–8% of all climate finance has been allocated to adaptation investments [2]. This significant financing gap needs to be addressed on a priority basis.

While adaptation is a priority for African countries, the adaptation needs tend to be underestimated, possibly due to lack of data and technical expertise. This partially explains why, despite Africa's vulnerability, only 24% of climate finance needs are identified as adaptation needs. Overall, a significant climate finance gap remains that external international support needs to fill. With further delay in climate action, these needs and associated costs can be expected to increase significantly. Adaptation finance should be significantly scaled up, towards achieving at least a doubling of the amount before 2025, as urged in the Glasgow Climate Pact, with an agreed process for monitoring progress towards this goal. This needs a clear commitment to allocating at least 50% of public climate finance to support adaptation measures in developing countries.



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For COP28, Africa will need to stress on a financing mechanism that will support the full implementation of its NAPs and NDCs but also urge developed countries to pledge not to provide new financing for fossil fuel exploration and infrastructure in Africa - particularly public finance. Meeting climate commitments while financing fossil fuels, particularly gas, is incompatible and not sustainable. This not only undermines climate action everywhere on the continent and globally, but also locks in constrained resources in sunset industries.

Africa needs to ensure that any new financing for mitigation and adaptation does not increase its already huge debt burden. It is therefore important that any new financing for Africa be grant-based financing that will not push them further into debt (Oxfam).

6. Food systems approach for a resilient people and nature and 1.5°C world

Africa's progress towards food security is and will continue to be stalled by climate impacts. A global 3°C trajectory will already by 2030 have strong negative consequences, impacting on incomes and at the same time driving malnutrition. Although a 1.5°Cs scenario would provide better options, frequent shocks are still expected ([World Bank](#)). African governments need to focus on climate actions in food systems, addressing best practices and enhancing the enabling environment. This entails going beyond the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture and climate discussions, through other mechanisms including loss and damage, adaptation, mitigation and finance among others.

a) African governments must elevate the topic of climate change and food systems on the COP28 agenda. This accelerates efforts on food loss and waste and sustainable agriculture that reduce emissions and enhance the resilience of food systems.

b) **Adaptation is urgent:** Adapting Africa's food systems to climate change is NOT a choice. Discussions on food systems should consider securing the most impacted sources of food for vulnerable communities, such as land, water, and related biodiversity like fish and seed. Holistic actions are needed in integrated land and water management systems to reverse biodiversity loss and restore degraded areas.

c) The food systems discussions must ensure increased support for **smallholders and indigenous people**, with special consideration given to those who are key stewards of Africa's biodiversity and ecosystems.

d) **African NDCs need to go beyond agriculture and deal with actions across the food systems:** The Paris Agreement makes specific references to mitigation and adaptation in food systems. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement provide a platform to bring all policy priorities together and plan and implement food systems measures in a holistic manner.





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Africa's actions on food systems should be holistic and integrated. A connected process drawing from the outcomes of the UNCBD, UNFCCC and UN Food systems summit. Promote agroecology for food security, while minimizing negative environmental impacts. Africa should promote agroecology especially in areas around conservation. African governments therefore need to develop and implement policies, regulations, and incentives towards agroecological transitions.

7. Shifting to renewable energy and ensuring affordable energy access

Promoting energy efficiency and shifting energy sources to accessible and affordable renewable energy solutions will be critical. More than 600 million people in Africa still lack basic access to affordable, reliable, clean energy. Over one billion people in 54 countries lack access to cooling, which is crucial to food security, medical supplies, livelihoods and the prevention of heat-related deaths, particularly in a warming climate[1]. International crises, like COVID-19[2] and the war in Ukraine, tend to disproportionately impact Africa due to the region's capacity constraints and institutional vulnerabilities. As impacts of climate change are accelerating, it is imperative that developmental gains on the continent be safeguarded against any geopolitical disruption. For COP28;



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- Parties should reiterate their commitment to support Africa in phasing out fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas), using just transition principles in a timely manner to meet its needs based on its strong supply of wind, sun, hydropower, and even geothermal resources, which offer great potential for deployment and investment. Misplaced and expensive investments in fossil fuels will be obsolete in a few years as the climate crisis worsens and fossil fuel companies potentially lose their social license to operate. Africa's energy development should be based on capacitating it to unlock its massive renewable energy potential, and all countries should aim to at least triple renewable energy capacity by 2030.
- Parties should reflect the G20 commitment to trebling renewable energy capacity by 2030 by pledging support for addressing Africa's energy poverty through the rollout of modern renewable energy.
- **Countries must commit to redirecting fossil fuel subsidies to renewable energy;** fossil fuel consumption subsidies must be re-directed towards renewable energy and energy efficiency; increasing modern renewable capacity to reach 100% of energy provision by 2050 nationally; doubling of annual investment in renewables and energy efficiency. These will help ensure an inclusive, green recovery by investing in poverty reduction, health, education and social protection measures, among others.

8. Strengthening the climate-nature narrative and recognition of the role of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) in mitigation and adaptation

Africa has a huge potential to build the evidence for how nature plays a critical role in building resilience to climate change and in contributing to limiting global warming to 1.5°C. The Glasgow Climate Pact recognizes the role of NbS in achieving a 1.5°C world.





By restoring degraded ecosystems and effectively and equitably conserving 30% of Earth's land, freshwater, and ocean habitats by 20, society can benefit from nature's capacity to absorb and store carbon, and we can accelerate progress towards sustainable development. When taking action to address climate change, Parties should ensure that nature's potential for climate change mitigation and adaptation is maximized, and used sustainably and equitably for present and future generations.

Many organisations both public and private, have begun to seriously consider Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for climate change as a key component to deliver tangible adaptation benefits for people and biodiversity. Africa is at the frontline of delivering measurable NbS to support adapting to climate change. We are at a critical period to elevate the power of "nature" from which the continent builds its riches, and ensures it achieves its full potential in the fight against climate change. Africa should reiterate the importance of leveraging the role of NbS in addressing the climate urgency and reducing the vulnerability of Africa's people and biodiversity to climate change by pledging the following:

- 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
- Scaling up nature based solutions for adaptation financing
- Leveraging the role of nature based solutions for adaptation in National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)
- Speeding up the implementation of large scale nature based solutions for adaptation interventions
- Enhancing Africa's capacity in delivering transformative nature based solutions for adaptation at scale.

There must also be safeguards in place to prevent non-solutions and risky activities that prejudice local populations from accessing their natural resources, lock in or extend the role of fossil fuels, and transform natural systems into monoculture production systems that undermine the adaptive potential of true resilient natural systems. In order to strengthen ocean-based climate action, governments permanently anchored the inclusion of strengthened ocean-based action in the Glasgow Climate Pact at COP26. This was done by specifically establishing an annual ocean and climate change dialogue.

9. Africa's special needs and circumstances

Africa is the region most vulnerable to and least equipped to defend itself from the negative effects of climate change, despite producing around 4% of global emissions. Currently estimated to be warming 1.5 times faster than the global mean, the region is also experiencing disproportionate exposure to climate risks, which will worsen if ambitious commitments are not followed up by urgent implementation. The contribution of the continent towards global climate regulation, for example by the Congo Basin as a carbon sink, needs to be recognised and commensurate resources need to be allocated towards its protection. Africa's special needs and circumstances owing to high levels of poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment, should be recognised globally. This would contribute to unlocking the necessary financial flow to Africa as it embarks on a just transition to a future powered by renewable energy expansion.

10. Building a Climate-Resilient Future for Africa with the Youth

Africa's youthful population is its greatest asset, and COP28 provides an opportunity to harness this demographic for climate action. In line with the resolutions from recent youth-focused assemblies, the African Climate Summit (ACS), and official continental forums; we urge COP28 to prioritize youth-centric engagement. This implies emphasizing the need to establish African youth as a "principal forum" for coordinating youth engagement in climate governance across Member States. Discussions at COP28 should therefore recognize, promote, and invest in mechanisms that enhance youth engagement in climate governance. COP28 should seize the opportunity to amplify the voices of African youth and youth worldwide. It should be the mechanism that ensures African youth's concerns and aspirations are not only heard but also systematically embedded in policy frameworks. The active involvement of young individuals is crucial for mitigating and adapting to the climate crisis, fostering innovation, and building a more resilient and sustainable future.





Conclusion:

COP28 should be the opportunity for Africa to strengthen its new narrative of being a continent of solutions to climate change while at the same time trying to meet its development objectives. WWF therefore urges African countries in collaboration with other countries at the COP28 to push for a phase-out of all fossil fuels and their subsidies, something that Africa already called out for in the [Nairobi Declaration](#) with their call for abolishment of fossil fuel subsidies. We equally hope for a clear roadmap from the GST process which will help to reset the climate ambition, a comprehensive framework for the GGA and mobilization of resources for adaptation and building climate resilience for vulnerable communities. COP28 should be able to deliver on the COP27 decision setting up the Loss and Damage Fund with a decision to operationalize the fund and finally close the finance gap by finally meeting the goal for developed countries to mobilize USD 100 billion per year.

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