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**Economic Commission for Africa  
Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development**

Tenth session

Addis Ababa (hybrid), 23–25 April 2024

Item 8 (c) of the provisional agenda\*

**Parallel meetings for an in-depth review of progress  
made, peer learning and acceleration actions  
regarding the sub-themes of the Regional Forum:  
climate action****Background report on the sub-theme of climate  
action****I. Introduction**

1. Climate change continues to pose an existential threat to Africa and seriously jeopardize the attainment of the continental development aspirations, as set out in various national development plans, in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want, of the African Union and in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

2. Under the 2030 Agenda, Sustainable Development Goal 13 is to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts. The Goal comprises five targets, for which progress is measured by a total of eight indicators. It is complemented by various goals of Agenda 2063, in which development aspirations for Africa are set out and priority areas established, with a view to ensuring environmentally sustainable and climate-resilient economies and communities. The priority areas include sustainable natural resource management; biodiversity conservation, genetic resources and ecosystems; water security; climate resilience and natural disaster preparedness and prevention; renewable energy; and sustainable consumption and production patterns.

3. In the present background report, the progress made towards achieving Goal 13 in Africa is examined. Goal 13 is being examined together with Goal 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere), Goal 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture), Goal 16 (promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels) and Goal 17 (strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development). African perspectives and main messages will be drawn from the examination and will be contributed to the process of following up on and reviewing efforts to achieve those five Goals, at the 2024 high-level political forum on sustainable development.

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\* ECA/RFSD/2024/1/Rev.3.

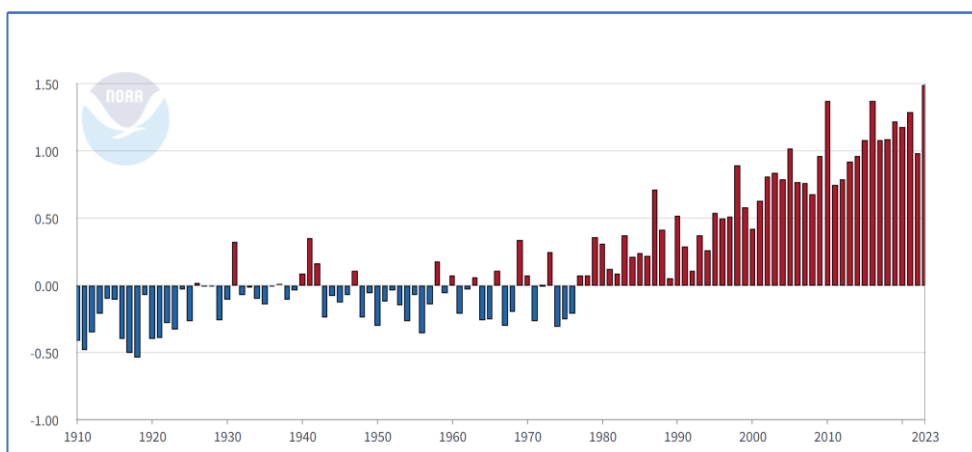


4. Climate change and development are inseparable. Climate change is the consequence of past global production and consumption patterns and the resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions, although it should be noted that Africa, which accounts for 17 per cent of the global population, contributes just 4 per cent of such emissions.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, action taken now and in the future to address climate change will require new development models that significantly reduce such emissions.

5. Greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise across the globe, making it less likely that Africa will achieve its development objectives. The year 2023 was the warmest year on record worldwide, with average surface air temperatures at close to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.<sup>2</sup> It was also the warmest year on record in Africa, where temperatures also reached an average of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.<sup>3</sup> According to the World Meteorological Organization, by 2022 Africa had warmed by 0.88°C above the average for the period 1961–1990, and during the period 1991–2022 the continent warmed by 0.3°C per decade on average, compared with 0.2°C per decade in the period 1961–1990.<sup>4</sup> Africa is, therefore, experiencing significant and continuous warming, as also demonstrated by the rapidly increasing temperature anomalies on the continent since the beginning of the twenty-first century, shown in figures I and II.

Figure I

**Average annual temperature anomalies across Africa, 1910–2023**  
(Degrees Celsius)



Source: United States of America, National Centers for Environmental Information, “Global Time Series”, Climate at a Glance database. Available at [www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/global/time-series](http://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/global/time-series) (accessed on 10 February 2024).

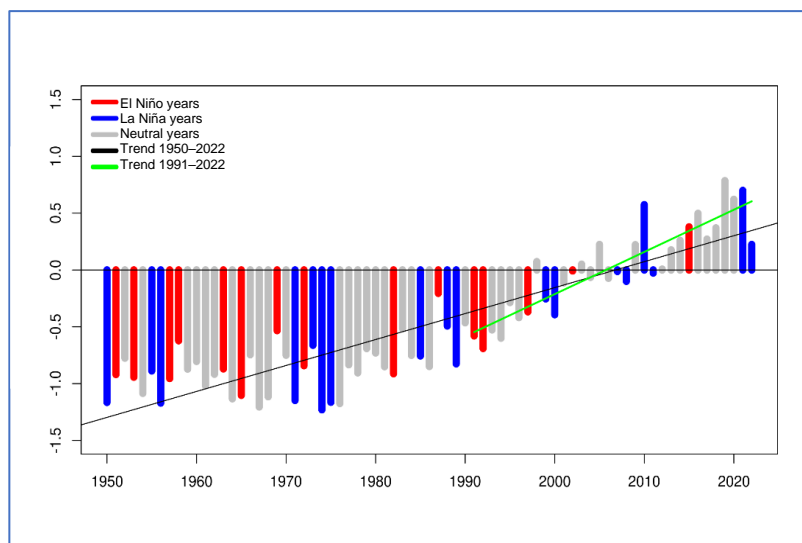
<sup>1</sup> Statista, “Africa’s share in global carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from 2000 to 2021”, Energy & Environment database. Available at [www.statista.com/statistics/1287508/africa-share-in-global-co2-emissions](https://www.statista.com/statistics/1287508/africa-share-in-global-co2-emissions) (accessed on 20 March 2024).

<sup>2</sup> Copernicus Climate Change Service, “Global climate highlights 2023”.

<sup>3</sup> United States of America, National Centers for Environmental Information, “Annual 2023 global climate report”, January 2024.

<sup>4</sup> World Meteorological Organization, *State of the Climate in Africa, 2022* (Geneva, 2023).

Figure II  
**Mean temperature anomaly over Africa, 1950–2022, relative to the average for 1991–2020**  
 (Degrees Celsius)



Source: United States of America, National Centers for Environmental Information, “Global Time Series”, Climate at a Glance database. Available at [www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/global/time-series](http://www.ncei.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/global/time-series) (accessed on 10 February 2024).

6. In the synthesis report on the technical dialogue of the first global stocktake (FCCC/SB/2023/9), produced pursuant to article 14 of the Paris Agreement and presented and reviewed at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, it is shown that current climate ambitions put the globe on a pathway to close to 3°C of warming. Urgent, ambitious and concerted global climate action is thus needed to support African sustainable and inclusive development aspirations. Innovative solutions should be employed that turn climate change challenges into development opportunities, leveraging the abundant natural resources of Africa, including its vast potential for renewable energy and its huge reserves of critical minerals.

7. The outcome of the first global stocktake (FCCC/PA/CMA/2023/L.17) was agreed upon at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties; it was built on the foundations of the Glasgow Climate Pact, which had resulted from the twenty-sixth session, and on the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, which had emerged from the twenty-seventh session. If acted upon in a concerted and ambitious manner, the measures contained therein could provide Africa with the chance to turn its climate change challenges into transformative, inclusive and climate-resilient development opportunities that would leave no one behind.

8. The measures in question included the agreement to transition away from all fossil fuel use in a just, orderly and equitable manner; encouragement to Parties to submit very ambitious economy-wide targets for emissions reductions in their next revised nationally determined contributions, during 2025; a target of tripling global renewable energy capacity and doubling energy efficiency; recognition of the need to significantly scale up adaptation finance, beyond the pledge to double it, made at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties; momentum towards reform of the global financial architecture; the United Arab Emirates framework for global climate resilience, in line with the global goal on adaptation; the United Arab Emirates just transition work programme, building on the outcome of the twenty-seventh session; the work programme for urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and

implementation, building on the outcome of the twenty-sixth session; the requirement for every presidency to appoint a youth climate champion; and the technology implementation programme.

9. The development of the outcomes of the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties that specifically relate to Africa started with the agreements reached at the Africa Climate Summit, held in Nairobi from 4 to 6 September 2023, at which issues pertaining to green growth and to climate finance solutions for Africa and the world were addressed. The eleventh Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa and the Africa climate talks – both flagship events of the Climate for Development in Africa Programme – preceded the Summit, with the former serving as its technical segment under the same theme. A joint programme of the African Union Commission, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the African Development Bank, the Climate for Development in Africa Programme is implemented in partnership with the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance and, in 2009, was mandated by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the African Union to help African States to foster a common and coordinated regional response to climate change. Also ahead of the Summit, the nineteenth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment was held in August 2023. Crucial messages on climate action for Africa emerged from all the above-mentioned meetings and are reflected in the present background report.

10. In 2023, implementation of the African Union Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032) began, and the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment of the Union endorsed the African Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. The Committee also expressed its support for the proposal that the Climate for Development in Africa programme of the African Union Commission, ECA and the African Development Bank should serve as one of the main platforms for the implementation of the Climate Change and Resilient Development Strategy and Action Plan (2022–2032).<sup>5</sup> Within the United Nations system, the fourth opportunity- and issues-based coalition is focused on fostering climate action and resilience, including work on loss and damage adaptation, food systems and food security. The purpose of the coalition is to raise awareness and bring about convergence across the United Nations system with respect to the adaptation to the African context of carbon markets, debt swaps for climate investment, green and blue bonds, the sustainable budgeting approach and blended finance facilities.

## **II. Sustainable Development Goal 13 in Africa: achievements and trends in respect of climate-related mitigation and adaptation**

11. Overall, progress on Goal 13 in Africa is still very limited. Urgent action is needed at both the regional and the international levels if the Goal is to be achieved on the continent.

### **A. Target 13.1: strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries**

12. While extreme weather events are natural, climate change is making them more frequent and severe. Africa is the region most disproportionately affected by the adverse effects of climate change, while having very limited

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<sup>5</sup> African Union, document STC5/ARDWE/MIN, report of the fifth ordinary session of the Specialized Technical Committee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Water and Environment, 14–17 November 2023.

adaptive capacity. The adverse effects include increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods and heatwaves; irregular seasons; changes to agroecological zones; and loss of biodiversity. Such effects can, in turn, result in reduced agricultural productivity, landslides, infrastructure damage, human insecurity and displacement, armed conflict and the spread of vector-borne diseases.

13. It is estimated that African countries lose, on average, 5 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) per year to the adverse effects of climate change; in some cases, the figure is as high as 15 per cent.<sup>6</sup> As of 2017, African States were making investments in adaptation that totalled between 2 and 9 per cent of GDP; such investments were often greater than the amounts those States allocated to health care, education and other critical public services<sup>7</sup> and are likely to have increased further in the intervening years. Climate change drives inequality and creates and prolongs poverty traps, to which children and adolescents are particularly exposed.

14. One example of the increasing toll of the adverse effects of climate change on African countries is the severe loss of life and economic damage inflicted on Malawi, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in March 2019 by Tropical Cyclone Idai, which affected more than 1.5 million people, caused almost 600 deaths and resulted in economic losses totalling over \$3 billion.<sup>8</sup> In May 2023, Rwanda was hit by severe and deadly floods and landslides, causing 131 deaths and affecting over 10,000 homes; this disaster is categorized as a severe weather event, given the size of the population and economy.<sup>9</sup> Since 2018, some 18.4 million children in East and Southern Africa have become internally displaced owing to weather-related disasters, equating to approximately 8,400 child displacements per day.<sup>10</sup>

15. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), owing to low levels of mitigation and adaptation, climate-related loss and damage are increasing. UNEP reports that the 55 most climate-vulnerable economies alone have already experienced loss and damage totalling more than \$500 billion since 2003.<sup>11</sup> Considering that, in February 2024, Africa accounted for 33 of the 45 least developed countries<sup>12</sup> and that 9 of the 10 countries ranked as most vulnerable to climate disruptions were in Africa,<sup>13</sup> the continent has borne the brunt of loss and damage from climate change.

#### **1. Indicator 13.1.1: number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population**

16. Figure III shows the number of deaths and missing persons attributed to natural disasters per 100,000 population in many countries in 2021. As of October 2023, the reporting data in respect of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 indicated that the global average disaster-related mortality rate had declined from 1.60 per 100,000 population in the period 2005–2015 to 1.15 in 2013–2022 (a decline of 28 per cent) and that, in

<sup>6</sup> African Development Bank, United Nations Environment Programme and ECA, *Climate Change Impacts on Africa's Economic Growth* (Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, African Development Bank, 2019).

<sup>7</sup> Climate for Development in Africa, "Information brief: Africa is spending more than its fair share for adaptation" (Addis Ababa, ECA, 2017).

<sup>8</sup> Alberto Bento Charrua, and others, "Impacts of the Tropical Cyclone Idai in Mozambique: a multi-temporal Landsat satellite imagery analysis", *Remote Sensing*, vol. 13, No. 2 (2021).

<sup>9</sup> International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, "Operational update: Rwanda – floods and landslides" (Geneva, 2023).

<sup>10</sup> Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, Displacement Data data set. Available at [www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data](http://www.internal-displacement.org/database/displacement-data) (accessed on 16 February 2024).

<sup>11</sup> UNEP, *Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced, Underprepared – Inadequate Investment and Planning on Climate Adaptation Leaves World Exposed* (Nairobi, 2023).

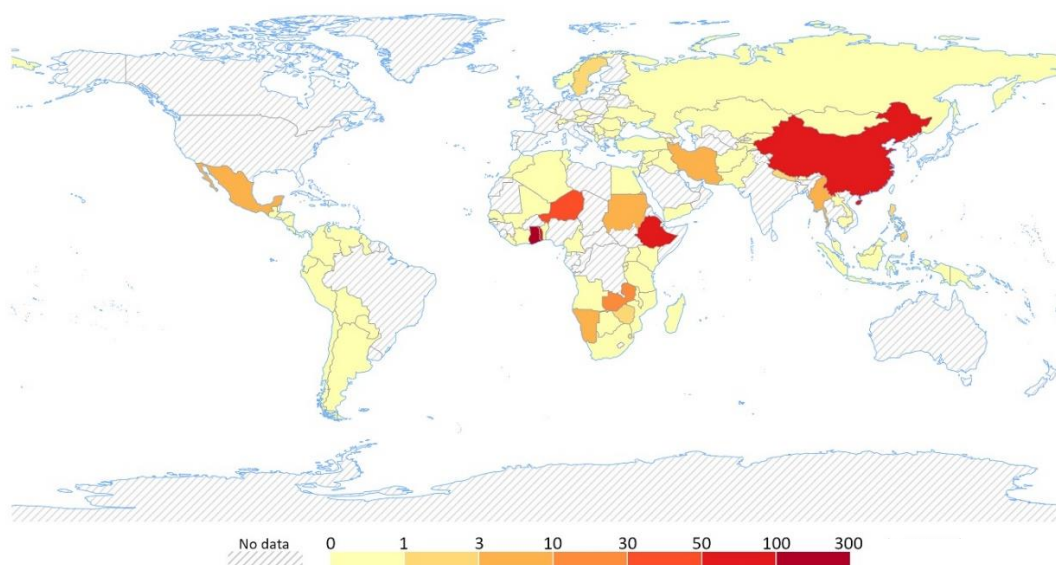
<sup>12</sup> United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, "UN list of least developed countries".

<sup>13</sup> University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index. Available at <https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/rankings/> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

absolute terms, the average number of disaster-related deaths per year in the period 2015–2022 had stood at 41,789. In Africa, the average disaster-related mortality rate per 100,000 population has changed little since 2005, increasing slightly from 2.35 in the period 2005–2014 to 2.39 in the period 2013–2022. While the number of disaster-related deaths per year in the period 2015–2022 was more than 15,000. In addition, the number of disaster-affected people has changed little since 2005, increasing from 1,929 per 100,000 population in the period 2005–2014 to 2,038 in the period 2013–2022. On average, more than 22 million people in Africa were affected by disasters each year between 2015 and 2020.<sup>14</sup>

Figure III

**Rate of deaths and missing persons due to natural disasters, 2021**  
(Number per 100,000 population)



Data source: UN office for Disaster Risk Reduction

[OurWorldinData.org/natural-disasters](https://OurWorldinData.org/natural-disasters) | CC BY

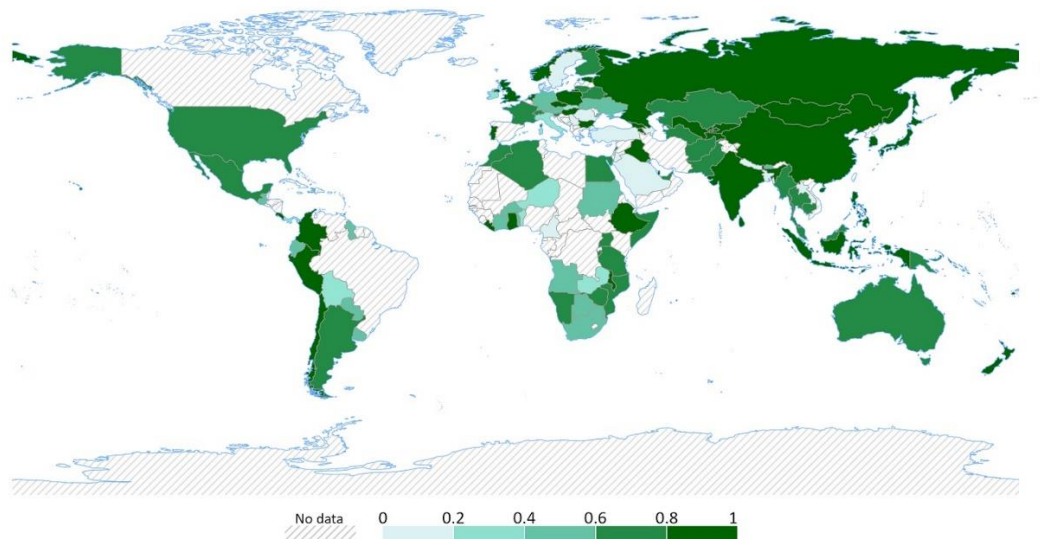
Source: Our World in Data, “Rate of deaths and missing persons due to natural disasters, 2021”, Natural Disasters database. Available at <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/deaths-and-missing-persons-due-to-natural-disasters> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

**2. Indicator 13.1.2: number of countries that adopt and implement national disaster risk reduction strategies in line with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030**

17. The reporting data in respect of the Sendai Framework indicate that 29 African countries have national and local disaster-risk reduction strategies in place. That number is rather low, in comparison with the 126 countries worldwide that report having national strategies and the 102 countries that report having local strategies. The imbalance between Africa and the rest of the world is illustrated by figure IV, in which the index values of between 0 and 1 shown on the map measure the extent to which States had established disaster-risk reduction strategies in 2022; the higher the index value, the more such strategies have been adopted and implemented.

<sup>14</sup> United Nations, Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, “Target reporting: map”, Measuring Implementation of the Sendai Framework dashboard. Available at <https://sendaimonitor.undrr.org/> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

Figure IV  
**Map of disaster-risk reduction strategies in place worldwide, 2022**  
 (Index number representing the number of strategies in place)



Data source: UN office for Disaster Risk Reduction

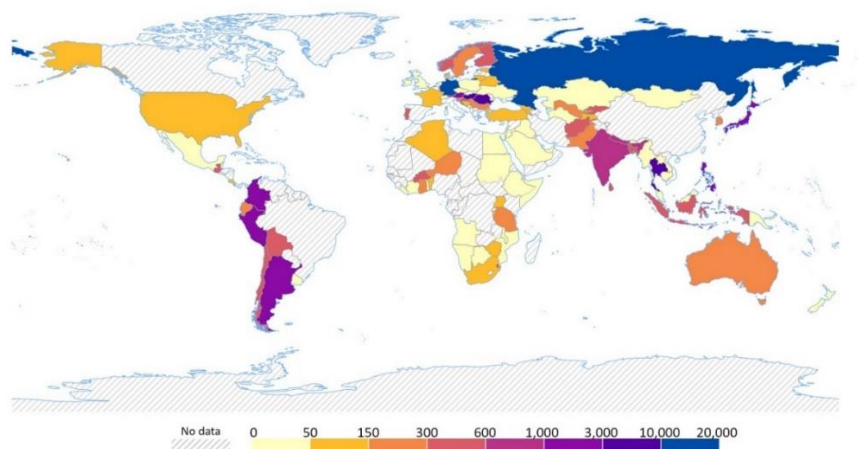
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Source: Our World in Data, “Adoption and implementation of policies to reduce disaster risk, 2022”, Natural Disasters database. Available at <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/deaths-and-missing-persons-due-to-natural-disasters> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

**3. Indicator 13.1.3: proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies**

18. In Africa, 28 cities participating in the “Making Cities Resilient 2030” initiative report that they have developed and adopted local disaster-risk reduction strategies.

Figure V  
**Number of local governments with disaster-risk reduction strategies, 2022**



Data source: UN office for Disaster Risk Reduction

[OurWorldinData.org/natural-disasters](https://OurWorldinData.org/natural-disasters) | CC BY

Source: Our World in Data, “Number of local governments with disaster risk reduction strategies, 2022”, Natural Disasters database. Available at <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/local-govts-risk-reduction> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

## **B. Target 13.2: integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning**

19. The purpose of this target is to encourage States to use such tools as nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans to incorporate climate change measures into action taken at the domestic level.

### **1. Indicator 13.2.1: number of countries with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**

20. African Governments have taken significant steps to combat climate change. All African States, with one exception, have ratified the Paris Agreement and declared ambitious nationally determined contributions to the global response to climate change. Parties to the Paris Agreement were required to submit their first revision of their nationally determined contributions in 2020. As of February 2024, 45 African States had submitted updated nationally determined contributions,<sup>15</sup> 23 of which had incorporated more ambitious targets;<sup>16</sup> a number of States had enacted multiple dedicated laws and implemented specific policies pertaining to climate change;<sup>17</sup> 21 of the 53 developing countries that had submitted national adaptation plans were African States;<sup>18</sup> and 8 of the 68 States that had submitted long-term low-emission development strategies were in Africa.<sup>19</sup> In 2017, African States were allocating significant shares of their GDP to climate adaptation.<sup>20</sup> As of October 2020, African States had, in over 70 per cent of the climate commitments made in their nationally determined contributions, prioritized the agriculture and clean energy sectors,<sup>21</sup> which stood out as catalysts for socioeconomic development because of their potential to enhance economic inclusivity.

### **2. Indicator 13.2.2: total greenhouse gas emissions per year**

21. As shown in figure VI, African emissions are a tiny fraction of the world total, a situation that dates back many years. The largest emitter is South Africa, followed by Nigeria and then Egypt, which together account for the majority of that percentage.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Nationally Determined Contributions Registry. Available at <https://unfccc.int/NDCREG> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

<sup>16</sup> Climate Watch, “NDC Enhancement Tracker”, Explore Nationally Determined Contributions database. Available at [www.climatewatchdata.org/ndcs-explore](http://www.climatewatchdata.org/ndcs-explore) (accessed on 16 February 2024).

<sup>17</sup> Grantham Research Institute, Climate Change Laws of the World database. Available at <https://climate-laws.org/> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

<sup>18</sup> United Nations, Submitted National Adaptation Plans from Developing Country Parties. Available at <https://napcentral.org/submitted-naps> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

<sup>19</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, “Long-term low-emission climate-resilient development strategies landscape in Africa”, 12 December 2023.

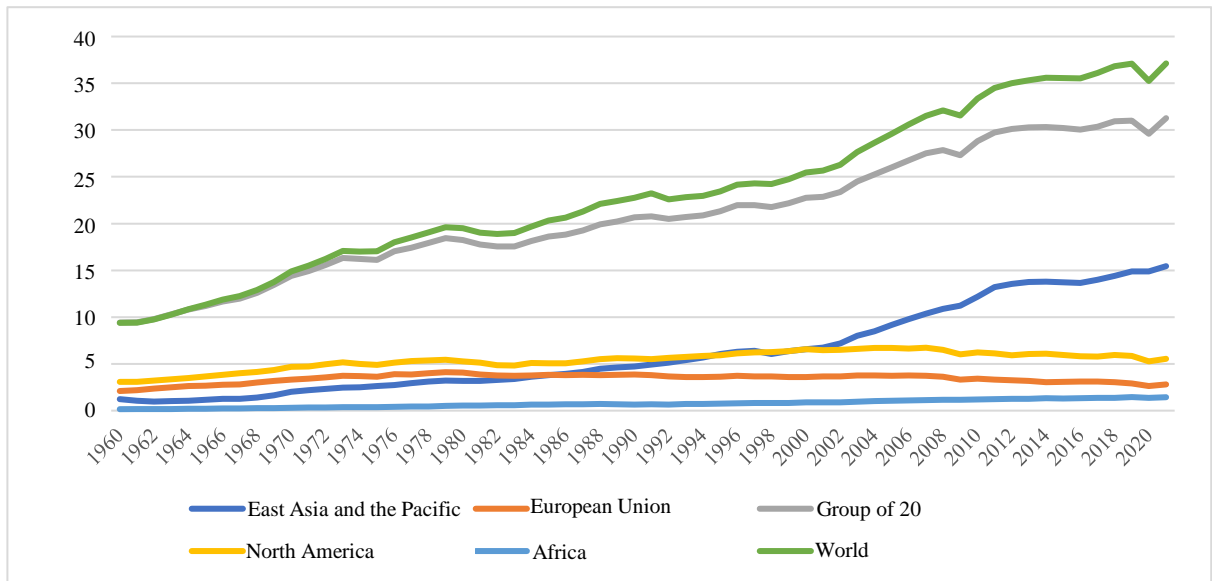
<sup>20</sup> ECA, “Africa spending more than its fair share for climate adaptation”.

<sup>21</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, “Climate change is an increasing threat to Africa”, 27 October 2020.

<sup>22</sup> Monica Crippa and others, *GHG Emissions of All World Countries, 2023* (Luxembourg, Publications Office of the European Union, 2023).



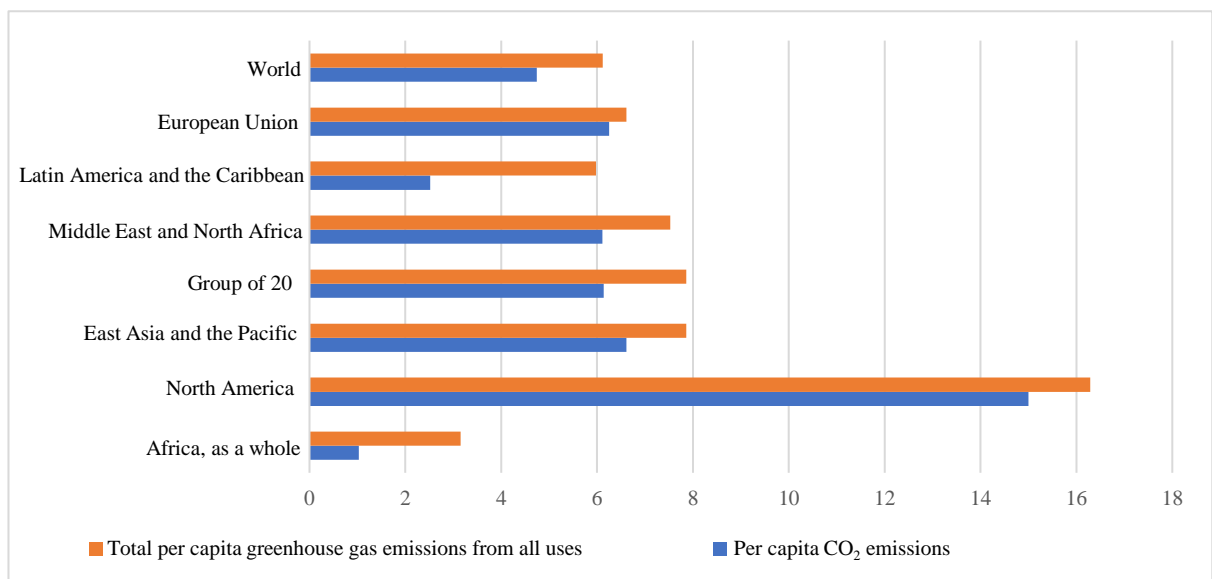
Figure VI  
**Total energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**  
 (Gigatons)



Source: Climate Watch, Historical GHG Emissions database. Available at [www.climatewatchdata.org](http://www.climatewatchdata.org) (accessed on 16 February 2024).

22. As shown in figure VII, as of 2020, the average per capita carbon emissions of Africa as a whole were only 1.00 ton, compared with a global average of 4.70 tons; the average for North America was 15.00 tons, for countries in the Group of 20 it was 6.14 tons, for East Asia and the Pacific it was 6.61 tons and for States members of the European Union it was 6.25 tons. Even in terms of greenhouse gases from all sources and all uses, Africa still had the lowest per capita share.

Figure VII  
**Average per capita greenhouse gas emissions, 2020**  
 (Tons per person)



Source: Climate Watch, Historical GHG Emissions database. Available at [www.climatewatchdata.org](http://www.climatewatchdata.org) (accessed on 16 February 2024).

**C. Target 13.3: improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning**

23. The data for this target are limited but improving. A number of initiatives to improve data availability are under way across Africa. One such initiative is the Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development, established by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, with a view to generating and scaling up action at all levels of education to promote sustainable development. Another initiative is the United Nations Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness, which brings together a number of entities of the United Nations system – including the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research – to promote international cooperation in support of action on climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation and access to information.<sup>23</sup>

24. The only indicator used to measure progress towards this target is 13.3.1: the extent to which (a) global citizenship education and (b) education for sustainable development are mainstreamed in (i) national education policies; (ii) curricula; (iii) teacher education; and (iv) student assessment. One example of such progress is that Algeria, Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Malawi and Mauritius are recorded as mainstreaming global citizenship and sustainable development into their teacher education programmes.<sup>24</sup>

**D. Target 13.a: implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible**

25. The only indicator used to measure progress towards this target is 13.a.1: amounts provided and mobilized in United States dollars per year in relation to the continued existing collective mobilization goal of the \$100 billion commitment through to 2025. The target, pursuant to the Paris Agreement, of the mobilization of \$100 billion per year has not been achieved, even though such a sum falls far short of what is needed. Estimates derived from the nationally determined contributions of African States – which lack a standardized approach to estimation – suggest that those States will require close to \$3 trillion between 2020 and 2030 in order to implement the Paris Agreement, including at least \$1.2 trillion for adaptation action.<sup>25</sup> Developing countries received only \$29 billion of public finance flows for adaptation in 2020, with Africa receiving \$11.4 billion, equating to 39 per cent of the total

<sup>23</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, “United Nations Alliance on Action for Climate Empowerment”.

<sup>24</sup> Our World in Data, “Mainstreaming of global citizenship and sustainable development into teacher education, 2020”, Education and Knowledge database. Available at <https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/mainstreaming-sustainable-development-into-teacher-education> (accessed on 22 March 2024).

<sup>25</sup> Africa nationally determined contributions hub, Doubling Down on Delivering Africa’s Climate Action Priorities: Policy Recommendations from the Africa NDC Hub – a Summary Report for COP27 December 2022 (Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, African Development Bank; Addis Ababa, ECA; Addis Ababa, African Union; 2022).

climate finance flow to the continent. The most vulnerable countries received the least climate adaptation finance. The African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change is requesting the mobilization of \$1.3 trillion in climate finance by 2030.<sup>26</sup> The figure actually mobilized is only a fraction of that. The quantity and quality of the climate finance currently available remains highly contested, with Oxfam estimating that just a quarter of the climate finance that is actually delivered to developing countries comes in the form of grants, with the rest mainly loans, many of them at commercial interest rates.<sup>27</sup> African States need to prioritize action on adaptation, and Governments and development partners need to further strengthen their ambitions in respect of low-carbon development and of accelerating adaptation efforts.

26. Only 2.4 per cent of multilateral climate financing was allocated to child-responsive projects between 2006 and 2023.<sup>28</sup> Climate financing and action that overlook the specific exposure and vulnerability of children weaken the efficacy of climate change response measures and risk contributing to adverse social outcomes and to deepening inequality.

27. With regard to climate financing from the Green Climate Fund, even though Africa is, as of March 2024, the region that has received the largest proportion – 38 per cent – of allocations from the Fund’s commitments of \$13.9 billion,<sup>29</sup> approximately half of the \$5.3 billion in resources committed comes from the private sector. That proportion is very high compared with other regions. For example, only 30 per cent of the \$3.13 billion committed to States in Asia and the Pacific and just 22 per cent of the \$3.3 billion committed to Latin America and the Caribbean come from the private sector.<sup>30</sup>

**E. Target 13.b: promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing States, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

28. The only indicator used to measure progress towards this target is 13.b.1: number of least developed countries and small island developing States with nationally determined contributions, long-term strategies, national adaptation plans and adaptation communications, as reported to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. All African small island developing States and least developed countries have submitted at least their first nationally determined contributions, and most have submitted their first revised nationally determined contributions.<sup>31</sup> As of November 2023, national adaptation plans have been submitted by 15 of the 33 African least developed countries and the only island State in the region to have submitted a

<sup>26</sup> UNEP, *Adaptation Gap Report 2022: Too Little, Too Slow – Climate Adaptation Failure Puts World at Risk* (Nairobi, 2022).

<sup>27</sup> Oxfam, *Climate Finance Shadow Report, 2023: Assessing the Delivery of the \$100 Billion Commitment* (Oxford, 2023).

<sup>28</sup> Children’s Environmental Rights Initiative, *Falling Short: Addressing the Climate Finance Gap for Children* (Capita, Greenville, South Carolina, United States of America; Plan International, Woking, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Save the Children International, London; United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), New York; 2023).

<sup>29</sup> Green Climate Fund, “Africa”, GCF Spotlight. Available at <https://gcfrod.blob.core.windows.net/public/odl/pdf/africa.pdf> (accessed on 21 March 2024).

<sup>30</sup> Green Climate Fund, “Approved portfolio: financing”, Open Data Library. Available at <https://data.greenclimate.fund/public/dashboard/data-browser/approved-portfolio/financing> (accessed on 23 March 2024).

<sup>31</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Nationally Determined Contributions Registry. Available at <https://unfccc.int/NDCREG> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

national adaptation plan – Madagascar – is not classed as a small island developing State.<sup>32</sup>

### III. Challenges and emerging issues, and opportunities to accelerate implementation

29. As the frequency and intensity of climate-induced events increases, families and communities in Africa, in particular the poorest and most vulnerable, will find it increasingly difficult to cope with and recover from shocks. The implications of climate change for children are especially troubling. In order to cope with several simultaneous climate-related shocks, children and their families will likely be forced to adopt strategies that could be detrimental to them in other areas of their lives.

30. Women, children and persons with disabilities suffer the most from the adverse effects of climate change. To ensure that no one is left behind, therefore, it is important that investments in and efforts towards climate adaptation involve ensuring that climate-resilient basic social services are in place, in particular those needed by children, young people and other vulnerable groups. The Committee on the Rights of the Child has issued its general comment No. 26 (2023), in which it provides clear guidance on the obligations of States with respect to protecting child rights in the face of environmental degradation and climate change. The general comment is an important tool to enable stakeholders, including child-rights and youth-led organizations, to advocate accelerated efforts towards low-carbon development and child-sensitive adaptation, with a view to protecting children from the effects of climate change.

31. Any action taken to address climate change will also help to tackle problems pertaining to migration. The Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative was launched in 2014 as a State-led, multi-stakeholder consultative process to improve the ability of States and other entities to prepare for, respond to and address the consequences of multiple crises for migrants. In 2016, the participating States published the *Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster*,<sup>33</sup> in which they provided practical, non-binding guidance on crisis preparedness, emergency response and post-crisis action, aimed at States, private sector bodies, international organizations and civil society.

32. With a view to promoting investment in climate action, priority should be given to presenting such action as an opportunity to enhance socioeconomic progress in Africa. For example, analysis shows that every \$1 invested in adaptation can generate a return of between \$2 and \$10,<sup>34</sup> while every \$1 invested in certain nature-based solutions can generate up to \$30 in economic benefits.<sup>35</sup> Studies have shown that prioritizing investments in green sectors, such as renewable energy, and in sustainable value chains generates gross value addition of up to 420 per cent while creating up to 250 per cent more jobs compared to similar investments in non-green sectors.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, *National Adaptation Plans, 2023: Progress in the Formulation and Implementation of NAPS* (Bonn, Germany, 2023).

<sup>33</sup> Migrants in Countries in Crisis Initiative, *Guidelines to Protect Migrants in Countries Experiencing Conflict or Natural Disaster* (Geneva, 2016).

<sup>34</sup> Global Commission on Adaptation, *Adapt Now: a Global Call for Leadership on Climate Resilience* (Rotterdam, Kingdom of the Netherlands, Global Center on Adaptation; Washington, D.C., World Resources Institute; 2019).

<sup>35</sup> New Climate Economy, *Unlocking the Inclusive Growth Story of the 21st Century: Accelerating Climate Action in Urgent Times* (Washington, D.C., World Resources Institute; 2018).

<sup>36</sup> ECA, *Building Forward for an African Green Recovery* (Addis Ababa, 2021).

33. While most States have ratified their first nationally determined contributions, up to 72 per cent of the contributions lack the investment plans that are critical if they are to attract resources for their implementation from a diverse range of economic agents, including State, non-State, formal, informal, individual and institutional economic agents. In addition, most of the commitments made under the nationally determined contributions – on average, up to 70 per cent – are classified as “conditional”,<sup>37</sup> meaning that their implementation is predicated upon international support, which has plateaued and, in some instances, stagnated.

34. The agreement reached at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change that there is a global imperative to transition away from fossil fuels offers unprecedented opportunities for African countries to achieve sustainable development, poverty eradication, climate resilience and social justice. It is estimated that Africa is home to 30 per cent of the critical minerals needed for the global drive to net zero. For example, the Democratic Republic of the Congo accounts for 70 per cent of the global cobalt supply but captures only 3 per cent of the global cobalt value chain.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, the global drive towards net zero presents the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the opportunity to leverage the African Continental Free Trade Area and its abundant clean energy resources to put the country, and indeed the continent, at the centre of the global electrification agenda while industrializing in a resource-efficient way. Similar opportunities could be seized by other African States.

35. Probably motivated by the chronic lack of effective, predictable and adequate flows of public climate finance to Africa, Governments on the continent are increasingly interested in carbon credits based on natural capital, and a number have already signed significant deals in that connection. Caution is needed, however, and carbon markets should not be promoted as either a panacea for shortfalls in climate finance or, as set out in the leaders’ declaration on a global climate finance framework made at the twenty-eighth session of the Conference of the Parties, a means to meet mitigation targets.

#### **IV. Main messages and recommendations for integrated and accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063**

36. As Africa remains the region most disproportionately affected by climate change, it is critical that the special needs and circumstances of the continent be recognized at the twenty-ninth session of the Conference of the Parties, with a view to contextualizing the just transition pathways for the region, with developed countries taking the lead by agreeing to more ambitious emission-reduction targets.

37. Developed countries must enhance the provision of climate finance to meet the needs of Africa until 2030 and, furthermore, allocate new financial resources that represent the greatest possible ambition and an improvement on previous contributions to the Global Environment Facility and the Green Climate Fund.

38. Africa must, with due regard to the principle of equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, be at the forefront of defining, leading and owning people-centred, just transitions. In this context, Africa must make optimal use of its abundant resources to build people-centred

<sup>37</sup> Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Nationally Determined Contributions Registry. Available at <https://unfccc.int/NDCREG> (accessed on 16 February 2024).

<sup>38</sup> BloombergNEF, “Producing battery materials in the DRC could lower supply-chain emissions and add value to the country’s cobalt”, 24 November 2021.

and resilient economies, with a view to closing development gaps, unlocking socioeconomic benefits, creating green and decent job opportunities, achieving sustainable industrialization and empowering the women, young people, local communities and Indigenous Peoples who are most vulnerable to climate change.

39. Africa must strengthen regional integration and leverage the African Continental Free Trade Area to drive its transition to energy and food security and to lead the use of its natural assets to address its development priorities and ensure that its participation in carbon markets is inclusive, is characterized by high-integrity standards and is supplementary to domestic mitigation efforts. In this regard, Africa should consider appropriate carbon tax mechanisms, including levies, to raise domestic revenues for local climate action.

40. African States, their development partners and the private sector should work together to develop and support climate-finance, risk-transfer and de-risking instruments. States should also consider such other instruments as debt-for-nature and debt-for-climate adaptation swaps to bridge the financing gap, while accelerating the implementation of the Great Blue Wall, among other initiatives, with a view to promoting sustainability and job creation.

41. The decarbonization of critical industrial sectors should be prioritized through policies that de-risk investment, support economic resilience and promote innovation. Financial mechanisms should be established to reduce the risk of investing in decarbonization technologies. Fostering public-private partnerships can enhance economic resilience by promoting sustainable industrial practices and attracting financing from the private sector. Training programmes for women and young people are also essential to equip the workforce with the skills needed for green jobs, ensuring a just transition towards a low-carbon economy.

42. In order to minimize the climate impact of displacement, climate action at the local level should be tailored to the local context, for instance by building community resilience, and climate-resilient development should be promoted. Meanwhile, climate-related drivers of displacement should be addressed. With a view to averting the adverse effects of climate change on human settlements and establishing robust mechanisms for equitable mitigation, just transitions must be accelerated by means of investments in economic diversification and in the creation of jobs in the green and blue economies, focusing on young people and on displaced and migrant workers affected or at risk of being affected by climate change.

43. Climate action must involve engagement with various stakeholders – including population groups affected by climate change – across different thematic areas, at the local, regional, national and international levels. In relation to decision-making processes pertaining to climate change and human mobility, inclusive and whole-of-society mobilization and partnerships should be enhanced through engagement with, among other groups, the public and private sectors, civil society, women, children, young people, Indigenous Peoples, displaced persons, migrants and affected communities. Such engagement should incorporate human rights-based, child-sensitive and gender-responsive approaches to migration management, and climate action.

44. With a view to the formulation of evidence-based policies and schemes, African regional partnerships should target data innovation, the interoperability of existing data systems and new data gathered from censuses, surveys and other data-collection mechanisms.

45. Governments should prioritize climate literacy and the development of green skills. From a young age, children and young people need to be taught the adaptive capacity that they will need for life in a world affected by climate change. The enhancement of education and skills is crucial in order to prepare

children and young people for the future and for their role in increasing sustainability. Climate change is exacerbating the problems faced by education systems all over the world.

46. African States should invest in low-carbon, climate-resilient social services for children, young people and vulnerable communities. Such investment represents a huge opportunity to promote low-carbon development and much-needed adaptation advances.

47. Governments should accelerate the transitions to the green and blue economies. Africa has been engaging in such transitions, the main purpose of which is to secure economic and environmental benefits by reducing ecological costs and resource consumption. A number of prerequisites exist for the transition to inclusive green and blue economies. First, strong policy and institutional support, political will and an approach involving the participation of public, private and community stakeholders are all required. Second, there is a need for technological innovation to support the entire economy, including the agricultural, industrial, fishing, mining and services sectors. Third, the transition must be supported by adequate finance to enable resource-constrained countries to progress towards a more sustainable future.

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