

POLICY IDEAS FOR COP27

FROM THE AFRICA-EUROPE FOUNDATION AND FRIENDS OF EUROPE

Make it Just, Make it Fair, Make it Measurable, Make it Accountable, Make it Financially Inclusive

COP27 will take place in Sharm el-Sheik in Egypt, 7-18 November 2022. It will be the first African COP since COP22, held in Morocco in 2016, and the 5th happening on the African continent since the start of the COP process on climate change.

COP27 labelled as the 'African COP' is one that must recognise the special needs and circumstances of the African continent while understanding the difficult geopolitical reality of certain parts of the world, including Europe.

Framed as the COP of implementation, and taking place one year before the first Global Stocktake, stakes and expectations are high for fast-tracking the implementation of the Paris rulebook, accelerating climate action, closing the finance gap and delivering on the announcements made at COP26 in Glasgow.

COP27 is seen by developing countries, particular in Africa, as a timely moment to focus on their particular needs. Thus, while accelerated mitigation is recognised as clearly essential, more attention and funds are needed to address the impacts of climate change to date, including on loss and damage.

The IPCC completed its 6th Assessment Report in 2022, providing much hard-hitting data on the limited progress made so far and harsh impacts from climate change, especially in the most vulnerable nations. Evidence from the Report paints a very damaging picture of losses to GDP for all African countries, over the last 30 years, with some of the most vulnerable semi-arid nations suffering more than 20% cuts in per capita income.

The steep decline in emissions needed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius has started with countries pledging for climate neutrality by mid-century. However, the radical systemic transformation that is urgently needed is not sufficiently grounded. While increasingly ambitious targets are needed, in each round of revised NDCs, attention is urgently needed to ensure implementation of existing commitments.

COP27 represents a significant milestone towards building a close climate partnership between Africa and Europe. As such, however, there is a strong need to address the mismatch between on the one hand the promises made by European governments at COP and the AU-EU Summit, and on the other, evidence of delivery of such commitments. This gap has generated mistrust from African governments regarding European promises, a gap which COP27 has the chance to fill.

Key recommendations:

Restore trust by delivering on commitments:

Finance and investment will always be central to success in the climate negotiations. Agreement is needed on the scale of funding for different purposes, and the structures through which it is channelled.

Top of the list is for developed countries to fulfil the annual target of US100 billion pledged in 2009, yet still not delivered at COP26 in 2021. This outstanding commitment rankles for many poorer countries, not only because it was formally agreed to but also because in practice it is wholly inadequate for addressing climate impacts for them. It is thus seen as emblematic of richer countries making promises they cannot be bothered to deliver.

Linked to the outstanding US100 bn is the pledge at Glasgow to double funding for climate adaptation, from US20bn to 40bn per year by 2025. The composition of Adaptation Finance needs to shift from 70% loans, to more than 70% grants. On the commitment to double adaptation finance, a series of more progressive developed countries are taking the lead and hope to show a credible plan for how to reach the target by the due date. A clear plan and route-map for different contributing countries would help re-build confidence.

The next priority is to engage on climate finance needs for 2025 and beyond, through discussion of the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG). This in-depth process of assessing impacts and needs should align with recognition of Loss & Damage, and its inclusion within the regular climate negotiations. Developed countries have tried to avoid discussion of L&D for too long, finding ways of postponing discussion, and pushing back decision-making.

Third, there are outstanding problems with the fragmented architecture and complex processes through which climate finance is delivered. A large number of different funds have been set up over the years, with no clear benefit from such additions to the scene. Now is the time to reform such fragmentation and make it easier for governments seeking to access finance. Many governments also face daunting challenges before funds are received, due to the bureaucratic procedures and long time frames involved, which shut out many potential beneficiaries. And benchmarks are needed for the share devoted to community-based actions, since even once acquired, central governments tend to keep hold of climate finance rather than pushing it downwards to grassroots levels. All countries should commit to locally-led climate action, ensuring that funding procedures enable practitioners in local institutions to access support.

Close the emission gap and speed up decarbonising power systems

There remains a huge gap in emissions per head between Europe and Africa, and between G20 and the rest of the world. G20 nations account for 75% of global emissions, yet 8 of the 20 still have no plans and targets for achieving net-zero. The EU accounts for 25% of historic emissions in comparison with 4% for Africa, yet their relative populations stand today at 6% and 17%. This illustrates the highly unequal pattern of greenhouse gas emissions per head, and the scale of the injustice which climate change brings to different regions. Therefore, the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) remains hugely important for the UNFCCC process.

The energy crunch generated by Russia's invasion of Ukraine should provide a strong push in favour of energy security, delivered by investment in decentralised renewable energy systems. With solar and wind technologies generating power at prices well below coal, oil and gas, the financial arguments for low carbon electricity could not be clearer. Instead of backsliding into increased fossil fuel production, the geo-politics at play during COP27 ought to encourage Europe to accelerate attainment of climate and energy targets, cutting harmful subsidies, and achieving the Green Deal.

Alongside the ramping-up of low carbon solutions, Europe should decommission the most carbon intensive power plants as rapidly as possible, and drive for energy efficiency measures. Faster decommissioning of large power stations by Europe could generate some slack in the EU's carbon budget, to share with African countries seeking to use gas as a transitional fuel. This would recognise the continent's need for solid baseload power in the electricity system, to which renewables can be added, while recognising the risks associated with stranded assets.

Invest in joint knowledge sharing, matchmaking, and capacity building

There are multiple areas for working better together as Africa and Europe on key priorities, such as mapping the energy, agri-food, health, mobility transition pathway: policy, practice, investment.

Opportunities to explore include matchmaking with EU knowledge and assets, technical expertise and finance; identifying projects of common interest that can transform the Africa-Europe partnership and make it more visible, building upon what exists, including Transition Plans for specific countries. There are multiple avenues for developing skills in climate services, adaptation practices, building resilience, vulnerability assessments, and ways to combine traditional knowledge and modern technologies.

Methods to strengthen skills and build capacities include formal training, mentoring and accompaniment, including for students, entrepreneurs, SMEs, private sector companies, and government personnel.

Women's leadership is needed at all levels, whether in the negotiating halls of COP27, in Ministries of Finance, or at local level. Ways need to be found to ensure that women can access climate funds, increase investment in energy access, and open-up participation in decision-making. Currently the needs of women and girls are being ignored amidst the climate crisis.

Take a Systems Approach

The current situation is a perfect storm of crises, with the COVID legacy, conflict in Europe and Africa, economic recession and cost of living crisis, combined with increased climate variability, land degradation, droughts and floods all leading to an age of disorder. Given the complex web of interlocking factors, we need to rethink systems and accelerate progress with the energy and agri-food transitions. This combination of crises offers an opportunity to:

- Ramp-up energy access and transition, to accelerate the greening of our societies
- Shift agri-food farming practice to agroecology, thereby restoring soil health, sequestering soil carbon, and building greater climate resilience
- Rethink our health systems, provision of health services, and the close coupling of human and ecosystem health
- Put the ocean at the core of the Africa-Europe partnership, building on the large and diverse blue economy
- Transform transport systems, enabling less use of fossil energy, reducing congestion, cleaning urban air quality, and overall waste
- Embed climate firmly within security strategies and explore ways to climate-proof investment

Treat climate as both a red flag for security and also a route to peace

The latest UN report on climate change issued just days before the start of the COP 27 casts doubt on the ability of the global community to meet the Paris target to restrict global warming to 1.5 degrees celcius over pre-industrial levels. It argues that the point at which it was feasible to do so has already passed and that we are inevitably heading to global warming at a minimum of 2 degrees, whatever remedial efforts we may take in the future.

This means that climate change will increasingly impact on national and human security. Africa due to the fragility of state structures in many countries, endemic disputes exacerbated by resource scarcity and conflicts and the impact of droughts and intermittent rainfall on already fragile eco-systems is a continent especially at risk. Experts have pointed to consequences in terms of heatwaves, health hazards, migration, hunger and famine, migration and the collapse of governance and even state

functionality in the wake of catastrophic floods, storms and other extreme weather events. There is also the risk of increasing inter-state tensions and conflicts over issues such as water, access to arable land and development projects in one country causing potential environmental damage in others.

As a result, the security community is increasingly recognising climate change as a security threat and incorporating its effects into security strategies and defence plans at both the national and the international level. NATO, for instance, has published a climate risk assessment and a climate and security action plan. It has proclaimed the ambition to become the world's leading international organisation dealing with the security implications of climate change. The EU for its part has incorporated climate change impacts into its recent joint threat assessment and its Strategic Compass.

There is an urgent need to now develop a climate and security partnership with Africa to help the latter improve its resilience and responsiveness. The EU and NATO already maintain partnerships with the African Union, regional groupings such as ECOWAS and many African countries bilaterally.

Recommendations include the following:

- Mapping of climate change patterns and speed of evolution, including desertification, soil erosion and resource pressures, using satellite monitoring instruments and oceanographic sensors. Transfer of technology and expertise so that Africa can do better mapping and forecasting itself. There is a need to establish an Africa wide early warning network and centralised authority based on data fusion and analysis.
- Planning for military assistance to deal with natural disasters such as floods, wildfires, earthquakes and extreme storms. This can include legal arrangements to facilitate rapid deployments, pre-positioning of military stocks and equipment and designating European stand-by assistance forces on a rotational basis, with assets such as water tanker aircraft to put out wildfires. Joint exercising with African relief forces and UN peacekeeping missions in Africa to facilitate interoperability and coordination.
- Assisting African countries to undertake climate vulnerability assessments and to help develop national and regional resilience plans. These can cover the hardening and climate proofing of critical infrastructure, as in energy, transport and telecommunications, and building redundancy and back up systems to avoid single points of failure.
- Working with African countries and regional organisations to develop crisis management contingency plans for climate related scenarios affecting security and to exercise these periodically to ensure a coherent joined up response, both within government and between government and the private sector no as well as civil society. Combating climate disinformation and ensuring effective government and media communication are especially important here.
- Mainstreaming climate risks into national security strategies and defence plans of African nations to cover the procurement of military equipment, reduction in the military reliance on fossil fuels climate proofing of key military bases such as ports and airfields, and improving awareness of climate and security through military training and education at staff colleges throughout Africa
- Transfer of technologies enabling the conversion of military forces to net zero targets through the adoption of “smart defence” projects in areas such as bases and facilities powered by renewables, battery operated military vehicles and less carbon intensive military transport and logistics systems. How savings from lower fossil fuel energy consumption can be re-invested in research and development of carbon neutral technologies, equipment and

operational procedures. Developing a comprehensive methodology to reliably assess the performance of African forces in meeting these goals.

- Exploring with African countries how bilateral and multilateral diplomacy can be used as a crisis prevention instrument in tackling potential disputes over resources or climate induced trends such as mass migration or land and water sharing.

Address disinformation:

- **Decades of disinformation have slowed progress** on addressing climate change and are disrupting our ability to implement the Paris Agreement.
- Instead of acknowledging the harmful effects of their products and committing to swift and deep reductions in carbon emissions, many of **the world's largest fossil fuel companies have knowingly deceived the public about climate science and climate action** - and they continue to do so today
- **Disinformation kills:** Without an urgent global effort to address disinformation about climate, our efforts will continue to stall and the planet will see global temperatures continue to rise, leading to catastrophic impacts to most major global coastal cities.
- **Our societies have proven they can tackle disinformation** when they make it an urgent priority but we have yet treat disinformation about climate change with the urgency and resources that it requires.
- **Effective approaches** to addressing disinformation about climate change include not only education and taking action on companies which propagate it but also on the new media which gives an equal platform to climate change deniers and their harmful messages.
- **Facts Won't Save Us:** As with all efforts to counter disinformation, our messaging on climate change and climate action is most effective when it is intimately relatable and satisfying to citizens and delivered by someone they know and trust. This means local leaders, trusted friends, neighbours, and family members.
- **Overcoming Resistance to climate science and climate action.** Every poll indicates that younger people believe and understand climate science while older and middle-aged citizens tend to be more sceptical. Thus, we have a unique opportunity to effectively change the public narrative on climate change through intergenerational dialogue. People with “personal traction” have the most success in convincing disinfo believers to consider other views so we must provide support to younger people who can engage older generations on climate change.

All key recommendations should be underpinned by the concepts of:

- Just, affordable, and equitable transition
- Good governance
- Strong regulation
- Inclusive and innovative strategies
- Pathways of engagement