

Concept Note

Africa Day at COP30

Theme: Africa at the Forefront of Climate Action: Sustainable Financing for Resilient and Inclusive Green Growth

Venue: COP 30 Africa Pavilion| Date: 11 November 2025

Time: 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm

I. Introduction

1. Context & Rationale

The 2025 Africa Day builds on the Second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2), held from 8th to 10th September 2025 in Addis Ababa, which culminated in the Africa Leaders Addis Ababa Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action, presenting a bold commitment to climate action for the continent with implications on the global climate change agenda. Africa is endowed with natural assets, including vast forests, peatlands, and regenerative agricultural systems that serve as critical carbon sinks. These ecosystems not only sequester billions of tons of CO₂ but also underpin the resilience and livelihoods of millions by supporting agriculture, energy production, trade, and climate adaptation efforts. For instance, the Congo Basin, the world's second-largest tropical rainforest after the Amazon, stores an estimated 60 billion tons of CO₂, representing roughly 4% of global carbon stocks in tropical forests.

To achieve climate-resilient development goals and a just transition to low-carbon economies, Africa requires accessible, scalable, and diversified financing options that address adaptation, mitigation, and transformative economic growth. The continent's large youth population, gender equity goals, and significant natural capital necessitate financing models that are inclusive, participatory, and sustainable. Africa Day at COP 30 will amplify Africa's collective voice on climate finance as a key enabler of transformational climate action, economic diversification, and poverty reduction. Africa's large youth population is poised to drive a new wave of circular economy enterprises, transforming the value of these ecological assets through clean technology and innovation.

2. Shifting of Gears - The Sustainable Climate Finance Imperative

A new paradigm is emerging, where African nations are decisively shifting gears. The model leverages natural resources for local value addition, green industrialisation, and climate-resilient development, prioritising long-term African prosperity and sovereignty over extractive foreign agendas. It is a move beyond being a supplier of raw exports to becoming a hub of innovation and local value addition.

In the green minerals and critical raw materials sector, Africa produces 75% of the global cobalt, 50% of the manganese, and 25% of the bauxite, but captures only 5-10% of the final value. There is therefore a need to promote local processing and battery manufacturing, thereby boosting the refining of raw materials locally and creating value addition, as well as

increasing revenue from these resources. Africa needs to capitalise on its green energy potential for internal industrialisation.

Despite its massive oil, gas and renewable energy resources, 600 million Africans lack access to clean energy. Prioritising African energy needs is critical and is the first step in promoting green growth in Africa. Morocco's Noor Ouarzazate Solar Plant and the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD) are some examples of the green industrialisation movement in Africa.

3. Carbon Markets Potential

Africa hosts **20% of the world's carbon sinks**, yet it earns less than USD 1 billion annually from global carbon markets, which are valued at **USD 900 billion**. Strategic monetisation of assets like the **Congo Basin**, which stores **60 billion tons of CO₂**, could generate **USD 3–10 billion** annually through REDD+ and over **USD 100 billion** continent-wide by 2030. However, up to **90% of revenue leaks** to foreign intermediaries. For example, Kenyan forest credits sell for **USD 30/ton**, but communities receive only **USD 3–5**. Weak national frameworks, with only 10 African countries having carbon trading regulations, further limit gains. The DRC's vast peatlands generate no revenue due to a lack of effective governance systems, while reliance on Western verifiers often leads to delays in payments, inflated costs and revenue leakage outside the continent.

To address these challenges, the **African Union** adopted the **Africa Action Plan on Carbon Markets (AAPCM)** and **AUDA-NEPAD's Principles on Integrity & Equity**, promoting African-led, high-integrity carbon trading. Community-driven projects, such as Kenya's Northern Rangelands and the DRC's Mai Ndombe REDD+, demonstrate the potential for local benefits. Innovative models, such as Gabon's USD 500 million debt-for-nature swap, green bonds in Nigeria and Kenya, and AI/blockchain tools, can enhance transparency and investment opportunities. With reforms, Africa's carbon market could grow to **USD 50–100 billion annually**, create **5 million jobs**, and unlock **USD 200 billion** in climate finance. Success depends on pan-African collaboration, AfCFTA-driven trade, and youth empowerment initiatives, such as Ethiopia's Green Legacy.

4. Adaptation Finance and Africa's Response

Africa, despite being highly vulnerable to climate impacts, receives **less than 10% of global adaptation finance**, leaving over **600 million people** at risk of exposure. Structural biases persist, with **90% of climate funds** managed by institutions like the World Bank, IMF, and EU, often favouring Western contractors. For instance, the **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** allocates **USD 10 billion annually**, yet Africa receives **less than 20%**, while Asia and Latin America receive around **60%**, with minimal trickle-down to local communities. Misleading perceptions of political risk further deter investment, even though regions like Latin America, which have higher deforestation rates, receive **five times more carbon finance**.

To close this gap, Africa must lead with **homegrown solutions**: sovereign adaptation bonds, pan-African risk pools, early warning systems, and corporate levies from developed nations to fund the **Loss & Damage Fund**. By leveraging its **USD 3 trillion in natural capital**, from drought-resistant crops to wetlands, Africa can implement **nature-based strategies** that build

resilience and economic value. Proven models, such as Ethiopia's watershed management and Senegal's agroforestry, should be scaled up, with a target of **USD 50 billion annually by 2030**.

Africa also holds **approximately USD 350 billion in sovereign and pension funds, which are** mostly invested abroad. Redirecting these resources into transformative domestic projects requires predictable policy, strong governance, and investor confidence. Unlocking this potential is key to building a resilient, self-financed future.

5. Unkept COP29 Promises

COP29 in Baku failed to deliver adequate climate finance, leaving African nations without adequate resources to address the climate crisis. Despite calls for a **USD 1.3 trillion annual goal by 2030**, including **USD 300 billion for Africa**, systemic issues remained unresolved. African leaders advocated for **debt-free grants** and direct access via institutions like the AfDB, but the final agreement upheld **loan-based financing** and **Western intermediaries**, with **60% of funds burdening African economies**. The **Loss & Damage Fund** was severely underfunded, with only **USD 700 million pledged** against an annual need of **USD 400 billion**, and just half of that redeemed. Meanwhile, **private finance**, which makes up only **2% of climate investments in Africa**, was prioritised without equity safeguards.

6. The second Africa Climate Summit, the Road to Belém, Brazil.

At the recently concluded Africa Climate Summit in Ethiopia, the African Leaders' Addis Ababa declaration, Declaration on Climate Change and Call to Action, called for financial reforms that shift from climate finance promises towards project-level financing, which reaches communities and entrepreneurs on the ground, with an emphasis on inclusivity, transparency, and accountability. The declaration also affirmed African agency and climate leadership, and challenged wealthier nations to respond with scaled-up climate finance and systemic reform of global finance and governance systems. Furthermore, the declaration recognised the need to transform climate finance from aid into strategic, scaled investments that leverage diverse sources, including public, private, philanthropic, and multilateral finance.

It is only in keeping with the terms of the Addis Ababa Declaration that global climate finance could be transformed to provide real, measurable and impactful outcomes for climate actions. Without these changes, the unkept promises of COP29 will continue to leave Africa footing the bill for a crisis it did not cause, hindering future progress beyond COP 30.

7. Africa's COP 30 Flagship Event

The Africa Day event is a significant moment for Africa during the Climate COPs, designed to highlight Africa's leadership in the global climate agenda, with an emphasis on innovative and sustainable financing mechanisms that underpin resilient and inclusive green growth throughout the continent. Africa Day provides a vital platform to advocate for equitable climate

finance, partnerships, and policies that align with Africa's socio-economic priorities and the African Union's Agenda 2063 vision.

The event at COP 30 embodies Africa's leadership, innovation, and determination to mobilise the necessary financing to transform its economies while addressing climate vulnerabilities and promoting social equity. Through this event, Africa reaffirms its strong commitment to global climate goals and its vision for a sustainable and prosperous future for all Africans.

II. Objectives for Africa Day

1. Present Africa's unified stance on sustainable climate finance to international partners, financial institutions, and donors.
2. Provide strategic direction on enhancing Africa's resilience to Climate Change
3. Showcase successful African-led initiatives, utilising innovative financial instruments such as blended finance, green bonds, and climate risk insurance.
4. Mobilise new financing commitments and strategic partnerships focused on Africa's priority sectors, including renewable energy, climate-smart agriculture, ecosystem restoration, and infrastructure resilience.
5. Facilitate policy dialogue and knowledge exchange on governance frameworks that enhance transparency, accountability, and accessibility of climate funds across African countries.
6. Empower governments, institutions, partners, the private sector, and Communities and youth to create at least 5 million green jobs by 2030.

III. Expected outcomes

COP30 marks a pivotal moment for Africa to demand justice in carbon pricing, direct access to climate finance, and an end to resource exploitation. The Africa Day side event is expected to advance the discussion from Addis Ababa's ACS2 to Belem's COP30, which, amongst African leaders, would lead to binding commitments from Global North nations to redirect 30% of climate finance to African-led initiatives and a roadmap for AfCFTA-driven carbon trade. By centring African agency, this event will ensure that COP30 delivers tangible progress toward a just transition that fuels the continent's resilience and prosperity, thereby supporting the implementation of Agenda 2063, the Africa we want, and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.