



OPEN LETTER

Leaders in West Africa Call for Bold Climate Action at COP28

The Global Stocktake highlighted the role of non-state actors in developing successful regional climate strategies. The political outcomes at COP28 must build a system of codesigned climate solutions that incorporate the regional and local knowledge of West Africa.

Dear Global Leaders,

The appetite for bold climate action has never been greater. We know that the drive and desire exist, and we are calling on you to use the findings of the Global Stocktake to drive action that has a real, transformative impact. In order to execute this pivotal moment, inclusive and regionally considered solutions must be the centerpiece of the political outcomes of the Global Stocktake, at COP28 and beyond.

In September, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) published the Technical Synthesis Report for the world's first Global Stocktake. The landmark review identifies the prevailing climate action implementation gap and will form the basis of conversations at COP28 in Dubai where leaders will reflect on progress and establish updated climate commitments. Where the Global Stocktake provides a roadmap for a decisive shift in the current incomplete approach to addressing climate change, COP28 is the primary platform to execute this pivot.


We are calling on world leaders to continuously incorporate the unique risks and opportunities in the West African region in this decision-making process and to elevate the voices of those most vulnerable to devastating climate impacts. An adequate response to climate change must not be a one-size-fits-all solution: West Africa possesses many of the solutions but the voices of local experts and civil society cannot be overlooked by global leaders at COP28.

Top regional considerations include:

- **Adaptation:** Many of the natural resources in West Africa are not isolated to individual countries. Transboundary resources need to be taken into account when designing national climate policy, including National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), particularly as they relate to adaptation.

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- **Finance:** Local climate action is significantly underfunded. Policy needs to ensure finance is directed to the areas where the solutions are being developed, and that the requirements to access climate finance are simplified.
 - **Mitigation:** Resources geared towards mitigation must reach the communities that need them most. The region needs support for improved monitoring of mitigation aid.
 - **Equity:** A top-down approach to the Just Transition cannot uplift our communities. The Just Transition needs to be viewed from the perspective of local livelihoods.
 - **Implementation:** Capacity building needs to be informed by all regional experts, particularly where political situations are limiting implementation. The voices of civil society need to be incorporated into this process.

Climate change poses a unique threat to our region because of compounding social, economic, and political factors. Current political uncertainties in West Africa are also important factors that exacerbate the impact of climate change. Yet, our societies, geographies, cultures, and skills offer hope that a proper understanding of the Global Stocktake in the context of West Africa can result in climate solutions that put people and the earth first, and benefit our economy as well.

Therefore, we call on leaders to produce a Global Stocktake decision text that considers transboundary resources and political turbulence in different parts of the world, including West Africa, ensures continuous financial flows for local action and that mitigation aid reaches local communities, maps out a Just Transition plan oriented towards local livelihoods, and incorporates the voices of civil society.

We implore the world's leaders to interpret the implications of the Global Stocktake that are specific to our region and to utilize these advantages, including:

- **Adaptation:** In a region already facing forced migration due to political and economic reasons, an improved approach and renewed prioritization of adaptation can help people live where they are and decrease the compounding impacts of climate-related migration.
 - **Finance:** West Africa hosts many of the solutions needed to address the climate crisis. An optimized allocation of finance to those developing climate solutions can build economies that can tackle the climate crisis and jumpstart economic development that builds the sustainable, thriving future we need, while benefiting local communities.
 - **Mitigation:** The synergies between mitigation solutions and development solutions based on our region's Green Growth Agenda should be harnessed to make progress towards both of these regional priorities.
 - **Equity:** An inclusive approach to the Just Transition and green growth that addresses equity at a local level can advance social, climate, and economic interests in tandem.
 - **Implementation:** Instructive definitions for local communities and civil society around resilience, finance, and the Just Transition can enhance these solutions even at the community level and develop skills that can accelerate green growth.
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Our call to action

An optimal political outcome of the Global Stocktake at COP28 would provide an opportunity for West Africa to build and expand climate solutions that progress intersecting social, economic, and political priorities in the region, including reducing causes of forced migration, scaling sustainable development, and accelerating the Just Transition and green growth.

The Global Stocktake Technical Synthesis report identified the knowledge and action gaps that need to be addressed to adequately and equitably act on climate. To avoid the irreversible consequences of climate change, it's never been more urgent to incorporate regional and local considerations into climate plans and deliver political outcomes at COP28 that protect the people of West Africa and beyond.

Signatories

Dr. Kwame Oppong Hackman, Senior Scientist, West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)

Dr. Mohau Mateyisi, Senior Scientist, Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR)

Dr. Alcade C. Segnon, Scientist, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

Ms. Compaore Marie-Pierre, coordinator, Women Environmental Programme

Ms. Noura Fatchima Djibrilla, Association Nigerienne des Scouts de l'Environnement ANSEN

Mr. Emmanuel Seck, Executive Director, ENDA Energy

Mr. Kenneth Nana Amaoateng, Executive Director, AbibiNsroma Foundation

Dr. Kisito Gandji, Scientist, West African Science Service Center on

Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)

Mr. Agbozo Eric, Founder & CEO, Defence Against AIDS Poverty and Underdevelopment (DAAPU)

Mr. Abdulhamid Tahir Hamid, Chief Executive Officer, Global Environmental and Climate Conservation Initiative (GECCI)

Mr. Baako Abdul-Fatawu, Executive Director, CIWED GHANA

Mr. Wendkouni Jean Anicet SAWADOGO, President, African Youth Initiative for Development (AYID)

Lougue Aboubacar Okana, Executive director, Coordination Nationale des Jeunes pour l'Environnement et le Climat (CONAJEC)

Olumide Idowu, Co-Founder/ CEO, International Climate Change Development Initiative (ICCDI)

Fatoumata Marong, Women and Youths Empowerment Officer,

Community Action Platform on Environment and Development

Maiga Mouhamadou, Executive d'Ousmane, ONG AMADE

Akara Wagua, Chairman of the Board, Action pour la Protection de l'Environnement et le Conseil Agricole (APECA)

Aminu Bonifacio, Managing Director, Massive Vision Enterprise, Climate Smart Agricultural Practices program, Green Climate Initiative

Mohammed Bun Bida, Muslim Family Counselling Services

Raphael Godlove Ahenu, Founder/ CEO, GLOBAL MEDIA FOUNDATION

Almoudou Coulibaly, coordinator, ONG Vision d'Action pour le Développement Inclusif au Mali (VADIM)

Dabe Bi Kie Yves Blanchard, President, Africa Innovation Network 4 Climate and Education



Quotes from regional stakeholders

“Global leaders should not be silent on the ongoing political instabilities in the different parts of the world, including West Africa. Can governments fighting political insecurities effectively work towards fighting climate change? Global leaders should note that ignoring turbulent political situations can seriously affect implementation.”

Dr. Kwame Oppong Hackman, Senior Scientist, West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)

“In order to translate the findings of the Global Stocktake into inclusive solutions, local experts in our region must be brought into the design and implementation of local solutions.”

Dr. Alcade C. Segnon, Scientist, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT

“The plan to deliver a Just Transition for West Africa must begin with discussions of equity and from the perspective of local livelihoods, and sets forth a plan that upholds the principles of restorative justice and mandates the transition down to the community level.”

Ms. COMPAORE Marie-Pierre, coordinator, Women Environmental Programme

“While the Global Stocktake technical synthesis report highlighted the information gaps that need to be breached, governments must respond at COP28 to these in a systematic and intersectional fashion, identifying where synergies exist between climate and sustainable development goals.”

Ms. Noura Fatchima Djibrilla, Association Nigerienne des Scouts de l'Environnement ANSEN

“A more comprehensive GST should aggregate all efforts made to achieve the Paris Agreement’s objectives particularly in considering the climate action of non-state actors when accounting for initiatives implemented within the framework of the NDCs.”

Mr. Emmanuel SECK, Executive Director, ENDA Energy

“Climate finance, especially for local communities, is not just an investment in sustainable solutions; it’s a commitment by global leaders and policymakers to empower local communities. By ensuring accessible climate finance at all levels, they enable local communities not only to adapt but thrive in the face of climate change impacts. It’s time for more impactful actions that speak louder than words, creating a resilient future for all.”

Dr. Kisito Gandji, Scientist, West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)

“If the GST process will be facilitative as perceived by the framers of UNFCCC Article 14, then the involvement of affected communities including youth, gender, farmer-based groups, and persons with disability as well as CSO bodies must be identified, encouraged and supported with the required knowledge and empowered to fully participate in the GST process.”

Mr. AGBOZO Eric, Founder & CEO, Defence Against AIDS Poverty and Underdevelopment (DAAPU)

“The Global Stocktake serves as a reality check on our climate action progress, urging honesty and boldness in future plans. At COP28, it is essential to set a course for a more sustainable future, increase ambition and accelerate efforts in emission reduction, climate adaptation, and a fair transition to a low-carbon economy. Strong leadership from governments, businesses, and civil society is crucial to building a better future for all.”

Mr. Abdulhamid Tahir Hamid, Chief Executive Officer, Global Environmental and Climate Conservation Initiative (GECCI)

“The Global Stocktake serves as a compass for charting our progress in combating climate change. As we approach COP28, it is imperative that we prioritize ambitious and equitable climate action. Let us unite in our commitment to a sustainable future, recognizing the interconnectedness of global efforts in mitigating climate challenges. Together, we can pave the way for transformative change that resonates across borders and generations.”

Mr. Baako Abdul-Fatawu, Executive Director, CIWED GHANA

“The climate clock is ticking for Africa. To fulfill our commitment to the Paris Agreement, African nations face a stark reality – a need to invest over \$3 trillion by 2030 in mitigation and adaptation. Let’s delve into the innovative financial instruments emerging across the continent, paving the way for a sustainable future. It’s time for bold actions and transformative solutions that not only address the climate crisis but also leverage the power of volunteerism.”

Ms. Ramata Ouedraogo, Project Officer, West African Science Service Center on Climate Change and Adapted Land Use (WASCAL)

“As dedicated young advocates, we stand as stewards of the African ecosystem. Our visionary endeavors forge a path towards a future where climate challenges yield to innovation, education, and collective responsibility, propelling us toward a sustainable and harmonious coexistence with our planet.”

Mr. Wendkouni Jean Anicet SAWADOGO, President, African Youth Initiative for Development (AYID)