



**The African Governments**

**Africa Group of Negotiators on Climate Change**

**The African Union**

**The African People**

**Challenging injustice in a time of Transition: - African People's Climate Justice Declaration to African Governments / October 2022**

We the African People:

**In solidarity**, stand as women, men, youth, peasants, social movements, community-based and civil society organisations as a united front against the multi-dimensional crisis that is prevailing in our continent.

**Noting the** frequency and intensity of climate crises in Africa that have brought us together in our diversity, we speak with one voice to call to the African and global leaders to take the matters of climate change seriously and ensure that climate justice is delivered urgently.

**Being Aware that African** leaders and other world leaders are preparing to gather again for the 27<sup>th</sup> edition of the Conference of Party (COP) event, we the African people have taken stock of the commitments to COP 26 and previous COPs and the extent to which they were delivered.

**Acknowledging** that this COP27 is going to be held on African soil, it is of great importance that African voices are heard and our concerns and recommendations are taken on board.

**Rejecting** any attempts to brand COP 27 as an African COP if it does not recognise the voices of African people in their diversity and push for agreements that draw closer to making climate justice expectations a reality.

### **Therefore, cognizant of the current effects of the climate crisis in Africa and the world**

Climate Change remains Africa's biggest "existential challenge"<sup>1</sup>. We are already experiencing the effects of the climate crisis, as evidenced by the February 2022 Cyclone Batsirai in Madagascar which was followed by heavy storms, which left the number of displaced people at around 150 000 and 1.64 million people facing severe food insecurity compounding the effects of the worst drought in 40 years in other parts of the country. The April 2022 'Durban Rain Bomb' also caused flooding across KwaZulu Natal in South Africa, during which 450 people lost their lives, 40,000 were displaced and 12,000 homes completely destroyed<sup>2</sup>. In 2019 cyclone Idai left more than 960 people dead, thousands missing and affected nearly 3 million people in Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi<sup>3</sup> and was followed by 4 more cyclones within a 2 year period. Dust storms are wreaking havoc in the Sahel region<sup>4</sup>.

All this is negatively impacting food security and causing biodiversity loss in Africa and millions of people are experiencing extreme hunger and are in need of food handouts across the continent. Peasant farmers of which the majority are women, produce the majority of local food, feeding African homes - nearly 80% of total food consumed by Africans. They also rely mostly on rain-fed agriculture and other natural products available in their territories for their livelihoods. They (peasant farmers) are mostly affected by the effects of climate change in rural economies. Peasant women are also responsible for energy and water provision for their families and communities and are main caregivers for the sick, making the multiple roles burdensome in times of crisis. The climate crisis is leading Africa to become a net food importer resulting in food prices going beyond the reach of ordinary people, while in many cases undercutting local markets.

Climate change and resource-induced conflicts and environmental disasters not only in the African region but throughout the world continue unabated and hundreds of thousands of families have been heavily affected in 2022 alone. As extreme weather events have worsened, insecurity has fed the resurgence of armed conflict in fragile regions such as along the Niger Delta, Chad basin, the horn of Africa, the DRC basin and the Amazon (timber logging by multinational companies) where weak institutions and economies, injustice, violence and social insecurity are already prevalent.

Currently, unprecedented heatwaves are sweeping across the world, bringing wildfires and killing thousands. Europe is facing its worst drought in 500 years whilst recent Monsoon floods have affected Pakistan (Asia) since mid-June 2022<sup>5</sup> that has left a third of the country under water. Caribbean Islands are under threat of extinction due to the rise in sea levels. In China, a record-breaking heatwave combined with a prolonged drought during the usual flood season has wreaked havoc affecting hydropower capacity and future food supply<sup>6</sup>. All these effects are being experienced amidst low climate adaptation capacity in the global South.

Natural resources misgovernance through extractivism -the large-scale plunder of our resources for profit and to meet overconsumption of elites in the Global North and South - has resulted in increased poverty and maldevelopment amongst communities and nations and is a driver of the climate and ecological crisis. Industrial agriculture, forestry and fishing and a reckless promotion of these and other false solutions are pushing Africa to the brink of destruction. Ironically there is a new push for fossil fuel investments in Africa amidst the Ukraine-Russia conflict. This has worsened climate injustice in the world as the Global North is pushing poor Global South countries to invest in fossil fuels such as the US\$400 billion gas pipeline to run from Nigeria Niger-Delta region to Europe<sup>7</sup>. This is regardless of the fact that the same Global North is calling for a phase-down of fossil fuel investment by nations in fear of increased GHG emissions. Tragically, Africa is the least emitter at less than 4% of global emissions, yet it is paying the ultimate price from climate shocks and disasters.

Growing evidence shows that gas exploitation in Africa will not bring long-term economic benefits to the continent. The only short-term winners will be European countries looking for alternative Russian gas supplies, as well as oil and gas transnational corporations looking to make huge profits. The worlds biggest oil and gas companies are planning 195 gigantic oil and gas projects called "Carbon Bombs", including in Africa, that would drive the climate past internationally agreed temperature limits. The carbon bombs will produce 646 GtCO<sub>2</sub> emissions, exceeding the global carbon budget of 500 GtCO<sub>2</sub>. Carbon emissions have no borders, increases in one country will impact us all<sup>8</sup>. We need to be transitioning to renewables. Renewables that are decentralised and women and community-led are cheaper and safer and have co-benefits for the environment and socially. This is a no-brainer in Africa where most of the continent is not locked into dirty energy.

The aggressive promotion of 'green' hydrogen is a dangerous and dirty distraction especially when it is derived from natural gas and other fossil fuels. The massive investments and infrastructure which are partly subsidised by our own states, are intended to serve the Global North, with little to no benefits of increased energy access

in our own territories. We stand to expose, discredit and discourage and halt all forms of hydrogen gas exploration and production.

### **Acknowledging: The Global Climate Summits continue to fail us!**

As COP 27 brings focus to Africa and its climate vulnerability as well as non-commitment by the global north on its UNFCCC pledges, the 'just transition' narrative is finally being recognised by governments (after years of community struggles and articulations). We are, however, equally experiencing a stronger push by industry entrenching dirty energy colonialism even further. The recently proposed African Union's "African Position on Energy Access and Transition", if adopted by Heads of States, could deepen an oppressive regime throughout Africa. It will destroy efforts to bolster equality, open democracy, the inclusion of people's voices, and gender justice and crush hopes of a fossil fuel-free energy future for the people of Africa as well as the global 2050 mitigation ambitions.

The increasing interest in dirty energy resources throughout the region does not resonate with the commitments which came out of COP 26. Expansion of fossil fuel operations in South Africa (SA), the exploration of oil and gas in Zimbabwe and Ivory Coast, exploitation of offshore oil and gas reserves in Nigeria, and gas operations in Mozambique and interests in the DRC<sup>9, 10</sup>, not to mention the resuscitation of coal use in Europe to cover the gap created by the war in Ukraine<sup>11,12</sup> are just examples of the lip service that has been given on reducing reliance on the dirty fossil fuel.

False solutions such as chemical recycling, plastic/waste incineration, carbon markets, carbon offsetting, geoengineering, net zero, etc in various African countries financed by the Global North are further pushing us deeper into the climate emergency and vulnerable communities at the frontlines with no sources of defense to experiences of the devastating impacts of climate change.

Small scale food producers in Africa, especially female rural farmers, continue to push back against injustices emanating from poor policy structures and the destruction of sustainable food systems in the advent of climate change. The current food narrative and climate change discourse is captured by international corporations and does not reflect the peasant voices, especially women farmers despite them being the most impacted by climate change. Climate change and current industrial food systems are damaging the ecosystem and creating social inequalities. As a Continent, there is no better time than now to demand food sovereignty, which includes a sustainable food system grounded in agroecology, territorial markets and peasant rights. Now is the time to claim our right to culturally appropriate food that is produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods. Small scale food producers and consumers must have

a say in how food is produced, processed, marketed and consumed. We say NO to food being used to control the People of the World.

**THEREFORE: We are calling on our African Delegation to COP 27 - to push for the following outcomes**

- **Climate financing** should be increased to meet the set target, it should be in the form of grants and without any debt- creating and repressive conditions. It should be targeted towards the most vulnerable communities at the frontline of the climate crisis in Africa including rural women food producers.
- **Clear commitments** should be made on 'loss and damage' reparations. There is a need to ensure that the historical 'polluter-pays' responsibilities for the 'climate debt' that large polluters owe is honoured and paid to oppressed indigenous and other local communities in Africa and rest of the Global South according to how the climate crisis is impacting them. The Global North must fairly and justly compensate for the loss and damage experienced by those who are most vulnerable, and often less responsible in the destruction of environments. There is a need to advocate for the Glasgow Dialogue to move from an open ended negotiating platform on loss and damage to an emergency facility with accountability frameworks.
- **Build Food Sovereignty:** Recognize, respect and support peasant agroecology and other real sustainable food production and distribution models grounded on food sovereignty as alternatives to the industrialized food system. Local level initiatives should strengthen food systems and food sovereignty by women and peasants and must be supported by national and international resources without any conditions. Governments should increase national budget allocations to agriculture, and protect local seeds and seed systems, guided by the principle of Free, Prior and Informed (and Continuous) Consent by small-scale food producers and consumers.
- **Stop financing false Solutions:** Abandon all false solutions (including net zero, failed emissions-trading and offsetting mechanisms, such as clean development mechanism (CDMs), so-called nature-based and other techno-fix false solutions like geo-engineering, sequestration in monocultures, dangerous genetic modification and manipulation). Nuclear energy, big dams, and 'Green' and 'Blue'

Economy models must be called out as scams and be abandoned and abolished. Ensure support to vulnerable communities to build back better through just recovery and resilience as well as adaptation mechanisms.

- **Leave Fossil Fuels Underground:** Governments of the Global North and Global South and the financiers of the global oil, gas and coal industries must stop all new exploration. Our governments must redirect existing reserves towards a sovereignty agenda of phasing out of fossil fuels and commit to a just energy transition. The Free, Prior, Informed and Continuous Consent of women, indigenous peoples and their communities, and their Right to Say No to fossil fuels extraction and combustion projects in their territories, as well as harmful mega infrastructure projects, must be recognized and respected and any loss and damage experienced must be fairly compensated.
- **Transforming our energy system:** Ideas like energy sufficiency for all, energy sovereignty, energy democracy, free energy technologies, energy as a common good, 100% renewable energy for all, community-owned renewable energy, and low-impact renewable energy can help us urgently transition as a society to a way of living that is just and in harmony with Nature.
- **Build Peace and bring an end to Climate Hypocrisy:** War is Profitable (for a few), the current rise in global appetite for African energy reserves is inserted in a global struggle for power over energy supplies to Europe, with the oil and gas multinational corporations looking to further destroy our environments and make huge profits from the sector. Despite many pledges and efforts by powerful governments to tackle the causes of climate change, emissions and pollution from energy and industry have increased by 60% since the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate was signed in 1992. The exploration of African gas is not even intended to benefit the people of this continent. Most of the gas is for export. It is not for the basic human needs and rights of our peoples.
- **Stop Waste Colonialism:** Global North must stop waste dumping in the Global South and all parties must commit to exclude waste-to-energy incineration from national and other climate plans. Stop petrochemical expansion, reduce plastic production, and phase-out single-use plastic and packaging across different sectors. Invest in plans and waste reduction measures and zero waste circular economy systems, including reuse-based alternative product delivery systems. Hold polluter companies accountable for plastic pollution and their enormous contribution to global warming, in line with the “producer pays” principle and

recognise the role of those involved in reducing the impact of plastic on the climate.

- **Respect and uphold the rights of people:** Use the UN declaration on the Rights of Peasants and the UN Declaration on Indigenous People's Rights in the face of climate injustice. Revise national legal frameworks to better take into account the rights of local communities and indigenous peoples, and especially to strengthen women's rights and their protection from violence. We the ACJC strongly stand in solidarity with the regions of Cabo Delgado in Mozambique, Okavango region in Namibia, and all communities and territories affected by armed conflicts and resource wars, as well as all those affected by the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP) and the West African Gas Pipeline (WAGP). Climate actions which perpetuate injustice and further exploitation of natural resources and displacement of women, farmers and whole communities due to false solutions must make way for equitable and just transition in energy, agriculture and mining.

**A NEW AFRICA IS POSSIBLE! CLIMATE JUSTICE NOW!**