From Nairobi to Addis Ababa

Taking stock of the 2023 Nairobi Declaration ahead of the second Africa Climate Summit

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SEPTEMBER 2025

Executive summary

Following the first Africa Climate Summit, the 2023 Nairobi Declaration set out a clear imperative: reconciling climate action with development – with only 6% of the SDGs on track to be met in Africa and over 600 million people still lacking access to energy. Achieving a just transition rests on expanding energy access, prioritising adaptation over mitigation, capitalising on Africa's green potential and scaling-up climate finance. In the lead-up to the second Africa Climate Summit, taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 8-10 September 2025, this brief takes stock of progress towards achieving the Nairobi Declaration commitments. Progress is assessed with respect to Africa's four main climate priorities that form the essence of the Nairobi Declaration and the continent's longstanding climate agenda.

PRIORITY 1: ENSURING A JUST ENERGY TRANSITION

- Initiatives like Mission 300 and SEFA have mobilised billions and expanded energy access, yet 623 million people in Africa remain without electricity and only one third of the population have access to clean cooking.
- Clean energy investments in Africa remain low, accounting for only 2% of the world's total despite Africa's vast solar and hydroelectric potential and nascent green hydrogen industry.
- Renewable capacity reached 72 GW in 2023 but is far off the Nairobi Declaration's 300 GW by 2030 target, with current forecasts reaching only 169 GW.

PRIORITY 2: CHAMPIONING ADAPTATION OVER MITIGATION

- Africa's costed NDCs stand at $1.6-$1.9 trillion, with many adaptation needs remaining uncosted, despite adaptation being a higher priority given Africa's position as a low emitter with high climate vulnerability.
- Progress on defining measurable indicators for a Global Goal on Adaptation has stalled, with an outcome expected at COP30 in Brazil.
- COP16 in Saudi Arabia secured pledges to combat drought, but fell short of the $191 billion needed for land restoration in Africa per year.
- More and more African cities are piloting resilience projects, and climate early warning systems across the continent have increased their comprehensiveness in the last decade.

PRIORITY 3: LEVERAGING AFRICA'S GREEN POTENTIAL

- Africa's forests absorb 600 Mt of CO_2 annually and remain the world's largest carbon sink.
- COP29 operationalised international carbon markets under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, allowing countries to trade emission certificates towards their NDCs and creating a financing opportunity for Africa which captures 16% of the market to date.
- Agriculture and the blue economy remain heavily underutilised on the continent, and balancing biodiversity and protection with expanding the industry will be a challenge.

PRIORITY 4: SCALING-UP CLIMATE FINANCE

- The $100 billion annual finance goal was only met for the first time in 2022, and while the Loss and Damage Fund was finalised at COP29, it has raised only $768 million, less than 1% of Africa's estimated needs by 2030.
- To prevent profit shifting and illicit financial flows, international tax cooperation is needed, with the final text of a UN Tax Convention, following Nigeria's lead, expected at the UNGA in 2027.
- The International Maritime Organization has set a precedent by taxing carbon emissions from global shipping, starting in 2028.
- Africa's debt represents about 25% of its GDP, and the continent suffers from inadequate representation and decision-making in the multilateral financial architecture, with multilateral development bank (MDB) reform efforts remaining incomplete.

The first Africa Climate Summit articulated a common African position on climate, focussed on a key imperative: reconciling climate and development

Taking place in Nairobi, Kenya in September 2023, the Africa Climate Summit was the first of its kind to convene 18 African heads of state and around 30,000 delegates, including the UN Secretary-General and the President of the European Commission, to formulate a unified position on climate action in the lead-up to COP28. Central to the debates and subsequent Nairobi Declaration was a focus on green growth, and the imperative to reconcile climate action with much-needed industrial development.

Reconciling climate action with industrial development rests on four main priorities:

- Ensuring a just transition and access to energy for all.
- Recognising Africa's specific vulnerability to climate change and emphasising adaptation over mitigation.
- Leveraging the green potential that lies in Africa's natural resources.
- Securing access to appropriate climate finance mechanisms.

Following the Nairobi Declaration's commitment to establish the Africa Climate Summit as a biennial event, the second edition is taking place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 5-10 September 2025 under the theme 'Financing for Africa's Resilient and Green Development'. In preparation for this high-level event, this research brief takes stock of some of the achievements of the Nairobi Declaration so far, with particular focus on the priorities of a just transition, adaptation over mitigation, Africa's green potential and climate finance.

> ACS2 will highlight proven Africa-led climate solutions and the continent's bold efforts to re-green its landscapes – laying the groundwork to effectively address the impacts of climate change and greener development. With African leadership at the forefront, we can shape fair, practical, and global climate actions.
>
> *H.E. Dr Abiy Ahmed Ali, Prime Minister of Ethiopia*[2]

Nairobi Declaration §51: We call for collective global action to mobilise the necessary capital for both development and climate action, echoing the statement of the Paris Pact for People and the Planet, that *no country should ever have to choose between development aspirations and climate action*.

> We cannot approach climate action and human development from a disconnected or in an adversarial manner.
>
> *H.E. Dr William Samoei Ruto, President of Kenya*[1]

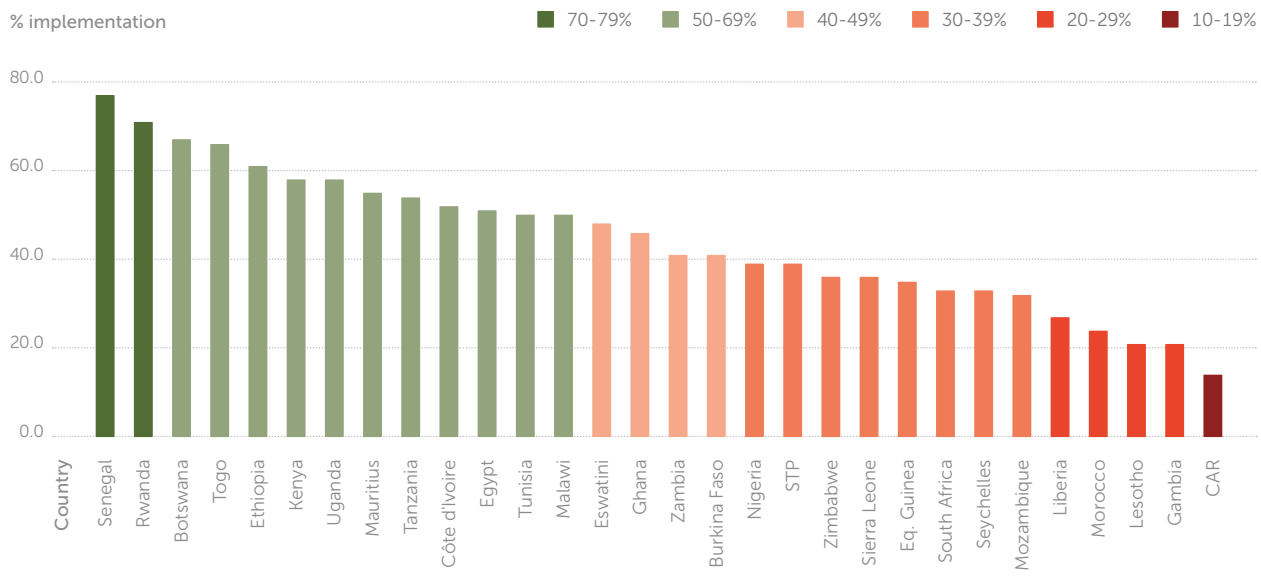
Massive development challenges, with access to energy still lacking for over 600 million people in Africa

In 2024, only 6% of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were on track to be met by 2030 in Africa.[3] At the end of the African Union's (AU) Agenda 2063 First Ten-Year Implementation Plan (FTYIP), covering 2014-2023, targets defined for 2023 stood at only 50% achievement. At country level, only 13 countries have been able to implement 50% or more of their targets, led by Senegal and Rwanda. Five countries had an implementation rate of 30% or less.[4]

Launched in early 2024, the Second Ten-Year Implementation Plan (STYIP) focusses on accelerating economic development. The primary objective of the STYIP is for all AU member states to achieve middle-income status by 2033 through increased industrialisation, value addition and infrastructure development, all dependent on sustainable investment.[5]

Nairobi Declaration §11: Recall that only seven years remain to achieve the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, and note with concern that 600 million people in Africa still lack access to electricity while 970 million lack access to clean cooking.

African countries: Agenda 2063 implementation progress (2023)*



* Data only available for 30 African countries.

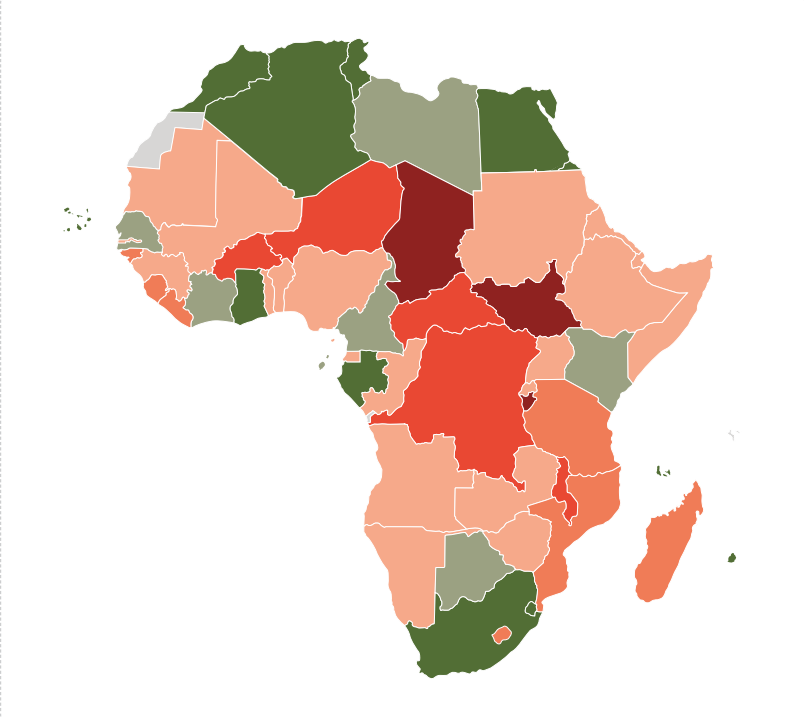
Source: MIF based on AUDA-NEPAD (2024a)

According to the 2024 and 2025 Africa Sustainable Development Reports, the continent still has massive development gaps to close:

- **SDG 1 & Agenda 2063 Goal 1.1 – Eradication of poverty:** Steady progress since 2000 yet offset by multiple crisis, with 38% of Africa's population still living below national poverty lines.[6]
- **SDG 2 & Agenda 2063 Goal 3 – Food security:** Alarming recent increases in the number of people experiencing hunger due to COVID-19 and recurrent droughts, with 60% of Africa's population threatened by severe or moderate food insecurity in 2022.[7]
- **SDG 8 & Agenda 2063 Goal 4** – Sustainable economic growth: While African countries maintain among the world's highest annual GDP growth rates, labour productivity remains low and more than 70% of youth are holding insecure jobs.[8]
- **SDG 7 & Agenda 2063 Goal 1.7** – Access to energy: In 2023, there were still 14 African countries in which less than half the population had access to energy, and electrification across the continent sat at just under 60% on average, compared to 91.6% globally. Altogether, about 623 million people across the continent were still lacking energy access.[9]

Only 6% of SDGs are on track to be met in Africa by 2030

African countries: share of population with access to electricity (2023)



Source: MIF based on World Bank (2025a)

Urbanisation, population growth and job demand will place greater pressure on meeting development needs

Africa is the only demographic region that will substantially grow between 2025 and 2100, to an estimated 3.8 billion or 37.5% of the world's population. By 2100, it is expected that the continent's working age (15-64) and youth (15-34) populations will grow to 2.4 billion and just over one billion people, respectively.[11] To keep up with the demands of a growing youth and working age population, the continent as a whole will have to generate around 20 million jobs annually between now and 2100.[12]

Additionally, Africa's average urbanisation rate is the highest in the world at 1.1, marginally ahead of Asia's (1.0). Eight out of the top ten countries with the highest urbanisation rates between 2025 and 2030 are African, led by Burundi (2.5), Uganda (2.2) and Ethiopia (2.1).[13] Rapid urbanisation puts additional stress on job creation as well as public services such as health, education and security provision, particularly for local governance and city municipalities.

There is no way around it. Propelling African countries to middle-income status through increased industrialisation means addressing development challenges like access to energy. This will require that emissions rise in Africa, having historically been the lowest at around 7% of global CO_2 emissions since the mid-19th century.[14] Fossil fuels are used not just in electric power generation, but in agricultural fertiliser, the cement and steel needed to build infrastructure and housing, and the transportation fuels for shipping and trade.

By 2100, Africa's share of youth and working age populations will grow to 44.1% and 40.6% of the world's total, respectively, requiring 20 million new jobs annually

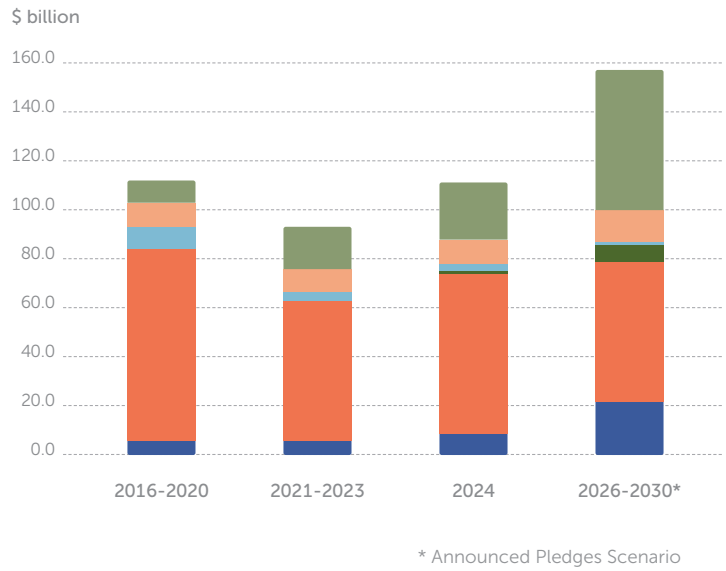
Reaching middle-income status will require increased industrialisation and hence unavoidable higher emissions for African countries

Renewable energy capacity is making progress, but financing still lags behind

Cognisant of Africa's immense, and mainly untapped, renewable energy potential, the Nairobi Declaration aims at substantially increasing finance for renewable energy to the continent. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), clean energy investments in Africa still account for only 2% of the world's total. The IEA's spending tracking shows that of the around $110 billion invested in energy in Africa in 2024, 63% went to fossil fuel supply and power and only 22% to clean and low-emissions supply.[15] This contrasts with 55.5% of the continent's own energy consumption coming from renewable sources,[16] and is a stark reminder of the region's comparatively low consumption, with more than 600 million people still missing access to energy.

Nairobi Declaration §14: Concerned that despite Africa having an estimated 40% of the world's renewable energy resources, only $60 billion or 2% of $3 trillion renewable energy investments in the last decade have come to Africa.

Africa: energy investments (2016-2030)



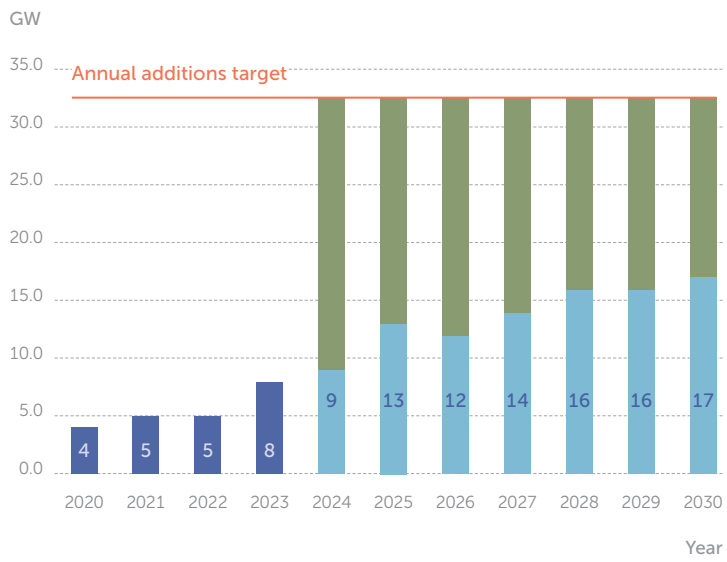
Source: MIF based on IEA (2024)

Nairobi Declaration §34: Provide all the necessary reforms and support required to raise the share of renewable energy financing to at least 20% by 2030.

Based on BloombergNEF, Africa has made remarkable progress in increasing renewable energy capacity, which stood at 72 GW in 2023. Installed capacity, given the current wind and solar additions forecasts across the continent, is only expected to reach 169 GW by 2030, falling way short of the Nairobi Declaration's target. To reach 300 GW by 2030, annual additions of 32.6 GW are required – almost four times more of what is expected to be added in 2024, and about twice as much as 2030's projected additions.[17]

Nairobi Declaration §49i: Increase Africa's renewable generation capacity from 56 GW in 2022 to at least 300 GW by 2030, both to address energy poverty and to bolster the global supply of cost-effective clean energy for industry.

Africa: renewable energy additions targets to meet 300 GW by 2030



Source: MIF based on BloombergNEF (2024)

Progress has been made across selected initiatives aiming at increasing renewable energy capacity in Africa, with some recent advancements despite being underway since before the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration.

Mission 300

Launched in April 2024 by the World Bank and African Development Bank (AfDB) and partners, Mission 300 aims to bring electricity to 300 million Africans by 2030. Besides connecting more people to electricity, efforts include integrating extreme weather risks into power system planning and off-grid solutions to make energy infrastructure more resilient. At the latest Mission 300 Africa Energy Summit in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, partners pledged over $50 billion to support energy access across Africa and twelve countries have developed National Energy Compacts with support from the World Bank. Between July 2023 and February 2025, the bank ramped up financing for projects connecting 21 million people on the continent, with projects currently under implementation aimed at reaching nearly 100 million more.[18]

Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA)

Established in 2011 at the AfDB, SEFA has grown to be the bank's largest in-house blended finance facility with commitments of over $500 million by ten donors.[19] Through technical assistance and concessional investments, the fund aims to increase the share of renewable energy in power systems and provide electricity access to underserved communities across the continent through clean mini-grid solutions. In 2024, SEFA approved 14 projects with a combined funding of $108 million, projected to generate 840 MW in renewable energy capacity and create over 176,000 new jobs.[20]

Desert to Power Initiative

Launched in 2018, this AfDB initiative aims to install 10 GW of solar capacity across 11 Sahelian countries by 2030 and thereby facilitate access to electricity for 250 million people. In 2024, the initiative's portfolio covered ten investments and over 15 technical assistance projects in seven of the 11 countries.[21] Still, seven years after launch, Desert to Power has approved financing for only 185 MW of solar capacity, less than 3% of its 2030 target, partly due to COVID-19 related delays and political instability, coups and civil war across the Sahel region. Additionally, funding has fallen short, with only $727 million (3.6%) committed of the estimated $20 billion needed. Some participant countries only started developing or validating their national Desert to Power roadmaps years after the initiative kicked off.[22]

Grand Inga Hydropower Dam

Africa's hydropower potential is vast, with only 10% of the continent's technical potential harnessed, and installed capacity at 43.5 GW to date. In 2024, a total of 4,507 MW was added (including pumped storage capacity), the most notable being Ethiopia's GERD adding 800 MW and Uganda's 600 MW Karuma Power Station being fully commissioned.[23] Africa's most ambitious hydropower project initiated in the 1970s, the Grand Inga Dam with a projected capacity of over 40 GW, would be the largest hydroelectric plant in the world, surpassing China's Three Gorges Dam. While the first two dams of the proposed seven-dam facility were built in 1972 and 1982, the World Bank earlier this year issued the initial $250 million tranche of a $1 billion development for Inga 3, expected to generate between 2-11 GW of power.[24]

Africa Single Energy Market (AfSEM)

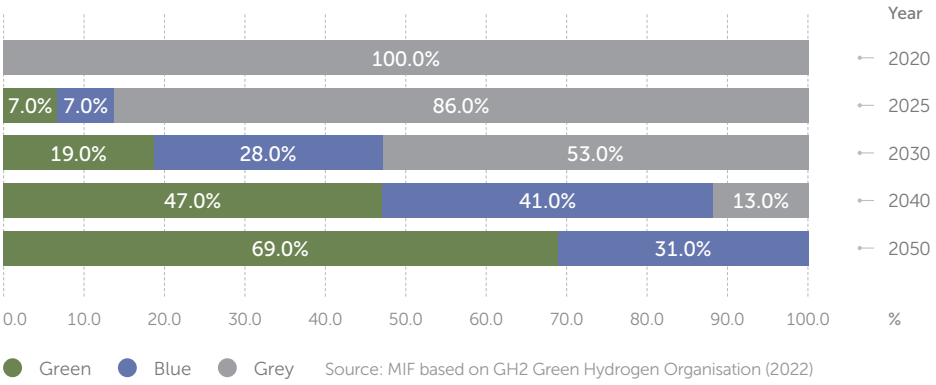
AfSEM's goal is to facilitate the integration of energy markets and sources, including renewables, covering over 30 million km^2, and thereby lower the cost of electricity production, as well as boost the pace and reliability of access.[25] Adopted as an Agenda 2063 STYIP flagship project in 2024, it is set to be fully operational by 2040.[26]

While still in its infancy, Africa's green hydrogen industry is growing and expected to create millions of jobs by 2050

As the world increasingly prioritises decarbonisation, global hydrogen demand could grow sevenfold by 2050 with almost 70% of the demand being for green hydrogen.[27] While still in its infancy, the European Investment Bank has estimated that the African green hydrogen industry could produce up to 50 Mt per year by 2035, at a price of only €2 per kg, highly competitive with oil prices.[28]

Nairobi Declaration §35: Promote the production of green hydrogen and hydrogen derivatives such as green fertiliser and synthetic fuels.

World: demand for hydrogen by source (2020-2050)



Source: MIF based on GH2 Green Hydrogen Organisation (2022)

Progress toward the Nairobi Declaration's ambitious target to ramp up production was made at the last Africa Green Hydrogen Summit, held in June 2025 in Cape Town, South Africa, which has evolved into a continental platform for cooperation.[29]

The Africa Green Hydrogen Alliance, established in 2022 by Egypt, Kenya, Mauritania, Morocco, Namibia and South Africa, aims to produce 30-60 Mt of green hydrogen annually by 2050, potentially generating 2-4 million new jobs across member states. Host of the summit President Ramaphosa noted that more than 52 large-scale projects have been announced across the continent, including South Africa's Coega Green Ammonia project, the AMAN project in Mauritania and Project Nour in Morocco.[30] In 2025, the European Union (EU) also unveiled a €4.7 billion investment package for South Africa, with €4.4 billion dedicated to advancing the nation's clean energy sector, particularly green hydrogen development.[31] It is part of the EU's Global Gateway, a large-scale, €300 billion infrastructure investments initiative over the period 2021-2027.

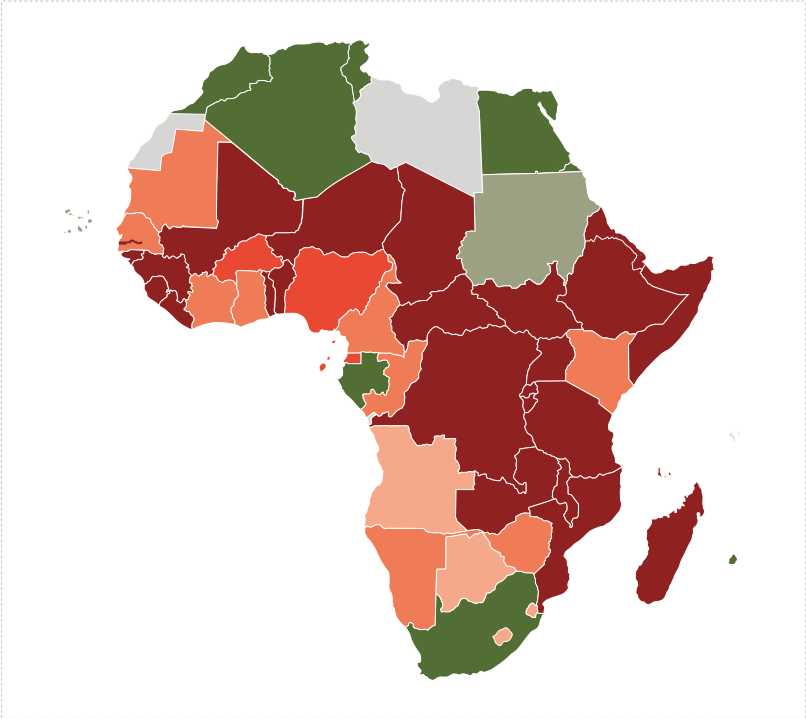
Launched in 2022, the Africa Green Hydrogen Alliance aims to produce 30-60 Mt of green hydrogen by 2050, and could do so at a price competitive with oil

The 2024 Paris Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa: half the funds needed to achieve Africa-wide access by 2030 were pledged

Access to clean cooking fuels is not just critical to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions on a global level, but also a question of local air pollution and health. Yet as of 2023, on average only one third of the continental population, or about 514 million people, had access to clean cooking fuels – compared to 74.1% globally. While only eight countries reach a coverage of above 85%, in 30, access remains below 30%, and in seven of those reaches only 1% (Burundi, Central African Republic, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Sierra Leone and South Sudan).[32]

Nairobi Declaration §26: Promote clean cooking technologies and initiatives as a just energy transition and gender equality for African rural women, youth, and children.

African countries: share of population with access to clean cooking fuels (2023)



Source: MIF based on WHO (2025)

Only one third of Africa's population has access to clean cooking fuels, compared to 74.1% globally

Since the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration, the governments of Tanzania and Norway, the AfDB and IEA co-hosted the Summit on Clean Cooking in Africa, held in May 2024 in Paris, France, bringing together nearly 60 countries, private sector partners and development institutions. The summit resulted in the mobilisation of $2.2 billion worth of pledges of which more than $470 million have already been disbursed. According to the IEA, $4 billion are needed to achieve universal clean cooking access across Africa by 2030. The commitments made at this summit mark the largest single gathering of resources dedicated to expanding clean cooking access.[33]

For Africa, ten out of the 12 governments that were a part of the 2024 summit have enacted or implemented new clean cooking policies, including government subsidies for Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), tax incentives for switching to clean cooking and cooking stove distribution programmes. Tanzania and Kenya demonstrated the largest increase in policy coverage since 2024.[34]

About half of the $4 billion needed to ensure universal clean cooking access in Africa by 2030 was pledged in 2024, with $470 million already disbursed

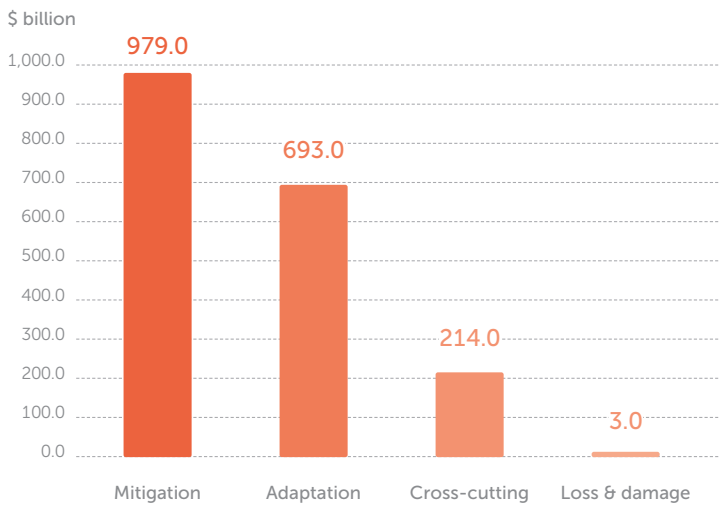
PRIORITY 2: CHAMPIONING ADAPTATION OVER MITIGATION

A measurable Global Goal on Adaptation is yet to be defined, and Africa's adaptation needs could be underestimated by a factor of two

The Nairobi Declaration stresses that for Africa and other low emitters, adaptation is of greater relevance than mitigation. Only 57% of Africa's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) have been costed, amounting to $1.6-$1.9 trillion, usually estimated with a time frame of five to ten years. Costed needs are up to 2.3 times higher for mitigation ($970-$979 billion) than for adaptation ($430-$693 billion), followed by cross-cutting measures ($214 billion) and loss and damage ($3 billion).[35] According to the Climate Policy Initiative and the Global Center on Adaptation, these figures could be underestimating adaptation needs by a factor of two because of the uncertainty of future risk and because damages from climate change can occur faster and stronger than estimated at the time of NDC submissions.[36] Many countries, including African ones, do not outline adaptation costs in their NDCs, and adaptation only accounts for 16% of costed needs.[37]

Nairobi Declaration §22: Resolve for a measurable Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) with indicators and targets to enable assessment of progress against negative impacts of climate change.

Africa: costed needs by type as reported in NDC submissions (2024)*



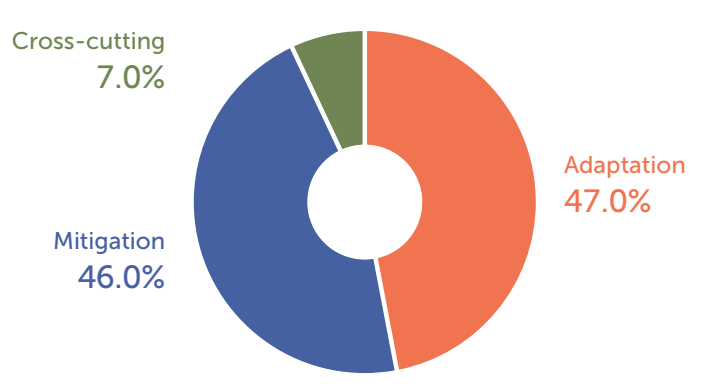
Source: MIF based on UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance (2024)

* Highest extrapolated estimate; NDCs are usually reported with a timeframe of 5-10 years.

Nairobi Declaration §39: Identify, prioritise, and mainstream adaptation into development policy-making and planning, including in the context of NDCs.

$1.6-$1.9 trillion are needed to achieve Africa's NDCs, with just over half of needs costed

Africa: share of total needs by type based on NDC submissions (2024)



Many uncosted needs relate to adaptation, leading to the underestimation of climate finance in Africa

Source: MIF based on UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance (2024)

Central to the negotiations around adaptation has been the difficulty of defining and tracking progress in enhancing adaptive capacities and resilience. Since the first Africa Climate Summit, negotiations to track the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), outlined in Article 7 of the Paris Agreement, initially gained traction at COP28 with the two-year UAE-Belém work programme to be finalised at COP30 in Brazil. COP29 further outlined that the GGA shall have no more than 100 globally applicable indicators, which are yet to be specified.[38] As of May 2025, a group of technical experts submitted a list of 490 consolidated indicators (out of around 9,000 submitted by UN bodies, the African Group of Negotiators, the EU and other actors) to the UNFCCC.[39]

Progress on indicator definitions to track the GGA stalled at COP29, with an outcome expected from the UAE-Belém work programme at COP30

African cities are advancing Nature-based Solutions for resilience, yet adaptation at large is under-prioritised in implementation plans

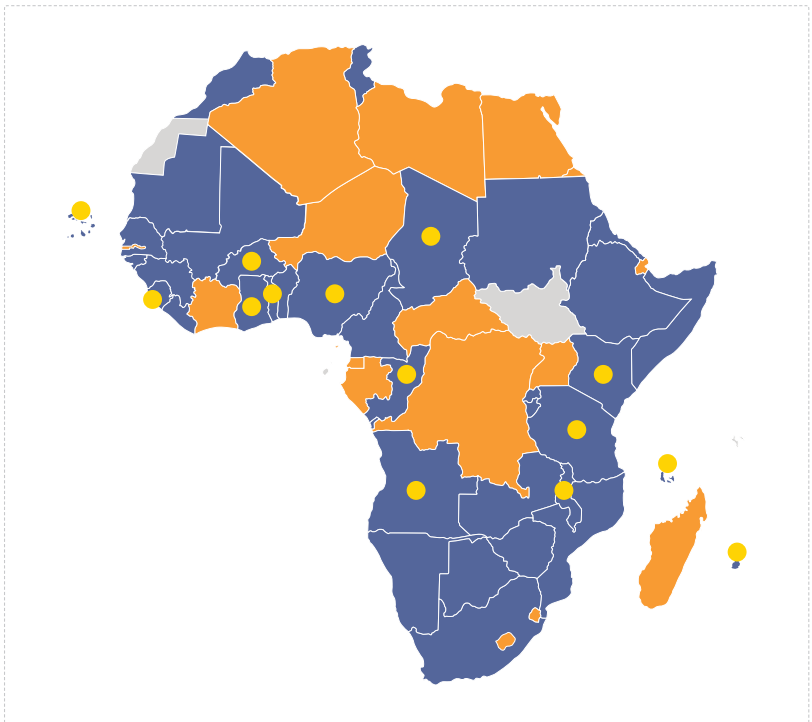
Africa is host to 12 of the 20 most climate-vulnerable countries worldwide,[40] and home to three megacities with a population of over 10 million (Cairo, Kinshasa and Lagos). It is expected that by 2050, twelve other African cities will join these ranks.[41] Due their high population density, cities are hotspots for pollution, diseases and natural disasters, and the Nairobi Declaration thus urges member states to adapt urban infrastructure to preserve the wellbeing of their inhabitants.

Nature-based Solutions (NbS) use innovative designs of existing nature to address social challenges and protect ecosystems. Forested catchments, urban wetlands and farms, mangroves and tree-shaded walking paths are critical in building climate-resilient cities.[42] Yet, while the majority of African countries mention using NbS in their NDCs, as of January 2024, only 15 African countries had actually developed implementation plans including NbS.[43]

Nairobi Declaration §41: Promote investments in urban infrastructure including through upgrading informal settlements and slum areas to build climate-resilient cities and urban centres.

NbS are critical in adapting to climate change and building resilient cities, but only 15 African countries recognise this in national implementation plans

African countries: existence of Nature-based Solutions in NDCs (2024)



Source: MIF based on Kiribou et al. (2024)

Since the first Africa Climate Summit, several African countries have continued to implement innovative measures to drive climate resilience in cities:

City	Initiative	Details
Kigali, Rwanda Dire Dawa, Ethiopia Johannesburg, South Africa	SUNCASA flood prevention project	Launched in 2024 by the Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), the World Resources Institute (WRI) and the government of Canada, the three-year, $21 million SUNCASA project has successfully reforested more than 1,000 hectares of buffer zones along rivers.[44]
Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso	Green belt revitalisation	A 2,000 hectare green belt surrounding the city with trees and vegetable plots to reduce heat and desertification and provide residents with an income from agricultural activity. While it was originally started in the 1970s, a major heatwave in 2024 led to a recent expansion of the project.[45]
Freetown, Sierra Leone	Reflective roofing innovations	Since 2021, Freetown's city council together with Mirrors for Earth charity has started installing heat-reflective roofs from recycled plastic in informal settlements. Initial assessments in 2024 showed that indoor temperatures were reduced by as much as 6°C.[46]
Cape Coast, Ghana Lusaka, Zambia Port Louis, Mauritius	DRR4Africa disaster risk reduction roadmaps	A two-year programme launched at COP28 by ICLEI Africa and Lloyd's Register Foundation to improve urban climate adaptation planning and disaster response policies in three African cities through data collection, risk assessments and knowledge sharing.[47]

The Green & Resilient UrbanShift Africa Forum

The Green & Resilient UrbanShift Africa Forum took place in Nairobi from 17-19 February 2025, bringing together over 250 African mayors, city officials, investors, policymakers and civil society representatives to strengthen climate-resilient urban planning across the continent. Hosted by C40 Cities, participants issued an open letter urging national governments to invest in the green economy, create sustainable jobs, bolster municipal finance and facilitate public-private partnerships. The event also saw the launch of the Sustainable Investment Action and Advocacy Roadmap – a practical guide for Global South cities to access climate finance – and featured site visits, sustainable urban planning showcases and a new partnership between C40 and UN-Habitat to accelerate resilient urban development.[48]

COP16 on drought (December 2024) mobilised funds for drought resilience, but a hefty finance gap persists

Two thirds of Africa are desert or dryland and vulnerable to droughts, desertification and land degradation, making drought resilience a key priority in the Nairobi Declaration. Temperatures across the continent were 0.86°C above the 1991-2020 average in 2024, the hottest year on record. Droughts have persisted for over five years in North-Western and parts of Southern Africa, while the Horn, West-Central Africa and Indian Ocean islands saw alarmingly low rainfall in 2024.[49]

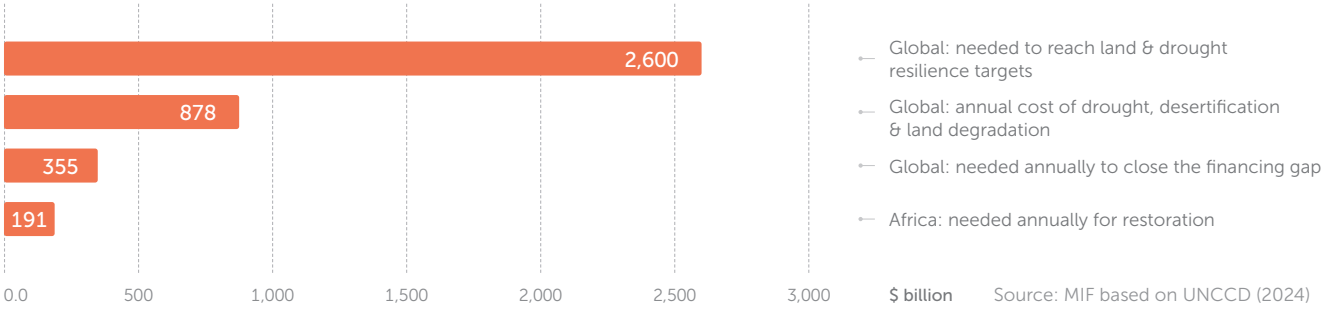
Nairobi Declaration §44: Enhance drought resilience systems to shift from crisis management to proactive drought preparedness and adaptation, to significantly reduce drought vulnerability of people, economic activities, and ecosystems.

At COP16 of the UN Convention to Combat Drought (UNCCD) in late 2024 in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, over $12 billion was pledged through the new Riyadh Global Drought Resilience Partnership to support 80 vulnerable countries. The Great Green Wall initiative, aimed at restoring 100 million hectares of degraded land in the Sahel, also secured $15 million from Italy and Austria. Despite funding progress, COP16 failed to produce a binding global drought agreement, deferring key decisions to COP17 in Mongolia in 2026.[50]

At the 2024 summit, the UNCCD launched its first-ever financial needs assessment for combating desertification, estimating that at least $2.6 trillion is required globally by 2030 to restore over one billion hectares of degraded land, with $191 billion needed annually for Africa alone.[51]

Africa needs $191 billion a year to restore degraded land, way below pledges made to combat desertification at COP16

Financing needs to combat drought, desertification & land degradation until 2030



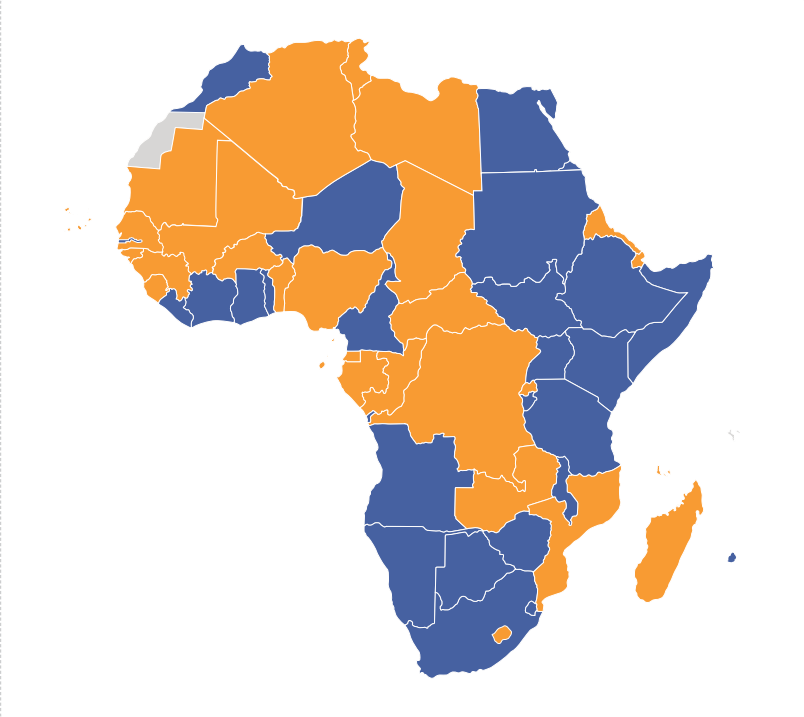
Source: MIF based on UNCCD (2024)

African countries have increased the comprehensiveness of early warning systems in the last decade

As of 2024, 25 African countries report having Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (MHEWS).[52] MHEWS are comprehensive systems designed to provide disaster risk knowledge to communities, detect and predict events, disseminate warnings and increase response capabilities.

Nairobi Declaration §42: Strengthen early warning systems and climate information services, as well as taking early action to protect lives, livelihoods and assets and inform long-term decision-making related to climate change risks. We emphasise the importance of embracing indigenous knowledge and citizen science in both adaptation strategies and early warning systems.

African countries: existence of Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems (2024)

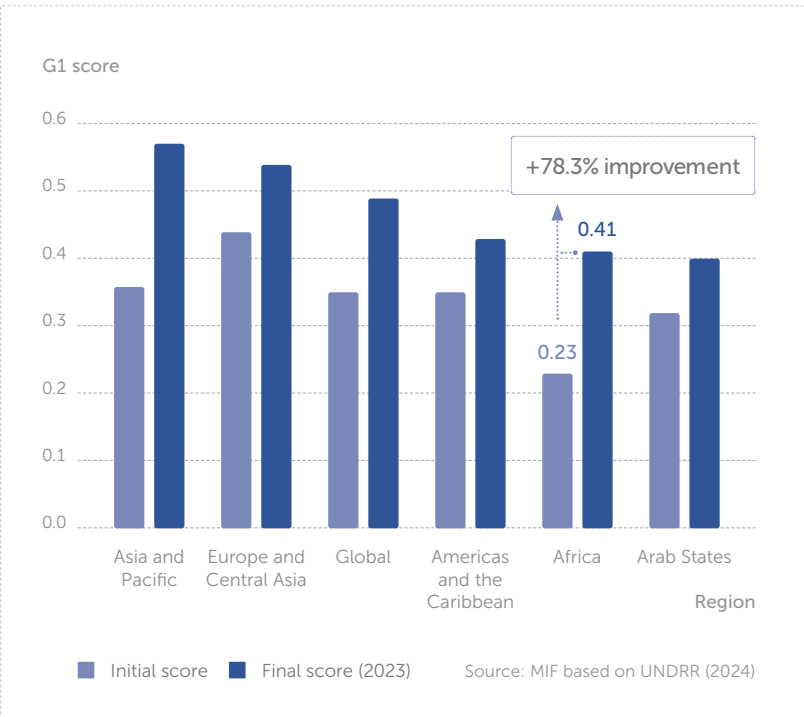


Source: MIF based on UNDRR (2024)

African countries have made the largest relative improvement in MHEWS comprehensiveness, up by +78.3% since 2015

To measure the quality of MHEWS, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) uses the Sendai Framework, whose Target G aims to substantially increase access to MHEWS to people by 2030. The comprehensiveness of MHEWS (i.e. number of people covered by MHEWS and accessibility, understandability and coverage of evacuation plans) is measured by the framework's G-1 score on a scale between 0 and 1.[53] African countries have increased their average G-1 score from 0.23 to 0.41 in the last decade, the largest relative improvement of all regions by +78.3%.[54]

World regions: average initial & final MHEWS comprehensiveness (G-1) scores (2015-2023)*



Source: MIF based on UNDRR (2024)

* Although reporting started in 2015, the initial score for each country is the earliest they submitted, as early as 2015 or as late as 2024.

African early warning systems take centre stage at forums in Windhoek (2024) and Geneva (2025)

The 2023 Africa Climate Summit launched the Multi-Hazard Early Warning for All (EW4All) Action Plan for Africa (2023-2027), which aims to strengthen the continent-wide Africa Multi-Hazard Early Warning and Action System (AMHEWAS).[55] At the first Africa EW4All Forum in Namibia in 2024, multiple stakeholders urged member states to enhance resource allocation and scale-up early warning for conflict affected areas.[56]

Outcomes also fed into the inaugural Global EW4All Multi-Stakeholder Forum, co-convened by UNDRR and the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) and held in Geneva in June 2025. The summit reiterated the urgency of universal access to early warning systems, with disaster-related losses in 2023 estimated at $250 billion.[57]

PRIORITY 3: LEVERAGING AFRICA'S GREEN POTENTIAL

While carbon offsetting capabilities are shrinking, COP29's carbon market agreement paves the way for Africa to trade certificates

Forests, peatlands and mangroves are Earth's most important natural carbon repositories, with Africa's peatlands alone holding over 35,000 Mt of carbon.[58] The continent's forests absorb 600 Mt of CO_2 annually – yet carbon sequestration capabilities are shrinking. According to research from the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa, in just nine years between 2010 and 2019, Africa went from being a net carbon sink to being a slight net carbon source, mainly due to greenhouse gas emissions from land use.[59]

Following the Nairobi Declaration's emphasis on carbon markets, COP29 reached a landmark deal on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Decisions on clauses 6.2 and 6.4 allow countries to trade carbon credits toward their NDCs and have established standards for calculating emissions reductions,[60] opening new revenue opportunities for Africa. Different projections show that global carbon markets could reach $15-$100 billion by 2030.[61] While demand for African carbon credits grew about 11% in 2024, the continent still accounts for only 16% of the global market.[62]

Nairobi Declaration §16: Recognising that Africa's vast forests, especially the Congo Basin rainforest, are the largest carbon sinks globally, and the important ecosystem services provided by Africa's vast savannahs, Miombo woodlands, peatlands, mangroves, and coral reefs, it is time that Africa's natural capital wealth is properly measured by recognising its contribution to reducing global carbon emissions.

Africa's forests alone sequester around 600 Mt of CO_2 each year and remain the world's largest carbon sink

Djibouti and Gabon at the forefront of maritime carbon markets

Djibouti and Gabon are leading the Africa Sovereign Carbon Initiative (ASCI), introducing Africa's first mandatory carbon pricing for shipping. Djibouti launched in 2023, followed by Gabon in 2025, setting a $17/tonne of CO_2 price on 50% of a ship's journey emissions, mirroring the EU Emissions Trading System.[63] Twelve more African countries are considering joining ASCI, signalling growing momentum for carbon accountability and regulation in the shipping sector.[64]

AfDB to launch carbon credits support facility

The AfDB has unveiled the Africa Carbon Support Facility at its 2025 annual meeting in Abidjan. The initiative, currently in the design phase, aims to strengthen carbon markets across the continent through two key components: helping governments develop policy frameworks for carbon trading and also improving infrastructure to boost both supply and demand for carbon credits. AfDB officials envision integrating carbon credits into African stock exchanges, potentially increasing their value by up to tenfold by shifting from voluntary to compliance markets.[65]

Upcoming summit will convene Africa's entire carbon market value chain

The Carbon Markets Africa Summit, to take place in Johannesburg from 21-23 October 2025, will bring together Africa's full carbon value chain – policy-makers, investors, standards bodies, developers, and corporates – to ignite credible, inclusive carbon finance.[66] The first day will focus on how Africa can define its own carbon trajectory, align with global frameworks like Article 6, and convert policy into action via multi-stakeholder dialogues. The second day will emphasise capital access through investor roundtables, tackling de-risking, scaling and mobilising private climate finance.[67]

The 2024 COP16 on biodiversity pledged $200 billion by 2030, and biodiversity credits could offer potential new revenue streams

Africa is home to at least one sixth of the world's plant species and one sixth of the world's remaining forests – including the 240 million-hectare Congo Basin forests across eight countries – one quarter of the world's mammal species, one fifth of the world's bird species and the last significant assemblage of large mammals. However, climate change poses an immense threat to Africa's biodiversity and ecological wealth. At current rates of deforestation, around 70% of Africa's tropical forests will be affected by 2100.[68]

Nairobi Declaration §49viii: Implement a mix of measures that elevate Africa's share of carbon markets.

Operationalisation of Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement allows international carbon trading towards countries' NDCs

Nairobi Declaration §27: Strengthen actions to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, deforestation, and desertification, as well as restore degraded lands to achieve land degradation neutrality; and implement the Abidjan declaration on achieving gender equality for successful land restoration.

Shortly after the adoption of the Nairobi Declaration, at COP16 of the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 2024, wealthy nations pledged $163 million to the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund – far below the $20 billion target set at COP15. Disagreements over a dedicated fund to help poorer countries implement the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, which was opposed by the EU, Japan and Canada, led to a temporary suspension of the summit.[69] When it resumed in February 2025 in Rome, Italy, Parties agreed to mobilise $200 billion annually by 2030, including $30 billion in international finance.

In the same year of the first Africa Climate Summit, member states also agreed on the AU Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (2023-2030) which mentions biodiversity credits as a potential new revenue stream of its Target 19.[71] Biodiversity credits encourage companies to offset their environmental footprint by purchasing credits from protection, conservation or restoration agencies and NGOs. While the value of nascent global biodiversity credits is currently estimated at between $2 to $8 million,[72] Africa's vast natural landscapes and wildlife offer a unique starting point to expand such schemes. If developed effectively, the demand for biodiversity credits could reach $2 billion by 2030 and $69 billion by 2050, presenting a huge financial opportunity for the continent.[73]

First Africa Biodiversity Summit scheduled for October 2025 aims to advance inclusive governance

The inaugural Africa Biodiversity Summit, organised by the AU in collaboration with the government of Botswana, is scheduled to take place in Gaborone from 1-5 October 2025. Under the theme 'Advancing Inclusive Biodiversity Governance', the summit will convene African Heads of State, global leaders, and conservation stakeholders. It aims to foster equitable, locally-led conservation pathways and to boost financial support for homegrown biodiversity solutions.[74]

COP16 on biodiversity was temporarily suspended due to disagreements over a special fund for poorer countries to halt biodiversity loss

Nairobi Declaration §33: Finalise and implement the African Union Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, with the view to realising the 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.

Global demand for biodiversity credits could reach $69 billion by 2050, a huge financing opportunity for Africa

A starting point: smallholder farmers and local communities have been officially recognised as key stakeholders at 2024-2025 drought and biodiversity COPs

Progress towards this goal of the Nairobi Declaration was made at COP16 of the UNCCD in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia and at COP16 of the CBD in Cali, Colombia and Rome, Italy:

- Two major agreements at COP16 of the CDD in Riyadh resulted in the creation of the Caucus for Indigenous People and the Caucus for Local Communities to ensure their specific perspectives, needs and challenges are adequately represented in future negotiations.[75]
- COP16 of the CBD, whose 2014 Nagoya Protocol already urges Parties to ensure that indigenous communities share the profits of genetic resource use, and that Parties prioritise access for vulnerable countries and groups,[76] also established a subsidiary body for Indigenous Peoples and officially recognised people of African descent as biodiversity custodians.[77]

Nairobi Declaration §38: Support smallholder farmers, indigenous peoples, and local communities in the green economic transition, given their key role in ecosystems stewardship.

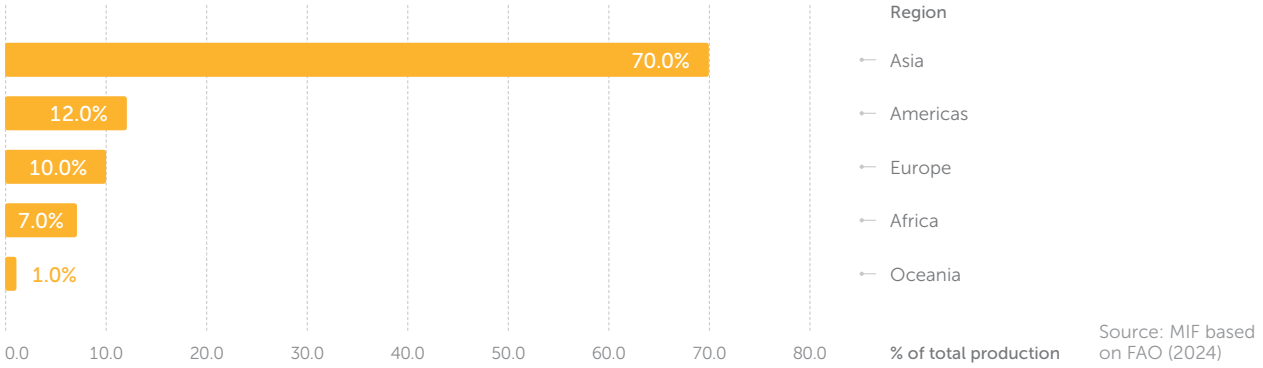
Balancing a productive blue economy with ocean protection is paramount for Africa's 38 coastal countries

Although 38 of 54 African countries are coastal, 98% of the continent's coastline remains underused for fisheries. The continent's blue economy generates about $300 billion annually and supports nearly 50 million jobs.[78] Yet, Africa still has the world's lowest share of fisheries and aquaculture (7%) after Oceania, according to the FAO.[79]

The AfCFTA is projected to boost intra-Africa trade by 33%, with the UN Economic Commission for Africa projecting cargo vessel traffic to rise from 58 million to 132 million tonnes by 2030 if fully implemented. Many countries expect to experience surges in port traffic: Comoros, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Somalia.[80] International shipping accounted for 1.8% of global energy-related CO_2 emissions in 2022,[81] highlighting the challenge of balancing maritime trade growth with ocean protection.

Nairobi Declaration §17: Further recognise the critical importance of the oceans in climate action and commitments made on ocean sustainability in multiple fora such as the Second UN Oceans Conference in 2022, and the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa in 2023.

World regions: share of total fisheries and aquaculture production (2020)



Source: MIF based on FAO (2024)

Nairobi Declaration §37: Promote regenerative blue economy and support implementation of the Moroni Declaration for Ocean and Climate Action in Africa, and the Great Blue Wall Initiative, whilst recognising the circumstances of Africa's Island States.

The first Africa Climate Summit highlighted the Moroni Declaration and Great Blue Wall (GBW) initiative, aiming to mobilise $15 billion, conserve 2 million km^2 of ocean ecosystems, sequester 100 Mt of CO_2 and create two million jobs by 2030. In February 2024, the Africa-Europe High-Level Policy Dialogue reaffirmed its importance, stressing the shift from declaration to action and positioning the blue economy at the centre of the AU's STYIP.[82] Some African countries have already begun implementing policies to address Nairobi Declaration challenges:

Country	Initiative
Kenya	**Ecosystem restoration monitoring:** Through the FAO's AIM4NatuRe workshop in May 2025, Kenya is enhancing its capability to monitor ecosystem restoration nationwide, building systems that could be vital for tracking marine and coastal outcomes tied to the GBW.[83]
Mozambique	**ReSea regenerative seascapes project:** In May 2024, Mozambique launched ReSea together with the International Union for Conservation of Nature and local partners. The project centres nature-based interventions in the coastal communities of Vilanculo and Inhassoro, fostering women- and youth-driven conservation measures.[84] **Blue Future conservation initiative:** Backed by the Mozambican government and the Wildlife Conservation Society, Blue Future has mapped out a 1,000-7,000 km^2 coastal conservation corridor between Memba and Mossuril to scale up protection to at least 30% of national marine areas by 2030.[85]

Launched in 2021, the Great Blue Wall aims to mobilise $15 billion by 2030, restore 2 million km^2 of ocean, sequester 100 Mt CO_2 and create 2 million jobs

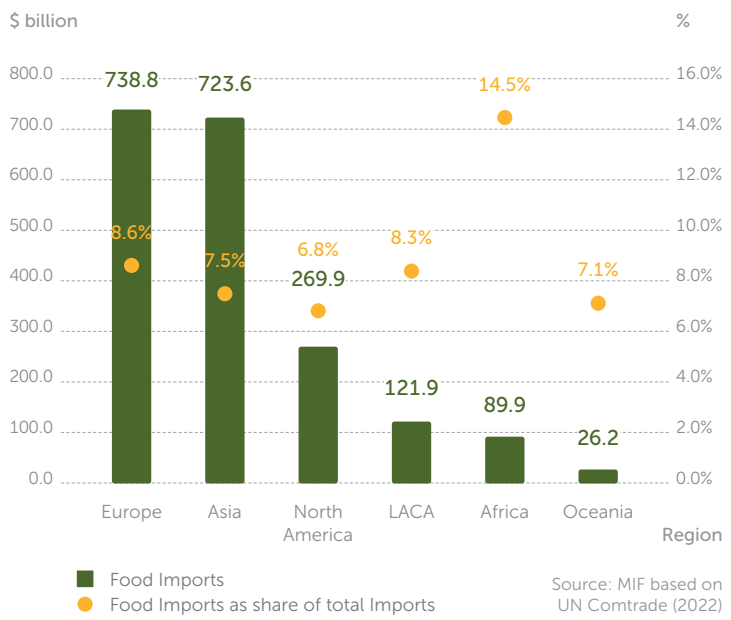
Boosting agricultural productivity while minimising environmental impacts remains a challenge, as low crop yields contribute to food insecurity

Africa has vast agricultural potential, with arable land expanding by 52% since 2000 – now the third largest globally[86] – and home to 65% of the world's uncultivated land.[87] Yet, as noted in the Nairobi Declaration, productivity remains low: crop yields are twice as low and growing twice as slowly as the global average,[88] driving food insecurity and reliance on imports. Only four countries (Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Morocco and South Africa) earn over $5 billion from food exports.[89] Meanwhile, UNDESA estimates that 50% of food produced in Africa is wasted due to inadequate cooling and storage.[90]

Despite availability of agricultural land in Africa, the continent relies heavily on food imports, and around 50% of yields go to waste

Nairobi Declaration §31: Redouble our efforts to boost agricultural yields through sustainable agricultural practices, to enhance food security while minimising negative environmental impacts.

World regions: total food imports as a share of total imports (2022)



Tanzania to host first Africa Conference on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanisation

The Africa Conference on Sustainable Agricultural Mechanisation, to be held in Tanzania from 25-28 November 2025, is the first regional event of its kind, organised by the FAO. It aims to boost collaboration, share innovations, and promote inclusive, climate-smart mechanisation. Building on the Framework for Sustainable Agricultural Mechanisation in Africa and the 2023 Global Conference, it will bring together stakeholders to align strategies, scale sustainable mechanisation, and enhance productivity while supporting youth and women.[95]

While boosting continental agricultural production remains an ambitious goal at this time, some countries have taken concrete steps since the first Africa Climate Summit:

Country	Policy	Details
Burkina Faso	Suspension of cereal imports	In 2024, the government enacted an indefinite import ban on wheat and other white cereals to boost domestic production and reduce reliance on foreign goods, with the positive effects on local production to be determined.[91]
Sierra Leone	MDB finance-led agricultural development	To reduce reliance on rice imports, the government raised $620 million from development banks in 2024 to improve roads to major rice-growing areas, expand irrigation and supply fertiliser and seeds to smallholder farmers, aiming to attract private investment through better infrastructure.[92]
Cameroon	PATNUC digital platform	Since April 2024, the Acceleration of Digital Transformation of Cameroon Project (PATNUC) has enrolled over 9,000 producers into an e-voucher system, with nearly 4,000 producers benefiting from fertiliser and seed subsidies.[93]
Africa-wide	Agricultural production database	In 2025, researchers from Caltech, the University of Maryland, the University of Manitoba and the Gates Foundation released a new agricultural production database using spatial data, government statistics, farmer surveys and plot-level crop cuts. This detailed data helps assess how yields respond to climate and practices, supporting better agricultural policymaking.[94]

The $100 billion annual goal set up in 2009 was reached for the first time in 2022, two years after the deadline

The Nairobi Declaration urges international partners to honour the commitment they made at the COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark, to provide $100 billion annually in climate finance for developing countries by 2020. Progress assessments by the OECD show that in 2022, developed countries provided and mobilised a total of $115.9 billion in climate finance for developing countries, exceeding the annual $100 billion goal for the first time – two years after the deadline.[96]

To keep that momentum going, a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) was decided at COP29 in 2024: on the final day of the summit, the COP29 presidency called on all actors to scale up climate finance for developing countries to at least $1.3 trillion per year by 2035. The same decision specified that developed countries' climate finance for developing countries shall be raised to $300 billion a year by 2035, tripling the amount previously set in 2009.[97]

Nairobi Declaration §19ii: Honour the commitment to provide $100 billion in annual climate finance, as promised in 2009 at the UNFCCC COP15 in Copenhagen, Denmark.

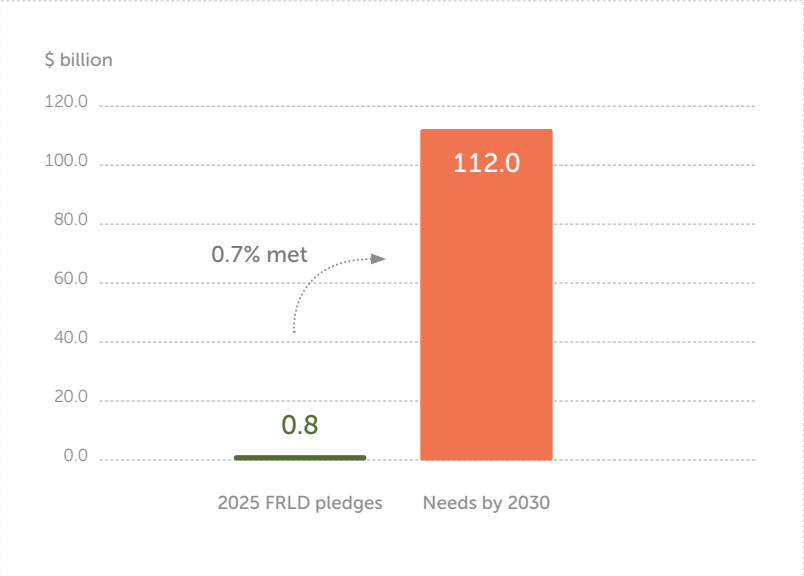
The Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage was finalised at COP29 in Baku, but pledges are still way off needs

Following a firm commitment at COP28 in Dubai, COP29 in Baku finalised the paperwork creating the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) which will be hosted in the Philippines under the institutional auspices of the World Bank. Parties committed to starting payouts to affected countries in 2026. Former UN Assistant Secretary-General and former head of the African Risk Capacity Group, Ibrahima Cheikh Diong, was appointed as the Fund's Executive Director in 2024.

However, as of April 2025, pledges to the FRLD by 27 contributors only total $768.4 million.[98] This amounts to less than one quarter of what African countries estimated they need for loss and damage in their latest NDC submissions. Further research suggests that sub-Saharan Africa alone will face $112 billion in climate-related damages by 2030, of which FRLD contributions amount to less than 1%.[99]

Nairobi Declaration §22: We call for the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund as agreed at COP27.

2025 FRLD pledges & sub-Saharan Africa's total loss and damage needs by 2030



Payouts from the Loss and Damage Fund to affected countries are supposed to start in 2026

Source: MIF based on Markandya & González-Eguino (2019) and UNFCCC (2025)

International cooperation and minimum taxes are key to prevent profit shifting and retain Africa's revenue streams

According to the Global Tax Expenditures database, among the 30 African countries for which data is available, they have lost between 0.1% (Chad) and 6% (Senegal) of their GDP to tax exemptions, deductions, credits, deferrals and reduced rates. Although latest available years range from 2015 to 2022, revenue lost amounts to $55.9 billion annually.[100]

In 2023, Nigeria submitted a proposal calling for the establishment of a UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation to govern international tax cooperation, eliminate tax havens and tackle illicit financial flows.[101] In 2024, the convention's terms of reference were passed with an overwhelming majority (125 countries), while 46 countries, including all EU member states, abstained and nine voted against.[102] Negotiations picked up again in early 2025, in which a decision on voting procedures was made and tax dispute resolution was chosen as the focus of the next protocol of the convention.[103] Negotiations are supposed to conclude in 2027, when the final framework convention text will be presented to the 82nd Session of the UN General Assembly.[104]

To combat profit shifting, 140 countries have to date joined the OECD/G20 BEPS framework which proposes the reallocation of profits generated by multi-national enterprises to market jurisdictions and a global minimum tax rate of 15%. While presenting an important step forward, African governments still consider the 15% rate insufficient to prevent profit-shifting out of Africa and have instead proposed a minimum rate of 20%.[105]

Nairobi Declaration §52vii: Decisively act on the promotion of inclusive and effective international tax cooperation at the UN with the aim to reduce Africa's loss of $27 billion annual corporate tax revenue through profit shifting, by at least 50% by 2030 and 75% by 2050.

African countries are estimated to have lost more than $55 billion annually to corporate tax holidays between 2015-2022

Progress on a UN Tax Convention is moving slow, with the final text to be presented to the UN General Assembly in 2027

African governments have proposed a minimum tax rate of 20% to prevent profit shifting out of the continent

The IMO April 2025 agreement sets landmark precedent to tax carbon emissions from global shipping starting in 2028

Similar to debates around international tax cooperation to prevent profit shifting, negotiations on a global carbon tax are moving slowly. In a landmark decision made at the UN International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in London, UK in April 2025, countries voted in favour of a global framework putting a carbon price on shipping emissions to encourage the use of cleaner technologies. The overall policy is expected to be formally adopted in October 2025.

The new framework sets a global precedent: from 2028, ships must switch to lower-carbon fuels or pay for excess emissions. A $380/tonne fee will apply to the most intensive emissions, and $100/tonne on remaining emissions above a set threshold. The tax is expected to generate $10 billion annually. However, it's projected to cut shipping emissions by only 8% – well below the IMO's 2023 targets of at least 20%, with a stretch goal of 30% by 2030.[106]

Nairobi Declaration §57: Urge world leaders to consider the proposal for a global carbon taxation regime including a carbon tax on fossil fuel trade, maritime transport and aviation.

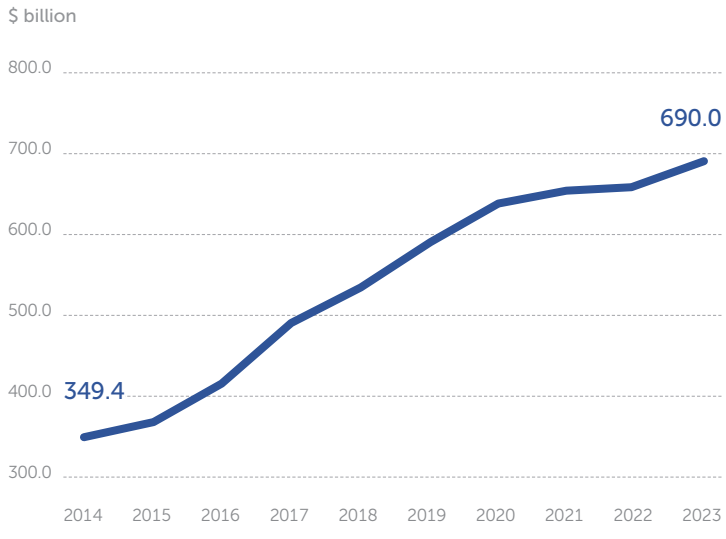
The new global shipping tax will raise $10 billion a year

The current multilateral system does not meet Africa's development and climate finance needs, and MDBs reform processes are still underway

As outlined in the Nairobi Declaration, debt remains a key issue for African countries' development and climate aspirations. The continent's external public debt nearly doubled from $349.4 billion in 2014 to $690 billion in 2023, amounting to 24% of the continent's GDP. For seven countries, their debt-to-GDP ratio is higher than 50%: Cabo Verde, Djibouti, Guinea-Bissau, Rwanda, Senegal, São Tomé and Príncipe and Zambia.[107] Debt service across Africa consumes almost 14% of government spending – twice the allocation for health.[108]

Nairobi Declaration §52ix: Redesign MDB governance, to ensure a 'fit for purpose' system with appropriate representation, voice, and agency of all countries.

Africa: total external public debt stock (2014-2023)



Source: MIF based on World Bank (2025a)

Nairobi Declaration §52v: Improve debt management, including: a. the inclusion of 'debt pause clauses', and b. the proposed expert review of the Common Framework and the Debt Sustainability Analysis.

In order to reform international debt architecture and enable African countries to escape the cycle of debt, African leaders adopted the Lomé Declaration on Debt at the first ever AU Conference on Debt in Lomé, Togo in May 2025. They called for urgent reform of the G20 Common Framework for debt restructuring, which they argue is too slow, creditor-driven, and outdated. The declaration proposes a more inclusive, transparent, and equitable system, including a standardised methodology to improve the comparability of treatment as well as calling for a legally binding global debt resolution mechanism at the UN level.[109]

The first Africa Climate Summit acknowledges that the current multilateral financial architecture does not meet the needs of African and other developing countries. International Monetary Fund (IMF) voting rights, special drawing rights (SDR) allocation, debt service and surcharges greatly limit Africa's ability to access long-term, concessional finance. IMF quotas reflect countries' relative positions in the global economy, determine their financial contributions and voting power, as well as the amount of loans and SDRs they can access, thus maintaining the current economic imbalances. Africa, despite comprising about 19% of the world's population, only accounts for 6.5% of IMF voting rights – only marginally more than China, Japan and Germany, respectively.[110]

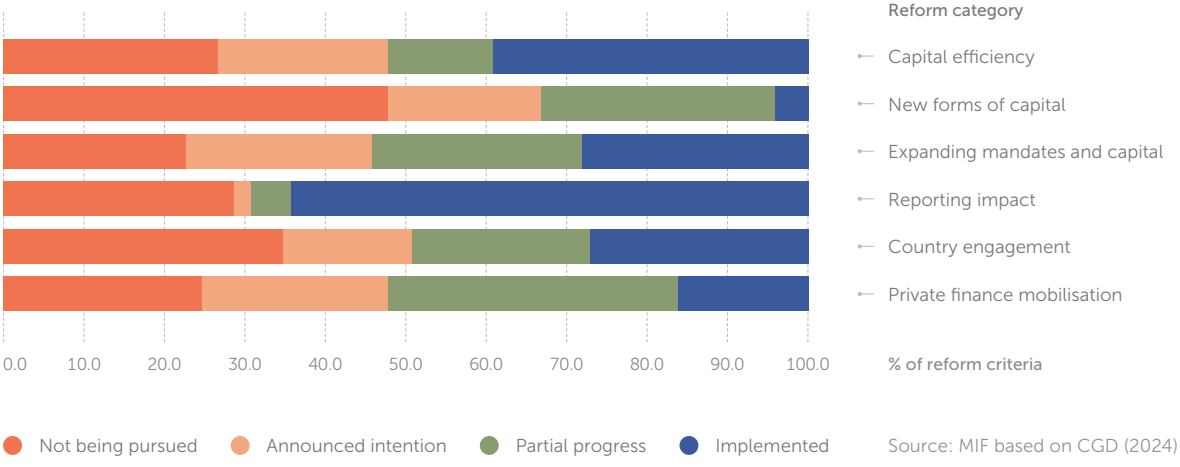
Over the last three years, multilateral development banks (MDBs) have started reform processes to better respond to the needs of developing countries, including capital efficiency and new forms of capital, expanding mandates, reporting, country engagement and mobilising private finance. As reported by the Center for Global Development, full implementation ranges from 5% to 64% across reform types. While the AfDB and World Bank Group record over two thirds of reforms (69%) as in progress or implemented, at EIB Global, two thirds (67%) of reforms are not currently being pursued.[111]

African leaders adopted the Lomé Declaration on Debt at the first ever AU Conference on Debt in Togo in May 2025

Africa only holds 6.5% of IMF voting rights and struggles to access SDRs

Three years in, reform progress across MDBs stands at 50% on average

Selected MDBs: progress across reform categories (2024)*



Source: MIF based on CGD (2024)

* MDBs assessed include AfDB, ADB, AIIB, EBRD, EIB Global, IDBG and WBG.

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