OUTCOME NOTE - Third AEF-AUC-ECA-PACJA Africa-Europe Informal Climate Convening ‘Fostering Africa-Europe Climate Diplomacy and Cooperation: On the Road to COP32 and a strengthened Africa-Europe Climate Partnership’

Context

This third African-Europe Climate Convening took place on the margins of SB64 in Bonn and brought together representatives from the African Union Commission, UNECA, PACJA, the European Union, the African Group of Negotiators, Ethiopia as ‘incoming incoming’ COP32 presidency, and other partners from the two continents.

The discussion was explicitly informal and dialogue-oriented, with the shared objective of rebuilding trust, identifying practical convergence, and translating political alignment into deliverable climate cooperation ahead of COP31, COP32, and beyond. It marked a third chapter of a maturing Africa-Europe climate diplomacy track, moving from trust building in 2024 to strategic alignment in 2025 and to joint political shaping in 2026.

The meeting reinforced a shared view that climate change is not a distant environmental issue for Africa, but a present-day development, resilience, and justice emergency. Key evidence shared during the discussion included:

- Africa loses up to **5% of GDP** due to climate impacts.
- Direct economic losses were cited at **USD 9.6 billion** in 2023-2024.
- Africa contributes **less than 4%** of global emissions but hosts **17 of the 20** most climate-vulnerable countries.
- Climate impacts could reduce Africa’s GDP by up to **12.5% by 2030**.
- Only about **14% of global climate finance** reaches LDCs.
- Only around **3% of global private renewable investment** reaches sub-Saharan Africa.
- Africa’s Mission 300 has already helped connect **50 million people** to the grid, with a target of **300 million by 2030**.

Key headlines

- **Africa-Europe Track 1.5 climate diplomacy can serve as the bridge between political ambition and practical outcomes.** The core message is clear: **Africa and Europe must now co-lead a global climate agenda that is just, investable, inclusive, and deliverable.**
- Africa and Europe agreed that **climate diplomacy must shift from position-taking to implementation and coalition-building**, including in view of COP31.
- A strong **shared narrative emerged around climate justice, resilience, green industrialisation, and electrification** as joint Africa-Europe priorities.
- Participants underscored the **urgency of unlocking climate finance, adapting financial architecture, and improving access to existing funds**.
- Several speakers highlighted the **need to strengthen African institutions, evidence generation and science, and visibility of African climate solutions**.
- **Africa increasingly wants to be seen as a solutions partner, not a beneficiary, seeking co-investment and co-development with Europe.**
- **COP32 in Ethiopia** was presented as **a major opportunity to restore trust in the UNFCCC process and co-demonstrate delivery.**

Main Themes and Takeaways

Climate change is a development emergency for Africa - The African Union Commission opened with a clear statement that climate impacts are already eroding African development gains. The continent is losing up to 5% of GDP due to climate impacts, with direct economic losses reported at least USD 9.6 billion in 2023-2024. Africa contributes less than 4% of global greenhouse gas emissions yet contains 17 of the 20 most climate-vulnerable countries. Projections cited in the meeting indicate that climate impacts could reduce Africa's GDP by up to 12.5% by 2030. **Takeaway:** Climate action for Africa must be treated as survival, development, and justice simultaneously-not as a separate environmental agenda. Time to shift the debate from climate ambition versus development to climate ambition through development.

Trust in the multilateral process is under strain - Multiple speakers described the wider geopolitical context as one of volatility, mistrust, and reduced attention to climate. There was broad concern that formal negotiations are not making sufficient progress, and that some breakthroughs are more likely to come through informal spaces where dialogue is less rigid. **Takeaway:** Informal convenings can help bridge divides, but they need to be connected to formal negotiation tracks and political decision-making.

Africa-Europe cooperation has strategic value beyond negotiations - The EU stressed that Africa and Europe are deeply interlinked through trade, investment, aid, geography, history, and shared interests in the energy transition. The discussion repeatedly returned to the idea that the energy transition creates a major window for both continents to benefit from industrial transformation, job creation, and energy access through enhanced electrification. **Takeaway:** The partnership should be positioned not only as climate diplomacy, but as a strategic development and economic and industrial partnership.

Climate finance remains the central bottleneck to implementation - Finance emerged as the most persistent constraint. It is not planning but finance delivery. Speakers raised concerns about: (i) limited public finance, (ii) weak access to existing climate funds, (iii) overly complex procedures, (iv) the need for better project pipelines, (v) the role of debt and illicit financial flows, (vi) the need to diversify donor bases, (vii) the importance of aligning finance with delivery on the ground. Several participants welcomed progress under the Santiago Network and called for stronger alignment among climate finance mechanisms, including the Loss and Damage Fund and adaptation-related facilities. **Takeaway:** The partnership should focus on practical finance delivery, not only on headline commitments.

Making Adaptation Investible for Development - Make Africa-Europe adaptation cooperation a development-first investment agenda by aligning adaptation with national development plans and essential services, building a pipeline of bankable projects, and using public finance to de-risk private capital so resources flow faster to locally led, high-impact resilience solutions. Move from broad pledges to a pipeline of clearly designed, bankable projects that can attract public, blended, and private finance. Deploy grants, guarantees, first-loss capital, and concessional finance to make adaptation projects more attractive for investors and use regional cooperation and country-led platforms to pool expertise, aggregate demand, and improve project readiness. **Takeaway:** Position adaptation not as a stand-alone climate agenda, but as core economic and social infrastructure tied to water, sanitation, health, agriculture, transport, and housing.

Electrification and green industrialisation are shared priorities - Several interventions converged on electrification as a major political and practical agenda for the next COP cycle. The meeting referenced Africa's Mission 300 initiative, which has already helped connect 50 million people to the grid and aims to connect 300 million by 2030. This was linked to the EU-Africa Green Energy Initiative, which aims to connect 100 million Africans by 2030 and add 50 GW of renewable energy capacity. The discussion also highlighted the African Green Industrialisation Initiative, the EU Clean Industrial Deal, and the COP31 electrification target of 35% by 2035 as complementary agendas. **Takeaway:** Electrification, renewable energy, and green industrialisation are the clearest near-term convergence points for joint action.

Build an Africa-Europe trade and climate agenda that rewards low-carbon competitiveness, industrial upgrading, and resilient value chains - The meeting showed that climate action should be treated not only as mitigation and adaptation, but also as an economic and trade opportunity. Africa's green industrialisation agenda, the EU Clean Industrial Deal, and the African Continental Free Trade Area create a strong basis for aligning climate policy with trade and competitiveness. The partnership should therefore move toward a framework that: supports green value chains in sectors such as renewables, batteries, critical minerals, agriculture, and green manufacturing;

- helps African firms meet low-carbon standards, traceability requirements, and sustainability rules without becoming locked out of European markets;
- uses trade policy to expand investment, technology transfer, and local value addition in Africa rather than only extracting raw materials;
- strengthens supply chain resilience and diversification so that climate shocks do not undermine trade and industrial development;
- ensures that carbon border measures, industrial policy, and green standards are implemented in a way that is fair, transparent, and development-compatible for African partners.

Takeaway: Trade policy should be used as a climate-enabling tool, not a barrier. A joint Africa-Europe approach to competitiveness can help turn the climate transition into jobs, industrial transformation, and shared economic resilience ahead of COP32.

Adaptation, Loss and damage, and broader resilience need stronger institutional support - Speakers emphasized that the continent needs better national and regional capacity to assess climate-related loss and damage, design resilience investments, and support access to finance. Kenya's Santiago Network-supported assessment of loss and damage was presented as an encouraging example. There was also a strong call to strengthen African institutions-particularly coordination structures, such as ClimDev, and African climate knowledge - so that African science and evidence can feed into global processes more effectively. **Takeaway:** Institutional strengthening and evidence generation are prerequisites for scaling climate action in Africa.

Science, the IPCC, and African knowledge visibility matter - A recurring theme was the need to protect the integrity of science and ensure African research is more visible and usable in global processes. Participants noted that African scientific work is substantial, but its visibility and translation into policy remains too weak. Specific concern was raised about the IPCC timeline, especially the challenge of aligning the seventh assessment cycle (AR7) with the second

Global Stocktake (GST2). The meeting highlighted the need for practical coordination mechanisms, including potential subregional expertise pooling, to help African experts contribute meaningfully. **Takeaway:** Africa needs stronger scientific infrastructure, visibility, and coordination to influence global assessments and decision-making, and institutions like ClimDev/ACPC should be strengthened to support evidence generation and reporting.

Build new coalitions for reform and implementation across climate, finance, and sectoral forums - The Africa-Europe partnership should move beyond the UNFCCC alone and actively build coalitions in other international and sectoral arenas where climate outcomes are also shaped. The meeting showed that progress is increasingly being made - or blocked - in forums such as the IMO, in discussions on the international financial architecture, and through practical coalitions on transitioning away from fossil fuels, electrification, green industrialisation, and adaptation finance. **Takeaway:** climate diplomacy must be multi-track, cross-sectoral, and coalition-based. The Africa-Europe partnership should help connect negotiations with delivery in shipping, finance, energy access, agri-food, industry, and adaptation, creating a broader ecosystem of implementation that can reinforce COP32 outcomes.

Gender, youth, and vulnerable communities must be centered - Interventions highlighted that women and youth are disproportionately affected by climate shocks and are often excluded from resource flows. Women were identified as central to household resilience, food systems, water access, and care burdens. Young people were described as a major source of innovation and opportunity, particularly in green industries and market creation. **Takeaway:** Climate finance and programming must be deliberately designed to reach women, youth, and other vulnerable groups: (i) Introduce gender-responsive and youth-responsive access criteria for climate finance; (ii) Ensure resources reach household-level resilience systems and community-based organizations; (iii) Support women-led adaptation, food security, and water resilience initiatives.

Bottom Line for COP32

The meeting showed broad agreement that Africa and Europe can and should move from dialogue to delivery. The strongest convergence lies in electrification, green industrialisation, adaptation, climate finance reform, and institutional strengthening. Participants called for a partnership that is more visible, more practical, more inclusive, and more responsive to the realities faced by vulnerable African countries. COP32 in Ethiopia was repeatedly framed as a critical opportunity to restore trust, demonstrate progress, and convert the Africa-Europe climate relationship into a genuinely implementation-oriented alliance. A strengthened partnership should be built around trust, joint implementation, and visible impact.

Participants included:

- **Antwi-Boasiako Amoah**, Chair of the African Group of Negotiators (AGN)
- **Diana Acconcia**, Director for International Affairs and Climate Finance, European Commission Directorate-General for Climate Action
- **Samuel Addis**, Deputy Director, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Ethiopia (COP32 Presidency)
- **Amb. Mattias Frumerie**, Climate Ambassador, Sweden

- **Heike Henn**, Director-General for Climate Action, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany
- **Jette Michelsen**, Climate Negotiator to the UNFCCC & Chief Advisor, Department of Green Diplomacy and Climate, Denmark
- **Jori Keijsper**, Acting Climate Envoy and Head of Delegation to the UNFCCC, the Netherlands
- **Mithika Mwenda**, Executive Director, Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)
- **Amb. Felix Wertli**, Ambassador for the Environment and Head of the International Affairs Division at the Federal Office for the Environment, Switzerland
- **Sabelo Mbokazi**, Head of Labour, Employment and Migration, Directorate of Humanitarian Affairs and Health Services, African Union Commission (AUC)
- **Orla Kilcullen**, Adaptation Lead, and Deputy Director, Irish Aid (incoming EU presidency)
- **Charles Mwangi**, Head of Programs, Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)
- **Cromwel Lukorito**, Vice-Chair, IPCC Working Group II on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability
- **Evelyne Nkeng Peh**, Advisor on Migration and Displacement, GIZ AU Office/AUC
- **Gillian Hamilton**, Co-Lead of the Africa Working Group, International Climate Policy Hub (ICPH)
- **Grace Ampomaa Afrifa**, Chair of Ethics and Arbitration, Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA)
- **Iva Detelinova**, EU-Africa Engagement Lead, African Climate Foundation (ACF)
- **Marcela Tarazona,** Technical and Strategy Lead for Climate Finance and Economics, Genesis Analytics
- **Seth Osafo**, Legal Advisor to the Africa Group of Climate Negotiators (AGN)
- **Veronica Jakarasi**, AGN Negotiator, Zimbabwe
- **Xolisa Nwadla**, AGN Negotiator, South Africa
- **Caroline Tangwireyi**, Senior Adaptation Officer, Climate Change, African Union ▪ Commission (AUC)
- **Yosef Amha**, Economic Affairs Officer, Climate Change, Agriculture and Adaptation, Climate Research for Development in Africa (CR4D) Secretariat, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA)
- **Raphaël Danglade**, Head of Climate and Development, Africa-Europe Foundation (AEF)

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