

# Marseille Declaration

## Strengthening Cooperation between Europe and Africa on Climate Change Adaptation

We, representatives of networks of local authorities, Indigenous peoples, civil society organisations, researchers and economic actors, and technical operators, gathered in Marseille for the Climate Chance Europe-Africa Summit on Climate Change Adaptation,

- **We emphasise** the critical need for increased mobilisation and strengthened cooperation between African and European actors to address the accelerating climate crisis, aligning with the latest IPCC reports that highlight the need to focus more on adaptation and resilience.
- **We recall** that while the African continent has contributed little—compared to industrialised countries—to the rise in greenhouse gas concentrations, it faces disproportionate climate risks. As climate-related hazards already impose significant costs on many territories, urgent adaptation measures must be supported by the historical emitters of greenhouse gases.
- **We express our concern** over the significant decline in official development aid budgets, as they are necessary tools for implementing on-the-ground actions that meet the needs of populations, enhance resilience, contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, and safeguard common goods such as natural resources, biodiversity, and climate.
- **We are convinced** that, in the current context of extreme international tensions and political polarisation, strengthening, beyond declarations, effective cooperation between Europe and Africa on climate adaptation is a tangible pathway to building a more united, peaceful, and resilient world for all, respectful of human rights and the environment.

### Key Areas for Strengthening Cooperation

#### 1) Scientific Cooperation as the foundation for Addressing the Challenge of Global Warming

Scientific cooperation must be significantly strengthened, with support for the development of African research. Academic and non-academic partnerships should be co-constructed, taking into account territorial realities and diversities.

We support the scientific community, which is under attack from pressure groups attempting to undermine climate action. We reaffirm that there is no longer any debate about the reality of global warming and humanity's role in increasing greenhouse gas concentrations. We highlight the essential role of the IPCC, IPBES, and marine science in forming the scientific consensus upon which our actions should be based.

Climate adaptation requires an integrated approach, combining expertise from development studies, social sciences, citizen science, Indigenous knowledge, multi-level and multi-sectoral governance, economic analysis, and technological innovation. By mobilising and strengthening diverse expertise, we inform and consolidate actors' solutions in line with their specific challenges and local contexts.

We stress the importance of transforming food systems from farm to table, strengthening urban-rural linkages, and building resilient food supply chains. As highlighted by the latest IPCC AR6 report, land, water, and food-related adaptation and mitigation solutions offer the greatest potential for tackling the climate crisis and must be prioritised in research programs.

We underscore the need to support African countries in systematically analysing climate data. Strengthening national meteorological and hydrological services (NMHS), training, data production, and ensuring easy access to this data are crucial for informing populations and decision-making bodies, establishing future scenarios, and defining fair and efficient adaptation actions.

We propose the creation of an Africa-Europe Climate Data Exchange Framework to facilitate open-access to climate risk data and enhance forecasting capabilities for African nations.

## **2) Financial and Technical Solutions Combining Adaptation and Mitigation**

There can be no adaptation without global reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. We insist on the importance of greater efforts by industrialised countries to cut their emissions and provide international support to African nations for low-emission development pathways, notably through financial mechanisms enabling the rapid expansion of renewable energy and forest cover conservation.

Certain proven actions, which generate intersectoral co-benefits and avoid maladaptation, should be particularly supported. Nature-based solutions, such as mangrove and soil restoration, which fully involve Indigenous Peoples and local communities and ensure equal participation of women at all decision-making levels, have demonstrated their effectiveness in risk reduction, CO<sub>2</sub> sequestration, biodiversity preservation, and providing new resources for local populations.



We call for strengthened public and private financial and technical support for such initiatives.

We acknowledge the financing challenges highlighted during COPs in Cali (biodiversity), Baku (climate), and Riyadh (desertification). While we welcome certain measures adopted at these COPs, we regret that they fall short of the real financial support required. We urge the European Union and the African Union to advocate for increased resources and dedicated programs.

Alternative financing mechanisms, such as carbon markets and biodiversity certificates, are being discussed. These can be effectively mobilised but must be strictly used for the benefit of local populations and Indigenous Peoples, ensuring gender equality and improved rights and livelihoods for women, who are the most affected by climate change. All actions must be firmly grounded in human rights, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

### **3) The Crucial Challenge of Housing Adaptation and Urban Resilience**

Building on the Climate Chance Summit Declaration of Yaoundé on Sustainable Habitats in Africa, we underscore the urgent need to adapt housing and settlements to climate change. This requires a holistic approach integrating sustainable and circular construction practices, urban planning, risk management, and financial support.

We stress the importance of incorporating adaptation measures into the production of sustainable new buildings and renovation efforts. Traditional techniques and expertise must be valued, and training programs for sustainable and circular material production should be supported. Bioclimatic architecture is a key adaptation lever, and African-European technical and economic cooperation must be reinforced in these areas.

We highlight the importance of planning urban development, integrating informal settlements into adaptation strategies, and ensuring access to vital services (transport, water, health, food) in urban resilience efforts.

Sustainable water management and universal access to clean water are critical for both development and climate adaptation. Public policies must prioritise this issue, integrating it into various forms of cooperation.

### **4) The Key Role of Local Action**

Depending on the territory, priorities for action vary today because the challenges faced are also highly diverse. We therefore emphasise the importance of an approach that is as close as possible to realities on the ground. Through dialogue and collective



governance, it is essential to forge shared visions rooted in local cultures, traditional knowledge, and citizen aspirations.

First, in line with previous declarations from African local government networks—particularly the declaration from the last Africities Summit in Kisumu—we call for the strengthening of the powers and resources of African local governments. Without them, it will not be possible to implement efficient and impactful actions at scale.

We stress the importance of prioritising funding for these local initiatives, ensuring they are integrated into the strategies of international donors and development banks. We call for discussions to ensure that the innovative financing mechanisms currently under debate are also accessible to local governments, supporting projects of varying scales and prioritising territories based on their vulnerability.

We advocate for stronger scientific cooperation at the territorial level and for the development of tools to disseminate information and share best practices. These partnerships should not be one-sided—Europe also has much to learn from the solutions developed in Africa, and international cooperation must promote reciprocity.

We highlight the importance of planning and ensuring coherence across different spatial and temporal scales. A cross-cutting, multi-sectoral, and multi-stakeholder approach is essential. Local governments must be supported in strengthening their planning and urban engineering tools, including skills development, training, and digital resources. Additionally, population movements, particularly rural exodus, must be integrated into this planning process.

Cross-border challenges require specific strategies. We emphasise the importance of decentralised Africa-Europe cooperation as a valuable tool for strengthening territorial adaptation efforts. Currently, too few cooperation initiatives focus on adaptation, and a real momentum must be created in this regard.

To achieve meaningful climate adaptation, local governments must be given stronger decision-making power and the technical resources necessary for implementation. We stress the need to facilitate local governments' access to funding, enabling them to reinforce their decision-making capacity and prioritise actions effectively. More broadly, all territorial actors, including Indigenous Peoples, must benefit from this improved access to funding, allowing them to drive the transformation of their territories.

#### **5) Mobilised Societies, Networked Actors, Especially at the Economic Level**

The responses that need to be developed in different territories to address the challenges of adaptation will only be effective if they are crafted as close as possible to the realities on the ground and the daily lives of local populations. We emphasise the importance of a participatory, inclusive, and transformative approach, closely



involving residents—particularly the most vulnerable, women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples. These responses will only be relevant if they take into account the differentiated vulnerabilities caused by social and gender inequalities.

The capacity for innovation among local actors is significant. This territorial creativity, which fosters adaptation, resource efficiency, and social cohesion, must be supported. Promoting impact-driven entrepreneurship is a key lever for strengthening adaptation. Social and environmental entrepreneurs, especially young people and women, play an essential role in developing local solutions that are rooted in community needs and adapted to their realities.

Adaptation will only be possible if it is based on a dynamic entrepreneurial ecosystem. International companies must increase their contribution to local value creation, facilitate knowledge transfer, and build efficient value chains. They must support entrepreneurship on the continent, provide resources to emerging structures, and help countries structure their economic offerings and develop real industries that can provide robust economic responses to adaptation challenges. Likewise, the agricultural sector—which is inherently highly sensitive to climate change—must be strengthened and supported with new solutions in production, distribution, and preservation. The private sector plays a crucial role in this regard, and strengthening economic cooperation should help it meet these challenges and build more resilient supply chains.

We stress the importance of exchange and networking. We advocate for dedicated sessions on adaptation in all major meetings between stakeholders, the creation of specific tools for information dissemination, and the sharing of best practices. We therefore welcome new initiatives for collective mobilisation, such as the Alliance of Francophone Cities for Climate, in coordination with the European Covenant of Mayors initiative, the Covenant of Mayors for Sub-Saharan Africa (CoM SSA), and the international coalition for the adaptation of African territories.

*Our common future is being shaped in our cities and territories. Africa and Europe must together champion the vision of living spaces that are viable, just, and resilient.*



# This is our Marseille Declaration

1st April 2025

At the [Climate Chance Europe-Africa Summit 2025](#), which brought together 1,500 participants from over 40 countries.

## Supported by the following organisations:



City of Marseille  
Climate Chance Association

## Local gouvernement networks :

International Association of Francophone Mayors (AIMF)  
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United Cities and Local Governments - Africa (UCLGA)  
ICLEI Europe  
ICLEI Africa  
Covenant of Mayors in Sub-Saharan Africa (CoMSSA)  
Cités unies France (CUF)  
CCRE – Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR)  
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**Signatory cities at the AIMF 2025 Congress (Hué, Vietnam):**

City of Paris  
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Nancy Metropolis  
Foumban Municipality  
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**Economic actors networks :**

Climate Enterprise Convention (CEC)  
Cameroonian Association for Renewable Energy (ACER)  
The Sahel and West Africa Club (OECD/SWAC)  
Habitat and Francophonie Network (RHF)  
Construction21  
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Association des producteurs de fours et de foyers améliorés au Togo (APFFAT)

**NGO and civil society networks:**

Coordination Sud  
Climate Action Network Europe (CAN Europe)  
Women Engage for a Common Future - International (WECF International)  
Indigenous Peoples of Africa Co-ordinating Committee (IPACC)  
Geres  
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Association Malienne pour la Promotion de la Citoyenneté et la Protection de l'Environnement (AMAPCPE)  
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National Council of the Order of Architects (CNOA)

**Researchers and technical operators:**

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Sciences Po Rennes  
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