

ESG | Climate Action | Environmental Innovation

SANKOFA  
SUSTAINABILITY

## Africa's ESG Vanguards

Our Top 35 sustainable  
companies across key sectors.

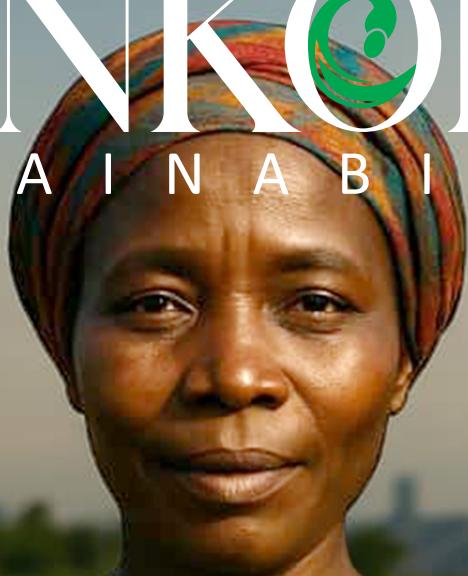
## Greenwashing in Ghana

Unmasking ESG misinformation  
in the mining sector.

## Green Tech & Innovation:

African startups disrupting  
waste, energy, and water.

Africa Rooted  
in Resilience





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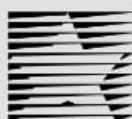
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# African Sustainability



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# Akwaa Sankofa Sustainability: Africa is sustainability.

**A**frica is not merely rising; it is *re-rooting*. Amid the global urgency to confront climate collapse, biodiversity loss, and social inequity, the African continent is forging a new path: not in imitation of Western models, but in reclamation of its indigenous wisdom and environmental guardianship.

The launch of *Sankofa Sustainability* marks more than a publication, it is a movement. A return to move forward. “Sankofa,” from the Akan philosophy, teaches that we must retrieve what is valuable from the past to inform a stronger future. And in this age of ecological reckoning, Africa’s past holds powerful blueprints: rotational farming, sacred groves, zero-waste cultures, communal

land stewardship are all systems that echo modern sustainability ideals.

But this magazine is not about nostalgia. It is about *integration*. This issue brings to the fore African-led ESG excellence, carbon-neutral innovations, and youth-led revolutions in green politics. We spotlight companies like Safaricom, Exxaro, Growthpoint, Dangote, Olam, Serengeti Energy and Kenya Airways that are walking the ESG talk. We journey through forests regrown in Rwanda, sustainable tea fields in Kenya, and solar villages in Mali. These are not just success stories but *testimonies* that sustainability in Africa is not foreign, it is familiar. It is not imported, it is inherited.



At the heart of this publication lies a commitment to storytelling that centers justice, dignity, and truth. Environmental degradation in Africa is not an abstraction, it is lived. It is a grandmother's fading harvest. A child's trek for clean water. A displaced fisherman's loss of sea life. But it is also a youth innovator's prototype in a Lagos lab. A community reclaiming its wetlands in Mozambique. A grassroots movement building climate schools in Ethiopia.

As the world searches for scalable climate solutions, Africa's voice must be loud, clear, and unapologetically centered. Yet global platforms often reduce our 54 nations into a footnote or case study. *Sankofa Sustainability* is the antithesis of that marginalization. Here, Africa is not a subject, it is the source.

In each of the 24 sections of this issue, from Green Tech & Innovation to Forests, from Biodiversity to Green Arts

& Culture, we bring forth not just news, but meaning. Not just statistics, but stories. Our writers, experts, and correspondents span the continent, offering local insights with global significance.

This is your magazine, a collective drumbeat for ecological transformation. Whether you are a policymaker in Accra, a student in Tunis, an activist in Kinshasa, or a green entrepreneur in Johannesburg, this platform belongs to you.

We invite you to read, reflect, engage, and respond. Let these pages move you to action, debate, investment, or innovation. Let them remind you: Africa is not lagging behind in sustainability. Africa *is* sustainability.

*The Editorial Team  
Sankofa Sustainability Magazine*



# Welcome Message from the Editor-in-Chief

young activists daring to imagine a greener tomorrow.

This edition, “**Africa Rooted in Resilience**” is about looking inward to go forward. We draw inspiration from ancestral wisdom and spotlight trailblazers redefining ESG from the ground up. From the rise of carbon markets in Gabon and Kenya to the tenacity of eco-defenders in Uganda, we document Africa not as a victim of climate change, but as a global vanguard of sustainability innovation.

Sankofa, a Ghanaian symbol reminding us to fetch wisdom from the past to build the future, guides every page of this magazine. And like the bird in our logo, we reach back into heritage, memory and community while stepping boldly into the future.

Thank you for joining us on this journey. Your curiosity, your voice and your advocacy matters. Let this issue ignite something in you.

Warmly,

Prince Moses Zakaria

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Moses Zakaria".

Editor-in-Chief | Sankofa Sustainability Magazine

Dear Reader,

Welcome to this special issue of *Sankofa Sustainability*, a deeply rooted tribute to Africa's enduring spirit, environmental courage, and collective hope.

In your hands is more than just a magazine. It's a movement. A mirror. A megaphone. It reflects the voices rising from the forests of the Congo Basin, the innovation hubs of Nairobi, the climate clubs in Mbarara's schools, and the windswept Sahelian farms braving drought with dignity and digital tools. It amplifies the stories that too often go untold: of women guarding forests, startups turning waste into wealth, and

“ Our Mission & This Issue’s Theme:

# Africa Rooted in Resilience ”

**A**t *Sankofa Sustainability*, we are committed to telling the stories that move Africa forward, stories of environmental justice, corporate accountability, local ingenuity and ancestral wisdom. Our mission is to spotlight the changemakers, unsung heroes and bold innovators shaping a sustainable future across the continent. Through compelling narratives, investigative features and powerful visuals, we champion ESG (**E**nvironmental, **S**ocial, and **G**overnance) values, **C**limate Action, and **E**nvironmental **S**ustainability in every corner of Africa.

Each issue is guided by a central theme, one that reflects the heartbeat of the continent and its people. For May 2025, our theme is: **Africa Rooted in Resilience**.

This issue celebrates the enduring power of African communities to adapt, resist and regenerate. At a time when global conversations on climate and equity are louder than ever, Africa's grassroots leaders, eco-entrepreneurs and youth voices are demonstrating what real resilience looks like.

We explore how ancestral land stewardship informs modern conservation, how Indigenous women are reshaping ESG at the forest frontlines and how data and AI are empowering farmers facing the harshest effects of climate change. We uncover not only the environmental battles being fought, but the cultural, economic and political victories being won.

Africa's story is not one of crisis, but of capacity. Not just of survival, but of sustainable strength. This edition honors that truth and carries it to the world.

*Sankofa Sustainability* welcomes you to *Africa*, a continent rooted in resilience.

# A Continent Rooted in

## A Sweeping Overview of Africa as a Global Sustainability Beacon

By the Editorial Team | Sankofa Sustainability Magazine

**W**hen the winds of change sweep across the globe, Africa stands not as a bystander, but as a resilient force, grounded in ancient wisdom, ignited by youthful innovation and driven by a profound commitment to a greener future. Across vast savannahs, dense forests, sun-drenched deserts and bustling cities, the continent is proving that sustainability is not a borrowed idea, it is embedded in its roots.

From the Sahel to the Cape, African communities have long practiced ecological balance, rotating crops, preserving sacred forests and conserving water with systems developed long before "climate-smart" became a buzzword. Today, those ancestral practices are being fused with cutting-edge solutions: AI-powered irrigation systems in Niger, solar microgrids in Zambia and blockchain-enabled carbon credit tracking in Kenya. Africa is writing a new narrative, one where tradition meets technology and resilience is redefined.

At the heart of this transformation is a powerful realization, sustainability in Africa is not a luxury, it is a necessity. With over 60% of its population under 25 and a frontline position in the climate crisis, Africa is uniquely positioned to leapfrog old systems and build future-ready societies from the ground up.

## From Local Wisdom to Global Solutions

**A**frica's strength lies in its diversity of ecosystems, languages, peoples and ideas. In Ghana, reforestation efforts are reviving sacred groves once protected by indigenous customs. In Kenya, Maasai pastoralists are using GPS-enabled collars to track herd migration while minimizing environmental degradation. These are not isolated stories, rather, they are pieces of a continental mosaic of ecological ingenuity.

And global actors are taking note. Investments in renewable energy have more than tripled across the continent in the past five years. African nations now host some of the largest solar farms in the world, such as Benban in Egypt and Noor Ouarzazate in Morocco. Meanwhile, Rwanda has become a model for urban sustainability, banning single-use plastics and designing green spaces into its city planning.

The Congo Basin, often referred to as the "lungs of Africa," is another emblem of resilience. Despite increasing pressures from logging and mining, indigenous communities and environmental defenders are employing drones, AI, and traditional patrols to safeguard its biodiversity. Their message is clear, Africa is not waiting to be saved. It is saving itself and in doing so, it is offering the world a blueprint for hope.

# Resilience

## Youth at the Helm, Innovation in Hand

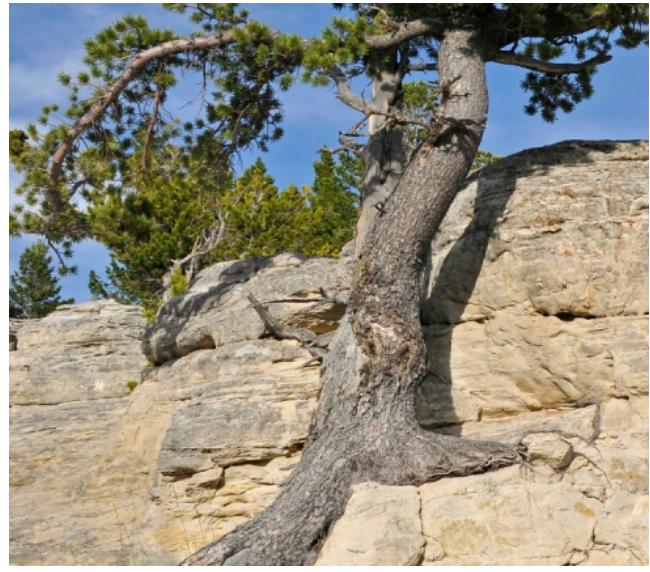
Perhaps the most transformative force in Africa's sustainability journey is its youth. In Nigeria, eco-entrepreneurs are converting plastic waste into building bricks. In South Africa, climate artists are using murals to spark consciousness. Across the continent, young Africans are not just demanding change, they are engineering it.

Africa's universities are incubating green tech startups. Its farmers are turning to regenerative agriculture. Its governments, led by countries like Gabon and Namibia, are pushing for stronger climate finance and fair carbon markets. This energy is not reactionary, it is visionary.

As Sankofa Sustainability launches this inaugural issue, we celebrate a continent that refuses to be boxed in by outdated narratives of lack or fragility. Africa is not the world's environmental burden, rather, it is its green hope.

In the Akan tradition, the Sankofa bird looks back to retrieve what is valuable from the past, even as it moves forward. Africa is doing just that, retrieving indigenous wisdom, reimagining development and rising resiliently.

In this issue, we explore the faces, the movements, the innovations and the truths driving Africa's sustainability agenda. Join us as we amplify the voices and visions of a continent rooted in resilience and ready to lead.



## Africa as the World's Green Hope

By Haruna Issah-Issango

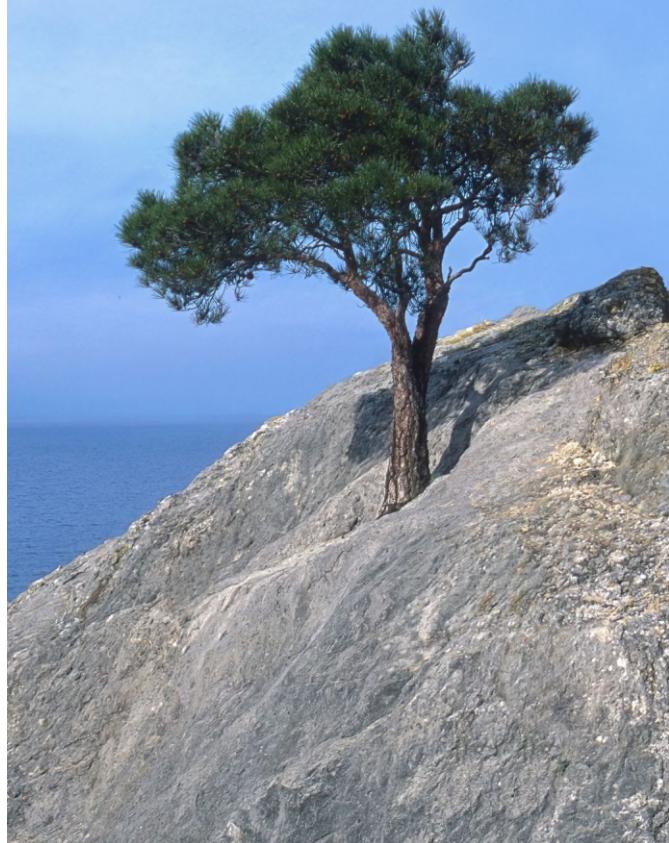
Across the African continent, from the terraced highlands of Ethiopia to the deep rainforests of the Congo Basin, an ancient resilience blooms through every landscape. Often portrayed solely as a victim of climate vulnerability, Africa holds a rarely told truth: it is a continent of ecological wisdom, homegrown ingenuity and time-tested sustainability. In the face of a planet in crisis, Africa stands as the world's green hope and its best-kept secret in solving the sustainability puzzle.

# Indigenous Knowledge: Nature's Original Manual

Long before climate change became a global headline, African communities lived in harmony with nature. Nomadic herders in the Sahel rotated grazing lands to prevent desertification. Farmers in Ghana's Upper East Region cultivated water-harvesting techniques using earthen bunds. The Zulu practiced agroforestry, growing medicinal plants alongside crops. These were not acts of environmentalism, they were survival, sustainability and sacred stewardship wrapped into one.

To the typical African, traditional ecological knowledge is not archaic, it is a living system of climate adaptation and biodiversity protection.

For example, the Pokot people of Kenya use indigenous forecasting, observing animal behaviors, wind patterns and tree flowering to predict rainfall. These methods are now being integrated with modern climate models to enhance regional accuracy. In Malawi, the use of local seed banks preserves crop diversity and strengthens food systems against climate shocks.



## Restoring What the World Forgot

Africa is home to the Great Green Wall, a Pan-African initiative aiming to restore 100 million hectares of degraded land across 11 countries by 2030. Communities are planting trees not just for carbon capture, but for food, medicine and shade. The initiative has already restored millions of hectares, created jobs and offered an African-led solution to climate migration.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo, Indigenous Batwa communities are being empowered to steward forest reserves. In Senegal, mangrove restoration projects protect coastlines and nurture fisheries. In South Africa, ecovillages are reviving communal land ethics with modern ecological design.



## Africa's Green Innovation Surge

**A**frica is not only sustaining old wisdom but creating new solutions. The continent's youth are engineering eco-solutions rooted in culture and necessity. In Nigeria, social enterprise

Wecyclers is revolutionizing urban recycling through a fleet of low-emission cargo bikes. In Rwanda, the government banned plastic bags decades ahead of global peers, while startups like Ampersand are electrifying motorcycle taxis with

battery-swap stations.

This wave of eco-entrepreneurship is pushing Africa to the forefront of grassroots green tech.

It's innovation with equity, designed not to disrupt, but to deepen environmental connection.

Africa is sustainability and does not need to imitate the West's path to sustainability, Africa is already walking a greener path.

## The Cultural Climate Connection

**I**n Africa, the climate is not an abstract force, it is spirit, rhythm, ancestry. The drumbeat of climate justice here is inseparable from justice for women, land rights and decolonization. Climate is culture and Africa's cultural capital is its greatest asset in the green transition.

The Sankofa philosophy, looking to the past to inform the future embodies this perfectly. Africa's regenerative traditions are not relics but roadmaps. They are ready to guide a world frantically searching for meaning in the age of climate chaos.

## A Call to Global Listening

**A**frica is not a charity case in the climate conversation. It is a teacher, a partner and a protagonist. The world must shift from extracting resources to amplifying Africa's regenerative voice. From listening to its stories, funding its solutions and protecting its biodiversity not as a global service, but as a global necessity.

As deserts advance and glaciers melt, the world will soon realize the future of sustainability is deeply rooted in Africa's past and it is blooming in its present.

## Five African Climate Solutions the World Should Learn From

- Pokot Rain Forecasting (Kenya)
- Indigenous Seed Banks (Malawi)
- Plastic Ban Enforcement (Rwanda)
- Sahelian Earthen Water Bunds (Burkina Faso)
- Mangrove Restoration (Senegal)



# Africa's ESG Vanguards:

## The 35 Companies Leading the Continent's Green Revolution

By Prince Moses Zakaria | Sankofa Sustainability Magazine

**A**s the global call for environmental, social and governance (ESG) excellence grows louder, African companies are stepping forward not just to answer that call, but to redefine what sustainability leadership looks like. From solar-powered mining in South Africa to climate-resilient agriculture in West Africa, from circular waste economies in North Africa to digital climate finance tools in East Africa, Africa's top companies are setting the pace in innovation, impact, and inclusive growth.

In curating this list of **Africa's Top 35 ESG Vanguards**, we looked beyond glossy pledges to spotlight companies demonstrating measurable, scalable and community-rooted ESG performance. These leaders represent a dynamic cross-section of sectors in energy, agribusiness, finance, tech, real estate, aviation, manufacturing, logistics and more, each proving that doing good can go hand-in-hand with doing well.

Our selection process combined third-party ESG ratings,

stakeholder feedback, independent audits, verified sustainability reports, and on-the-ground impacts. What emerged is a powerful testament to African ingenuity and a clarion call to global investors, partners and policymakers. *Africa is not just participating in the green revolution, it is leading it.*

### A Continental Map of Sustainability Leadership

- **Safaricom (Kenya)** – The region's most transparent telecom giant, with a robust net-zero plan and inclusive digital access.
- **Dangote Group (Pan-Africa)** – From cement to fertilizer, transitioning industrial operations to cleaner, climate-smart models.
- **Exxaro Resources (South Africa)** – A mining company reimagining the energy transition with large-scale solar deployment and employee equity.
- **Olam International (Nigeria & Côte d'Ivoire)** – Building traceable, ethical cocoa and cashew value



chains from farm to factory.

- **Serengeti Energy (Kenya)** – Clean energy champions building hydro and solar across the continent.
- **Kenya Airways** – One of Africa's first airlines with a science-based target for carbon reduction and a circular inflight waste policy.
- **Growthpoint Properties (South Africa)** – A real estate leader in green-certified buildings and climate resilience architecture.

These companies are not perfect but they are pioneering. And as the stakes of climate inaction grow, it is their bold moves, transparency and commitment to people and planet that offer a bright path forward for the rest of the continent.

Let us take you inside their boardrooms, onto their factory floors, into their communities where sustainability is not a slogan, but a way of doing business. In our full report (Pages 9–22), we break down:

- Sectoral Rankings

- Spotlight on the sectoral leaders of ESG Performers
- Infographics of ESG performances

## AGRICULTURE

### Nurturing the Roots of Sustainability

1. **Olam International (Nigeria & Côte d'Ivoire)** – Leads traceable cocoa and cashew value chains, empowering smallholders and restoring ecosystems with agroforestry practices.
2. **Illovo Sugar Africa (Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa)** – Converts bagasse into clean energy and pioneers out-grower partnerships to drive climate-resilient livelihoods.
3. **KTDA (Kenya Tea Development Agency) (Kenya)** – Empowers over 600,000 smallholders with fair-trade, climate-smart tea farming and renewable energy-powered factories.
4. **Zambeef Products Plc (Zambia)** – Integrates sustainable livestock practices, afforestation and water recycling in their vertically integrated food value chain.

- 5. AgDevCo (Pan-Africa)** – A social impact investor advancing sustainable farming through irrigation schemes, gender equity and climate-adaptive agribusinesses.

## MINING

### Digging Deeper with Responsibility

- 6. Exxaro Resources (South Africa)** – Runs one of Africa's largest solar-powered coal mines and has committed to net-zero by 2050 through biodiversity offsets and renewable transitions.
- 7. Anglo American (South Africa)** – Implements renewable hydrogen haul trucks and a FutureSmart Mining™ program focused on water stewardship and tailings innovation.
- 8. Harmony Gold (South Africa)** – Focuses on mine rehabilitation, reforestation and social license programs including community-owned enterprises.
- 9. First Quantum Minerals (Zambia)** – Champions low-impact mining, environmental monitoring, and inclusive employment for women and youth in host communities.
- 10. International Resources Holding (IRH) (UAE/Southern Africa)** – Investing in green rail logistics, emissions-reducing tech and regional clean energy infrastructure.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

### Lighting Up with Clean Power

- 11. Serengeti Energy (Kenya)** – Develops run-of-river hydro and solar mini-grids, prioritizing local community co-benefits and ESG-aligned financing.
- 12. Lekela Power (South Africa)** – Operates major wind farms and reinvests profits into education, biodiversity conservation and youth entrepreneurship.
- 13. BBOXX (Rwanda)** – Deploys off-grid solar systems with smart PAYGO models and focuses on last-mile electrification for women-led households.
- 14. Azuri Technologies (Kenya)** – Brings solar to over 2 million people while training rural technicians and minimizing e-waste.

- 15. Mobisol (Tanzania)** – Fuses mobile tech and solar leasing for clean energy access and local job creation in under-electrified regions.

## ICT

### Sustainable Innovation & Connectivity

- 16. Safaricom (Kenya)** – A carbon-neutral pioneer using 100% renewable power, e-waste recycling and gender-balanced leadership.
- 17. MTN Group (South Africa)** – Integrates green energy into cell sites, drives digital inclusion and supports climate literacy campaigns.
- 18. Liquid Intelligent Technologies (Pan-Africa)** – Reduces data center emissions with energy-efficient cooling and connects rural schools via fiber networks.
- 19. Telkom SA (South Africa)** – Implements solar-powered telecom infrastructure and reduces plastic and hazardous waste footprint.
- 20. SEACOM (South Africa)** – Champions data sustainability, transitioning to green grids and driving digital access across underserved regions.

## MANUFACTURING

### Greening Industrial Giants

- 21. Dangote Group (Nigeria)** – Deploys waste heat recovery systems, alternative fuels and community development in cement operations.
- 22. Bidco Africa (Kenya)** – Uses biomass for processing, sources raw materials ethically and supports zero waste packaging.
- 23. Tiger Brands (South Africa)** – Advances supply chain traceability, sustainable agriculture and water risk mitigation.
- 24. Unilever Nigeria (Nigeria)** – Localizes ESG goals around women's empowerment, plastic neutrality and sustainable sourcing.
- 25. Nestlé South Africa (South Africa)** – Invests in regenerative farming, low-carbon dairy and youth-skilling for green jobs.



## REAL ESTATE

*Building the Green Cities of Tomorrow*

26. **Growthpoint Properties (South Africa)** – Uses solar and green roofs, holds over 100 green building certifications and supports urban biodiversity.
27. **Redefine Properties (South Africa)** – Develops green-certified buildings and funds education and housing programs in marginalized communities.
28. **Attacq (South Africa)** – Focuses on water-saving urban designs, net-zero buildings and stakeholder-engaged precinct planning.
29. **Equites Property Fund (South Africa)** – Leads in sustainable industrial warehousing and ESG-linked financing for tenants.
30. **Liberty Holdings (Property Division) (South Africa)** – Embeds ESG into investment decisions, prioritizes energy performance and social inclusion.

## TRANSPORT

*Driving the Mobility Revolution*

31. **Kenya Airways (Kenya)** – Operates fuel-efficient Boeing 787s, offsets carbon voluntarily and promotes green tourism partnerships.
32. **DHL Africa (Pan-Africa)** – Rolls out electric vehicles, carbon-neutral warehouses and circular economy packaging.
33. **Transnet (South Africa)** – Electrifies rail infrastructure, reduces port emissions and supports youth STEM development.
34. **Maersk (Pan-Africa)** – Transitions to green ammonia shipping, digitizes logistics to cut waste and empowers African SMEs.
35. **Bolloré Transport & Logistics (Pan-Africa)** – Pioneers solar-powered logistics hubs and trains local supply chain innovators.

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*Coming Up in Part Two: leading countries with demonstrable ESG commitments by region across Africa, ESG Leaders in Finance, Healthcare, Education, Tourism and Climate Tech sectors who are making Africa the world's most promising frontier for sustainable impact.*

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# Safaricom

(Kenya): A Living Blueprint for Tech-Driven Sustainability



Peter Ndegwa  
CEO, Safaricom

As Africa's digital frontier expands, Safaricom stands tall, not merely as a telecommunications powerhouse, but as a paragon of purpose-led sustainability. In its 2024 ESG report, Safaricom unveils a vision of technology that is both transformational and deeply humane. The company's approach is as comprehensive as it is bold, blending carbon consciousness, social inclusion and transparent governance into a single, actionable strategy.

## Carbon Neutral Connectivity

Safaricom is racing toward net-zero by 2050 and its progress is nothing short of revolutionary. By the end of 2023, over 95% of Safaricom's network operations were powered by renewable energy, with 1,400+ solar-powered base stations now active across Kenya. Diesel generators have been phased out where feasible, replaced by hybrid systems that pair solar with cutting-edge battery storage ensuring resilience even where grid power is unreliable.

The company's emissions tracking is powered by AI and satellite intelligence, offering real-time visibility and granular control over its carbon footprint. As a signatory to the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), Safaricom aligns its environmental goals with rigorous climate science, making it a beacon for other African corporates navigating the low-carbon transition.

## Technology for Equity and Empowerment

Safaricom believes that connectivity is only meaningful if it includes everyone. Over 6,000 schools have been brought online through its digital infrastructure projects, while its rural telemedicine programs now serve thousands in underserved counties thus, bringing healthcare to the last mile.

Diversity and inclusion are woven into the corporate fabric: 40% of its board and senior management positions are held by women and its disability inclusion program is regarded as one of the most progressive in the region. Safaricom's parental leave benefits exceed international standards, supporting work-life balance in a changing workforce.

Through its Spark Fund, the company has seeded 20+ youth-led startups focused on e-health, clean energy and agri-tech, amplifying African innovation in sustainability.

## Circular Economy and Waste Leadership

In an era of rising e-waste, Safaricom is building a circular economy from the ground up. In 2022 alone, the company safely recycled over 200 tonnes of e-waste, from network equipment to obsolete devices. Its take-back

partnerships and regional drop-off hubs have become industry benchmarks.

At the heart of this commitment is the Safaricom Sustainability Hub in Nairobi, a fully net-zero facility that demonstrates what regenerative design looks like in practice, from rainwater harvesting to green landscaping. More than a headquarters, the Hub functions as a training ground for ESG practitioners across East Africa.

## Governance That

### Elevates Transparency

Safaricom has institutionalized ESG at the highest levels. A dedicated sustainability committee guides all major decisions, backed by a real-time internal ESG dashboard that tracks compliance, performance and stakeholder engagement. As a long-time UN Global Compact signatory, the company adheres to the GRI, SASB and UNGC reporting frameworks, producing some of the most transparent and data-rich sustainability reports on the continent.

## Scaling a Vision Beyond Borders

With expansion into Ethiopia underway, Safaricom is scaling more than services. It is exporting a sustainability blueprint. Every new market it enters carries the DNA of environmental accountability and social responsibility.

### Why It Matters

Safaricom is not just navigating the ESG journey, it is defining its contours for Africa and the world. With its deep-rooted commitments to climate action, inclusion and integrity, the company is setting a new standard, echoing that, sustainability in tech is not optional, it's the only way forward.

*Technology should never widen inequality.  
At Safaricom, our mission is to ensure it becomes the bridge that connects, uplifts, and protects.*

Peter Ndegwa  
CEO, Safaricom



**Serengeti**  
**ENERGY**

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**Safaricom**  
Twaweza

# Serengeti

## (Kenya): Illuminating Africa's Path to Clean Energy

When the story of Africa's energy transition is written, Serengeti Energy will undoubtedly occupy a leading chapter. Based in Nairobi, Kenya, this independent power producer is not just developing renewable energy infrastructure, it is setting new standards in how clean energy aligns with people, nature and equitable development.

### Local Solutions, Continental Impact

Serengeti Energy has established itself as a powerhouse in designing and operating small to medium-sized renewable energy projects, particularly in underserved sub-Saharan regions. From hydro plants in Uganda and Rwanda to solar arrays in Malawi and Sierra Leone, the company's footprint spans across eight countries and counting.



*Anton Milner  
CEO, Serengeti Energy*

# Energy

What makes Serengeti's model distinct is its blend of technical sophistication and local adaptability. Each project is customized not just to maximize megawatts but to support the communities around it. At the Nyamwamba II Hydropower Plant in western Uganda, for example, the company collaborated with local authorities to install flood mitigation infrastructure and community-owned water distribution systems alongside energy generation.

## Community First, Always

Serengeti's ESG framework is woven into every phase of its operations, from early feasibility studies to long-term asset management. The company conducts comprehensive Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs), ensuring the protection of sensitive ecosystems and culturally significant sites. In Sierra Leone, the Pujehun Solar Plant was constructed with input from local tribal councils, who also partnered in reforestation efforts to offset land use impacts. Serengeti also runs educational programs on renewable energy in schools near its operations, supports vocational training for local youth and promotes gender inclusion by hiring women engineers and managers wherever possible.

## Green Financing & Future-Proof Governance

The company's sustainability goals are backed by a strong financial architecture. Supported by investors such as KfW, Norfund and the European Investment Bank, Serengeti Energy adheres to rigorous ESG reporting standards and regularly publishes impact reports validated by third-party auditors.

Governance at Serengeti goes beyond compliance. The company operates with full board-level oversight on ESG matters and integrates sustainability metrics into key performance indicators (KPIs) for executive leadership. This model has attracted impact-driven capital and international accolades, including recognition by the African Development Bank as a top-tier renewable energy innovator.

*In building Africa's energy future, we're not copying models—we're creating new ones that make sustainability a shared reality.*

**Anton Milner**  
CEO, Serengeti Energy

## Looking Ahead

With several new projects in development, including mini-grids and battery-integrated solar farms in East and West Africa, Serengeti is

proving that Africa's future can be clean, inclusive and economically sound. The company is also exploring partnerships with agricultural cooperatives and tech startups to electrify cold chains, irrigation systems and digital services across rural landscapes.

Serengeti Energy is more than a power company. It is a vision of what African ESG excellence looks like: localized, inclusive and resilient.

# Olam International

(Nigeria & Côte d'Ivoire): Building Traceable and Ethical Value Chains from the Ground Up



**Sunny Verghese**  
Co-Founder & CEO, Olam

When you think of cocoa or cashew nuts, chances are the journey of those commodities began in Africa, specifically in places like Nigeria or Côte d'Ivoire. But until recently, the story of these crops was mostly one of exploitation, environmental degradation and invisible farmers. Olam International, one of the world's largest agribusinesses, is rewriting that narrative with a strong ESG-centric model tailored to Africa's agricultural heartlands.

## Sustainability as Strategy

For Olam, ESG is not a side activity, but it is the company's operating system. Their flagship initiatives in Côte d'Ivoire and Nigeria are helping to build the most traceable and sustainable cocoa and cashew value chains in the world. Through the Olam Farmer Information System (OFIS), they've digitized over 800,000 smallholder farmers, offering real-time farm data, tailored agronomic support and a clear window into where, how and by whom crops are grown.

## Environmental Commitments That Dig Deep

In Côte d'Ivoire, the company has been a central partner in the Cocoa & Forests Initiative, a multi-stakeholder commitment to end deforestation and restore degraded forests. With satellite monitoring, GPS farm mapping and deforestation risk scoring, Olam has excluded over 70,000 hectares of high-risk forest from its sourcing zones and actively participates in reforestation efforts alongside local communities.

In Nigeria, Olam has embarked on climate-smart cashew cultivation as well as training farmers on agroforestry techniques that sequester carbon while improving yields. Their climate adaptation toolkit includes drought-resistant seedlings, mulching practices and the use of biochar to restore soil fertility in Sahel-adjacent zones.

## Social Equity from Seed to Shelf

Beyond the environment, Olam is redefining social sustainability. Women in cocoa-growing communities often lack economic agency. Olam's SheFarms initiative empowers over 50,000 women with access to micro-financing, agricultural training and cooperative marketing platforms. Farmer Field Schools are co-designed with local leaders, ensuring that cultural contexts inform curriculum and delivery.

Meanwhile, child labour remediation remains a top priority. Olam's Child Labour Monitoring and

Remediation System (CLMRS) employs social workers and school liaison officers to identify and reintegrate at-risk children into education, while supporting families with income alternatives.

## Governance with Teeth

What distinguishes Olam in the ESG arena is its robust internal governance framework.

The company maintains a Sustainability Advisory Council, comprised of local and international experts, which reviews all major sourcing and community engagement strategies. This is supplemented by third-party audits, regular transparency reports and partnerships with organizations like Rainforest Alliance and Fairtrade International.

In 2024, Olam launched its Sustainable Cashew Charter, a governance framework that sets industry-wide benchmarks for traceability, labor rights and ecological responsibility across West Africa's cashew belt.

## The Future is Rooted Locally

Olam is now moving toward regenerative agriculture, carbon financing pilots and blockchain-backed traceability for ethical sourcing. Its evolving ESG model is becoming a blueprint for other agri-giants and a beacon of hope for sustainable agriculture on the continent.

*Olam remains committed to best practice in forest conservation, sustainable agricultural development, poverty reduction and job creation. We want to leave the world a better place than we found it.*

**Sunny Verghese**  
Co-Founder & CEO, Olam

### Impact Snapshot: Olam in West Africa

- 800,000+ farmers digitized via OFIS platform
- 70,000 hectares of forest protected or rehabilitated
- 50,000+ women supported through SheFarms

- 95% of cocoa supply chain traceable to farm level
- 30% increase in farmer incomes within 3 years of ESG program participation



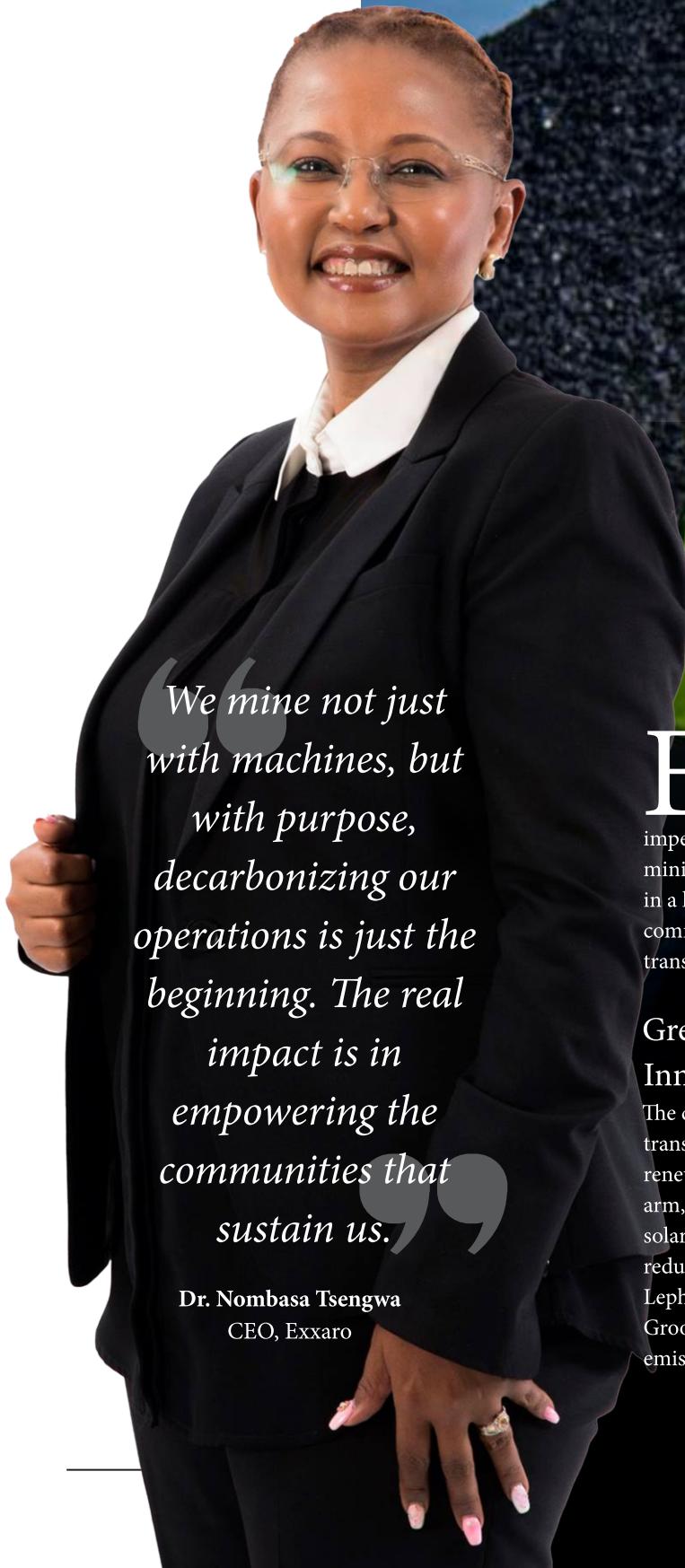
# Re-imagining Global Agriculture



# POSSIBILITY IS ALL AROUND US

exxaro

POWERING POSSIBILITY



*We mine not just with machines, but with purpose, decarbonizing our operations is just the beginning. The real impact is in empowering the communities that sustain us.*

**Dr. Nombasa Tsengwa**  
CEO, Exxaro



Exxaro Resources is reimagining the mining industry in South Africa, aligning extractive operations with environmental and social imperatives. As one of the continent's foremost mining companies, Exxaro's ESG journey is rooted in a holistic commitment to decarbonization, community upliftment and operational transparency.

### Green Mining through Solar Innovation

The centerpiece of Exxaro's environmental transformation is its landmark investment in renewable energy. Through its renewable energy arm, Cennergi, Exxaro has deployed utilityscale solar farms to power mining operations, significantly reducing reliance on coal-fired electricity. The Lephalale Solar Project, supplying power to the Grootegeeluk coal mine is projected to reduce carbon emissions by over 35% annually.

# Exxaro Resources

## (South Africa): Digging Deeper with Responsibility

In collaboration with Eskom and the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, Exxaro's energy transition strategy includes grid feed-ins and microgrid developments for local communities, expanding access to clean energy beyond the mine gates.

### Emissions Accountability and Circular Practice

Exxaro's internal carbon pricing mechanism, established in 2023, has incentivized operational shifts towards low-emission machinery, closed-loop water systems and waste valorization. In its 2024 ESG Report, the company reported a 27% drop in Scope 1 and 2 emissions, with a 40% target set for 2030. Their integrated water resource management framework is minimizing water withdrawal in drought-prone Limpopo, reusing more than 60% of process water.

Meanwhile, mine tailings are being transformed into construction aggregates and nonhazardous waste is directed to cement production facilities under their industrial symbiosis program.

#### Impact Snapshot: Exxaro Resources

- 35% annual carbon emission reduction at solar-powered operations

### Social Capital and Economic Inclusion

On the social front, Exxaro champions inclusive local procurement and enterprise development. Its Mpowers employee ownership scheme benefits over 8,000 workers, while SMMEs in the surrounding communities have received R1.2 billion in contracts and skills development grants.

The company's gender-responsive workplace policies and youth STEM bursary programs have attracted international accolades.

#### Governance with Substance, Not Symbolism

Exxaro's governance reforms include ESG-linked executive compensation, third-party sustainability audits and open data dashboards for community feedback. The board of directors is 46% female and 75% of executive leadership is Black South African, a rarity in the mining sector.

As the world pivots to green minerals and responsible supply chains, Exxaro Resources proves that Africa can mine its future with integrity, innovation, and inclusiveness.

- **R1.2 billion** reinvested in community businesses
- **60%+** of operational water reused onsite
- **46%** female representation at board level



# Dangote Group

## [Pan-African] Cementing a Greener Legacy in African Industry

Few companies on the African continent rival the industrial scale and regional impact of the Dangote Group. Founded by Aliko Dangote, Africa's richest man, the Nigerian conglomerate is a towering presence in sectors ranging from cement and sugar to oil refining and agriculture. Yet, beyond its economic footprint, the Dangote Group is making strides in aligning with global Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) standards, especially through its flagship entity, Dangote Cement.

### Green Cement for a Changing Climate

Cement manufacturing is one of the most carbon-intensive industries globally. Aware of its environmental

responsibilities, Dangote Cement has implemented sweeping reforms to reduce its carbon footprint. The company's "Green Cement" initiative is anchored in a bold commitment: reduce Scope 1 carbon emissions intensity by 22% by 2030, in line with the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

To meet this target, Dangote Cement is replacing fossil fuels with alternative fuels such as rice husks, sawdust, and municipal solid waste in several of its plants across Nigeria and other African countries. The Obajana and Ibese plants have made significant transitions to lowemission clinker production technologies, which dramatically cut down on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.



Additionally, Dangote has invested in Waste Heat Recovery (WHR) systems at multiple plants, capturing and converting excess heat into electrical energy. These systems not only improve energy efficiency but also reduce the company's reliance on the grid, particularly in powerdeficient regions.

## Water and Resource Stewardship

Water scarcity is a pressing issue in many African communities. Recognizing this, the Dangote Group has prioritized water stewardship across its operations. The cement plants now include systems that treat and recycle water, reducing both consumption and pollution. Rainwater harvesting systems are also being deployed to supplement freshwater use, especially in arid regions like Northern Nigeria.

In parallel, the company has adopted a circular economy approach by recycling production byproducts and encouraging the use of eco-friendly packaging materials in its consumer-facing divisions like Dangote Sugar and Dangote Flour.

## Social Investments that Build Futures

Dangote's ESG excellence is not confined to environmental metrics. Social responsibility is a core pillar of its operations. Through the Aliko Dangote Foundation, the Group has contributed millions of dollars to health, education, and disaster relief efforts across Africa.

In 2023 alone, the Foundation partnered with GAVI and the Nigerian government to provide free vaccines to over five million children. Its mobile health outreach programs are making significant inroads in rural areas, with thousands receiving maternal and neonatal care.

On the education front, Dangote Cement has established scholarship schemes for students in host communities, while its vocational training centers equip youth with skills in trades ranging from masonry to electrical installation. These programs are tailored to promote economic inclusion and reduce youth unemployment.



**Aliko Dangote**

Founder, Chairman & CEO – Dangote Group

## Governance That Embeds Sustainability

Corporate governance at Dangote is undergoing a transformation aimed at institutionalizing ESG as a driver of long-term value. The Group has developed an internal ESG scorecard used by board members and executives to monitor progress across key sustainability indicators.

Annual sustainability reports published by the company align with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Nigerian Stock Exchange's sustainability disclosure requirements. The company also adheres to anti-corruption protocols, with regular ethics training and compliance audits for staff and suppliers.

*To grow sustainably  
is to grow  
responsibly and that  
means leaving no  
community, no  
environment, and  
no future behind.*

*Aliko Dangote*  
Founder, Chairman & CEO –  
Dangote Group

## Building Africa's Green Industrial Era

What sets Dangote apart is its ambition to model sustainability at scale within an industry often considered irredeemably polluting. By embedding climate responsibility, social development, and strong governance into its business DNA, Dangote Group is proving that industrial giants can be environmental stewards.

As Africa eyes a just energy transition and green industrial revolution, Dangote is poised to be a continental leader. Its cement may be the foundation of Africa's cities, but its ESG evolution could be the cornerstone of Africa's sustainable future.

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Estienne de Klerk - CEO, Growthpoint Properties

# Growthpoint Properties

## (South Africa): Building Africa's Greener Skylines

In the heart of South Africa's bustling commercial and urban real estate landscape, Growthpoint Properties has emerged not just as a real estate investment trust (REIT), but as a sustainability pioneer redefining what green infrastructure looks like on the African continent. As one of Africa's largest REITs, Growthpoint has positioned sustainability as a cornerstone of its business model, with far-reaching environmental, social and governance (ESG) commitments that extend well beyond bricks and mortar.

### Leading the Green Building Revolution

Growthpoint owns and manages a portfolio that spans commercial offices, retail centers and industrial facilities, many of which are certified under the Green Building Council of South Africa's Green Star rating system. With over 123 certified green buildings, Growthpoint has set the pace for sustainable real estate development and management in Africa.



Key initiatives include:

- Implementing state-of-the-art energy efficiency retrofits such as LED lighting, smart HVAC systems, and advanced building management systems.
- Installing rooftop solar photovoltaic (PV) systems across numerous commercial sites, reducing reliance on carbon-intensive grid electricity.
- Utilizing water harvesting and greywater recycling technologies in high-traffic facilities.
- Conducting lifecycle assessments to measure embodied carbon in construction materials and introducing low-carbon alternatives.

In 2022 alone, Growthpoint's green buildings saved over 50 million liters of water and reduced greenhouse gas emissions by over 30,000 tonnes, a significant contribution in a country grappling with both water

scarcity and energy insecurity.

In 2024, Growthpoint's commitment to green building excellence was recognized with four prestigious awards from the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA). These accolades included:

- Best Quality Submission – Existing Building Performance for Woodmead Estate (4-Star certification).
- Highest Rated Building (Existing Building Performance) for Serra Services, Meadowbrook Estate (6-Star certification).
- Best Quality Submission – Asset Rating Design and Highest-Rated Building, Asset Rating Design for the Anglo American fit-out at 144 Oxford (6-Star Interiors certification).

These awards underscore Growthpoint's dedication to creating sustainable, environmentally responsible properties that benefit stakeholders, tenants and communities.

## Empowering Communities through Property

Growthpoint's social strategy is centered on inclusive economic participation and community upliftment. Through its corporate social investment (CSI) program, Growthpoint supports educational infrastructure upgrades, school nutrition programs and entrepreneurial training hubs near its developments.

One flagship initiative is the Property Point enterprise and supplier development program. Since its inception, Property Point has incubated over 250 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), many of them Black-owned, facilitating over R1.5 billion in procurement opportunities and supporting more than 3,000 jobs.

The company also partners with local governments to support urban regeneration projects, especially in underdeveloped city districts, by upgrading public spaces, installing green landscaping and creating safer walkways.

## Governance for Transparency and Longevity

At the core of Growthpoint's operations is a commitment to ethical governance. ESG goals are embedded in executive performance contracts and the company adheres to integrated reporting standards aligned with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and the Task Force

on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

A dedicated sustainability committee reports directly to the board, overseeing metrics related to energy consumption, emissions, tenant satisfaction and social impact. The company publishes an annual ESG report with third-party auditing, providing stakeholders with transparent access to performance data.

Additionally, Growthpoint has actively engaged with the Johannesburg Stock Exchange's sustainability disclosures and has earned inclusion in several sustainability-focused indices.

*Sustainability isn't a trend, it's a responsibility. Every square meter we build or retrofit must reflect our commitment to the planet and the people who inhabit it.*

**Estienne de Klerk**  
CEO, Growthpoint Properties

## Shaping the Future of African Urbanization

Looking forward, Growthpoint is expanding its ESG footprint by investing in sustainable housing projects, green logistics hubs and mixed-use eco-districts. The company is also piloting innovations such as green bonds to finance its climate-friendly infrastructure pipeline.

In partnership with academic institutions and green technology startups, Growthpoint is investing in data-driven building technologies, such as AI-enabled maintenance systems and digital twin models to simulate performance and optimize resource use.

By creating a blueprint for sustainable real estate in Africa, Growthpoint Properties is proving that profitability and environmental stewardship can coexist and even thrive together. Their model not only minimizes ecological harm but also delivers resilient, future-ready urban environments that benefit communities, investors and the planet.



Allan Kilavuka - CEO, Kenya Airways

# Kenya Airways

## [Kenya]: Charting a Sustainable Flight Path for Africa

As Africa's aviation landscape evolves, Kenya Airways (KQ) stands at the forefront, pioneering sustainable practices that resonate beyond the skies. The airline's 2024 ESG initiatives underscore a commitment to environmental stewardship, operational efficiency and community engagement, setting a benchmark for the continent's aviation industry.

### Environmental Stewardship: Towards Net-Zero Emissions

Kenya Airways has pledged to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, aligning with the International Air Transport Association's (IATA) global commitment. This ambitious goal is supported by several key initiatives:

- **Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF):**

KQ became the first African airline to pilot a long-haul commercial flight using SAF, partnering with Eni Sustainable Mobility and local firm Flamex Petroleum Ltd. This initiative not only reduces carbon emissions but also sets a precedent for SAF adoption across Africa.

- Pyro-Diesel Plant:** In 2024, KQ launched a pyro-diesel plant capable of producing 700 to 1,000 liters of diesel daily from waste materials. This innovation reduces reliance on traditional fossil fuels and lowers the airline's ground operations' carbon footprint.
- Renewable Energy Utilization:** Approximately 90% of the electricity at KQ's hub, Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA), is sourced from renewable energy, showcasing the airline's commitment to clean energy adoption.

## Operational Efficiency: Project Kifaru

Under the strategic recovery plan, Project Kifaru, Kenya Airways has implemented measures to enhance operational efficiency and sustainability:

- Msaferi House Transformation:** KQ converted its Msaferi House property into a centralized Operations Control Centre (OCC), streamlining flight crew coordination, inflight management, and fleet operations. This consolidation has improved team collaboration and reduced operational costs.
- Water Bottling Plant Expansion:** The airline expanded its water bottling facility to produce approximately 4,500 liters daily, reducing dependence on external suppliers and lowering procurement costs. This initiative also opens avenues for additional revenue through potential water sales.

## Community Engagement and Social Responsibility

Kenya Airways recognizes the importance of uplifting

communities and fostering inclusive growth:

- SAF Production and Employment:** KQ's partnership to establish Kenya's first SAF production plant is set to create jobs in Kwale County and boost the nation's tree cover by cultivating energy seed plants on degraded lands.
- Sustainability Champions Program:** This initiative fosters cross-departmental collaboration within the airline, promoting a culture of sustainability and environmental consciousness among employees.

## Recognition and Awards

Kenya Airways' sustainability efforts have garnered international acclaim:

- SkyTeam Aviation Challenge 2024:** KQ received awards for Best Scaled Catering Solution and Best Approach to Scaling Sustainable Aviation Fuel. The airline's innovative efforts, such as introducing traditional African bread baskets and aluminum food containers, are projected to eliminate 24 tonnes of plastic waste annually.
- Operational Excellence:** In 2023, KQ was ranked the second most efficient airline in Africa, achieving a 71.86% on-time arrival rate from 41,905 flights.

*By embracing sustainable aviation fuel, reducing single-use plastics, and fostering collaboration across teams, we are driving meaningful change for the aviation industry and our planet.*

**Allan Kilavuka**  
CEO, Kenya Airways

Kenya Airways' 2024 ESG initiatives reflect a holistic approach to sustainability, intertwining environmental responsibility, operational efficiency, and

community development. As the airline continues to soar, it sets a precedent for sustainable aviation in Africa, embodying a commitment to a greener and more inclusive future.

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# The Greenwashing Game: Unmasking Eco-Deception in Ghana's Mining Sector

By Ernest Kwame Owusu Addo

In the golden hills of Ghana's Western Region, banners flutter with slogans like "Greener Mines, Brighter Futures" and "Sustainable Gold for a Sustainable World." Mining giants claim to be leading the environmental charge, highlighting their tree-planting ceremonies and community water projects in glossy brochures. But on the ground, a different story unfolds, one of polluted rivers, displaced communities and ecosystems on the brink.

Greenwashing is when companies falsely portray themselves as environmentally friendly, has become a sophisticated public relations strategy in Ghana's mining industry. As global pressure mounts for industries to show Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) compliance, some firms are spending more on crafting their green image than on actual sustainability.

## The Illusion of Sustainability

Ghana's mining sector, particularly gold mining, plays a crucial economic role, contributing nearly 48% of the country's export revenue. But the sector's environmental track record has long been blemished by land degradation, deforestation and toxic runoff. Today, many mining firms are adopting the ESG language, but often without changing their core practices.

"Mining companies have mastered the art of narrative control," says Ama Serwaa, a local environmental activist in Tarkwa. "They'll invite the media to a tree-planting day and ignore the thousands of trees they cleared for excavation."

One major gold mining company in Obuasi, for instance, reported 'net-positive biodiversity' in its 2023 ESG report, citing a forest restoration program. However, satellite images reveal ongoing deforestation within its concession area. Meanwhile, downstream communities report increased water turbidity and loss of fish populations.

## Smoke and Mirrors: PR vs. Practice

Greenwashing in Ghana's mining sector often takes several forms:

- **Tokenistic Environmental Projects:** One-off events such as tree plantings or community cleanups are promoted as long-term commitments.
- **Selective Transparency:** Companies publish impact assessments that highlight minor improvements while omitting serious violations.
- **Third-party ESG Badges:** Some miners secure unverifiable or loosely regulated ESG certifications from overseas organizations.



In 2024, the Ghana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) cited multiple firms for exceeding tailings discharge limits, even as those same firms touted “zero-discharge technology” in their promotional materials.

“We don’t need brochures; we need accountability,” says Kwabena Asare, a hydrologist in the Ashanti Region. “Every rainy season, we sample heavy metal concentrations in rivers like the Birim and Ankobra, and the results are alarming.”

## Who Holds Them Accountable?

Ghana’s regulatory landscape is improving, but enforcement remains inconsistent. The Minerals Commission and EPA often face resource and capacity challenges, and community watchdogs are limited by lack of access to independent environmental data.

International investors and ESG-conscious stakeholders could play a role in demanding transparency. However, many are satisfied with surface-level ESG metrics and unchecked reports.

“There is a risk that Ghana becomes a testing ground for ESG theater,” warns Dr. Yaw Agyeman Boafo, a Research Fellow at the Centre for Climate Change and

Sustainability Studies, University of Ghana. “Real sustainability requires community consent, environmental justice and measurable ecological outcomes,” Dr. Boafo added.

## Toward Responsible Mining

Amid the greenwashing, a few companies are striving for genuine change. A mid-sized firm in the Upper East Region has piloted a solar-powered gold extraction system and conducts quarterly community audits. Local leaders co-design environmental mitigation strategies, an approach that activists say should be standard.

To combat greenwashing, experts recommend:

- Public access to real-time environmental monitoring data.
- Independent ESG audits involving local civil society.
- A national ESG rating framework with consequences for non-compliance.
- Increased media literacy to challenge corporate narratives.

Ghana sits at the crossroads, it can either allow mining greenwashing to erode trust and environmental integrity or take bold steps toward a genuinely sustainable extractive sector. For now, the burden of truth lies buried beneath layers of gold dust and green-painted PR.

# The Guardians of the Congo Basin: Indigenous Forest Protectors Take the Lead

By Maria Awanto Ncha - Bafoussam, Cameroon

Deep in the heart of Central Africa, the Congo Basin spans six nations and shelters the secondlargest tropical rainforest on Earth. It is home to thousands of plant and animal species, many of them found nowhere else on the planet. Yet, what truly defines this lush expanse is not just its rich biodiversity, but the people who have lived in harmony with it for millennia. Now, as deforestation and climate threats loom larger than ever, these Indigenous communities are taking center stage as protectors of this vital ecosystem.

For the BaAka, Baka, Twa, and other forest peoples, the forest is more than a resource—it is a relative. “We don’t just live in the forest,” says Jeanne Mbali, a BaAka elder from northern Republic of Congo. “The forest lives in us.”

## Forest Knowledge as a Conservation



## Strategy

In the past decade, Indigenous-led conservation has moved from the margins to the mainstream. Across the

Congo Basin—from Cameroon to the Democratic Republic of Congo— Indigenous communities are now collaborating with researchers, governments, and NGOs to defend their ancestral territories.

Their most powerful tools? Centuries-old ecological knowledge and an intimate relationship with the land. Traditional fire management, sustainable hunting practices, and non-invasive harvesting of forest products

Recent studies by the Rainforest Foundation UK show that forests under Indigenous stewardship in the Congo Basin experience significantly lower deforestation rates than areas under state control. “Indigenous territories are the last strongholds of forest integrity,” notes Dr. Claudine Ayong, an ethnobotanist working in the region. “Their knowledge systems are not just valuable, they are irreplaceable.”

### Blending Ancestral Wisdom with Modern Tools

While oral histories and traditional rites remain foundational, Indigenous Forest guardians are increasingly using satellite mapping, drones, and GPS tools to document illegal logging and monitor biodiversity.

In Gabon, the Indigenous Bantu and Babongo communities have partnered with the Gabonese National Parks Agency to train youth as ‘eco-trackers.’ These youth patrol forests, collect geospatial data, and alert authorities to incursions. “Technology gives us a new way to tell our forest’s story,” says tracker Marius Nkani.

“We combine it with our



are just some of the ways these communities maintain biodiversity.

old ways to protect what is ours.”



Organizations like the Indigenous Peoples of Africa Coordinating Committee (IPACC) and CEFACIDCameroon are pushing for legal reforms, while grassroots networks like OKANI are documenting violations and advocating for reparative justice.

### Hope Rooted in the Forest

What is perhaps most inspiring is the resilience and vision Indigenous communities bring to the biodiversity crisis. In the Sankuru Reserve of DRC, a women-led initiative has restored 500 hectares of forest by reviving

sacred groves and reintroducing medicinal plant species.

In the Central African Republic, storytelling festivals are being held in forest clearings to transmit conservation ethics to the next generation. “If we lose our stories, we lose our way,” says storyteller Bienvenu Mbokou. “But with each song, each tale, the forest breathes again.”

As global leaders debate climate targets and biodiversity loss, the Congo Basin’s guardians remind us that solutions already exist, rooted in respect, reciprocity, and relationship.



#### Congo Basin at a Glance

- Size: Over 3.7 million square kilometers
- Countries: Cameroon, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon
- Species: Over 10,000 species of tropical plants; 400+ mammals; 1,000+ birds
- Indigenous Peoples: Estimated 1 million

**Call to Action:** Support initiatives led by Indigenous communities through verified organizations like Rainforest Foundation UK, IPACC, and the Congo Basin Forest Partnership.

The forest does not need saving. It needs its protectors to be empowered.

The Congo Basin Indigenous Peoples Platform, formed in 2019, acts as a unified voice pushing for land rights, cultural preservation, and environmental justice. Through partnerships with global initiatives like the UN-REDD+ programme and Forest Peoples Programme, Indigenous leaders are now shaping national conservation policies.

#### Obstacles and Unfinished Business

Despite progress, major challenges persist. Many Indigenous communities still lack formal recognition of their land rights. Logging concessions, mining operations, and agri-business projects continue to threaten territories without proper consent. Cultural erasure, displacement, and environmental racism remain potent threats.

“We need more than celebration,” says activist and legal advocate Élodie Tamba from Cameroon. “We need protection. We need power.”



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# From Droughts to Data:

## How Sahelian Farmers Are Using AI to Predict Rainfall

By Abdoulaye O. Diallo - Bamako, Mali

In the windswept stretches of Mali and Niger, where the Sahel's edge teeters between desert and farmland, climate unpredictability has long governed the fates of millions. Traditional knowledge passed through generations once guided planting seasons, migration patterns, and harvests. But today, as climate change accelerates, even the most seasoned farmers are outwitted by erratic weather.

"The rains used to come in June," says Hamadou Traoré, a millet farmer in the Koulikoro region of Mali. "Now, they come late. Or too heavy. Or not at all. Our calendars are broken."

However, a new wave of digital innovation is beginning to restore clarity, not through ancestral stars or animal behavior, but through artificial intelligence (AI). Across several rural pilot programs, farmers like Traoré are receiving hyper-local climate forecasts and planting recommendations via mobile phones. These insights are generated by AI models trained on years of satellite data, rainfall patterns, soil moisture, and temperature variations. The technology is giving birth to a new form of climate resilience in Africa's most vulnerable agricultural zones.

### AI on the Frontlines of Climate Shock

One of the pioneering initiatives, the "Sahel Weather Smart" project, is a collaboration between the African Institute for Mathematical Sciences (AIMS), Mali Meteorological Agency, and Microsoft AI for Earth. It uses deep learning models to predict rainfall windows with unprecedented accuracy.

"We are building AI systems that don't just forecast general weather," says Dr. Fatou Binta Diallo, a data scientist at AIMS. "They are tailored to the village level — providing specific planting timelines, irrigation tips, and warnings about heatwaves or dry spells."

These tools are designed with linguistic accessibility in mind. Farmers receive messages in Bambara, Hausa, or Fulfulde, using voice or simple text prompts for areas with low literacy rates. For Traoré, the system sent a voice message alert two weeks before an anticipated rain delay, helping him delay sowing just long enough to avoid crop loss.

### Bridging Technology and Tradition

"AI alone is not the answer," notes Dr. Diallo. "We work with local agricultural extension officers and community elders to contextualize the data."





This hybrid model of tech and tradition is what makes these tools effective. Agricultural cooperatives and local climate stewards are involved in feedback loops that improve the models. The technology learns not only from data, but also from lived experience. For example, farmer-reported yield outcomes feed back into the algorithms, creating a responsive, adaptive system.

In Niger, the NGO "FarmSmart Niger" has integrated AI forecasts with traditional farming calendars to restore confidence among elder farmers. "This is not about replacing wisdom," says program coordinator Ibrahim Zakari. "It's about enhancing it."

## Challenges in the Field

Despite these advances, the path is not without obstacles. Many remote regions still lack reliable internet or phone access. Devices are often shared within communities, and the cost of mobile data, even when subsidized, can be burdensome.

Then there is trust. Initial skepticism around "machines telling us when to plant" has been mitigated through storytelling and demonstration plots. In Mali's Sikasso region, a comparative trial showed a 40% increase in

yields when AI-informed practices were applied.

"Once they saw that the advice worked," says Traoré, "even the oldest among us began to listen."

## Scaling Up Climate Intelligence

With climate models predicting a 20% drop in Sahelian crop yields by 2050 without adaptation, scalable AI systems could become lifelines. African agritech startups like Aerobotics and Farmerline HQ are already expanding their platforms across the continent.

But experts warn that for AI to succeed in Africa's agricultural future, it must remain anchored in equity, accessibility, and cultural respect. Funding must prioritize open-access platforms, community ownership, and capacity-building.

"The future of African farming is not just digital," says Dr. Diallo. "It is dignified, data-informed, and deeply human."

As the Sahel braces for more climatic turbulence, the fusion of ancestral knowledge with algorithmic precision may yet preserve not just harvests, but heritage.

*"The future of African farming is not just digital. It is dignified, data-informed, and deeply human."*

*Dr. Diallo*

# Africa's Carbon Markets Boom:

## Can Kenya and Gabon Lead a Just Transition?

By Adam Akinyi - Nairobi, Kenya



Carbon markets have emerged as one of the most contested battlegrounds in global climate discourse. As countries and corporations scramble to offset emissions and meet net-zero targets, Africa's vast landscapes, rich in forests, mangroves, and regenerative ecosystems, are increasingly viewed as fertile ground for carbon credit schemes. Among the front-runners in this carbon rush are Kenya and Gabon, two nations positioning themselves as continental pioneers in carbon trading. But as carbon credits become a multi-billion-dollar business, pressing questions arise: Who really benefits? And can this market lead to a just transition for Africa?

### Kenya's Carbon Opportunity

Kenya has seen a dramatic rise in voluntary carbon

markets, particularly through projects tied to reforestation, agroforestry, and improved cookstove programs. The country's groundbreaking *Climate Change (Amendment) Act of 2023* provides a legal framework for carbon trading, establishing the Kenya Carbon Market Registry and guidelines for community benefit-sharing.

In the Rift Valley, the Kasigau Corridor REDD+ project is one of Africa's largest forest carbon programs and has protected over 200,000 hectares of dryland forest and generated more than 5 million carbon credits. The project, run by Wildlife Works, has reinvested revenues into schools, water access, and women's empowerment.

Yet, critics warn of transparency gaps and community consultation issues.

## Gabon: Africa's Carbon Credit Powerhouse

In Central Africa, Gabon has taken a bold stance by integrating carbon markets into national economic strategy. With nearly 90% forest cover and some of the world's highest biodiversity density, Gabon has positioned itself as a net carbon absorber.

Through a landmark deal with the Central African Forest Initiative (CAFI), Gabon earned \$150 million in results-based payments for verified carbon sequestration between 2016 and 2021. President Ali Bongo Ondimba's administration launched the Gabonese Sovereign Carbon Fund in 2023 to manage and monetize future credits.

Gabon's carbon integrity model emphasizes rigorous measurement and verification, but civil society groups caution against a top-down approach. As local conservationists remain proud of the country's achievement in that regard, they caution that Indigenous and local communities are not to be left as stewards, but stakeholders.

## The Pitfalls of a Growing Market

Africa's carbon markets are not without risks. A report by the African Climate Foundation and Power Shift Africa highlights that many projects across the continent are developed by foreign firms with minimal local input. Contracts often lack transparency, and land tenure issues remain unresolved.

Moreover, carbon offsetting, while profitable, may offer moral license for polluters in the Global North to avoid direct emissions cuts. Most African climate watchers,

### Quick Facts

- Kenya's Kasigau Project: 200,000+ hectares protected, 340,000+ people impacted
- Gabon: 88% forest cover, first African country paid for verified forest carbon reductions
- Global Market Value: Voluntary carbon markets

including Dr. Mithika Mwenda of the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance warns that Africa must not become a carbon dump. He believes that, real climate justice means reducing emissions at the source, not just outsourcing them.

## Can Carbon Markets Be Fair?

To address these concerns, climate experts call for an Africa-led carbon governance framework. Key proposals include:

- Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) for all local communities involved.
- Transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms.
- Strengthening land rights and customary tenure.
- Building African-owned verification and trading platforms.

The African Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI), launched at COP27, seeks to address such gaps by scaling voluntary carbon markets with equitable principles. Kenya and Gabon are both active members.

## Toward a Just Transition

Done right, carbon markets could finance reforestation, support climate adaptation, and drive green jobs. Kenya's youth-led Greenbelt Movement 2.0 is already planting native trees across urban areas, funded partially by carbon credits. In Gabon, ecotourism programs tied to carbonpositive forests are emerging.

Ultimately, the question is not whether Africa will trade carbon, it already is. The question is whether it will do so on its own terms, ensuring that the communities safeguarding these carbon sinks are first in line for the benefits.

*projected to exceed \$50 billion by 2030*

**Call to Action:** Support African-led carbon projects that prioritize community consent, equity, and transparency. Learn more at [africacarbonmarkets.org](http://africacarbonmarkets.org) and follow the African Carbon Markets Initiative for updates.

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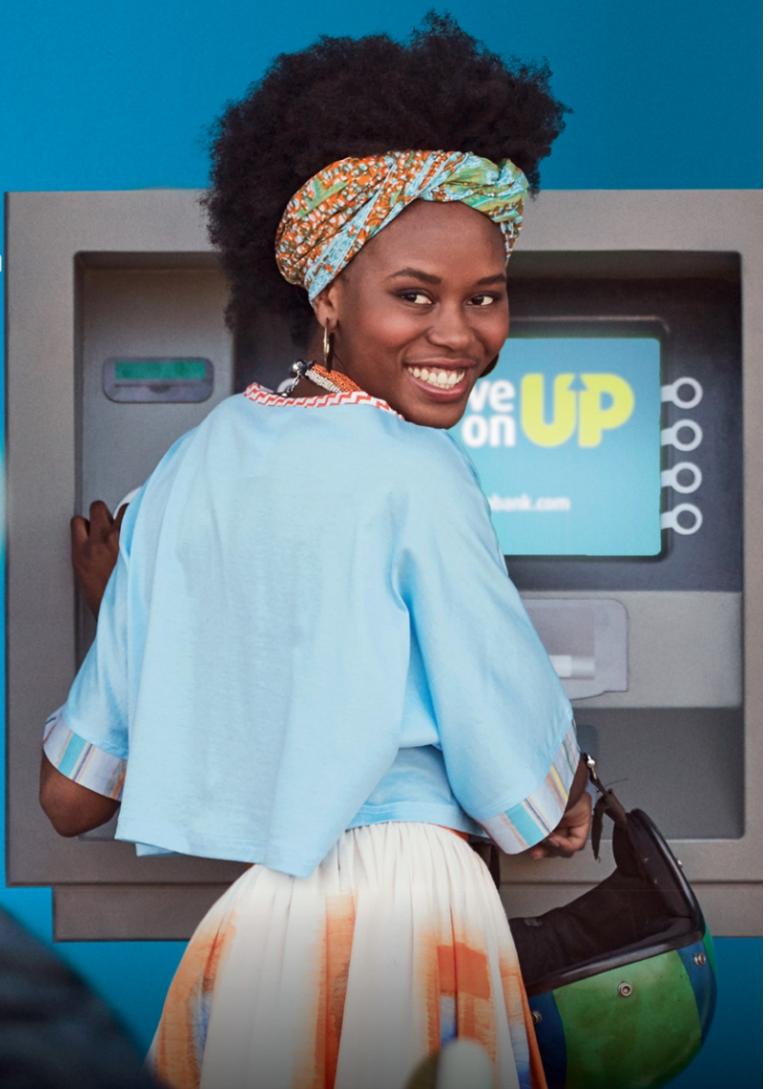
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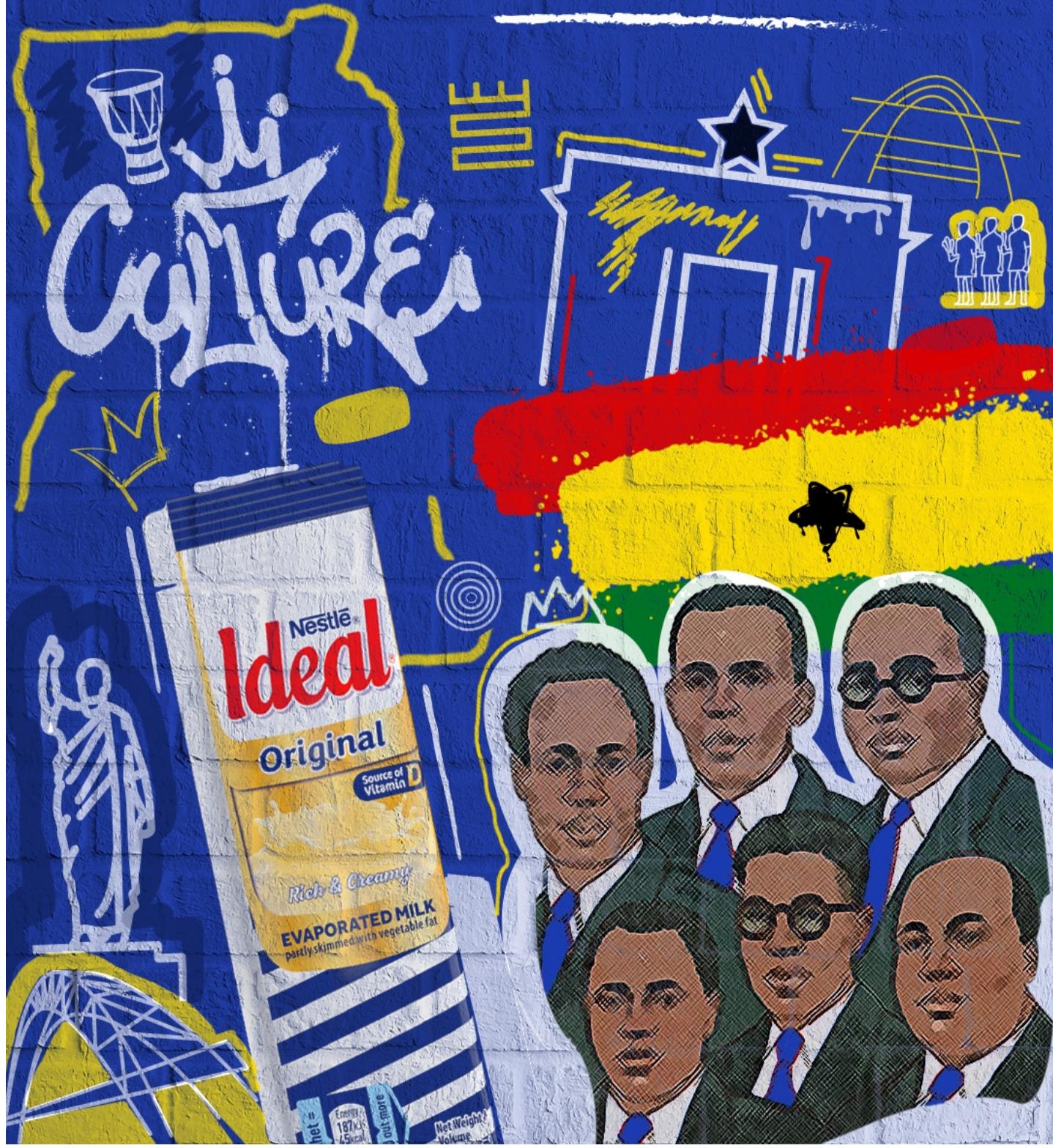
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# Climate Watch Roundup:

## Africa's Climate Frontlines March–April 2025

### Ghana's Keta Coastline Crumbles Amid Record Tidal Surges

In March 2025, tidal waves battered Ghana's Keta coastline for the third consecutive month, submerging homes and displacing over 3,000 residents. Experts from Ghana's Hydrological Services predict the erosion rate could double if no urgent coastal reinforcement is undertaken. Local fishing communities are calling for a reactivation of stalled sea defense projects.

### Cyclone Gamane Devastates Mozambique and Madagascar

Late March 2025 saw Cyclone Gamane, a Category 3 storm, slam into Mozambique's coastal city of Quelimane before sweeping through northern Madagascar. The storm left over 150,000 displaced, caused 82 reported deaths, and flattened key infrastructure. Relief efforts are ongoing, but humanitarian agencies warn of a looming health crisis due to contaminated water and stagnant floodwaters.

Kenya Suffers Deadliest Flash Floods in Over a Decade Torrential rains in April 2025 triggered devastating flash floods across Nairobi, Nakuru, and parts of the Rift Valley, leaving 426 people dead and over 12,000 homes destroyed. The Kenya Red Cross attributes the extent of the damage to outdated drainage systems and increased informal settlements in flood-prone zones. Climate experts cite La Niña intensification as a contributing factor.

### Ethiopia's Highland Farmers Abandon Failing Coffee Crops

In the Oromia and Sidama regions of Ethiopia, coffee farmers are witnessing one of the worst harvest seasons in 20 years. Rising night time temperatures and erratic rainfall patterns have stunted flowering cycles, prompting farmers to switch to climate-resilient crops like enset and macadamia. Ethiopia's Coffee and Tea Authority forecasts a 35% drop in national output for 2025.



## Namibia Reports First Green Hydrogen-Induced Environmental Displacement

While celebrated as a clean energy innovation, Namibia's ambitious green hydrogen projects have led to the first known instance of climate tech displacement. In March, over 200 pastoralist families in the Tsau Khaeb region were relocated to make way for hydrogen facilities. Civil society groups are demanding a just energy transition that includes transparent land negotiations and benefit-sharing.

## Malawi Declares State of Emergency Over Drought

On March 28, 2025, the President of Malawi declared a national emergency following a record drought affecting 18 districts. Maize production is expected to fall by 45%, and hydropower generation has plummeted, causing rolling blackouts. The government is seeking urgent international support for food relief and energy

stabilization.

## Algeria Experiences Unseasonal Rain Bomb in Sahara Edge Towns

In an unexpected twist, late March storms unleashed over 200 mm of rain in southern Algerian towns like Tamanrasset and Djézet, causing flash floods and mudslides. Scientists warn that increased moisture intrusion into desert interiors could signal a radical new climate reality for North Africa.

## Senegal Unveils Ambitious Climate Education Curriculum

Amid intensifying coastal threats and erratic rainfall, Senegal's Ministry of Education launched Africa's first national climate education curriculum in April 2025. The program will be taught in Wolof, French, and local languages across public schools. It integrates environmental science, indigenous resilience practices, and real-world adaptation projects for students.

# Green Tech &

## African startups disrupting waste, energy, and water.

By Zanele Khumalo

### BioAni: Turning Waste into Life in Côte d'Ivoire



In a quiet agricultural district just outside Abidjan, something remarkable is happening beneath the surface, millions of black soldier fly larvae are working overtime, helping to redefine the future of farming in West Africa. At the helm of this biological revolution is BioAni, a fast-growing Ivorian agritech startup transforming organic waste into premium, eco-friendly fertilizer.

Founded in 2021 by agronomist Yao Kouamé, BioAni was born from a simple but urgent insight. Côte d'Ivoire, like many African nations, struggles with two escalating problems, mounting organic waste and depleted agricultural soils.

The answer lay in nature. BioAni harnesses the black soldier fly (*Hermetia illucens*), an insect native to tropical regions to upcycle food scraps, market waste and

other organic materials into nutrient-rich compost and insect protein. The larvae are voracious eaters, capable of digesting waste that would otherwise rot in landfills or clog drainage systems. Within just 10 days, they can consume and convert up to five times their weight in refuse.

The result? Bio-rich compost that replenishes degraded soils, reduces reliance on chemical fertilizers and improves food production for local farmers. The larvae themselves are dried and processed into high-protein animal feed, creating a zero-waste circular economy that supports both plant and animal agriculture.

BioAni's facility currently processes over 10 tons of organic waste per month and services a growing network of urban markets and farms across southern Côte d'Ivoire. The startup has received acclaim from regional sustainability programs and recently secured seed funding from the African Development Foundation, positioning it for expansion into Senegal and Ghana.

Their work aligns closely with Côte d'Ivoire's national sustainability agenda, which seeks to reduce chemical input in agriculture and promote climate-smart farming practices. BioAni regularly conducts outreach with farmers, training them on regenerative soil practices and distributing compost samples to encourage adoption.

As BioAni continues to scale, its vision remains clear, empower farmers, protect the environment and let nature do what it does best, sustain life.

# Innovation



## Gjenge Makers: Paving the Way with Plastic Bricks in Kenya

In the heart of Nairobi's industrial area, amidst the hum of machinery and the clink of freshly pressed bricks, Nzambi Matee, a materials engineer and environmental activist, is leading a quiet but powerful revolution in sustainable construction. Her startup, Gjenge Makers, has become a symbol of African ingenuity, transforming plastic waste into strong, stylish and affordable building materials that are changing how Kenya builds its future.

Founded in 2018, Gjenge Makers began as a response to two urgent problems, Kenya's mounting plastic waste crisis and the country's pressing need for cost-effective housing solutions.

Today, the company produces over 1,500 paving bricks per day, recycling close to 500 kilograms of plastic daily. The bricks crafted from a mixture of plastic waste and

sand are five to seven times stronger than concrete, according to lab testing. They come in various vibrant colors and textures, making them ideal for footpaths, schoolyards, driveways and more.

But beyond engineering, the impact is deeply human. Gjenge Makers has created over 120 jobs, particularly for youth and women from marginalized communities. Local collectors earn a steady income supplying plastic waste, while technicians and machine operators are trained on-site, building both economic opportunity and technical capacity.

In 2021, Matee was honored with the UN Environment Programme's Young Champions of the Earth award, a global recognition of her work's potential to scale. Since then, the startup has drawn international partnerships, increased its processing capacity and is now exploring regional expansion in East Africa.

What makes Gjenge unique is not just the product, but its model. By integrating waste recovery, localized production and sustainable construction, it offers a replicable blueprint for green manufacturing in Africa.

As Africa races to meet the housing and climate challenges of the 21st century, solutions like Gjenge Makers remind us that innovation does not have to be imported, it can be handcrafted, pressed into shape and built from the ground up.



## Meier Energy: Empowering Africa's Solar Backbone from Morocco

At the heart of Morocco's green energy revolution, where the sun blazes across the arid plains and wind sweeps through mountain valleys, Meier Energy is quietly making a powerful impact by helping solar infrastructure become smarter, more efficient and truly sustainable.

Founded in 2020 by electrical engineer and clean-tech entrepreneur Salma El Hajjami, Meier Energy is a Moroccan startup that's addressing one of the most overlooked challenges in renewable energy, operational efficiency.

Meier Energy specializes in smart monitoring systems for photovoltaic (PV) power stations. Their proprietary technology uses IoT-enabled sensors and real-time analytics to track energy output, detect inefficiencies, and forecast maintenance needs, thereby, reducing energy losses by up to 15%. This technology is especially vital in North Africa, where dust, temperature fluctuations and poor grid integration can undermine the long-term success of solar farms.

Working with partners across Casablanca, Rabat and the Ouarzazate Solar Complex, the world's largest concentrated solar power plant, Meier Energy has rapidly gained a reputation for delivering precision solutions.

Their clients include commercial energy providers, agro-industrial sites and off-grid operators eager to lower costs and shrink their carbon footprints.

But Meier Energy is not just innovating for the grid, it is building local capacity, too. The startup runs a "Green Tech for Youth" fellowship, training Moroccan engineering students in solar diagnostics and IoT data analytics.

In 2024, Meier Energy secured a strategic partnership with a Belgian cleantech fund and launched a pilot expansion into Senegal and Tunisia markets and is increasingly investing in solar microgrids and energy-efficient infrastructure. The startup's long-term vision? To be the go-to energy optimization partner for African solar farms from Cairo to Cape Town.

As Morocco pushes toward its 52% renewable energy target by 2030, Meier Energy stands as a key player behind the scenes, fine-tuning the continent's solar backbone, one data point at a time.





## WeCyclers: Pedaling Toward a Cleaner Lagos

In the bustling metropolis of Lagos, Nigeria, where over 20 million residents generate mountains of waste each day, WeCyclers is rewriting the narrative on urban recycling. Powered by low-cost cargo bicycles and an innovative rewards system, this social enterprise is turning trash into opportunity, one household at a time.

Founded in 2012 by Bilikiss Adebiyi-Abiola, a former MIT SLOAN graduate with a passion for social innovation, WeCyclers began with a radical idea, use simple pedal-powered tricycles to collect recyclable materials from homes in low-income communities where municipal waste services are irregular or nonexistent.

More than 26,000 households are now registered in the WeCyclers network. The company has collected over 3,000 metric tons of recyclable waste to date and continues to scale operations with support from partners including Coca-Cola, Nestlé and Lagos State Government.

The service is hyper-local and deeply personal. Collectors, often recruited from the very communities they serve ride through narrow alleyways and bustling streets, forming lasting relationships with residents. For many of these collectors, WeCyclers offers dignified employment and a steady income in a city where job security is scarce.

Beyond the physical waste collection, WeCyclers is igniting a cultural shift. Their outreach campaigns, school programs and community events are educating the next generation of environmental stewards and positioning recycling not just as a chore, but as a civic duty.

In 2020, the company opened a new state-of-the-art materials recovery facility in Lagos to process waste at scale, boosting both efficiency and traceability. Their ambition is to expand beyond Lagos and create a model that other African megacities can adapt.

As Lagos grows, WeCyclers rides steadily ahead, proving that even the most complex urban problems can be addressed with simple, human-centered solutions that begin at the grassroots.

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## Africa House Rolls Out Pan-African \$50 Billion Sustainability Drive



In a bold move to anchor Africa's role in the global sustainability economy, **Africa House** announced a sweeping initiative dubbed “50 by 35” during the 2025 World Economic Forum in Davos. The plan targets \$50 billion in green investments by 2035, with a focus on unlocking capital for renewable energy, digital infrastructure, and entrepreneurship across the continent. Designed to attract institutional investors and de-risk capital through blended finance strategies, the initiative is set to position Africa as a magnet for ESG-aligned development funding.

## Will.i.am Champions Digital Equity and Human Capital at Africa House

**A**rtist and tech entrepreneur **Will.i.am** brought a powerful message to Davos during the **Africa House** sessions, arguing that the AI revolution must be grounded in ethical design, inclusive education and digital equity. Highlighting the risks of exclusion in the AI era, he urged investors and governments to channel resources into preparing Africa's youth for jobs of the future. His remarks resonated with delegates focused on bridging the skills gap in an AI-driven global economy.

## Burkina Faso Pioneers Carbon Market Standards with Verra Milestone

**B**urkina Faso has entered the record books with the registration of its **Tond Tenga carbon project**, the first in Africa under the new ICVCM-endorsed Verified Carbon Standard (VCS). Overseen by **Verra**, the project sets a benchmark for quality and transparency in carbon credit generation, potentially paving the way for a new era of high-integrity carbon trading in Africa. The move aligns with global efforts to standardize voluntary carbon markets and could significantly boost climate financing in the region.

## AfDB-Backed ESG Deals Win Top Awards in Senegal and Rwanda

**T**he African Development Bank (AfDB) continues to drive sustainable finance, supporting two landmark deals that were recognized at the **2025 Bonds, Loans & ESG Capital Markets Africa Awards**. Senegal's €500 million sustainable term loan and Rwanda's €200 million ESG facility were both lauded for their innovation and impact. These transactions, bolstered by AfDB credit guarantees, are emblematic of Africa's evolving ESG finance ecosystem and its capacity to leverage climate finance for national development.



## UN Global Compact Rallies African Business for SDG Action

**W**ith a renewed sense of urgency, the UN Global Compact Africa Hub hosted its inaugural SDG Activation Day on April 7, 2025. The event convened hundreds of African companies to translate sustainability goals into measurable business actions. Panels and workshops spotlighted living wages, gender parity and sustainable finance as core priorities and culminated in a series of public-private pledges aimed at accelerating progress on the continent's 2030 agenda.



## South Africa Puts Climate and Debt on Global Agenda as G20 Chair-Elect



Image: Eraldo Peres/AP/picture alliance

**A**s South Africa readies to take the helm of the G20, President Cyril Ramaphosa has made it clear that, climate finance and debt relief for developing nations will top the agenda. Speaking ahead of the transition, Ramaphosa emphasized the urgency of mobilizing capital for climate resilience and advocating for debt restructuring mechanisms to safeguard vulnerable economies. The strategic focus reflects South Africa's broader ambitions to amplify African voices in global economic reform.

# New renewable initiatives across the continent.

By Zanele Khumalo

## Ghana's Floating Solar Ambition: A Beacon of Renewable Innovation in West Africa

In a groundbreaking stride towards sustainable energy, Ghana has unveiled West Africa's largest floating solar power plant, a 5-megawatt (MW)

underscores Ghana's commitment to diversifying its energy mix and reducing its carbon footprint.

### Harnessing the Power of Water and Sun

The floating solar photovoltaic (PV) system, situated in the Bono Region, represents the first phase of a larger plan to scale up to 65 MW, with long-term aspirations of reaching 250 MW. By integrating solar panels on the surface of the reservoir, the project optimizes land use



installation on the Bui Reservoir. This initiative, spearheaded by the Bui Power Authority (BPA), not only marks a significant technological achievement but also

and reduces water evaporation, a dual benefit that enhances both energy production and water conservation.

"We have completed the 5-megawatt project, and it is already generating power," announced Peter Acheampong, Deputy Director of Renewable Energy at BPA, during the unveiling ceremony. He emphasized that the BPA's expansion efforts align with Ghana's Renewable Energy Master Plan, aiming for 10% renewable energy penetration by 2030.

## A Hybrid Approach to Energy Generation

This floating solar project is part of a hybrid energy system that integrates solar and hydroelectric resources to supply power to Ghana's national grid. By combining these two renewable sources, the system ensures a more stable and reliable energy supply, particularly during dry seasons when water levels typically drop.

The integration of solar energy into the existing hydroelectric infrastructure demonstrates a forward-thinking approach to energy generation, leveraging the strengths of multiple renewable sources to meet the country's growing electricity demand sustainably.

## Environmental and Economic Impacts

Beyond energy production, the floating solar project offers additional environmental advantages. The panels

create a shaded environment beneath them, fostering fish spawning and supporting aquatic ecosystems, a benefit that engineers have highlighted as an unexpected ecological bonus.

Economically, the project is expected to stimulate local job creation and drive regional development. The construction phase has already provided employment opportunities for local workers, and the ongoing operation and maintenance of the facility will continue to support the local economy.

## A Model for Renewable Energy in Africa

Ghana's floating solar initiative sets a precedent for renewable energy projects across the continent. By demonstrating the feasibility and benefits of integrating solar technology with existing hydroelectric infrastructure, the project serves as a model for other nations seeking innovative solutions to their energy challenges.

As Ghana continues to pursue its renewable energy goals, the success of the Bui floating solar project highlights the country's leadership in sustainable development and its commitment to a cleaner, greener future.

## Morocco's Dual Energy Strategy: Paving a Balanced Path to Sustainability

In a bold and forward-looking energy pivot, Morocco has launched a multi-pronged strategy that blends gas infrastructure expansion with robust renewable energy development, thus, positioning the North African nation as a regional pioneer in integrated energy transition planning.

## A New LNG Terminal: Reducing Coal Dependence, Enhancing Energy Security

Central to Morocco's strategy is the construction of a state-of-the-art liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminal near the coastal city of Nador on the Mediterranean. This critical infrastructure aims to diversify the country's energy sources by reducing its reliance on coal and helping to stabilize supply in the short to medium term.



The new terminal will be linked to the existing Maghreb-Europe pipeline, creating a streamlined route between Morocco and Spain and extending further into Morocco's key industrial corridors, namely Mohammedia and Kenitra. Once operational, the terminal is expected to boost Morocco's natural gas supply capacity from the current 1 billion cubic meters (bcm) to approximately 8 bcm by 2027, supporting both power generation and industrial needs.

Government officials emphasize that this investment is not a pivot away from renewables but a complementary measure to ensure grid reliability as intermittent solar and wind energy increase in the mix. "This project is designed to be transitional and strategic," said a senior advisor at Morocco's Ministry of Energy Transition. "It secures energy supply while allowing renewables the runway they need to scale sustainably."

## The Morocco-Nigeria Gas Pipeline: A Pan-African Energy Corridor

Running parallel to the LNG initiative is the Morocco-Nigeria Gas Pipeline, a 6,800-kilometer transcontinental project designed to transport offshore gas from Nigeria up through several West African nations to Morocco and onward into Europe. The pipeline has already passed critical feasibility and engineering milestones, and is being supported by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

More than just a piece of infrastructure, this pipeline is emblematic of a broader African strategy for regional energy integration, economic cooperation and environmental diplomacy. Once operational, it will also

support renewable development by providing baseload flexibility that renewable grids often require.

## A Renewable Power Surge: 13 GW by 2030

Simultaneously, Morocco's national electricity utility, ONEE (Office National de l'Électricité et de l'Eau Potable), has committed to adding 15 gigawatts (GW) of new electricity generation capacity by 2030, of which 13 GW will come from renewable sources such as solar, wind and hydro.

This vision is being realized through a \$13 billion investment plan that prioritizes large-scale solar farms in desert regions, wind power stations along the Atlantic coast and hybrid grid systems that can store and dispatch clean power efficiently.

Currently, renewables constitute approximately 45% of Morocco's installed electricity capacity. The government aims to push this figure to 52% by 2030, a target that will significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions and accelerate the country's Paris Agreement commitments.

## A Blueprint for Other African Nations

What sets Morocco's approach apart is its balance, leveraging transitional fuels like gas to underwrite a longer-term vision of renewable energy leadership. The dual strategy is supported by international financing, strong public-private partnerships and clear regulatory frameworks that have made Morocco a preferred destination for climate-aligned capital.

As the global energy transition accelerates, Morocco's model offers valuable insights for other African nations seeking to reconcile development needs with environmental imperatives. The nation's ability to align infrastructure development with climate policy not only underscores its sustainability credentials but positions it as a critical player in Africa's green energy narrative..



## Mission 300: Powering a Brighter Future for Africa

In one of the most ambitious continental undertakings in modern development history, a coalition of global financial institutions, spearheaded by the World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), has launched *Mission 300*, a \$90 billion initiative aimed at electrifying the lives of 300 million Africans by 2030.

This transformative program is not merely about wiring homes or powering light bulbs. It is about reshaping economies, revitalizing communities and restoring dignity through access to one of the most basic human necessities, energy.

### The Scale of the Challenge

Across Sub-Saharan Africa, more than 600 million people, roughly half of the continent's population still live without reliable access to electricity. In rural areas, this figure can climb as high as 80%. Without energy, communities are left in the dark, cut off from education, healthcare, job opportunities and the modern economy.

"Electricity is not a luxury, it is a catalyst for human development," said Dr. Akinwumi Adesina, President of

the AfDB. "Without energy, there is no economic growth, no digital connectivity, no resilience against climate threats."

*Mission 300* seeks to change this equation decisively.

### Unprecedented Investment in Access and Equity

The program's \$90 billion financing pool represents one of the largest mobilizations of capital for energy access in Africa's history. The initiative is structured to support national electrification strategies, public-private partnerships and decentralized energy solutions across the continent.

A substantial portion of the funding is earmarked for distributed renewable energy systems, mini-grids, solar home systems and hybrid installations that can reach off-grid communities faster and more affordably than traditional grid expansion. According to World Bank estimates, up to 70% of new electricity connections under *Mission 300* will be powered by renewables. The Islamic Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have already pledged over \$6.15 billion in co-financing to support project rollouts across Africa's least electrified regions.

## Clean Cooking: The Silent Crisis Addressed

Mission 300 also boldly confronts a less visible but deadly challenge, access to clean cooking. Over 900 million Africans still rely on firewood, charcoal and other biomass for cooking, contributing to indoor air pollution that kills an estimated 600,000 people annually, mostly women and children.

To tackle this, the initiative will invest significantly in clean cooking technologies, such as LPG, ethanol stoves and solar cookers. These interventions not only reduce health risks but also curb deforestation and gender-based burdens, freeing women from hours of wood collection and exposure to toxic smoke.

## A Pan-African Collaborative Approach

Mission 300 is not a top-down initiative. It emphasizes country ownership, regional cooperation and stakeholder engagement. National governments are being supported to develop and implement integrated electrification plans, while African utilities, innovators and civil society organizations are central to the deployment strategies.

To ensure accountability and impact, the initiative will be tracked through a new Energy Access Dashboard, an open-data platform developed with the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the African Union's Department of Infrastructure and Energy.

Moreover, Mission 300 aligns closely with Agenda 2063 and SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), reinforcing Africa's leadership in setting and achieving its own development priorities.

## Looking Ahead: Electrification as a Foundation for Climate-Resilient Growth

The electrification of 300 million Africans is not just a moral imperative, it is a smart climate strategy. By leapfrogging carbon-heavy infrastructure and investing directly in renewables and efficiency, Mission 300 supports a low-emissions development pathway for Africa.

As Mission 300 gathers momentum, it marks a defining chapter in Africa's sustainable development story, one where energy access becomes a right, not a privilege and the continent's lights shine not just brighter, but greener.

## Nigeria's Mini-Grid Revolution: Powering Progress from the Ground Up

**N**igeria is lighting up a new path toward sustainable development, one rural village, one underserved town, one microgrid at a time. With over 90 million citizens still lacking reliable electricity, the Nigerian government has set in motion a

bold renewable energy campaign to bring power to the people starting from the grassroots.

This shift is being driven by a \$200 million partnership with **WeLight**, a pan-African distributed renewable energy (DRE) company, with co-financing from the **World Bank** and the **African Development Bank (AfDB)**. The initiative aims to deploy **400 mini-grids and 50 larger MetroGrids** across Nigeria, reaching an estimated 1.5 to 2 million people over the next few years.



More than a power project, this is a revolution in access, equity, and economic transformation.

**Bridging the Energy Divide with Decentralized Power**  
In many parts of rural Nigeria, the national grid remains a distant dream, too costly to extend, too fragile to rely upon. Powered primarily by solar photovoltaic technology, WeLight's mini-grids offer 24/7 electricity for homes, schools, clinics, businesses and community services. These installations come with smart meters, affordable payment options and modular designs that allow scaling as communities grow.

This approach also aligns with Nigeria's target to increase renewable energy's contribution to its electricity mix from 22% to **50% by 2030**, as outlined in the country's **Energy Transition Plan**.

## Empowering Communities: The WeLight Model

What sets this project apart is its deep emphasis on

### **community engagement and customized solutions.**

Before construction begins, WeLight teams work closely with local leaders, residents and businesses to assess energy needs, map demand and build trust. This participatory model ensures high adoption rates and long-term sustainability.

From cold storage facilities for fishers in the Niger Delta to solar-powered irrigation pumps in northern Nigeria's drylands, each mini-grid is adapted to the local context. This flexibility not only meets real needs, but also encourages entrepreneurship, job creation and resilience.

In Oyo State, for instance, a WeLight-powered mini-grid has enabled a community tailoring center to operate long hours, expand services and train youth in garment-making. In Borno, where grid infrastructure was devastated by conflict, solar mini-grids are restoring power to health centers treating internally displaced persons.



## A Blueprint for Africa's Rural Energy Future

The Nigeria Mini-Grid Revolution offers valuable lessons for other African countries seeking to expand energy access rapidly and sustainably. By blending public support with private-sector execution, and by placing communities at the center of the solution, Nigeria is creating a replicable model for decentralized electrification.

WeLight plans to localize more of its supply chain within Nigeria, creating new green jobs in installation, maintenance, customer service and hardware manufacturing. The company also provides technical training to young Nigerians, nurturing a new generation of solar technicians and energy entrepreneurs.

According to the **Rural Electrification Agency (REA)**, the mini-grid sector has the potential to create over **500,000 jobs** in Nigeria by 2030 if supported with the right policy and financing frameworks.

## Greening Nigeria's Development Path

Crucially, this initiative also represents a pivotal shift in

Nigeria's climate resilience strategy. By reducing reliance on diesel generators, ubiquitous in off-grid areas and major contributors to pollution, the transition to mini-grids is expected to cut emissions by hundreds of thousands of metric tons annually.

It also offers resilience against grid outages and climate disruptions, ensuring that communities maintain access to critical services even during floods or storms.

The Nigerian government, through its **Energy Transition Implementation Unit**, has endorsed the WeLight partnership as part of its broader plan to decarbonize the power sector and achieve net-zero emissions by 2060.

## Lighting the Way Forward

As solar panels gleam under the West African sun and batteries quietly hum with stored energy, Nigeria's rural landscapes are being transformed, not only by the power of the sun but by the power of possibility.

In towns once shrouded in darkness, businesses now buzz after dusk, clinics hum with refrigerated medicines and students chase their dreams under the glow of clean, reliable light.

The mini-grid revolution is more than a power solution, it is an energy justice movement. And in the villages and voices of Nigeria, it is already changing lives.



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# Legal wins and community activism on the front lines.

## Tunisia: Semia Gharbi's Crusade Against Illegal Waste Imports

In a landmark victory for environmental justice, Tunisian scientist and educator Semia Gharbi has been honoured

with the 2025 Goldman Environmental Prize for her relentless efforts in exposing and combating illegal waste trafficking between Italy and Tunisia.

Gharbi's investigation unveiled a clandestine operation where hundreds of containers labeled as recyclable plastic were, in fact, filled with household garbage. Her advocacy led to the arrest of over 40 individuals, including 26 Tunisian officials and 16 Italians and the repatriation of 6,000 tonnes of waste back to Italy in February 2022.



Beyond legal repercussions, Gharbi's campaign prompted significant policy reforms, closing loopholes in international waste shipping regulations within the European Union. Her work underscores the power of grassroots activism in holding corporations and governments accountable for environmental crimes.

## South Africa: 'Deadly Air' Case Affirms Right to Clean Environment

In a significant legal triumph, South Africa's Supreme Court of Appeal upheld a ruling that the government's failure to address air pollution in the Mpumalanga Highveld region violates citizens' constitutional rights to health and a clean environment.

The 'Deadly Air' case, brought forth by environmental groups groundWork and the Vukani Environmental Justice Movement, highlighted the government's inaction in enforcing air quality regulations in an area plagued by emissions from coal-fired power stations and industrial activities.

The court's decision mandates the government to implement effective measures to improve air quality, setting a precedent for environmental accountability and reinforcing the constitutional guarantee of a healthy environment for all South Africans.

## Nigeria: Ogoni Communities Demand Justice Amid Oil Resumption Plans

In March 2025, over 30 civil society groups, led by the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), staged protests in Bori, Rivers State, opposing the Nigerian government's plans to resume oil exploration in Ogoniland.

Protesters demanded the exoneration of environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni Eight, executed in



1995, and called for the implementation of the Ogoni Bill of Rights. They emphasized that any oil resumption must involve MOSOP and address longstanding environmental and social injustices.

The groups also insisted on comprehensive cleanup efforts, compensation for affected communities, and the granting of operational licenses to indigenous Ogoni companies. Their unified stance highlights the ongoing struggle for environmental justice and community rights in the Niger Delta.

## Africa: Youth-Led Climate Justice Movements Gain Momentum

Across Africa, young activists are at the forefront of climate justice movements, addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on vulnerable communities.

In countries like Benin, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Uganda, youth-led initiatives are leading adaptation projects, providing aid and mobilizing communities to build resilience against environmental challenges.

Organizations such as the Green Africa Youth Organization in Ghana and the Ghana Youth Environmental Movement are empowering young people through education, advocacy, and community projects, fostering a new generation of environmental leaders committed to sustainable development and justice.

# Fighting for

**A**cross Uganda's varied landscapes, from the mineral-rich soils of Mubende to the forests of Hoima and the classrooms of Mbarara, a quiet revolution is taking root. Women, often the first to feel the sting of environmental injustice, are stepping into leadership roles as frontline defenders of their land, resources, and communities.

## Voices Against Land Grabs and Illegal Mining

In Western Uganda's Mubende District, home to some of the nation's most lucrative gold deposits, women have become the unlikely warriors challenging illegal mining practices that strip the land and poison water sources.



Source: <https://lens.monash.edu/@politics-society/2024/03/07/1386393/women-bear-the-brunt-of-asias-climate-failures>

# Earth & Equity: Women Eco-Defenders of Uganda

By Sankofa Sustainability Correspondent

One such activist is Judith Nankya, a mother of four who has become a respected voice in her village after organizing protests against unlicensed gold prospectors.

"Our rivers are drying, our soils are poisoned, and our children are sick. We are not against development, but this is not the kind of development that feeds us," says Nankya, who works with a women's cooperative supported by Akina Mama wa Afrika (AMwA).

AMwA has been instrumental in providing legal training and documentation tools for grassroots women, enabling them to report abuses, seek legal redress, and advocate for policy changes. Their work forms part of a broader push toward economic justice and climate action led by African women.

## Forests as Pillars of Resistance and Renewal

In Hoima District, the destruction of Bugoma Forest for sugarcane plantations sparked national outcry. But it also inspired local women to take action. Led by a group called Daughters of the Forest, women in surrounding

communities have taken up the responsibility of replanting native trees and guarding forest boundaries.

Christine Atugonza, who leads the group, explains: "The forest has always protected us. Now we protect it. Our grandmothers taught us the value of every tree and herb. That knowledge still lives in us."

With support from local NGOs, the women have initiated tree nurseries, forest patrols, and ecotourism programs. They are also collaborating with district officials to create buffer zones and educate loggers on sustainable alternatives.

## Sowing Seeds of Change in the Classroom

While much of the environmental movement in Uganda is rural, its ripples are reaching into urban and peri-urban schools through initiatives like climate clubs. In Mbarara District, schools like St. Peter's Primary have introduced clubs that teach students the basics of climate science, conservation ethics, and community engagement.

"I want to become an environmental scientist," says 13-year-old Maria Namara, president of her school's club. "We plant trees, we clean our water streams, and we talk to elders about stopping bush burning."

These efforts have been supported by programs from the Ministry of Education and partners like the Uganda National Meteorological Authority, who provide materials, speakers, and training sessions.

## Policy Change Through the Eyes of the Grassroots

In Kampala, AMwA and its partners have begun facilitating dialogues between rural women activists and national lawmakers. Their goal is to bring firsthand environmental experiences into Uganda's climate policy frameworks.



One such policy victory came in March 2025, when a proposed bill mandating environmental impact assessments for all medium-scale mining projects passed its second reading, an achievement woman like Judith Nankya proudly claim partial credit for.

"We are finally being heard," she said during a televised town hall. "And we will keep speaking because what happens to our soil happens to our lives."

## An Emerging Model for the Continent

Uganda's eco-defender movement, deeply grounded in the lived experiences of rural women, presents a model of inclusive, community-led environmental action. Their

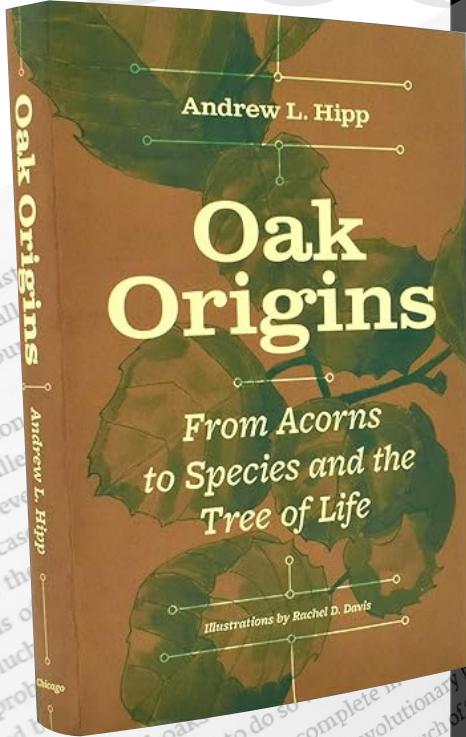
**“We are finally  
being heard, and  
we will keep  
speaking because  
what happens to  
our soil happens  
to our lives.”**

fight is not just for trees or rivers, it is for dignity, heritage, and survival.

As climate change continues to deepen inequality, these women remind the world that sustainable development must start with those most impacted. Their voices, rising from forests and fields, are shaping a new narrative for environmental justice in Africa, certainly, one rooted in equity, resilience, and hope.

*These narratives underscore the dynamic landscape of environmental justice in Africa, highlighting the critical roles of individuals, communities and youth movements in advocating for a sustainable and equitable future.*

# Eco Book of the Season



# Eco Book of the Season

Oak Origins:  
From Acorns to Species  
and the Tree of Life  
by Andrew L. Hipp

Andrew Hipp delves into the evolutionary history of oaks, revealing their significance in global ecosystems. This work combines scientific insight with storytelling, highlighting the resilience and diversity of these vital trees across continents and eras.

An Eco Documentary to Watch  
**Common Ground (2025)**

Building upon the themes of regenerative agriculture, *Common Ground* presents stories of farmers and communities adopting sustainable practices. The film encourages viewers to reflect on the potential of regenerative methods in addressing environmental challenges, while also considering the broader implications for food systems.



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# Kigali's Green City: A Blueprint for Sustainable Urban Living



Kigali, Rwanda, is pioneering a transformative approach to urban development with its ambitious Green City project. Spanning 600 hectares in the Kinyinya Hill area, this initiative aims to create a sustainable, inclusive and climate-resilient urban community.

The master plan envisions a city where essential services such as schools, markets, health centers are within a 15-minute walk for residents. Housing will be affordable and constructed using locally sourced materials, integrating renewable energy solutions to ensure environmental sustainability.

Transportation within the Green City will prioritize public transit and cycling, reducing reliance on private vehicles and minimizing carbon emissions. The project also includes plans for an Urban Eco-Park and aims to create approximately 50,000 jobs, fostering economic growth alongside environmental stewardship.

By addressing challenges such as housing affordability, urban sprawl and climate vulnerability, Kigali's Green City sets a precedent for sustainable urban development in Africa and beyond.

# Dakar's Electric BRT: Revolutionizing Urban Mobility

Dakar, Senegal, has launched sub-Saharan Africa's first all-electric Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system, marking a significant milestone in sustainable urban transportation. The 18.3-kilometer network connects 23 stations across 14 districts, aiming to serve up to 300,000 passengers daily.

The fleet of 121 electric buses, powered by renewable energy, is expected to halve commute times and reduce annual CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by approximately 59,000 tonnes. The project also emphasizes inclusivity, with infrastructure designed to accommodate individuals with disabilities and ensure safety for all users.

Financed through a public-private partnership involving entities like Meridiam and FONSIS and supported by international organizations, the BRT system reflects a collaborative effort to modernize Dakar's public transport while addressing environmental concerns.

This initiative positions Dakar as a leader in sustainable urban mobility, offering a model for other African cities to emulate.



# Mariam Issoufou Kamara:

## Redefining African Architecture

**N**igerien architect Mariam Issoufou Kamara is at the forefront of a movement to redefine

African architecture through sustainable and culturally resonant designs. Her firm, Atelier Masōmī, integrates traditional building techniques with modern aesthetics to create spaces that reflect the identities and needs of local communities.

Kamara's notable projects include the Hikma Community Complex in Dandaji, Niger, and the upcoming Bët-bi museum in Senegal. The latter, set to open this year, aims to serve as a cultural hub that honors the region's heritage while fostering contemporary artistic expression.

By employing local materials and collaborating with artisans, Kamara's work not only promotes environmental sustainability but also supports economic development within the communities she serves.

Her approach challenges conventional architectural paradigms, offering a vision of design that is both innovative and deeply rooted in African traditions.

**G**hana has taken a significant step towards sustainable urban transportation with the introduction of its first fleet of electric buses. Launched in November 2024, the initiative aims to reduce transport costs by up to 50% and cut greenhouse gas emissions by 70%.

The buses, operated by Metro Mass Transit Limited in collaboration with the Greater Accra Passenger Transport Executive, are designed for accessibility and efficiency. Features include wider doors, low-floor ramps, and quieter operation, contributing to a more inclusive and pleasant commuting experience.



## Ghana's Electric Bus Initiative: Driving Towards a Greener Future

Beyond environmental benefits, the project is expected to create new employment opportunities in vehicle maintenance and infrastructure management. The pilot phase focuses on routes within the Adenta Municipality, with plans for expansion based on its success. Ghana's electric bus initiative exemplifies a commitment to integrating sustainable practices into public transportation, setting a precedent for other nations in the region.





**A**cross Africa, a seismic shift is underway and it is not measured in tectonic plates or along fault lines. It is in the voices of young people. From the dusty streets of Kampala to the vibrant avenues of Johannesburg, a generation once dismissed as "future leaders" is claiming its rightful place now as stewards of Africa's green future.

We are not waiting for permission to speak, we are demanding a seat at the table where decisions on climate, energy and development are made. And if we are not invited, we are building new tables entirely.

### Enough of the Empty Promises

African leaders and global institutions have spent years making pledges, many of which have dissolved into political slogans and donor soundbites. But as the continent faces rising floods, vanishing forests and erratic rainfall, youth are watching their futures evaporate into the warming air.

In Uganda, Leah Namugerwa's tree-planting campaigns and school strikes have sparked a wave of youth-led environmental activism. In South Africa, students are using art, protest and digital media to challenge coal-fired policies in favor of renewables. From Accra to Nairobi, university groups are pressuring their institutions to divest from fossil fuel interests.

Our message is clear, Climate action delayed is climate justice denied.

### We Are Not Just Marching, We Are Mobilizing

African youth are organizing not just protests but solutions. We are running clean energy startups, launching climate education hubs and advocating for laws that protect our environment and our futures. We are the engineers building solar microgrids. The designers of green buildings. The coders mapping flood-prone zones in slums.

# Youth Demand Green Justice Now!

## Voices Rising from Kampala to Johannesburg

By Guest Columnist: **Naa Adjoa Kwakye** | Youth Climate Advocate

We are tired of being the face of poverty in donor campaigns. We want to be the architects of transformation.

### Global North, Hear This Loud and Clear

Africa contributes the least to climate change but pays the

steepest price. If climate finance mechanisms are not directed equitably, they only reinforce old injustices in shiny green wrappers.

We demand reparative climate finance, not loans disguised as aid. We demand access to technology and knowledge, not crumbs from the global innovation table. And we demand that youth voices shape the negotiation tables at COP summits, not just in side events or photo ops.

### Africa's Green Future Must Be Youth-Led

The climate clock is ticking, but it is also a rallying call. The African youth movement for climate justice is not just a flash of youthful exuberance, it is a generational uprising grounded in science, solidarity and ancestral wisdom.

So, here is our call to governments, donors and decision-makers. Listen. Partner. Empower. Or step aside.

The era of apathy is over.  
The age of African youth-led climate justice has begun.



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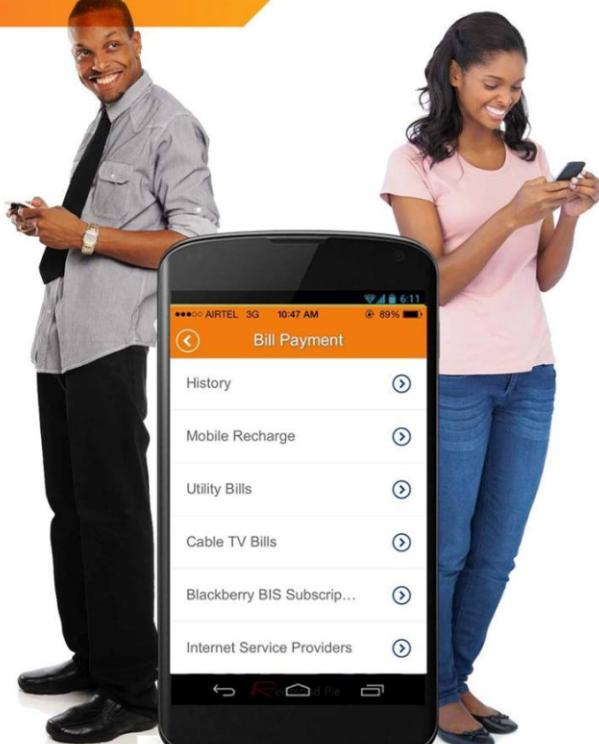
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# We Are Not Just Ticking Boxes, We Are Rewriting the Rules

By Kwesi Obuobi, ESG Advisor & Climate Finance Strategist



**W**hen I first stepped into the world of ESG a decade ago, many saw it as a Western import, a compliance exercise meant to make corporate annual reports look prettier. But today, sitting in a boardroom in Nairobi, as an African-led agribusiness presents its regenerative land-use model to secure green bond financing, I am reminded of how far we have come, and how far we still need to go.

Africa is not a latecomer to sustainability. We have been practicing circular economies long before the term was coined. From indigenous rotational farming to the repurposing culture embedded in our marketplaces, our ways of living have always whispered resilience and balance. The tragedy is that the language of global finance often failed to hear us.

That is changing.

Today, I consult with sovereign wealth funds in Namibia seeking to align their portfolios with ESG principles. I mentor young women in Senegal pioneering climate-smart rice cooperatives. I advise private equity firms in South Africa on ESG risk beyond mere carbon metrics, looking at water stress, labor rights and land tenure transparency. What I see is a quiet revolution, not loud, but powerful.

But let us be honest, ESG in Africa is still in its infancy. Too many corporate sustainability reports are shallow. Too many “net-zero” pledges are vague. And too few communities, the people on whose land and livelihoods these industries depend, are actually consulted.



**Africa is not a latecomer to sustainability. We have been practicing circular economies long before the term was coined**

We cannot afford to mimic global ESG trends blindly. Our risk profiles, data ecosystems and cultural landscapes are different. An African ESG framework must be rooted in our realities. One that recognizes that a just transition is not just about energy, but, about equity.

The private sector has a major role to play, but so does the state. We need legislation that makes ESG reporting mandatory, not optional. We need green finance pipelines that reach small and medium enterprises, not just utility-scale solar farms. And we need youth at

the table, not only as interns, but as strategists and decision-makers.

ESG is not a destination. It's a dynamic process of negotiation between people, planet and profit. It demands courage. It demands context. And above all, it demands that we stop seeing sustainability as something we do to Africa and start seeing it as something we build from Africa.

As I often tell my clients. “We're not here to tick boxes. We're here to write new ones.”



# Sounds of the Sahel: Music as a Call to Climate Action

In Niger, Mali and Burkina Faso, music is becoming a powerful rallying cry against climate devastation. Emerging artists like Aïchatou Dembélé and DJéman, influenced by the rhythms of the Sahel and the trauma of desertification, are weaving climate messages into traditional griot storytelling. Their songs, delivered

in Fulfulde, Bambara and Hausa lament dying rivers and parched farmlands, but also envision green rebirth. At community festivals and on local radio, their voices echo across regions where policy change often lags behind lived experience. For many, these rhythms are not entertainment, they are urgent testimony.

# “Walls That Speak”: Murals Confront Climate Change in Nairobi

*This mural, located in Lindi village, Kibera, was created as part of the Weather Mtaani awareness campaign. It illustrates how residents can use weather forecasts to take preventative action against extreme rainfall, promoting climate resilience in informal settlements.*

In Nairobi's Mathare and Kibera, young artists are transforming alleyways and crumbling walls into living canvases for environmental justice. Through projects like Art for Earth, local collectives are painting giant murals of burning forests, plastic-choked rivers and hopeful green cities. These visual outcries are more than aesthetic interventions, they are acts of protest. From school walls to market corners, these artworks are mobilizing communities to think, feel and act green.



PHOTO CREDIT: Graffiti Girls Kenya



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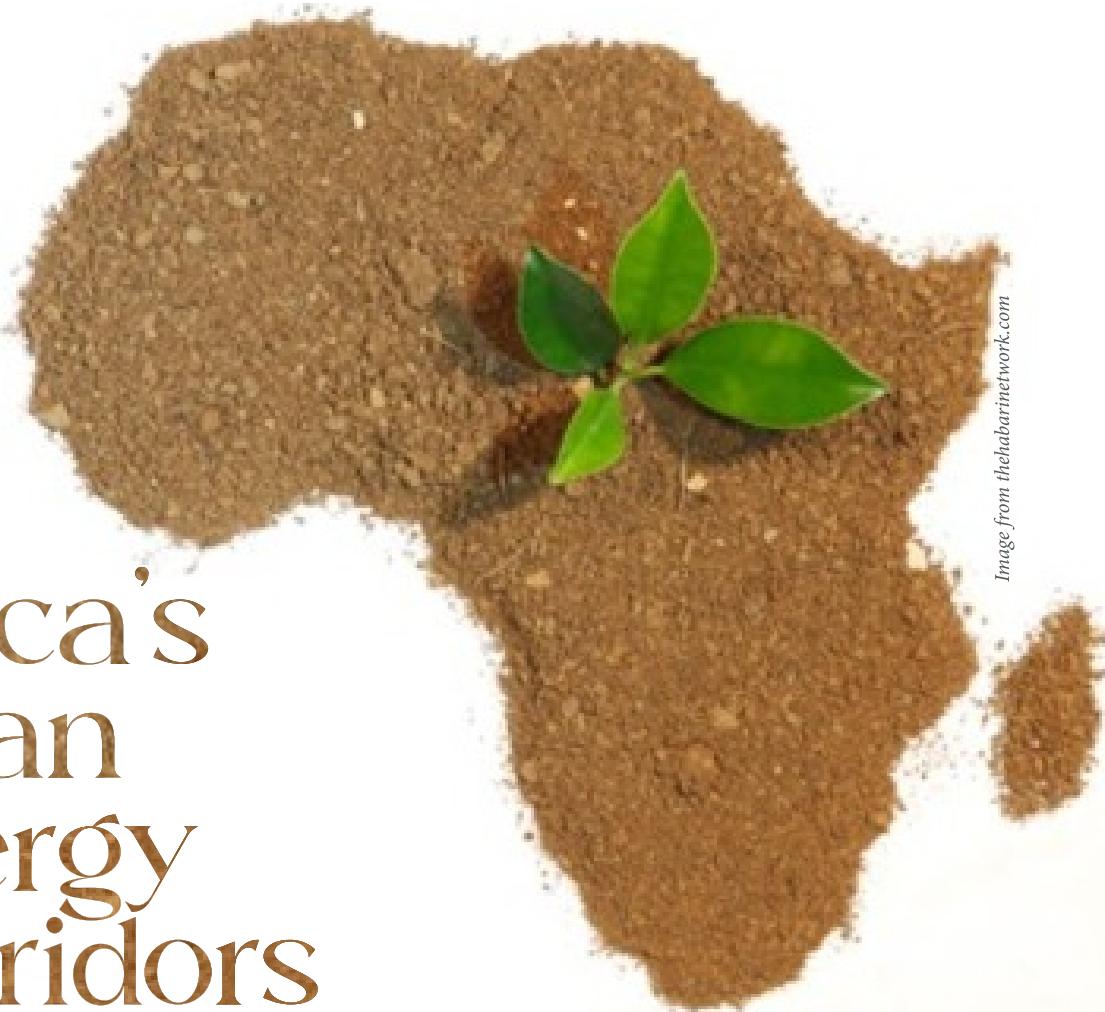
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# Africa's Clean Energy Corridors

## Power Pathways Reshaping the Future

Across the African continent, a transformative energy journey is underway. Nations are weaving together a tapestry of renewable energy initiatives, forging corridors that not only illuminate homes but also empower communities and economies.

### Interconnected Grids: The Backbone of a Sustainable Future

Regional collaborations are at the heart of this energy revolution. By linking national grids, countries are enabling the seamless flow of electricity across borders, optimizing resource utilization and enhancing energy

security. These interconnected systems are the arteries through which the lifeblood of renewable energy flows, reaching urban centers and remote villages alike.

### Renewable Energy Zones: Harnessing Nature's Bounty

Strategically identified Renewable Energy Zones (REZs) are pivotal in this landscape. These areas, rich in solar, wind, hydro and geothermal potential, are being developed to maximize clean energy production. By focusing on these zones, countries are tapping into nature's abundance, reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and paving the way for a greener future.

## Investment and Infrastructure: Building the Foundations

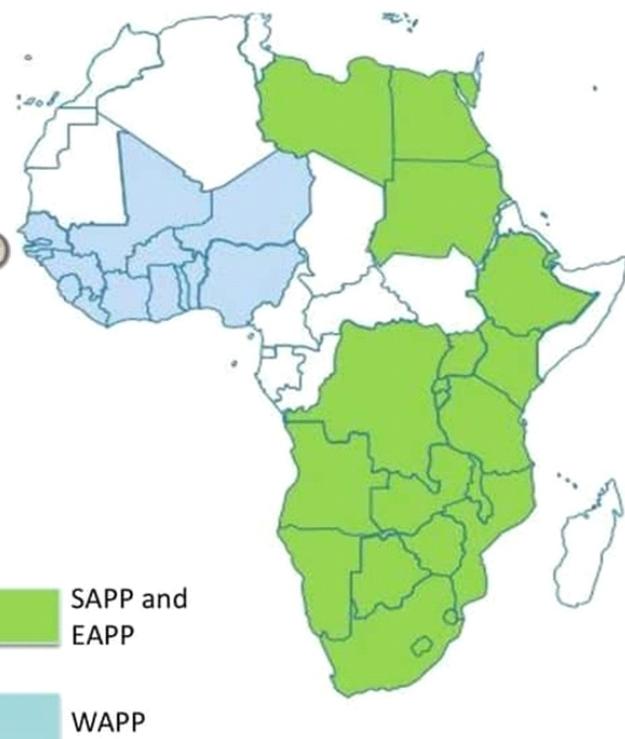
Realizing the vision of a sustainable energy future requires substantial investment in infrastructure. From constructing new power plants to upgrading transmission lines, these developments are essential for accommodating increased renewable energy integration. Such investments not only bolster energy capacity but also stimulate economic growth and job creation.

## Impact and Outlook: A Brighter Tomorrow

The ripple effects of these clean energy corridors are profound. Communities gain access to reliable electricity, industries flourish with consistent power supply and the environment benefits from reduced carbon emissions. As these corridors expand and evolve, they embody the continent's commitment to a sustainable and inclusive energy paradigm.



Infographic Credit: Ijeoma Onyeji-Nwogu



Infographic Credit: International Renewable Energy Agency



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# Galamsey Nation:

## How Illegal Mining Is Destroying Ghana from Within

By Yaw Agyeman Boafo, Senior Research Fellow, Centre for Climate Change and Sustainability Studies, University of Ghana, Legon

**A**s part of Ghana's ongoing national climate risk and vulnerability assessment, I undertook a field mission to Wassa Amenfi East Municipality in the Western Region—once revered for its fertile soils, lush forests, and agricultural productivity.

What I encountered was a district under siege.

In communities such as Dompoase, Aboso, Adesu, and Wassa Akropong, the landscape bears deep wounds. Rivers once clean now run thick with silt and chemical

residue. Forests have been decimated. Cocoa farms have vanished, replaced by open pits and heavy machinery operating openly in residential areas. What used to be agricultural heartlands are fast becoming desolate mining fields.

Wassa Amenfi East is not an isolated case. From Ghana's northern savannah to its southern rainforest zones, the narrative is repeating itself. Illegal small-scale mining—galamsey—is tearing through our country's ecosystems, social fabric, and governance systems.

---

*Degraded wetlands and dying trees reflect the ecological trauma of illegal mining in what was once a thriving forest ecosystem.*





## Gold at an Unbearable Cost

Illegal mining has turned Wassa Amenfi into a fractured landscape of gaping wounds—thousands of abandoned pits stretch across farmlands and forest edges like open graves, leaching poison into the environment. Rivers once central to the community's life—used for drinking, irrigation, bathing, and fishing—now carry a toxic cocktail of mercury, cyanide, and silt.

The destruction is more than surface deep. Ecosystem services that sustained both nature and people—clean water, fertile soil, shade, pollination, fish habitats—have been degraded or lost entirely. Topsoil has been scraped away. Water tables are polluted. Aquatic life has vanished.

In some communities, the same streams used for household drinking are now suspected to contain unsafe levels of heavy metals, raising serious public health concerns. Farmers report that irrigation water now stains crops, and residents complain of skin irritations and strange illnesses.

What's even more alarming is the normalization of this destruction. Gold buying shops are more common than clinics, and makeshift refineries operate around the clock, releasing smoke and chemical waste into the air and nearby wetlands. Some family compounds have been

swallowed by the mining frenzy—converted into operational pits or used for ore washing, blurring the lines between home and hazard.

Local authorities are overwhelmed. “We are losing control,” admitted a senior executive at the Wassa Amenfi East District Assembly. “The rate of degradation is faster than our ability to respond. What we are witnessing is not just environmental harm—it’s a collapse of rural life-support

systems.

## Foreign Involvement and Legal Evasion

The complicity of foreign actors—particularly Chinese, Indian, Nigerian, and other West African nationals—in illegal mining operations in Wassa Amenfi East is no longer a secret. Their presence is visible in both the pits and the streets.

Many operate behind Ghanaian fronts, registering companies under local names to bypass regulation, while actively supplying illegal miners with equipment and chemicals. These include chafans (floating dredges), excavators, water pumps, and earth-moving tractors, often sourced through business hubs controlled by foreign actors.

Across major towns like Wassa Akropong and Adesu, Chinese- and Indian-owned shops stock and service machinery directly linked to illegal mining. Meanwhile, Nigerian nationals have become prominent players in the gold buying trade, running shops that operate outside formal regulatory frameworks. Some also run mobile phone and electronics businesses that cater to the booming galamsey economy.



A Chinese-language signboard for a heavy machinery repair service operating in a mining town in Wassa Amenfi East.

The growing dominance of foreign-linked enterprises in the illegal mining value chain is not only deepening environmental degradation, but also eroding local governance, displacing livelihoods, and draining gold resources through unregulated exports.

If left unchecked, this entrenchment of foreign influence in the galamsey economy threatens both the sovereignty of Ghana's natural resources and the future autonomy of its local economies.

## Enforcement Gaps and Political Paralysis

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other regulatory bodies have made efforts to rein in illegal mining through periodic crackdowns, permit revocations, and inter-agency taskforces. Notably, the new Acting Chief Executive of the EPA, Prof. Nana Ama Browne Klutse, has demonstrated commendable leadership by moving beyond her office into the field—visiting affected communities, engaging stakeholders, and advocating for stronger environmental governance.

Her presence is a signal that the agency is serious about restoring public trust and reclaiming degraded ecosystems.

But even the boldest leadership faces an entrenched system of impunity.

As district officials pointed out, enforcement remains patchy and under-resourced. “We lack the logistical capacity to sustain operations on the ground,” a senior official at the Wassa Amenfi East District Assembly explained. “Once national attention shifts, the miners return.”

Previous governments—including under the NPP—launched initiatives like Operation Vanguard, while the current NDC administration has renewed anti-galamsey rhetoric. Yet, on the ground, the impact is minimal. Equipment seized one week is back the next. Pits closed are reopened.

What is clear is that this crisis goes far beyond the efforts of one committed individual or institution. It requires systemic reform, political consistency, and cross-sectoral collaboration.

Galamsey has outpaced governance—thriving in the space between legislation and enforcement, capitalizing on weak oversight and vested interests.

## Health, Livelihoods, and a Vanishing Future

The impact of galamsey reaches far beyond the environment. With farmlands destroyed, traditional livelihoods have collapsed. Many youth, faced with limited options, have turned to mining or drifted into crime, drug use, and idleness. A new culture of quick money and lawlessness is taking root.

In mining hotspots such as Wassa Akropong and Adesu, a rise in transactional sex and commercial sex work is evident. Guesthouses and bars have multiplied, and young girls—some barely in their teens—are becoming entangled in exploitative relationships with miners, including foreign nationals.

Health professionals in the district report a surge in sexually transmitted infections, teenage pregnancies, and maternal health complications. School dropout rates are increasing, and many families are struggling to stay afloat in the absence of stable incomes.

Traditional and religious leaders lament the erosion of community values. Social cohesion is unraveling, and with it, the hope and dignity that once anchored these towns.

## A Quiet Climate Disaster

Wassa Amenfi's forests were once more than scenery—they were a shield, a sponge, a sanctuary. These ecosystems performed vital services: capturing and storing carbon, stabilizing rainfall, cooling the atmosphere, and protecting watersheds.

But galamsey has dismantled that shield.

Illegal mining clears trees, compacts soils, and pollutes

water sources—stripping the land of its ability to self-regulate. Without forest cover, surface temperatures rise. Floods worsen. Dry seasons become harsher.

Climate models already show Ghana facing rising temperatures, shorter rainy seasons, and more erratic rainfall. With its ecological buffer gone, Wassa Amenfi has become hyper-exposed to these shifts.

Scientific studies confirm that deforestation in Ghana accelerates local warming and increases vulnerability to floods, droughts, and food insecurity. What we are witnessing is a slow, compounding climate disaster—one that doesn't make daily headlines, but steadily erodes resilience.

Every tree cut, every pit left open, every poisoned river pushes Wassa Amenfi—and Ghana—closer to a climate tipping point.

## What Must Be Done: Reclaiming the Future, Restoring the Forests

Ghana is no longer at the edge of a crisis—we are in the thick of its aftermath. The scars of illegal mining are visible across the country, but they are also deeply institutional.

The first urgent step is to revoke L.I. 2462, the Legislative Instrument that established the so-called Mining in Forest Reserve Committee. Originally intended to regulate mining in forest reserves, it has instead become a legal gateway to ecological destruction.

Our forest reserves are not zones of compromise. They are life-support systems. Allowing mining in them—regardless of oversight mechanisms—is an act of environmental suicide.

We therefore call for the immediate repeal of L.I. 2462 and a moratorium on all new mining permits within or around forest reserves.



*Image credit - AeroVision Gh/Shutterstock.*

In addition, Ghana must pursue coordinated action across the following areas:

- Strengthen enforcement from the ground up, empowering the EPA, Forestry Commission, and local assemblies with autonomy, resources, and protection from political interference.
- Criminalize foreign nationals involved in illegal mining and prosecute Ghanaian collaborators through a transparent legal process.
- Reclaim and restore degraded lands through a national reforestation corps that trains and employs local youth.
- Shut down unauthorized gold buying shops and refineries, particularly those enabling illegal trade and worsening social instability.
- Invest in resilient livelihoods—agroforestry, aquaculture, and green enterprises that provide alternatives to illegal mining.
- Engage traditional leaders, faith-based institutions, and civil society to rebuild community stewardship

and values.

- Establish an independent mining governance review panel to audit permits, expose corruption, and design sustainable reforms.

Ghana must choose: to protect its forests, rivers, and people—or continue sacrificing them for fleeting gains.

Wassa Amenfi East may be only one district, but it mirrors the reality facing many parts of the country. Let its cry be a wake-up call that travels beyond poisoned rivers and broken farms, beyond ministries and media rooms, into the very heart of our national conscience.



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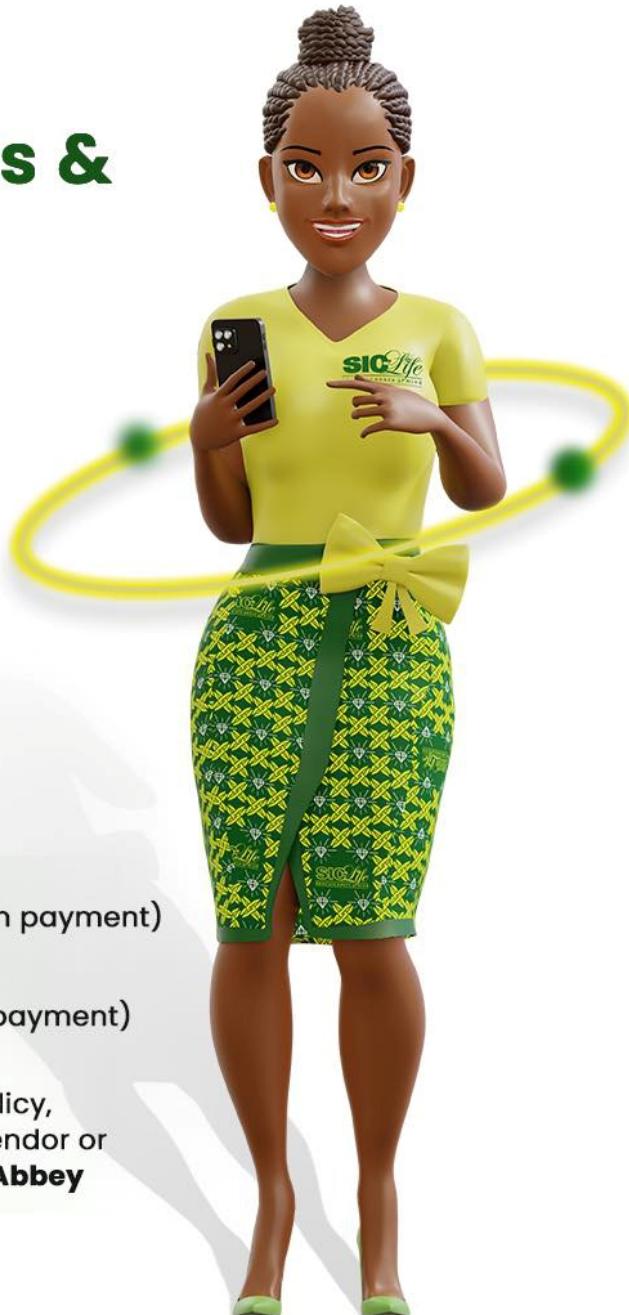
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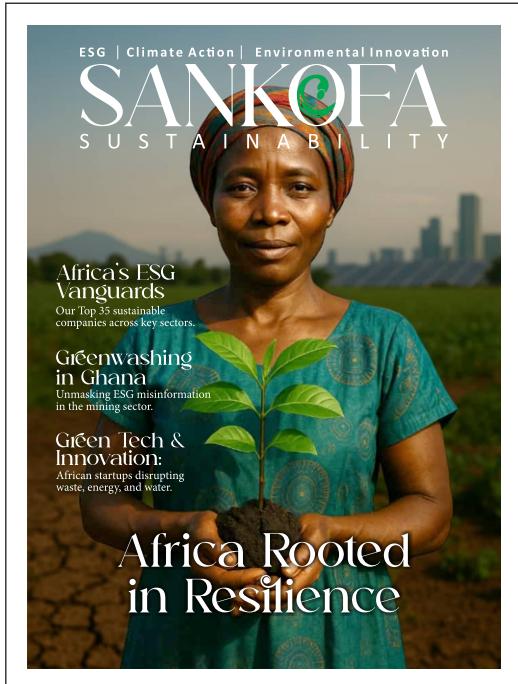
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*Championing Africa's Green Revolution*

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