



zero
EMISSIONS | OMISSIONS

Open Letter from Climate and Environmental Civil Society Organisations to the President of the African Development

A call to immediately stop the financing of all coal projects on the African continent

Dear Mr Akinwumi Adesina,

We, the undersigned civil society organisations, call on the leadership of the African Development Bank to immediately put in place and publish on the AfDB website a policy that the bank will not fund, provide financial services or capacity support to any coal project on the African continent.

We welcomed your announcement made on Tuesday, 24th September 2019, in which you reiterated the AfDB's commitment to no longer fund coal plants on the continent, but rather to build the "largest solar zone in the world" in the Sahel region.

This announcement follows a series of [scientific reports](#) confirming that stopping the construction of coal-fired power plants and closing existing plants is a crucial element in achieving the Paris Agreement's objective.

Africa's vulnerability to climate change is well known and documented. According to the [2018 Climate Change Vulnerability Index](#), seven of the ten most climate-vulnerable countries are in Africa. During this year alone, two powerful hurricanes plunged Mozambique, Zimbabwe and Malawi into a state of disaster, at a time when droughts have taken their toll in Eastern Africa and the Horn of Africa.

Successive reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) confirm that after the polar zones, Africa is expected to be the second hardest hit region by the effects of climate change. These effects are already hampering economic development, sometimes eroding years of economic progress, exacerbating conflict and pushing hundreds of thousands of people every year into exile, especially those living in arid zones and areas affected by desertification.

Despite this gloomy picture, Africa remains one of the few continents where the development of coal-fired power plants continues while the latest [IPCC report](#) stated that all coal-fired plants must close by 2040 to reach the 1.5 °C target set in the Paris Agreement. If fossil fuel projects globally continue at the current rate, Africa is heading straight for an average warming of 3 to 4 °C; a scenario that would have disastrous consequences, with extreme heat that would affect the majority of the continent's land, increased risks of extreme drought (especially in Eastern and Southern Africa), a decline in agricultural yield, and extreme flooding as highlighted in the latest IPCC report. The same report made it clear that anyone who supports the fossil fuel industry knowingly contributes to untold suffering around the world.

In the face of these extreme weather events and associated risks that threaten the lives and livelihoods of millions of Africans, the youth and civil society organisations of Africa took action from the 20th to 27th September, calling for immediate and radical climate action in agreement with science, and an end to the fossil fuel era.

In this historic mobilisation called "Global Climate Strikes", people from all walks of life, including fishing communities, farmers, women, young people, civil society groups, traditional and religious leaders took part in diverse actions sending a strong message to their governments and financial institutions that **Africa does not need fossil fuels to meet its energy demand and grow its energy supply, but should rather lead the world in the energy transition fuelled by renewable resources**. Frontline communities affected by the coal projects of Bargny (Senegal), Lamu (Kenya) and South Africa have taken the lead in the strike mobilisations.

While thanking and congratulating you for your commitment to rid Africa of the coal influence and to accelerate the use of renewable energies, we are convinced that the AfDB can do more by officially and definitively disengaging itself from any current or future coal project, **starting with the Bargny project (Senegal) where the AfDB Board of Directors had approved a preferential loan of € 55 million on 25th November 2009. Subsequently, the same board approved an additional loan of \$ 5 million¹.**

By doing so, we will be truly convinced that the statement made in New York is not a mere announcement, but rather a firm commitment to actively and concretely support the renewable energy transition and development that Africa so badly needs to not only fight against the climate crisis but also boost its development and improve the well-being of its inhabitants.

That is why we, therefore, urge the AfDB to:

- Immediately put in place and publish on the AfDB website a policy that the bank will not fund, provide financial services or capacity support to any coal project on the African continent.
- Shift the AfDB's portfolio to 100% renewable energy projects and sustainable, low-emission agriculture and infrastructure;
- Publish a roadmap to reduce portfolio-wide emissions and align with 1.5°C goal.
- Increase transparency and access to information as well as increased transparency in stakeholder engagement and consultation in relation to energy finance;

¹ Source: Compliance Verification Report, Sendou Coal Project, Independent Inspection Mechanism, Request No. RQ 2016/2, pages 5).



- Release additional information or a timeline for the release of additional information regarding the construction of the "largest solar energy zone on the planet" in the Sahel region;

We look forward to hearing from you on what steps will be taken towards achieving these changes. Our hope is that we can all work together to create a brighter, sustainable future for the African continent.

Kind regards,

- 350Africa.org
- African Climate Reality Project
- Action Solidaire Internationale
- Hope Land Congo
- Réseau des Associations pour le Protection de l'Environnement
- 350 Cote d'Ivoire
- JVE Cote d'Ivoire
- JVE Niger
- JVE Senegal
- Volontariat-Action-Mobilite
- Jeunes Volontaires pour l'Environnement International
- Collectif Bargny
- Jeune Vert Togo
- Jeunesse Unie pour le Progrès et le Développement
- Actions en Faveur de l'Homme et de la Nature Côte d'Ivoire
- AEV
- JVE Rwanda
- Actions communautaires pour le développement intégral
- ENERGIES 2050
- Plateforme de Plaidoyer, Recherche et de Renforcement des Capacités des ONGs
- Association Malienne pour la Solidarité et le Développement
- Association des Journalistes Professionnels pour l'Environnement
- Plateforme de la Société Civile Changement Climatique et Développement durable Côte d'Ivoire
- Association des Acteurs de Développement
- Organisation Congolaise des Ecologistes et Amis de la Nature - RD Congo
- Association Catholique pour la Protection de l'Environnement
- PAWA254
- Lawyers' Environmental Action Team
- Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation
- Global Initiative for Food Security and Ecosystem Preservation
- Save Lamu
- 350 Ghana Reducing Our Carbon
- Africa Institute for Energy Governance
- Sierra Leone School Green Clubs
- Green Saturday
- 350 Kenya
- Muslims for Human Rights (MUHURI)
- Center For Justice Governance and Environmental Action (CJGEA)



- Friends of Lake Turkana (FoLT)
- Fahamu Africa
- HAKI Africa
- SAFCEI
- Earthlife Africa
- WESSA
- groundWork
- Project 90 by 2030
- Greenpeace Africa
- HOMEF
- Natural Justice Kenya/Senegal
- Abibiman Foundation
- JVE International
- Baruch Initiative for Transformation
- Agro Tech Liberia
- Action for Social Development and Environmental Protection Organization (ASDEPO)
- Surge Africa
- Coal Free Nigeria
- Fossil Free South Africa
- Global Media Foundation (GLOMEF)
- DASCO - Design for Activism & Social Change Organization
- Africa Green Concern Group
- Kishoka Youth Organization
- Arewa Youth Trust Foundation
- Christian Aid
- Light Ethiopia
- Urgewald eV
- Arab Watch Regional Coalition (AWC)
- Environmental Friendly Initiative
- ONG Gabon Environnement
- Bank Information Center
- Youth and Cultural Development Foundation
- Climate Reality Leaders Zambia

