



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP  
GROUPE DE LA BANQUE AFRICAINE  
DE DEVELOPPEMENT



17 January 2022

Ms. Amy Gilliam  
Branch Manager  
African Climate Reality Project  
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Dear Ms. Gilliam,

**Subject: Reply to concerns of the African Climate Reality Project on COP26 and membership in the Bank Civil Society Committee**

The African Development Bank acknowledges receipt of your letter dated 10 December 2021, as representative for climate and energy thematic of the Bank-Civil Society Committee following the published press release on 5 November 2021.

We take the African Climate Reality Project's concerns seriously and would like to continue to have fruitful dialogue with you and to mutually explore suitable solutions to Climate Change challenges. The African Development Bank Group would like to share the following details in response to the issues raised:

**1) A detailed, written response from the Bank regarding the status of the Climate change & Green Growth Strategic Framework and Policy. If the strategy has been finalized, it must be shared with ACRP and CSOs for review for us to provide a balance and check system to see if our comments and concerns were addressed.**

The new *Climate Change and Green Growth Policy and Strategy (2021-2030)* was approved by the Bank's Board of Directors on 27 October 2021. The process included public consultations and comments, including feedback from a diversity of stakeholders. We take this opportunity to thank you for your valuable contributions throughout this process. A copy of the approved document is attached.

The African Development Bank values the perspective of civil society organizations in terms of the increasingly important role of climate change considerations and renewable energy as a good basis for Africa's sustainable development. *The Bank's Ten-Year Strategy (2013–2022)* focuses on inclusive growth and the transition to green growth. Accordingly, the Bank places particular focus on sustainability, which is central to its work as evidenced by several projects that were approved, reached financial closure, or completed in recent

years. Although Africa contributes the least to carbon emissions, it is the world's most vulnerable region - and the continent bears a disproportionate burden of the impact of climate change. This includes devastating floods, severe droughts, and pest invasions.

COP26 presented a golden opportunity for humanity to turn the tide against this existential threat and a global platform for all of us to amplify Africa's voice and common position on climate change. The Bank understands this and is leading by example - our message to COP26 was pegged on the very important pillars of climate adaptation, mitigation, climate financing and green growth investments. In addition, the Bank lined up several flagship events to amplify Africa's voice in Glasgow. This was in line with the approved *New Climate Change and Green Growth Policy and Strategy* comprising four key pillars: adaptation, mitigation, climate finance, and creating an enabling environment for climate actions in Africa<sup>1</sup>.

Regarding climate change, the Bank has been committed to supporting pan-African positions as expressed by the Committee of African Heads of State and Government on Climate Change, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the Regional Economic Communities and the African Group Negotiators. In addition, the Bank maintains constant engagement with all non-state actors including civil society organizations, business associations, parliamentarians, academia and the media etc.

At COP26, Africa was demanding that past promises made by developed countries to help finance Africa's climate action must be kept. Since the entry into force of the Paris Agreement in 2016, the African Development Bank has provided \$12.3 billion as climate finance under our second *Climate Change Action Plan (2016-2020)*. The Bank prioritized adaptation, which is Africa's climate change priority, by setting a specific target for achieving parity between adaptation and mitigation. As a result, the Bank's adaptation finance grew from \$365 million in 2016 to a high of about \$2 billion in 2019. In 2018, we achieved our parity goal by allocating nearly 50% of our climate finance resources to adaptation. We exceeded this target, with 55% and 63% of climate finance invested in adaptation actions in 2019 and 2020 respectively. In recognition of this achievement, the United Nations Secretary General in 2021 praised the Bank's global leadership role for showing the way by allocating half of our climate finance to adaptation. It is also important to note that about 80% of the Bank's climate finance resources come from its internal financing instruments. The remaining 20% is provided by co-financiers and external climate finance providers. Moving forward, the Bank has committed to double its climate finance to reach \$25 billion by 2025 while allocating at least 40% of its annual investments as climate finance.

In partnership with the Global Centre on Adaptation, we are championing several transformational Bank-funded programs such as the \$25 billion Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program to scale up adaptation action across the continent. We recently committed \$6.5 billion to support the Great Green Wall, which is arguably one of the most ambitious sustainable development programs in Africa to address the pressing challenges of environmental degradation, climate change, food insecurity and energy poverty in the Sahel region, the Horn of Africa and beyond.

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<sup>1</sup> We shall share the final document with you and thank you for your active participation in the review team on the behalf of the Bank Civil Society Committee



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On mitigation, the Bank is also spearheading important programs, building on our successful initiatives that include:

- 1) The Ouarzazate solar complex project in Morocco: the largest concentrated solar power plant in the world.
- 2) The Lake Turkana Wind power project in northern Kenya: the single largest wind farm in Africa.
- 3) The Desert to Power initiative: our bold initiative to transform the Sahel into a land of opportunities. The Desert to Power Initiative in the Sahel is initially focusing on the Sahel G5 countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger. Examples of these pioneering projects include Burkina Faso's 52 megawatt Yeleen Solar PV Projects and Chad's 32 megawatt Djermaya Solar PV project.

The Bank is also financing several transmission projects facilitating power trade and is supporting Africa's development along a low-carbon development pathway. For instance, in countries such as Cabo Verde, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco and South Africa, the Bank's investments in renewable energy play different roles: augmenting base load capacity, diversifying the energy mix, increasing rural electrification and enhancing energy security. The Bank is working with these countries on this journey by supporting—utility-scale renewable projects (along with related grid-infrastructure) and decentralized renewables, including flagship investments in new facilities and programs such as the Facility for Energy Inclusion. Since the launch of the Bank's *Strategy for the New Deal on Energy*, renewable energy projects across all major technologies constitute close to 85% of the Bank's approved power generation investments, compared to 9% during the period 2001–2010.

Regarding coal-based projects, the Bank has not invested in coal projects for over 10 years - since the approvals of the Sendou Project in Senegal and the Medupi Project in South Africa - and we are exiting from coal investments as a matter of policy. The Bank's President stated at September 2019 UN General Assembly that the Bank will not finance any coal project. The Bank has also created a Green Baseload component under the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa to support alternatives for fossil-fuel based generation, which has been recognized as one of the "Big7" instruments in the context of the COP26 Energy Transition Council.

The Bank's collaboration with civil society is an ongoing process and we look forward to continuing the conversation.

**2) A public response and apology, detailing legitimate reasons and corresponding evidence for the Bank's cancellation of the presentation of the CSO Position Statement on 4 November 2021 that was to take place at the AfDB COP 26 Pavilion.**

The Bank again regrets the cancellation of the webinar on the sidelines of COP26.

We would like to clarify that the discussion around the position paper developed and endorsed by the CSO Coalition was cancelled to allow a greater diversity of Bank departments to provide a common response. The focus of your position paper on the key themes of energy, agriculture, forestry, land and ecosystems, and climate finance required contributions from these respective Bank departments in order to adequately address the pertinent issues raised.

We propose rescheduling this discussion in early in 2022 and before COP27.

**3) A direct contact list of the individuals with whom we can engage with in the Bank's Energy and Climate Change departments must be sent to ACRP's Branch Manager**

Please find below the contact details of the Bank's Climate Change and Green Growth Department and the Civil Society Engagement Division Team:

- Al-Hamndou DORSOUMA, Acting Director Climate Change and Green Growth Department, [A.DORSOUMA@AFDB.ORG](mailto:A.DORSOUMA@AFDB.ORG)
- Daniel Schroth, Acting Director for the Department of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, [D.SCHROTH@AFDB.ORG](mailto:D.SCHROTH@AFDB.ORG)
- Zéneb TOURE, Manager Civil Society and Community Engagement Division, [Z.TOURE@AFDB.ORG](mailto:Z.TOURE@AFDB.ORG)

**4) An update on the Bank's Framework for Enhanced Engagement with CSOs and a written response outlining how the Bank is planning to improve engagement with CSOs across Africa so it is more meaningful and effective**

Since the 2012 *Framework for Enhanced Engagement with CSOs*, the Bank has made significant progress engaging with civil society via: the creation of a Bank Civil Society and Community Engagement Division in 2017; the ongoing recruitment and deployment of Civil Society Officers in Bank Regional Offices since 2018; civil society engagement in the design of relevant Bank strategies such as the Gender, Fragility, Water and Sanitation and Economic Governance strategies; and the strengthening civil society consultations during the preparation of country strategy papers.

There's been progress on enhancing civil society engagement in country dialogue with the organization of "CSO Open Days" in regional members countries, strengthening civil society participation in the design and implementation of Bank-funded projects at country level, and the renewal of the Bank-Civil Society Committee. To be closer to the people it serves, the Bank now organizes regional civil society forums that alternate with the continental civil society forum.

The progress paved the way for more interactions with non-state actors. The Bank's Independent Evaluation Unit in 2020 recommended transitioning the existing *Framework* into a Bank *Civil Society Engagement Strategy*. We thank you for your engagement in the Working Group on the development of this *Civil Society Engagement Strategy (2022-2027)*. Your comments, contributions and suggestions have been instrumental in drafting the Concept Note to be submitted to the Bank's Senior Management. As agreed at this stage, the process of developing the full strategy shall start in 2022 and will be discussed with Committee Members including ACRP and designed in a participatory manner with civil society stakeholders.



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The Bank aims to improve civil society engagement across Africa in a meaningful and effective way based on mutual trust and respect. We are developing guidelines, tools and other resources to mainstream civil society engagement in Bank country strategy papers and in Bank projects. We also intend to roll out a civil society capacity-building programme that facilitates training, information and outreach - including civil society knowledge management within the Bank and with civil society partners. The Bank intends to elaborate the civil society engagement strategy in synergy with civil society partners for a more participatory and inclusive economic transformation and green growth in Africa.

The Bank would like to assure you that we are fully committed to civil society engagement as this is the most effective way of ensuring inclusive economic growth and a rapid transition to green growth across the continent. This engagement has never been more important, particularly in this context of climate change exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Our commitment towards a people-centered development agenda remains key in building climate adaptation for resilient growth.

Kindly accept our very best wishes for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,

**Zéneb TOURE**  
**Manager**

**Civil Society and Community Engagement Division**

**Attachments:**

1. New Climate Change and Green Growth Policy and Strategy (approved by the Bank on 27 October 2021)
2. Framework for Enhanced Engagement with CSOs, 2012