



Declaration of Heads of States and Governments of ECOWAS on Climate Change

We, Heads of States and Governments of Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, participating at the 60th Ordinary Session of the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of States and Government held on December 12, 2021

Taking into account (i) the international climate governance framework through the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement ratified by all ECOWAS Member States, (ii) the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), (iii) the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), (iv) the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), (v) the Africa 2063 Agenda and (vi) the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction;

Taking into account our revised Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), representing our commitments under the Paris Agreement and our considerable efforts to implement these revised NDCs as well as our National Adaptation Plans which represent our options, efforts and strategies to build and increase resilience, strengthen adaptation and reduce the vulnerability of our communities and ecosystems to the consequences of climate change;

Taking note of the decisions of the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) to the UNFCCC held from 30th October to 12th November 2021 in Glasgow, United Kingdom;

Acknowledging the Sixth Report of the IPCC Working Group I and express our great concern at the conclusion that climate change is already affecting all regions of the Planet. It results in extreme weather conditions with adverse impacts on communities;

Concerning the effects and impacts of climate change which will lead to:

- (i) a sharp decrease in crop, livestock and fishing yields, with particular impacts on food and nutrition security,*
- (ii) threats to biodiversity,*
- (iii) the rapid degradation of infrastructure and in particular of transport networks,*
- (iv) the exacerbation of conflicts linked to the scarcity and use of natural resources and a scarcity of potable water and of course with the consequences of migration,*
- (v) proliferation of diseases (of plants, animals and humans),*
- (vi) major human and economic losses,*
- (vii) the decline in the resilience of women and young people, who are relatively more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change;*
- (viii) sea level rise and coastal erosion;*



Recognizing that the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) is exacerbated by structural factors, including their size, isolation, limited resource base, market size, exposure to climate risks and natural disasters significantly impacting socio-economic outcomes and their ability to achieve the SDGs;

Noting also that the coastal zones, very vulnerable to sea level rise, currently hosts 31% of the West African population and 51% of the urban population whose trend for 2050 would be between 74 and 83 million people in the “control of disparities” and “trend” scenarios respectively;

Recalling our national, regional and international initiatives and commitments to intensify efforts in the fight against climate change to reinforce the resilience of West African populations;

Recalling the various ECOWAS sectoral policies and programmes adopted, including the Environment Policy (2008), the Convergence Plan for the Sustainable Management and Use of Forest Ecosystems in West Africa (2013), the revised ECOWAS Agricultural Policy (2015), the Water Resources Policy in West Africa (2008), the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Policies (2015), the Master Plan for the Development of Regional Infrastructure (2021), as well as the Hydromet Initiative and the Regional Flood Management Strategy (2021);

Recognizing the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission, in collaboration with UEMOA and specialized regional institutions working on climate such as the AGRHYMET-CILSS Regional Center (Climate Regional Center for West Africa and the Sahel) and WASCAL to its efforts, through capacity building of our States, for:

- (i) the development and implementation of NDCs and National Adaptation Plans*
- (ii) the development of national frameworks for Climate Services,*
- (iii) access to climate finance,*
- (iv) climate research and seasonal forecasts,*
- (v) international climate negotiations;*
- (vi) integrating climate change into sectoral policies;*

Recognizing that these efforts, both at regional and national levels, appear to be limited in view of the scale of the impacts which affect the daily lives of our populations with:

- (i) the weakness of national climate finance;*
- (ii) weak capacity to mobilize external resources (climate funds, development partners);*
- (iii) the insufficiency of institutions accredited to climate funds in the region;*

Recognizing that a set of integrated interventions, both effective and economically affordable, in the management of natural resources, and the promotion of low-carbon technologies can significantly reduce the magnitude of the problem;

Recognizing the support that technical and financial partners provide to capacity building and investments in the management of the environment and natural resources;

Noting, however, that the investment needs expressed in the NDCs and consolidated in the assessment report of climate finance needs for West Africa for 2021 amounting to approximately \$294 billion over the period



2015-2030 will require the mobilization of additional resources from various sources at national and international levels including multilateral and bilateral development banks and funds, private sector;

Recalling the commitments made by developed countries to support adaptation finance;

Supporting sustained reliable funding for adaptation through all activities of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and deploring, however, the fact that the texts adopted in Glasgow did not establish any obligation for States participating in the mechanism of Article 6.2, including many developed countries, to double their contribution to adaptation; stress the need to continue negotiations on the levy on internationally transferred mitigation outcomes for adaptation finance;

Emphasizing the urgency to accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement under the auspices of the UNFCCC and anxious to take the necessary measures to combat climate change in view of the poor consideration of the concerns of Africa and the region in the decisions of the Conferences of the Parties to the UNFCCC;

Emphasizing the need for climate solidarity with African countries, particularly in the area of financing loss and damage and energy transition;

We, Heads of States and Governments,

Hereby commit to:

1. Intensify and strengthen our efforts to reduce vulnerability and increase adaptive capacity of our communities, ecosystems and economies while contributing to the global temperature limitation to 1.5 degrees Celsius;
2. Develop and implement our long-term low emission and climate resilient development strategies including strengthen national climate governance mechanisms for multi-sector coordination, in particular by strengthening national structures managing climate issues;
3. Take into account the unconditional activities included in the NDCs and National Adaptation Plans in development plans and national budgets;
4. Strengthen human resources, infrastructure, equipment of national hydrometeorological services, for a better provision of climate services at national and regional levels, in order to have reliable hydrometeorological information allowing better decision-making on extreme events such as floods, droughts and heat waves;
5. Advocacy for developed countries, including world leaders who pledged at COP26 in Glasgow to double adaptation funding by 2025, as well as step up their collective ambition to ensure that their pledge of \$100 billion per year is met to ensure diligent implementation of climate actions;
6. Strengthen investments to increase the share of renewable energy in the energy mix with a view to transition to low carbon development;



7. Take into consideration the foreseeable increase in the risks of coastal erosion and land salinization in any investment program in the coastal zone of West Africa and to improve the sustainability of programmed investments and their benefits in the face of climate change;
8. Support the development of strategies and programs for reducing methane and non-carbon emissions;
9. Initiate innovative mechanisms for climate financing (Green bonds, Blue bonds, debt swap, etc.)
10. Strengthening of actions in favor of fragile areas (water sheds, banks, sensitive and degraded areas, protected areas, community and transboundary forests) and engage actions against degraded water and lands in mining areas;
11. Instruct high-level delegations for their effective participation during all sessions of the Conferences of the Parties;
12. Facilitate the establishment of accredited entities in countries for the transfer of climate technologies;
13. Promote the involvement of the private sector, civil society, traditional authorities and communities in the implementation of the NDCs, resource mobilization and environmental protection;
14. Promote gender mainstreaming into climate and environmental protection actions;
15. Integrate climate change and environmental protection education into school curricula.

We also instruct the ECOWAS Commission to:

- i) Finalize and accelerate the implementation of the regional climate strategy, in collaboration with specialized regional institutions and Member States;
- ii) Develop and implement integrated regional climate-compatible programs covering the fields of agriculture, livestock, fisheries, water resources, forestry, restoration of degraded lands, preservation ecosystems, biodiversity, industry and transport;
- iii) Promote and support countries in the intensification of sustainable agriculture in order to reduce emissions from the agro-silvo-pastoral and agro-food sectors
- iv) Strengthen the capacities of member states in terms of adaptation and mitigation to climate change and stimulate the creation of sustainable, fair and decent green and blue jobs;
- v) Accelerate the development of regional initiatives on renewable and low carbon energies (hydroelectric, solar, wind, biomass, nuclear, etc.) by integrating the potential of carbon-free hydrogen (natural & green), in order to effect an energy transition adapted to the potential of our energy resources, including gas;
- vi) Promote better environmental practices and low carbon technologies;
- vii) Conduct research and systematic observation on climate and weather with regional specialized institutions, in order to have reliable data for good decision-making at the regional level in terms of mitigation, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change;



- viii) Advocate for the restructuring of climate finance architecture so that issues of public debt, fiscal space and the multidimensional vulnerabilities of countries are included in its architecture;
- ix) Accelerate the accreditation of the ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development and other interested financial entities to existing climate funds and support the accreditation process of regional institutions to climate funds;
- x) Conduct feasibility studies of investment projects/programmes to mobilize funds;
- xi) Encourage and facilitate exchanges between ECOWAS countries and the enhancement of indigenous and traditional knowledge;
- xii) Facilitate the promotion of the development and integrated management of small hydraulic structures.

We urge all regional institutions to strengthen their support to activities in the fight against climate change.

We call on the Members States to take local measures to fight against climate change.

We urge the various multilateral funds, including the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environment Facility and development partners, to support the development and implementation of regional and national adaptation and mitigation programs in West Africa;

We nominate His Excellency Mr. Nana Addo Dankwa AKUFO-ADDO, President of the Republic of Ghana as Champion to promote and mobilize the relevant multilateral institutions to implement the above ECOWAS climate commitments.