
Interlocking Africa's Bioeconomy and Climate Change Agendas Offers Promising Pathways to Agrifood Systems Transformation and Sustainable Growth, New Report Reveals

Africa can become a global leader in green growth, attracting billions in foreign investment and driving the continent's economic transformation.

News highlights:

- "Africa is at a crossroads", new report calls on leaders to embrace African bioeconomy
- Pre-COP29 analysis reveals potential to transform continent's economy with unrivalled biological resources
- Report calls for greater R&D investment so Africa can lead modernized global economy in food and energy
- Report reviews evidence toward a just energy transition and low-carbon pathways in Africa

OCTOBER 3, Rabat, Morocco – Africa's bioeconomy can ignite economic transformation and help to combat the rising challenge of climate change, delivering new jobs, food security, improved nutrition, and environmental resilience for Africans across the continent, argues a new report out today.

The [2024 Annual Trends and Outlook Report \(ATOR\)](#), titled "Advancing the Climate and Bioeconomy Agenda in Africa for Resilient and Sustainable Agrifood Systems," urges African leaders, policymakers, and global partners to unite in leveraging Africa's vast renewable biological resources to drive innovation, upscaling investments in new technologies, and upskilling to drive a bioeconomy transition while adapting to climate change.

"Africa is at a crossroads. The continent is highly vulnerable to climate change – at the same time, its rich biodiversity offers tangible opportunities to address multiple challenges simultaneously," said **Dr. Ousmane Badiane**, Executive Chairperson, [AKADEMIYA2063](#). "Investment in science and technology, skills development, and partnership with the private sector to leverage Africa's vast untapped potential will not only provide solutions for climate adaptation but also open up new industries and value chains that can drive job creation and economic diversification across the continent, especially for rural youth and other marginalized groups."

Launched by the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) at the three-day 2024 ReSAKSS Annual Conference in Rabat, Morocco, organized by [AKADEMIYA2063](#) and the African Union Commission's Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment ([AUC-DARBE](#)), in partnership with the Policy Center for the New South ([PCNS](#)), the report examines the linkages between the two pressing agendas of climate change and the bioeconomy towards building resilient agrifood systems.

Despite producing just four percent of global greenhouse emissions, Africa is disproportionately affected by climate change. Thirty million across Southern Africa face the effects of severe drought as a result of recent El Niño weather patterns, agitated by rising sea temperatures.

The report explores the challenges that the climate crisis poses for Africa's agrifood systems and the opportunities offered by a transition to a bioeconomy to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. Some critical issues highlighted in the research include:

- **Connecting Africa's climate change and bioeconomy agendas:** The report highlights the win-win relationship between climate actions and expanding the bioeconomy, with lessons from the continent and beyond. Transitioning to a bioeconomy would require clear strategies aligned with climate change targets and priorities. This would entail creating a conducive environment to enable emerging companies to innovate, providing the training and education needed to drive a bioeconomy transition, and cooperating across borders.
- **Climate risks and vulnerabilities:** Strategies should focus on reducing risk, especially in areas where the risk is known to be high. In addition, plans should incorporate important components such as agricultural research to develop new varieties and techniques, information services to help farmers adapt more quickly, and risk-reducing approaches such as irrigation, mechanization, and agroforestry.
- **Adaptation actions to climate change:** The report underscores the need for an integrated policy approach to mitigate and reverse the adverse effects of climate change. In their analysis of the likely impact of climate change on African agriculture between present day and 2050, the authors argue that the best policies and investments will be those that give farmers multiple options for adaptation, reduce risk, or increase productivity over a wide range of climate outcomes.
- **Impact of climate change and strategic investment in agricultural commodities:** An analysis of the climate stress sensitivity of agricultural commodities recommends investment in crops less sensitive to shocks. Crops such as maize, sorghum, and soybeans will see a greater production boost or a lower loss in Africa than in the rest of the world. Groundnuts and rice will do modestly worse in Africa than in the rest of the world – wheat and potatoes will suffer greater losses than those seen worldwide. This finding raises crucial policy concerns about whether countries should focus on less sensitive crops or invest more in sensitive crops and generate heat- and drought-tolerant varieties.
- **Exploring methane emissions:** Assessment of current methane concentrations using satellite remote sensing data reveals a significant presence of methane emissions throughout the continent. Methane levels vary according to the sowing, growing, and harvesting seasons, with more pronounced methane emissions during the harvesting season, indicating the agricultural sector's significant contribution to methane emissions. Strategies such as timely harvesting to avoid rainy periods and managing residue treatment can effectively control methane outputs during this season.
- **Bioeconomy in global agrifood systems:** The experiences of expanding the bioeconomy in selected African, Asian, and Latin American countries (Ghana, Namibia, Uganda, Thailand, and Brazil) demonstrate the importance of elevating the bioeconomy as a top policy priority. Linking bioeconomy initiatives with entrepreneurship and innovations in bio-based sectors,

alongside knowledge sharing across borders, will improve coherence in aligning bioeconomy sustainability objectives with climate and biodiversity and other multilateral agreements. Harnessing natural resources must be accompanied by cross-sectoral collaboration.

- **A just energy transition:** A review of the challenges and pathways for transitioning from fossil fuels and biomass energy to sustainable renewable energy in Africa indicates that this shift, a critical strategy for addressing climate change and ensuring sustainable development, is best achieved through a "just" transition. The authors address the issues of sustainability and creating job opportunities for the continent's marginalized populations, also stressing the importance of access to affordable energy options, highlighting mini-grids and other decentralized energy solutions as vital technical pathways for achieving a just energy transition, particularly in remote and underserved regions.

At this critical moment when the continent is designing its agricultural transformation action agenda for the next decade, this research will be crucial in helping policymakers understand how countries can best achieve the commitments under the CAADP through an in-depth analysis of factors that contributed to the limited progress observed over the four concluded CAADP Biennial Review cycles.

"Africa's political leaders, the private sector, and other key stakeholders need to unite to sustain and amplify the momentum for the continent's resilience and green growth agendas," said H.E. Ambassador Josefa L. C. Sacko, Commissioner, Department of Agriculture, Rural Development, Blue Economy and Sustainable Environment, African Union Commission (AUC).

"The 2024 ReSAKSS ATOR, the official monitoring and evaluation report for the CAADP, recognizes the high-priority status of climate change on Africa's development agenda. The research should be leveraged as a policy tool for decision-makers to promote dialogue on pathways toward a more comprehensive Post-Malabo CAADP Agenda that integrates the priorities for a successful food systems transformation toward an agriculture-led, broad-based economic transformation across Africa".

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About the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS)

Established in 2006 under the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP), the Regional Strategic Analysis and Knowledge Support System (ReSAKSS) supports efforts to promote evidence and outcome-based policy planning and implementation. In particular, ReSAKSS

provides data and related analytical and knowledge products to facilitate CAADP benchmarking, review, and mutual accountability processes.

AKADEMIYA2063 leads the work of ReSAKSS in partnership with the African Union Commission (AUC), the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), and leading Regional Economic Communities (RECs). The mission of AKADEMIYA2063 is to provide data, policy analysis, and capacity-strengthening support to enable African Union (AU) Member States to achieve economic transformation and shared prosperity in support of the AU's Agenda 2063. As the main platform for monitoring CAADP implementation, ReSAKSS tracks the progress of core CAADP indicators through an interactive website and a flagship Annual Trends and Outlook Report (ATOR), the official CAADP monitoring and evaluation (M&E) report. In addition to tracking progress on CAADP core indicators, the ATOR presents analysis on a feature topic of strategic importance to the CAADP agenda each year. For more information, visit: <https://conference.resakss.org/>; www.akademiya2063.org.