

The Converging Climate and Bioeconomy Agendas in Africa

Expert Panel - Concept Note

January 16, 2025 | 16:00 – 17:30

 Berlin

Organizers



GFFA EXPERT PANEL

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1. Introduction

Africa is facing the brunt of the global climate crisis. Many of the continent's regions are seeing decreased agricultural productivity due to climate stresses and shifting rainfall patterns, and its coastal nations are confronting rising sea levels that threaten livelihoods and critical infrastructure. Without immediate action to mitigate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapt to climate change, there is a serious risk that millions of people across the continent will be pushed into acute hunger and lose their livelihoods, jeopardizing the economic development progress achieved over the past decades.

At the same time, innovations in developing a sustainable bioeconomy in Africa offer real opportunities to address multiple challenges simultaneously. The bioeconomy is set to play a crucial role in fostering sustainable development by utilizing biological resources, such as plants, animals, and microorganisms, to produce food, energy, and materials. The bioeconomy promotes the shift away from fossil fuel dependency, helping to mitigate climate change while supporting biodiversity and ecosystems and enhancing communities' ability to adapt and build resilience. By harnessing innovations in biotechnology and circular economy principles, the bioeconomy also creates new industries and jobs, fostering economic growth. It encourages efficient resource use, reduces waste, and contributes to food security, making it essential for addressing both environmental and socioeconomic challenges.

The recently released 2024 edition of the Annual Trends and Outlook Report (ATOR) explores the challenges that the climate crisis poses for agrifood systems, and the opportunities offered by a transition to a bioeconomy to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change. The report highlights priority areas for action, ranging from developing an integrated policy approach to mitigate and reverse the negative effects of climate change to expanding investment in bioeconomy to leverage biotechnology, agricultural waste, and renewable resources and to enhance value addition and diversify income streams for farmers and rural communities.

More importantly, the report highlights the win-win relationship between climate actions and expanding the bioeconomy, with lessons from the continent and beyond. It also stresses the urgency of accelerating the implementation of national, continental, and regional climate change initiatives while helping to bridge the knowledge gap around climate change and bioeconomy agendas by generating new evidence and compiling existing knowledge within the context of Africa's agrifood systems transformation.

The intertwined challenges and opportunities facing Africa will shape its progress in achieving sustainable development and reaching its potential for economic growth. The call by the 2024 ATOR for a systematic and well-designed strategic approach to address the challenges while tapping into the opportunities could not come at a more opportune time. The ongoing efforts to equip Africa with a new 10-year CAADP strategy (2026–2035) to implement the post-Malabo agenda present an opportune moment for African leaders to align the CAADP goals and ambitions with emerging initiatives such as the implementation of countries' UNFSS national pathways, revision of NDCs in 2025, the Global Bioeconomy Summit held in October 2024, hosted for the first time in Africa, and Brazil's G20 Bioeconomy Initiative.

2. Session Objectives

With a focus on four thematic issues, including climate change and its impact on agrifood systems, the link between bioeconomy and nutrition, climate change and bioeconomy financing, and strategy formulation and implementation, the expert session will specifically:

- a) Share the key findings of the 2024 ATOR;
- b) Review the economic impacts of climate change and the linkages between climate and bioeconomy actions ;
- c) Review opportunities offered by bioeconomy to improve nutrition outcomes;
- d) Review the innovative models in climate and bioeconomy financing and
- e) Discuss the rationale and opportunity of mainstreaming the bioeconomy in the new CAADP agenda across the continental, regional, and national levels.

3. Session Format (90 min)

Chair and Moderator: Joachim von Braun, ZEF

Opening and Framing Remarks

- *Opening and global political context:* **Joachim von Braun**, ZEF (5 min)
- *Introducing the 2024 ATOR and key findings and continental political context:* **Augustin Wambo Yamdjeu**, AKADEMIYA2063 (5 min)

Moderated Panel Discussion (45 min; 2 questions each)

- **Getaw Tadesse**, AKADEMIYA2063 – The nexus between climate change and bioeconomy
- **Bill Sutton**, World Bank – Climate and Nature
- **Cecilia d’Alessandro**, ECDPM – Climate change financing
- **Ebenezer Miezah Kwofie**, McGill University – the Bioeconomy-Nutrition Nexus

Q&A [30 min]

Closing Remarks

- **Julius Ecuru**, ICIPE/BioInnovate Africa [05 min]

Languages

English

Key Resources

- 2024 ATOR: [Advancing the climate and bioeconomy agenda in Africa for resilient and sustainable agrifood systems](#)
- 2024 Global Bioeconomy Summit [Communique](#)

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