



## 3<sup>rd</sup> Africa Climate Talks

### Climate Change and Development in Africa: African perspectives on climate resilient recovery from COVID-19

#### *Webinar Series*

*2nd Session: COVID-19, climate change and development in Africa –  
expectations from COP26*

*XX April 2021, 12pm – 2pm (UTC)*

#### Introduction

The Covid-19 pandemic has wrought havoc on economies, communities and ecosystems across the world. It has been described as a revelatory crisis, enabling us to see more clearly crises that already were unfolding before the pandemic. One of these is the climate crisis. Like Covid-19, climate change is a global crisis that affects countries and communities in different ways. Africa is already bearing the brunt of the impacts of climate change, while contributing the least to the crisis. The vulnerabilities to climate change are reflections of wider developmental issues, including poverty; massive infrastructure gaps in energy, water, agriculture transport and other sectors; and low institutional development and overwhelming capacity constraints.

The Covid-19 crisis is an inflection point. This is reflected in the categorical calls by citizens, civil society, private sector and other stakeholders for a better post Covid-19 world. A post pandemic world should recognise the crises and challenges that existed before the pandemic, devise solutions, and build a better, more equitable and sustainable dispensation. Despite the widespread calls to build back better, concrete ideas about how this can be achieved are still evolving. Already in 2020, governments worldwide are investing more than \$10 trillion in crisis relief stimulus packages. Most of the stimulus packages coming on stream do not sufficiently incorporate climate resilience into their recovery plans. The narrow window of opportunity to build a more climate resilient world could close very quickly. The pandemic and the resulting responses hold many lessons which can inform the post-pandemic reconstructions. There are many similarities between the Covid-19 pandemic and climate change crises, as well as significant divergences. How can the lessons and experiences be harnessed to inform climate informed post pandemic reconstruction?

The African Climate Policy Centre (ACPC) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the Climate Change and Desertification Unit (CCDU) of the African

Union Commission (AUC), and the ClimDev-Africa Special Fund (CDSF) of the African Development Bank (AfDB) are hosting a series of webinar events – as part of the Africa Climate Talks (ACT!)<sup>1</sup> - aimed at teasing out key lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and exploring viable pathways towards building a climate resilient Africa. The webinars are based on an ACPC background paper on “*Climate Change and Development in Africa Post COVID-19: Some Critical Reflections*” that is [available here](#).

Initial indications are that Covid-19 is a zoonotic disease caused by the corona virus making the leap from wildlife to humans, possibly through an intermediate species. There are clear links between health and the environment. Biodiversity loss and proximity to wildlife can create the conditions for illnesses to spread. Research suggests that the emergence of new human diseases is closely linked to loss and degradation of ecosystems and habitats, which in turn is driven by climate change, resource extraction, urban and agricultural expansion and pollution. Rising temperatures have been linked with changes in the range of malarial mosquitoes, and the spread of malaria and the Zika virus. but promote meaningful. These health challenges arising from climate change impacts are thus just a harbinger of things to come in the absence of urgent and meaningful concerted global action on climate change.

### Objective

The webinar series brings together different perspectives and stakeholders to stimulate a pan-African discourse aimed at contributing to the emergence of an African narrative on climate change and development, drawing on lessons from experiences with the COVID-19 pandemic and identification of opportunities that could be translated into policy options by African decision makers to build more resilient societies and economies, while enhancing environmental integrity.

The specific objective of the 2nd session is to explore the convergence of the COVID-19 and climate crises and what this means for global climate governance, and the transformative outcomes that should be expected from COP26.



Funded by:



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<sup>1</sup> Launched in 2015, the Africa Climate Talks (ACTs!) is an all of society initiative that seeks to democratize the climate change and development narrative in Africa through engaging all the stakeholders from the local, national, to sub-regional and regional in totally inclusive discourses to catalyse organic African perspectives on climate change and development which contribute to the realization of Agenda 2063 and the SDGs through climate resilience.