

NEWSLETTER

CLIMATE CHECK



TOP NEWS FOR THE QUARTER

SADC URGED TO UNITE ON UN TAX CONVENTION, CLIMATE ACTION

Civil society organizations are calling for a unified SADC stance on the UN Tax Convention, climate action, and a shift towards renewable energy to address regional challenges like public debt, food systems, and gender equity.

Consumers play a vital role in tackling climate change by embracing sustainable habits, supporting renewable energy, and advocating for stronger policies. Simple actions like choosing eco-friendly products, reducing carbon footprints, and investing in green finance can make a significant difference.

TOPICAL CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES CONSUMERS SHOULD KNOW



Summary transcript remarks by UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell at the 10th African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 5 September 2024.

Today, I want to start with some good news. Climate action is the single greatest economic opportunity of this century. It can and should be the single greatest opportunity for Africa, to lift up people, communities, and economies, after centuries of exploitation. The opportunity is immense. But so too are the costs for African nations of unchecked global heating. The continent has been warming at a faster rate than the global average. From Algeria to Zambia, climate-driven disasters are getting worse, inflicting the most suffering on those who did least to cause it. In Africa, as in all regions, the climate crisis is an economic sinkhole, sucking the momentum out of economic growth.

In fact, many African nations are losing up to 5% of GDP as a result of climate impacts. Consider food production being hit hard, contributing to the re-emergence of famine, while also pushing up global prices, and with them inflation and the cost of living. Supply chains are already being hit hard by spiraling climate impacts.

It is African nations and people who are paying the heaviest price. But it would be entirely incorrect for any world leader - especially in the G20 - to think: although this is all incredibly sad, ultimately it's not my problem. The economic and political reality – in an interdependent world - is we are all in this crisis together. We rise together, or we fall together. But if the climate and economic crises are globally interlinked. So too are the solutions.

At COP28, we concluded the first-ever stock take of global climate action. It showed how much more work is still needed. In response all nations agreed on some ambitious new commitments.

- To transition away from all fossil fuels quickly, but fairly.
- To triple renewable energy.
- To double energy efficiency.
- And to go from responding to climate impacts, to truly transformative adaptation.

I recognize these are big commitments, particularly in regions focused on development. But delivering on them will unlock a goldmine of human and economic benefits. Cleaner, more reliable and affordable energy across Africa. Linking nature-based climate solutions with biodiversity protection and land restoration will drive progress right across the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Yet African nations' vast potential to drive forward climate solutions is being thwarted by an epidemic of underinvestment. Of the more than \$400 billion spent on clean energy last year, only \$2.6 billion went to African nations. Renewable energy investment in Africa needs to grow at least fivefold by 2030.

COP29 in Baku must signal that the climate crisis is core business for every government, with finance solutions to match. Nations must agree a new international climate financial goal. And ensure that it is grounded in the needs of developing countries.

We must make the Loss and Damage Fund fully operational.

UN Climate Change will be with you every step of the way.

I thank you.

ZAMBIA'S ENERGY TRANSITION: DIVERSIFYING POWER SOURCES FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

BY KAMBOBE MALASHA

As Zambia faces a severe drought that has disrupted its hydroelectric power generation, the Ministry of Energy is taking decisive action to diversify the country's energy sources. On August 1, 2024, the Ministry announced a major breakthrough in the GET FiT Zambia 120MW Solar PV programme, aimed at addressing the energy crisis while pushing Zambia's renewable energy agenda. This development was made possible through the cooperation of the German government and KfW, the German Development Bank. The GET FiT Zambia solar projects will also strengthen Zesco's operational capacity, offering much-needed cost reductions as renewable energy becomes more cost-competitive than traditional sources.

In addition to addressing electricity access, Zambia is seeing a sharp rise in energy demand, driven largely by the expanding copper mining industry. To meet this demand sustainably, while also fulfilling the country's climate change commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 47% by 2030, a shift toward renewable energy is essential.

Zambia's reliance on hydroelectric power, which accounts for over 80 percent of electricity generation, has been severely affected by the ongoing drought, leading to power shortages. Expanding renewable energy sources, and adopting green solutions will greatly improve energy security and reliability, reducing the risks associated with dependence on a single, climate-sensitive source.

Another key challenge is Zambia's continued dependence on charcoal for cooking and heating, particularly in urban areas. Charcoal production contributes to deforestation, environmental degradation, and air pollution. Reducing the nation's reliance on charcoal is critical to protecting Zambia's forests. Renewable energy alternatives, such as Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG), biogas, and charcoal briquettes, are cleaner cooking technologies that can provide more sustainable options and reduce the demand for charcoal.

In a time of drought, rising energy demand, and environmental challenges, Zambia's emphasis on diversifying energy sources through solar, wind, geothermal, and efforts to reduce reliance on charcoal is essential for building a sustainable, resilient, and inclusive energy future.



SADC URGED TO UNITE ON UN TAX CONVENTION, CLIMATE ACTION

BY NANCY MWAPE

Civil society organizations (CSOs) have called on SADC Heads of States to present a unified stance in support of the UN Tax Convention and avoid negotiating as individual countries, which weakens the region's negotiating power.

Speaking at a media briefing held on 3rd September 2024 in Lusaka, Zambia Social Forum representative Mr. Gershom Kabaso emphasized the need for a coordinated approach to standardise tax systems, curb tax evasion and avoidance, which deprives the region of crucial resources for development.

He was presenting the outcomes of the 2024 SADC People's Summit, held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 15th to 16th August 2024, which attracted over 500 participants from various CSOs, including the Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) International.

The Summit, themed "Reclaiming SADC for People's Development," addressed urgent regional issues such as health, agriculture, education, employment, climate change, gender, trade, and governance.

Mr. Kabaso highlighted the intertwined crises of climate change and public debt, both of which hinder the region's ambitions for climate justice and resilience. "The Summit recognized the crippling effect of the public debt burden, which hampers environmental sustainability, social justice, and economic equity across the region," he stated.

He urged SADC Heads of States to quantify climate-induced losses and damages to make a compelling case for grant-based, rather than loan-based, financing from developed nations, particularly to address climate change and reduce the region's debt burden.

In addition, Kabaso outlined key recommendations from the Summit, including the need for green climate budgets at both national and sub-national levels to support agro-ecology, indigenous knowledge systems, and seed sovereignty for transforming food systems.

The Summit's other key demands included stopping the expansion of industrial agriculture and reducing reliance on petrochemicals and synthetic fertilizers in food production.

Mainstreaming gender-transformative approaches into climate discussions, with a focus on decision-making, education, and community involvement. Ensuring women's inclusion in climate resilience projects and integrating risk management into SADC's Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy.

Regarding renewable energy, CSOs called on SADC member states to prioritize investments in solar, wind, and hydropower to transition away from fossil fuels. They also endorsed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty to support the region's energy transition.



ZAMBIA, SWEDEN SIGN MOU TO ADVANCE CARBON CREDIT COOPERATION

BY DALITSO MVULA

In a landmark event, Zambia and Sweden have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at fostering international cooperation under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. The agreement signed by Zambia's Ministry of Green Economy and Environment (MGEE) and the Swedish Energy Agency, marks the beginning of negotiations for a bilateral agreement focused on carbon credit transactions.

The event held in Lusaka on 20th August 2024, was attended by key figures including MGEE Permanent Secretary Dr. Dauty Chibamba and Swedish Ambassador to Zambia Mr. Johan Hallenborg. The MoU signifies a major step forward in Zambia's efforts to address its energy challenges through innovative climate cooperation. By leveraging Sweden's expertise and support, Zambia aims to enhance its energy sector, contribute to climate goals, and drive sustainable development.

"This MoU represents the first chapter of a successful partnership under Article 6," noted Dr. Chibamba. The agreement is set to bolster Zambia's capacity to engage in carbon markets and implement effective mitigation strategies, aligning with global climate objectives.

Swedish Ambassador Hallenborg emphasized the potential of this collaboration to address Zambia's energy needs while supporting its climate targets. "Sweden's involvement will focus on Zambia's specific energy needs and contribute to broader climate goals," he stated.

The Swedish Energy Agency's Deputy Director General, Ms. Caroline Asserup, highlighted the importance of international cooperation in tackling climate change. "This formalised collaboration is crucial for addressing global climate challenges," she said.

As part of their visit, Swedish officials also explored the Industrial Development Corporation, Supa Moto, and the Kafue Sugar Project to further understand Zambia's development landscape.

This initiative is supported by the Supporting Preparedness for Article 6 Cooperation (SPAR6C) program, which provides technical assistance and capacity building to countries preparing for carbon credit transactions under the Paris Agreement. SPAR6C is funded by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action (BMWK) and managed in Zambia by GGGI, in collaboration with GFA Consulting Group and the UN Environment Program Copenhagen Climate Centre.



FOOD LOSS: HOW SOIL MAPPING CAN HELP

BY KAMBOBE MALASHA

Food loss is a growing concern in Zambia, exacerbated by the ongoing drought, which is increasing food insecurity across the country. Agriculture plays a pivotal role in Zambia's economy, with approximately 60% of the population engaged in the sector, according to the World Bank. However, the current drought is hindering the food supply chain, preventing a large portion of food from reaching consumers.

The drought has heightened existing challenges, such as poor soil health and outdated farming methods, further reducing crop yields and increasing waste. Since smallholder farmers produce most of Zambia's food, addressing these issues is crucial for improving food security. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) estimates that up to 30% of food produced in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Zambia, is lost, leading to shortages and jeopardizing livelihoods.

What is Soil Mapping?

“Soil mapping is a critical tool for understanding the ground beneath our feet. It provides essential information for land use planning, soil conservation, and agricultural management. It helps us understand the physical, chemical, and biological properties of soil and enables us to make informed decisions about land use and management.”(Geopard, 2024)

How Can Soil Mapping Help Reduce Food Loss in Zambia?

- **Optimizing Fertilizer Use:** Many Zambian farmers apply fertilizers without a clear understanding of their soil's nutrient requirements, resulting in either under- or over-application. Soil mapping allows farmers to assess their soil's precise composition, enabling them to apply fertilizers more efficiently. This reduces waste and enhances crop yields.
- **Reducing Reliance on Synthetic Fertilizers:** The overuse of synthetic fertilizers has led to long-term soil degradation and increased food loss. While offering short-term gains, these fertilizers deplete essential nutrients and damage soil microorganisms, ultimately lowering crop productivity. Soil mapping enables farmers to transition to more sustainable fertilization methods, such as using organic compost or agroecological practices, which help maintain the soil's natural fertility.

This approach not only boosts yields but also mitigates environmental damage caused by synthetic fertilizer runoff, such as water pollution. By adopting a more balanced and sustainable approach to soil management, farmers can reduce food loss throughout the value chain.





Republic of Zambia
Ministry of Green Economy and Environment
Zambia Meteorological Department

Weather Alert and advisory

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A strong high pressure system located over the south eastern coast of South Africa will induce a **strong, cool and moist airflow** over Zambia from **30th August to 3rd September, 2024**.

This will result in partly **cloudy** weather conditions, an **increase in winds** and a **reduction in temperature**. Isolated **rainfall** is anticipated in some parts of Lusaka, Central, Eastern and Muchinga Provinces during the forecast period.

Farmers are therefore advised to **secure harvested crops** to avoid damage due to the rains expected during this period and the general public to **keep warm and avoid open areas** due to dusty conditions as this weather may lead to increased cases of flu and other health related conditions.

Users of **water transport and fishers** are advised to take precautionary measures to **avoid accidents** due to windy weather conditions anticipated.

*Produced by the Zambia Meteorological Department,
Ministry of Green Economy and Environment.*



TOPICAL CLIMATE CHANGE ISSUES CONSUMERS SHOULD KNOW:

Carbon Footprint: Awareness of how everyday actions (like transportation or energy use) contribute to carbon emissions.

Eco-Labeling: Consumers should be familiar with eco-labels that indicate products are environmentally friendly.

Sustainable Consumption: Consumers are encouraged to adopt eco-friendly products, reduce waste, and lower carbon footprints.

Green Finance: Awareness of climate-friendly investment options, such as green bonds or eco-friendly mutual funds.

Transitioning to clean energy sources like solar, wind, and hydro can reduce climate impact.

Sustainable Agriculture: Encouragement to support practices that minimize environmental impact, such as organic farming or agroforestry.

Climate Adaptation: The need for consumers to prepare for climate impacts such as extreme weather events, droughts, or floods.

Climate Advocacy: Consumers can participate in pushing for stronger climate policies from their governments.