






COP27 POLICY BRIEF SERIES

Reflections on COP26 for Africa and Zambia: where to next?

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Summary

COP26 concluded with the 197 parties agreeing to the 'Glasgow Climate Pact'. The package of decisions included strengthened efforts to curb greenhouse gas emissions and returning to COP27 in Egypt with more ambitious emissions reductions targets. This is with the aim of closing the gap to limit global warming to under 1.5°C from the current trajectory of 2.4°C. Drawing on an online

workshop held in December 2021, this policy brief discusses the implications of the Glasgow Climate Pact for Africa and Zambia in particular. It highlights key policy areas of interest, including finance, mitigation and adaptation, collaboration, and climate policy implementation challenges, before setting out important issues for Africa that will need to be debated as we look towards COP27 in Egypt in November 2022.

Key Policy Recommendations

- African countries, and Zambia in particular, would benefit from reframing their climate policy discussions in terms of contribution to their context-specific sustainable development aspirations.
- Greater policy coherence and integration across climate-relevant sectors will be vital to enabling effective implementation.
- Prior to COP27, African countries should build strong cases that demonstrate that the current climate finance architecture is not currently fit for the purpose of meeting Africa's needs.
- Lessons from Zambia show the need to revisit and strengthen Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) ambitions, raising the all-important question of what African countries can do to collaboratively strengthen their NDCs.
- One pathway will be to explore the links between adaptation and mitigation in order to support sustainable and resilient development.



The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect the UK government's official policies.

Introduction

This policy brief discusses the implications of the Glasgow Climate Pact for Africa and Zambia in particular. It draws on an online workshop held in December 2021 which discussed the extent to which the outcomes responded to Zambian and African priorities, key challenges, and opportunities. The workshop was jointly organized by the Zambian Institute for Policy Analysis & Research and University College London, under the auspices of the Climate Compatible Growth Programme¹.

The Outcomes of COP26 for Africa

COP26 concluded with the 197 parties agreeing to the 'Glasgow Climate Pact' [1]. The package of decisions included strengthened efforts to curb greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and returning to COP27 in Egypt with more ambitious emissions reductions targets. This is with the aim of closing the gap to limit global warming to under 1.5°C from the current trajectory of 2.4°C. It also reaffirmed the responsibility of developed countries to fulfil their pledge of providing USD 100 billion per year to developing countries. Further promises were made to support climate vulnerable countries adapt to the dangerous and costly impacts of climate change through the adaptation fund.

“Adaptation remains a key priority for Africa, but agreement on enhanced financing remains problematic.”

COP26 took place in the shadows of an extraordinary two years. Firstly, the world was hit by a global pandemic which brought into sharp focus the inter-relationships between the environment and the vulnerability of human systems. Despite calls for a 'green recovery' that 'builds back better', by April 2022, the advanced economies had spent USD 18.6 trillion on an unsustainable recovery, with green investment amounting a mere 3% of this total [2]. Secondly, a new US administration arrived in January 2021. The reinstatement of the US into the Paris Agreement, along with a chain of executive orders that followed, positioned the US to play its part in tackling the climate crisis. Thirdly, 2021 marked a year when Africa faced numerous challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic had decimated livelihoods and economies across Africa, nursing a deep recession that threatened to throw nearly 40 million people into extreme poverty. Africa came to the COP with a greater understanding that economic recovery from the pandemic needed to be aligned with meaningful climate action. But it needed a global community that was willing to listen, cooperate, and act. Africa came with a suite of demands to Glasgow:

Mitigation. Curbing GHG emissions is at the heart of keeping 1.5°C alive and, given much of Africa's infrastructure is yet to be built, how the remaining carbon budget is allocated and Africa's entitlement within that is critical to the continent. The Glasgow Climate Pact represented only limited incremental progress; announcements at COP26 would lead to a pathway of global warming decreasing from 2.7 to 2.4°C.

¹ This is one of a series of workshops held in Zambia under the CCG programme. These findings will be presented in future outputs.

Adaptation remains a key priority for Africa, but agreement on enhanced financing remains problematic. The Glasgow Climate Pact urged Parties to further integrate adaptation into local, national, and regional planning, and for developed countries to double their collective provision of climate finance for adaptation, taking it from 25% to 50% share of global climate finance.

Loss and Damage. Despite expressions of goodwill, the G77 and China proposal for establishing a dedicated facility for loss and damage was not included. But there were reasons for optimism. Scotland's First Minister, Nicola Sturgeon, pledged GBP 2 million as an 'act of reparation' [3], challenging the resistance of richer nations and opening up a conversation on issues of liability and responsibility.

Finance. There was no breakthrough on the commitment to reach the USD 100 billion of climate finance per year target. The Glasgow Pact noted its 'regret' that developed countries were not able to mobilize the money, urging them to 'fully deliver on the USD 100 billion goal urgently and through to 2025'.

The Zambia Workshop

The outcomes of COP26 were unpacked at the workshop². Attending the workshop were ten participants from government ministries (5), non-governmental organizations (1), research organizations (2), and international partners (2) dealing with climate-related issues in Zambia and Africa³. While some participants thought COP26 had been a success, others argued the outcomes were mixed at best. Agreement on the accounting rules of international carbon markets – especially [Article 6](#) [4] – was seen as a positive outcome, as was the [Declaration on Forest and](#)

[Land Use](#) [5]. However, others lamented the failure to agree on the financing agreement, which is required for climate finance to be scaled up. Four key themes were discussed during the workshop:

POLICY & GOVERNANCE

Participants argued that COP26 provided Zambia momentum to mainstream climate change issues. The establishment of the Ministry of Green Economy and Environment was praised as a strong indication of the Government's commitment. Participants were hopeful that the new arrangement will provide the mechanism to mainstream climate change across sectors. Some noted the need to forge stronger partnerships to catalyse synergies between adaptation, mitigation, and commitments under the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Concerns were also raised over persistent policy implementation gaps and the need to review and improve existing climate strategies.

INNOVATION & TECHNOLOGY DEVELOPMENT

The need to make stronger connections between innovation, technology, and finance was emphasized. Participants argued that climate finance capacity should be better integrated with a country's development priorities and be assessed against existing innovation capabilities. For Zambia, key areas of innovation investment include Climate Smart

² The agenda for the workshop consisted of brief overviews of the two projects that underpinned the workshop, short reflections from each participant on the outcomes of COP26 for Zambia, and open discussion which centred around the four themes discussed in this brief.

³ A purposive and convenience sampling strategy was used to identify individuals to participate in the workshop.

Agriculture (CSA) and green transport. CSA was considered a major opportunity, although challenges for scaling and diffusion remain. These include:

- lack of equitable access to finance and innovation capabilities
- weak technology adoption
- underdeveloped extension services and peer-to-peer exchange.

On green transport, participants discussed the need to invest in technological innovations. This was considered vital to meeting many of Zambia's development goals, including improving access to services and bolstering international trading connections.

INVESTMENT & FINANCE

Finance remains a major barrier to both mitigation and adaptation, and participants highlighted several areas where changes are required. They discussed the need to create more flexible and responsive financial mechanisms, with current mechanisms being too lengthy and insufficiently inclusive. African countries are seen as high-risk destinations for private finance, preventing their ability to access affordable finance from the international capital market. Participants also highlighted the need for better financing metrics, which need to go beyond project bankability. Finally, the urgent requirement for more investment and finance in adaptation was discussed. Participants argued that while this is a priority for many least developed countries, including Zambia, finance for adaptation is lagging and lacks clear commitments from international stakeholders. Participants questioned whether financing commitments would be kept, lamented the loss of grant components, and cited the urgent need for scale-up of pledges.

“Increased collaboration amongst stakeholders at local, national, and international levels underpins action on climate change in Zambia.”



COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIPS

Increased collaboration amongst stakeholders at local, national, and international levels underpins action on climate change in Zambia. Participants discussed how the momentum created by COP26 could be used to enhance meaningful alliances and keep the wider public well informed about climate change consequences as well as opportunities for joint action. It was agreed that strengthening local capacity beyond the national government will be essential. This requires deeper conversations with all societal actors to unpack what COP26 meant for Zambia and its people, and to place high-level climate pledges into context.

Where to next?

COP26 provided a springboard to achieve higher level ambitions at COP27. However, much work awaits:

- 1) Participants argued that Zambia, and Africa, should **link climate change to their context-specific sustainable development aspirations**.
- 2) Achieving this will require **greater policy coherence and integration** across climate-relevant sectors. In Zambia and elsewhere this will require strengthening of public institutions in order to **enable effective implementation**.
- 3) The debate around financing for adaptation, loss and damage, and mitigation is critical, and Africa needs to play a proactive role in getting the best possible deal in Egypt. A

strong case should be made that the **current architecture for accessing finance is not meeting Africa's needs**. This architecture needs to be adapted to the particular hurdles that Zambia and other African countries face.

- 4) The Glasgow Climate Pact requested that countries revisit and strengthen their NDCs 'as necessary to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal' by the time of COP27 in Egypt [1]. Although high-emitting countries are chiefly responsible for the climate crisis, the question remains: **what can African countries do to collaboratively strengthen their NDCs?** Answers to this question have the scope to provide a positive direction for African policymaking. **Careful consideration of adaptation and mitigation, and where they can be linked, could lead to more sustainable and resilient development.**

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