



IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report Analysis

Nairobi Kenya, 22 March 2023— In its latest report, released on March 20, 2023, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) again classified Africa among the most vulnerable regions to climate change, and called a transformational change in all sectors of society to achieve climate-resilient development in Africa.

According to the report, the region is projected to experience more frequent and intense heat waves, droughts, floods, storms, and wildfires under all emission scenarios.

These extreme events will have negative consequences for human health, food security, water availability, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. The effects of the climate crisis are already dire, the report shows. It warns, for instance, that as warming continues some regions of Africa may become uninhabitable or lose their agricultural potential by the end of this century under high-emission scenarios.

This is happening against a backdrop of scaled up exploration of oil and opening of coal mines by developed countries and sustained pressure on Africa countries with such resources to sign concessions with developed countries for extraction of more dirty energy and further contribute to worsening emissions and further spikes in global temperatures. It just seems the global conspiracy on less developed countries has reached monumental proportion, and impunity for rich nations is becoming the new global order.

Economic costs are already piling up. The IPCC estimates that Africa has incurred annual losses of \$7 billion due to climate change between 2010 and 2019, which could rise to \$50 billion by 2040 under a high-emissions scenario. In addition, climate change could reduce gross domestic product (GDP) growth in Africa by 2-4% per year by 2040, and by 10-25% by 2100, compared to a no-climate-change scenario.

The report was released against the backdrop of Cyclone Freddy, a powerful and deadly tropical storm hit Malawi and Mozambique, causing widespread flooding, landslides, and cholera outbreaks. According to the UN, more than half a million people were displaced by the cyclone in Malawi alone, and hundreds of people lost their lives in both countries. Cyclone Freddy also damaged infrastructure and social services, hampering relief efforts and access to health care.

Yet, one of the key findings of the report is that there is a large gap between the climate finance needs and flows for adaptation and mitigation in Africa and other developing regions.

According to the IPCC, developing countries alone will need \$127 billion per year by 2030 and \$295 billion per year by 2050 to adapt to climate change. But funds for adaptation reached just

\$23 billion to \$46 billion from 2017 to 2018, accounting for only 4% to 8% of tracked climate finance.

Dr Mithika Mwenda, Executive Director of the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance said:

“What we read in this report is an unbelievable level of insensitivity and indifference to the suffering of millions in Africa, who are unjustly burdened by the effect of a crisis they neither caused nor have the means to address. Industrialized countries that are responsible for this crisis must come to terms with the inhumanity of the effects of their pursuit of self-gain. For such grim statistics as captured in this report to make sense, we need a new order for global climate governance. Without a new thinking on the required international cooperation and support for African countries to implement effective policies and measures that are consistent with the scale of the climate challenge they are experiencing, their development goals and priorities, this report will be another warming that gets ignored.”

Beyond Africa, the synthesis report concludes that urgent action is needed to limit warming to well below 2°C or even 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels; adapt to unavoidable impacts; enhance resilience; reduce vulnerability; support sustainable development; protect human rights; ensure equity; promote justice; foster cooperation; enhance participation; strengthen governance; increase ambition; accelerate transformation; mobilize resources; harness innovation; empower people; protect nature; respect diversity; build solidarity; secure peace; and safeguard our common future.

The IPCC’s report will shape climate change dialogues in the buildup to the 28th UN Conference on Climate Change (COP28). The conference, hosted by the United Arab Emirates in November 2023, has already drawn criticism following the appointment of Sultan al-Jaber, head of an oil giant, to lead the negotiations.

Dr Augustine B Njamnshi, chair of the Political and Technical Affairs Committee at PACJA said:

“COP28 should be a defining moment for climate action in the light of this report. However, we are all but optimistic. Appointing an oil executive to lead climate negotiations shows that the UEA authorities do not fully appreciate the severity of the declining trust and faith in the ability of the global community to step up to the challenge at hand. We doubt that the UAE authorities can deliver the trustworthy leadership needed to take transformative decisions at COP28 and beyond. That is why we still believe that Sultan al-Jaber needs to step down.”

The IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report is the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment of climate change to date. It summarizes the findings of three previous reports on the physical science, impacts, adaptation and vulnerability, and mitigation of climate change.

For more interviews, contact Mr. Fidele NIYIGABA, Communications and Knowledge Management Manager;

Email: fidele.niyigaba@pacja.org