



PRESS KIT

ECOWAS

Regional Climate Strategy

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Taking action for the climate is urgent and a priority

Climate change is a vital concern for West African economies, societies, communities and ecosystems. The effects of global warming are transforming the regional environment and increasing the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events in West Africa. These changes in the world's climate are reshaping the world and increasing the risks of instability and insecurity in all its forms. This trend in climate change is clearly reaffirmed by the IPCC in its 6th Assessment Report.

Climate change is a priority issue for West Africa. Africa is the continent that contributes the least to greenhouse gas emissions, but it is among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Indeed, nine of the thirty most vulnerable countries in the world are in the West African region, and four of the ten most vulnerable countries.

Emissions from ECOWAS countries represent 1.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions. All ECOWAS countries emit on average less than one tonne of CO₂ per capita per year.

The main climatic hazards are the increase in temperature: in West Africa, the increase in temperature is 1.5 times higher than at the global level, recurrent droughts, greater variability in

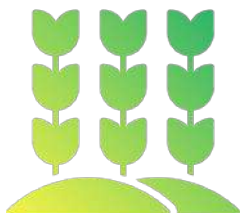
rainfall and seasons, marked by rainy episodes that are sometimes rarer and often more intense, increasingly frequent and violent floods, rising sea levels and wave heights, etc., with dramatic human and economic consequences on all sectors of the countries and on the most vulnerable populations, including women, young people and the elderly.

In view of the seriousness of future impacts, «Acting Together» within the framework of regional solidarity is an absolute necessity to enable the West African region to reduce its vulnerability and collectively face up to the risks induced by the impacts of climate change which, by definition, have no borders.

“

In West Africa, the temperature increase is 1.5 times greater than the global level.

Impacts with dramatic human and economic consequences



Agriculture : By 2050, overall reduction in average yields of 12%, 16%, 20% and 25% respectively for millet, sorghum, maize and rice. By 2030, climate change could reduce groundnut yields from 11% to 25% and cowpea yields by 30% in some sub-regions of the Sahelian and Sudanian zone. Cocoa bean production will also be greatly reduced by 2050.

Water resources: River flows in the region are projected to decrease from 20% to 40% by 2050 (with implications for hydroelectricity supply), and groundwater recharge in the region's coastal areas is projected to decrease by 12.5% and 25% respectively by 2030 and 2050.



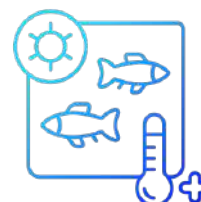
Accelerated coastal erosion, despite the fact that West Africa's coastal areas are home to about a third of the region's population and generate 56% of its GDP.

Climatic migration: By 2050, climatic factors could force up to 32 million people to migrate within their country in West Africa.



Health: Increased risk of malnutrition, diarrhoeal diseases such as cholera, mosquito-borne diseases such as malaria and dengue fever with increasing temperatures and more variable rainfall, and 6-9 times higher risk of heat-related mortality (than the 1950-2005 average) with 2°C global warming .

Fisheries: The average maximum body size of marine fish in the tropics is expected to decrease by about 20% by 2050 compared to the 2000s according to the IPCC's pessimistic RCP8.5 scenario and the degradation of fishing environments (e.g. mangroves) leading to fish depletion.



Economy: According to the African Development Bank, the impact of climate change on the continent could reach US\$50 billion per year by 2040, with a further 30% decline in GDP by 2050.



ECOWAS takes action on climate

The global economy is in transition to a resilient, low-carbon economy. The technologies exist and are accessible, but they have yet to be deployed on a massive scale. Thus, the low level of development of several countries in the ECOWAS zone, often seen as a weakness, can in fact represent an opportunity to seize and take advantage of the economic opportunities linked to the transition, so as to engage in resilient and low-carbon development trajectories as of now. However, this paradigm shift requires a strong and long-term political commitment.

ECOWAS is already active in the fight against climate change through several sectors (**energy, agriculture, livestock, water, infrastructure, health, climate services, disaster risk management**).



It must now play an even stronger role in engaging with its Member States to facilitate the implementation of their climate commitments under the Paris Agreement. Therefore, a real political commitment is needed to accelerate climate action in the ECOWAS zone. This is the purpose of the ECOWAS regional climate strategy.

A regional strategy for coordinated regional climate action

The impacts of climate change are transboundary and it is together that ECOWAS Member States can meet this challenge.

Climate action at the level of the ECOWAS zone is essential because the coordination of interventions and solidarity between Member States are the keys to effective and sustainable climate action.

Regional coordination of the response to climate change is essential, particularly with regard to adaptation, given the shared impacts, the extent of shared resources

and ecosystems and the risks inherent in the strong contrasts observed in the ECOWAS region.

In addition, the contribution of institutions dedicated to economic integration and the emergence of a strong regional market offers opportunities to promote a low greenhouse gas emission economy and would enable countries to move away from development paths that are incompatible with their own climate change priorities.



Climate action is also a development opportunity for West Africa: human development compatible with a sustainable future on the one hand; economic development on the other.





Vision and horizons

The ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy (RCS) contributes to the implementation of the African Union Strategy on Climate Change (2020-2030), is fully in line with the Paris Agreement and is aligned with and contributes to the achievement of the ECOWAS Vision 2050 .

It is about of “**a fully integrated community of people in a peaceful and prosperous region, supported by strong institutions, respectful of fundamental freedoms and striving for inclusive sustainable development**”.

ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy Vision : “A community resilient to the effects and impacts of climate change and which knows how to take advantage of the relative economic opportunities in order to promote a long-term sustainable and low-carbon development”.

With this document, ECOWAS formulates its first regional climate strategy **to set regional mitigation and adaptation targets by 2030**, which is the deadline chosen by all its Member States to meet the commitments they made in their first Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and also contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG).

ECOWAS is motivated by a logic of continuous improvement, in line with the principle of advancing the ambition set by the Paris Agreement and the need to set targets aligned with scientific knowledge.

Thus, this regional climate strategy for 2030 is a first milestone in ECOWAS’ contribution to the fight against climate change.

It will have to be revised to increase the region’s level of ambition by 2050 in synergy with the objectives of ECOWAS Vision 2050, while taking into account the commitments of its Member States which will be included in their next NDCs and the results of the first global assessments of the **Paris Agreement**.

Objectives



The overall objective of the ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy is to: ***Support Member States to tackle the challenge of the fight against climate change, in particular for the achievement of their commitments under the Paris Agreement.***

This general objective is broken down into **6 specific objectives (SO)**:

SO1. Ensure the compatibility and coherence of the regional policy framework with the global objectives of the Paris Agreement

SO2. Develop anticipation capacity and informed decision making to manage current and future climate risks

SO3. Encourage an institutional and organizational paradigm shift regarding climate change

SO4. Build the capacities of ECOWAS and its Member States for the implementation of climate change policies and actions

SO5. Strengthen cooperation and solidarity between Member States in the face of climate change

SO6. Promote new approaches to mobilize endogenous and exogenous financial resources



With this document, **ECOWAS formulates its first regional climate strategy** to set regional mitigation and adaptation targets for 2030.

The Paris Agreement aims to keep the global temperature increase well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to continue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius.



Scope of actions

Within the framework of this regional climate strategy, ECOWAS intends to intervene in the following three fields of action:

Action Area 1: Organisation

Reduce the carbon impact of fixed and mobile facilities and strengthen the adaptive capacity of systems and infrastructure within the organisational perimeter of ECOWAS institutions and agencies.

This perimeter comes under the social and environmental responsibility (SER) of ECOWAS, by targeting actions that concern its mode of operation as well as its assets and the conduct of its staff, in a perspective of continuous improvement of its societal, social and environmental performance. To this end, the ECOWAS Commission undertakes to formulate its RCS policy, which will serve as an example for the other institutions of the Community.

Action Area 2: ECOWAS Commission's areas of competence

Improve ECOWAS regional policies, measures and programs with a view to making them progressively climate-friendly and efficient, by systematically integrating mitigation and adaptation goals and setting sectoral targets to guide ambition in ECOWAS' areas of competence.

Action Area 3: Political dialogue with Member States

Strengthen political dialogue in order to support a progressive improvement in the ambition of Member States through their NDCs and the modalities foreseen for their implementation, in a spirit of solidarity, equity and cooperation.

It is also about putting in place arrangements that allow ECOWAS and its Member States to speak with one voice to co-construct together the implementation of the Paris Agreement in support of the action of its Member States, but also to be stronger by being united in the international cooperation framework on climate change, to actively participate in the negotiations of the modalities of implementation of the Paris Agreement, in particular through the Regional Support Group for International Climate Negotiations (GRANIC) set up in 2021 by the ECOWAS Commission.

In addition, EBID's upcoming accreditation to the Green Climate Fund will contribute to the achievement of the Community's climate action in this third area.

Sectors

The mitigation and adaptation objectives and the implementation measures provided for in this strategy relate to ECOWAS intervention sectors.

They are part of a perspective of strengthening a number of sectoral policies and programmes already largely committed by the community, in order to

further integrate climate change concerns and contribute to the search for solutions to common or cross-border problems, to raise their level of ambition and/or to improve the conditions for their implementation, including in terms of financing.

Adaptation component:

- ◇ Agriculture, fisheries, livestock and aquaculture
- ◇ Energy
- ◇ Environments, natural ecosystems and biodiversity
- ◇ Water
- ◇ Transport and mobility
- ◇ Coastal areas
- ◇ Climate Services, Climate Systems, Early Warning Systems and Climate Disaster Risk Management
- ◇ Health

Mitigation component:

- ◇ Agriculture, forestry and other land uses
- ◇ Energy
- ◇ Transport and mobility
- ◇ Industrial processes and product use



Stakeholders

ECOWAS bodies

The **ECOWAS Commission** puts in place the necessary governance mechanisms internally, and with regional stakeholders to ensure the steering of the implementation of the RCS.

The sectoral directorates and specialised technical agencies of the ECOWAS Commission are responsible for developing the regional policies, programmes and actions necessary to achieve the sectoral objectives and priorities set by the RCS in their area of competence, in consultation with their regional counterparts, including Member States.

Cross-cutting departments (such as those responsible for trade, private sector, education and technology, and gender) are also responsible for mainstreaming the strategic orientations of the RCS in the exercise of their responsibilities.

Finally, the coordination of implementation is mainly carried out by the Commission's Environment Department, which provides the secretariat of the Commission's Interdepartmental Environment Committee, but also leads the regional platform for monitoring implementation with stakeholders.

The **West African Health Organisation (WAHO)**, is responsible for the implementation of actions in the health sector, in the same way as a sectoral directorate of the Commission.

The Member States

Member States participate in the implementation of the RCS through the transposition of regional policies and their normative instruments into national policies. To this end, they are in contact with the national actors impacted and involved in the implementation: public actors, civil society and the private sector.

The **ECOWAS Parliament** gives an advisory opinion on the RCS before its adoption by the Heads of State and Government and is informed of the achievement of the objectives of the RCS through the transmission by the Presidency of the Commission of the annual implementation monitoring report.

The **ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)** mobilises resources for the achievement of national climate commitments in the region.

The **Regional Climate Centre for West Africa and the Sahel (RCC-WAS)**, operationalised by the AGRHYMET Regional Centre, which ensures, according to the June 2020 Partnership Agreement between the ECOWAS Commission and CILSS :

- (i) operational weather and climate forecasting activities,
- (ii) operational climate monitoring activities,
- (iii) operational data services, in support of long-range forecasting and climate monitoring,
- (iv) operational capacity building,
- (v) management and dissemination of weather and climate information.

Member States, in accordance with their commitments under the Paris Agreement, are jointly responsible for ensuring that the RCS is in line with the Paris Agreement, and may refer the matter to the Commission at the biennial meetings on the implementation of the RCS.

Stakeholders

The Commission's regional and international partners

The WAEMU Commission,

The African Union Commission,

West African scientific and technical climate institutions partners of the ECOWAS Commission (CILSS, WASCAL) involved in the implementation.

Regional and international technical and financial partners

Civil society through regional platforms and umbrella organisations and regional platforms of private sector actors, which are informed and consulted in the implementation of the RCS.



A participatory approach

Climate change affects everyone. There is a collective responsibility to act on climate change mitigation and adaptation.

To be ambitious and mobilising, the regional climate strategy must be widely owned. This is why it is developed through a participatory process.

An enlarged consultation committee comprising :
the climate focal points of the 15 ECOWAS Member

States, representatives of other regional institutions such as WAEMU and CILSS, ECOWAS' technical and financial partners, as well as representatives of civil society and the private sector is participating in the construction of the vision and ambition of the regional climate strategy.



A development process driven by partnership

ECOWAS has mandated the GCCA+ West Africa project to support it in the development of its RCS.

The «Global Climate Change Alliance Plus - West Africa (GCCA+ WA)» project is funded by the European Union and implemented by Expertise France under the leadership of the ECOWAS Commission and in collaboration with the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). This project is part of a regional cooperation dynamic. It aims to contribute to the regional effort to implement the Paris Agreement and strengthen West Africa's resilience to climate change.

Read more here : <https://www.expertisefrance.fr/en/fiche-projet?id=721711>

About Expertise France

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United to tackle climate change

The response to climate change implies profound transformations, which must be achieved by making regional and national public policies consistent with the objectives set by the international community in order to be resilient to impacts.

This is the **ambition of the ECOWAS Regional Climate Strategy**. By adopting this strategy, ECOWAS is committing itself alongside and in support of its 15 Member States to make climate a priority for political action in the region.

The impacts of climate change are already affecting the daily lives of communities and the economic development of countries.

The fight against climate change requires immediate and decisive action, which is profoundly

transformative, on the part of all (public actors, private actors and civil society) to face and mitigate the impacts.

Consumption, production and living patterns are all vectors of solutions to combat climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Everyone must act against climate change, each at his or her own level and in his or her own field. ECOWAS and its Member States are committed to supporting the mobilisation of the entire region in the face of the colossal challenge of climate change.



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