

African post-Covid plans must prioritise climate: study

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African countries must put climate change at the heart of post-pandemic recovery efforts, a report by advocacy and environmental groups said Tuesday, adding green policy investment would boost the economy and

society.

Countries across the continent are particularly exposed to the effects of a changing climate, including from increases in extreme weather disasters like floods and droughts.

The report, "Driving a Green and Sustainable post-COVID-19 Recovery in Africa", said COVID-19 had "clearly exacerbated these climate vulnerabilities" by reducing the resources available to adapt.

"A narrow focus on economic recovery that ignores climate change and the broader objectives of sustainable development will cost Africa more economic pain in the long run," it warned.

The report was published by Kenyan think tank Power Shift Africa, Nigerian environmental NGO Society for Planet and Prosperity, and Morocco-based advocacy and business development firm Positive Agenda Advisory.

While it acknowledged that climate change is currently a "marginal consideration" for many African governments, it said some were already incorporating climate policies into their post-COVID plans.

Nigeria, the report said, aims to install five million off-grid home solar systems and mini-grids, which it hopes can create up to a quarter of a million jobs.

"The pandemic is a reset moment, to shift away from billions of investments in doomed fossil fuels," Mohamed Adow, director of Power Shift Africa, told AFP.

"Africa is blessed with sun and wind—it must be the bedrock of our recovery."

With a huge part of the population dependant on farming for food and income, the report said agriculture investment should be prioritised, focusing on irrigation, cultivation techniques and improved storage.

It also underscored the importance of international support to help countries finance measures to cope with climate change.

Richer countries have so far failed to meet a promise to give climate-vulnerable nations \$100 billion a year to draw down emissions and help adapt to climate impacts.

The issue is set to be a key theme at upcoming United Nations climate talks in Glasgow.

"We need to build a global solidarity. In the pandemic as in the climate emergency, no one is safe until everyone is safe," said Adow.

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