

# Carbon markets are 'bogus solutions' as rich world keeps polluting, African Climate Summit is told

September 6 2023, by Cara Anna



A delegate walk in front of a mural outside the Kenyatta International Convention Centre (KICC) in Nairobi, Kenya Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023, during the Africa Climate Summit. The summit's opening speeches included clear calls to reform the global financial structures that have left African nations paying about five times more to borrow money than others, worsening the debt crisis for many. Credit: AP Photo/Brian Inganga

A Nigerian environmental activist declared Wednesday at the first African Climate Summit that carbon markets are "bogus solutions," providing a sharp reminder that not all of Africa's 1.3 billion people support richer countries using the continent's green spaces to offset continued polluting at home.

The summit has sought to reframe the African continent, which has enormous amounts of clean energy minerals and [renewable energy sources](#), as less of a victim of climate change driven by the world's biggest economies and more of the solution, with .

But investment in the continent in exchange for the ability to keep polluting elsewhere has angered some in Africa who prefer to see China, the United States, India, the European Union and others rein in their emissions of planet-warming greenhouse gases.

"We reject forced solutions on our land," Priscilla Achakpa, founder of the Nigeria-based Women Environmental Programme, told summit participants on the event's final day. She urged the so-called "Global North" to "remove yourself from the perspective of the colonial past."

The summit is part of Africa's preparation for the next United Nations climate change conference, which is scheduled to take place in Dubai in December.

The [summit](#) has largely featured leaders in government, business and [civil society](#), many of them veterans of other climate gatherings.



Kenya's President William Ruto speaks at Kenyatta International Conference Centre in Nairobi, Kenya Tuesday, Sept. 5, 2023, during the Africa Climate Summit. Credit: AP Photo/Brian Inganga

"Heading from event to event doesn't leave us with a lot of constructive thinking time" to bridge the gaps that still divide communities on the best ways to reduce emissions, Simon Stiell, the executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, said.

Carbon markets, in which polluters effectively offset emissions by investing in tree-planting or conservation initiatives, are cheaper to purchase in Africa than in many other parts of the world where schemes are more strictly regulated. African nations seek a better price to help achieve their own emission-reduction targets.

In Africa's market, the continent earns less than \$10 per ton of carbon. Other regions can receive over \$100 for the same amount. In carbon trading, one credit issued equals 1 ton of carbon dioxide or another greenhouse gas equivalent removed from the atmosphere.

The voluntary carbon market, which remains dominant in Africa, has been plagued by integrity and transparency concerns. Environmental groups are concerned it is a free pass to keep polluting.

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