



SPOTLIGHT ON THE AFRICAN ACTIVISTS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

NEWSLETTER OF THE AFRICAN ACTIVIST FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



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**Climate justice for
Africa!**

MESSAGE FROM THE AACJ PROGRAM MANAGER

Ten months since the Glasgow COP-26 conference and roughly six weeks before the next scheduled COP27 to be held in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt. Very little has changed to increase hope that the ambitious goal set in the 2015 Paris accord to limit the earth's warming to 1.5 degrees Celcius will be achieved. At the same time, the world continues to reel from the persisting effects of the COVID-19 global pandemic and escalating climate-related disasters, record inflation related to the Ukraine-Russia war resulting in supply chain disruptions, rising food prices which further threatens the most vulnerable population in Africa.

In March 2022, at the Economist Sustainability Summit, UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres cautioned that the world is "sleepwalking to a climate catastrophe" and with little political will, the possibility to reduce global warming is becoming bleaker. In Guterres's words " the 1.5 degrees Celcius goal is on life support. it is in intensive care." In May 2022, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) project that there is a 50% chance that the world will reach an overshoot of 1.4 degrees Celcius goal within one of the next five years and that there's 93% chance that the average temperature of the next five years (2022-2026) will be warmer than the last five years. Reaching and breaching 1.5 degrees Celcius will be disastrous for the African continent.

Reaching 1.5 degrees Celcius, even if temporarily, within one of the next five years is bad news for Africa. As a region that is at the frontline of the climate crisis, we know all too well the devastating impacts of increasing global temperatures: stronger hurricanes, more frequent and intense drought in the horn and East of Africa, and extreme precipitation events all of which continue to result in loss of lives, and a precarious development trajectory that could undermine our sustainable development agenda. At the same time, Africa must prepare for the worse by pursuing climate-resilient development to adapt.

However, the international community must provide the financing at speed and the scale needed for our countries to adapt. Developed countries have already failed to meet their climate finance pledges and it is no secret that the current climate finance architecture is not serving the continent. Access to adaptation finance is much too difficult and much too slow; the rules are too complex and requirements too onerous and the scale is below what is required to have a transformative impact on the lives of the African people. Developed countries must step up and keep their promise.



**BENSON SIMBA, AACJ PROGRAM
MANAGER**

The focus of the AACJ consortium in 2022 has been to build on the foundation laid in 2021 to ensure that African women, youth and indigenous people's narratives and ancestral knowledge of the environment are preserved, shared, and amplified worldwide; that communities' capacities are invested in through strengthened movements and enhanced opportunities for collaboration. The other major priorities included creating AACJ project systems and processes at the Global, Regional, and Country levels. We the African Activists for Climate Justice partners continue to call for URGENT global action to cut emissions in line with climate science.

With the world still heading towards climate catastrophe, we thought we would use this issue of a spotlight on the African Activists for Climate Justice to highlight climate impacts but more importantly, to share bright spots on tangible actions of the consortium on the ground that are making a positive impact's on people's lives and thus contributing to climate justice advocacy for the continent. From the climate justice torch to the African Feminist Academy for Climate Justice, The AACJ Consortium has worked tirelessly to address climate injustice.

Good reading to all!

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BUILDING MOVEMENT FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

More than 1000000 people from 50 countries were able to join the climate justice Torch campaign and the African climate caravan this year—a record-breaking attendance made possible by bringing the communities to the frontline of the climate crisis. The two campaigns brought together practitioners, grassroots representatives, policymakers, and donors for the street march, interactive discussions, workshops, and networking.

ELEVATING COMMUNITY VOICES ON CLIMATE JUSTICE AT COP 27

THE CLIMATE JUSTICE TORCH

Last year's international climate negotiations (also referred to as COP 26) have been criticized by many for being the most exclusive and inaccessible negotiations ever. Many voices, including those of youth, grassroots women, indigenous peoples, and vulnerable communities, have gone unheard. As a result, the outcomes of COP 26 “reflect the lack of fair access and participation of many civil society organizations, especially from the Global South whose role as observers (in these international processes) is essential for climate justice in their regions”.

The African Activists for climate justice has already mobilized more than 100.000 youth and indigenous communities through the CJT March in Gabon during its launch, Senegal, Morocco, Burkina Faso, Zambia, through The Climate Justice Torch . initiated by the Panafrican Climate justice Alliance, this youth led campaign contributes to the effective building of an African narrative on climate justice by ensuring meaningful engagement within targeted communities directly affected by the climate crisis. In addition, it profiles the issues at stake, contributes to advancing the commitment to operationalizing the special needs and circumstances of the African continent, and inspires the youth, women, and vulnerable populations to tell their stories in their language, about their understanding of the climate crisis.

“Science has proved it and has time and again told us Africa is at the forefront of the climate crisis because of a problem it did not cause. As Africans, we must not tire in telling and retelling the global north to not just sort out the mess, but finance the loss and damage and adaptation efforts by the Africans,” Prof White said while addressing thousands of climate activists that had gathered at the ministry headquarters in Libreville on the launch of the CJT.

Activists point out the inherent inequities in these climate conversations—that the richest countries have greater representation and voice while they have historically and currently continue to drive the climate crisis by burning fossil fuels that enable them to get richer. At the same time, the poorest countries across the world suffer the climate crisis first and worst, even though they've emitted the smallest share of greenhouse gases, yet they still can't get a meaningful seat at the COP26 table.

SOLUTIONS COME FROM COMMUNITIES

“We need to make sure that the voices of front-line communities are part of these conversations, because these communities are dealing with the immediate effects of climate change right now,” says Ozawa Bineshi Albert, co-executive director of Climate Justice Alliance. These individuals and communities are the ones living through the emergency of climate change on a daily basis and coming up with actual solutions—such as clean energy and sustainable agriculture.

“The solutions need to come from front-line communities,” says Bineshi Albert, expert on environmental justice and Native rights, and who will be speaking on behalf of Indigenous women at this year's meeting, as she did at COP27.

Communities have been sharing experiences of good practices on climate actions at the local level, voices of which will be used to lobby and advocate for a COP for the African people in Sharm El Sheikh when global leaders meet for the Climate Summit. African civil society groups hope that the voices so gathered will be enough to pile pressure on global leaders from wealthy and industrialized countries to adopt ambitious Africa-centric climate commitments and outcomes at COP27.

UNHEARD VOICES: CLIMATE CHANGE AS A MATTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE



84-year-old Madina Kaarsho moved to Hoby, Somalia from the neighboring town of Harardhere with her daughter Fatuma and her grandchildren hoping to escape drought. Madina suffers from poor eyesight that has gotten worse because of the reflection from the desert sand. After the last drought in 2017, Somalians are again enduring one of the driest seasons on record.



In March of 2019, Cyclone Idai made landfall in Mozambique, decimating homes and wreaking havoc on the lives of 1.85 million people. Alice and her husband Konforme, along with their children, were one of the many families that lost their home to the storm. “In my 38 years of life I have never seen a cyclone as strong as this,” said Konforme. Barely one month later, Cyclone Kenneth struck the already devastated country – a testament to the increasing frequency of extreme weather events around Africa



Cyclone Idai affected Zimbabwe too, causing a massive landslide in the town of Chimanimani. The next morning, Michelle Chipare discovered that her two-year-old daughter Brenda had died in the disaster. Climate-related disasters not only cause immediate devastation, they pose a long-term threat to the livelihoods of Zimbabweans like Michelle and Brenda. As eighty percent of the population relies on rain-fed agriculture for their food needs, adapting to extreme weather is a matter of life or death.



10-year-old Hibo carries water in a jerrycan to her temporary home in a camp for internally displaced people in Somalia. “We left our home in Guriel and walked for 10 days to reach Kaharey camp,” she says.

The scale of the displacement is immense – Somalia has 3.7 million internally displaced persons and Ethiopia has 4.2 million internally displaced persons and 800,000 refugees.

Families with children and adolescents on the move or in emergency camps are at risk of violence or abuse. It also forces women and children to spend increased time collecting water, exposing them to unsafe movement far from home.

TOWARDS COP27

AFRICAN CLIMATE CARAVAN

on the other hand, Oxfam through the AACJ program wanted to keep the conversation going and dive deeper into the topic so the needs of these victims stay in the spotlight. The Caravans are a virtual “road show” that seeks to galvanize the cross-country stakeholder voices, to tell the African story while making known the demands of Africa among its inhabitants and the rest of the world.

It's a call for climate justice, justice for those least responsible, most affected by climate change who are also the source of climate solutions and resilience leaders.

The upcoming COP27 provides Africa with an opportunity to present its agenda to the world. Previous COPs have been gravely disappointing. African leaders and civil society organizations (CSOs) have consistently been excluded, not taken seriously, and/or ignored. In part, this is because Africa's well-founded demand for 'climate justice' unsettles the Global North, including those who have the power and privilege to shape the UN climate change (UNFCCC) process. "At COP27, Africa must change the narrative and use the COP as an opportunity to amplify the voices of those who suffer most from climate change and environmental degradation. This is not a moment to apologize or sheepishly seek concessions behind closed doors. It is a time to demand justice" Said Dr shitima, the Africashittimof Negotiators chair.

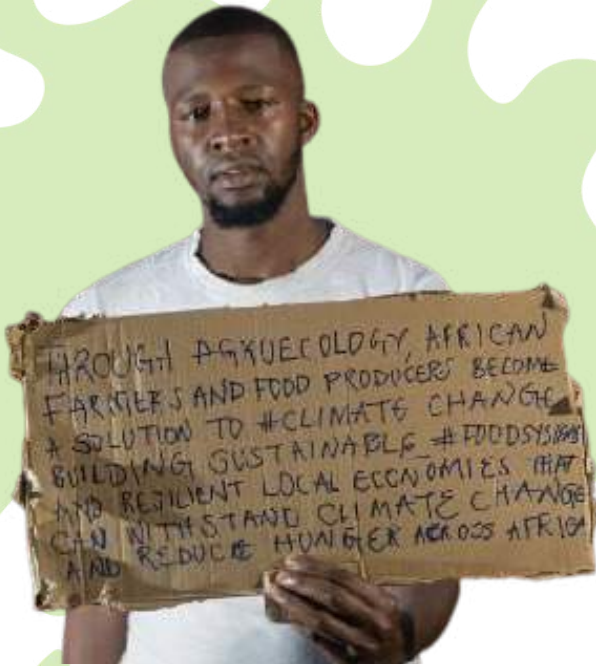
Ironically, those best placed to lead this effort are not politicians or professional negotiators but are rather the young people already making these demands in communities and countries around Africa. Although the global news media have focused mostly on youth activists from the Global North, African youth climate movements are strong and growing.

Young people across the continent are rising, making their voices heard, and finding solutions for the climate crisis. They do not just need to be present at the COP; they should be setting the agenda for global policy. More than 105000 people have joined d the campaign.

**DECLARATION OF THE AFRICAN CARAVANS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE AHEAD OF COP 27
BY COMMUNITY MOVEMENTS, CIVIL SOCIETY, AND YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS**

**[HTTPS://NATURALJUSTICE.ORG/WP-
CONTENT/UPLOADS/2022/10/EN-DECLARATION-
CARAVANE.PDF](https://naturaljustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/en-decalARATION-CARAVANE.PDF)**

VOICES OF THE YOUTH ON AFRICAN CLIMATE CARAVAN



My name is Suwilanji Sinyangwe, from Zambia. I am joining the climate caravan because I believe it is time for Africa to lead the climate conversations. Imagine African countries only contribute about 4% to global emissions, yet we are among the worst hit by climate change. Therefore the climate change debate is more crucial than ever for Africa.



I am Refiloe Tshabalala, born and raised in an industrial town (Standerton), filled with firms, there is a nearby power station, mine and there is Sasol not so far from my town.

As a young activist, I realized that there is power in Social Media. Most of the youth of the world is highly active on Social Media and it would be very easy to raise awareness through the Social Media platforms for not only the youth will see and learn but also everyone that has these platforms will see, young or old. I also know that through vlogging I'd be able to teach my viewers about what is climate change and it's impacts on the environment and the people.



My name is Jodahi B. Petros, and I would be joining the Caravan as a youth and Environmental Activator from Ethiopia. It will be a great opportunity for me to meet, communicate, and understand the communities that are going to be involved in caravan. I hope to share my ideas and expertise as an Applied Biologist, Environmental Developer, and Digital marketer in the road ahead. I can not wait to represent my country and show the various stakeholders affected and affecting the climate crisis.



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FOOTING THE BILL: FAIR FINANCE FOR LOSS AND DAMAGE IN AN ERA OF ESCALATING CLIMATE IMPACTS

800% INCREASE IN UN APPEAL NEEDS FOR EXTREME WEATHER-RELATED EMERGENCIES OVER LAST 20 YEARS – OXFAM RESEARCH

The amount of money needed for UN humanitarian appeals involving extreme weather events like floods or drought is now eight times higher than 20 years ago — and donors are failing to keep up, reveals a new Oxfam brief today. For every \$2 needed for UN weather-related appeals, donor countries are only providing \$1.

The report, "Footing the Bill", says that the increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events due to climate change is putting more pressure on an already over-stretched and underfunded humanitarian system. The costs of the destruction from these storms, droughts, and floods are also increasing inequality; people in poorer communities and low-income countries are the worst hit yet they lack the systems and funding that wealthier countries have to cope with the effects. The richest one percent of people on Earth are emitting twice as much carbon pollution as the poorest half of humanity.

The UN appeals focus on the most urgent humanitarian needs, but that barely scratches the surface of the real costs in loss and damage that climate change is now wreaking on countries' economies.

The economic cost of extreme weather events in 2021 alone was estimated to be \$329 billion globally, the third-highest year on record. This is nearly double the total aid given by rich nations to the developing world that year. The costs of loss and damage to low- and middle-income countries — for instance, the money needed to rebuild homes and hospitals or provide shelter, food, and emergency cash transfers after a cyclone — could reach between \$290 billion and \$580 billion a year by 2030. This does not account for non-economic losses such as the loss of life, cultures, ways of living, and biodiversity.

Oxfam's research shows that UN appeals cover only about 474 million of the estimated 3.9 billion people in low- and middle-income countries affected by extreme weather-related disasters since 2000, equivalent to one in eight people.

"Human activity has created a world 1.1°C warmer than pre-industrial levels and we are now suffering the consequences. More alarming still, we will overshoot the 1.5°C safety threshold on current projections. The cost of climate destruction will keep rising and our failure now to cut emissions will have catastrophic consequences for humanity. We can't ignore the huge economic and non-economic losses and damages that underlie this picture — the loss of life, homes, schools, jobs, culture, land, Indigenous and local knowledge, and biodiversity," said Oxfam Executive Director Gabriela Bucher.

Click here for more :

<https://oxfamilibrary.openrepository.com/bitstream/handle/10546/621382/bp-fair-finance-loss-and-damage-070622-en.pdf>

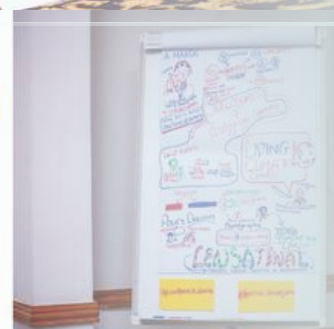
AFRICAN FEMINIST ACADEMY FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

Climate change is a challenge that burdens us all, but not equally. Women and girls are among those affected disproportionately, especially those belonging to marginalized and discriminated communities in the Global South. And yet their voices are rarely heard in decision-making forums.

But from the rubble of stark division, we are seeing movements unite. Spearheaded by diverse and powerful women, the fight for climate justice is picking up speed. Could the climate crisis serve to unite us? Will it be the turning point in global solidarity, urging us to act, connect our struggles, and finally triumph over the systemic inequalities that divide us?

The inaugural Africa Feminist Academy for Climate Justice (AFACJ) was a co-created space that brought together African women and girls in all their diversities to cross-learn, strategize, and boldly reclaim their rights on climate justice. Tucked between debunking false solutions for climate change and patriarchal narratives, the Academy tested and tried COP26 promises. Yester resolutions were also unpacked and the muted feminist concerns and solutions were lauded in the interest of the African women, youth, and frontline communities including black indigenous people, land defenders, and rural communities that bear the greatest burden of the climate crisis.

The Academy was well attended by African feminists and climate activists who have been disproportionately marginalized and out rightly excluded from the big COPs made up of the who is who. Their inclusion was feminist impartiality to the exclusive Global North summits which regurgitate false hopes but sustain discrimination against those who are forced into being voiceless and helpless. The academists were drawn from Cameroon, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Somalia Tunisia, Togo, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe and largely encompassed indigenous people, young women, youth and frontline community activists who are keen to share their lived experiences and stories of resilience.



In seeking to build consensus on the next steps, the academists recognized and redressed the discourse of loss and damage. They focused largely on marginalized peoples' and communities' convictions of climate justice. In so doing, they proposed solutions that can address the climate impacts, particularly for African women and girls, whose voices are often muted in Climate Justice spaces. Their resolutions were penned and glued to the tree of hope. As reflected in the imagery, the tree of hope elevated feminist alternative solutions to be implemented for a just and healthy African continent.

TOWARDS A PAN-AFRICAN ECOFEMINIST MOVEMENT FOR ACTION AND ACCOUNTABILITY FOR CLIMATE, ENVIRONMENT, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Pan-African ecofeminists, climate activists, community leaders and gender justice advocates met in Zimbabwe in August 2022 to think, dream, and strategize collaboratively around shared demands and engagement with COP and other regional and global policy and advocacy processes. Below is a collectively devised poem, symbolizing our shared identity, analysis, self-expression, and public declaration. The poem was developed in the final reflective closing circle of the three day meeting.

Key Demands by Pan-African Ecofeminists

As world leaders gear up for the climate negotiations at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP27) in Egypt from 7 to 18 November 2022, pan-African ecofeminists, climate activists, community leaders, and gender justice advocates from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, and Zimbabwe are **STANDING IN SOLIDARITY WITH** frontline defenders and local communities across the continent, and **CALLING** on African Governments to demand that developed nations:

- Advance a just transition as a common position for the continent that centers an eco-feminist future for African women and girls in all their diversity, in policy and decision-making.
- Uphold and defend progressive policy considerations on loss and damage and commit to a dedicated fund for loss and damage beyond the general adaptation funds. Apportion climate financing to local and indigenous climate solutions that promote food sovereignty and sustainable renewable energy.
- Foster meaningful and equitable representation of women and girls in all negotiations and decision-making, including frontline community women leaders.
- Facilitate meaningful engagement of civil society pre-COP as well as post-COP to enhance accountability.

They called on all state parties to the UNFCCC to

- Prioritize continent-wide land reforms which promote equitable access to and control over land by women, including ownership and control of the food ecosystem.
- Invest in and promote locally led, gender-just, and feminist climate solutions and anti-capitalist, decolonial, and collectivized movements.
- Support the UN Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Context of Climate Change and call on this office to institute effective mechanisms to strengthen the protection of environmental human rights defenders and accountability for abuse, reprisals, and violations by states and corporate actors.

A PAN-AFRICAN ECO-FEMINIST WOMANIFESTO

We are indigenous
We are deeply rooted
and
We are ecofeminists

We give ourselves the permission to dream,
to dismantle power

With hope in our hearts
for a different future
We are able to build
Collectively
One with nature; our power shines forth

We want solidarity and power

The cool breeze is who we are
The ones working towards equitable and sustainable nature practices
We are alive
and
we are that which gives life

We are African women working to defend the environment

We cannot keep bleeding for them to become rich

We are who we are!
We are the feminist power!

We are Africa
Africa that blossoms with hope and oozes sparkles of an ecofeminist future

Eco-feminism means womens roots.

Women's rights are nature's rights!
Fed up with climate change we are thirsty for climate justice!

Our fight is to decolonize
Our struggles, our dreams are valid
The is so much hope for the African women
when we all stand together, united

ALUTA CONTINUA!



AFRICAN CLIMATE WEEK COMMEMORATION WORKSHOP: CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN RIGHTS.



On 1 September 2022, Natural Justice organized a workshop on climate change and human rights. This workshop, which saw the participation of about thirty civil society actors, made it possible to share with civil society organizations the progress made in terms of integration into public policies on climate change but also and above all to exchange in order to decline their expectations and build their positions in anticipation of COP27 in Egypt.

To this end, the recommendations made during the group work made it possible to set out the expectations of civil society in relation to COP 27 and the modalities of collaboration:

Civil society expectations at COP27

- Take into account loss and damage in public policies;
- Implement concrete responses to those who suffer these losses and damages;
- Improve the integration of human rights into public policies;
- Respect the commitments of the countries of the North in the context of Climate Change;
- Involve local communities in the negotiation process;
- Favor the anticipatory approach in the management of environmental problems;
- Promote capacity building for access to green finance;
- Provide assessment tools to determine which losses are eligible for repairs;
- Advocacy from African countries;
- Develop a loss and damage agreement.

MY CLIMATE TESTIMONY

YOUTH CLIMATE CHANGE IS OUR FIGHT



Natalie Mukundane
African Youth Commission

Lawyer by profession, Natalie Mukundane has several years of experience in youth development at the national and regional levels. Through management and leadership and now communication, Nathalie has dedicated much of her time to climate activism and the youth implication in the fight of climate change.



The earth is my home I promise to keep it, healthy and beautiful...' I sang as loud as my little lungs could handle; I was not about to let anyone else out sing me. You see I had come there for a purpose; Dad had promised I will get to plant my

first tree all on my own if I put on a great show for the guest of honors of the event that day. I was ready to sing and dance until my little voice was no more if it meant I got to plant a tree! I did put up a great show and got plant a tree! Well, it was an average-sized leafy Neem tree seedling, but in my 10-year-old hands it felt like a tree.

I remember wondering to myself how long it would be until the tree got big enough for me to bask under its shed, proudly knowing that it exists because I put it there. We planted 1 million trees during that event. I named my little tree 'Muktree'.

Fast forward 19 years now, that memory still warms my heart. I was too young to understand the full impact of what was happening back then, but now as a youth activist working with on the 'African Activists for Climate Change' project, I realize how crucial that project was for the environment.

You see when I used to think of Climate Change back in High School I thought of it as a foreign concept, something that people do to show they care for their environment and get applauded. Reading about the protests of Wangari Mathai even made me more confused because my teenage mind thought surely Global Warming can't be that bad if the weather was the same!? What was all the fuss?

Upon joining the ACCJ project my eyes have been opened up to a whole new world. It hit different when I visited some grassroots communities and heard the stories of how rain not coming when it was supposed to meant children staying home due to lack of fees, It hit different when I interacted with ladies in rural communities and found out that having a glass of fresh clean water is a privilege because someone had to walk a gruesome distance due to the dried up wells, It hit different when I spoke to some of my friends employed in green job sectors and they told me they've been laid off because their bosses could not afford to keep them anymore.

The reality hit home hard and I realized, indeed this is a crisis we are dealing with. Just because it is currently not as viral as COVID-19 or as scary as suicide bombers, doesn't mean it couldn't easily be the single greatest threat to the future of humanity.



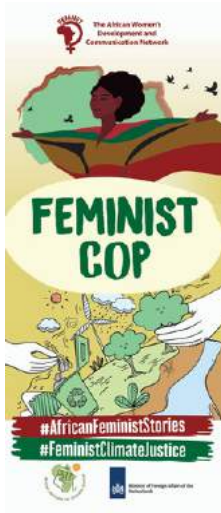
Every day I wake up I am grateful I get to be part of such a project, I get to use my young voice to explain to people what the Climate Crisis means, advocate and lobby in spaces with leaders and stakeholders equipped enough to make a difference, and visit communities to learn more about their challenges and share if in existence possible solutions.

I have a long journey ahead of me, the climate crisis is not going anywhere anytime soon. The journey that started as a hearty beautiful song has now morphed into a distressed chant for action 'What do we want? Climate Justice! When do we want it? Now! Now!

My Climate Story is just beginning, and I can't wait to share its long tumultuous but rewarding moments with my great grand kids, under the cool breezy shade of 'Muktree' one day.



AACJ UPCOMING EVENTS



FEMINIST COP

FEMNET, together with its AACJ partners, PACJA, Oxfam Novib, Natural Justice and Africa Youth Commission are organizing the Feminist COP 27 as an alternative space led by feminists at the frontline of the climate crisis from the global south, as part of solidarity actions to galvanise climate justice movement in the world.



Windhoek, Namibia,



20th -24th October, 2022 ahead of the 10th Climate Change and Development in Africa Conference (CCDA X)



AACJ SIDE EVENT AT COP27

Climate change and its related severe impacts such as ravaging drought and destructive floods call for urgency towards Locally Led Adaptation initiatives across Africa. Empowering local stakeholders to actively lead in adaptation amplifies the voices of vulnerable communities and enhances decision-making to build their resilience. Objective: Amplify locally led initiatives through sharing of experiences of women, youth, indigenous and marginalized groups



Sharma El sheikh , Egypt



14th November 2022, 10am-11am



AFRICAN CLIMATE CARAVAN

The Caravans are a virtual “road show” that will seek to galvanize the cross-country stakeholder voices, with an aim of telling the African story while making known the demands of Africa among its inhabitants and the rest of the world.



Sharma El sheikh , Egypt



CLIMATE JUSTICE TORCH MARCH

This campaign launch aims to kick start an Africa-wide process of enhancing visibility of the struggles and resilience of African communities in the frontline of climate crisis by giving them a platform to voice their issues and shape priorities for discussions in COP27.



Sharma El sheikh , Egypt



04th November 2022

AACJ IN IMAGES





AFRICAN ACTIVISTS FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE



The African Women's
Development and
Communication Network



NATURAL
JUSTICE



THANKS TO



Government of the Netherlands