

Leave no-one behind! COVID-19 and Climate Change merit equal engagement.

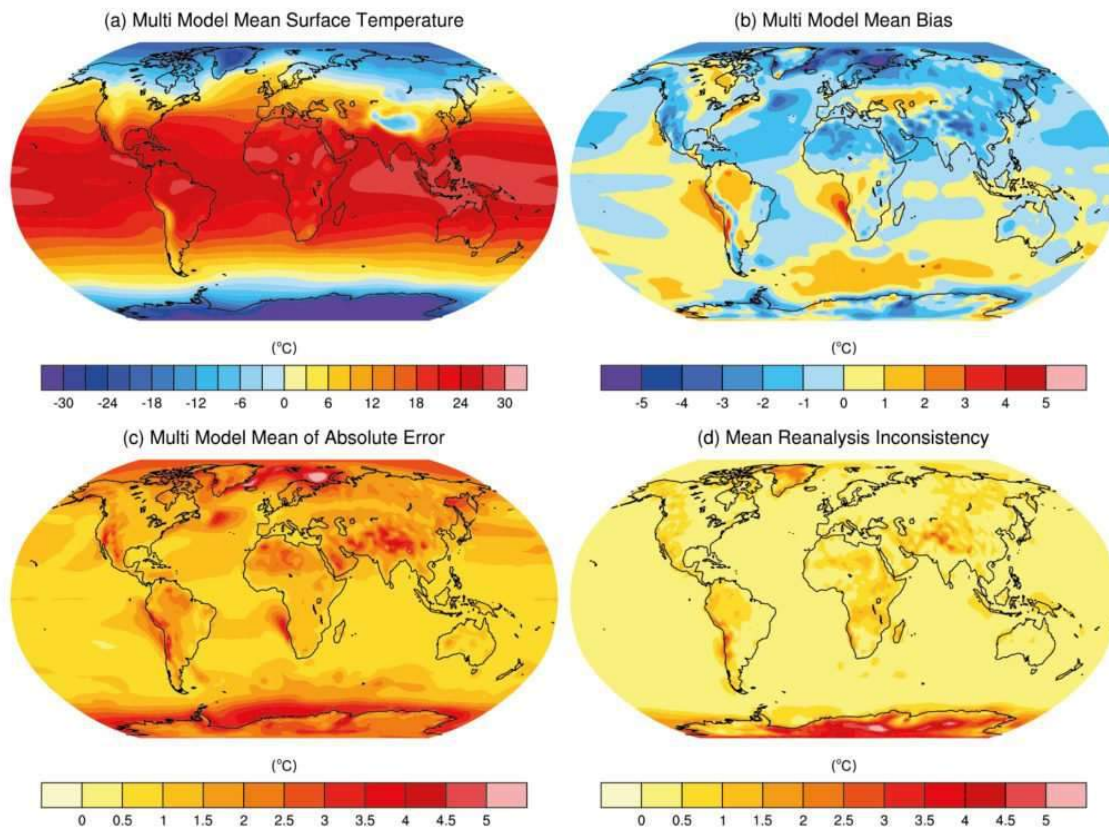
Argumentative backup-note to the letters to Boris Johnson, Leaders of the AU and EU on the occasion of the postponement of COP 26

Introduction to the two-letter initiative

Originally, the **26th session of the Conference of the Parties** to the Paris Climate Agreement was due to be held at Glasgow from 9-19 November 2020. It was **postponed to November 2021** due to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic which, right now, does not indicate any signs of abating.

Africa regards the global climate change crisis as the defining **development challenge** of our time. From the evidence of science and the scenarios projected by the world climate experts and the community of scientists, it is acknowledged that **Africa**, as a region, **will bear the greatest brunt and suffer the worst devastating effects**.¹ Climate models anticipate that Africa will experience a median temperature rise of up to 4 degrees in the 21st century.²

¹ Taken from the 5th Assessment Report of the IPCC (2013), Chapter 9 (Evaluation of Climate Models) Figure 9.2, p. 761, see: https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/WG1AR5_Chapter09_FINAL.pdf



² "There is nonetheless broad consensus that temperatures will rise faster than global averages, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) base scenario projecting an increase of about 4 degrees Celsius by the end of the century" Taken from Giordano B./ Bassini E. (2019) Climate Change and Africa's Future at <https://www.hoover.org/research/climate-change-and-africas-future>

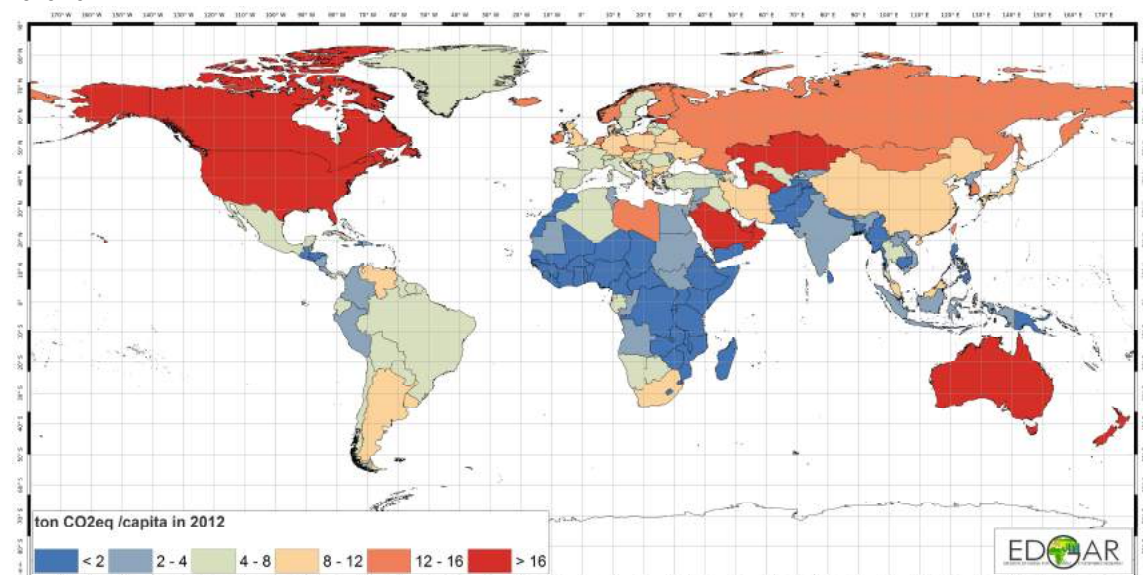
And this, although Africa has, other than western countries, hardly contributed to the problem historically and presently.³

At the same time, **Africa's adaptive capacity is extremely low** and the inherent justice problem is all the more excruciating because the largest emitters so far have shown no factual and adequate interest in assisting Africa evolve adaptive and resilient strategies.

³ The following graphic provides information on the historic amount of emissions, calculated for the period between 1800 and 2005. Taken from Matthews, D./Graham, T. et al. (2014) National contributions to observed global warming. Environmental Research Letters 9, see <https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/9/1/014010/pdf>

Rank	Country	Total	Fossil Fuel CO ₂	Land-use CO ₂	All CO ₂	Non-CO ₂ GHG	All GHG	Aerosols
1	United States	0.151	0.143	0.026	0.170	0.044	0.213	-0.063
2	China	0.063	0.042	0.036	0.078	0.049	0.127	-0.065
3	Russia	0.059	0.059	0.014	0.072	0.020	0.092	-0.034
4	Brazil	0.049	0.004	0.032	0.036	0.018	0.054	-0.005
5	India	0.047	0.013	0.025	0.037	0.025	0.062	-0.015
6	Germany	0.033	0.035	-0.000	0.035	0.008	0.042	-0.009
7	United Kingdom	0.032	0.031	0.001	0.033	0.007	0.040	-0.007
8	France	0.016	0.014	-0.000	0.014	0.007	0.021	-0.005
9	Indonesia	0.015	0.003	0.013	0.015	0.006	0.021	-0.006
10	Canada	0.013	0.011	0.007	0.017	0.005	0.023	-0.009
11	Japan	0.013	0.021	0.001	0.022	0.002	0.024	-0.011
12	Mexico	0.010	0.006	0.008	0.014	0.003	0.017	-0.007
13	Thailand	0.009	0.002	0.006	0.008	0.004	0.012	-0.002
14	Columbia	0.009	0.001	0.006	0.007	0.003	0.010	-0.001
15	Argentina	0.009	0.002	0.003	0.005	0.005	0.010	-0.001
16	Poland	0.007	0.010	0.001	0.011	0.003	0.014	-0.007
17	Nigeria	0.007	0.001	0.001	0.002	0.005	0.007	0.000
18	Venezuela	0.007	0.002	0.002	0.004	0.003	0.008	-0.001
19	Australia	0.006	0.005	0.002	0.007	0.006	0.014	-0.007
20	Netherlands	0.006	0.004	0.000	0.004	0.002	0.006	-0.001

When viewing more current data regarding the CO₂ eq/ton per capita (2012) emission, the world looks as follows:



See European Commission Emissions Data Base for Global Atmospheric Research (EDGAR), <https://edgar.jrc.ec.europa.eu/overview.php?v=CO2andGHG1970-2016&dst=CO2emi>

Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar
<https://www.jesuits.africa/>

Xavier Network
<https://xavier.network/>

This prompted Jesuits in Europe and Africa to cooperate in jointly voicing concerns in two letters,⁴ published on 9 November 2020, the day when COP 26 was due to start in Glasgow:

1. The first letter directed to Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, host of the COP 26 conference and in charge of the preparatory process leading up to the new conference date in November 2021.
2. The second letter addressed to leaders of the African and European Union, appealing to step up regional cooperation immediately.

The Jesuits expressed their concern that the absence of this conference in 2020, which was to be the first “global stocktake”⁵ of the progress of state parties towards their commitments under the Paris Agreement, will lure governments into diverting attention and resources away from climate change towards focussing on the ongoing global pandemic.

This paper is a more detailed elaboration, providing information in view of the argumentative backup to these two letters.

Context and background of the initiative

While COVID-19 remains a clear and present danger to the health and security of the world’s people, climate change is no less of a pressing crisis. Humankind should call to mind Pope Francis’ observation in his 2015 encyclical on the Care for our Common Home (*Laudato Si’*): “Everything is connected,” (Nr.91), and *Fratelli tutti* message which can be summarized as: “Everyone is connected.” Indeed, climate change is exacerbating the already existing social, economic, and environmental harms that COVID-19 has exacerbated further, and our ongoing response to the pandemic cannot ignore this.

Therefore, and being mindful of the unique challenge of the global pandemic, the Jesuits approve of measures against the COVID-19 pandemic, but emphasize the equal urgency of international action in view of the ongoing climate change for the following reasons:

First: Climate change did not take a break during the global coronavirus pandemic. Rather, it seems to be accelerating, as predicted tipping points are approaching faster than anticipated.⁶ As Pope Francis rightly stated: “**Climate restoration** is of utmost importance, since we are in the midst of a **climate emergency**.”⁷

Second: Traditionally, climate goals and targets are defined in view of 1990 emissions. It is the Jesuits conviction that, whoever is still committed to honour the legal and political obligation to keep global warming at around 1,5 or 2 degrees Celsius, needs to look rather at the **remaining Global Carbon Budget** for being the guiding principle, while the timeline set by it indicates that there is no time to

⁴ Since 2012, Jesuits in Africa and Europe increasingly cooperate in the joint research and advocacy, for example the project “[Tax Justice & Poverty](#)”, or [migration and Illicit Financial Flows](#), or on issues of climate change. The cooperation is coordinated by the continental social centres (JESC for Europe, JASC for Africa) and/or takes place between individual academic, developmental or refugee-caring institutions.

⁵ See Global Stocktake (referred to in Article 14 of the Paris Agreement) at <https://unfccc.int/topics/science/workstreams/global-stocktake-referred-to-in-article-14-of-the-paris-agreement>

⁶ Especially melting of arctic ice and melting of Siberian permafrost with its release of methane see (Lenton, Rockström, & al., 2019).

⁷ Message for the World Day of Prayer for the Creation, 1 September 2020, see http://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2020/documents/papa-francesco_20200901_messaggio-giornata-cura-creato.html

spare.⁸ Here, the world's climate scientists, activists and leaders are right who call to mind that "Nature is angry and does not negotiate."⁹

Third: Pope Francis reminds the world that it is **the poorest and most vulnerable who are bearing the brunt of climate change**, even though they have least contributed to this crisis.¹⁰ There are significant justice issues at stake, and it is the duty of those countries whose development have most contributed to climate change to take the lead in marshalling the resources to combat it.

Fourth: COVID-19 makes it clear that many of today's global risks have no respect for national borders. Such "**transborder risks**" include not only climate change, ecological degradation, and pandemics, but also effects of migration, terrorism, and cyber security. No country or region stands in isolation and addressing these crises requires the resources and combined expertise of the international community. Here, Pope Francis' endorsement of **multilateral cooperation** in *Fratelli tutti*, is a welcome admonition against the withdrawal of an increasing number of countries from multilateral efforts such as the Paris Agreement and the challenge that poses to global health and security.

Consequences for the global level: Letter to Boris Johnson

It follows now what the Jesuits think on how time can best be used by the host of COP 26, the United Kingdom, between now and the taking place of the postponed COP 26 in 2021. It has been addressed in the letter to the British Prime Minister, Boris Johnson:

First of all, it is noted that **many are working already on the links between the COVID-19 and climate change crisis**, e.g. on how COVID-19 relief packages and social protection programs can integrate climate action and what lessons can be learned from COVID-19 action for effective climate action.¹¹ This is even more important since the work of the Green Climate Fund should move its focus to locally lead adaptation to the effects of climate change.¹²

Here, publications of the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED) are welcomed, which recommends

- Integrate multi-dimensional risks into climate planning and decision making
- Channel funds through climate responsive social protection programmes and health projects that build resilience of those living in extreme poverty

⁸ For illustrating the urgency, see the renowned Mercator Research Institute' Carbon Clock at <https://www.mcc-berlin.net/en/research/co2-budget.html> or Climate-Analytics Briefing paper "Carbon budgets for the 1.5°C limit" <https://climateanalytics.org/briefings/carbon-budgets-for-the-15c-limit/>

⁹ Antonio Guterres on 23.9.2019 <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/sg/speeches/2019-09-23/remarks-2019-climate-action-summit>

¹⁰ See LS 53: "The poorest areas and countries are less capable of adopting new models for reducing environmental impact because they lack the wherewithal to develop the necessary processes and to cover their costs. We must continue to be aware that, regarding climate change, there are *differentiated responsibilities*. As the United States bishops have said, greater attention must be given to "the needs of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable, in a debate often dominated by more powerful interests". We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference."

¹¹ See Three things climate funds can learn from the COVID-19 response (25 June 2020) at <https://www.iied.org/three-things-climate-funds-can-learn-covid-19-response>

¹² The Green Climate Fund: time to shift focus to locally led adaptation (17 August 2020) at <https://www.iied.org/green-climate-fund-time-shift-focus-locally-led-adaptation>

- New and additional finance, to be spent on grassroots-initiatives rather than on initiatives supporting the donor's agenda.¹³

However, the Jesuits point out the need to go even beyond the approach of treating COVID-19 and the Climate Change crisis as two complementary and reinforcing sides of one and the same crisis. The Jesuits appeal that **an even more systemic approach is needed**, since the present situation provokes and deepens a number of other complex crises, too, especially in developing countries. For example:

- The **debt crisis**: Here poor countries run into trouble because they had to spend money on health and food subsidies and are no longer able to honour their debts. This calls to acknowledge that the debt crisis is part of the complex crisis facing developing countries.¹⁴
- **Human Rights Crisis**: The focus on COVID-19 emergency programs is often misused to worsen the human rights situation in developing countries, including opportunities for civil society to participate in transparent proceedings, to fight corruption and to document human rights abuses. Here it is necessary to prevent that progress made, e.g. in COP 25 in view of the Gender Action Plan,¹⁵ is not stalled and endangered due to other pressing negotiations, particularly on Article 6 on carbon trading.

More specifically and in view of the pending agenda of COP 26, the following is called to mind:

- In 2021, the **Paris Rulebook** needs definitely to be finalized. This was prevented so far by discord surrounding Art. 6 on Carbon Trading. Ineffective or counter-effective mechanisms, e.g. such producing the "hot air" phenomenon,¹⁶ must be avoided. Here efforts need be undertaken to resolve diverging views ahead of next years' meeting and/or regional initiatives need to be strengthened (see below).
- Ambitious and binding time-frames and time-lines must be agreed upon for the submission of national climate plans that highlight **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** that are consistent with limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C. Again: Guiding principle here must not be the 1990 figures, but the remaining CO₂ budget and the share available to each country if the 1.5°C goal is to be kept.
- So far, only 14 countries have submitted climate plans with NDCs, representing merely 3.8% of global greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁷ More need to come fast and soon.
- Negotiations surrounding the **transparency framework** need to be speeded up: Only if transparency is secured it can be verified whether political declarations and legal commitments are being honoured.¹⁸

¹³ See Call to international funders: address grassroots organisations' priorities, not yours (14 October 2020), at <https://www.iied.org/call-international-funders-address-grassroots-organisations-priorities-not-yours> and Non-state actors promoting and collaborating on local knowledge and initiatives for climate action (9 December 2019) <https://www.ecojesuit.com/non-state-actors-promoting-and-collaborating-on-local-knowledge-and-initiatives-for-climate-action/>

¹⁴ See Tackling the triple crisis. Using debt swaps to address debt, climate and nature loss post-COVID-19 (September 2020), at <https://pubs.iied.org/16674IIED/>

¹⁵ See Strengthened 5-year Action Plan on Gender Adopted at COP25 (28 January 2020), at <https://unfccc.int/news/strengthened-5-year-action-plan-on-gender-adopted-at-cop25>

¹⁶ Avoiding hot air in the 2015 Paris agreement (November 2015) at https://carbonmarketwatch.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/International-hot-air_final.pdf

¹⁷ Status is of 20 October 2020, updates see <https://www.climatewatchdata.org/2020-ndc-tracker>

¹⁸ See INSIDER: Designing the Paris Agreement's Transparency Framework (6 November 2017), at <https://www.wri.org/blog/2017/11/insider-designing-paris-agreements-transparency-framework>

- The role of the **UNFCCC’s Paris Committee on Capacity Building** needs to be clarified as soon as possible; whose task is specifically designed to assist developing countries in turning commitments into reality. The PCCB has been tasked with managing and overseeing the capacity-building workplan for the period 2016-2020. The longer progress here is stalling, it cannot perform its key role in ensuring coherence and coordination in capacity-building activities under the Convention.¹⁹
- The **Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts** (the so-called “Loss and Damage Mechanism”) needs to be implemented as soon as possible. Its task is to address loss and damage associated with impacts of climate change, including extreme events and slow onset events, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.²⁰ It was established by COP 19 in November 2013 already, but progress in implementing its functions is stalling.

While the COP 26 is important on the global level, regional initiatives, frameworks and opportunities to cooperate should not be neglected. Most importantly the **Regional Dialogues on Carbon Pricing**, led by the Collaborative Instruments for Ambitious Climate Action (CiACA)²¹ workstream of the UNFCCC, which were concluded last 9 October 2020. Involved were Latin America, Caribbean, West Africa, East and Southern Africa, and Southeast Asia, the meetings are designed as a peer learning process on how to use the instrument of Carbon Trading in the effort to advance the social and ecological transformation. “There was a general consensus that more frequent, regular and dedicated opportunities to update neighbouring countries on progress and challenges in promoting the adoption of carbon pricing instruments can assist in identifying successful strategies and replicate, where possible, efficient approaches.”²² Regional initiatives of this kind need to be encouraged and strengthened.

Finally, there is the question of **financing the social and ecological transition** which is called for by the present crises in a way that takes into account the responsibility of past and present polluters following the both the Principle of Ability to Pay and the Principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibility. Most importantly: Implementing both the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals would require several trillion of US Dollars.²³ Here, the Jesuits suggest specific policy instruments such as debt relief, Excess Profit Taxes or Pigovian Taxes etc. below, when detailing areas of an Enhanced AU and EU cooperation.

Opportunities for the UK as host country of COP 26

Nothing inspires more than a good example. And here the United Kingdom, being host country of COP 26, has a very special responsibility. The Jesuits hope that the UK dares to take on the necessary leadership needed to push participants ahead of next years’ meeting to adopt ambitious national agendas beforehand. To do this credibly, it would be key that the United Kingdom itself adopts an

¹⁹ See <https://unfccc.int/pccb>

²⁰ See Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (WIM), at <https://unfccc.int/topics/adaptation-and-resilience/workstreams/loss-and-damage-ld/warsaw-international-mechanism-for-loss-and-damage-associated-with-climate-change-impacts-wim>

²¹ See <https://unfccc.int/about-us/regional-collaboration-centres/the-collaborative-instruments-for-ambitious-climate-action-ciaca-initiative>

²² See UN Climate Change Fosters Regional Carbon Pricing (9 October 2020), at <https://unfccc.int/news/un-climate-change-fosters-regional-carbon-pricing>

²³ For example: According to estimations, around 12-13 trillion USD are needed until 2030 to implement the Paris agreement, another 10 and more trillion annually (!) would be needed to implement the Sustainable Development Goals – and those estimations are from the time ahead of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the figures see chapter 3.4 of (Alt, 2020b).

Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar https://www.jesuits.africa/	Xavier Network https://xavier.network/
---	---

ambitious national agenda, taking into account, among others, proposals by the 58-organizations strong “UK Climate Coalition”.²⁴

In addition to that, the Jesuits welcome the **Private Finance Agenda**, launched by the Bank of England in February 2020. Its purpose is said “to help private finance support the global economy transition to net zero greenhouse gas emissions. The objective is that every professional financial decision will need to take climate change into account. The right framework for reporting, risk management and returns will embed these considerations and help finance a whole economy transition. To achieve net zero, every company, bank, insurer and investor will need to adjust their business models for a low carbon world.”²⁵ The Jesuits consider this to be a key action that the United Kingdom could take the lead in supporting and bringing to the table.

Finally: It is critical for the success of efforts to combat climate change on a global level that the United States be a key participant in the process. Here the United Kingdom is uniquely poised to use its influence in the spirit of the **US-UK Special Relationship** to encourage Washington to reengage with this process.

Consequences for AU-EU cooperation: Letter to AU-EU Leaders

It follows now what the Jesuits think on how time can best be used between the AU and EU now and the taking place of the postponed COP 26 in 2021, addressed in the letter to AU-EU Leaders. Given the dragging of feet in the global context we advocate for some sort of Enhanced AU-EU Cooperation area on the topics of concern.

The situation at the outset: No equal partnership

The Jesuits see a great potential in **an enhanced cooperation between the AU and EU area**. First, because both blocs and most of their Member States remain in principle committed to multilateral cooperation on climate change. And second, since the two continents are bound together by a geographic proximity as well as a joint history, economic relationships and migration.

The Jesuits welcome accordingly **declarations of intent to step up this cooperation**, for example: In March 2020, the European Commission issued a joint communication to the European Parliament and the Council entitled *Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa*,²⁶ which was intended to begin a six month consultative process which would culminate in a new working framework to be agreed upon at the joint EU-African Union summit in October. That process too was derailed by COVID-19 and the summit has yet to be rescheduled. However, the communication gives insight into European thinking on “new prospects and challenges which are emerging [in Africa] from economic, political, social, technological, demographic, climate and environmental changes.”²⁷ While it is clear that the EU is committed to a “rules-based multilateralism” on climate issues, it is equally clear that **the agenda is driven by European prerogatives and priorities**.²⁸ For example, while the communication expresses a desire to partner with Africa, “our twin continent,” such sentiment fails

²⁴See The plan for a green, fair and healthy recovery - Priority recommendations for government, at <https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/recoveryplan>

²⁵ See COP26 Private Finance Agenda Launched (27 February 2020) at <https://unfccc.int/news/cop26-private-finance-agenda-launched>

²⁶ See https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/fs_20_374

²⁷ *Joint Communication of the European Commission and the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy to the European Parliament and the Council: Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa*, (9 March 2020), at https://ec.europa.eu/international-partnerships/system/files/communication-eu-africa-strategy-join-2020-4-final_en.pdf.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 15.

to acknowledge both the colonial and postcolonial past, as well as the yawning power disparity in their trade and socio-economic relations.²⁹

On this background, **Africa and the EU do not have real mutual priorities, even on climate change, and it is critical for the future of sustainable development and poverty reduction in Africa to recognize those differences and give precedence to Africa's agenda.**³⁰ This is not meant to suggest that Europe's interests are immaterial to Africa, but only that a one-size-fits-all approach to climate change simply will not work across continents.

In the eyes of the Jesuits, the time is now for Europe and Africa to embark on a serious partnership, aware of their at times troubled history, but now committed to a common future at eye level together.

In view of the European Union and its member states³¹

Having said that, the Jesuits acknowledge and appreciate the commitment of the EU-Commission to advance on climate issues within the EU with its proposed Green Deal. Here, too, it needs to be reiterated, that the COVID-19 pandemic must not be used as a pretence to delay its comprehensive implementation, as it seems to be the view of populists and/or conservatives in the EU parliament.³² On the contrary, **funds released for tackling the consequences of the pandemic need to be used simultaneously to advance the social and ecological transformation necessary to combat climate change.** More particularly, the Jesuits point out the following:

- The Green Deal is not perceived to be ambitious enough, especially given the enormous financial and technical means available to Europe as one of the world's most prosperous and innovative continents and its responsibility as one of the world's largest contributors to pollution, past and present. On that background the decision of the European Parliament of 7th October is welcomed, to raise the target from 55% reduction (compared to 1990 figures) by 2030 to 60%,³³ a figure which also finds support by researcher and economists.³⁴ It is very much hoped that EU-Leader will confirm this ambitious target at their meeting in December.
- Analytical clarity is needed. Targets should not be reached by simply offsetting reductions and removals in CO₂, but to formulate explicit targets for both areas which then are published transparently and traceably.
- In view of CO₂ removal via Carbon Storage the still ongoing debate regarding the safety and security of this practice needs to be brought to an end first. If things go wrong, large areas of

²⁹ Ibid., 1. Olabisi D. Akinkugbe, In EU-Africa Trade Relations: Africa is not Europe's 'Twin Continent.' In: *Afronomicslaw*, (14 March 2020), <https://www.afronomicslaw.org/2020/03/13/in-eu-africa-trade-relations-africa-is-not-europes-twin-continent/>.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ See: German Catholic Bishops and their comment on the European Climate Law (COD 2020/0036) from 28 September 2020 (Kommissariat der Deutschen Bischöfe, 2020).

³² Christdemokraten im Europaparlament stellen den „Green Deal“ in Frage (27 June 2020) at <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/politik/ausland/christdemokraten-im-eu-parlament-stellen-green-deal-infrage-16835406.html>

³³ See <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2020/10/07/eu-parliament-votes-favour-cutting-emissions-60-2030/>

³⁴ See, for example, the study „A new climate for Europe: 2030 climate targets must be more ambitious“ (9 October 2019) by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW), at https://doi.org/10.18723/diw_dwr:2019-41-1. See also the study “An Economic Case for the UN Climate Targets: Early and strong climate action pays off” (13 July 2020) by the PIK Potsdam at https://www.pik-potsdam.de/en/news/latest-news/an-economic-case-for-the-un-climate-targets-early-and-strong-climate-action-pays-off?set_language=en

fertile soil could be destroyed and no longer be available for the production of food items. The Jesuits suggest a stronger use of natural instruments of carbon removal, such as reforestation.

- Only 33 countries worldwide have stated their intention to update their climate plans/Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020, including the European Union.³⁵ If all EU Member States transform those intention into ambitious climate plans, ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions included, this would be a strong signal to all other countries.
- Economic leaders, especially, need clarity about progress towards this social and ecological transformation. The EU should therefore develop a mandatory and transparent strategy beyond 2030.
- The Jesuits support those scientists arguing that any continuation of fossil energy is morally unacceptable³⁶ and needs to be stopped as quickly as possible. This is of particular importance since some large polluters still committed to fossil fuels are in EU Member states.³⁷ The Jesuits support the recommendation by the European Academies' Science Advisory Council: Push vigorously the European Union's hydrogen and energy system integration strategies and, by doing so, "it is particularly urgent to remove the subsidies, taxes, levies and other incentives which continue to distort energy markets by directly and indirectly supporting the use of fossil fuels."³⁸

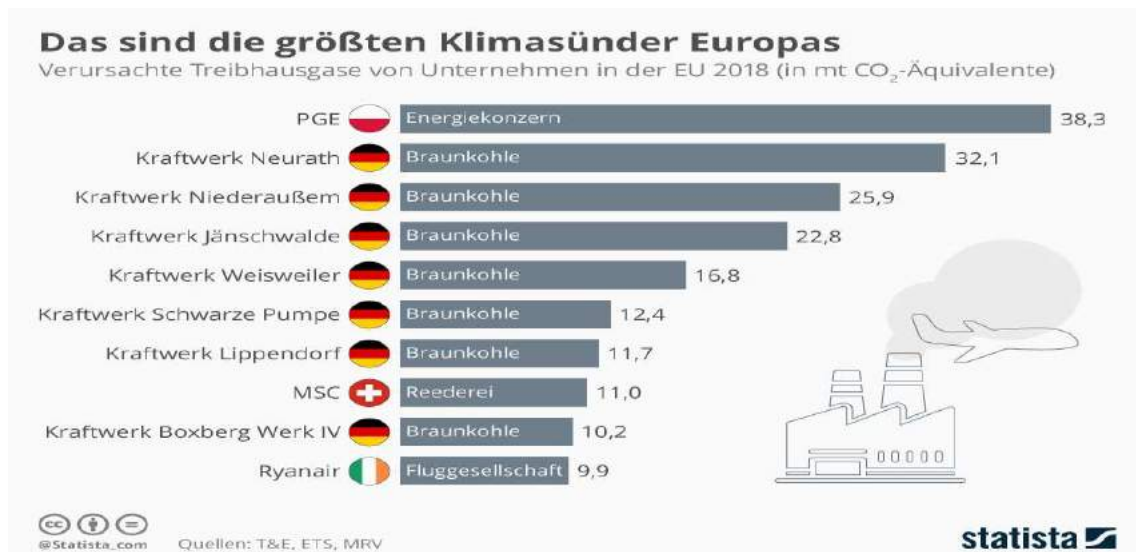
Finally, the Jesuits want to raise **two comments from a climate justice perspective**:

First, the Green Deal focuses Europe's attention on emissions within its own territory. Thus, a highly-industrialized European state is considered to have made progress when goods consumed in it are now imported (so that the pollution associated with their production now occurs in some far-away poor African country rather than domestically).

³⁵ Status 20 October 2020, for updates see <https://www.climatewatchdata.org/2020-ndc-tracker>

³⁶ (Otto, Donges, & al., 2020)

³⁷



³⁸ (EASAC, 2020, S. 4). EU Member states, incl. United Kingdom, Norway and Switzerland, still spend over 137 billion Euro subsidies on fossil fuels, Germany being largest with 37 billion Euro annually.

"Milliardensubventionen gegen die Klimaziele" (July 2020), Investigate Europe at <https://www.investigate-europe.eu/de/2020/milliarden-subventionen-gegen-die-klimaziele/>

Similarly, European states pay a lot to companies for closing a few fossil-fuel-fired power plants at home, even though those firms are building dozens of such plants in poorer countries, often with favourable financing from banks in that industrialized state or even from its government (“export credits”) including the European Investment Bank (EIB).

Both amounts to window-dressing and is therefore not acceptable.

In view of the African Union and its member states

In 2015, the African Union committed itself in Agenda 2063: *The Africa we Want* to a sustainable development with full cooperation for international efforts to mitigate climate change. In the Agenda 2063, the African Union has as its first aspiration: “*A prosperous Africa based on inclusive growth and sustainable development*” where the AU declares its determination “to eradicate poverty in one generation and build shared prosperity through social and economic transformation of the continent.” Part of this key aspiration is Goal Nr. 2, expressing the resolve by the AU to attain “[e]nvironmentally sustainable climate and resilient economies and communities putting in place measures to sustainably manage the continent’s rich biodiversity, forests, land and waters and using mainly adaptive measures to address climate change risks.”

At the same time, the Agenda 2063 does not elaborate detailed plans which would be comparable to the EU Green Deal program. However, through the African Development Bank,³⁹ Africa has a with five medium-term to long-term development priorities. The so-called “High 5s” are to:

1. Light up and Power Africa;
2. Feed Africa;
3. Industrialize Africa;
4. Integrate Africa; and
5. Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa.

The first three and the last long-term priority offers, however, plenty of potential for an AU-EU cooperation, advancing the social and ecological transformation, as will be shown in the respective chapter below.

The stress in any African intervention to mitigate climate change is on building resilience and adaptation and the problem is, of course, that all those programs require funding, while, at the same time, the situation of African budgets has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, when suddenly and unforeseeably funds were needed to subsidize businesses and food or increase health spending.

Areas for an enhanced AU and EU cooperation

Jesuits support the Agenda 2063 claim that there is an ethical imbalance in asking a continent which produces less than 5% of global carbon emissions to bear the brunt of climate change.⁴⁰ Jesuits here expect historic emitters, many of which are European, to demonstrate greater sensitivity:

A climate justice perspective recognizes this imbalance and links it to both the **Principle of Ability to Pay** and, more importantly for the international context, the **Principle of the Common, but Differentiated Responsibility** – the first international legal instrument adopted by the world

³⁹ African Development Bank (2013) At the center of Africa’s transformation, strategy for 2013–2022, at <https://www.afdb.org/en/about-us/mission-strategy/afdb-strategy>

⁴⁰ See Olabisi D. Akinkugbe, In EU-Africa Trade Relations: Africa is not Europe’s ‘Twin Continent.’ In: *Afronomicslaw*, (14 March 2020), <https://www.afronomicslaw.org/2020/03/13/in-eu-africa-trade-relations-africa-is-not-europes-twin-continent/>, 3-4.

Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar https://www.jesuits.africa/	Xavier Network https://xavier.network/
---	---

community to address climate change at the 1992 Conference in Rio:⁴¹ Therefore Europe is expected to bear its fair share of the political and social costs of addressing climate change and extending to Africa the financial and technical assistance.

First, the debt problem of African states needs to be considered again. COVID-19 has already placed many governments in the precarious position of having to decide between servicing their debt and directing scarce resources towards saving lives.⁴² Without a comprehensive framework for **restructuring or cancelling Africa's sovereign debt**, governments simply will not have the resources to make any effective contribution to climate change. Africa can pay its creditors, or it can help invest in a sustainable, green future – it cannot do both. The Jesuits refer to Pope Francis, who in *Fratelli tutti* on the one side acknowledges that debt need to be repaid, at the same time subordinated this obligation to the need of governments to provide for their people (see FT 126). EU member states, as key stakeholders in international financial organizations, including the World Bank and the IMF, can use their influence to press for resolution of Africa's debt crisis, making sure that private creditors and Chinese banks are brought to the table for a comprehensive multilateral solution.

Next: At the Financing for Development (FfD) Conference in Addis Ababa, July 2015, European countries pledged to support developing countries to finance climate action. In this context, **stemming Illicit Financial Flows and improving Domestic Resource Mobilization** were considered to be of priority importance.⁴³ This has been confirmed at the UN Summit to pass the Sustainable Development Goals⁴⁴ and is endorsed by eminent scholars (Sachs, McCord, & al., 2019). Accordingly, Europe should increase its assistance in helping Africa in stemming illicit financial flows and building the capacity of African tax administrations. Here, German-African Jesuits did quite an amount of research within the project on Tax Justice & Poverty,⁴⁵ out of which also a number of the following recommendations arise. More specifically, the Jesuits support the following funding avenues:

1. Europe is reminded to deliver on the commitment given at the 2009 Copenhagen summit and confirmed at 2016, namely, to **mobilize 100 billion USD annually** from 2020 onwards as per the Paris Agreement.⁴⁶
2. Follow the recommendation of the European Academies' Science Advisory Council and **stop spending any money on fossil energies** also in the AU-EU cooperation.
3. In response to the problem of IFFs, the EU advances three policy areas within the EU, and has been extending its practices, norms and regulations outside its territory extending them beyond Europe leveraging the role that it plays in the international discussion on sustainable development and, perhaps even more, through the market power it wields and by making

⁴¹ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_But_Differentiated_Responsibilities

⁴² See "Double Burden: Africa's debt crisis hampers its fight against covid-19," *The Economist*, 11 April 2020, at <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2020/04/11/africas-debt-crisis-hampers-its-fight-against-covid-19>.

⁴³ Result of the Addis Meeting: "More than 100 countries have agreed on a framework to bankroll an array of ambitious development goals, ranging from tackling poverty to dealing with climate change by 2030. ... Meeting the 2030 goals would cost between \$3.3 trillion and \$4.5 trillion a year in state spending, investment and aid, analysts say, an amount roughly equivalent to the United States 2016 federal budget of \$3.8 trillion." See U.N. conference agrees on plan to finance development goals (16 July 2015), at Reuters, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-africa-development/u-n-conference-agrees-on-plan-to-finance-development-goals-idUSKCN0PQ21D20150716>

⁴⁴ Target 16.4 reads: "By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial flows and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organised crime".

⁴⁵ See www.taxjustice-and-poverty.org

⁴⁶ See <https://unfccc.int/topics/climate-finance/the-big-picture/climate-finance-in-the-negotiations>

- them accessible only by sufficiently compliant economic actors. These are the **1) automatic tax information exchange between Member States, 2) country-by-country reporting by companies and the 3) financial institutions and a spillover analysis of EU tax legislation.** This is commendable, but more is needed to implement those mechanisms for Africa's benefit, most importantly, to train African personnel and to cooperate with them in their attempt to work with those instruments.
4. In particular, African countries need to have **access to the tax data on income and capital** which MNEs in the EU report as having abroad, so that it can be taxed in the source country. This request implies, first, a removal of privacy protection laws, secondly, countries should have to receive the information upon request. Thirdly, African countries be helped to build capacity to produce a complete business case with the exact taxpayer information they need and to put in place sophisticated software and legal guarantees to ensure that the information exchanged remains secure.
 5. Furthermore, the Jesuits are concerned about **conflicting policy objectives** when it comes to addressing complex problems: For example: What is the point to strengthen the DRM capacities of tax administrations with Official Developmental Aid, and, at the same time, erode the tax base with double tax agreements (DTAs), e.g. taxing rights for Multinational Corporations, if they are headquartered in the state of the wealthy partner to the treaty. Therefore Jesuits highlight the need to ensure consistency between tax policies applied in agreements with developing countries and development policies like as specified under Article 208 TFEU. They further highlight the fact that through the Cotonou agreement, the EU has committed itself to advancing development priorities of African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) States by sharing information before taking a measure that might affect ACP interests and carrying out consultations in case they have concerns.
 6. Additional resources should be raised by introducing an **Excess Profit Tax**. This has both precedence in US-UK history, it also resembles the German Wealth Levy, which can be levied upon the wealthy to fund extraordinary needs.⁴⁷ It should not surprise, that both the Excess Profit Tax and the Wealth Levy were discussed/applied in times following the World Wars or other times of crisis. Therefore, given present challenges, it seems very timely that those instruments are reconsidered. This suggestion gains support by considering (a), that certain cooperations (and its owners) even increased their profits in spite of the COVID 19 pandemic and that many of them are also among those who (b) also profited extra-ordinarily over the past decades of globalization. Given the present complex crises we are of the opinion that such an instrument is and adequate expression of the principle that Strong Shoulders have to carry a heavier burden than others.
 7. Stronger use should be made if "**Pigovian Mechanisms**",⁴⁸ i.e. taxes and levies whose primary goal is to put a price on damaging behaviour with the intent to push back and decrease this behaviour. Here, the following instruments come to mind:
 - The participation of Africa in the **market-based mechanisms** to address climate change through demonstration projects. Here support is called for to institutional capacity needs and building a critical mass of experts within Africa in the areas of carbon trade and international climate change negotiation skills.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ For the Excess Profit Tax see (Lawson, 2020), for the German Wealth Levy see <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verm%C3%B6gensabgabe>

⁴⁸ See for more detail https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pigovian_tax

⁴⁹ All this could be started within regional cooperation contexts as were recommended above, Footnote 21

- We support the recommendation of the High-Level Commission on Carbon Pricing, suggesting **Carbon-Dioxid taxes** of 40-80 USD per ton by 2020 and 100 USD per ton by 2030 at the latest.⁵⁰
- In order to protect AU-EU industries from the competition of those not applying such instruments one should also consider the introduction of a **Border Adjustment Tax** to protect industries within the AU-EU cooperation area.⁵¹

As long as damaging behaviour is not successfully pushed back with those instruments, proceeds could directly be used for measures of adaptation and mitigation. Here, one should also be mindful to **support those who are hardest hit by the consequences of the social and ecological transformation** of the economy and society:

- Proceeds could be used to soften the impact arising here for **low-income households**, small and medium businesses and developing countries.
- Proceeds could also be used to support those who avoid deforestation and or create new **natural global sinks of CO₂**, thus enabling the world to do without Carbon Storage Facilities. For example: Considerable benefit for all could arise from supporting the “Great Green Wall”, launched by the African Union in 2007 to stop continuing desertification in the Sahel region.⁵²

In view of practical plans and programs, the Jesuits suggest the following:

Prevention is cheaper than reparation and compensation: A lot can be gained when addressing the vulnerability to climate change through **support to early warning systems, adaptation needs assessment** and adaptation activities. Similarly, the **establishment of climate centres within Africa and cooperative mechanisms** (South-North and South-South) would assist in addressing regional specific climate change impacts and adaptation needs.

In this context, and given the tendency of urbanization, we suggest to provide technical and financial support for Africa to **increase energy availability, particularly in the rural areas, energy diversification** and for ensuring energy security for investment promotion in climate change-friendly development areas.

Here, international cooperation holds a lot of potential for both sides, if it is fairly done and its fruits are fairly delivered: Especially the **production of Hydrogen** contains a lot of promise since there is a lot of renewable energy available in Africa while the resulting product is easy to transport.⁵³

This kind of international high-tech collaboration could be strengthened by a reform in the way green inventions are rewarded and incentivized. When poor countries find that specific green inventions are patented and may be used only with purchase of an expensive license, they will be sorely

⁵⁰ See Report of 29 May 2017 at https://www.co2-preis-rechner.de/PDF/CarbonPricing_Final_May29.pdf

⁵¹ (Alt, 2020b)

⁵² See <https://www.dw.com/en/the-great-green-wall-of-the-sahel/a-37709247>. Information on the present status see <https://www.dw.com/en/what-happened-to-africas-ambitious-green-belt-project/a-53004690>

⁵³ “In a new initiative, Germany is collaborating with African countries to explore the utilization of green hydrogen and hydrogen derivatives as an energy option in a joint effort. H2 POWER-AFRICA project is the first-phase of a joint initiative of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) and African partners in the Sub-Saharan region (SADC and ECOWAS countries) to explore the potentials of green hydrogen production from the enormous renewable energy sources within the sub-regions.”, see Mukumbira, G. (27 April 2020), H2 Power in Africa – Atlas of Green Hydrogen Generation Potentials in Africa, see <https://www.sasscal.org/atlas-of-green-hydrogen-generation-potentials-in-africa/>

tempted to resort to older, more polluting alternatives of the sort richer countries used decades ago. **Everyone anywhere should be able to use a green invention for free**, and its inventors were then rewarded from public funds in proportion to the pollution averted. Patent monopoly rewards turn innovators into jealous spies, scouring the earth to find possible infringers, agents who may be using their innovation without license. The proposed alternative rewards would encourage innovators actively to promote the widespread and effective deployment of their innovation so as to enlarge its impact. An innovator would seek to earn more by helping users get the most out of its invention and by subsidizing its use for additional impact among the poorest. All this could be achieved by creating an Environmental Impact Fund, financed by the more affluent states, which would distribute each year a large pool of reward money among registered green inventions in proportion to the environmental impact that will have been achieved through their use in the preceding year.

Given experiences in the past, when of the vast majority of financial aid went to private multinational corporations or other for-profit enterprises, we underline the above mentioned recommendation of the IIED that **more support should be given to local initiatives and grassroots movements**. The Jesuits are convinced: Change best grows from below since local people know best about local needs and local potentials or small enterprises and start-ups are more flexible when responding to the real needs and opportunities of their environment and they are less path dependent than large corporations.

In addition, the Jesuits suggest to support more strongly **innovative ways of doing economy in a social and sustainable way**, i.e. in a way of Pope Francis.⁵⁴ They point to enterprises applying the standards of the Common Good Economy,⁵⁵ Social Entrepreneurship,⁵⁶ or those committed to advance mandatory Corporate Social Accountability.⁵⁷

Furthermore, the Jesuits point out the potential of **innovative indigenous and other technologies for both adaptation and mitigation** to climate change, such as drought-resistant crops, crop diversification, improved farming technologies, better irrigation techniques, [and] control of climate-related disease such as malaria and dengue fever.

Social justice comprises gender justice and, as mentioned, progress achieved here at COP 25 needs to be defended. The Jesuits call for **gender impact analysis** being part of any policy package, aiming to **identify gender-specific needs** and protection measures related to floods, droughts and other disasters and involve women in all aspects of decision making relating to adaptation and mitigation, including disaster risk reduction and choice of adaptation technologies.

Conclusion

By providing its fair financial share, Europe could have a huge positive impact by helping poorer states onto a green path of development and, at the same time, contribute to the slowdown of climate change. For example in view of the first Agenda 2063 priority “to light up and power Africa”: One could meet their rapidly growing electricity needs with cutting-edge installations drawing on solar, wind, tidal, geothermal, hydro and/or wave power. Doing this, Europe could offer African states to pay the cost difference between such green installations and the coal-fired power plants. Since Africa here is less path-dependent than industrialized states, that way huge amounts of

⁵⁴ See <https://francescoeconomy.org/>

⁵⁵ See <https://www.ecogood.org/>

⁵⁶ See <https://www.ashoka.org/de-de/focus/social-entrepreneurship>

⁵⁷ See <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/corporate-accountability.asp>

pollution could be avoided at very low cost – or even at negative cost, if one also takes into account that, avoiding fuel costs, those green installations are much cheaper to run (Majekolagbe, 2020).

That way, more people could remain in their traditional homesteads, migration movements could be prevented.

All in all, supporting Africa in its efforts of adaptation, mitigation and strengthened resilience would be a win-win situation for both Europe and Africa. Or, in the words of Pope Francis' Fratelli tutti: That way, we could strive to "attain a global juridical, political and economic order 'which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity'. Ultimately, this will benefit the entire world, since 'development aid for poor countries' implies 'creating wealth for all'." (FT, 138)

Contact

For further information and all inquiries please get in touch with:

For both letters and the argumentative Backup-Note

Office of the Director of Jesuit Justice & Ecology for the Jesuit Conference on Africa & Madagascar c/o Africama House P.O. Box 1540 Nairobi, Kenya 00502	Jesuitenmission Germany as part of the Jesuit Network for mission and development (Xavier Network) c/o Königstraße 64 90402 Nürnberg Germany
Rev. Charlies B. Chilufya SJ, MRes (Director) Whatsapp +254786584784 Skype-Id cchilufya_1	Rev. Dr. Jörg Alt SJ, MA, BD (Advocacy Officer) Phone +49 911 2346-160 <alt@jesuitenmission.de>
Fernando Saldivar SJ (Global Policy Officer) Whatsapp +254 759174927 Skype-Id fcsaldivar	

Jesuit Conference of Africa and Madagascar https://www.jesuits.africa/	Xavier Network https://xavier.network/
---	---

Bibliography

- African Union. (2015). *Agenda 2063: The Africa we Want. Framework Document*. Addis Ababa: African Union.
- Alt, J. (2020b). *Taxation and Transformation: The use and usefulness of Catholic Social Teaching, taxes and tax-related instruments to advance systemic change*. Retrieved from Tax Justice & Poverty: <http://tinyurl.com/MaxxTax>
- EASAC. (2020, September). *Hydrogen and synthetic fuels*. Retrieved from European Academies' Science Advisory Council: https://easac.eu/fileadmin/PDF_s/reports_statements/Hydrogen_and_Synthetic_Fuels/EASAC_Hydrogen_Commentary_Web_publication.pdf
- Kommissariat der Deutschen Bischöfe. (2020, September 28). *Stellungnahme des Kommissariats der deutschen Bischöfe zum Europäischen Klimagesetz*. Retrieved from Klima-Allianz: <https://www.klima-allianz.de/news/detail/stellungname-des-kommissariats-der-deutschen-bischoefe-zum-europaeischen-klimagesetz/>
- Lawson, M. (2020). *Pandemic profiteers and excess profits*. Private Mail.
- Lenton, T., Rockström, J., & al., e. (2019, November 27). *Climate tipping points - too risky to bet against*. Retrieved from Nature: <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03595-0>
- Majekolagbe, A. (2020, July 6). *Unintended Consequences: Covid-19, Climate Change and Nigeria's Sustainability Transition*. Retrieved from Afronomicslaw: <https://www.afronomicslaw.org/2020/07/06/unintended-consequences-covid-19-climate-change-and-nigerias-sustainability-transition/>
- Otto, I. M., Donges, J. F., & al., e. (2020, February 4). *Social tipping dynamics for stabilizing Earth's climate by 2050*. Retrieved from Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America: <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/5/2354>
- Sachs, J., McCord, G., & al. (2019). *SDG costing & financing for Low-Income Developing Countries*. New York: Sustainable Development Solution Network.