



## CONCLUDING STATEMENT

### **From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience in Africa at Local and Regional Levels**

**Pontifical Academies of Sciences (PAS) and of Social Sciences (PASS) with CIFOR-ICRAF, NASAC, and African Partners June 30 – July 1, 2025 | Nairobi, Kenya**

#### **Preamble**

We, the co-organizers of the Regional Conference "*From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience in Africa at Local and Regional Levels*," convened in Nairobi, Kenya, from June 30 to July 1, 2025, under the auspices of the Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences, in partnership with CIFOR-ICRAF, NASAC, and African stakeholders, affirm our commitments to contribute to building a climate-resilient Africa, noting that we relate to diverse stakeholder communities.

This Conference builds upon and refers to foundations laid by African initiatives and action plans, such as the 2023 African Climate Summit<sup>1</sup>, and the Africa Youth Climate Assembly Declaration<sup>2</sup>. It connects to climate ethics and planetary stewardship, as articulated by the Pontifical Academies in the Vatican, and it adds a critical dimension: elevating resilience through Mitigation, Adaptation, and Societal Transformation (MAST), with an emphasis on locally-led actions and systemic change<sup>3</sup>.

We emphasize Africa's disproportionate vulnerability to climate change, despite its minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. In light of this, we reiterate the urgency of placing climate resilience—particularly at local and regional levels—at the heart of Africa's climate agenda.

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<sup>1</sup><https://africaclimatesummit.org/downloads/post-summit/ACS-commitments-and-announcement-compilation.pdf> and <https://africaclimatesummit.org/downloads/post-summit/THE-INAUGURAL-AFRICA-CLIMATE-SUMMIT.pdf>

<sup>2</sup>[https://media.africaclimatesummit.org/ACS+Africa+Youth+Climate+Assembly+Declaration+AYCA\\_231003\\_200635.pdf?request-content-type=%22application/force-download%22](https://media.africaclimatesummit.org/ACS+Africa+Youth+Climate+Assembly+Declaration+AYCA_231003_200635.pdf?request-content-type=%22application/force-download%22)

<sup>3</sup> In July of 2022, PAS organized a meeting of experts, at which the *MAST concept for resilience was proposed* and accepted by all the experts attending the meeting in a conference declaration. This led to the realization that resilience must be built at the local level of cities and states.

A Global summit was organized jointly by PAS and PASS during May 15 - 17, 2024, assembling from all hemispheres a group of mayors and governors to discuss and showcase innovative solutions for climate resilience. The outcome of the summit was a *Planetary Call to Action for Climate Change Resilience* (Pope Francis, Ramanathan, V; Suárez-Orozco, M; von Braun, J; Alford, H; Turkson, P; and 15 other authors by PAS and PASS, signed by all attendees, including all the attending Mayors and Governors. The document

[https://www.pas.va/en/events/2024/climate\\_resilience/call\\_to\\_action\\_climate\\_change.html](https://www.pas.va/en/events/2024/climate_resilience/call_to_action_climate_change.html) recognizes that the climate crisis is upon us already, and we need a new expanded approach beyond emissions mitigation to protect people and ecosystems, and need to engage with global reach at the local level.

## **Strategic Orientations**

1. **MAST: A Three-Pillar Resilience Framework** - We endorse the MAST framework as a cornerstone of Africa's climate resilience strategy:
  - **Mitigation:** We support urgent actions to bend the global warming curve below 2°C. Mitigation must be scaled with justice, recognizing Africa's right to sustainable development while transitioning toward low-carbon futures.
  - **Adaptation:** Given Africa's acute exposure to climate risks, adaptation must become a central priority. Local resilience must anticipate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate shocks—from droughts and floods to food and water insecurity.
  - **Societal Transformation:** Deep behavioral, institutional, and systemic shifts are essential. This includes promoting sustainable land use, circular economies, and the transformative role of forests and nature-based solutions.
2. **Local Leadership and Decentralized Governance**

The participation of **mayors, governors, and local leaders** from urban and rural constituencies reaffirmed the central role of decentralized governance in operationalizing climate resilience. Cities and subnational governments must be empowered with finance, capacity, and decision-making authority to deliver tailored resilience plans and policies.

3. **Youth as Agents of Transformation**

We commend the active engagement of Africa's youth throughout this Conference. The Youth MAST Dialogues provided a vital space for intergenerational exchange and bold calls to action. Youth must not only be included—they must be **co-leaders** in shaping and implementing resilience solutions at all levels.

4. **Science, Policy, and Community Synergies**

The Conference benefited from strong contributions from African academies of science, research organizations, Indigenous knowledge holders, and religious communities. We reaffirm that **climate resilience must be informed by robust science**, inclusive policy dialogues, and bottom-up community engagement.

5. **Faith-Based and Civil Society Engagement**

The engagement of regional faith leaders and civil society actors enriched our deliberations. Inspired by Pope Francis' May 2024 call for a **Universal Protocol of Resilience**, we echo his appeal for ethical urgency, social justice, and planetary care. Faith-based institutions are uniquely positioned to mobilize moral will and community-based resilience.

## **Tangible Outcomes and Commitments**

The Conference concludes with the following actionable commitments:

- **City and Regional Climate Resilience Protocols:** We commit to developing localized resilience blueprints—designed city-by-city and province-by-province—with clear implementation pathways, finance mechanisms, and community ownership.

- **Investable Business Plans for Resilience:** Municipalities and regions will collaborate with financial institutions to create practical, bankable climate resilience plans, prioritizing nature-based solutions, agroecological transitions, and resilient infrastructure.
- **Platform for Science Guided Policy Dialogue:** We support the establishment of regular high-level policy dialogues to track progress based on sound data and science-based evidence, exchange best practices, and prepare structured contributions for COP30 in Brazil and the Final Vatican Resilience Summit in 2027 together with communities from other hemispheres.
- **Resilience Capacity-Building:** Institutions will be strengthened at the local level, including technical, educational, and financial capacities, to implement adaptation and resilience strategies, especially in vulnerable communities.

### **Key Areas of Action and Shared Priorities**

Thematic dialogues during the conference provided critical insights and recommendations across the following areas:

- **Urban and Rural Resilience:** Mayors and local leaders shared success stories and challenges in addressing floods, heatwaves, and drought, emphasizing the need for localized planning and inclusive governance.
- **National Adaptation Plans:** We applaud the efforts by African governments to integrate their National Adaptation Plans into both national and sectoral development plans. This approach is crucial for securing funding and prioritizing climate resilience initiatives at both national and local levels.
- **Innovative Climate Finance:** Experts identified urgent priorities for financing climate adaptation and resilience, calling for new instruments and direct access mechanisms for cities and local governments. We recognize the important work being done by the African Development Bank and its partners in providing clean energy access to local communities lacking electricity. This together with restoring biodiversity and ecological health in the continent should be emphasized as foundational elements of Adaptation strategies.
- **Food, Land, and Water Systems:** Building resilience in Africa's food and water systems is essential. This requires strong African science systems, Integrated land use policies, climate-smart agriculture, and water harvesting techniques were emphasized as transformative pathways.
- **Nature-Based Solutions (NBS):** Forest conservation, reforestation, and nature-based infrastructure emerged as cost-effective and community-supported responses that align with science, and considering ecological and spiritual values.
- **Disaster Preparedness and Recovery:** Participants stressed the need for improved early warning systems, post-disaster recovery strategies, and insurance mechanisms for vulnerable populations.
- **Schools' curricula:** We recommend strengthening initiatives to incorporate climate change adaptation into school curricula. This will better prepare students for future careers in green technologies and enhance their understanding of climate resilience.
- **Climate-Induced Migration:** Addressing the root causes and human rights implications of climate-related migration was identified as a key priority for resilience planning.

### **Looking Forward: Africa's Call to Action for COP30**

As Africa prepares to speak with one voice at **COP30 in Brazil**, this Conference **calls to**:

- Increase climate finance to support **locally-led adaptation and resilience**;
- Promote the adoption of a **Universal Protocol for Resilience**, rooted in justice, science, and solidarity;
- Establish a **Pan-African Resilience Alliance**, that includes cities, youth, academia, faith-based organizations, and civil society;
- Ensure youth are **formally included** in all regional and global climate negotiations, including COP30 and beyond.

From Nairobi to the world, we commit to a new era of climate action anchored in resilience, rooted in Africa's realities, and powered by its people. Let this Nairobi Conference mark the beginning of an African-led, globally supported movement for **resilient futures for all**.

**Adopted in Nairobi, Kenya 1 July 2025**