AFRICA DAY @ COP31, Antalya, Türkiye

Theme: Securing Africa's Water: Advancing Climate Resilience, Early Action and Climate Finance

Date: 12 November 2026 Time: 14:00 to 16:30, Venue: Africa Pavilion Blue Zone,
&
Date: 14 November 2026, Time: 13:15 to 14:45, Venue: Side Event Room Yellow

CONCEPT NOTE

1. Background and Rationale

As the African Union advances its **2026 Theme of the Year on Water and Sanitation, *"Assuring Sustainable Water Availability and Safe Sanitation Systems to Achieve the Goals of Agenda 2063,"*** Africa Day at COP31 will position investments in water and sanitation as a strategic driver of Africa's climate resilience, sustainable development and economic transformation. The event organized by the African Union Commission, the African Centre of Meteorological Applications for Development, in collaboration with ClimDev-Africa partners – AfDB, Afreximbank, UNECA and AUDA-NEPAD.

Water lies at the heart of Africa's climate agenda. It underpins food systems, energy generation, public health, ecosystem integrity, livelihoods and economic growth. However, increasing climate variability, recurrent droughts, floods and extreme weather events continue to undermine development gains across the continent. The anticipated 2026-2027 El Niño further underscores the urgency of strengthening preparedness, anticipatory action and resilience investments.

Africa Day at COP31 will therefore bring together African Heads of State and Government, Ministers, development partners, financial institutions, the private sector, civil society and youth to advance a shared agenda centred on investments in water and sanitation, climate resilience and sustainable development.

The event also provides an important opportunity to build momentum between COP31 and Africa's hosting of COP32 in Addis Ababa in 2027, helping shape an implementation-focused African agenda built around investment, delivery and partnerships.

2. Thematic Areas

Water is the thread that weaves together Africa's climate resilience agenda. Climate finance is the catalyst that enables delivery. Investments in water and sanitation, multi-hazard early warning systems, healthy ecosystems and landscape restoration are the pathways through which Africa can accelerate resilience, sustainable development and climate action. Africa Day will be anchored around three interconnected priorities, with water serving as the unifying thread across Africa's climate and development agenda and climate finance serving as the catalyst for implementation and scale.

I. Investments in Water and Climate Finance

Promoting increased investment in climate-resilient water and sanitation infrastructure, watershed management, irrigation, climate-smart agriculture and resilient livelihoods. Discussions will focus on mobilizing public and private finance, expanding access to adaptation finance and accelerating implementation through innovative financing mechanisms.

II. Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems and Anticipatory Action

Strengthening climate services, hydrometeorological systems, forecasting capabilities and anticipatory action to protect lives, livelihoods and economies. Particular attention will be given to preparedness for the anticipated 2026-2027 El Niño and accelerating implementation of the Early Warnings for All initiative across Africa.

III. Ecosystems, Forests, Islands and Landscape Resilience

Recognizing ecosystems as natural infrastructure that sustain water resources, livelihoods and resilience, this thematic area will highlight the role of Africa's forests, island and coastal ecosystems, and restored landscapes in supporting climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

3. Objectives

Africa Day at COP31 will seek to:

1. Secure high-level political commitment to scale up investments in water and sanitation as a foundation for climate resilience and sustainable development.
2. Mobilize increased climate finance for adaptation, resilience-building and transformational investments.
3. Strengthen continental cooperation on multi-hazard early warning systems and anticipatory action.
4. Highlight the contribution of ecosystems, forests, islands and restored landscapes to climate resilience and sustainable development.
5. Showcase African-led flagship initiatives, such as the Africa Climate Commissions (African Islands, Congo Basin and Sahel) and flagships such as the Great Green Wall.

6. Build momentum toward COP32 and strengthen Africa's collective voice on implementation and climate finance.

4. Expected Outcomes

The event is expected to deliver:

- A high-level political call for increased investments in water and sanitation, climate resilience and climate finance.
- Stronger political support for scaling multi-hazard early warning systems and anticipatory action.
- New partnerships and financing commitments for adaptation and resilience programmes.
- Increased visibility and support for the Climate Commissions and flagship programmes
- Strategic recommendations to inform Africa's priorities and engagement towards COP32.