

New initiatives in energy, water, agriculture announced at COP23

New commitments and initiatives in energy, water and agriculture sectors were announced on Friday, 10 November, at the United Nations Climate Conference (COP23) in Bonn, Germany, under the auspices of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action to help implement the Paris Agreement.



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The Marrakech Partnership aims at catalysing greater climate action by public and private stakeholders as the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015, calls on countries to combat climate change by limiting the rise of global temperature below 2°C and strive not to exceed 1.5°C.

Cleaner energy development

In Bonn, new initiatives were announced to push forward the transition to renewable energy and to show that more ambitious clean energy development can quickly become a bigger part of national climate plans submitted under the Paris Agreement.

"With the price of renewable and storage technologies tumbling, and greater understanding on how to set the policy table for a cleaner energy mix and more integrated energy planning, the question before decision makers is, why wait?" said Rachel Kyte, special representative of the UN secretary-general and CEO, Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All).

Among key announcements, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) released a new report, *Untapped Potential for Climate Action: Renewable Energy in Nationally Determined Contributions*, which suggests there is substantial scope for countries to cost-effectively increase renewable energy.

The Climate Group also announced new members to its recently launched EV100 campaign, a major new global electric transport initiative designed to make electric vehicles "the new normal." And 13 countries with the International Energy Agency (IEA) announced this week the launch of a new multi-year, €30m plan to support clean energy transitions around the world.

Investing faster and further in agricultural climate action

Regarding agriculture, leaders and experts said that investing faster and further in agricultural climate action and to support the sustainable livelihoods of small-scale farmers will unlock much greater potential to curb emissions and protect people against climate change.

"Countries now have the opportunity to transform their agricultural sectors to achieve food security for all through sustainable agriculture and strategies that boost resource-use efficiency, conserve and restore biodiversity and natural resources, and combat the impacts of climate change," said René Castro, assistant director-general of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

In the livestock sector, for example, FAO estimates that emissions could be readily reduced by about 30% with the adoption of best practices.

FAO released a new *Sourcebook on Climate-Smart Agriculture*. It recommends scaling up public and private climate finance flows to agriculture; spurring public-private partnerships; strengthening a multi-sector and multi-stakeholder dialogue; investing in knowledge and information; and building capacity to address barriers to implement climate action.

Managing healthy water supplies

In the water sector, the majority of national climate plans with an adaptation component prioritise action on water, yet financing would need to triple to \$295bn per year to meet such targets, said experts on Friday.

"Sustainable use of water for multiple purposes must remain a way of life and needs to be at the center of building resilient cities and human settlements and ensuring food security in a climate change context," said Mariet Verhoef-Cohen, president of the Women for Water Partnership.

The international water community co-signed on Friday what it called a "nature based solution declaration" to encourage the use of natural systems in managing healthy water supplies. Around 40% of the world's population will face water shortages by 2050, accelerating migration and triggering conflict, while some regions could lose up to 6% of their economic output, unless it is better managed.

"Involving both women and men in decision making and integrated water resources initiatives leads to better sustainability, governance and efficiency", said Verhoef-Cohen.