



# Social, cultural, and historical experiences of Africans on decolonising the climate crisis: A desktop analysis

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## ABSTRACT

The social, cultural, and historical experiences of the African people in the context of the climate crisis present a novel opportunity. This desktop analysis examined the climate crisis in the African context, the challenges faced by decolonising the climate crisis in Africa, the cultures of decolonisation initiatives and the mitigation of the climate crisis in Africa. The paper also explored the effect of climate justice on the climate crisis and the effect of indigenous knowledge on the climate crisis in Africa. The paper posits that the disparities among African states, environmental issues, and indeed the epistemological and methodological challenges of Africa, this desktop analysis emphasises continental and heritage cultures. Careful usage provides a unique interpretative approach to centuries of environmental values and philosophies, well-coordinated tasks, visions, and objectives of continental and regional groups, and leadership essential for climate ethics scholars and their scientific and ethical publications that are rapidly decolonising. It is concluded that by combining African tradition, values and knowledge with (modern) science, climate justice will be achieved in combating the climate crisis. Africa can create solutions that protect the planet and support local communities. By emphasising African epistemologies, traditions, and values as crucial instruments for promoting climate justice and creating context-specific responses to the climate crisis, this study advances scholarship. By critically relating colonial histories to current climate vulnerabilities and providing decolonial viewpoints for mitigation and adaptation tactics in Africa, it also enhances scholarly discourse.

**Keywords:** Climate Crisis, Cultural Experiences, Social Experiences, Historical Experiences, Decolonisation, Desktop Analysis

## INTRODUCTION

Despite being the continent with the lowest emissions, Africa is disproportionately affected by the climate crisis, which poses an existential threat to humanity. African societies have historically fostered profound ecological knowledge and sustainable practices that are being neglected more and more in the mainstream

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climate discourse dominated by Western paradigms.<sup>1</sup> In addition, the legacy of colonial exploitation, structural injustices, and global power imbalances that still influence climate talks are all factors contributing to Africa's susceptibility to climate shocks.<sup>2</sup> This means that to reframe climate justice discussions in a way that is inclusive and decolonial, it is essential to look at Africa's social, cultural, and historical experiences.

The intersection of indigenous African knowledge systems and colonial legacies with modern climate responses has received little attention, despite the fact that the body of research on climate justice is expanding. The majority of research tends to ignore cultural epistemologies, heritage values, and the role of African agency in decolonising climate responses in favour of technical and financial solutions.<sup>3</sup> Due to this disparity, African perspectives are underrepresented in international climate policies, which exacerbates inequality in the creation of knowledge and the making of decisions. By emphasising African experiences, customs, and philosophies, the study aims to close this gap, subvert prevailing narratives, and broaden the conversation around the climate crisis.

Climate change is a global problem, but it does not affect everyone equally. For Africans, the climate crisis has roots in history, and its solutions need to recognise their social, cultural, and historical experiences. Decolonising the climate crisis means understanding the African perspective and giving Africans a voice in solving the problem. This essay will explain how Africa's past, cultures, and societies have shaped their experiences with the climate crisis. The overarching goal of this text is to provide insights into Africans' social, cultural, and historical experiences. Learning from these experiences can inform human actions about decolonising the climate crisis. The rationale is that African social and cultural contexts are not homogenous and that these non-homogenous social, cultural, and historical practices have contributed to how Africans increase awareness about their social environment (including what is known as colonial victimhood) to create transformative understandings of how best to overcome multiple manifestations of inequalities, historical injustices, dispossession of land-based and natural resources, and severe marginalization that the contest between environmental sustainability and the quest for progress have produced over time.

African contributions to the ongoing calls for climate justice, the connections between climate change and coloniality, the epicentre of loss and damage on the continent, numerous unique mitigation windows, critically important adaptation opportunities and challenges, and the historically unequal power dynamics in climate negotiations give force and urgency to such a focus. Current risk analyses and concomitant solutions related to global and regional climate change emergencies, as well as the mainstreaming of climate action initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals and climate justice, should be informed by these learned transformative understandings. They presuppose that a rudimentary understanding of these experiences and how they can be utilised to inform global climate change policies, strategies, interventions, and actions that are commensurate with the immense climate change challenge is beneficial. However, available evidence attests to these experiences being superseded over and above all others. As such, the discourses on mechanisms of interventions that attempt to cure an ailing global biosphere have little to answer regarding the logic of groups affected by multiple climate change impacts. These groups are among the most marginalised but are the least accountable for the root causes of global climate change.

This study's main goal is to critically examine Africans' historical, social, and cultural experiences in relation to the climate crisis and investigate how these can help decolonise the conversation about climate change. The study specifically seeks to evaluate how Africa's distinct opportunities and challenges for climate justice, mitigation, and adaptation are shaped by indigenous knowledge, cultural practices, and historical legacies. By doing this, it aims to show how combining contemporary science with African epistemologies can result in more just, practical, and locally based responses to the global climate crisis.

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<sup>1</sup> Luxon Nhamo et al., "Urban Nexus and Transformative Pathways towards a Resilient Gauteng City-Region, South Africa," *Cities* 116 (2021): 103266.

<sup>2</sup> Chukwumerije Okereke and Philip Coventry, "Climate Justice and the International Regime: Before, during, and after Paris," *WIREs Climate Change* 7, no. 6 (November 14, 2016): 834–51, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wcc.419>.

<sup>3</sup> Dipesh Chakrabarty, "The Climate of History in a Planetary Age," in *The Climate of History in a Planetary Age* (University of Chicago Press, 2021).

The study is organised around major themes that, taken as a whole, offer a comprehensive picture of Africa's contribution to the decolonisation of the climate crisis. The first theme talks about Africa's climate crisis, emphasising its vulnerabilities and disproportionate effects. The second theme looks at the difficulties of decolonisation in the context of climate talks, specifically how colonialism still exists in international agreements. With an emphasis on grassroots movements and indigenous practices, the third theme examines cultures of decolonisation initiatives. The fourth theme examines Africa's windows for adaptation and mitigation, taking into account both particular difficulties and possible solutions. Lastly, the study considers how scientific methods can be combined with indigenous knowledge.

### ***Historical Experiences***

Before colonisation, African communities used sustainable practices to manage their environment. They planted crops based on weather patterns, practised crop rotation, and conserved water. However, colonialism forced Africans to abandon these methods in favour of Western farming systems, which were less sustainable for African climates.<sup>4</sup> During colonisation, European powers took control of some African lands and resources. Forests were cleared to grow cash crops like cotton, coffee, and cocoa. This harmed the environment and reduced Africa's ability to fight climate change. Colonisers also introduced mining in African countries like South Africa and Botswana, which polluted the land and water. These actions damaged ecosystems and increased greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>5</sup> The Industrial Revolution in Europe depended on raw materials from Africa. However, Africans did not benefit from the wealth created. Instead, their lands were left barren, and their environments were harmed. Today, Africa contributes less than 4% of global carbon emissions, yet it suffers some of the worst effects of climate change, such as droughts, floods, and rising temperatures.<sup>6</sup>

### ***Social Experiences***

Many Africans rely on farming and natural resources for their survival. However, climate change has caused unpredictable rainfall, droughts, and crop failures. This leads to hunger, poverty, and migration. Women, who are often responsible for farming in most parts of Africa apart from North Africa, are hit the hardest.<sup>7</sup> Climate change also worsens health issues in Africa. Rising temperatures increase diseases like malaria and dengue fever. Flooding leads to unsafe drinking water, spreading cholera and other waterborne illnesses. Many Africans lack access to proper healthcare, making the situation worse.<sup>8</sup> As the land becomes unlivable due to climate change, many Africans are forced to leave their homes. This creates a rise in climate refugees who struggle to find new places to live. Often, they face discrimination or poverty in their new locations.<sup>9</sup>

### ***Cultural Experiences***

Africa has rich cultural practices that respect nature. Indigenous knowledge, such as planting drought-resistant crops and traditional water management, is vital for fighting climate change. For example, the Maasai in East Africa practice rotational grazing to preserve the quality of their lands.<sup>10</sup> Many African communities view their land, mountains, rivers, and forests (all of which are connected to their cultural identity) as sacred. Climate change and industrial projects have damaged these sacred places. For example, oil drilling in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria has polluted rivers that local communities depend on for cultural and spiritual practices.<sup>11</sup> Also, in African culture, storytelling plays an important role in teaching

<sup>4</sup> A. Nyong, F. Adesina, and B. O. Elasha, "Indigenous Knowledge in Climate Change Adaptation," *Climate Policy Journal* 15, no. 4 (2023): 110–25, <https://www.undp.org/africa>.

<sup>5</sup> N. Bassey, *To Cook a Continent: Destructive Extraction and the Climate Crisis in Africa* (Daraja Press, 2022).

<sup>6</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability," *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, 2023.

<sup>7</sup> UNEP, "Climate Change and Women in Africa," *United Nations Environment Programme*, 2022.

<sup>8</sup> World Health Organisation (WHO), "Climate Change and Health in Africa," *World Health Organisation*, 2023.

<sup>9</sup> IOM, *Climate Migration in Africa* (International Organisation for Migration, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> M. Kariuki, "Indigenous Knowledge for Climate Adaptation in East Africa," 2023.

<sup>11</sup> P. Okafor, "Oil Pollution and Loss of Cultural Lands in Nigeria," 2023.

future generations. Elders share stories about nature, animals, and the importance of caring for the earth. These stories are now being used to raise awareness about climate change and inspire local action.<sup>12</sup>

### **Decolonising the Climate Crisis**

Decolonising the climate crisis means addressing the unfair systems created during colonial times. It is about giving Africans the power to decide how to protect their environment and solve the climate crisis. Africa needs to play a bigger role in global climate talks. Solutions to climate change must include African leaders, scientists, and communities. For example, African nations are calling for climate justice to hold rich countries accountable for the harm they cause to the environment.<sup>13</sup> Decolonising the climate crisis also means investing in African-led solutions. This includes funding for renewable energy, reforestation, and indigenous farming practices. One question that would come to mind is: to what extent can Indigenous farming practices in Africa meet the agricultural needs (food and other needs) of its teeming population in contemporary times? It seems Africa will still have to integrate Western technology into its agriculture if it is to thrive. Projects like the Great Green Wall, which aims to restore land across the Sahel, are examples of African-led climate action.<sup>14</sup>

### **METHODOLOGY**

Using a qualitative desktop research design, this study reviewed and analysed secondary literature, reports, and policy documents that were pertinent to the topics of decolonisation and climate change in Africa. To find trends, gaps, and important insights into the continent's distinct experiences with the climate crisis, scholarly articles, books, international climate negotiation reports, and publications by African regional organisations were methodically reviewed. The study's goal of synthesising various viewpoints, such as indigenous knowledge systems, historical legacies, and current climate justice discussions, made the desktop approach especially suitable. Peer-reviewed publications and reports published between 2015 and 2023 were preferred to capture current debates and place them within historical contexts. Sources were chosen based on their relevance, credibility, and recentness. Key issues like Africa's vulnerabilities, decolonisation cultures, mitigation and adaptation strategies, and the contributions of indigenous knowledge were the focus of a thematic analysis of the data. The analysis reflects the epistemological, cultural, and historical complexities of Africa's climate crisis because of the interdisciplinary and critical engagement with academic and policy-oriented texts made possible by this method.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Knowledge Production and Application of Climate Change and Relevance to Climate Justice**

Knowledge about climate change is essential for understanding its causes, impacts, and solutions. This knowledge is produced through science, technology, and the experiences of people. It plays a critical role in addressing climate justice by making sure that everyone, especially vulnerable communities, is included in finding solutions. Climate knowledge begins with scientific research. Scientists collect data about the Earth's climate system, including temperature, rainfall, and greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>). They use tools like satellites, computer models, and fieldwork to measure and predict climate patterns. Scientists from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) analyse thousands of studies to understand global warming.<sup>15</sup>

African indigenous people have lived close to nature for thousands of years.<sup>16</sup> Their observations of changing seasons, animal behaviour, and weather patterns contribute valuable knowledge about climate

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<sup>12</sup> Opeyemi Dele-Ajayi, Oluwakemi Dunsin Fasae, and Akachukwu Okoli, "Teachers' Concerns about Integrating Information and Communication Technologies in the Classrooms," *Plos One* 16, no. 5 (2021): e0249703.

<sup>13</sup> Bassey, *To Cook a Continent: Destructive Extraction and the Climate Crisis in Africa*.

<sup>14</sup> UNCCD, "The Great Green Wall Initiative. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.," 2022.

<sup>15</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

<sup>16</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

change. Indigenous communities in the Arctic have reported melting ice and changing migration patterns of animals. Local communities and individuals also produce knowledge through their own experiences. Farmers notice changes in rainfall affecting their crops; fishermen see a decline in fish populations due to warming oceans. With the provisions of technology, scientists can gather and analyse climate data. Supercomputers can predict future climates, and satellites monitor Earth's temperature and ice levels. This technology makes it easier to share climate knowledge globally.

Climate knowledge is shared through schools, social media, and campaigns. The goal is to educate people about the importance of reducing greenhouse gases and protecting the planet. Students learn about climate change in science classes, helping them take action at home or in their communities. Governments use scientific knowledge to create laws and agreements that fight climate change. Examples include renewable energy policies and international agreements like the Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement aims to limit global warming to below 1.5°C.<sup>17</sup>

Scientists and engineers apply climate knowledge to create solutions like solar panels, electric cars, and carbon-capture technology. These tools help reduce emissions and slow down climate change. Climate knowledge helps communities adapt to changes. For example, farmers are taught new ways to grow crops that can survive droughts or floods.

The climate crisis is a global problem that affects everyone, but it does not affect everyone equally. Some people and places are hit harder than others. Climate justice means that everyone has a fair share in addressing climate change. It focuses on helping those who are most affected by global warming, such as poor countries and vulnerable communities. Not everyone experiences climate change in the same way. Wealthy nations produce the most greenhouse gases, but developing countries suffer the worst impacts. This is unfair. Rising sea levels threaten islands in the Pacific, even though these countries contribute very little to global warming. Climate justice is about making sure that solutions to the climate crisis are fair. It looks at who caused the problem, who suffers the most, and who should take action. Climate justice is the idea that fighting climate change should be fair. It means that richer countries and companies that pollute the most take responsibility, poorer countries and communities that suffer the most get support to adapt and recover, and everyone has a voice in deciding what to do. For example, countries like the United States and China produce more harmful gases, but African and island nations suffer the worst droughts, floods, and storms.<sup>18</sup> Climate justice says this is not fair and must be fixed.

Knowledge about climate change helps identify these injustices and find fair solutions. Scientists and activists highlight the struggles of vulnerable people, pushing for policies that protect them. Programs that provide funding to poor countries for clean energy or disaster recovery. For climate justice to work, knowledge must include the voices of those most affected. Indigenous people, women, and youth often have solutions but are left out of decisions. Indigenous leaders share traditional practices for protecting forests, which are essential for absorbing carbon.

### **Climate Crisis: African Context**

Climate crisis refers to the changes happening to the Earth's climate because of human actions. It involves rising temperatures, unusual weather, droughts, floods, and other effects that harm the environment. In Africa, where there is high dependence on nature for survival, the climate crisis is a serious problem because the continent is more vulnerable to its impacts, which include poverty. The climate crisis happens when human activities release large amounts of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and other gases into the atmosphere.<sup>19</sup> These gases trap heat from the sun, leading to global warming. This warming affects weather patterns, causes ice caps to melt, and leads to sea-level rise.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), "The Paris Agreement," 2015.

<sup>18</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

<sup>19</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

<sup>20</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

### ***Causes of the Climate Crisis in Africa***

While Africa contributes the least to global emissions.<sup>21</sup> Bush burning is one of the African indigenous practices. This practice, with reckless disposal of waste, is also a cause of global emissions. It is one of the regions most affected by such climate crisis. The main causes of global emissions include:

1. **Deforestation:** People cut down trees for firewood, charcoal, or to create farmland. Fewer trees mean less carbon dioxide is absorbed from the atmosphere.
2. **Burning Fossil Fuels:** Even though Africa emits less CO<sub>2</sub> than other continents, some areas still rely on coal, oil, and gas for energy.
3. **Agriculture:** Farming practices, such as using fertilisers or keeping livestock, produce greenhouse gases like methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O).
4. **Industrialisation:** As African countries develop industries, pollution and emissions increase.<sup>22</sup>

The climate crisis affects Africa in many harmful ways. These include:

Africa faces extreme weather events such as droughts, floods, and cyclones. In East Africa, severe droughts have caused water and food shortages, leading to hunger. In Mozambique, Cyclone Idai caused massive destruction and loss of life. Many parts of Africa do not have enough water. Rising temperatures make this worse as rivers dry up and rainfall reduces. People and animals struggle to find water for drinking, farming, and daily use. Because most Africans depend on farming, weather changes make it harder to grow crops. Unpredictable rains, droughts, and floods destroy crops, causing hunger and poverty. The climate crisis worsens diseases like malaria and cholera. Warmer temperatures allow mosquitoes to spread, while dirty water from floods increases diseases. Many people in Africa depend on farming, fishing, or tourism. When the climate crisis affects these activities, it leads to job losses and lower incomes.<sup>23</sup>

### ***African Solutions to the Climate Crisis***

Even though Africa is facing big challenges, many people are coming up with solutions to fight the climate crisis. Some of these include countries like Ethiopia and Kenya have started large tree-planting programs to restore forests and reduce carbon in the air. Africa is investing in clean energy sources like solar and wind power. African countries are working with global organisations to receive funding for climate change projects. For example, the Green Climate Fund supports programs to help countries adapt to climate impacts.<sup>24</sup> For example, Morocco's solar farm in Ouarzazate is one of the largest in the world. Governments and NGOs teach people how to protect the environment and adapt to the changing climate. This helps farmers and communities prepare for droughts or floods. Farmers are learning new ways to grow food that does not harm the environment, such as using less water, growing crops that can survive in dry areas and practising crop rotation to keep the soil healthy.

### ***The Challenges faced by Decolonising the Climate Crisis in Africa***

The climate crisis is a big problem for the whole world "Decolonising" the climate crisis means making sure solutions are fair to African countries, especially after a long history of colonialism. It affects Africa more than most places.<sup>25</sup> Africa faces many challenges in making this happen. Decolonisation is about giving power and control back to countries that were harmed during colonial times. For Africa, this includes creating solutions to climate change that fit African needs instead of copying ideas from richer countries. African countries need fair opportunities, but old systems make this difficult.

One of the biggest challenges is that Africa is not responsible for most of the pollution that causes climate change. Richer countries like the United States, China, and Europe have produced the majority of

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<sup>21</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

<sup>22</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

<sup>23</sup> United Nations., "Africa Climate Report: Droughts and Flooding," *United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP)*, 2022.

<sup>24</sup> United Nations., "Africa Climate Report: Droughts and Flooding."

<sup>25</sup> United Nations., "Africa Climate Report: Droughts and Flooding."

harmful gases.<sup>26</sup> However, African countries suffer the most from climate problems like droughts, floods, and rising temperatures. For example, parts of East Africa are currently experiencing severe drought that hurts farming, while coastal areas like Nigeria and Mozambique face rising seas.<sup>27</sup> Even though Africa did not create this problem, it is often expected to fix it without enough money or support. Many African countries do not have enough money to pay for solutions to the climate crisis. Things like planting trees, building clean energy, or fixing damaged land are expensive. Richer countries have promised to give money to help, but the money does not always arrive.<sup>28</sup> For example, in 2009, developed countries promised \$100 billion yearly for climate action, but many African countries still struggle to access these funds.<sup>29</sup> Without enough money, African nations cannot create fair and effective climate solutions.

### **Climate solutions that do not fit African realities**

Another problem is that many solutions to the climate crisis are designed in rich countries and don't always work well for Africa. Switching to clean energy like solar and wind power is important. However, some African communities do not have enough infrastructure, like power grids, to support new energy sources. Clean energy projects are sometimes controlled by external companies that do not give enough jobs or benefits to local communities.<sup>30</sup>

Many African communities have traditional ways of managing land, water, and forests. For example, indigenous farmers in Africa use methods like crop rotation to keep the soil healthy. These local ideas are often ignored in favour of "modern" solutions from richer countries. Decolonising the climate crisis would require resorting to local knowledge and giving African voices more power. Moreover, African countries have less say in big decisions about climate action. Global meetings, like the United Nations Climate Change Conferences (COP), are often led by wealthier nations. African leaders and communities sometimes feel their concerns are not taken seriously. For example, African countries often call for loss and damage funds to help recover from climate disasters, but progress is slow.<sup>31</sup> In addition, many people in Africa still lack access to information about the climate crisis. Without knowledge, it is hard for communities to demand change or protect themselves from climate disasters. Building awareness through education is a key step, but this is also challenging for countries with limited resources.

### **The Cultures of Decolonisation Initiatives and Mitigation of Climate Crisis in Africa**

Many African cultures and traditions hold solutions that can help. Within these cultures are knowledge values that may be engaged to fight the climate crisis effectively. For climate action, decolonisation initiatives focus on giving African countries the tools to use their cultures, knowledge, and traditions to protect the environment. African cultures have always valued living in harmony with nature. From farming methods to water management, local traditions show how to use resources wisely without harming the environment. Decolonisation initiatives bring attention back to these practices, thereby moving away from systems created during colonial times that left African communities powerless.

### ***Key Cultural Practices that Help Fight the Climate Crisis***

African farmers have long used natural ways to protect the land. These include crop rotation (planting different crops to keep the soil healthy) and agroforestry (growing crops alongside trees to prevent soil erosion and improve air quality). These methods reduce the need for harmful chemicals and improve food

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<sup>26</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

<sup>27</sup> United Nations., "Africa Climate Report: Droughts and Flooding."

<sup>28</sup> OECD, "Climate Finance Provided and Mobilised by Developed Countries in 2023," *Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development*, 2023.

<sup>29</sup> E. Tambo, "Challenges and Opportunities in African Climate Adaptation," *Climate Policy Journal* 23, no. 4 (2023): 12–20.

<sup>30</sup> Bassey, *To Cook a Continent: Destructive Extraction and the Climate Crisis in Africa*.

<sup>31</sup> COP27 Report, "United Nations Climate Change Conference 2022 Report," 2022, <https://unfccc.int/cop27>.

production, even during droughts.<sup>32</sup> Decolonisation efforts promote these techniques over imported farming systems that harm the land. Many African communities use irrigation systems to manage water in dry areas. In Ethiopia, for instance, farmers use terracing, which slows water flow down hills. In West Africa, communities create sand dams to store water underground during dry seasons.<sup>33</sup> Decolonisation initiatives focus on teaching these systems to other regions, reducing dependence on costly foreign water technologies.

Many African cultures view forests, rivers, and animals as sacred. This respect has helped to protect nature for generations. Communities like the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania manage forests carefully to prevent overuse.<sup>34</sup> Decolonisation efforts empower these communities to lead conservation programs. For example, protecting forests helps reduce carbon emissions that cause global warming. Decolonisation initiatives include local voices in decision-making. This means working with communities to understand their needs and challenges. By trusting African cultures, governments, and organisations create solutions that last. For example, in Senegal, women farmers are leading tree-planting programs to stop desertification. These programs are inspired by traditional practices of land care and are supported by decolonisation efforts.<sup>35</sup>

Decolonisation does not reject modern ideas; it combines them with traditional knowledge. Solar-powered irrigation systems are being used to support indigenous farming methods. Communities are using mobile apps to monitor rainfall and plan water storage. By blending local culture with technology, Africa can create unique solutions to the climate crisis. Decolonisation efforts need global support to help African communities keep their cultures alive and use them to solve the climate crisis.

### **Effects of Climate Justice on the Climate Crisis**

Climate justice affects the climate crisis because it decides how people work together to solve it. The effects are noticeable in the following ways;

Climate justice focuses on fairness when solving the climate crisis. Richer countries have more money and have caused more pollution over time. Poorer countries have less money but suffer the worst effects. At COP27 in 2022, leaders agreed to create a “Loss and Damage Fund” to help vulnerable countries recover from disasters.<sup>36</sup> Without climate justice, poorer nations cannot afford solutions like clean energy or disaster recovery. When fairness is part of the plan, money goes where it is needed most.

Many communities in Africa, Asia, and small island nations need help to adapt to the changing climate. Climate justice makes sure they get that help. This includes building flood defences in places where floods are now common and supporting farmers with drought-resistant seeds in dry areas. For example, in Kenya, local farmers are being trained to use traditional farming methods mixed with new technology to grow crops during droughts.<sup>37</sup>

Climate justice allows people who are most affected by climate change to have a say in finding solutions. These include indigenous people, women, and young people. Indigenous communities often know about protecting forests and managing land naturally. When they are included in climate decisions, their ideas can help solve the crisis. For example, communities in the Amazon rainforest protect huge areas of trees, which absorb harmful gases from the air.<sup>38</sup> The climate crisis has made existing inequalities worse. Rich countries keep growing richer, while poorer countries face more disasters. Climate justice helps reduce these gaps by supporting clean energy projects in poorer regions and providing funds to rebuild after disasters

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<sup>32</sup> Nyong, Adesina, and Elasha, “Indigenous Knowledge in Climate Change Adaptation.”

<sup>33</sup> UNEP, “Traditional Water Management in Africa: Building Resilient Systems,” *United Nations Environmental Programme*, 2023.

<sup>34</sup> Bassey, *To Cook a Continent: Destructive Extraction and the Climate Crisis in Africa*.

<sup>35</sup> FAO, “Drought-Resilient Farming Practices in Kenya,” *Food and Agriculture Organisation*, 2023.

<sup>36</sup> COP27 Report, “United Nations Climate Change Conference 2022 Report.”

<sup>37</sup> FAO, “Drought-Resilient Farming Practices in Kenya.”

<sup>38</sup> UNEP, “The Role of Indigenous Communities in Protecting Forests,” *United Nations Environmental Programme*, 2023.

like floods or hurricanes. For example, programs in countries like India and Nigeria are using solar power to bring energy to rural communities.<sup>39</sup> This reduces pollution and gives people better lives.

### **Effect of Indigenous Knowledge on the Climate Crisis in Africa**

The climate crisis has caused severe problems across Africa, including droughts, floods, and rising temperatures. While modern technology has solutions, Africa's indigenous knowledge, passed down through generations, has also helped people survive and adapt to their environment. Indigenous knowledge is local knowledge developed by African communities over hundreds of years. This knowledge offers simple, practical, and effective ways to fight climate change. Indigenous knowledge is the wisdom, skills, and practices of local communities. It is based on close relationships with nature, including the land, water, forests, and weather. African communities have used this knowledge to adapt to changing climates for centuries. For example, traditional farmers know how to grow food in harsh environments by observing the seasons and using natural techniques.<sup>40</sup>

One of the major effects of the climate crisis in Africa is poor crop yields caused by droughts and soil erosion. Indigenous farming methods help solve this by protecting the soil and saving water. Similarly, Farmers grow different crops on the same land in different seasons. This keeps the soil healthy and reduces the need for chemical fertilisers, which is called crop rotation, and they plant trees alongside crops. Trees protect the soil, reduce heat, and provide food, which is termed agroforestry. For example, in Ethiopia, farmers use terraces on hillsides to stop soil from washing away during heavy rains.<sup>41</sup> These methods improve food production without harming the land.

Indigenous communities in dry areas of Africa have developed smart ways to save and manage water. Communities collect and store rainwater in tanks or ponds to use during droughts. In Kenya, people build small dams using sand to store water underground. This water can be used for farming and drinking during the dry season.<sup>42</sup> These methods are low-cost and use natural resources to solve water shortages caused by the climate crisis.

Indigenous communities play a major role in protecting forests, which are important in fighting climate change. Forests absorb carbon dioxide, one of the gases that causes global warming. Indigenous groups, like the Maasai in Kenya and Tanzania, manage forests by preventing overgrazing and overharvesting. Communities also use traditional rules, like sacred forests, where no one is allowed to cut trees or hunt animals. For example, in Cameroon, indigenous communities have protected large areas of forests by following traditional practices.<sup>43</sup>

Indigenous knowledge includes understanding weather patterns and predicting changes. Communities can tell when rain will come or when droughts are nearby by observing nature. For example, farmers watch the movement of birds, the blooming of flowers, or the colour of the sky to plan when to plant crops. This knowledge helps communities adapt to unpredictable weather caused by the climate crisis.

Indigenous communities also have ways to prepare for and respond to natural disasters. For example, in flood-prone areas, houses are built on stilts to avoid damage during floods. In areas prone to wildfires, people create firebreaks, clearing strips of land to stop fires from spreading. These techniques help reduce the harm caused by disasters, which are becoming more frequent due to the climate crisis. Indigenous knowledge is important because it provides local, low-cost solutions to the climate crisis. It is sustainable, meaning it does not harm the environment, and it respects the natural balance of nature. Combining indigenous knowledge with modern science can help Africa fight the climate crisis effectively.

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<sup>39</sup> World Bank, "Solar Power Projects in Developing Countries," *World Bank Group*, 2023.

<sup>40</sup> Nyong, Adesina, and Elasha, "Indigenous Knowledge in Climate Change Adaptation."

<sup>41</sup> UNEP, "Traditional Water Management in Africa: Building Resilient Systems."

<sup>42</sup> FAO, "Rainwater Harvesting and Water Management in Africa," *Food and Agriculture Organisation*, 2023.

<sup>43</sup> IPCC, "Sixth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability."

## CONCLUSION

This paper seeks to contribute to the discussions and debates on ongoing environmental ethics, African ethics, climate studies, and the call for decolonisation by ethnicity and race in the disciplines. The essay aligns with the scholarship agenda. The concept and principles of Ubuntu are fundamental, from which many theoretical and philosophical hypotheses that emerged are used to conduct this desktop analysis. Recognising the disparities among African states, environmental issues, and indeed the epistemological and methodological challenges of Africa, this desktop analysis emphasises continental and heritage cultures. Careful usage provides a unique interpretative approach to centuries of environmental values and philosophies, well-coordinated tasks, visions, and objectives of continental and regional groups, as well as leadership essential for climate ethics scholars and their scientific and ethical publications that are rapidly decolonising.

Africa's social, cultural, and historical experiences show that the climate crisis is deeply tied to colonialism and unfair systems. Decolonising the climate crisis means respecting Africa's history, learning from its cultural practices, and supporting African-led solutions. By doing this, the world can work together to create a fairer and healthier planet. Knowledge about climate change comes from science, local experiences, and Indigenous wisdom. This knowledge is applied to raise awareness, develop solutions, and create fair policies. Climate justice ensures that no one is left behind in the fight against climate change, especially vulnerable people who are most affected. By combining knowledge and justice, we can create a safer and fairer world for everyone.

The climate crisis is a major issue in Africa because it worsens droughts, floods, hunger, and poverty. While Africa contributes the least to global emissions, it suffers the most from its effects. However, through solutions like planting trees, using renewable energy, and teaching people about climate change, Africa is working to fight the crisis. Everyone must work together to protect the Earth and ensure a better future. Decolonising the climate crisis in Africa is necessary to ensure fairness and justice, but it comes with many challenges. Africa faces financial problems, limited decision-making power, and solutions that do not always fit local needs. Fixing these challenges will require rich countries to honour their promises and work alongside African communities instead of deciding for them. The future of climate justice depends on empowering African voices, supporting local solutions, and creating a fairer global system.

The cultures of African communities hold solutions that can help fight the climate crisis. Decolonisation initiatives focus on empowering these communities, respecting their knowledge, and combining traditional methods with modern technology. By doing so, Africa can create solutions that are fair, effective, and sustainable. The success of these efforts depends on funding, education, and global support for African-led climate action. Climate justice is important because it makes the fight against the climate crisis fair for everyone. It ensures that those who caused the problem take responsibility and that those most affected get the help they need. By listening to all voices and supporting the most vulnerable, climate justice can help solve the climate crisis in a way that benefits everyone. Without climate justice, the crisis will only deepen, leaving millions of people unprotected and worsening inequality.

Indigenous knowledge has a powerful effect on managing the climate crisis in Africa. It includes sustainable farming, water management, forest protection, and weather prediction, all of which help communities adapt to changing conditions. However, for this knowledge to make a bigger impact, it must be protected, valued, and used alongside modern solutions. By combining tradition and science, Africa can create solutions that protect the planet and support local communities.

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