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SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



inśaf

Institute for Sustainability Africa

'Advancing Sustainability Initiatives for Africa'

Sustainability Highlights June 2023

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SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

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World Environment Day brings solutions to plastic pollution into focus

Abidjan, 5 June 2023 - Individuals, communities, civil society, businesses and governments around the world today marked World Environment Day with a focus on solutions to plastic pollution, with official celebrations held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, with the support of the Netherlands. The focus on solutions to plastic pollution this World Environment Day is particularly timely, following the recent conclusion of a second round of negotiations on a global agreement to end plastic pollution in France. 2023 marks the 50th anniversary of World Environment Day, after it was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1972. Over the past five decades, with the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) at the helm, the day has grown to be one of the largest global platforms for environmental outreach. Tens of millions of people participate online and through in-person activities, events and actions around the world. **Read more:** <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/world-environment-day-brings-solutions-plastic-pollution-focus>

Solutions to plastic pollution



More than 400 million tonnes of plastic is produced every year worldwide, half of which is designed to be used only once. Of that, less than 10 per cent is recycled. An estimated 19-23 million tonnes end up in lakes, rivers and seas annually. That is approximately the weight of 2,200 Eiffel Towers all together. Microplastics - tiny plastic particles up to 5mm in diameter - find their way into food, water and air. It is estimated that each person on the planet consumes more than 50,000 plastic particles per year - and many more if inhalation is considered. Discarded or

burnt single-use plastic harms human health and biodiversity and pollutes every ecosystem from mountain tops to the ocean floor. With available science and solutions to tackle the problem, governments, companies and other stakeholders must scale up and speed actions to solve this crisis. This underscores the importance of this World Environment Day in mobilizing transformative action from every corner of the world. **Read more:** <https://www.un.org/en/observances/environment-day>

Assessing the Global Climate in June 2023



Globally, June 2023 set a record for the warmest June in the 174-year NOAA record. The year-to-date (January-June) global surface temperature ranked as the third warmest such period on record. According to NCEI's Global Annual Temperature Outlook, it is virtually certain (> 99.0%) that the year 2023 will rank among the 10-warmest years on record and a 97% chance it will rank among the top five. This monthly summary, developed by scientists at NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information, is part of the suite of climate services NOAA

provides to government, business, academia and the public to support informed decision-making. **Read more:** <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/global-climate-202306>

The geography of environmental degradation in the Amazon

The Pan Amazon spans approximately 825 million hectares, of which approximately ninety million hectares have been lost to deforestation; this corresponds to ~13% of the original forest cover. At first glance, this percentage value might not seem alarming, particularly in the context of the total extant forest cover. However, cleared land is embedded within landscape mosaics that include an approximately equivalent area of fragmented forest, both of which are surrounded by extensive areas of degraded forest damaged by illegal logging, wildfire, and overhunting. A conservative estimate of the total area of all these 'human-modified landscapes' is approximately 250 million hectares, which represents about thirty per cent of the geographic area of the Pan Amazon. The human-modified landscapes of the Amazon can be stratified into four macro-regions, based on biophysical and cultural attributes that have determined their recent development. Each landscape has a unique development trajectory, but there are identifiable stages that reflect levels of infrastructure investment, agricultural production system, levels of technology, and social capital. **Read more:** <https://news.mongabay.com/2023/06/the-geography-of-environmental-degradation-in-the-amazon/>

The sustainable aviation fuel entrepreneurs poised for takeoff



June 6 - Sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) had a bumper year in 2022, with production soaring to at least 300 million litres, up 200% on the previous year, according to the International Air Transport Association (IATA). But that is a drop in the bucket of the 450 billion litres a year that will be required by 2050, with the airline industry relying on SAF to account for around 65% of the mitigation needed to achieve its net-zero targets. One leading logistics company, DHL, is targeting using 30% of sustainable aviation fuel for all air transport by 2030. In March

2022, it signed deals with BP and Finnish oil refining company Neste to provide more than 800 million litres of SAF within the next five years. "It's a great story when an industrial value chain is increasing in size by 200% in a given year, but when you look at the starting base, SAF currently is only 0.1-0.2% of aviation fuel supply globally. The journey is insanely challenging, and though progress has been made, there's just not enough of it," says PwC director Scott Koronka. **Read more:** <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/climate-energy/sustainable-aviation-fuel-entrepreneurs-poised-takeoff-2023-06-07/>

June 2023 Regional Climate Impacts and Outlooks

NOAA and its partners have released the latest Regional Climate Impacts and Outlooks, which recap spring conditions and provide insight into what might be expected this summer. The March-May average temperature for the contiguous U.S. was 51.5°F, 0.6°F above average, ranking in the middle third of the record. Temperatures were above average from the southern Plains and Great Lakes to the East Coast and in parts of the Northwest. Temperatures were below average from parts of the West Coast to the northern Plains. Florida ranked fourth warmest while Massachusetts ranked 10th warmest on record for this spring season. The contiguous U.S. March-May precipitation total was 7.86 inches, 0.08 inch above average, ranking in the middle third of the record. Precipitation was above average from the West Coast to the Rocky Mountains and in parts of the western Plains, northern Great Lakes and Southeast. Spring precipitation was below average from the central Plains to the Mid-Atlantic and in parts of the central and northern Rockies, as well as Maine during the March-May period. Pennsylvania and Maryland each ranked ninth driest while Kansas ranked 13th driest on record for the spring season. **Read more:** <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/news/june-2023-regional-climate-impacts-and-outlooks>

The hidden environmental risk that will trouble investors



A new investigation from the European Central Bank (ECB) reminds us that when it comes to the environment, energy transition isn't the whole story. We should all be taking a closer look at 'biodiversity risk'. A thriving ecosystem provides many "services" that sustain the global economy, from fertile soils to crop pollination, timber and clean air. These are not only valuable, but at risk of being lost. Figures from Bloomberg NEF suggest that (even at a conservative estimate), global gross

domestic product (GDP) could be \$2.7tn a year lower by 2030 as a result of biodiversity loss. Last month, the ECB looked at 4.2mn companies across the eurozone, which accounted for €4.2tn in corporate loans between them. The research found that around 3mn of those companies are "highly dependent" on at least one ecosystem service, while 75 per cent of company bank loans were granted to businesses in this position. **Read more:** <https://www.investorchronicle.co.uk/news/2023/06/30/the-hidden-environmental-risk-that-will-trouble-investors/>

Sustainable finance group pushes for transparency of ESG rating agencies

The Sustainable Finance Beirat, the body advising the German government on its sustainable finance strategy, is recommending as a requirement that ESG rating providers disclose how they deal with conflicts of interest. The committee is proposing to clearly separate organisational structures or processes of ESG rating providers, if they offer companies products or services for a fee, to avoid conflicts of interest, it said in a position paper on regulating ESG rating providers. The group, which has drafted the paper in view of the legislative proposal by the European Commission on ESG ratings expected in mid-June, also considers essential the improvement of quality standards for rating methods, their transparency, the dialogue between ESG rating providers and companies, or other stakeholders, it added in the paper. **Read more:** <https://www.ipe.com/news/sustainable-finance-group-pushes-for-transparency-of-esg-rating-agencies/10067188.article>

Côte d'Ivoire unveils new environmental code to fight plastic pollution

The world marked Monday (June 5) the 50th World Environment Day. The Ivorian environment minister announced on the occasion the upcoming implementation of a new environmental code against plastic pollution in the country. He held a press conference in Abidjan with the Director of the UN Environment Program. "Any importer of plastic products is responsible for the end-of-life of these products. So that's one of the measures, and it's going to lead decrees [detailing the modalities of application of the law.] These will in turn obviously lead to decrees regulating the waste sector which includes plastic waste," Jean-Luc Assi said. Côte d'Ivoire's economic capital produces over 288 tonnes of waste each day, according to the UNICEF. A code and bans will not be the only solution, NGOs believe an alternative needs to be presented to consumers. **Read more:** <https://www.africanews.com/2023/06/06/cote-divoire-unveils-new-environmental-code-to-fight-plastic-pollution/>

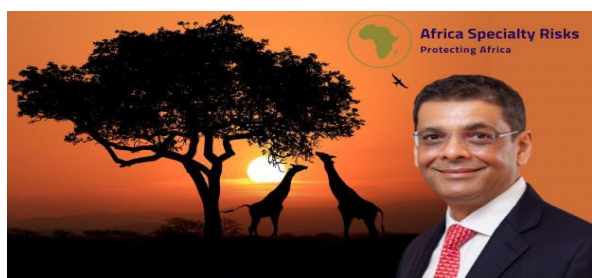
ESG: Why African banks need to embrace non-financial disclosures, and fast



From the world's great innovators come the innovations—the tools, products and ideas—that push beyond the status quo and open new possibilities. Our annual Innovation issue includes a collation of the year's best innovations in the finance sector. This year, these included, as always, many tech tools in a range of key business areas such as forex, UX, open banking and payments. Whether for doing more with less or offering nonbanking services, new opportunities for the most innovative and savviest financial

organizations have opened with artificial intelligence (AI), distributed ledger technology and open standards. Across the customer spectrum, from retail to corporate banking, clients can select more intuitive experiences while accessing more actionable information than ever before. **Read more:** <https://www.gfmag.com/magazine/june-2023/best-financial-innovations-2023>

Insurance power: ESG versus energy access in Africa



"The topic of environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG) issues and African energy is always a slightly contentious one, because only 40 percent of the population have access to electricity. Half of that electricity comes from coal-fired power plants, so turning those off would be a disaster on a social basis." This was the view of Mikir Shah (pictured), chief executive officer of pan-Africa-focused reinsurance group Africa Specialty Risks (ASR), as he discussed the African insurance market with Intelligent Insurer. Figures from the International Energy Agency for 2022 show that six hundred million people in Africa lack access

to electricity. But the continent's move to cleaner energy is necessary and already well underway. **Read more:** <https://www.intelligentinsurer.com/article/insurance-power-esg-versus-energy-access-in-africa>

Focus On Investment Opportunities In Africa's Green Economy

As investment steps up in Africa, Tarek Zouari, managing partner and founder of Exco Tunisia, a member of accounting network Kreston Global, discusses the barriers and opportunities to foreign investment into Africa's growing green economy and the role of accounting in shaping Africa's green agenda. For investors seeking to do business in Africa, Tarek Zouari at Exco Tunisia believes that tapping into the emerging green economy is an attractive opportunity. "Not only is there appetite for foreign investment, but a growing population means there is demand for green innovation that creates a climate-resilient food supply, workforce and economy," he said in a statement. Africa is the second largest continent in terms of land area, and is estimated to have around 60 per cent of the world's uncultivated arable land. In addition, the continent is home to about 10 per cent of the world's renewable fresh water resources, including the Nile, Congo, and Niger rivers. As of 2022, Africa's total population is estimated to be around 1.4 billion people, which is about 17 per cent of the world's total population. "This presents both opportunities and challenges for Africa's future development, positioning the continent as highly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and also a site of great renewable potential as the green economy evolves," he continued. **Read more:** <https://www.wealthbriefing.com/html/article.php?id=198191>

Zimbabwe Welcomes UN Special Envoy Jean Todt: A New Chapter for Road Safety Initiatives

Harare, Zimbabwe - Globally acclaimed French motor racing executive and former rally co-driver, Jean Todt, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Road Safety, visited Harare, Zimbabwe from 6-8 June 2023. The mission aimed to meet with high-ranking government officials and key stakeholders, such as the UN, to advocate for the effective implementation of the Global Plan for the Decade of Action for Road Safety 2021-2030, which aims to halve the number of victims on the road by 2030. The visit also assessed Zimbabwe's progress in ensuring road safety following the United Nations Road Safety Performance Reviews (RSPR) conducted in 2022. The RSPR revealed that official statistics confirm Zimbabwe has not achieved the Sustainable Development Goal target 3.6 to reduce road crash deaths and serious injuries by 50% by 2020. [Read more: https://www.afro.who.int/countries/zimbabwe/news/zimbabwe-welcomes-un-special-envoy-jean-todt-new-chapter-road-safety-initiatives](https://www.afro.who.int/countries/zimbabwe/news/zimbabwe-welcomes-un-special-envoy-jean-todt-new-chapter-road-safety-initiatives)

ZIMBABWE-ZAMBIA: an agreement to conserve the lower Zambezi-Mana basins

It's now official. The lower Zambezi-Mana basins have acquired the status of transboundary conservation area (TCA). This is the result of a memorandum of understanding signed on 26 May 2023 by the Zimbabwean Minister for the Environment, Climate, Tourism and the Hospitality Industry, Ngobizitha Mangaliso Ndlovu, and the Zambian Minister for Tourism, Rodney M. Sikumba. In addition to formalising the status of the TCA, the signing of this memorandum of understanding reflects the desire of the two southern African countries to promote the concerted and sustainable management of shared resources. "This initiative creates new opportunities for our governments, local communities and stakeholders to advance sustainable development agendas and ensure that tangible benefits are shared equitably by all participants," explains Minister Ngobizitha Mangaliso Ndlovu. For Minister Rodney M. Sikumba, the TCA is a benefit for both communities and nature. "This act will inevitably promote peace and stability, guarantee the sustainable use of natural resources, ensure economic development and improve environmental protection", he explains. [Read more: https://www.afrik21.africa/en/zimbabwe-zambia-an-agreement-to-conserve-the-lower-zambezi-mana-basins/](https://www.afrik21.africa/en/zimbabwe-zambia-an-agreement-to-conserve-the-lower-zambezi-mana-basins/)

Smart climate changes in Zimbabwe reaps bountiful harvest

IN the 11th century, a few hours south of present-day Harare, a vibrant farming and trading empire was emerging at the heart of the fertile watershed between the Zambezi and Limpopo rivers, known as Great Zimbabwe. At its peak, this empire was estimated to be home to around 18,000 people. However, by the mid-15th century, Great Zimbabwe was largely abandoned. While the exact cause remains a mystery, archaeological research suggests that famine and water shortages resulting from over-farming and climatic change may have played a role. Today, Zimbabwe, with a population of approximately 15 million people, is among the 12 fastest-growing economies in Africa. According to the UNDP, the country faces a range of environmental and socioeconomic crises, including deforestation, strained water resources, biodiversity loss, rising inequality, and increasing poverty. Furthermore, climate change has significantly impacted key economic sectors, posing threats to infrastructure, livelihoods, and food security. [Read more: https://www.newzimbabwe.com/https-www-newzimbabwe-com-smart-climate-changes-in-zimbabwe-reaps-bountiful-harvest/](https://www.newzimbabwe.com/https-www-newzimbabwe-com-smart-climate-changes-in-zimbabwe-reaps-bountiful-harvest/)

Oil Exploration Threatens Pristine Mana Pools in Zimbabwe

Mana Pools National Park (219,600 ha) forms part of a natural World Heritage Site (WHS) that was inscribed based on its intact wilderness and beauty in 1984. This 676,600 ha WHS also encompasses the Sapi Safari Area (118,000 ha) and Chewore Safari Area (339,000 ha). Mana Pools is a Key Biodiversity Area, home to remarkable wildlife including iconic species such as elephants, buffalos, and lion in addition to a variety of plains game, leopards and cheetahs, and many resident and migratory birds, with over 450 bird species recorded. Mana Pools National Park was also designated as a wetland of international importance under the Ramsar Convention in 2013. The site's pristine ecosystem is an important tourist attraction and crucial for Zimbabwe's tourism industry. The Mana Pools World Heritage Site, part of the larger Middle Zambezi Biosphere Reserve, is located directly opposite the Lower Zambezi National Park in Zambia. The Lower Zambezi National Park is also currently under serious threat by the development of an open pit copper mine in the middle of the national park. There are grave concerns around the overall effect of large-scale mining in this ecologically sensitive area which would also invariably impact the Mana Pools World Heritage Site. [Read more: https://www.birdlife.org/news/2023/06/13/oil-exploration-threatens-pristine-mana-pools-in-zimbabwe/](https://www.birdlife.org/news/2023/06/13/oil-exploration-threatens-pristine-mana-pools-in-zimbabwe/)

ABOUT INSAF

INSAF is an independent multi-disciplinary independent think tank and research organization working towards a sustainable Africa. The Institute is a registered Independent Trust (MA1218/2012) in Zimbabwe.

OUR VISION

Advance Sustainability Initiatives for Africa

OUR MISSION

Foster Sustainability Initiatives and innovations towards Green Economy, Sustainable Development and Sustainable Living through applied research, programs and technical support services and across sectors.

OUR VALUES

- ✧ A non-partisan research institute
- ✧ An agent for change that promote transformation towards sustainability
- ✧ Committed to rigorous and objective research and analysis to support policy and decision making across sectors
- ✧ Capable of handling complex economic, environmental, developmental, and social issues honestly
- ✧ Committed to environmental sustainability principle, practices and values





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