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# SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS

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 **insaf**

Institute for Sustainability Africa

*'Advancing Sustainability Initiatives for Africa'*

Sustainability Highlights October 2023

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# SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

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## Revolutionizing data center cooling: A path to energy efficiency and sustainability



In this digitally-savvy world, where every single click, swipe or stream connects to a whole new universe of information, sits a hidden driving force: the data center. These enigmatic facilities house all the infrastructure that corporate giants need to deliver their services and serve as the unsung heroes of our online lives, letting us play what we like, shop what we want and order what we need (among many other things) with remarkable efficiency. However, beneath their impressive processing capabilities and sleek exterior exists a little-known paradox: data centers are insatiable energy

beasts. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), they are responsible for about 1.5-2% of global energy consumption - nearly as much as the airline industry - and can use up to 50 times the energy of a similar-sized commercial office building. **Read more:** <https://venturebeat.com/data-infrastructure/revolutionizing-data-center-cooling-a-path-to-energy-efficiency-and-sustainability/>

## Fidelity hires sustainable directors from M&G and Federated Hermes

Fidelity International has appointed two directors based in London to its sustainable investing team. Phil Cliff joins as director, sustainable investing, with a focus on climate integration, from M&G Investments, where he was head of climate. Cliff will develop Fidelity's climate strategy and transition plan as well as its commitment to halve emissions across investment portfolios by 2030 and reach net zero by 2050. He will also oversee the firm's climate reporting. Aaron Hay takes on the director, sustainable investing role with a focus on ESG integration within Fidelity's private credit strategies and has joined from Federated Hermes where he was responsible for investee stewardship, sustainable and impact investment strategy and implementation, and co-managing a growing sustainable fixed income team. **Read more:** <https://esgclarity.com/fidelity-hires-sustainable-directors-from-mg-and-federated-hermes/>

## Building leaders of a sustainability-focused world



Developing sustainable business practices in organisations is extremely crucial yet difficult, especially in Asian countries where profitability becomes the key concern for business owners. Sweden has been one of the role models for businesses around the world for innovation and established green businesses. Swedish Institute, an agency of the Swedish Government runs leadership programmes to create sustainability leaders across continents. In their recent

Management Programme for Asia, Bangladesh took part for the first time along with six other countries - China, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, Philippines and India where 32 business leaders from Asia travelled to Sweden, with a common objective of exploring sustainable business practices and leadership. **Read more:** <https://www.thedailystar.net/lifestyle/news/building-leaders-sustainability-focused-world-3457176>

## Sustainable cultural assets could cut GCC carbon emissions

The GCC region can cut lifetime carbon emissions by at least 1.3 million tonnes, equivalent to removing 320,000 cars from roads per year, if the region's planned cultural assets are developed using sustainable methods and technologies. This is according to the latest report by Strategy& Middle East, part of the PwC network, titled 'A Sustainable and Inclusive Cultural Renaissance for the Middle East'. Exploring the region's impact of investments in arts and culture, the report provides a detailed analysis of how culture and sustainability can come together through the implementation of sustainable construction and programmes. The report also suggests that GCC countries could reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (GHGs) by more than 600,000 tonnes annually if they were to host all their planned cultural events and film productions in a more sustainable manner. "GCC countries are committed towards celebrating and preserving their cultural traditions and heritage, aligning these efforts as part of their strategic visions. **Read more:** <https://www.zawya.com/en/economy/gcc/sustainable-cultural-assets-could-cut-gcc-carbon-emissions-s9st4yn4>

## The key to media sustainability in Africa

“We are seeing several changes as far as globalisation, the shift in regulatory structures across different jurisdictions, including influences on how media is produced and consumed but one of the main challenges facing the media is how to create sustainable business models,” said Phillip Mogodi, Jamlab Accelerator manager, who moderated a panel discussion on media sustainability at the recent Jamfest conference. Digitalisation has significantly changed the media landscape, and media organisations must find new ways to ensure long-term survival and independence. The speakers included Kate Skinner executive director of the Association of Independent Publishers (AIP), Makhudu Sefara editor of TimesLIVE and Scott Peter Smith, chief digital officer at The Mail & Guardian, who presented how their respective organisations are responding to the challenges facing the media industry. Sefara said that conversations around media sustainability are the result of the media industry not paying attention to the nexus between journalism and innovation and that these conversations are a reaction to the disruptions that digitalisation has caused to the media industry. **Read more:** <https://journalism.co.za/the-key-to-media-sustainability-in-africa/>

## Aquaculture Africa programme highlights sustainability

Themed “Resilient value chains in the blue economy” AFRAQ23 is expected to bring together over 700 industry, academic, government, development partner delegates from several countries in Africa and across the world to connect and celebrate achievements in the aquaculture developmental journey, but also to find solutions to some of the challenges impacting the sustainability of the sector. The conference scientific and technical programme which is under finalisation is packed with multi-sessions that resonate to the conference theme of “sustainability”, balancing global and African perspectives - as to the efforts as led by renowned Programme Chairs, Professor Peter Britz (Rhodes University, South Africa) and Prof Cyprian Katongo (University of Zambia). The first keynote address “The evolution and development of aquaculture in Zambia - from an industry perspective” will feature Zambia’s aquaculture value chain development journey, from being a small producer decades ago, to one of the top and fastest aquaculture producing countries in Africa today. **Read more:** <https://www.fishfarmermagazine.com/events/aquaculture-africa-programme-highlights-sustainability/>

## Why ESG makes great business sense for African fintechs



While ESG has its critics (on both sides of the aisle), it’s philosophy has gained near-universal acceptance in investor circles. In fact, a 2022 study by asset management firm Capital Group found that 89% of investors consider ESG issues in their investment approaches. Additionally, there are around US\$2.5 trillion in ESG assets under fund management. And with rising interest rates putting a dampener on investment (including in Africa), scoring well on those metrics may become more important than ever. But for African fintechs the case for ESG goes beyond becoming

investable. Implemented properly, the principles behind ESG make a great deal of business sense. As an illustration of how much of a boost it can be to a business, a study by accounting firm Moore Global found that companies with strong ESG principles saw their profits grow 9.1% in the three years between 2019 and 2022. In other words, the fintechs that get ESG right won’t just have an easier time attracting investment, they’ll also be better poised for growth, sustainability and profitability. **Read more:** <https://www.africanreview.com/ict/why-esg-makes-great-business-sense-for-african-fintechs>

## The injustice of climate change: What solutions for Africa?



The countries most affected by disasters are those that have contributed the least to the problem. Africa contributes to 3% of global CO2 emissions and yet Africa suffers from extreme heat, floods, cyclones, tsunamis, etc. Africa faces a difficult but not impossible equation to solve: it must encourage growth without fueling CO2 emissions. The Anthropocene, the moment when humans began to impact geology and ecosystems, began in the 18th century for rich countries. The Anthropocene of Africa has not begun. This situation has lead

Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank (AfDB), to say “Africa is not at net zero, Africa is at ground zero”. **Read more:** <https://african.business/2023/10/resources/the-injustice-of-climate-change-what-solutions-for-africa>

## A lifesaver’: How e-tricycles are revolutionising the lives of Zimbabwean farmers

### Best practices for mainstreaming sustainability in banking sector

The Zimbabwe Stock Exchange is now requiring environmental and social information disclosures for all listed companies. This is in line with global best practice and regional counterparts such as Johannesburg Stock Exchange. Without ESG, capital will be difficult to raise, worldwide. No investor wants to be associated with risk and poor reputation. For how long shall we wait whilst pollution destroys our environment? For how long as financial institutions shall we provide financing to borrowers who affect society by their actions? For how long shall we be complicit with the destruction of our natural resources? Implementing ESG to the level of best practice also includes transparency and reporting of ESG performance using internationally recognised standards such as the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) S1 and IFRS S2. The practice of ESG reporting should be adopted across the banking sector in Zimbabwe. Progressive banks also have established exclusion lists specifying projects and activities that they cannot finance, such as activities related to trafficking of drugs, cruelty to humanity, child abuse, pornography, highly polluting activities and other social vices. **Read more:** <https://www.newsday.co.zw/theindependent/opinion/article/200018681/best-practices-for-mainstreaming-sustainability-in-banking-sector>

## Instead of relocating to better pastures, these Zim farmers use different methods to beat climate crisis



When small-hold farmer Gift Chisvo was given land in Zimbabwe's midlands in the early 2000s under a land reform programme introduced by former president Robert Mugabe, he initially battled to make use of the land. "Before the land reform programme, I resided in Hwange, where farming was impractical due to low rainfall and high temperatures. "Upon securing a farming opportunity in Shashe, we encountered difficulties in revitalising the region's productivity through traditional farming methods," explained Chisvo, who was born in Shashe. White

commercial farmers had ranched cattle in the area prior to being pushed out during the reforms. The village has had soils categorised as loamy to sandy, and the new owners, who wanted to farm crops, experienced challenging conditions. After several failures, some, like Chisvo considered leaving. **Read more:** [https://www.news24.com/fin24/climate\\_future/solutions/instead-of-relocating-to-better-pastures-these-zim-farmers-use-different-methods-to-beat-climate-crisis-20231021](https://www.news24.com/fin24/climate_future/solutions/instead-of-relocating-to-better-pastures-these-zim-farmers-use-different-methods-to-beat-climate-crisis-20231021)

## Include children in climate change policies

THE United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) has called on policymakers to include children's concerns when crafting policies aimed at mitigating the effects of climate change. Unicef's climate and environment programme specialist representative Eglina Tawuya made the call at a climate change conference held in Bulawayo last week. "It is important to note that in all this, young people are the most affected, yet they contribute the least to the situation," Tawuya said. "As they are still growing, they are at the greatest risk of injury, disability and death caused by the impacts of climate change. Children and young people must be at the forefront of climate-related policies, strategies and plans." **Read more:** <https://www.newsday.co.zw/local-news/article/200017544/include-children-in-climate-change-policies>

## Canadian government boosts MCC's climate work in Zimbabwe

The contribution will provide funds over two and a half years for a project called Locally-Led Indigenous Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Change Adaptation in Zimbabwe. The LINCZ project will benefit more than 48,000 people in the districts of Binga, Gwanda and Mwenzezi. All three areas have experienced significant loss in biodiversity and ecosystems. Drought is becoming more frequent throughout the region, with food insecurity on the rise. "The situation is dire," said Thelma Sadzamari, MCC's area co-director for Southern and Central Africa and Nigeria. "Many, many families don't have enough to eat. There are no easy solutions, but we're seeing signs of hope in places like Zimbabwe. "The signs include nature-based projects like reforestation, wetland rehabilitation and conservation agriculture; training in beekeeping as an alternative source of income; and eco-friendly stoves and other energy saving technologies designed by women engineers. **Read more:** <https://www.thezimbabwean.co/2023/10/canadian-government-boosts-mccs-climate-work-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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