

# SUSTAINABILITY TRENDS

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER



Institute for Sustainability Africa

'Advancing Sustainability Initiatives for Africa'

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Balancing profitability and environmental sustainability in Africa

## COP28

COP28: 12 must-see virtual panels for sustainability leaders



## SUSTAINABILITY

ZSE to enforce ESG reporting from 2024



Mines slammed over ESG reports: Zimbabwe

# SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS

PAGE	TOPIC
3	COP28: 12 must-see virtual panels for sustainability leaders
3	FutureLearn's COP28 Inspired Initiatives: Fostering a Global Community of Learners Committed to Sustainability
3	Unilever CEO signals radical shift in sustainability agenda
3	Food without agriculture
4	Unlocking the power of sustainability in Africa's sport for peace and development sector
4	Mastercard Foundation invests in the future of African youth
4	Sustainable development: balancing profitability and environmental sustainability in Africa
4	Accelerating towards sustainability
5	The Zimbabwean Brands Inspiring a New Movement of Sustainable Fashion
5	ZSE to enforce ESG reporting from 2024
5	Mines slammed over ESG reports
5	Longer droughts in Zimbabwe take a toll on wildlife and cause more frequent clashes with people
6	About INSAF
7	Contact details

## Global regulators propose tougher scrutiny of voluntary carbon markets

LONDON, Dec 3 (Reuters) - A global securities watchdog proposed 21 safety measures on Sunday to improve integrity, transparency and enforcement in voluntary carbon markets (VCMs) in a sector of growing importance to efforts to combat climate change. IOSCO, which groups market watchdogs from Asia, Europe, Latin America and the United States, launched a 90-day public consultation on a set of good practices for national regulators to apply "VCMs have gained significant importance in recent years. But for these markets to succeed, they need integrity - both environmental and financial," Rodrigo Buenaventura, chair of IOSCO's sustainable finance taskforce, told an event at the COP28 climate summit in Dubai on Sunday. The two weeks of UN talks, which began on Nov. 30, are addressing debate over whether ending the use of fossil fuels in the first place should be prioritised over promoting technologies that can capture emissions. VCMs cover pollution-reducing projects, such as reforestation, renewable energy, biogas and solar power that generate carbon credits companies buy to offset their emissions and meet net-zero targets. Banks, investment funds and speculators also buy credits in the hope of re-selling them at a higher price, IOSCO said. IOSCO last year raised the prospect of closer scrutiny of carbon markets when it said it was concerned the quality and double counting of credits left the sector open to fraud. **Read more:** <https://www.reuters.com/sustainability/global-regulators-propose-tougher-scrutiny-voluntary-carbon-markets-2023-12-03/>

## Futurelearn's cop28 inspired initiatives: fostering a global community of learners committed to sustainability

As the world gears up for COP28, FutureLearn, a leading online learning platform, is taking proactive steps to contribute to global sustainability efforts through a series of sustainability and socio-economic development-themed courses and initiatives - aimed to equip learners with the knowledge and skills necessary for building a more sustainable future. Recognising the urgency of addressing the skills gap in the pursuit of sustainable development, FutureLearn offers learners a comprehensive range of courses on themes of 'sustainability' and 'climate change' designed to empower them to contribute meaningfully to sustainability efforts worldwide. These courses include: The Regenerative Agriculture Revolution, Climate and Energy: An Interdisciplinary Perspective, Ecology and Wildlife Conservation, Using Systems Thinking to Tackle the Climate and Biodiversity Crisis, Environmental Challenges: Rights and Values in Ecosystem Services, Unleash Your Potential: Sustainable Futures, and Renewable Energy: Sustainable Electricity Supply with Microgrids. Dr Aisling Tierney, from the University of Bristol, who delivers the Sustainable Futures course on FutureLearn, commented. **Read more:** <https://gs-gen.com/futurelearns-cop28-inspired-initiatives-fostering-a-global-community-of-learners-committed-to-sustainability/>

## Unilever CEO signals radical shift in sustainability agenda

Unilever's new CEO said the consumer products company's "aspirational" climate commitments have failed to deliver shareholder value and signaled an overhaul of the company's sustainability strategy that will leave more decisions to brand managers. The shift, outlined during a third-quarter financial presentation in late October, marks a sharp change in course for the U.K. company, long considered a standard-bearer in corporate sustainability. Its now-defunct Sustainable Living Plan, introduced by former CEO Paul Polman in 2010, was among the first strategies to recognize the potential materiality of environmental issues to business performance. "Unilever's reputation in this area is well-deserved, but ... our efforts are being spread too thinly," said Hein Schumacher, who took over July 1. "We have too many long-term commitments that failed to make sufficient short-term impact, and the latter is what the world really needs right now." **Read more:** <https://www.greenbiz.com/article/unilever-ceo-signals-radical-shift-sustainability-agenda>

## Food without agriculture

Efforts to make food systems more sustainable have emphasized reducing adverse environmental impacts of agriculture. In contrast, chemical and biological processes that could produce food without agriculture have received comparatively little attention or resources. Although there is a possibility that someday a wide array of attractive foods could be produced chemosynthetically, here we show that dietary fats could be synthesized with  $<0.8 \text{ g CO}_2\text{-eq kcal}^{-1}$ , which is much less than the  $>1.5 \text{ g CO}_2\text{-eq kcal}^{-1}$  now emitted to produce palm oil in Brazil or Indonesia. Although scaling up such synthesis could disrupt agricultural economies and depend on consumer acceptance, the enormous potential reductions in greenhouse gas emissions as well as in land and water use represent a realistic possibility for mitigating the environmental footprint of agriculture over the coming decade. The prodigious quantities of food produced by global agriculture entail correspondingly vast areas of land unavailable to natural ecosystems<sup>1,2,3</sup>, water resources used and polluted<sup>4,5</sup>, and greenhouse gases (GHGs) emitted to the atmosphere<sup>3,6</sup>. Efforts to reduce such impacts despite the world's growing and ever-richer population have focused on limiting demand for the most resource- and pollution-intensive foods<sup>7</sup>, decreasing the inputs to (and thereby impacts of) agricultural production<sup>8</sup> and using produced food more efficiently<sup>9,10</sup>. Here we highlight another possibility: producing food without agriculture. **Read more:** <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41893-023-01241-2>

## Unlocking the power of sustainability in Africa's sport for peace and development sector



In recent years, the Sport for Peace and Development (S4D) sector in Africa has emerged as a powerful movement for positive change. Organizations, both local and international, have come together to address pressing issues outlined in the sustainable development goals. Large entities like the United Nations and international sports federations like FIFA and the IOC have invested millions of dollars, making significant strides in promoting peace, justice, human rights, and combating poverty, hunger, and inequality. As we enter a new decade, it's essential to reflect on the progress made and the lessons learned in the S4D sector. **Read more:** <https://www.sportanddev.org/latest/news/unlocking-power-sustainability-africas-sport-peace-and-development-sector>

## Mastercard Foundation invests in the future of African youth

Enabling young leaders to own their futures, Mastercard Foundation invests in African and Canadian youth providing vital opportunities to learn and prosper. Working with visionary organisations, the Mastercard Foundation is one of the world's largest enablers of providing access to dignified and fulfilling work for young people in Africa and Indigenous communities in Canada. "We want a world where young people are included and are thriving and their leadership and contributions matter," says Mastercard Foundation. "A future where young people are driving transformative change and achieving their full potential." Bringing together the private sector, donors, young people, and civil society, Mastercard Foundation is a developer of effective ecosystems and infrastructure, as well as a supporter of policies and an environment where young people can find work and entrepreneurs can succeed and grow. **Read more:** <https://sustainabilitymag.com/company-reports/mastercard-foundation-invests-in-the-future-of-african-youth>

## Sustainable development: balancing profitability and environmental sustainability in Africa

In recent years, the concept of sustainable development has gained significant traction across the globe, with a growing recognition that economic growth and environmental stewardship must go hand in hand. Africa, a continent rich in natural resources and brimming with untapped potential, faces a unique opportunity to chart a sustainable development path that balances profitability and environmental sustainability. The Tony Elumelu Foundation (TEF), through its approach to empowering young African and its demonstrated impact, has emerged as a catalyst for change, empowering entrepreneurs and driving sustainable development across Africa. Africa stands at a crossroads, simultaneously facing challenges and opportunities. The continent's rapid population growth, urbanization, and increased consumer demands, presents a promising environment for economic growth and development. **Read more:** <https://www.tonyelumelufoundation.org/research-publications/sustainable-development-balancing-profitability-and-environmental-sustainability-in-africa>

## Accelerating towards sustainability

In September this year, an IVECO S- Way truck powered by bioLNG sped its way across Europe as part of the 'On the road to net-zero emissions' bioLNG tour of IVECO and Shell. The goal was to complete the 10-day journey without contributing any emissions to the atmosphere and, having covered thousands of kilometres, was labelled as a success by IVECO upon its conclusion. While the campaign demonstrated the viability of bioLNG-powered trucks, it serves as another example of manufacturer desire to deliver sustainable solutions for customers. In Africa, the appetite for sustainable transport is less developed due to the dominance of the used-vehicle market, a lack of infrastructure, and a deficiency in funding (to name but a few reasons). However, many are appealing for governments to embrace this phenomenon and encourage the transformation of the sector. According to Agora Verkehrswende's Leapfrogging to Sustainable Transport in Africa report, the transport industry is responsible for a whopping 29% of total CO2 emissions from the combustion of coal, crude oil and natural gas on the continent and this is growing rapidly. If this issue is left unaddressed it could get out of hand, potentially requiring costly intervention at a later time.. **Read more:** <https://www.africanreview.com/transport-a-logistics/accelerating-towards-sustainability>

## The Zimbabwean Brands Inspiring a New Movement of Sustainable Fashion



Fashion is arguably one of the longest serving industries in the world. No matter how far you go back in history, you are sure to discover the trade of clothes, shoes or accessories. Modern day concerns of fashion are linked with its sustainable practices. Consumers are more conscious of the environmental impact the fashion industry has and are seeking more sustainable brands. Environmental sustainability is an imperative issue that the world should tackle collectively. In the

fashion industry, sustainability has been closely associated with practices aiming to achieve a carbon-neutral sector based on equality, social justice, animal welfare, and ecological integrity. This is beyond textiles and products as it incorporates the whole product life cycle—addressing how the clothes are made, consumed and disposed. Traditionally, Africa has a good track record of sustainability with numerous brands utilizing environmentally friendly materials in clothes production such as natural fibers, raffia, silk, and cotton. **Read more:** <https://www.okayafrica.com/sustainable-clothing-brands-zimbabwe/>

## ZSE to enforce ESG reporting from 2024

Companies listed on the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange (ZSE) and the Victoria Falls Stock Exchange (VFEX) will, starting January 2024, be required to report on sustainability issues as part of their financial disclosures. Between 2019 and 2020, the ZSE and VFEX's updated listing rules, which now compel listed companies to put in place measures to deal with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) issues. The firms were allowed a transitional period for such disclosures. VFEX and ZSE chief executive officer (CEO), Mr Justin Bgoni, said in a notice that both exchanges allowed for a transitional period for issuers to adopt a set of requirements and offered area-specific training before enforcement of the requirements. "The stock exchanges have developed core sustainability disclosure metrics for adoption as a minimum starting point, and other issuers have already made efforts to adopt and report on sustainability. **Read more:** <https://www.thezimbabwemail.com/capital-money-markets/zse-to-enforce-esg-reporting-from-2024/>

## Zimbabwe tobacco: Is it sustainable?

ZIMBABWE has a rich history of tobacco production, dating back to 1894, four years after the arrival of white settlers. Its tobacco is known for its unique flavour, aroma and taste, which are influenced by several factors, including climate, soil and growing conditions. Zimbabwean tobacco is characterised by its smooth and mellow taste, with a balanced combination of sweetness and earthy tones. It also has a distinct and pleasing aroma, often described as slightly sweet and nutty. The country's climatic conditions, low humidity and fertile soils contribute to the highest quality tobacco, making it the best tobacco in the world and highly sought-after globally. The tobacco industry in Zimbabwe has experienced significant growth in recent years, reaching an all-time high of almost 300 million kilogrammes in 2023. However, as the industry continues to break production records, it is crucial to assess its sustainability, identify potential future obstacles and propose mitigation strategies to ensure the continued production of this valuable crop. **Read more:** <https://www.newsday.co.zw/theindependent/business-digest/article/200020002/zim-tobacco-is-it-sustainable>

## Mines slammed over ESG reports



THE majority of Zimbabwean mining companies are not publishing environmental social and governance (ESG) reports, raising questions over their commitment to protecting the environment, a legal expert at the Zimbabwe Environmental Law Association has said. An ESG report is published by companies and organisations to show their plans on tackling environmental degradation, climate change, human rights abuses and

corruption. Listed companies are obligated to submit reports with full details about the state of affairs in their businesses. But only five mining firms are listed on these bourses. **Read more:** <https://www.newsday.co.zw/business/article/200003707/mines-slammed-over-esg-reports>

## 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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