

## Africa's Global Engagement: Perspectives from Emerging Countries; May 2026

An analysis of Africa's engagement in EU-Led renewable energy initiatives: A case study of LEAP-RE programme

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### **Abstract**

In line with the climate change response, Africa is on a mission to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels and other sources of energy that are detrimental to the environment. With the increasing population and rising energy demands, Africa-led sustainable renewable energy interventions in Africa are more vital than ever before. Several initiatives have been introduced to support Africa's response to this challenge. However, 'externally driven initiatives often surpass the African Union's (AU) strategies and initiatives in this area. The Agenda 2063 Framework Document (2015) states that as a result of non-African led initiatives (e.g. through the Structural Adjustment Programs of 1980 to early 1990s), it led to "to slow growth, de-industrialisation and increased dependence on raw materials exports" in Africa. In today's context, these initiatives are usually led and funded by non-African institutions and implemented in Africa with limited consideration of Africa's capabilities needs. To support the objectives of the European Union's Green Deal as well as other preceding strategies of the European Union (EU), the EU launched several initiatives, including the Long-term Europe-Africa Partnership on Renewable Energy (LEAP-RE) programme launched in 2021, which seeks to establish a long-term partnership of African and European stakeholders in the field of renewable energy, as a response to the climate change crisis. These projects focus on areas of research, innovation, and technology development that have been jointly devised by both African and European stakeholders. However, these areas are often not in sync with Africa's strengths and renewable energy potential. This paper contributes to the growing literature that analyses Africa's investments, priorities, and engagements in responding to climate change. It references the development of the LEAP-RE programme and its relevance to the African context. It concludes with recommendations on the approaches for Africa to leverage external resources to meet the increasing energy demands in the continent while capitalising on its resource potential.