

***EU Africa Business Forum: High Level Green Talk  
on Accelerating the EU-Africa Partnership  
for Green Energy Transition in Africa***

**16 April 2021, online  
(14.00-16.00 CET/ 15.00-17.00 EAT/ 13.00-15.00 WET).**

**Context**

Investing in sustainable energy is fundamental for human and economic development, as envisioned in both the AU Agenda 2063 and the EU Green Deal and set out in the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its seventeen Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

While Africa is the continent that contributes the least to greenhouse gas emissions, it is disproportionately impacted by climate change. In the aftermath of COVID-19 pandemic, to power the ambitious call of structural change, and high economic growth envisaged in the ten year implementation plan of AU Agenda 2063, comprehensive reforms will be needed to improve the investment climate and attract financing for building a sustainable energy system in Africa for socio economic development, sustainable industrialisation and trade. This will be key for the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) plan and achievements of the 300 GW targets of the Africa Renewable Energy Initiative (AREI) by 2030.

The growing population and economic progress call for a rapid increase of electricity supply, with sustainable energy sources and energy efficiency measures as a basis for long-term prosperity. Africa is richly endowed with renewable energy sources and the green transition offers vast potential to create jobs and growth, reduce inequalities, improve health, increase resilience and reduce stress on livelihoods. This is particularly the case in rural areas of Africa, where decentralised renewable energy solutions offer tremendous opportunity to enhance resilience and economic growth. European investors are already actively investing in Africa especially when market conditions are right. Notable examples include South Africa, Morocco and Egypt, among others.

It is important that both continents act urgently to seize the shared opportunities that lie ahead and to tackle the common challenges that we all face, be it the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis. The vision of the future EU-Africa relations is outlined in the EU proposal “Towards a Comprehensive Strategy with Africa calls for working together on five key global trends with a partnership for Green Transition and Energy Access being one of them. Under this new partnership framework, the EU intends to support Africa’s economic development to maximise the benefit of the green transition in full compliance with the Paris Agreement.

To support these common objectives, the EU-Africa Business Forum (EABF) platform aims to enable public-private dialogue and to develop a shared vision for EU-Africa relations. Providing an unrivalled avenue for high-level dialogue between the private sectors from both sides with the public actors as well as providing networking possibilities on issues pertaining to both continents. It brings together African and European leaders from a wide range of organizations to explore ways of stimulating investments and improving the business environment and investment climate in Africa.

Ahead of the EU-AU Summit the EABF High Level Green Talk will capitalise on the existing joint partnership already achieved in the energy sector. Furthermore, the event will precede the signing of a Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) Ministerial Declaration on Energy on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021 in Evora, Portugal. Finally, it will benefit from on the series of Green Talks organised by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council and the European Investment Bank in the run-up to the High-Level Green Investment Forum EU-Africa, taking place on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April, and where new investment pathways towards sustainable, inclusive development for Africa’s green future will be discussed. In the margin of this high-level event a two day virtual Marketplace on green energy transition will be organised on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April.

## **Objective**

In the current context of a global energy transformation and immediate need of economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, this high-level event will explore what is needed for the continent to stimulate the required investments to develop the energy systems fit for inclusive and sustainable development, jobs, gender equity and attainment of universal energy access in line with SDG7 and the climate objectives.

The event's focus will revolve around the concepts of the Africa-EU Green Energy Initiative whose main goals include – (1) increasing the share of renewable energy in Africa's energy mix, including green hydrogen; (2) increasing access to sustainable energy services, including clean cooking; and (3) promoting energy and resource efficiency; as well as the strategic actions: (a) policy dialogue; (b) capacity building; (c) technical assistance (d) support to leveraging private investments including through blended finance and de-risking instruments, and (e) reinforce Africa-EU business and technology cooperation and the uptake of EU green technologies. In addition, the event will emphasise the role of a nexus approach with other key sectors especially digitalisation in fast tracking energy access and related service delivery. In the spirit of leaving no one behind, it will be essential that energy access in rural and remote areas through off-grid solutions is prioritised with women and youth playing a greater role than before.

The engagement of the private sector is essential for success. The discussion will pave the way for a substantive engagement and announcements to be made in the framework of the EU-AU Summit.

## **High Level Green Talk on 16 April 2021**

The High-Level Green Talk is embedded in the series of the Green Talks organised by the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council and will take place on 16 April 2021. The event will be the culmination of this roadshow as the wrap up of the initiative. It will take place on-line.

It will consist of a roundtable discussion between high-level representatives from the EU and AU Commissions, ministerial level representatives from Africa and the EU Member States, as well as EU and African Business representatives and CEOs.

The discussion on the initiative will be embedded in the wider discussion on the green and just transition and transformation in Africa. The focus will be on EU and AU Commissions as well as Member States exchanging views on accelerating the green transition in the energy sector in Africa and listening to the views of the private sector and the industry to bridge the energy gap in the continent. The questions from the audience will be raised by the moderator on the basis of the discussions taking place on a live chat during the session.

This EABF event will be hosted by the European Commission, the African Union Commission and the Portuguese Presidency of the European Council, and co-organised with the support of the European Investment Bank, the African Development Bank (TBC), the Africa EU Energy Partnership (AEEP) Secretariat<sup>1</sup>, and friends of Europe who will provide the platform and outreach to the potential participants, building on the Africa Europe Foundation and the Strategy Group on energy<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://africa-eu-partnership.org/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.friendsofeurope.org/initiatives/africa-europe-foundation/>

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*Hosted by the African Union Commission, the European Commission  
and the Portuguese EU Presidency.*

*Co-organised with the European Investment Bank, the African Development Bank (TBC), the  
Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP, and the Africa-Europe Foundation (AEF)*

<b>20 min</b>	<p><b>Opening remarks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Mr. <b>Augusto Santos Silva</b>, Minister of State and Foreign Affairs of Portugal – Presidency of the European Council (TBC)</li> <li>- Mr <b>Frans Timmermans</b>, European Commission Executive Vice-President for the European Green Deal, European Commission (TBC)</li> <li>- Dr <b>Amani Abou-Zeid</b>, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy, African Union Commission (TBC)</li> </ul>
<b>95 min</b>	<p>Roundtable chaired and moderated by <b>Kandeh Yumkella</b>, former United Nations Under Secretary-General and co-chair of the Strategy Group on Energy (AEF)</p> <p><i>Achieving greater private sector participation for a faster sustainable energy transformation in Africa.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- One representative from an international organization</li> <li>- 2 Senior representatives from European and African policy making</li> <li>- 2 European CEOs representing the RE industry and project developers</li> <li>- 2 African CEOs representing the RE industry and project developers</li> <li>- 2 Senior representatives from the European Investment Bank and African Development Bank</li> </ul> <p>Curated Q&amp;A and wrap-up by Kandeh Yumkella</p>
<b>5 min</b>	<p><b>Concluding remarks</b></p>

## **Annex - Digital Marketplace on green energy**

In addition to this High-Level Green Talk, a virtual digital marketplace on green energy will be organised on 20 and 21 April 2021 in the margins of the Portuguese Green Forum. This digital marketplace will create a venue for African and European companies, institutions and business organisations involved and/or interested in green energy to meet, network exchange and share ideas, technology and encourage the building of potential partnership and match-making deals in the green energy sector. The platform will allow for showcasing Green energy projects as well for networking through Business to Business (B2B) or Business to Government (B2G) or Government to Government (G2G) meetings.

The marketplace will bring together participants and exhibitors from the following categories

- African and EU companies, associations or consortias showcasing specific sustainable energy projects and/or the application of green technologies in their processes or looking to secure financing, technology transfer or expertise in sustainable energy;
- Private sector organisations (e.g. BusinessEurope, African Business Council...), showcasing green energy projects, new technology and initiatives;
- EU and Member States projects (e.g. GetInvest, ElectriFI, blending and Guarantees under EFSD);
- African Initiatives involved in sustainable energy projects (e.g. Africa Renewable Energy Initiative, RCREEE, ECREEE)
- European and African institutional actors (e.g. EIB, AfDB, developments agencies and other development banks) involved in green energy projects in Africa as well as private financial institutions (banks, venture capital) interested to support / invest in sustainable energy projects in Africa;
- Consulting firms (lawyers, consultancies, etc.), with specific expertise on sustainable energy and the energy transition;
- Civil Society/Think Tanks dealing with policy dialogue on sustainable energy.

European and African private sector or civil society organisations who wish to participate will be able to outreach to their membership to participate to the High-Level Green Talk as well as to the marketplace as participants or as exhibitors. All participants to the High-Level Green Talk will be automatically invited also to the marketplace.

The virtual marketplace will be managed by Downtown Europe and powered by Swapcard, an engagement and matchmaking platform for events. Registered participants, exhibitors, service providers, etc. operating in the area of ‘green energy’ sector or related sector will be free to enter the platform and connect through different tools, i.e. virtual booths, B2B, B2G, G2G platforms.

The marketplace will provide search functions allowing participants to navigate the platform looking for information, partners, etc. at will. Participants will be able to register through the platform, make engagements, matching, etc. It will also offer an in-built messaging tool, which will allow participants to network, exchange information and set up meetings and events.

In order to help participants fully take advantage and navigate the platform seamlessly, an online Helpdesk will be set up, with real time support. General guidelines for participants and exhibitors including self-help videos will be made available, together with hands on training sessions for Business Organisations and sponsors.

The marketplace will be easily accessible on the web or via a custom-made app designed for smartphones and laptops and designed to facilitate access even for participants with low-bandwidth capacity.

Participants will have access to the following online tools, which will be hosted on the marketplace:

- **Virtual booths (up to 100 exhibitors)**

The virtual booth will be a space within the larger virtual marketplace. The aim is to share information and sparking interest on green energy projects, initiatives, technology and policies,

etc. A variety of assets can be displayed. These include static text, logos, banners, video and even Chabot. The virtual booth will be based on 'Swapcard' model. The attendee will be able to engage directly with the exhibitor. Conversations can be instant, a contact form or simply be a link. It will be possible via the virtual booth for exhibitors will host live discussions or demos.

Below are some of the functionalities which will be offered, each exhibitor will be able to intuitively construct their own booth:

- Test booths and live booths
- Search functions to locate booths
- Business intelligence tools
- Exhibitors will be able to place their company/organisation logos on booths; provide their own booth pictures; and easily upload videos, photos & documents
- In-booth chat and video-chat function will be available

Guidelines and step-by-step tutorial videos will be provided to potential exhibitors as well as real time support for the preparation of the marketplace booths. A number of online training meeting will be organised with the sponsors and groups of exhibitors to assist them with the preparation of their online material.

- **B2B / B2G / G2G**

All participants who are interested in holding bilateral or multigroup meetings (for up to ten participants), will be able to do so, by using a booking function for meeting rooms with face to face virtual interaction. Swapcard uses AI to boost matchmaking, connecting users with the most relevant people based on their profiles, and create custom event journeys. Through the initial registration process, a virtual marketplace database will be created, whereby participants will be able to search for the following:

- Search for contacts by categories i.e. sectors, country, industry etc.
- Search function with wide search algorithm allowing for search of companies and individuals, country/sub region, categories, subjects, interests and other relevant fields and matchmaking investor and promoters

Through this networking platform those participating will be able to meet, pitch projects and ideas, search for technical partners and funding partners, build linkages with development partners and financing institutions. The platform will be built in such a way as to allow for flexibility to adapt to the needs of the participants.

- **Side meetings, conferences and workshops**

Participating European and African private sector or civil society organisations will be able to set-up side meetings, conferences and workshops on 22 April 2021.