



PRESS RELEASE

West Africa Climate Resilience Summit Champions Cooperation for Scalable Local Solutions

The 7th edition of a series of events held across four continents to catalyze coordinated action under a shared climate resilience framework, the Summit will convene stakeholders in Dakar to advance knowledge sharing and best practices that drive effective, innovative, and context-specific climate solutions.

DAKAR, March 23, 2026 — The West Africa Climate Resilience Summit will bring together public officials, local authorities, researchers, youth, and development partners to discuss regional priorities and identify actionable pathways for climate resilience. Themed **“From Climate Crisis to Climate Resilience: Pathways for West Africa and the Sahel at Local and Regional Levels,”** the event is part of a global series of Climate Resilience Summits jointly organized by the Pontifical Academy of Sciences (PAS) and the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences (PASS). The [Dakar edition](#), hosted in partnership with AKADEMIYA2063 and the Centre de Suivi Écologique, aims to foster high-level policy dialogue to advance climate resilience, emphasizing inclusion and perspectives from diverse stakeholder groups—particularly youth—on science and climate action.

“Climate change affects everyone, and no one is exempt from its far-reaching effects,” said **Cardinal Peter Turkson**, Chancellor of PAS and PASS. “Yet Africa bears a disproportionate share of its impacts (cfr. *Climate apartheid* of Desmond Tutu). Faith-based communities agree that we must respond by harnessing the continent’s expertise and fostering dialogue to develop integrated, effective solutions, protecting creation.”

In response to the global climate crisis, PAS and PASS advanced an unprecedented, bottom-up global approach to resilience. The Climate Resilience initiative was launched with an international summit at the Casina Pio IV in the Vatican, culminating in a Call to Action signed by Pope Francis, along with scientists, policymakers, and leaders of diverse faith communities. In pursuit of this Call to Action, PAS and PASS are convening a series of regional summits worldwide to catalyze coordinated local and global action within a shared resilience framework. To date, six summits have been held across four continents—in Austria, Brazil, Kenya, and the United States. The work continues under the leadership of Pope Leo XIV.

“It is fitting that this landmark dialogue is taking place in Senegal, which has developed a robust strategic framework with a strong focus on adaptation in agriculture, coastal protection, and renewable energy,” said **Dr. Cheikh Mbow**, Director General of the Centre de Suivi Écologique. “These priorities are reflected in Senegal’s new development strategy, *Vision Sénégal 2050 – Agenda National de Transformation*, and the National Plan for the Adaptation of the Agricultural



Sector to Climate Change, aimed at strengthening resilience. Advancing knowledge for sustainable climate action remains crucial to ensure science-driven policies grounded in local realities.”

The [Climate Resilience](#) concept is anchored in the MAST strategy: Mitigation, Adaptation, and Societal Transformation, emphasizing the intersection of regional contexts, community engagement, global collaboration, science, and nature-based solutions, while unlocking finance, insurance, equity, and justice. This global framework, designed for local adoption worldwide, draws on the expertise of mayors, governors, regional scientists, and practitioners who are closest to the urgency of climate impacts.

“The year 2023 ranked among the hottest on record, possibly exceeding paleotemperature records dating back 125,000 years. Climate change is not standing still; our endeavors are to accelerate action toward a sustainable environment and a resilient future,” said **Prof. Marcelo Suárez-Orozco**, Chancellor of the University of Massachusetts Boston, and PASS Council Member. “To strengthen the resilience of people and ecosystems under growing climate stress, we must empower local communities and fuse traditional knowledge with science-driven, interdisciplinary approaches. This integration is not only essential for climate resilience at the local level—it is the decisive path to a just and sustainable tomorrow.”

The West Africa Climate Resilience Summit will draw on regional expertise in climate resilience, in collaboration with PAS and PASS. Thematic discussions will foster regional and international cooperation and knowledge exchange to advance effective, innovative, and scalable climate solutions. The dialogue will also tailor responses to the region’s diverse climate risks and socio-economic, governance, and cultural contexts, equally exploring the role of forests and other nature-based solutions.

“Sustainability and adaptation to a changing climate require a more judicious use of biological and ecological resources, alongside resilience-proofing policy interventions across sectors,” said **Dr. Ousmane Badiane**, Executive Chairperson of AKADEMIYA2063. “This Summit will provide a platform for regional and global climate actors to explore pathways for enhancing capacity-strengthening and sharing best practices to support the local implementation of climate resilience solutions, with a strong focus on regional and local planning, adaptation, and resilience financing.”

The two-day Summit will bring together a diverse range of stakeholders—including policymakers, mayors, leading scientists and researchers, leaders of Christian and Islamic communities, youth leaders, and civil society—providing an intersectional platform where climate science, social science, policy, business, and faith-based communities converge.



“Adaptation in West Africa and the Sahel is very much a matter of food and agriculture. The Summit will therefore also focus on food system innovations and water,” said **Prof. Joachim von Braun**, President of PAS. “We call for enhanced action for food and nutrition security under climate stress and deploying innovative financing mechanisms in support of that.”

The primary outcome of the regional summits will be a blueprint for climate resilience that can be adopted locally by communities worldwide. The 2025–2026 regional summits will further advance the call to action for a Universal Protocol for Climate Resilience, culminating in a comprehensive Vatican summit in 2027 and the release of the Universal Protocol.

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