African Union | THE AFRICA-EU PARTNERSHIP / LE PARTENARIAT AFRIQUE-UE | Africa-EU Energy Partnership

AEEP Energy Talks Spotlight

From ACS2 to COP30: Advancing Africa and EU Cooperation to Deliver on Common Priorities

The AEEP is supported by its Steering Group:

COMESA | Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy | Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development | African Union

AEEP Energy Talks Spotlight

From ACS2 to COP30: Advancing Africa and EU Cooperation to Deliver on Common Priorities

Key findings from the AEEP Energy Talks on 5 November 2025

SUMMARY

The 21st AEEP Energy Talks reviewed the outcomes of the 2nd Africa Climate Summit (ACS2), held from 8–10 September 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and explored how these outcomes can inform Africa–EU collaboration ahead of COP30. The webinar analysed the ACS2 declarations and commitments, particularly the draft Addis Ababa Declaration, which emphasises green and resilient development, renewable energy investment, climate finance, and Africa's unified voice in international climate negotiations. The ACS2 Declaration has now been officially released.

The webinar opened with remarks from Alexandre Detroux, Team Leader - Green, Digital, Economic Transformation, Policy and Cooperation Section of the EU Delegation, who highlighted ACS2's role in positioning Africa as a driver of climate solutions. He noted Africa's commitment to scaling renewable energy, creating jobs, and expanding energy access, and highlighted the EU's active engagement at ACS2, including new renewable energy projects and discussions on climate finance and youth leadership. Looking ahead to COP30, he reaffirmed the EU's support for ambitious implementation and Africa–EU partnership to translate commitments into measurable outcomes.

This was followed by a presentation from Haruna Gujba, Senior Energy Advisor at AEEP, sharing the key outcomes of ACS2, focusing on energy access, just transition pathways, green minerals, and climate finance. He highlighted Africa's ambition to expand renewable energy, advance Mission 300 for universal energy access, promote local beneficiation of critical minerals with a call to establish a coalition of critical mineral-producing countries in Africa to foster strategic regional cooperation, value addition and beneficiation, and mobilise climate finance through initiatives like the Africa Climate Innovation Compact. He emphasised translating ACS2 commitments into concrete policies, projects, and measurable outcomes, and ensuring Africa's unified voice in negotiations leading to COP30.

The panel discussion, moderated by Towela Nyirenda-Jere, Head of Secretariat of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership, reflected on the importance of a unified African voice, inclusive energy solutions, and innovative financing to accelerate the continent's energy transition. Experts emphasised leveraging regional coordination, green industrialisation, and concrete actions to translate climate commitments into tangible impact ahead of COP30.

The webinar concluded with Towela Nyirenda-Jere highlighting the key takeaways from the discussion, emphasising the need for continued Africa–EU cooperation, aligning initiatives from global to national levels, ensuring coordination across projects, and promoting inclusivity especially the voices of women and civil society as Africa prepares for COP30.

Introduction

Africa stands at a critical juncture in its energy transition. The continent has significant renewable energy potential, growing industrial ambitions, and opportunities for regional integration through initiatives such as the **African Single Electricity Market (AfSEM)** and the **Continental Power Systems Master Plan (CMP)**. At the same time, African countries face high financing costs, infrastructural gaps, and the need to ensure that energy solutions are inclusive, gender-responsive, and aligned with local development priorities.

The 2nd Africa Climate Summit (ACS2) provided a platform for African leaders to articulate a unified voice ahead of COP30, highlighting priorities such as climate finance, renewable energy deployment, green industrialisation, and just transition measures. Effective implementation of these commitments requires strategic coordination across national, regional, and continental frameworks, as well as strong Africa–EU collaboration to translate political declarations into tangible policies and projects.

The 21st AEEP Energy Talks brought together experts from Africa and Europe to examine how the ACS2 outcomes can inform joint action and shape follow-up engagements ahead of COP30. By connecting continental priorities with international negotiation processes, the discussion aimed to strengthen Africa's unified position, identify practical solutions for accelerating the energy transition, and explore opportunities for ambitious Africa–EU partnerships that deliver measurable results on the ground.

Opening Remarks – Alexandre Detroux, EU Delegation to the African Union

Mr. Alexandre Detroux, representing the European Union Delegation to the African Union, opened the 21st Energy Talks by highlighting the timeliness of the discussion amid Africa's accelerating climate and energy transition. He commended the AEEP Secretariat for organising the dialogue and noted that the Second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2) held in Addis Ababa from 8–10 September 2025 marked a turning point in positioning Africa as a driver of climate solutions rather than a victim of climate change. The summit's call for climate finance that empowers African institutions and communities, and its emphasis on scaling renewable energy for inclusive industrialisation, were central to his remarks.

> ***"Together, Africa and Europe can turn declarations into tangible results. The next time we meet, we aim to report on megawatts delivered, emissions avoided, and livelihoods improved. Let us share experiences, align efforts, and turn ambition into action."***
>
> – Alexandre Detroux

He reflected on the EU's strong engagement during ACS2, represented at the highest level by European Commission Executive Vice-President Teresa Ribera. Together with African counterparts, the EU launched new renewable energy projects and advanced dialogues on climate finance, green transition, deforestation, and youth leadership. Looking ahead to COP30, Mr. Detroux reaffirmed the EU's commitment to supporting the COP30 Presidency's focus on implementation and advancing the pledges agreed under the COP28 Global Stocktake.

Mr. Detroux highlighted the Africa Climate Innovation Compact, launched at ACS2, as an example of African-driven solutions — aiming to catalyse 1,000 homegrown innovations across energy, water, agriculture, transport, and resilience by 2030. He noted that the Africa–EU partnership will be instrumental in achieving ambitious and actionable outcomes at COP30. Despite jointly accounting for only around 10% of global emissions, he said, both regions face acute climate impacts and therefore share a strong interest in pursuing multilateral, implementation-focused solutions.

He concluded by reaffirming the EU's role as a reliable partner through initiatives such as the **Global Gateway** and the **Africa–EU Green Energy Initiative**, which combine finance, guarantees, and policy expertise to mobilise sustainable investment.

Presentation on the Outcomes of the Second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2)

Haruna Gujba senior energy advisor at the AEEP Secretariat and seconded to the African Union Commission, presented the key outcomes of the Second Africa Climate Summit (ACS2). His presentation focused on energy-related priorities, just transition pathways, green minerals, and climate finance, and their implications for Africa's engagement at COP30.

> *"Africa is positioning itself not as a victim of climate change, but as a key driver of the energy transition, leveraging its renewable energy resources to lead on clean energy solutions."*
>
> – Dr. Haruna Gujba

He highlighted that ACS2 followed broad consultations with governments, regional institutions, and civil society, resulting in a declaration reflecting a unified African position. Key areas included energy access, renewable energy transition, climate finance, adaptation, technology- and nature-based solutions, peace and security, health, and loss and damage. Africa reaffirmed its ambition to reach 300 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 and emphasised the Mission 300 initiative to provide energy access to 300 million people. Support for continental programmes such as the African Single Electricity Market, Continental Power Systems Masterplan, and the Africa Clean Cooking Programme was also underscored.

On just transition and energy security, ACS2 highlighted the role of transitional energy resources, particularly natural gas, and stressed the importance of public–private partnerships and domestic investment in grid infrastructure, regional interconnectors, and community mini-grids. Africa's capabilities in adaptation, renewable energy deployment, and use of technologies including AI and digital solutions were also emphasised.

The summit further addressed the green mineral transition, including the launch of the Africa Green Minerals Strategy, local beneficiation, job creation, and governance frameworks. Leaders proposed a coalition of critical mineral producing countries to coordinate continental positions. On climate finance, ACS2 called for increased grants and concessional funding, simplified access to funds, and mobilisation of USD 50 billion annually through initiatives such as the Africa Climate Innovation Compact and the Africa Climate Facility, providing a framework for Africa's COP30 priorities.

Panel Discussion

The panel included:

- Alfonso Medinilla — Head, Climate Action & Green Transition Team, European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
- Patricia Mbogo — Executive Director, ACCESS Coalition
- Simbini Tichakunda — Principal Programme Officer, Energy, African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD)

The discussion was moderated by Dr. Towela Jere, Head of Secretariat of the Africa-EU Energy Partnership (AEEP).

WHAT WAS THE MOST SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES OR COMMITMENTS FROM THE AFRICA CLIMATE SUMMIT?

Mr. Tichakunda Simbini highlighted the recognition of African-led initiatives in the ACS2 declaration compared to the first summit. He emphasised that the declaration reaffirmed existing continental initiatives, including the African Single Electricity Market, the Africa Clean Cooking Programme, and APRA targets. He also noted the introduction of Mission 300 as a concrete goal to provide energy access to 300 million people by 2030, along with emerging initiatives such as the Africa Green Industrialization Initiative and the Green Minerals Strategy. Additionally, he stressed the acknowledgement of transition fuels, particularly gas, as a critical component of energy security and a steppingstone toward a cleaner energy transition.

Mr. Alfonso Medinilla focused on Africa's climate leadership and the broader implications of ACS2. He emphasised that the summit reaffirmed Africa's climate-positive growth pathway and demonstrated African-led climate leadership for developing countries. He highlighted the importance of setting ambitious yet realistic targets, including moving toward 20% renewable energy investments, while addressing financing constraints and debt challenges. He also pointed out the shift from symbolic commitments to tangible resource mobilisation, particularly through the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative, showing a serious commitment to mobilising the pipeline of African projects.

> ***"It's possible to have an opportunity-driven position by African countries, while also recognizing the asymmetry of opportunity and underlying injustices."***
>
> **– Alfonso Medinilla**

Ms. Patricia Mbogo offered a community-centred perspective, stressing the need to translate high-level commitments into outcomes that address the real needs of communities. She emphasised inclusivity in global financial reforms and climate financing, ensuring that solutions reach energy-poor communities. She highlighted the acceleration of renewable energy deployment, particularly through decentralised systems for communities beyond the grid. Ms. Mbogo also stressed the holistic implementation of Mission 300, not only focusing on electrification but also on clean cooking and productive energy use, as well as the importance of locally mobilised finance to support sustainable and affordable energy access.

HOW CAN THE SIGNIFICANT OUTCOMES FROM ACS2 BE TRANSLATED INTO CONCRETE POLICIES OR PROJECTS THAT WILL MOVE AFRICA'S CLIMATE AND ENERGY AGENDA FORWARD?

Mr. Medinilla highlighted the multiple levels of action required, emphasising that while African countries have ambitious visions to leverage their mineral resources and clean energy potential, these ambitions are constrained by high debt burdens and the high cost of capital. He pointed out that international finance and cost of capital remain major barriers, noting that project cancellations often result from these financial challenges. He also stressed the importance of domestic market development and demand-side policies, giving the example of green fertiliser manufacturing in East Africa. Linking these efforts to broader frameworks such as the Africa Green Industrialisation Initiative and the African Continental Free Trade Area, he noted that integrating green agendas into continental trade policies is essential to create the enabling environment needed for sustainable projects.

Ms. Mbogo focused on the need for integration, inclusivity, and accountability to ensure that ACS2 outcomes translate into tangible impacts on the ground. She emphasised that energy projects should bring together different sectors and be aligned with national energy plans, noting that initiatives like Mission 300 must go beyond electrification to include clean cooking and productive energy use. Patricia stressed the importance of innovative and affordable financing mechanisms that are accessible to local communities and highlighted the critical role of civil society in amplifying the voices of energy-poor populations. She also underscored the necessity of monitoring, accountability, and transparency to ensure that commitments are met and that projects deliver sustainable benefits to communities.

> ***"We need to start doing things differently—bringing together resources, aligning initiatives like Mission 300 and the Africa-EU Green Energy Initiative, and creating country-specific action plans to accelerate renewable energy projects and green industrialization."***
>
> **– Tichakunda Simbini**

Mr. Simbini took a more structural perspective, talking about the need to align existing initiatives and plans for practical implementation. He noted that while frameworks like the Continental Power Systems Master Plan, Mission 300, and various renewable energy programmes exist, targets have often not been met due to a lack of coordination and actionable country-level plans. Mr. Simbini advocated for better resource mobilisation and collaboration between African and European partners to accelerate implementation. He stressed aligning initiatives to exploit renewable energy potential, developing green industrialisation hubs, and fostering complementarities between existing programmes. Ultimately, he called for a more integrated and strategic approach to implement projects effectively, ensuring that financial resources are used optimally to achieve tangible outcomes.

HOW CAN CLEAN COOKING INITIATIVES ADDRESS GENDER ISSUES, PARTICULARLY THE INVOLVEMENT AND NEEDS OF WOMEN IN COMMUNITIES?

The moderator highlighted a question from the audience for Ms. Mbogo on how gender considerations are addressed in clean cooking initiatives, given that women are most affected, and whether community plans include concrete measures.

Ms. Mbogo explained that women are the primary managers of household cooking but often lack control over resources and decision-making, which limits their ability to transition to cleaner solutions. Financing and assets are usually controlled by men, leaving women without a voice in choosing energy solutions.

> ***"When we engage women, consult them, and provide solutions that truly meet their needs, we are ensuring a just transition."***
>
> **– Patricia Mbogo**

She emphasised that civil society and organisations like Access Coalition have been advocating for gender-responsive and inclusive energy processes that involve women, youth, and marginalised communities. Understanding local dynamics and including these groups in planning and decision-making is essential to ensure that clean cooking initiatives meet real community needs.

PANEL REFLECTIONS: OUTLOOK FOR COP30 AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE AFRICA–EU ENERGY PARTNERSHIP

As the panel drew to a close, the moderator invited speakers to share their concluding thoughts, focusing on how ACS2 outcomes can translate into tangible results at COP30 and recommendations for the Africa–EU Energy Partnership.

Patricia Mbogo emphasised the importance of African leaders presenting a unified voice at COP30. She noted that by coordinating requests and reflecting local needs, African countries can ensure they are active decision-makers rather than passive recipients. Ms. Mbogo stressed that unity and clarity in representation would enhance accountability from global leaders and enable a just and effective energy transition across the continent.

Building on this, **Alfonso Medinilla** highlighted that a coordinated African position is crucial to leverage the ACS2 outcomes, especially regarding critical raw materials. He underlined systemic barriers such as the cost of capital and the importance of aligning with other developing nations. He also pointed to the COP30 presidency's agenda on harmonising carbon markets as an opportunity for proactive African engagement. Mr. Medinilla urged the Africa–EU partnership to focus on ambitious, actionable measures — such as trade in energy and energy-intensive goods — rather than repeating old commitments.

Tichakunda Simbini added that African energy initiatives are implemented through structured governance involving regional economic communities, ensuring decisions are coordinated from the ground up. For COP30 and the bicontinental partnership, he recommended capitalising on existing initiatives like AEGEI and prior commitments rather than launching new ones. Mr. Simbini emphasised the need for dialogue between the African Union and the European Union to align resources and strategies effectively, noting that AEEP plays a pivotal role in facilitating these discussions and enhancing impact on the ground.

AEEP Energy Talk Conclusions – Translating ACS2 Outcomes into Tangible Results at COP30

- African countries need to present a unified position at COP30 to ensure they are active decision-makers rather than passive recipients. Coordinated requests and clarity in representation will enhance accountability from global leaders and enable a just and effective energy transition.

- Leveraging the ACS2 outcomes, particularly on critical raw materials, provides African countries with negotiation power. Systemic barriers such as the cost of capital must be addressed, and alignment with other developing nations can strengthen Africa's stance.

- The COP30 presidency's focus on harmonising carbon markets presents an opportunity for proactive African engagement, even as positions across the continent remain diverse. African countries are encouraged to capitalise on these opportunities while maintaining unity and coherence in messaging.

- For the Africa–EU Energy Partnership, emphasis should be placed on ambitious, actionable measures, such as trade in energy and energy-intensive goods, rather than repeating past commitments. Existing initiatives like AEGEI and prior ACS2 commitments should be prioritised to maximize impact on the ground.

- Implementation requires structured governance involving regional economic communities to coordinate decisions from the member-state to the continental level. Dialogue between the African Union and the European Union is critical to align resources, strategies, and initiatives effectively. AEEP plays a pivotal role in facilitating these discussions and ensuring tangible outcomes.