

Africa's Green Transition: Critical Minerals, Plastic Policies, and Climate Finance

Environment & Economy · Answer Key · 16 Questions

1. Which African nation has been at the forefront of developing domestic refining capacity for cobalt, aiming to convert cobalt hydroxide into higher-value cobalt metal, thereby capturing more value from its significant global production in 2024?

- A) Ghana
- B) Democratic Republic of Congo**
- C) Zambia
- D) South Africa

2. The African Climate Summit 2025 in Addis Ababa highlighted the continent's potential to benefit from its critical green minerals. Which of the following actions was emphasized by leaders and experts as crucial for Africa to avoid repeating past exploitative patterns and ensure prosperity?

- A) Focus solely on exporting raw materials to meet global demand
- B) Investing in local processing, value addition, and regional cooperation**
- C) Prioritizing foreign direct investment over domestic industrialization
- D) Reducing the export of all raw minerals, regardless of value addition

3. Kenya implemented one of the world's strictest bans on single-use plastic bags in 2017. According to a 2025 report, what is the estimated annual economic loss for African sectors like agriculture and tourism due to plastic pollution?

- A) USD 1.3 billion
- B) USD 13 billion**
- C) USD 130 billion
- D) USD 1.3 trillion

4. The African mining sector faces significant energy constraints and increasing electricity tariffs. To address this, mining companies have accelerated investment in which of the following to reduce operational costs and carbon footprints?

- A) Increased reliance on imported fossil fuels
- B) Expansion of artisanal mining operations
- C) Renewable energy projects (solar, wind, battery storage)**
- D) Deeper engagement with international coal markets

5. Africa is a significant supplier of critical minerals essential for the global energy transition. Which of the following minerals, primarily sourced from African nations like the DRC and Zambia, is crucial for electric vehicle batteries and energy storage systems?

- A) Bauxite and Nickel
- B) Chromium and Platinum
- C) Cobalt and Manganese**
- D) Graphite and Lithium

6. The global push for a plastics treaty has seen varied responses in Africa. Some African countries are leading in plastic bans, yet face challenges. Which of the following is a significant concern raised by the petrochemical and plastics industry lobby regarding Africa's regulations?

- A) Weakening regulations to become hubs for unregulated plastic waste dumping**
- B) Overly stringent regulations stifling local innovation
- C) Excessive investment in domestic recycling infrastructure
- D) Mandatory quotas for exporting plastic waste to developed nations

7. Climate finance flows to Africa have shown significant growth, but still fall short of the estimated needs. According to the 2024 Landscape of Climate Finance in Africa report, what percentage of Africa's estimated annual investment needs for implementing its current NDCs was met in 2021/22?

- A) Approximately 70%
- B) Approximately 50%
- C) Approximately 23%**
- D) Approximately 10%

8. The impact of climate change on Africa is profound, with escalating droughts, floods, and food insecurity. By 2050, how much could the continent's annual losses due to climate impacts reach if action stalls, according to the IPCC?

- A) \$7-15 billion
- B) \$50 billion**
- C) \$163 billion
- D) \$290 billion

9. Africa holds vast reserves of critical minerals vital for the global energy transition. Which African nation holds significant reserves of platinum group metals (PGMs) and chromium, crucial for green hydrogen and decarbonizing heavy transport?

- A) Nigeria
- B) Egypt
- C) South Africa**
- D) Algeria

10. The UN Plastic Treaty negotiations have faced divisions. While some African nations champion plastic reduction, others, particularly oil and gas-producing countries, express concern. What is a primary economic concern for these African nations regarding a treaty that cuts single-use plastic production?

- A) Increased demand for petrochemicals leading to higher prices
- B) Stifling the growth of their petrochemical industry and related economic benefits**
- C) Reduced reliance on imported oil and gas resources
- D) The need to invest heavily in renewable energy alternatives

11. Africa's natural product-based drug discovery efforts face challenges despite its rich biodiversity. Which of the following is identified as a significant barrier limiting Africa's impact in this sector?

- A) Excessive government funding for research
- B) Limited translational capacity and weak infrastructure**
- C) Over-reliance on synthetic drug development
- D) A surplus of trained medicinal chemists

12. The demand for critical minerals like lithium and cobalt is surging due to the global energy transition. Which African country is a leading producer of lithium, with a rapid increase in production?

- A) Botswana
- B) Zimbabwe**
- C) Namibia
- D) Ghana

13. Water scarcity poses a severe threat to Africa's development. By 2030, it is projected that water scarcity could displace between 24 million and 700 million people globally. In Africa alone, how many countries are expected to suffer from a greater combination of increased water scarcity and water stress by 2025?

- A) 5
- B) 10
- C) 25**
- D) 50

14. Africa's forests play a crucial role in global climate regulation. However, a recent study suggests that forests in Africa are beginning to emit carbon instead of absorbing it. What is a major driver of this alarming trend in countries like the Democratic Republic of Congo?

- A) Sustainable logging practices and afforestation projects
- B) Illegal extraction of minerals and agricultural expansion driven by biomass energy needs**
- C) Increased investment in renewable energy sources
- D) Expansion of protected forest reserves

15. The African Carbon Markets Initiative (ACMI) aims to harness the potential of carbon markets. What is a significant concern raised by some regarding large land-use projects within carbon markets in Africa?

A) These projects are insufficiently funded

B) They lead to Africans losing land to facilitate continued pollution by richer countries

C) The carbon credits generated are of low quality

D) There is a lack of transparency in project development

16. Africa's commitment to climate adaptation is crucial, with the continent bearing a disproportionate share of climate impacts despite low emissions. What is the estimated annual loss for Africa due to climate impacts, a figure that could reach \$50 billion by 2050 if action stalls?

A) \$7-15 billion

B) \$163 billion

C) \$290 billion

D) \$1.6 trillion