

# PRESS RELEASE

## UNU INRA Releases New Report on Voluntary Carbon Markets in Africa

**Accra, Ghana; 18 December 2024** - The United Nations University, Institute for Natural Resources in Africa, has launched a new report on Voluntary Carbon Markets in Africa. The report, which was launched at the UNCCD COP 16 in Riyadh, is on Carbon Market Economies: Crafting a New Narrative of Opportunity and Sustainable Growth for Climate Action in Africa.

**Voluntary Carbon Markets (VCMs)** have emerged as a powerful tool for climate finance, offering Africa significant opportunities to attract green investments for both emissions reductions and ecosystem restoration.

However, implementing these solutions in Africa involves taking complex socio-political and economic factors into account.

**Climate change** remains an existential threat, prompting a redefinition and renegotiation of power dynamics and sustainability imperatives towards a carbon-neutral future. Vulnerable countries in the Global South are struggling to enact climate action, leaving frontline communities vulnerable.

In the same vein, financially and technologically advanced countries negotiate carbon reductions, while grappling with global power dynamics, thereby striving to mitigate climate impacts. This has raised concerns around transparency, integrity and how well VCMs align with Africa's sustainable development priorities.

**The COP29 resolution on Article 6**, is a historic breakthrough in global climate governance, addressing long-standing challenges in carbon markets and non-market cooperation. It establishes mechanisms for cross-border collaboration through bilateral carbon trading (Article 6.2) and a centralized emissions reduction framework known as the [Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism](#) (Article 6.4), with potential annual savings of \$250 billion in implementing NDCs (COP29, 2024). For Africa, this unlocks opportunities to attract private investments, finance adaptation projects through the Share of Proceeds (SOP) principle, and strengthen monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems, fostering meaningful participation in global carbon markets.

**With this in mind, the VCM report provides a critical analysis of the political economy of VCMs in Africa by synthesising key interviews with policy-makers and leading experts in climate and development discourse.** It explores the tensions between market-oriented approaches and the need for sustainable development, providing insights into questions of equity, governance, and the monetization of natural resources.

The findings highlight the importance of adopting a new perspective that focuses on fair and sustainable solutions, prioritizing the interests of local communities and genuine climate action rather than profit-driven imperatives.

**Read VCM report here :**

[https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:10036/Carbon\\_Market\\_Economies\\_\\_\\_\\_Nov\\_2024\\_\\_Web\\_.pdf](https://collections.unu.edu/eserv/UNU:10036/Carbon_Market_Economies____Nov_2024__Web_.pdf)

**Also read about UNU-INRA at UNCCDCOP16 Riyadh and our side event on Rethinking Carbon Markets for Africa’s Sustainable Future:**

<https://unu.edu/inra/report/rethinking-carbon-markets-africas-sustainable-future>

**About UNU INRA:**

UNU-INRA is one of the 14 Research Institutes of the United Nations University (UNU). It aims to bridge the gap between science and natural resources management policies in Africa, with a mandate to strengthen African national institutions’ capacity to manage natural resources.

Established in 1985, UNU-INRA is a leading voice in Africa’s natural resource knowledge base, contributing to research and evidence to bridge the gap between science and policy and promote sustainable development through natural resource governance that is sensitive to climate change.

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