CALIBRATE 2026

Climate Action Leaders In Business - Raising African Talent & Enterprise

Ghana-India Kofi Annan ICT Centre of Excellence (GI-KACE), Accra, Ghana

21–22 May 2026

ACCRA DECLARATION

Scaling Climate Solutions: From Innovation to Implementation

PREAMBLE

We, the participants, presenters, workshop facilitators, keynote speakers, and institutional partners assembled at the third edition of the CALIBRATE summit hosted at the Ghana-India Kofi Annan ICT Centre of Excellence (GI-KACE), Accra, Ghana, from 21 to 22 May 2026, having engaged in two full days of deliberations, workshops, presentations, and dialogue on the theme Scaling Climate Solutions: From Innovation to Implementation;

RECALLING that Africa contributes the least to global greenhouse gas emissions yet bears the heaviest burden of climate change impacts, including droughts, floods, food insecurity, and forced displacement;

REAFFIRMING the urgent calls to action voiced by speakers across all sessions that deliberate, coordinated, and people-centred responses to climate change are not merely desirable but existential necessities;

RECOGNISING the challenge posed by the Convener to all in attendance: "If we leave this world today, what impact are we leaving behind?";

ACKNOWLEDGING the June 3rd Flood Disaster in Accra in the year 2015 and similar climate-linked catastrophes across the continent as sobering reminders that the transition from talk to action is not optional — it is overdue;

DO HEREBY ADOPT this Accra Declaration as a collective statement of commitment, resolve, and actionable intent.

SECTION I — OBSERVATIONS FROM SUMMIT PROCEEDINGS

The following key observations emerged from the scientific presentations, keynote addresses, workshops, and open discussions held over the two-day summit:

On Climate Hazard and Vulnerability:

- Africa's vulnerability to climate hazards is increasing day by day. Our continent is exposed to floods, droughts, soil erosion, and resource contamination and the opportunities to harness resilience remain insufficiently activated.
- The June 3rd flood disaster, alongside recurring Brahmaputra floods devastating tea plantations in Assam and Bangladesh, illustrates the real and compounding costs of climate inaction.
- The Black Volta Basin and White Volta Basin of Ghana face serious projected temperature increases of 1°C to 7.5°C and declining rainfall by 2050, threatening agriculture, hydropower from the Akosombo and Bui dams, and water security across northern Ghana.

On Environmental Pollution and Public Health:

- Mercury and lead concentrations in major Ghanaian rivers exceed acceptable limits posing significant cancer risks and organ damage to communities who depend on these water bodies.
- Illegal artisanal mining (galamsey) has driven 214.01 km² of forest-to-mining conversion and 123.17 km² of illegal forest encroachment in the Ashanti Region alone between 2019 and 2025.
- Pollutants from mining and agriculture can enter the human body and alter genetic expression — a sobering reminder, as shared during proceedings, that environmental contamination is not an abstract statistic but a deeply personal and intergenerational crisis.
- The Tano River, a vital freshwater source, faces escalating threats from illegal mining, agricultural runoff, and industrial discharge, with measurable increases in biochemical oxygen demand and nitrogen levels.

On Food Security, Energy and Agricultural Innovation:

- Post-harvest losses of 30–50% of harvests in off-grid communities stem directly from energy poverty and inadequate preservation infrastructure — a solvable problem demanding engineering innovation and climate finance. Ensuring innovative solutions requires a better understanding of the role of energy technology in climate innovative solutions.
- Innovative solutions presented at CALIBRATE 2026 including solar-powered dehydration systems, nuclear-integrated agro-processing, and atmospheric water harvesting demonstrate that African innovators are already engineering the solutions the continent needs.

On Geospatial Technology and Data for Decision-Making:

- The Ghana Climate Atlas, presented by the Ghana Meteorological Agency, represents a vital tool for climate-smart agriculture, enterprise planning, and community resilience and must be made accessible to all stakeholders, including smallholder farmers and local entrepreneurs.
- Geographic Information Systems (GIS) platforms, satellite imagery, machine learning, and open Earth observation data from Digital Earth Africa and Google Earth Engine are powerful tools that can democratise climate decision-making but only if capacity to use them is built at scale.
- The Africa Geoportal, ArcGIS Field Maps, and web-based geospatial platforms offer practical entry points for climate entrepreneurs seeking to integrate spatial intelligence into their solutions.

On Governance, Chieftaincy, and Community Partnership:

- Traditional leaders and chiefs are underutilised partners in climate governance. As emphasised during proceedings, when formulating climate activities and policies, traditional authorities can and must be great partners. The inclusion of Nana Obrempong Toku Dum VIII in the CALIBRATE 2026 programme is a model to replicate.

- Relapse from Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in Northern Ghana where 75% of communities reverted to open defecation demonstrates that innovation without sustained community ownership, financing, and follow-up cannot achieve lasting change.

SECTION II — COMMITMENTS AND CALLS TO ACTION

Inspired by the deliberations and the spirit of CALIBRATE 2026, we commit to the following:

1. From Talk to Action — Urgency and Deliberateness

We commit to moving beyond conferences as talk shows. Every convening must yield concrete, time-bound, accountable actions. As stated during proceedings: "It shouldn't be a talk show anymore. Let's take action." We pledge to be deliberate when it comes to climate in our enterprises, research, policies, and daily choices.

2. Environmental Citizenship

We embrace our responsibility as environmental citizens. Whatever we do comes back to us. We commit to independent environmental checks, early warning systems in our communities, and active advocacy for clean air, clean water, and uncontaminated soil as non-negotiable rights for all Africans.

3. Scaling African Climate Innovation

We commit to supporting and scaling the innovative climate solutions presented at CALIBRATE 2026, including low-cost Internet of Things (IoT) weather stations for rural Earth observation, solar-powered food preservation systems for off-grid communities, atmospheric water harvesting for water-insecure villages, phytoremediation techniques for polluted soils and waterways, and anaerobic co-digestion of organic waste for renewable biogas.

4. Climate Finance Access for African Entrepreneurs

We commit to engaging actively with climate finance mechanisms — including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) scholarship programmes — and to supporting African entrepreneurs in navigating these pathways. We urge financial institutions and governments to simplify access criteria and increase direct access to climate finance for African enterprises.

5. Mainstreaming Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education for Climate Resilience

We support the urgent call for strategic partnership between educational institutions, government, civil society, and the private sector to mainstream Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) education as a direct driver of climate sustainability. Graduates equipped with real-world climate problem-solving skills are Africa’s most important climate asset.

6. Integrating Traditional Leadership into Climate Governance

We call on all climate practitioners — researchers, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and development organisations — to deliberately include traditional leaders and chiefs as partners in climate planning and implementation. Locally embedded authority is not a complement to climate action; it is a prerequisite for its legitimacy and sustainability.

7. Leveraging Geospatial and Digital Innovation

We commit to expanding the use of open Earth observation data, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) tools, artificial intelligence-powered geospatial intelligence, and digital infrastructure to accelerate climate entrepreneurship across Africa. We call on governments and institutions to invest in digital literacy and geospatial capacity building, particularly for young Africans.

8. Publishing and Disseminating Climate Science

We commit to contributing to and utilising the Journal of Nature-Based Solutions and Innovations (JNSI) with its June 30, 2026 submission deadline to share research that bridges innovation and implementation. All manuscripts should be linked to relevant Sustainable Development Goals. We affirm that open, accessible climate science is a public good.

9. Social Enterprise as a Force for Climate Action

We recognise the power of social enterprise as rooted in attitude and community orientation. We commit to asking ourselves, as individuals and institutions: What do we consider as value? What are we giving back to society? Climate action must not only solve environmental problems — it must create economic opportunity for the communities most affected.

10. Returning Next Year — Stronger

We commit to returning to CALIBRATE 2027 with progress reports, new partnerships, new innovations, and expanded networks. CALIBRATE belongs to Africa. We pledge to take what we have learned here, build what Africa needs, and continue this work with greater urgency and greater resolve.

ADOPTED AT ACCRA

This Declaration is adopted by consensus by the participants of CALIBRATE 2026, the third edition of the Climate Action Leaders In Business: Raising African Talent & Enterprise summit convened by the University of Water Science and Engineering (UWSE) in partnership with the Ghana-India Kofi Annan ICT Centre of Excellence (GI-KACE), Esri West Africa, the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), the Ghana Space Science and Technology Institute (GSSTI), the West and Central African Research and Education Network (WACREN), the Regional Centre for Mapping of Resources for Development (RCMRD), the Ghana Domain Name Registry (GDNR), Digital Earth Africa, Dagawei Intelligence, Little Bee Community (UK), Ghana Metereological Agency (GMet), Sir Padampat Singhania University, India and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Accra, Ghana
22 May 2026

CALIBRATE 2027

Watch for the Call for Abstracts and Registration

https://uwse.edu.gh/calibrate-2027/ | info@uwse.edu.gh