

How Climate Change Narrative Is Preventing Africa From Modernizing and Gaining Prosperity

From [*The Epoch Times*](#)

Under a blazing Kenyan sun, elderly women toil on their hands and knees in the reddish-brown clay, separating the choking weeds from the small, green shoots of a finger millet crop. The women are barehanded and barefoot, and they work from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. Clearing a small field takes three days.

“A combine harvester could replace 1,000 people,” Jusper Machogu, an agricultural engineer and farmer in Kenya, told The Epoch Times. “It makes me sad whenever I see my mom wading through millet. We have women kneeling down and uprooting weeds throughout the farm all day, and it’s sunny. Those machines would change our lives.”



A Samburu woman works to remove an invasive plant in Naibunga Upper Conservancy, Laikipia County, Kenya, on May 12, 2022. (Luis Tato/AFP via Getty Images)

But farmers such as Mr. Machogu can't get a combine harvester. Even if they could afford one from the meager salaries they make selling crops, Western nations' climate policies prevent Africans from achieving what the West already has—modernization and prosperity. In November 2023, to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuel use, the president of the Republic of Kenya, William Ruto, cut subsidies for fertilizer, fuel, and electricity for the 2023–2024 financial year. He did so at the behest of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), a financial agency of the United Nations.

"I come from a community where people use cow dung to fertilize their farms," Mr. Machogu said. "And the reason for that is because last year, the government of Kenya decided that they were going to listen to what the IMF was telling them. It was telling them to end fertilizer subsidies. You can imagine how that's going to impact farmers. The fertilizer prices went up by almost two times. We have very poor people around here. So, if I was [purchasing] 20 kilos for my farm, I'm forced to get 10 kilos now. Most people have gone back to

using cow dung, which is not a good nitrogenous fertilizer for their crop. You can't compare urea, with a 46 percent nitrogenous content, to cow dung, with only 4 percent. It doesn't make sense."

Mr. Machogu said the IMF and the Western nations that embrace climate policies for Africa are engaging in neocolonialism, or "climate colonialism. The new climate colonialism is being driven by global entities such as the U.N., which says Africa should have energy but that because of climate concerns, it should focus on wind and solar.

Calvin Beisner, founder and president of the Christian-brd Cornwall Alliance, said that currently, "the most harmful policy" is that the IMF, World Bank, and agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development "refuse to do loans or other funding for coal, natural gas, or oil-brd electric generating stations in sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia and Latin America."

Vijay Jayaraj, a research associate for the CO2 Coalition, said he grew up in India and witnessed the growth of India's industrialization—courtesy of fossil fuels. "In terms of economic development, energy is the foundational keystone," Mr. Jayaraj told The Epoch Times. "If you're going to disrupt how people get energy—where and what quality of energy they receive—it will have an impact. Not just generally, in terms of the economy and the GDP, but also the household and individual level."

The U.N. Environment Programme's current official position regarding Africa is to help it achieve modernization but to do so under strict environmental guidelines. Notably, that includes increasing access to and reliance on wind and solar energy . . .

Mr. Machogu said that in layman's terms, the U.N.'s policy boils down to "no fossil fuels for Africa," which necessarily

means no economic progress. Conversely, unrestricted access to fossil fuels could help pull Africa out of poverty.

“Let me speak for Africa because 60 percent of Africans rely on agriculture for their livelihood,” Mr. Machogu said. “We need fossil fuels for farm machinery. Despite the fact that the U.N., the IMF, the World Bank, and all of these environmental organizations say solar and wind for Africa, we can’t electrify agriculture—if we did electrify, it would be a tiny percent.”

In addition to needing fossil fuels for machines and access to loans to purchase them, Mr. Machogu said expanded irrigation, courtesy of fossil fuels, would benefit Africa. “Africa is not all green,” he said. “We have other places that are very dry. So, one of the easiest ways we can end that is by irrigating our land, and we will irrigate our lands using pipes from fossil fuels.” Holding up a yellow plastic bucket and panning to his surrounding crops, Mr. Machogu said most Africans get water for crops by lugging it from wells. The farther your crop is from the well, the more backbreaking and time-consuming the labor.

Finally, Mr. Machogu explained that use of urea, a fertilizer made from ammonia and liquid carbon dioxide, is significantly lower in Africa, thanks, in part, to external pressure from entities such as the IMF.

Mr. Beisner concurred. “The fuel cost problem is real and rising in sub-Saharan Africa, frankly, around the world,” he said. “As our policies drive that increase in the cost of fuel, we are essentially condemning people to have less food harvested and, therefore, less food available to put on the table at higher prices.”

Mr. Beisner said the pivot away from natural gas as a fuel also affects nitrogenous fertilizers, which need “vast amounts” of it to be produced.

Banning natural gas as a fuel would have a ripple effect, he said. Fertilizer prices would increase, fertilizer use would decrease, and then food production around the world would decline.

Mr. Machogu said that unlike in Western civilizations, if profit from agriculture decreases, African farmers can't simply look for another line of work. "In Kenya, almost 80 percent of our population is earning a living from agriculture," he said. "So, there is no way we're going to stop farming. What's going to happen, and what has happened, is that most people are now getting less production from their farms, which means that you don't have supplies to sell for you to buy, let's say, cloth for your kids, or to pay school fees for your kids. And for other people, they cannot even feed themselves [from their farm]. They have to buy food."

INDIA'S PATH TO INDUSTRIALIZATION

Mr. Jayaraj said he comes from a family of farmers in India. But unlike Africa, India was able to modernize thanks to fossil fuel access—a process that started in the early 1950s and reached completion in 2019 with near-universal household access to electricity achieved, according to the International Energy Agency. He said that over three decades, he witnessed "the socio-economic empowerment of people" in India.

Mr. Jayaraj explained that in the 1960s, India experienced significant poverty and famine. While these were devastating, they led to an agricultural revolution made possible by the use of fertilizers and fossil fuels.

"Almost all the farmers in India, if he's not a large-scale or rich farmer, have loads of free electricity. This has become more and more common in the past two decades. It was possible only through coal-generated electricity, of which India has abundant reserves," he said. "You see not just fertilizers and farming but also electricity for small homes in rural India, which enables them to use electric motor pumps to draw water into the fields. It made a big difference. And you see fossil

fuels on every side of a farmer's life. Though he's there in the field—surrounded by nature, involved with nature—everything he does is supported by fossil fuels. So, when it comes to farming and the whole sector, it would be devastating if they switched to organic farming or reduced the import or production of fossil fuels.”

Mr. Jayaraj said that while growing up, his relatives' homes in villages and hamlets didn't have 24/7 electricity. “Whenever the electricity comes, I will see my uncles and grandfathers run to switch on their motor pumps to send water into the fields,”

He said that unlike Africa, India is not beholden to Western civilizations and has no intention of switching to or relying on renewable energy such as wind, solar, or electric vehicles.

Mr. Beisner said places such as Africa, Asia, and countries in Latin America will remain in poverty without unfettered access to fossil fuels.

“It's very important that they be able to build electric generating stations and that these stations deliver power at scale—massive amounts of power—reliably, without interruption. And that just can't be done affordably with wind and solar or other so-called renewable energy sources,” he said. “Without industrial-scale electricity, people in those countries will continue to be “extremely poor,” And that's a far greater threat to human health and human life than anything related to the environment, climate, or weather,” Mr. Beisner said. “We know that partly because, over the past 100 years, the average annual human mortality rate from extreme weather events has fallen by more than 98 percent. So, prosperity protects us from whatever weather can throw at us. And the opposition to fossil fuels as energy sources keeps us from having prosperity.”

Mr. Machogu said that Africa is currently where the United States was in the 1800s. But unlike the United States, Africa isn't being allowed an industrial revolution.

Mr. Machogu said he finds many Western leaders hypocritical.

“These people are consuming lots of fossil fuels—even Obama. If you look at Obama’s house, it’s a big, big house without solar panels—the same thing with this other guy, Al Gore. Al Gore has got a big, big house. And if you look at his house, he doesn’t have solar panels. So, these people say these things with a hidden agenda,” he said. “And I think it boils down to Africa not developing and depopulation. Just that. It’s so simple.”