

# ***Africa's Green Industrialisation***

*Concept note for the 6<sup>th</sup> edition  
of the Africa Works! Business Conference*



## **AFRICA WORKS! 2024**

Since its initial edition in 2012, Africa Works! has grown into the largest Africa-focused Business Conference in the Benelux. Previous editions welcomed 300-400 participants per day and featured high-level keynote speakers like Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, Mr. Amine Bouabid, CEO of the Bank of Africa, Mr. Carlos van Wageningen, Founder of the Lake Turkana Wind Park in Kenya and Mr. Samuel Alemayehu, Founder of the Reppie Waste-to-Energy plant in Addis Ababa.

The key purpose of Africa Works! is to showcase Africa's potential; a continent offering a unique and highly attractive environment for business and investment opportunities.

**Amsterdam** will be the city where the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the conference will be held. The **date** has been set for **Tuesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2024**. The **venue** of NABC's flagship event, Africa Works! is **KIT - Royal Tropical Institute**.

## **THEME**

The theme for the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Africa Works! is:  
**"Africa's Green Industrialisation"**

Africa, despite contributing only 4%<sup>1</sup> of greenhouse gas emissions, is confronted with staggering losses of up to \$50 billion by 2040 due to climate change. At the same time, African nations are facing significant challenges due to the soaring prices of food and energy, further compounded by the war in Ukraine. To effectively navigate these crises and protect against future uncertainties, Africa has prioritised economic diversification.

In this regard, the African Union (AU) Summit on Industrialisation and Economic Diversification, held from the 20 - 25 November 2022 in Niger, made great recognition of the fact that sustainable success on the Africa-Industrialisation front will only be achieved with deliberate efforts to integrate and systemically address Africa's underlying development features, such as the micro-small-medium enterprises, the urban-rural transition, socio-economic diversity across the AU member states, as well as linkages between education-skills development and industry.

With a current population of 1.4 billion people, and nearly 2.5 billion by 2050, the imperative challenge faced by African nations emerges - how to achieve economic transformation for its population through sustainable industrialisation while mitigating the environmental risks?

Africa Works! 2024 will explore the concept of green industrialisation, which aims to decouple economic growth from environmental harm. The event is designed to promote and facilitate international trade between Africa and the Netherlands, facilitate foreign direct investment in Africa and to provide a platform to expand or establish business operations in Africa.

---

<sup>1</sup> Statista, November 2022. Africa's share in global carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from 2000 to 2021.  
<https://www.statista.com/statistics/1287508/africa-share-in-global-co2-emissions/#:~:text=Africa%20accounted%20for%203.9%20percent,share%20among%20all%20world's%20regions.>

The Conference aims to:

- Accelerate the financing of priority investments projects.
- Make visible the investment and trade opportunities in different African countries.
- Connect Dutch/European companies with key authorities, and businesses from Africa.
- Accelerate strategic partnerships between businesses.
- Facilitate Public-Private-Partnerships.
- Connect international investors with interesting and fast-growing companies.

Within the overarching theme **“Africa’s Green Industrialisation”**, Africa Works! 2024 focuses on green solutions for sustainable economic diversification including opportunities linked to **1) circular food production, 2) renewable energy, and 3) sustainable agro-logistics** in Africa. The main question to be addressed is, **what can be done to support green industrialisation in Africa and what role can the private sector – Dutch and African – play in working towards a sustainable and inclusive future for the continent?**

Africa Works! 2024 will feature once again world-class speakers, high-quality content workshops, a roundtable, interesting country-focus sessions, investment pitches and networking. It is a one-day conference day targeting 350 attendees and a two-day programme tailored to African incoming (business) delegations (B2B/B2G meetings and company visits).

We extend a warm invitation to delegations from all African nations, with a special focus on **African delegations of the 8 combi-track countries** as identified by the Dutch Government where a combination of foreign trade and development cooperation is applied. The countries include Côte d’Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa.

## **PROGRAMME AFRICA WORKS! 2024**

The program for Africa Works! 2024 Conference will have the following format:

### **Day 1: Conference Day (morning)**

- Opening speech by the Minister of Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation (TBD, Minister yet to be appointed due to recent elections).
- Plenary session with key African or/and European thought leaders regarding **circular food production, renewable energy, and sustainable agro-logistics**.
- 6 workshops (2 regarding circular food production, 2 about renewable energy, and 2 related to sustainable agro-logistics).

### **Day 1: Conference Day (afternoon)**

- A round table with pre-selected stakeholders in cooperation with the partners of Steering Committee Africa Strategy.
- Five country-focussed sessions:
  - Possible (but not limited) with the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Development Cooperation, Invest International, RVO, etc.
  - Possible (but not limited) with/for African (company) delegations.

- Possible with African Embassies accredited to the Benelux and/or African Investment/Export and Promotion Agencies.
- A finance pitching session (deal room with impact investors).
- Networking.

When zooming into the workshops, the following themes will be addressed with each having two dedicated workshops which will be further defined in collaboration with our knowledge partner TNO and Wageningen University & Research. Thematic sessions will have real time approach, whereby real-life challenges and solutions are presented.

	Plenary	Break-out room 1	Break-out room 2	Break-out room 3	Break-out room 4	Break-out room 5
09:30-10:30	<b>OFFICIAL OPENING WITH KEYNOTE SPEECHES</b>					
10:30-10:45	<b>COFFEE BREAK</b>					
11:00-12:00	Workshop: Circular Food Production 1	Workshop: Renewable Energy 1	Workshop: Sustainable Agro-logistics 1	Workshop: Circular Food Production 2	Workshop: Renewable Energy 2	Workshop: Sustainable Agro-logistics 2
12:15-13:15	Workshop: Circular Food Production 1	Workshop: Renewable Energy 1	Workshop: Sustainable Agro-logistics 1	Workshop: Circular Food Production 2	Workshop: Renewable Energy 2	Workshop: Sustainable Agro-logistics 2
13:15-14:00	<b>LUNCH</b>					
14:15-15:15	Country session 1	Country session 2	Country session 3	Country session 4	Country session 5	Roundtable (invite only)
15:30-16:30	Investor's session					
16:30-18:00	<b>NETWORKING RECEPTION</b>					
18:00	<b>END</b>					

### Theme 1. Circular Food Production

Circular food production is the way forward, enabling us to produce enough food for everyone within the boundaries set by our planet. In the context of Africa Works! 2024, this theme refers to the practice of producing and transforming agricultural raw materials into value-added products while minimising environmental impact and promoting social and economic development. It involves adopting environmentally friendly and resource-efficient techniques during production and processing. The focus will be on:

1) **regenerative approaches to food production** and 2) **repurpose waste streams in the agro-processing sector.**

### Theme 2. Renewable Energy

The sessions will be discussing the development and adoption of alternative energy sources for energy transition including, solar, wind, hydro, geothermal power, and waste. The goal of the sessions is to explore the potential for renewable energy to meet Africa's growing energy demands for industrial development while reducing reliance on fossil fuels. Two sub-sessions that will fall under this theme are: 1) **alternative energy sources for energy transition** and 2) **advanced waste-to-energy technologies.**

### **Theme 3. Sustainable Agro-logistics**

Many African countries are a gateway to their region, boasting sizable exports and imports of agri-commodities. It is key to assist developing countries in strengthening food security and improving the competitiveness of agricultural exports through reducing logistics and food losses along the supply chains. Sustainable and efficient agro-logistics is critical to the economic development of many African countries. It boosts agriculture productivity and improves food security for the growing (urban) population. The workshops on sustainable agro-logistics will explore: 1) **efficient cold chains** and 2) **sustainable transportation systems**.

#### **Investors' session**

During the investors' session, six companies (African and Dutch) will pitch their project to financial institutions. Learning from the Africa Works! 2022, this year we will work much more closely with the impact investors in our network to ensure that the companies pitching are most relevant to their available funds.

#### **Country-focused sessions and Roundtable**

Regarding the **country-focused sessions**, the content depends on the incoming African Delegations. Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, and South Africa are high on the agenda.

As for the **roundtable**, key public-sector stakeholders will be invited for a roundtable on **Financing Green Industrialisation**. Governments, backed by substantial international support, must foster the creation of financing mechanisms for green industrialisation. This can be achieved by implementing a range of incentives that encourage companies to embrace green activities and practices. The transition to green practices, the adoption of cutting-edge green technologies, and the transformation of existing industries necessitate significant investments. To facilitate this shift, a set of incentives, whether financial or fiscal, is crucial in redirecting resources like labour and capital towards green activities. To establish such financing mechanisms, governments can collaborate with the private sector through public-private partnerships and establish green funds. These funds can be financed by the public sector with contributions from private actors and development partners, ensuring a comprehensive approach to funding green initiatives and driving sustainable industrialisation. Our strategic partner Invest International could take a leading role in this round table.

## **DAY 2 AND 3**

### **Field visits and B2B/B2G meetings**

A dedicated programme for the African incoming delegations based on field visits and matchmaking.

#### **DAY 2: field visits**

Track 1 – 2 visits related to circular food production.

Track 2 – 2 visits related to renewable energy.

Track 3 – 2 visits related to sustainable agro-logistics.

#### **DAY 3: matchmaking/follow ups**

B2B and/or B2G matchmaking

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

Africa Works! 2024 will contribute to SDG 2, SDG 4, SDG 7, SDG 8, SDG 9, SDG 11, SDG 12, and SDG 17.

## **PARTNERS**

In the Netherlands, key stakeholders for Africa Works! are partners TNO, Wageningen University & Research, VNO-NCW, NLinBusiness, Invest International, FMO, Atradius, RVO, Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Other stakeholders are the “top sectoren” and the relevant knowledge institutes.

For each sub-session (6 in total) NABC will find one or two **strategic private sector partners in the Netherlands and/or in Africa** to connect to sub-themes (circular food production, renewable energy, and sustainable agro-logistics). For the pitching sessions and deal room, partners include private equity, foundations, funds and impact investors.

NABC aims to connect in an early stage to the **Dutch and African Embassies** to get them engaged in bringing a relevant **business** delegation to Africa Works! 2024.

Early communication to **European stakeholders** like EBCAM, NABA, AfrikaVerein and financial institutions is crucial to realise more European participants.

## **TEAM**

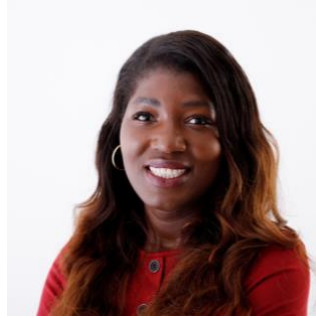


### **Program Supervisor: Rosmarijn Fens, Managing Director**

*20+ years international experience in the private, public and non-profit sector.*

Rosmarijn has a strong track-record in project management in large scale programs and projects in multicultural and cross-functional teams. Rosmarijn joined the NABC in 2018 and has successfully managed the overall coordination of NABC's flagship event in 2019. Rosmarijn became NABC's Managing

Director on January 1, 2021, and is NABC's first point of contact for questions related to Egypt and Nigeria.



**Program Manager: Núria Vlonk-Cunha Soares, Deputy Managing Director**

*12+ year experience in international (business) development in the public, non-profit and private sectors.*

Responsible for deliverables and execution of Africa Works! 2024. Núria Vlonk-Cunha Soares joined the NABC in 2021. She is responsible for the NABC Community (over 250 members) and key events such as Africa Works! and the Francophone Africa

Business Forum. Organising events and linking different people together runs like a thread through Nuria's career. In the past she organised seminars bringing together governmental officials, academics, the private sector and civil society organisations, both in the Netherlands and in Mozambique. Furthermore, she helped coordinate the Cordaid Healthcare Awards. In addition, Núria oversees the NABC's Africa Insights Desk, which provides both Dutch and African companies/organisations with market intelligence services. Núria is the NABC's first point of contact for questions related to Angola, Mozambique, and Senegal.



**PR Coordinator: Arne Doornebal, Community Manager**

*10+ Years of public relations and branding experience*

Responsible for all publications and visibility aspects of Africa Works! 2024. Arne Doornebal has been working as a journalist with a focus on Africa for over a decade. He lived in Uganda and South Sudan for nearly seven years as a professional journalist and has travelled to 20 African countries; his extensive personal knowledge

about the political, social, and economic climate in several African regions is an invaluable asset that can only be acquired with hands-on experience. All press and PR-related matters are overseen by Arne.



**Event Coordinator: Guna Alvika, Project Coordinator**

*5+ years experience in event management*

Responsible for the logistical aspects, as well as the attendee experience, of Africa Works! 2024. Guna joined the NABC in 2018 and has been instrumental in all NABC's events. For Africa Works! 2022, Guna worked on all aspects of the conference: logistics, communication, speakers, workshops and round tables. Since then, Guna has gained notable experience in end-

to-end execution of both physical and virtual events. In addition, she is passionate about digital marketing and highlights the importance of consistent branding which is why her experience in both event management and digital marketing blends in well together.



**Programme Support: Nazly Abd El Rahman, Junior Project Officer**

Responsible for delegation support and some of the logistical aspects of Africa Works! 2024. Nazly joined the NABC in 2022, where she worked on the Africa Works! 2022 conference. She is partially responsible for the organisation of Africa Works! 2024 with the venue (decoration and exhibitions), the delegations, the workshops and the hotels. She is the person to contact if

you have any questions or inquiries regarding Africa Works! 2024.

## **ABOUT NABC**

The Netherlands-African Business Council (NABC) is the leading organisation for sustainable trade and investment facilitation for Africa in the Netherlands. At NABC we believe that the Dutch private sector has a prominent role to play in the sustainable development of the African continent. Therefore, NABC's purpose is to inspire and connect businesses with Africa's opportunities and to enable businesses in making confident decisions about when, where, and how to do business in Africa.

The NABC has a core network of 250 members in the Dutch business community and a broader network of approximately 2,000 entities in the private sector. With presence in Africa and access to a community of over 10.000 African contacts in the private sector, knowledge institutions and government entities, **the NABC is an essential entity in stimulating trade and investment between the Netherlands and Africa.**

Over the last few years, the NABC has facilitated more than 70 trade missions in Africa and over 60 in the Netherlands. NABC strives to make a lasting impact and currently manages a market development programme in the Sahel region. Furthermore, NABC organises many business events throughout the year.

NABC's key events include the annual Ambassadors Dinner, FAB Forum and the flagship event 'Africa Works!'. All events are organised with the aim to connect African challenges to business opportunities and offer Dutch companies a platform to meet the African private and public sector, exchange experiences and knowledge and form partnerships. In addition, we organise sector or country-focused seminars, workshops, African Business Clubs, etc.

In the last few years, the NABC has organised the following large events:

**Africa Works! 2022 Innovation for Resilient Growth** (June 28 in The Hague):

Within the overarching theme "**Innovation for Resilient Growth**", Africa Works! 2022 – together with knowledge partner TNO – focused on innovative solutions for sustainable economic recovery including challenges linked to **food, water, and energy** in Africa.



### Africa Works! 2022 in numbers:



### The East-South Africa Agri Forum (June 6 2023 in Wageningen)

The East-South Africa Agri Forum was the first part of a two-day programme and a result of a joint regional initiative between the Agricultural Counsellors at the Embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Ethiopia, Uganda (covering Rwanda), Kenya (covering Tanzania), and South Africa. The overall purpose of the Forum was to inform the interested parties within focus-sectors about the latest as well as future sustainable business and policy developments, discuss demand from the local private sector and governments, as well as share future plans in potato, horticulture, agrologistics, dairy, and feed, among other areas, during separate thematic sessions. In addition, the Forum served as a platform to showcase Dutch expertise as a solution for the local needs within the aforementioned sectors.

### GrowCongo! Invest in Agriculture Forum (25 February 2020 in Amsterdam)

The Government of the Republic of Congo – joined by NABC, the World Bank and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) - organised the first ever ‘GrowCongo! Invest in Agriculture Forum’. GrowCongo! focused on providing valuable insights into the priorities and investment opportunities of the Republic of Congo’s agricultural sector. The event was opened by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Congo, H.E. Clément Mouamba, and joined by other prominent stakeholders including Minister of State and Agriculture, Mr. Henri Djombo. During GrowCongo!, participating parties agreed to invest more than 80 million euros into the agricultural sector.

### Digital Africa Business Days (15-16 December 2020 - Virtual Conference)

NABC organised the Digital Africa Business Days in close cooperation with the Dutch government, TNO and the partners behind the Africa Strategy for the Dutch private sector. This two-day virtual event focused on “Moving Forwards Together”, countering the effects of the COVID-19 crisis and finding innovative solutions to challenges in agriculture, water, energy, healthcare, and the circular economy. With over 1,400 registered participants, 100 speakers, and representation of 32 Dutch and African Embassies, the Digital Africa Business Days proved to be a successful platform to engage and find areas for collaboration and partnership. The event featured a live talk show, over 20 thematic sessions, a matchmaking event with the Dutch and African Embassies and numerous sector roundtables.

#### **FAB Forum 2019** (15 October 2019 in Utrecht)

The Dutch Government commissioned the NABC to organise for the fifth time the Francophone Africa Business Forum (FAB Forum). The theme was “Agriculture 2.0” with topics like circular agriculture, agritech and climate smart agriculture. The Forum attracted 300 participants among which 70 entrepreneurs were from Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The FAB Forum was part of a full week program for the delegates with the purpose to build the capacity of African entrepreneurs in the agri-food sector by introducing them to Dutch agricultural expertise, skills and technologies and to connect them to potential Dutch technical, financial and business partners.

#### **Country-Focused Webinars**

In response to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NABC has organised more than 18 country-focused webinars, among which we covered nearly all focus countries of the Dutch Africa Strategy. The purpose of these webinars was to inform Dutch companies about the current situation in the various African countries (regarding COVID-19 but also the business opportunities in a post-COVID era), and to give them the opportunity to ask questions to experts. During many of these webinars, we were joined by the African and Dutch ambassadors, as well as representatives of local government organisations and Dutch entrepreneurs active in the respective countries.