

Press release
For immediate release
09 October 2025

Nigeria launches Climate Adaptation Project to tackle erosion and protect communities

With support from UNOPS and funding from the European Investment Bank, the project will restore degraded land, improve watershed management, and strengthen livelihoods across several Nigerian states.

- The Nigeria Climate Adaptation – Erosion and Watershed Project has officially been launched by the Federal Ministry of Environment in partnership with UNOPS and the European Investment Bank (EIB).
- With €175 million in financing, the initiative will implement gully restoration, watershed management infrastructure, and sustainable land-use practices to reduce vulnerability and safeguard communities.
- UNOPS will provide technical support and advisory services to the Nigerian government in procurement, environmental and social safeguards, site selection, and project monitoring to ensure compliance with international standards and strengthen national capacity.

Abuja, Nigeria — The Federal Ministry of Environment, in partnership with UNOPS and the European Investment Bank (EIB), has launched the **Nigeria Climate Adaptation – Erosion and Watershed Project (NEWMAP-EIB)**. Supported by €175 million in funding from the EIB, the initiative will focus on restoring degraded land, improving watershed management, and strengthening livelihoods across 23 Nigerian states affected by severe soil erosion and environmental degradation.

Southeastern Nigeria faces widespread gully erosion driven by heavy rainfall and unstable sandy soils, while rising sea levels and land reclamation have exacerbated coastal erosion in the south, particularly in the Niger Delta. These environmental challenges have

destroyed homes, damaged infrastructure and threatened the livelihoods of many communities. The Nigeria Climate Adaptation – Erosion and Watershed Project will help reverse these impacts, by gully restoration, watershed management infrastructure, and sustainable land-use practices —reducing vulnerability and erosion, safeguarding communities, and building long-term climate resilience.

Speaking at the launching event, the **Minister of Environment and Chairman of the NEWMAP–EIB Steering Committee, Balarabe Abbas Lawal**, emphasized that the initiative is designed to build on and expand the achievements of the earlier NEWMAP project. "Through this project's work, we will scale up interventions to combat erosion, watershed degradation and other environmental malaise. We will also safeguard lives, protect farm lands, infrastructure and enhance livelihoods across communities within these 23 states. In addition, the project will strengthen climate adaptation measures and promote inclusive community participation at every level", he stated.

The launch was attended by high-level representatives from across Nigeria and beyond, including the EU Ambassador to Nigeria, Gautier Mignot; officials from the 23 participating states; federal ministers; commissioners for environment and climate; and partners from UNOPS, the World Bank, Islamic Development Bank, donor agencies, and civil society organizations.

Roger Stuart, Head of EIB Regional Hub for West and Central Africa, highlighted the significance of the project; being the first EIB-financed project in Sub-Saharan Africa that is solely dedicated to climate adaptation. "The launch of NEWMAP reflects the kind of practical long-term support the EIB is committed to delivering in partnership with Nigeria. We look forward to the positive impact this project will have on communities, ecosystems and the broader climate resilience agenda." said Stuart."

UNOPS will provide independent and technical support ensuring compliance with the highest international standards in areas including procurement, environmental and social safeguards, selection and verification of project sites, project monitoring and supervision.

Georg Ehrhardt, Head of Programme of UNOPS West Africa Multi-Country Office, underscored UNOPS role in ensuring high-quality implementation: "This project represents more than an investment in infrastructure: it is an investment in resilience, livelihoods, and the future of communities across Nigeria", he said.

By integrating national leadership, international expertise, and community engagement, the NEWMAP–EIB project represents a major step forward in building climate-resilient communities, safeguarding essential ecosystems, and ensuring livelihoods for generations to come across Nigeria.

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About UNOPS

UNOPS offers practical solutions across peace and security, humanitarian and development operations. We help the United Nations, governments and other partners, such as the European Union and its Member States, to manage projects, and deliver sustainable infrastructure and procurement across the world. Read more: www.unops.org.

About the EIB

The EIB is the long-term financing institution of the European Union, owned by its Member States. It makes long-term finance available for sound investment in order to contribute towards EU policy goals. The EIB supports projects in four priority areas: infrastructure, innovation, climate and environment, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

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