

# Global leaders unite to drive initiatives for climate action and clean energy

By  Katja Hamilton

19 Jan 2024

The World Economic Forum's 54th Annual Meeting in Davos served as a pivotal platform to address pressing global issues amid a critical and complex juncture in time.



Source: [Pexels](#)

The event acknowledged the challenges transcending borders, such as rising global temperatures, a fragile economy, and a deteriorating security landscape.

The importance of inclusion was underscored by leaders who recognised that these challenges impact everyone, irrespective of national, corporate, or community boundaries.

In his final address to delegates, Børge Brende, president of the World Economic Forum Geneva today confirmed that over 3,000 leaders, including 350 heads of state, ministers, and prominent CEOs across various industries had convened at the five-day meeting.

He said leaders from the public and private sectors, spanning different generations, had gathered to showcase the potential achievements that collaborative efforts can yield, and that the meeting facilitated a new spirit of solidarity and co-operation,

even among participants with differing perspectives.

“The diplomatic space provided by the forum was evident in the assembly of more than 80 national security advisors from governments and international organisations,” he said.

“This assembly aimed to advance a blueprint for peace, with world leaders expressing support for president Zelensky and Ukraine, while leaders from across the Middle East convened to support efforts to lower tensions and advance a path to peace.”



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The meeting also witnessed the launch of significant initiatives:

- The Friends of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) launched the first-ever private sector Action Plan. This white paper presents a bold and visionary action plan, co-created with the World Economic Forum, containing goals, initiatives and commitments from industry leaders in four priority sectors: automotive, agriculture and agro-processing, pharmaceuticals, and transport and logistics – which have a combined worth of \$130bn.

“This aims to boost impact investment and potentially unlock over \$15bn in frontier markets,” said Brende.

- Leaders from the Western Balkans and the EU reiterated their commitment to a common European future, emphasising regional growth and stability. Additionally, a network was launched to mobilise clean energy investment globally to aid the estimated 3tn needed for the energy transition.

## Green commitments

- Climate action took centre stage, with the First Movers Coalition (FMC) expanding to almost 100 companies, signalling substantial demand for breakthrough in climate technologies. The FMC, established two years ago, has become a leading force in expressing the private sector's interest and demand for innovative solutions and technologies addressing climate-related challenges.
- The World Economic Forum's Trillion Trees Platform announced that over 100 companies pledged to conserve, restore, and grow 12 billion trees.
- The Global Plastic Action Partnership welcomed Colombia and the Philippines, expanding the network of National Action Partnerships to 14.

“ Economic realities are changing. How can we adapt? [@Lagarde \(@ecb\)](#), Michael Sandel ([@Harvard](#)) and [@martinwolf\\_ \(@FT\)](#) discuss more in a special session recorded at Davos. [#wef24](#)  
Listen here: <https://t.co/rDVSivBRJs> [pic.twitter.com/eaahr1avCN](https://pic.twitter.com/eaahr1avCN)— World Economic Forum (@wef) [January 19, 2024](#) ”

- Technology, particularly AI, was a prominent focus, with the AI Governance Alliance announcing a global effort to increase AI access. The Center for the Fourth Industrial Revolution expanded with new centres in Germany, Vietnam, and Qatar, with plans for a centre in Ukraine.
- Uplink, a platform for early-stage impact entrepreneurs, raised \$43m in funding to scale initiatives focused on people

and the planet.

- The forum launched a new global gender parity sprint, engaging five industries and 15 country accelerators, with the aim of accelerating economic parity by 2030.
- The Global Alliance for Women's Health announced 42 organisations pledging \$55m to improve women's health and outcomes worldwide.

“The wealth of initiatives showcases a commitment to impactful change and reflects the forum's dedication to making measurable progress in economic, environmental, and security priorities,” Brende said.

As the meeting concluded, the emphasis on collaboration, impact, and measurable progress resonated.

The forum pledged to continue working with participants throughout the year, aiming to scale the progress achieved in Davos.

“The collective efforts showcased in just a week demonstrate that co-operation can indeed deliver tangible results.,” Brende added.

His closing remarks expressed gratitude to all those involved in making the annual meeting a reality, emphasising the commitment to ongoing collaboration and progress.

## ABOUT KATJA HAMILTON

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