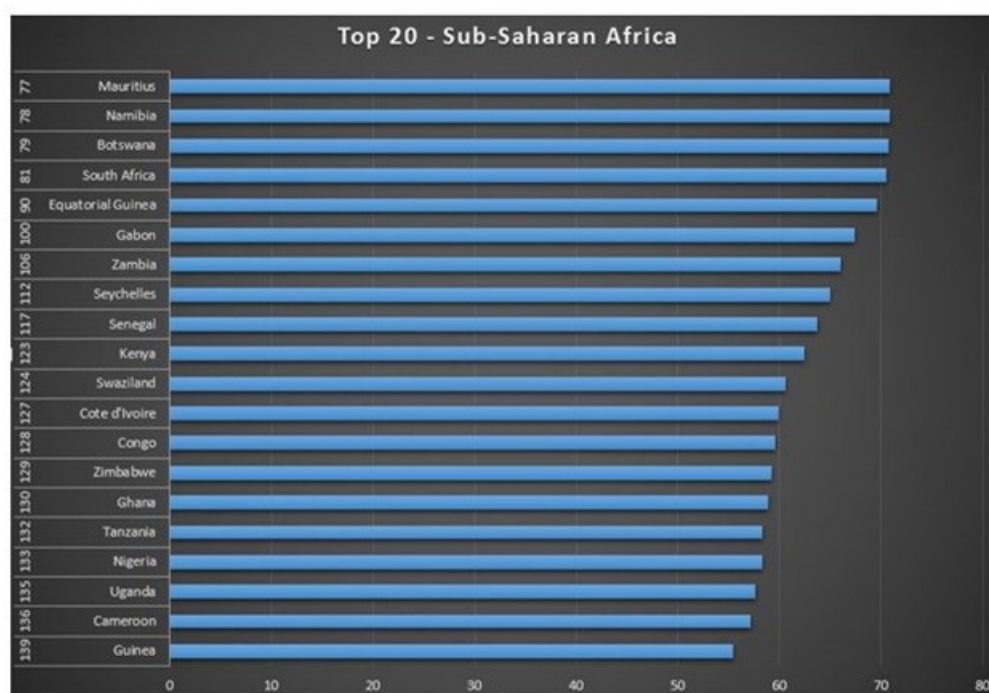


Environment not a priority for sub-Saharan African countries

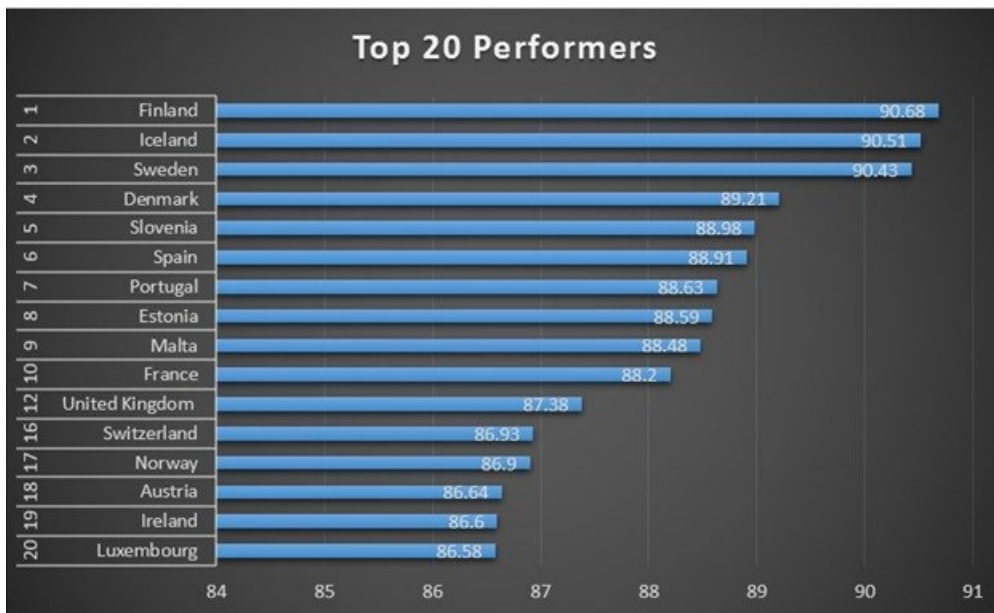
The latest results of the 2016 [Environmental Performance Index](#) (EPI) highlight that sub-Saharan African countries are the poorest performers, occupying 16 of the bottom 20 positions, when compared to over 178 countries worldwide.

Annually, researchers from Yale and Columbia Universities release the Environmental Performance Index (EPI) that documents the sustainable practices of over 178 countries globally. This report ranks countries' performance on high-priority environmental issues in two areas: protection of human health and protection of ecosystems. Looking at a variety of factors such as air quality, water and sanitation, agriculture, climate and energy, the EPI indicators measure a country's proximity to meeting internationally established targets or, in the absence of agreed targets, how nations compare to one another.

In the EPI, Mauritius, Namibia and Botswana are the top three performing African countries. South Africa takes the fourth spot with an overall ranking of 81. Only three nations in the bottom 20 are outside the African continent – Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Haiti.



European nations dominate the EPI's top performers, with all of the top ten slots occupied by European countries. New Zealand, an Asian Pacific country, just misses the top ten at rank 11.



Finland takes the top spot, followed by Iceland, Sweden, Denmark and Slovenia. The remaining four top performers also boast good energy mixes and smart policies for managing their natural and built environments.

The 2016 EPI's poor performers are a familiar group to the Index's low end. Somalia again takes last place (180th) followed, in ascending order, by Eritrea, Madagascar, Niger and Afghanistan. These African and South Asian nations all have broad governance problems with long, troubled legacies.

These nations show that environmental performance is an issue of governance – only well-functioning governments are able to manage the environment for the benefit of all.

Read the [full report](#).

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