***Recent developments:*** Economic activity in Sub-Saharan Africa slowed to a 3.4 percent rate in 2015 from 4.6 percent the previous year as a result of lower commodity prices, an economic slowdown in major trading partners, severe infrastructure constraints, political instability, and electricity shortages. It was the weakest economic showing for the region since 2009.

The slowdown was most pronounced among oil exporters. Nigeria, the region's largest economy, grew at a 3.3 percent rate in 2015, down from 6.3 percent the previous year. GDP in South Africa, a mineral and metal exporter, grew by 1.3 percent, down from 1.5 percent in 2014, as power supply problems, a severe drought, labor, social tensions, and low business confidence weighed on growth. Economic activity remained weak in some of the countries affected by the Ebola crisis, such as Guinea and Sierra Leone.

***Outlook:*** Economic growth in the region is forecast to pick up to 4.2 percent in 2016, as commodity prices stabilize and electrical power supply improves in many countries. Economic activity will vary across the region, with consumption growth remaining weak in oil exporting countries as fuel costs rise with the removal of subsidies and as currency depreciations erode consumer spending. In contrast, lower inflation in oil importing countries will help boost consumer spending.

With oil prices expected to remain low, fiscal revenues are likely to decline in Angola and Nigeria, leading to deficits. Budget gaps are also anticipated to remain high in oil importers as government spending continues to grow. Foreign investment into commodity exporters is likely to slow as a result of the fall in commodity prices. However, in some low-income commodity exporters, some governments are expected to invest heavily in energy and transport infrastructure, drawing on bond issuances, as in the case of Ethiopia, public private partnerships, as in Mozambique, Rwanda and Tanzania, and financing from China.

Growth is expected to pick up moderately in the region's three largest economies. Nigeria is forecast to expand by 4.6 percent, as efforts to rationalize the management and operation of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corp. should enhance revenues. South Africa is expected to advance only modestly to 1.4 percent growth from 1.3 percent in the year just ended, as power supply and labor problems, subdued employment growth, and higher interest rates crimp growth. Growth in Angola is forecast to edge up to 3.3 percent in 2016 from 3 percent as the economy rebounds gradually from constrained government spending and elevated inflation.

Activity in some frontier markets is set to accelerate. Growth in Ghana is forecast to recover to 5.9 percent in 2016 from 3.4 percent in 2015 thanks to rising oil production and shrinking budget and trade gaps. Kenya is projected to pick up to a 5.7 percent pace this year from 5.4 percent in 2015 as a result of large-scale infrastructure projects, which include a new port and expansion of the railway system that should help support trade.

Low-income countries are on track to grow rapidly as well as a result of limited exposures to commodities that have seen the sharpest price drops and as large-scale infrastructure projects unfold. Public investment, consumer spending and mining production are projected to support high 2016 rates of growth in Côte d'Ivoire (8.3 percent), Ethiopia (10.2 percent), Mozambique (6.5 percent), Rwanda (7.6 percent), and Tanzania (7.2 percent).

***Risks:*** Political upheaval and conflict could hurt regional growth. Security risks tied to the Boko Haram insurgency affect Cameroon, Chad, Niger, and Nigeria. The threat of terrorism is a concern for Kenya and Mali. Unreliable access to electricity could also constrain economic activity in many countries. A further decline in oil prices would reduce government spending in oil producing countries, while a faster-than-expected slowdown in China could add to commodity price pressures, which in turn could delay planned investments in natural resource sectors.

The global economic environment is likely to be less conducive to growth in Sub-Saharan Africa in coming years as lower commodity prices and tighter financial conditions hold activity back. Many countries have sizeable fiscal and current account deficits and rising debt levels. They could be vulnerable to currency pressures, inflation, and diminished business confidence if these conditions were to deteriorate. Governments can prepare by reducing fiscal vulnerabilities, addressing domestic constraints to activity, and promoting non-commodity sources of growth.

**Sub-Saharan Africa Country forecasts**
(annual percent change unless indicated otherwise)

| | 2013 | 2014 | Est. 2015 | Forecast 2016 | 2017 | 2018 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GDP at market prices (2010 US$) | | | | | | |
| **Angola** | 6.8 | 3.9 | 3.0 | 3.3 | 3.8 | 3.8 |
| **Benin** | 5.6 | 5.4 | 5.7 | 5.3 | 5.1 | 5.1 |
| **Botswana**[a] | 9.3 | 4.4 | 3.0 | 4.0 | 4.2 | 4.2 |
| **Burkina Faso** | 6.7 | 4.0 | 4.4 | 6.0 | 7.0 | 7.0 |
| **Burundi** | 4.6 | 4.7 | -2.3 | 3.5 | 4.8 | 4.8 |
| **Cabo Verde** | 1.0 | 1.8 | 2.9 | 3.5 | 4.1 | 4.1 |
| **Cameroon** | 5.6 | 5.9 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 6.5 | 6.4 |
| **Chad** | 5.7 | 7.3 | 4.1 | 4.9 | 6.1 | 6.5 |
| **Comoros** | 3.5 | 3.0 | 2.3 | 2.5 | 3.1 | 3.1 |
| **Congo, Dem. Rep.** | 8.5 | 9.0 | 8.0 | 8.6 | 9.0 | 9.0 |
| **Côte d'Ivoire** | 9.2 | 8.5 | 8.4 | 8.3 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| **Eritrea** | 1.3 | 1.7 | 0.9 | 2.0 | 2.2 | 2.2 |
| **Ethiopia**[a] | 10.5 | 9.9 | 10.2 | 10.2 | 9.0 | 9.0 |
| **Gabon** | 4.3 | 4.3 | 4.1 | 5.1 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| **Gambia, The** | 4.8 | -0.2 | 4.0 | 4.5 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| **Ghana** | 7.3 | 4.0 | 3.4 | 5.9 | 8.2 | 8.2 |
| **Guinea** | 2.3 | -0.3 | 0.4 | 3.5 | 4.0 | 4.2 |
| **Guinea-Bissau** | 0.3 | 2.5 | 4.4 | 4.9 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| **Kenya** | 5.7 | 5.3 | 5.4 | 5.7 | 6.1 | 6.1 |
| **Lesotho** | 4.6 | 2.0 | 2.6 | 2.8 | 4.5 | 4.5 |
| **Madagascar** | 2.4 | 3.0 | 3.2 | 3.4 | 3.6 | 3.6 |
| **Malawi** | 5.2 | 5.7 | 2.8 | 5.0 | 5.8 | 5.8 |
| **Mali** | 1.7 | 7.2 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 |
| **Mauritania** | 5.5 | 6.9 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 4.0 |
| **Mauritius** | 3.3 | 3.6 | 3.5 | 3.7 | 3.7 | 3.7 |
| **Mozambique** | 7.3 | 7.4 | 6.3 | 6.5 | 7.2 | 7.2 |
| **Namibia** | 5.7 | 6.4 | 5.0 | 5.5 | 5.9 | 5.9 |
| **Niger** | 4.6 | 6.9 | 4.4 | 5.3 | 9.3 | 5.7 |
| **Nigeria** | 5.4 | 6.3 | 3.3 | 4.6 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| **Rwanda** | 4.7 | 7.0 | 7.4 | 7.6 | 7.6 | 7.6 |
| **Senegal** | 3.5 | 3.9 | 5.0 | 5.3 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| **Sierra Leone** | 20.1 | 7.0 | -20.0 | 6.6 | 5.3 | 5.3 |
| **South Africa** | 2.2 | 1.5 | 1.3 | 1.4 | 1.6 | 1.6 |
| **Sudan** | 3.3 | 3.1 | 3.5 | 3.4 | 3.9 | 3.9 |
| **Swaziland** | 2.8 | 2.5 | 1.3 | 0.8 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| **Tanzania** | 7.3 | 7.0 | 7.2 | 7.2 | 7.1 | 7.1 |
| **Togo** | 5.1 | 5.7 | 5.1 | 4.9 | 4.7 | 4.7 |
| **Uganda**[a] | 3.6 | 4.0 | 5.0 | 5.0 | 5.8 | 5.8 |
| **Zambia** | 6.7 | 5.6 | 3.5 | 3.8 | 5.4 | 6.0 |
| **Zimbabwe** | 4.5 | 3.2 | 1.0 | 2.8 | 3.0 | 3.0 |

*Source*: World Bank.
World Bank forecasts are frequently updated based on new information and changing (global) circumstances. Consequently, projections presented here may differ from those contained in other Bank documents, even if basic assessments of countries' prospects do not significantly differ at any given moment in time.
a. Fiscal-year based numbers.