

Demands from National Youth Delegates from Europe to COP28

signed by 17 UNFCCC youth delegates
representing more than 22 million
young people in 9 European countries

Public version; November 27th

Mitigation: Broad, Radical and Rapid Changes

“Global emissions are not in line with modelled global mitigation pathways consistent with the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement, and there is a rapidly narrowing window to raise ambition (...) Reaching net zero emissions (...) requires broad and rapid changes in existing practices.” – UNFCCC Global Stocktake Synthesis Report

The political conclusion of the first **Global Stocktake** needs to acknowledge the substantial discrepancy between goals agreed upon in the Paris Agreement and current emission pathways and policies. A considerable acceleration of climate action is needed, on the European continent and beyond. The climate crisis is one of multidimensional, systematic injustice. Children and young people who are not to blame for a heating planet will have to live the longest with the consequences. This particularly applies to youth in climate-vulnerable developing countries. While the EU’s climate targets have become more ambitious, **European negotiators at COP28 must acknowledge that their current measures and pledges are not meeting the fair share in keeping 1.5 C alive.** Taking its **historical responsibility** seriously is long overdue. Every decision at COP28 must meet this benchmark.

- Political leaders must adopt a more honest tone about their own and others' failings. Top fossil fuel producers must match their rhetoric with action and exit the fossil age.
- The climate crisis is a fossil fuel crisis. This needs to be tackled heads-on at COP28 via a dedicated agenda item on a **full, fair, fast and funded phase out of all fossil fuels.**
- Any options for continuous fossil fuel extraction and burning after 2050 are unacceptable. Watered down language, including phrases like ‘unabated’ or ‘fossil fuel emissions’ must not be included in the COP28 cover decision.
- On the European continent, use of coal must be phased out by 2030, fossil gas by 2035 and fossil oil by 2040 at the latest.¹
- **Cease ongoing fossil fuel expansion**, in line with IEA and IPCC findings. Any new project extracting coal, gas and oil is **incompatible** with the Paris Agreement. This must be communicated rigorously and be reflected in the negotiations.
 - Stop investing in additional LNG infrastructure.
- Support the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, start a collective withdrawal process from the Energy Charter Treaty, and actively encourage and work for European countries to become members of the [Beyond Oil and Gas alliance](#) (BOGA).
- Financial institutions and EU funding instruments must **stop funding fossil fuels**, making sure promises by climate commissioner Wopke Hoekstra are backed by action.
 - The next EU long-term budget must be free of fossil fuel subsidies.
 - Phase-out dates for national fossil fuel subsidies must be mandated for the next NECP submissions in 2024.
- The EU and non-EU European countries must earnestly recognize the limitations of **abatement technologies**, such as carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS). As elucidated by IPCC Chair Hoesung Lee, excessive reliance on CCU and CCS could lead to surpassing climate tipping points and failure to achieve the 1.5 °C temperature limit when used to delay crucial climate action.

1. Climate Action Tracker, Paris-aligned benchmarks for the power sector: “Developed countries should take the lead, phasing out coal by 2030 and unabated fossil gas by 2035.”

- **Global renewable capacity** must be at least **tripled by 2030 to 11 TW**.²
 - Appropriate climate finance must be provided by developed nations to support developing countries' contributions to achieving the global renewable goal for 2030.³
 - Focus primarily on wind and solar for fast renewable energy scaling, with social safeguards to respect ecosystems and human rights.
- **Global rates of energy efficiency improvements** must be at least **doubled**⁴ for the decade 2020-2030, compared to the previous one.
 - Systemic energy sufficiency, demand-side reductions and technology transfer need to support energy efficiency targets.
- **Methane** specifically has contributed as much as 0.5°C of global warming since pre-industrial times⁵. As such, we demand a binding 2030 target to reduce methane emissions to near zero in the fossil fuel sector and a reduction of overall methane emissions by 45%, as well as more detailed reporting on leakages.
- As the EU is not meeting its fair share contributions and NDCs are not in line with the 1.5°C temperature limit⁶, the EU needs to submit a **1.5°C compatible update** to its **current NDC** of -65% gross emission reductions by 2030⁷. All EU member states need to strengthen their mitigation ambitions.
- The European Union should aim for **net-zero no later than 2040**, acknowledging its fair share within the Paris Agreement.⁸ Setting an ambitious 2040 target and communicating this target at COP28 is crucial to stimulate ambitious climate action in line with the science in Europe and beyond.
- The EU should take into account gaps in current international emissions reporting, such as emission from military activities⁹, in order to ensure a transparent pathway to stay below the 1.5°C temperature limit.

2. IEA, Roadmap to Net Zero by 2050: "Within that portfolio of technologies, the single most important lever to bring about the reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions needed by 2030 is to triple the global installed capacity of renewable power by the end of the current decade."

3. According to IPCC AR6 Figure 15.4, 1500 to 2800 billion USD of funding for total mitigation efforts in developing countries are required annually.

4. IEA, Energy Efficiency: The Decade for Climate Action: "(...) new IEA analysis showing that the world needs to double progress on efficiency between now and 2030 as part of efforts to improve energy security and affordability while keeping the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 °C within reach. (...) The new IEA report shows how doubling energy efficiency efforts can also deliver positive knock-on effects for society."

5. IPCC AR6 WG 1

6. Climate Action Tracker: "The CAT rates EU's climate targets, policies, and finance as "Insufficient". [...] the EU's climate policies and commitments need substantial improvements to be consistent with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C temperature limit."

7. Climate Action Tracker: "Domestic emission reductions of at least 61% (excl. LULUCF) are needed to make the EU's effort compatible with 1.5°C – this should be the floor of its next NDC update."

8. A reduction of 90%-95% by 2030 compared to 1990 levels, as outlined in the Scientific advice for the determination of an EU-wide 2040 climate target by the European Scientific Advisory Board on Climate Change should serve as a minimum, as "the lowest feasible budget estimates from the scenarios assessed in this report are still higher than the equal per capita emissions allocations and other fair share estimates based on principles such as 'polluter pays' and 'ability to pay'."

9. Nature, 2022: Decarbonize the military – mandate emissions reporting: "Armed forces have a massive carbon footprint that is absent from global accounting."

Adaptation: Responding to the Climate Emergency

- The EU must contribute at all levels to ensure that affected people, especially marginalized groups such as women, indigenous groups, rural populations and young people, are included directly, equally and with their needs taken into account in global, national and local decision-making processes and plans. In particular, when developing and implementing inclusive and gender-sensitive National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), local people should be involved in decision-making, especially when it comes to resettlement from risk areas.
- Since the GlaSS (Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work program) represents a crucial step towards addressing the adaptation gap, the EU needs to ensure that it delivers real progress towards a common understanding of the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).
- The EU should significantly increase contributions to adaptation finance and motivate peers to do the same. Adaptation and Loss & Damage finance complement each other and should not compete for funding.
 - The EU must at least double its collective provision of adaptation finance by 2025, as agreed at COP26. Adaptation finance needs to be additional and primarily grant-based.
 - The EU needs to provide support to countries that need financial, capacity building and technical support to create and implement their national adaptation plans (NAPs).
 - The EU must promote national mechanisms that can ensure local actors access to climate finance for adaptation measures.
- All European states should support the UNs 'Early Warnings for All' initiative politically, financially and by means of technology transfer and capacity building.
- Adaptation measures must be equitable, cross-cutting, inclusive and work transnationally. They should include, but are not limited to, sustainable land use and agriculture, ecosystem-based solutions, gender parity, physical and mental health, education and life-long learning, workers rights and social justice.
- We urge the EU to recognize climate induced migration as an adaptation strategy. All matters of migration should be in accordance with human rights.

Loss & Damage: Climate Justice for the Most Affected

- The EU should take an active role in the **operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund** at COP28.
 - The fund(s) should be **predictable, needs-based, obligatory, new and additional, grant-based, and accessible** for affected communities.
 - Acknowledging the EU's historic responsibility, **substantial contributions by EU member states** are needed.
 - The fund should be operationalized as soon as possible and permanently be under the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC. It should be accountable under the authority and guidance of the COP and the CMA (Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement). Prolonging intermediate solutions should not be allowed.
 - The EU should stress the fund to have accessibility, representativeness and transparency as its core. The fund must not pose a risk of higher debt burden for receiving countries and groups.
 - In the spirit of international solidarity, the EU should work towards a contribution structure based on **historical emissions** related to per capita GDP.
 - Funding should be accessible to **vulnerable countries**, including Small Island Developing States (SIDSs) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs), particularly marginalized population groups and civil society organizations that support these groups.
 - The fund should include different **funding windows** in order to respond to different kinds of events, namely slow onset events, rapid emergency response and micro-grants for affected communities. Non-economic losses and damages, such as the loss of lives or biodiversity, must also be considered and addressed.
 - The fund must not hinder sustainable development prospects by incurring additional debt. The EU should ensure grant-based distribution of funds.
 - The EU should advocate for a fund that is **equitably governed**, led by the lived realities of most affected communities and directly addressing their needs. A high degree of operability, without replicating existing power structures, needs to be achieved.
- In addition to the Loss and Damage Fund, the EU shall also support **other financial arrangements** dedicated to avert, minimize and address Loss and Damage.
- To make more informed and data-driven decisions, a biennial Loss and Damage **Finance Gap Report** should be implemented, which should assess future needs and include non-economic Losses and Damages.
- We call for the **Santiago Network** to be finalized and operationalized at COP28, and for the EU and its member states to provide adequate resources for its funding and proactively engage in the facilitation of technology transfer, assistance and capacity building.

Finance: Aligning financial flows with 1.5°C

- Reaching the **yearly 100 billion dollars target** on climate finance for each year in the period of 2020-2025 (provision of 600 billion USD in total) is essential for progress and trust in the climate negotiations, the delivery is long overdue and can only be the start of substantive climate finance contributions.
 - We urge the EU to explicitly call out other developed countries who consistently fall short on contributing their adequate share of this target.
- New mechanisms of climate finance need to be mostly **grant-based**, particularly for adaptation and loss and damage, and additional. Climate finance must **not come at the expense of existing development support**.
- We call on the EU to mobilize additional funds for L&D and Adaptation measures from the private sector through taxes, levies and reduction of subsidies. This could include an international CO2 tax, maritime tax, frequent flyer levy, fossil fuel tax, tax on financial transactions or a tax on wealth.
- Climate finance must be arranged so that it is **accessible to groups on the ground in particularly vulnerable situations**, such as women, indigenous peoples, children and people with disabilities.
- The New Collective Quantified Goal from 2025 must be defined **needs-based** and must include emission cuts, adaptation and loss and damage.
- We urge the EU at COP28 to prioritize a **dedicated agenda item on Article 2.1c for aligning all financial flows** with the **Paris Agreement goals**. The EU should also champion **equitable reform of the international financial system**, emphasizing the phasing out of fossil fuel finance, action on debt and tax justice.
 - The EU should actively advocate for the swift adoption of robust policies excluding fossil fuels and setting ambitious climate and biodiversity financing targets. Banks should incorporate strong safeguards for human rights and inclusive governance structures involving local communities, civil society, developing countries, and Indigenous peoples.

Youth Participation: Deciding on Our Future

“Children have the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment. States must ensure a clean, healthy and sustainable environment in order to respect, protect and fulfill children’s rights.” – UN General comment No. 26

Decisions made at COP28 will affect the lives of children, young people and all future generations. Youth have been at the forefront of climate activism and pushing for ambitious climate action in line with the best available science. Therefore, the European youth delegates demand that the rights of children and youth to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment are respected and to have meaningful participation in negotiations on our future.

- Enable funded, youth-led and representative **UNFCCC youth delegate programmes for every EU member state** by 2025. Additionally, advocate for youth delegates in all Party states and support by means of finance and knowledge transfer.
- Establish regular and **meaningful bilateral meetings** between the group of UNFCCC youth delegates and all EU Heads of Delegations during COPs, SBs and internal EU decision-making processes.
- Work towards a considerable share of people under 35 for EU delegations at COP.
- Support the development of international guidelines on UN Youth Delegate programmes, and provide funding, capacity building and other forms of support to have UN Youth Delegates in every country, building on the recommendation on youth participation in the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan (title XVII, para 87)
- Encourage **collaboration of youth delegates** beyond Europe, acknowledging the importance of intergenerational thinking present in many Indigenous cultures.¹⁰
- Ensure that EU positions are informed and decided by the **lived realities of Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, migrant and diaspora communities as well as Indigenous peoples from within and outside the EU; women, girls and non-binary persons; persons with disabilities;** and other marginalized and heavily affected groups, acknowledging the diverse range of viewpoints and expertise in each group.
 - Set up Youth Advisory Committees (on an EU and nation-state level) to include youth perspectives from underrepresented backgrounds in climate-related policy processes.¹¹

10. See the MoU signed by The Netherlands and Mexico during COP27 encouraging youth participation in COP delegations as an example for international collaboration.

11. See the Youth Advisory Committee established by the Dutch National Youth Council in collaboration with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs as an example, which includes young people from Africa and the Middle East.

Climate Justice: A healthy planet for everyone

- In all measures addressing loss and damage, climate protection, and climate adaptation actions (both nationally implemented and initiated through international climate financing), **human rights, poverty reduction, and gender equality** must be given central consideration.
- Limiting global warming to 1.5°C mandates a **just transition**. All parties at COP28 must protect workers rights and social justice as multiple green transitions are underway.
- 1.2 billion people could be climate-displaced by 2050¹². EU member states specifically need to build up sufficient capacity to protect, receive and integrate **climate refugees** into their societies. This includes establishing safe passages for people who have to leave their homes due to climate induced conflicts, droughts or floods.
- **Digitalisation** designed to increase transparency and accessibility in government is to be encouraged, but must assess the entire lifecycle of digital products and services and ensure a smaller environmental footprint for state services overall.
- Developed countries must ensure their green transitions are not built on the exploitation of resources and people in developing countries and **protect the most vulnerable communities** from negative impacts of a materially intensive green transition.
- Current economic structures prioritize profit over people. We need to pivot from an over-reliance on GDP and other economic growth measurement models to more **holistic measures** that are based on social, physical and mental health as well as environmental protection.
- Provide robust protection for procedural environmental rights, democracy, and the rule of law and championing youth and civil society participation at high-level climate negotiations as well as at regional and national levels through the establishment of genuine, effective, and inclusive participatory mechanisms.
- Ensure **protection for environmental defenders** and strongly condemn the criminalisation of peaceful climate activists in EU member states and beyond.
- The EU should support existing agreements¹³ on the protection of environmental defenders, and push for an agreement with the same purpose within the EU.
- The EU must advocate for the implementation of the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan and actively contribute to its realization.

12. Ecological Threat Register (ETR) by Institute for Economics & Peace, 2020

13. Such as the Escazu Agreement and the Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework, in particular Target 22

Triple Planetary Crisis: Biodiversity and Pollution

- Recognize the triple planetary crisis of climate crisis, biodiversity loss and pollution, in particular common causes and solutions of these constituent crises.
- Actively support the recognition of the **right to a healthy environment** within the UNFCCC and the Council of Europe, through an additional protocol to the ECHR
- Advocate for recognition of **ecocide as a crime** under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- Don't let **nature-based solutions** become "nature-based excuses" for Global North countries to push the burden of mitigation onto Global South countries. Ensure that nature-based solutions applied in the context of the UNFCCC are in line with the definition of UNEA Resolution 5/5, in particular ensuring environmental and social safeguards for their application and leading to positive effects for biodiversity.
- In the Global Stocktake process, highlight the crucial role of intact ecosystems in promoting climate action.
- Promote synergies between the Paris Agreement and the Kunming-Montréal Global Biodiversity Framework.
- Promote synergies and collaboration between the IPCC and IPBES¹⁴.
- Recognize the links between climate crisis and pollution, in particular ocean acidification caused by carbon dioxide emissions.
- The significant carbon footprint of linear consumption must be addressed by demand-side reductions and a fast and equitable transition to a circular economy.

14. Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services

