

European Youth Delegates' Urgent Demands Ahead of COP30

In 2024 the world crossed the 1.5°C threshold. Despite 29 COP's, global emissions fail to decrease and temperatures continue to rise. As youth delegates from 15 European countries, representing more than 85 million young people, **our future is in the hands of decision makers at COP30.**

We need to **rapidly reduce emissions** in a just, equitable and fair transition to net-zero without over-reliance on carbon removal technologies, accelerating renewable energy deployment and rapidly **phasing out all fossil fuels and incentives.** We need to reduce consumption of energy and resources, moving **beyond the endless growth paradigm** to a wellbeing economy that avoids crossing planetary boundaries and adapts to a heating planet while also making sure everyone's basic needs are met worldwide. Polluters, particularly those in high-emission sectors and historically responsible regions such as Europe, must take responsibility by providing grant-based financing for mitigation, adaptation, and for addressing both economic and non-economic losses and damages.

To safeguard our future, all future policymaking must be based on the **best available science**, rooted in **principles of climate justice, intergenerational equity and gender justice**, and acknowledge differentiated responsibilities and vulnerabilities across regions and time. **Children's rights** to clean air and a safe upbringing must be respected and protected in every decision taken in the UNFCCC and child and **youth voices** included in a meaningful and effective way.

Signed by:

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Our key demands for COP30

1. **Updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)** must be aligned with 1.5°C, include guidance and formulate concrete steps on the rapid and just **phase out of fossil fuels**, including the end of all **fossil fuel subsidies and -incentives**, and give priority to the reduction of methane emissions and high-emitting sectors. Ensure NDCs are child- and youth-sensitive, recognizing them as vulnerable groups as well as agents of change.
2. Taking into account the best available science, the **EU's 2040 target should push for net zero¹ by 2040**, with the EU's scientific advisory board opinion of -90% to -95%, without CO₂-compensation, serving as the minimum standard². Collective global efforts should result in a 43% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and 60% by 2035 compared to 2019 levels.³
3. Enable **fully funded, youth-led and representative UNFCCC youth delegate programmes for every EU member state** institutionalized latest by 2029, which should be mandated by a formal EU recommendation. The EU should establish **regular and meaningful bilateral meetings** between the UNFCCC youth delegates and all EU Heads of Delegations during COPs, SBs and internal EU decision-making processes.
4. The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) remains far behind what is actually needed. To meet the \$1.3 trillion climate finance target, we must urgently scale up grant-based contributions from all financial actors — public, private, bilateral, and multilateral. **The Baku to Belém Roadmap must include a concrete, time-bound action plan for delivering finance where it is most needed, especially to protect vulnerable communities.** This is not about scarcity but redistribution and political will. Climate finance must align with climate goals by phasing out high-emission investments.
5. **The EU's green transition must not exploit people or resources in developing countries and protect vulnerable communities.** A just transition should be systemic, rights-based, and focused on poverty reduction, intersectionality, (gender) equity and energy access. Economic systems must be reformed to enable equitable, sustainable transitions across all sectors, while preventing harmful spillover effects like resource exploitation in the Global South.
6. With rising pushback on gender equality, **the EU must prioritize the development of a new, ambitious Gender Action Plan (GAP) under the extended Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender.** Advancing gender-transformative climate policy requires appointing dedicated and well-funded National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points (NGCCFPs), systematic gender integration across all processes, including but not limited to NDCs and NAPs, and the meaningful, equal participation of women and girls in all their diversities in climate negotiation spaces.
7. The EU should honor the commitment to **at least double adaptation finance commitments in 2025 compared to 2022 levels**, prioritising predictable grant-based funding focused on access for marginalized communities. **By 2030, the EU's adaptation finance should at least triple** to meet rapidly growing needs. Additional demands include **aligning NAPs and NDCs, mobilizing carbon market resources, boosting private sector engagement, and strengthening the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) with clear indicators and inclusive implementation.**

¹ without over-reliance on carbon removal technologies

² 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'."

³ IPCC. *AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023*.

Mitigation: Broad, radical, and rapid changes

The past ten years have been the warmest on record, and the critical threshold of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels was reached in 2024. This temperature limit represents a globally agreed-upon target, as highlighted in the ICJ Advisory Opinion on Climate Change - a landmark initiative driven by youth from around the world. Now, ten years after the Paris Agreement, considerable acceleration of climate action is needed on the European continent and beyond. The climate crisis is one of multidimensional, intersectional and systematic injustice. Children and young people, who are least responsible, will have to live the longest with the consequences.

Europe has long positioned itself as a global leader on environmental and climate issues. However, its current targets fall short of its fair share in keeping 1.5°C alive.⁴ **To maintain credibility and champion meaningful progress, European negotiators at COP30 need to keep pushing for significant strengthening of mitigation efforts.** Furthermore, they must match their rhetoric on the world stage with action in their home countries.

Our key demands:

1. **Guarantee a net-zero⁵ 2040 target with at least a 95% emissions reduction without carbon compensation, following the EU's scientific advisory board recommendation.⁶** Given Europe's historic responsibility, the 2030 target should have been at least 62% by 2030, not the current 55% compared to 1990 levels.⁷ The 2040 target must correct this gap.
2. **Develop a strong EU NDC:** This year's round of NDC's should include economy-wide, absolute reduction targets based on the best available science.
 - **Commit to an NDC target of 81% reduction by 2035** (assuming net zero by 2040, 62% reduction by 2030, and a straight line approach) and provide according means of implementation. The EU should set a strong example by presenting a world-leading NDC that inspires others to follow.
 - Updated NDC's need to be aligned with the 1.5°C target. Building on the UAE consensus of COP28, they should outline concrete steps to rapidly **phase out fossil fuels, including the elimination of all fossil fuel subsidies**, while enabling a fair, equitable and just transition.
 - Work towards a **child-sensitive NDC**. This includes acknowledging children as a particularly vulnerable group as well as as agents of change, and mentioning them as such. Furthermore, this requires deploying adaptation measures that improve educational infrastructure, child-sensitive health measures and include children in the development, planning and implementation of strategies.
 - Adopt the universal Youth Clause in the NDC.
 - **Ensure that NDC's cover all greenhouse gas emissions, including methane.** NDC's should align with a reduction of methane emissions to near zero in the fossil fuel sector

⁴ 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."

⁵ without over-reliance on carbon removal technologies

⁶ 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'."

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."

- and a reduction of overall methane emissions by 45% by 2030⁸.
- Ensure a gender-responsive NDC while mainstreaming these aspects throughout. Recognize and address interlinkages between SRHR, Gender-Based Violence (GBV), and climate crisis in the NDCs and outline detailed plans to address these.
 - Recognise the rights of children and future generations, included but not limited to the right for a livable and equitable future, and the foundational principle of intergenerational equity as per ICJ Advisory Opinion.
 - Ensure sufficient grant-based financing for actions related to children & youth, Gender, ACE and health.
3. **Set strong global GHG reduction targets:** The global community needs to recognise the outcomes of the UAE consensus and steer their collective global efforts towards a 43% reduction in GHG emissions by 2030 and 60% by 2035 compared to 2019 levels.⁹
4. **Phase out fossil fuels:** As part of its 2040 targets, the EU should set targets to phase out use of coal by 2030, fossil gas by 2035 and fossil oil by 2040 at the latest.¹⁰ These objectives are technically viable and have already been proven possible by reliable models.¹¹
- To drive a just transition globally, **the EU should spearhead negotiations for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**, halting expansion in line with the Initiative’s call to “stop throwing fuel on the fire” and manage the phase out of coal, oil and gas.¹²
 - At COP30, **the EU must insist on the term “phase out” rather than “transition away from”** fossil fuels, and demand systemic phase-out across all sectors - including plastics, cement and petrochemicals - so that decarbonisation is truly economy-wide.
 - The EU must strengthen its efforts to curb fossil fuel lobby influence in all UNFCCC negotiation and other decision-making spaces.
 - Do not delay plans to phase out energy dependency on geopolitically unstable partners, for example through the swift implementation of the REPower EU Plan.
 - The EU and other European countries should also **cease ongoing fossil fuel expansion**, in line with IEA¹³ 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.
 - This phase out should not only concern the energy sector, but should be considered and conceived as a global and systemic fossil fuel phase out (such as, but not limited to, plastic- and concrete production).
 - **Give utmost priority to real decarbonisation of high-emitting sectors** including shipping, aviation, steel, cement, agriculture, aluminum, and defense,¹⁴ instead of relying excessively on Carbon Capture Utilization and Storage and Carbon Dioxide Removal, as this could delay crucial climate action.¹⁵ It is ineffective and more costly than investing in

⁸ United Nations Environment Programme: Global Methane Assessment

<https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/press-release/global-assessment-urgent-steps-must-be-taken-reduce-methane>

⁹ IPCC. *AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023*.

¹⁰ Open letter: fossil fuel phase out date needed in EU 2040 target <https://www.wwf.eu/?12768466/fossil-fuel-phase-ou-2040-target>

¹¹ PAC project (2020). “Paris Agreement Compatible Scenarios for Energy Infrastructure”. [Link](#)

¹² <https://fossilfuel treaty.org/>

¹³ IEA (2021), Net Zero by 2050, IEA, Paris <https://www.iea.org/reports/net-zero-by-2050>, License: CC BY 4.0

¹⁴ Nature, 2022: Decarbonize the military – mandate emissions reporting: “Armed forces have a massive carbon footprint that is absent from global accounting.”

¹⁵ IPCC SR15 Chapter 4: “Most CDR options face multiple feasibility constraints, which differ between options, limiting the potential for any single option to sustainably achieve the large-scale deployment required in the 1.5°C-consistent pathways described in Chapter 2 [...]”; Alexandra Deprez et al. ,Sustainability limits needed for CO2 removal. *Science*383,484-486(2024).DOI:10.1126/science.adj6171

renewable energy.¹⁶

- **Embed binding defence sector decarbonisation in the EU Climate Law's 2040 review**, phasing out coal, gas and oil by 2030/35/40. And establish a 'Defence Emissions Transparency Report' for each Member State, ensuring full public disclosure of military fuel consumption and mitigation progress at installations, training sites and in operations.

5. Ensure responsible and equitable implementation of mitigation technologies and carbon market systems.

- **Base all deployments of abatement technologies on the best available science** and take into account Europe's historical responsibility as one of the biggest emitters of GHG.
- **Implement technologies in a sustainable, inclusive and effective way** taking into account local/regional needs to prevent exacerbating existing inequalities.
- **Do not use Carbon markets as an opportunity to allow the development of techno-solutionism.**
- **Ensure that mitigation technologies recognise the critical role of protecting natural sinks** and maintaining ecosystem stability as essential components of climate mitigation. Technologies should respect planetary boundaries, uphold human rights, and safeguard the environment.¹⁷
- **Mitigation targets must avoid replacing fossil fuel dependence with other energy sources that pose significant environmental and social challenges.** Furthermore, mitigation strategies must centralize biodiversity protection, e.g. stopping harmful mining and protecting ecosystems from extractive industries.
- **Prevent double counting in carbon markets** by ensuring emission reductions are properly attributed, in line with the recent advancements in Article 6 at COP29. Emission reductions and removals must be real, verifiable, and fully aligned with each country's NDC. Transparency in transactions is essential, supported by robust institutional and financial frameworks. Social and environmental safeguards must prevent negative impacts and promote positive outcomes, with full respect for human rights, including those of Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- Within the scope of the Mitigation Work Programme, **push for structural reductions of societal carbon footprint by making climate-friendly solutions more accessible**, i.e.: plant-based diets, renovated and isolated buildings, efficient and accessible public transport to reduce the number of private vehicles and promote rail travel over air travel. The EU has already outlined initiatives like the Sustainable and Smart Mobility Strategy; it is now essential to ensure their rapid and effective implementation.

¹⁶ Energy, Health, and Climate Costs of Carbon-Capture and Direct-AirCapture versus 100%-Wind-Water-Solar Climate Policies in 149 Countries.

¹⁷ 2015. Smith et al.. Biophysical and economic limits to negative CO2 emissions. Nature Climate Change.

Loss and Damage

Loss and Damage impacts are already being felt most acutely by those least responsible for the climate crisis, particularly vulnerable communities in the Global South. Although mechanisms such as the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), the Santiago Network (SNLD), and the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FrLD) mark important steps forward, their current reach and resourcing fall short of addressing the scale and urgency of the challenge. Beyond the immediate human cost, lost lives, homes, and cultural heritage, climate-related damages are projected to reach a staggering \$38 trillion by 2050.¹⁸

Our key demands:

1. Based on *the solidarity principle*, defined by international law¹⁹ developed nations must **exercise their responsibility in providing the necessary grant-based financial assistance in addressing climate induced losses and damages**. This means that contributions to the FrLD should not rely on voluntary pledges, but be anchored in the principle of historical responsibility. Those who have contributed most to the climate crisis must be held accountable through predictable, needs-based financing that reflects their fair share.
2. These losses and damages include **economic and non-economic types**, as well as their interactions. The Warsaw International Mechanism and the Santiago Network should amplify their efforts to **identify primary forms of loss and damage and focus on averting, minimizing and addressing them to prevent further spillovers**.
3. Non-economic loss and damage (NELD) calls for the inclusion of financial and non-financial measures in addressing and relieving these impacts. **Upscale mitigation and adaptation efforts to prevent the occurrence of NELD**, as well as exploring approaches towards relieving the effects of NELD. Some things can never be addressed or repaired, such as the loss of life and/or the effects on mental health. Especially regarding NELD, which disproportionately impacts economically marginalized groups, calling for the importance of recognizing the vulnerability of informal workers, women, youth and indigenous peoples.
4. **Scale up previously determined financial contributions** in the next replenishment cycle of the FrLD to be more in line with the actual financial losses and damages suffered on the ground.
5. **Explore pathways towards directing loss and damage funding from a bottom-up approach** as to ensure the efficiency of the funds in reaching the MAPAs, in addition to the FrLD.
6. Make more informed and data-driven decisions and **implement a Loss and Damage Finance Gap Report**, which should assess future needs and include non-economic losses and damages.

¹⁸ Maximilian Kotz, Anders Levermann, Leonie Wenz (2024): The economic commitment of climate change. Nature. <https://www.pik-potsdam.de/en/news/latest-news/38-trillion-dollars-in-damages-each-year-world-economy-already-committed-to-income-reduction-of-19-due-to-climate-change>

¹⁹ Macdonald, Ronald St. John et al. "Solidarity in the Practice and Discourse of Public International Law." Pace International Law Review (1996).

Just transition: Unlocking the potential of inevitable change

The absence of a just transition continues to hold back global ambition, both nationally and internationally. We must ensure a transition that decreases existing inequalities rather than deepening them. Only then can we strengthen political and societal support, ensure effective implementation, and advance climate justice. This is crucial to unlock the progress needed to safeguard a livable future for all. The Just Transition Work Program is a crucial discussion on how to do exactly that, but its broad nature means we must bridge different global perspectives and priorities. Young people underline the EU's commitment to protecting people in national and regional energy transitions. At the same time, they call for a truly international approach, recognizing that the challenges of a just transition go beyond national borders. This chapter therefore outlines priorities at both the national and global levels.

Our key demands:

1. At the global level, **guarantee that the EU's green transition is not built on the exploitation of resources, people and ecosystems in developing countries.** In this pursuit, we must:
 - a. Ensure that transitions **limit and prevent spillover effects**, e.g. the environmental and socio-economic impacts of mining for materials used for the green energy transition, such as but not limited to cobalt and lithium;
 - i. Specifically, protecting **the most vulnerable, and already marginalized, communities** from negative impacts of a materially intensive green transition;
 - b. **Put human rights, poverty reduction, intergenerational equity and gender equality at the center** of all measures addressing loss and damage, environmental protection, climate mitigation and climate adaptation actions. This includes actions at the regional and national level, as well as actions initiated through international climate financing.
 - c. **Ensure systemic, intersectional and structural support for just transitions** at national and global levels, especially in developing countries. Support national climate goals on mitigation and adaptation, plans for decarbonisation, the phase out of fossil fuel usage and exploration through just transition pathways.
 - d. **Reform global and national economic systems and structures to enable and protect countries, especially developing countries, in their decarbonisation efforts.** We must ensure their transitions are supported and safeguarded against negative financial and economic impacts.²⁰

2. At the national level, **ensure just, inclusive and resilient transitions across all sectors.** To achieve this, we must:
 - a. **Invest in a structural approach to prevent and deal with existing energy poverty** and ensure transition measures that actually reach vulnerable households and individuals;
 - b. Protect **workers and farmers** in the transition, with re-skilling programmes and fair income guarantees. This includes equitable access to **green jobs and education pathways**;
 - c. Avoid top-down, corporate-driven energy projects; instead favour **decentralised, community-led renewable energy**;
 - d. Ensure just transitions across all sectors, specifically including but not limited to high-emission sectors such as agriculture, industry, and mobility to ensure that affected people in these sectors do not suffer disproportionate impacts of the transitions, receive its benefits and are involved and recognized in the process;
 - e. Include the recognition of unpaid care work as well as informal health and care workers.

²⁰ (e.g. debt increase because of divestment in fossil fuels, example of Colombia)

Adaptation: increasing finance and implementation

Youth emphasise the need to prioritise adaptation more strongly. Their concerns span coastal protection, food and water security, and disaster preparedness. They advocate for scaling up funding for nature-based solutions, underpinned by local knowledge and community-led approaches. However, inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation is now leaving the world exposed. According to the 2023 UNEP Adaptation Gap report, the financial needs of adaptation are estimated at US\$387 billion, with developing countries needing 10 to 18 times current public finance flows. The EU must lead by example, translating ambition into action through scaled-up grant-based finance, coherent planning, and implementation.

Our key demands:

1. Harmonise National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs):

- Ensure strong coherence and coordination between NDCs and NAPs to optimize resources, enhance implementation efficiency, and streamline reporting.
- **Demand that adaptation components in EU NDCs are fully aligned with the EU Adaptation Strategy** for cohesive and inclusive implementation.
- The EU must **offer technical and capacity-building support to other countries to design and implement effective NAP's.**

2. Double EU commitments to adaptation finance:

- **Acknowledge that current adaptation finance is insufficient and not progressing quickly enough to meet global needs.** In light of the current geopolitical situation, the EU must demonstrate leadership by at least doubling its current adaptation finance commitments while ensuring these are grant-based and easily accessible.
- **Prioritise predictable, dedicated funding** to the Adaptation Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). This is vital to help meet the global goal, set at COP26, of doubling overall adaptation finance by 2025.
- **Funding must be channeled to local communities, prioritise marginalised groups, including but not limited to children, youth, women, gender-diverse people and Indigenous Peoples, and guarantee their active participation in decision-making at all levels.**

3. Mobilise carbon market resources for adaptation:

- With the establishment of the Article 6.4 carbon market mechanism, the EU must urgently adopt a carbon market registry and operational guidelines to accelerate finance flows into the Adaptation Fund.

4. Strengthen the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA):

- **Reaffirm the need to enhance global efforts on adaptation**, with the EU supporting transformational adaptation while respecting developing countries' priorities for incremental adaptation and equitable access to finance.
- **Advocate for the development of indicators**, especially on Means of Implementation (MoI), to monitor progress and track adaptation finance effectively.
- Support cross-cutting indicators that empower vulnerable groups, children and youth, women and girls in all their diversity and the rights of Indigenous Peoples.

- Advocate for indicators that capture both the global and national context, that assess the actual effectiveness of adaptation measures.
- Alongside other indicators, specifically integrate health-related indicators into the GGA framework, emphasizing the critical importance of Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Adolescent Health (MNCHA), as well as mental health concerns like eco-anxiety. Highlight the differentiated impacts on girls, women, and gender-diverse people in all their diversities, Indigenous Peoples, and those in rural communities to mainstream these aspects and ensure inclusive adaptation mechanisms.

Climate finance: from targets to action

Climate finance is not just about numbers - it's about justice, resilience, and survival. As the climate crisis intensifies, the cost of inaction is outpacing even the most ambitious financial goals. Limiting global warming to 1.5°C could reduce the global economic costs of climate change by two-thirds. If warming continues to 3°C, global GDP will decrease by up to 10 percent - with the worst impacts in less developed countries.²¹ The money exists. But it's not flowing where it's needed.

The EU has both a responsibility and an opportunity to lead. Grant-based climate finance must be scaled up rapidly to support resilience, implement NDCs and NAPs, and enable a just transition that protects those most vulnerable to the impacts of the climate crisis. This includes ending financial flows to fossil fuels, aligning all finance with the Paris Agreement, and making funding truly accessible for frontline communities. The path ahead is clear: redistribute resources, remove systemic barriers, and reform the global financial system - not tomorrow, but today.

Our key demands:

1. Delivering the \$300 billion climate finance goal with justice and speed: The NCQG — **\$300 billion annually by 2035** — is a step up from previous targets, but it's still far from the **\$1.3 trillion** developing countries need. The gap between promise and necessity is vast, and the clock is ticking. The EU must not only contribute its fair share, but it must also lead efforts to **ensure these funds are delivered as grants or concessional finance** to avoid deepening the burden of already vulnerable nations.

- **Ensure finance reaches people, not just targets:** The Baku to Belém roadmap to 1.3T must include **a clear plan for mobilizing transparent, predictable and accessible finance from public, private, bilateral, and multilateral sources** — and for ensuring equitable access. **Local and marginalized communities must be empowered to access funds**, with special focus on women, Indigenous Peoples, children, youth, and persons with disabilities. The EU should **push for debt relief mechanisms**, including debt restructuring and forgiveness, to prevent deepening fiscal crises.
- **Establish and enforce a strong and measurable Baku to Belém Roadmap to 1.3T:** The Baku to Belém Roadmap must guide the transition from \$300 billion to \$1.3 trillion per year by 2035. This isn't just about volume, it's about channeling finance toward resilience and low-carbon development in an equitable, efficient, and accountable way.
 - **Mobilise scalable and innovative finance mechanisms:**
 - **Boost capital for Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs)** to unlock private investment at scale. MDBs can leverage every €1 into €4–10, making them crucial actors in closing funding gaps without deepening debt²².
 - **Implement carbon pricing in international aviation**²³. A fair, progressive carbon tax could generate up to **\$200 billion annually** while driving decarbonization. Additional levies on luxury air travel (business/first class and private jets) could generate further revenues in excess of \$80 billion annually.
 - **Introduce a coordinated tax on crude oil exports** via an international “Oil and Climate Club,” reallocating revenues to climate action. A \$5 per-barrel tax on

²¹ 1. Waidelich, P., Batibeniz, F., Rising, J., Kikstra, J.S., & Seneviratne, S.I. (2024). Climate damage projections beyond annual temperature. Nature Climate Change DOI: 10.1038/s41558-024-01990-8.

²² [Raising-ambition-and-accelerating-delivery-of-climate-finance_Third-IHLEG-report.pdf](#)

²³ [Destination Net Zero: The Urgent Need for a Global Carbon Tax on Aviation and Shipping](#)

- 25% of global oil exports could yield as much as \$18,4 billion annually²⁴.
- **Expand debt-for-nature swaps** to refinance existing debt while protecting ecosystems and supporting a just transition. It's an investment in both nature and prosperity.²⁵ The EU must warrant the authenticity and good faith of these swaps, considering the local circumstances and livelihoods of the populations affected.
- **Establish a mandatory carbon market**, ensuring high environmental and social standards and consistent global participation. This would drive private sector investment and could provide funding for nature-based solutions²⁶.
- **Mobilise private finance:** Private capital needs to deliver over half of the \$1.3 trillion target. But risk perceptions, especially in developing countries, still block investment. The EU must:
 - **Expand de-risking instruments** such as guarantees, credit enhancements, and blended finance through public institutions²⁷.
 - **Align public and private investments** through country platforms that support integrated climate and development goals.
 - **Use public policy to crowd in private finance**, including regulatory clarity, long-term signals, and transparency mandates.

2. Align all financial flows with the Paris Agreement: Article 2.1(c) of the Paris Agreement calls for aligning all financial flows, public and private, with low-emission, climate-resilient development. Nearly a decade later, this remains unrealised. Despite rhetorical climate leadership, the EU is backsliding. The recent postponement of the Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and weakening of the Corporate Sustainable Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) undermine the EU's ability to align financial flows with climate and social goals. These actions weaken transparency, ignore climate and environmental risks in corporate supply chains, and delay the transition towards a sustainable economy:

- **Mandate climate alignment of financial flows.** All financial actors — including private banks, asset managers, insurers, and public finance institutions — must be required to disclose and demonstrate climate alignment of their portfolios.
- **End the stop-and-go practice of corporate sustainability policies within the EU.** Clear targets, support in the transition and restored ambition are essential to implement Article 2.1(c) in practice.
- By COP30, governments must **adopt a clear roadmap for Article 2.1(c) implementation**, including milestones, accountability mechanisms, and timelines. The EU should lead in pushing this forward, using its influence in international forums to establish a robust and enforceable system.

3. Legally end all fossil fuel subsidies by 2030 that do not support a just transition: Fossil fuel subsidies distort markets, lock in emissions, and block the clean energy transition - and can constitute an internationally wrongful act following the ICJs ruling on climate change (see paragraph 427). In 2023, EU fossil fuel subsidies totalled over **€111 billion**, with just three countries accounting for the majority.²⁸² Despite commitments to phase them out, most Member States have failed to act. Fossil fuel

²⁴ [Taxing crude oil: A financing alternative to mitigate climate change? - ScienceDirect](#)

²⁵ [TNC Announces Its Third Global Debt Conversion in Barbados](#)

²⁶ [Nature and Carbon Markets | World Resources Institute](#)

²⁷ [Discussion-Paper-EM-Cost-of-Capital-for-RE-and-GCGF-FINAL-Jun-2023.pdf](#)

²⁸

subsidy reform is not just an environmental imperative — it is a **financial and geopolitical necessity**. Eliminating them frees up hundreds of billions in public funds to finance energy independence, accelerate the clean transition, and support those most affected by climate change.

- **Legally binding EU-wide phase-out plans** by 2030, with national roadmaps and transparent reporting.
- **Reallocate funds** to clean energy, energy efficiency, and direct support for vulnerable households.
- **End tax exemptions** for high-emission sectors such as aviation.
- **Strengthen EU oversight**, with the European Commission holding Member States accountable through stricter monitoring and enforcement.

4. Scale up nature and forest finance: Nature is essential for climate mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. Yet, biodiversity and ecosystems remain underfunded and siloed. The EU must champion integrated finance that supports both climate and nature goals, ensuring high environmental and social integrity.

- **Support equitable and rights-based forest finance:** At COP30, forest finance will take center stage. Increasing financial flows for forest conservation remains critical, with particular attention to safeguarding the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. The EU should support scaling up forest finance under climate finance frameworks while ensuring alignment with the UN CBD processes, complementarity with biodiversity finance, and avoiding duplication.
- **Bridge climate and biodiversity finance:** The EU should lead efforts to align biodiversity and climate finance, including across the Rio Conventions. This includes scaling up ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) and ensuring that NDCs, NAPs, and the Loss and Damage Fund fully integrate nature-based solutions, while making clear that climate and biodiversity finance must complement rather than replace one another.

Gender and the climate crisis: The new Gender Action Plan

The climate crisis exacerbates existing inequalities and disproportionately impacts girls, women and gender-diverse people, particularly Indigenous Peoples and People of Colour. Climate-induced disasters and slow onset events increase their workloads and care burden, restrict access to resources and land, and heighten exposure to gender-based violence, harmful practices, displacement, and food insecurity.

But girls, women and gender-diverse people, in all their diversity, are not just victims of climate change - they are powerful leaders and agents of change, driving innovative solutions on the frontlines. Their leadership leads to more sustainable decision-making, lower carbon footprints, and stronger resilience strategies. **Empowering them in climate governance is not just about equality - it is a prerequisite for a just transition that benefits all of society.**

Yet, despite their critical role, those most marginalized remain underrepresented in climate decision-making at all levels. According to the [Gender Climate Tracker](#), only 35% of all party delegates were women at COP29. Structural barriers persist, and the rise of anti-gender movements and criminalisation of and violence against women environmental human rights defenders (WEHRDs) threatens hard-won progress on gender equality in climate governance.

With the adoption of a 10-year enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender at COP29, this year is crucial for the establishment of the new Gender Action Plan (GAP). Taking into account the increasing backlash on gender equality, our demands are:

1. **National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points:** We encourage all European countries to appoint full-time National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points (NGCCFP) to adequately advance gender equality within the climate negotiations. While not all 27 EU Member States have appointed a NGCCFP thus far²⁹, doing so is encouraged and viewed as an important step toward establishing a common standard. To support the meaningful role of the NGCCFP, funding sources should be identified for capacity-building, meetings, and travel of the responsible role. The position should further be integrated across relevant ministries and entities to avoid a siloed approach.
2. **Gender Parity in Delegations and Constituted Bodies:** We urge the COP to act on the evidence on underrepresentation of women in delegations and constituted bodies as laid out by the 2024 Gender composition report (FCCC/CP/2024/4). The representation of women in the decision-making aspects of the UNFCCC process is crucial for meeting the goal of gender balance outlined in decisions 23/CP.18 and 3/CP.25 and to improve the leadership of women in Party delegations and in all bodies established under the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. According to the latest gender composition report ([FCCC/CP/2024/4](#)), on average, women occupied 39 per cent of constituted body positions. Furthermore, only 36% of party delegates and only 27.5% of heads of delegation were women.
3. **EU leadership on Gender:** We recommend that the European Union NGCCFP develop an EU-wide Gender Action Plan in coordination with member states, while also encouraging each member state to formulate its own National Gender Action Plan to ensure the integration of

²⁹ According to the [List of Gender Focal Points under the UNFCCC](#), the following EU countries have a NGCCFP: Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden.

gender perspectives in domestic climate policies. Furthermore, advancing gender justice should be an integral part of all climate-related processes and should therefore be mainstreamed into national plans, policies and strategies.

4. Recommendations on the new GAP

- We urge parties to strengthen the GAP to enhance the action within the UNFCCC and related bodies. The outcome should reflect a level of ambition that is gender transformative, to address root causes of gender inequality within society.
- **On selected existing priority areas under the former GAP and the Informal Note:**
 - Under the priority area of C, **coherence**, we call on parties, in addition to previously agreed activities, to increase the coherence of their commitments on gender and climate change between the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and the Convention to Combat Desertification, as well as to strengthen the coherence with national policies, plans and strategies.
 - Under priority area D, **Gender-responsive Implementation and Means of Implementation**, guarantee strategic allocation and design of gender-responsive grant-based finance.
 - Under the priority area E, **monitoring and reporting**, in addition to previously agreed activities, we emphasize the importance of incorporating a comprehensive set of indicators as an integral element of the future GAP, to enable the consistent tracking of progress over time. These indicators should cut across all activities under the GAP and should encompass both collective indicators and ones that can be disaggregated by Party or constituted body, to facilitate a more granular assessment of implementation.
- **Recommendations for new activities and deliverables:**
 - **Intersectionality:** The new GAP should be grounded in the principle of intersectionality, recognizing and addressing the multiple and overlapping forms of discrimination, including those based on race, class, sexual orientation and gender identity, disability, age, and other factors.
 - **Gender-based violence and protection of Women Environmental Human Rights Defenders (WEHRDs):** Given that the climate crisis intensifies gender inequalities and power imbalances that contribute to gender-based violence, the new Gender Action Plan must explicitly address these interlinkages, with particular attention to violence (both online and offline) targeting WEHRDs.
 - **Gender-responsive just transition and care work integration:** A just transition is only possible if gender equality is upheld as a core principle, with particular emphasis on the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work.
 - **Children and Youth:** Ensure Children and Youth must be meaningfully included and recognized not just as vulnerable groups, but also as strong agents of change. It's important to remember that within these groups, girls, young women, and gender-diverse children and youth often face even more challenges because of their gender and other factors like race or economic background.
 - **Substantially include SRHR, GBV, Harmful Practices into the new GAP** to enhance awareness, capacity building and information for governments and public, while including maternal, neonatal, child, and adolescent health (MNCHA), mental health, and psychosocial support as core components of climate resilience and adaptation strategies under the GAP.

Youth Participation: Deciding on our own future

“Humanity depends on the boundless energy, ideas, and contributions of youth everywhere. Today and every day, let’s support and stand with young people in shaping a just and sustainable world, for people and the planet.” - Antonio Guterres.

Children and youth (under the age of 24), comprising 40% of the world's population, suffer disproportionately from climate change³⁰. Extreme weather events, crop failures, heat waves all negatively impact children’s rights (right to health, right to life). Presently, one in four deaths among children under five stems from adverse environments.³¹ Climate-induced challenges impede long-term development, especially for marginalized children and youth facing discrimination and inequality. Decisions made within UNFCCC processes will affect the lives of children, young people and all future generations. Children and youth have been at the forefront of climate activism and pushing for inevitable climate action in line with the best available science and have a right to it as the ICJ affirmed. Intergenerational Equity is a foundational principle that must be upheld through climate action as well as through meaningful participation in the relevant processes and negotiations.

Our key demands:

- 1. Youth highlight the crucial focus on accessible, impactful climate education and training.** We must integrate climate education and disaster preparedness into curricula at all levels and scales, empowering teachers with the necessary resources to ensure accessibility across languages and regions. Education must provide children & youth with concrete tools applicable to the future, focussing on green skills and jobs. In this pursuit, **enable and fund both formal and informal forms of climate and environmental education** through dedicated EU-funding streams to national, regional and local level.
- 2. Enable fully funded, youth-led and representative UNFCCC youth delegate programmes for every EU Member State** institutionalized latest by 2029, which should be mandated by a formal EU recommendation. The EU should establish regular and meaningful bilateral meetings between the network of UNFCCC youth delegates and all EU Heads of Delegations during COPs, SBs and internal EU decision-making processes.
- 3. UNFCCC Parties should provide funding, capacity building, and other forms of support to ensure the presence of UN Youth Delegates in every country**, building on the recommendation on youth participation in the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan (Title XVI, para. 87), while encouraging **collaboration among youth delegates**. The presidency should continue facilitating data collection on existing youth delegate programmes to promote knowledge-sharing and transparency across Parties. **European states, in particular, should support child and youth participation and representation in countries that currently lack the resources or structures to do so.**
- 4. Recognizing that climate disinformation poses a serious threat to the levels of ambition and implementation of climate action, youth emphasize that strengthening information integrity is essential to ensuring the implementation of all six ACE elements. We therefore urge all Parties to put mechanisms in place that prevent misinformation on climate issues.** (Political)

³⁰ YOUTH and the State of the World <https://www.advocatesforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/storage/advfy/documents/fsstateworld.pdf>

³¹ World Health Organisation: Air pollution and child health: prescribing clean air <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/WHO-CED-PHE-18-01>

leaders should unite their populations in the fight against climate change by, for example, launching public information campaigns to counter misinformation, (social) media literacy training, supporting local public forums and discussions and creating legislation that require social media platforms to moderate and fact-check their communities.

5. **Ensure that EU positions are informed and decided by the lived realities of marginalized children and youth**, such as Indigenous Peoples, People of Colour, migrant and diaspora communities; girls, women and non-binary persons; persons with disabilities; and other disproportionately affected groups, acknowledging the diverse range of viewpoints and expertise. Thus, **Member States should meaningfully support, consult and engage with child and youth organizations, constituencies and other civil society organizations that represent the abovementioned groups**, in line with the work under Article 6 of the Convention and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, known as Action for Empowerment (ACE).
6. **Include an assessment of impacts on children in future NDCs and work towards child-sensitive NDCs**. This includes mentioning children as a particularly vulnerable group as well as agents of change, deploying adaptation measures that improve educational infrastructure, health infrastructure, participation in decision-making and other measures.
7. Actively follow up on the recommendations from the expert dialogues on disproportionate impacts of climate change on children in all the negotiations under the UNFCCC.
8. Actively push for the inclusion of children's needs across all workstreams and outcomes.
9. **Include effects of climate change on children and young people as a focus topic in the next IPCC reporting cycle.**
10. **Foster understanding of policymaking processes by making them more transparent and inclusive** for all affected people, including children.
11. **In line with procedural justice, ensure an appropriate age and gender balance within UNFCCC delegations.**
12. **All European states who lack an ACE-focal point should appoint one**, and through this role facilitate structural consultations with (children and) youth (organizations) in their country.
13. **Prevent disproportionate measures against environmental defenders and strongly condemn the criminalisation of peaceful climate activists**. The EU should support existing agreements¹³ on the protection of environmental defenders, and push for an agreement with the same purpose within the EU.
14. The Presidency Youth Climate Champion should be a facilitator of the youth who are present at the Climate Conference and be a bridge for youth voices to the presidency.
15. Communications on climate (policies) must be rooted in hope and agency, as opposed to fear, to empower children and youth to act

Perspectives of Youth from EU Overseas Countries and Territories

Young people in European Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs) are among the least responsible for the climate crisis. Yet, they are disproportionately exposed to its devastating impacts. Rising sea levels, intensified hurricanes, biodiversity loss, and resource pressures threaten their homes, livelihoods, and cultural heritage. This makes their situation a question of climate justice. However, OCT children and youth remain structurally excluded within the UNFCCC. Their perspectives are often mediated by national delegations, and they rarely have the opportunity to speak for themselves. Recognition of OCT children and youth as climate actors in their own right is a necessary first step towards recognitional justice. In the long term, meaningful participation must be ensured through structural reforms that guarantee procedural justice. The EU and its Member States should therefore establish and continue direct, institutionalised dialogue with OCT children and youth. Until then, we commit to amplifying their voices and placing their priorities at the centre.

OCT Youth Priorities

Consultations with OCT youth revealed urgent priorities that complement and reinforce the broader themes of this position paper. While these do not represent the full spectrum of perspectives across all EU OCT youth, they provide important insights into the specific realities of OCT youth and underscore the need for further consultations in other EU Member States.

1. Adaptation and resilience

- Investment in resilient infrastructure and nature-based solutions, including mangrove and coral reef restoration.
- Strengthened disaster preparedness and recovery systems with active youth involvement.

2. Energy transition

- A rapid, equitable shift to renewable energy, reducing dependency on imported fossil fuels.
- Preference for decentralised, community-led solutions such as rooftop solar, complemented by training and green job creation for youth.

3. Water and food security

- Expansion of climate-resilient agriculture to reduce import dependence and support affordable, healthy diets.
- Sustainable water management, including desalination, wastewater treatment, and local adaptation practices.
- Reduction of monoculture practices (such as sugarcane) rooted in colonial legacies, encouraging diversified and sustainable agricultural models that strengthen local food security and resilience.

4. Pollution and ecosystems

- Urgent action on waste management and sargassum influxes, combining enforcement with awareness campaigns.
- Preservation of biodiversity and protection of natural areas, balanced with tourism and economic interests.
- Recognition and remediation of soil pollution, particularly contamination by chlordecone, with measures that include judicial accountability, environmental restoration, and support for affected communities.

5. Climate finance and equity

- Fair and predictable access to climate finance for small islands, particularly for adaptation, loss and damage, and locally-led initiatives.
- Funding mechanisms that are inclusive, accessible, and channelled directly to community-based and youth-led organisations.

6. Youth participation and representation

- Direct and structural involvement of OCT youth in EU and UNFCCC processes, rather than indirect representation only.
- Institutionalised mechanisms for dialogue between the EU and OCT youth, recognising the right of young people to speak for themselves.

7. Capacity building and access to proper education

- Ensure OCT youth have equitable access to quality education, including higher education opportunities, within their own territories, without being forced to relocate to Europe.
- Integrate the history and cultural heritage of the OCTs into the curricula, especially within their own schools, as a matter of social justice and recognition of their distinct identities.