



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Today we march again to hold our political leaders to account”

06 December 2019, Madrid Spain: As thousands of people in Madrid and Santiago take their demands to the streets today, Climate Action Network (CAN) today highlighted why action within the UN halls critical to respond to the pressure from people and for governments to come out with a solid plan to stop emissions.

The speakers highlighted the growing presence and influence of fossil fuel lobbies within the talks and the disconnect between what people want as a climate safe future and what world leaders are willing to act on.

Sriram Madhusoodanan, Associate Campaign Director at Corporate Accountability

For years, the global climate treaty has been laden with blockers of progress primarily obstructionist northern governments, big polluters and their proxies. They lobby to maintain the status quo as the climate crisis deepens and influence the policy-making at UNFCCC and shun aside real climate solutions. Take a look around - the very corporations bankrolling these talks, sponsors of this conference are Spain's biggest polluters - Endesa, Iberdrola, Santander. And it's not just sponsorship, these polluters roam these halls of this conference pushing dangerous distraction like carbon markets that we know don't work. Industry groups like the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) whose members include BP, Shell, Chevron and COP25 sponsors Iberdrola and Santander is hosting 74 events this week averaging nearly 7 events a day. There, climate criminals like Shell are given a platform to greenwash and push for faulty carbon trading schemes as the way forward meanwhile civil society has to fight to keep the space inside the COP.

In a world where we must act to decrease carbon emissions to zero as soon as possible and end fossil fuel use, there's no room for any trading schemes that line big polluters' profits and sets us firmly on a path of climate catastrophe, death, mass migration, loss of ecosystems. It doesn't have to be this way - instead of focusing on rules for markets where there is simply no time or space for carbon markets, governments have the opportunity to chart a different course to real action right now.

They should stand with billions of people around the world enduring climate impacts daily and hundreds of thousands of people demanding real just solution like a decline of fossil fuels and advancement of framework for implementing real transformative solutions in Article 6.8 in the Paris Agreement. To advance the real solutions the world

urgently needs, governments must heed the call of peoples' movements all over the world, kick polluters out reject markets and advance real market solutions.

Juan Pablo Orrego, President of Ecosistemas, Chile

There is very intense social uprising in Chile with very dramatic consequences. The reasons for this is Chile has been trapped since the arrival of the Spaniards and the British to plunder, kill and rape in our territories. We have been trapped in a primary phase of extractivism and now neocolonial extractivism. The pillars of the Chilean economy are mega mining, plantations of pines and eucalyptus, industrial fishing including intensive salmon farming, intensive agribusiness. This system has hurt the environment and when you hurt the environment, you hurt the people. We have unusually high cancer rates, vascular accidents and other diseases directly provoked by this economic model.

The reaction of the government has been to repress this uprising. We need to restore our territory, change this economic model in Chile that does not respect the environment and human rights. One of the worst examples is the Alto Maipo project. The watershed basin that supplies water to the whole Metropolitan region of Chile - 8 million people - and four successive governments have allowed a North American Company AES Corp to build a massive run-of-the-river hydroelectric plant in this watershed.

Angela Valenzuela 350.org / Fridays for the Future Coordinator Chile

“One of the key messages in protests in Chile is “neoliberalism was born in Chile, and is going to die in Chile.” During the Cold War we were an experiment of an extreme case of neoliberalism and clearly that has not worked for Chile, for the people or the environment. This is problem is the root of what’s happening globally - we need new paradigms and new answers and we cannot continue this paradigm of infinite growth in a planet with limited resources.

These models are creating the climate crisis and leading us to a climate chaos. What we really need to do is to think about the root causes of the climate crisis. It’s been 25 years of negotiations and every year we hit record levels of heat waves, temperatures and emissions. And something is not working here but civil society around the world from Santiago to Madrid - is waking up - to confront the climate crisis.

Today we are going to march again to hold our political leaders accountable. We know that there are solutions, we know that we need to change the systems and work differently but we are lacking in political will so we really need to build a movement.”

ENDS

Contact:

Dharini Parthasarathy, Senior Communications Officer, CAN

dparthasarathy@climatenetwork.org

+918826107830