



PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Leaving this COP without addressing loss and damage finance will be a gross injustice.”

12 December 2019, Madrid, Spain: As the COP25 UN climate negotiations approach its end, Climate Action Network (CAN) held a press briefing to provide updates on key issues that are closely watched by civil society particularly loss and damage finance and raising ambition.

Reactions from CAN speakers:

Sven Harmeling, *Global Policy Lead on Climate Change and Resilience, CARE International*
“Today is the fourth birthday of the Paris Agreement and today, we’re hoping that we’ll be celebrating the progress that we might have agreed but we’re in a very different situation. We are in a situation where some of the core promises of the Paris Agreement are at risk of falling off the cliff.

We also see the issue like the gender action plan, which is also a core promise of the Paris Agreement, still not being agreed to on the second last day. Some countries are blocking that particular issue and that’s one of the most essential outcome of the COP. The third key issue which has also been raised yesterday is loss and damage. We came into the COP with civil society aligned with many demands from all the developing countries which are already facing the impacts of the climate crisis. The promise that was given in the Paris Agreement is Article 8 on loss and damage has not materialized into any meaningful additional action. There’s no clarity on where additional finance will come from. We’re facing situations here where some of the very basic demands of developing countries are resisted by many developed countries, particularly the United States. At this moment the negotiations of loss and damage are ongoing with technical negotiations facilitated by ministers.

There are three main issues remaining: in terms of the role of loss and damage in the GCF is at least a starting point but on its own won’t bring any new additional finance and developing countries would have to choose to use money for adaptation or use money for loss and damage which is far from being a just approach. The second is whether there would be an agreement on an expert group on action and support which would at least give a minimum hope to developing countries to start really looking into options for raising finance but even that is being resisted by developed countries. And there’s also a conversation to establish a so-called Santiago network of implementation on loss and damage which could be an interesting complement, but even there we are not seeing any movement from developed countries although the developing world has put these basic demands on the table more than a week ago.

Leaving the COP without any process forward on addressing loss and damage finance, without even mentioning it will be a gross injustice.”

Ili Masivesi, Advisor, Oxfam Pacific

“Lest we not forget, let me remind us why we are here for these past two weeks: time for action. How long will we continue to sit here and how long will we deliberate on this action - where is this action? Let’s ask ourselves: “Where is the action”? Loss and damage is very vital for us in the Pacific because it is about survival, it’s about us being put into a situation that we never contributed to, or we’ve got very negligible amount of greenhouse gas emissions in the countries that I represent. Let us not forget why we are here. It is time for action and action would have to start here, let’s not wait for Glasgow.”

Jennifer Tollman, *Senior Policy Advisor, E3G*

“We wouldn’t be talking to you like this if we weren’t seeing a vacuum of political leadership. It’s really clear major emitters are missing the boat on ambition and that is both out there in the world and even in this process. The big things that we’re fighting for at this point are a set of rules that don’t fundamentally undermine the Paris Agreement and out a text that could give us a timeline or some sense of momentum for next year and that is so desperately incremental to what we actually need in this world. This is not the fault of the process, this is the fault of the countries who don’t show up to actually deliver something in this forum provided for them.

Yesterday we saw the tiniest spark of hope in a step change happening here in the European Union in the release of the Green Deal. This is a set of comprehensive policies that layout the economic, physical and social reforms necessary to actually get people on to a path of climate neutrality and climate safety. This absence of political will that is haunting us in this process might yet hold us in Brussels. We see today that European leaders have the ability of breaking this vicious cycle of lacking in political leadership to finally agree on a climate neutrality target in 2050 as they failed to do in June. If they do this it will only be a first step because as we know, long-term aspirational visions of hope, need to be backed up with near-term action.

We’re twenty days out from 2020 the next year is going to set us on a path to climate safety through quick and decisive action over the next decade. Or we are going to have more and more conversations about the losses and damages that all of us will face. And the reality is the most impacted are the least responsible. The EU can either sit back and languish with the rogue and reluctant major economies that are refusing to take action or it can finally step up and seize that opportunity of climate neutrality, of being the first mover and of those really putting the people and their citizens at the center of what they’re doing.”

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