

# ECO

## THE SHOW US YOU'RE LISTENING ISSUE

eco@climateactionnetwork.org • www.climatenetwork.org/eco-newsletter • November 5, 2021

ECO has been published by Non-Governmental Environmental Groups at most international conferences since the Stockholm Environment Conference in 1972. ECO is produced cooperatively by the Climate Action Network at the UNFCCC meetings in Glasgow, Scotland during the November COP 26 meetings.

*Editorial/Production: Andrés Fuentes*

## The Ocean May Be a Side-Event At COP26, But Its Influence On the Climate is Not

In case you forgot, ECO wants to remind you: the ocean, covering 70 per cent of our planet's surface, drives global weather systems and the climate, and is the world's largest long-term store of biological carbon. It is sucking up 20 to 30 per cent of global emissions and absorbing over 90 per cent of human-made heat. We would be cooking without it. But the ocean isn't just a climate saviour, it is also a climate victim: marine species and ecosystems are suffering from climate change-driven rises in water temperature and from ocean acidification. **Coral reef ecosystems, home to about 30 per cent of the oceans biodiversity, are one of the first global ecosystems at risk of being almost wiped out. They face a 70 to 90 per cent loss at 1.5°C global temperature increase.**

ECO is surprised that, despite its enormous contribution to life and climate regulation on the planet, the ocean is still considered a side-event of the climate negotiations. The "Blue COP" in Madrid in 2019 was a first step to change that, resulting in the SBSTA holding a first of its kind *Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue* in 2020.

Now, at COP26, is the time to turn this initial exchange into an annual dialogue that improves coordination of ocean-related discussions already taking place under the UNFCCC, e.g. under the Nairobi Work Programme or the Marrakech Partnership for Global

Climate Action, and to mainstream oceans further into climate negotiations. Such a dialogue should define concrete measures on ocean-based adaptation, mitigation, and resilience; and help countries and marine and coastal communities to apply these measures and make them count as contributions to the Convention.

The oceans need to be well reflected in the Global Stocktake's guiding questions and sources of input. ECO thinks it's time to start counting all blue carbon, from coastal marshes to the deep sea, accelerating the decarbonisation of all shipping, fishing and other marine industries, and ensuring a just transition to a sustainable ecosystem-based management of the global ocean and protection for at least 30 per cent by 2030 to deliver outcomes for climate, biodiversity and people. And it needs to be spelled out that the ocean is part of the solution to limit and adapt to 1.5°C of global warming.

The launch of the *Ocean for Climate* and *Because the Ocean* declarations for COP26 are a good start to highlight the myriad opportunities for Parties to both maximise the ocean's potential to contribute to help stabilize the climate and enhance effective adaptation. Let's build on this and have COP26 stating that ocean action is climate action. Learn more at today's Ocean Day at COP26.

## The Presidency's Lonely Dialogue

ECO was awaiting yesterday's Open Dialogue with excitement. After all, this is a key event to "enable admitted NGO constituencies to have an open dialogue with Parties" as mandated in (FCCC/SBI/2017/7).

However, after arriving ECO had to look in the dictionary to make sure that dialogue indeed means the kind of conversation that is carried out by more than one person...as in the opposite of a monologue.

For the first hour, only observers spoke, as no party was present in the room. The European Union eventually found its

way to the room for a quick intervention in the end. ECO waited patiently for the presidency of COP27, Egypt. Or any other Parties for that matter. Maybe delegates lost their venue map and could not find the room...or maybe delegates got their fingers stuck in a bowling ball or their goldfish fell sick - ECO assumes there must have been good reasons why only the UK and the EU showed up.

That's why all nine constituencies jointly request to repeat the meeting in week two of COP26 – this time with an actual presence from Parties. ECO looks forward to a real dialogue.

# India Presents: The Sustainable Development Mechanism To Drive Ambition

India, what happened to your “cooperative and constructive” engagement on Article 6? ECO hasn’t seen much of that lately, and was particularly struck by your comments yesterday. It’s as if you carefully read all of our previous articles and decided to promote the exact opposite of what ECO recommended.

First, you proposed to bracket (aka delete) references to Human Rights and sustainable development in the establishment of the *sustainable development* mechanism! ECO would find this grotesquely funny if it wasn’t also very concerning and sad. With this, India aligned itself with Iran as the only two countries taking the floor to criticise the inclusion of Human Rights in Article 6.

ECO also heard India say that cancelling credits to deliver an overall reduction in emissions was “illogical”. But what is illogical is the idea that a mechanism, which operates as a zero-sum game, can actually increase overall ambition. Without cancellation, Article 6 will not make a meaningful contribution to climate action. It seems India supports a 100 per cent cancellation on ambition.

Additionally, it sounded as if India was promoting a review of the concept of additionality, except that, unlike many others who have contributed to this discussion,

they actually seem to support *weaker* additionality rules compared to the Kyoto Protocol era. Apparently, India considers that activities are additional even if they would happen in the absence of the mechanism, if they were required by law, or were included in national policies. Not only does India support carrying over junk credits from the CDM, but it seems it actually wants to create more of those!

This brings us to the last issue: the unwavering support of India for the failed CDM. A full carryover of credits and projects from the CDM will do nothing for the climate. It will also do nothing for private investors and market confidence. Carrying over billions of junk credits would be a lose-lose situation. This would weaken NDCs, by using junk credits to meet targets instead of reducing emissions, and keep supply high and prices low in a new market, hence making it harder for developers to implement new projects. This is a measure that only benefits legacy developers.

Who seriously believes that a new developer wishing to implement projects will prefer a system with low prices which rewards investors from ten years ago, rather than a fresh, credible market with rising prices? ECO certainly doesn’t.

## Koronivia Family: Serving an Empty Pot After All These Years of Cooking?

The Koronivia family has gathered many times in the last years, in person and online. Through nearly a dozen workshops we have spent time together sharing recipes, listening to experts ranging from smallholder farmers to IPCC scientists, and cooking up real solutions to feed the world and cool the planet. We’re so close to serving up a truly amazing meal of delicious, resilient and gender-responsive agroecological solutions that shift us away from polluting, industrialised farming systems. It’s starting to smell delicious!

But oh no! There are crashing sounds in the kitchen. Will this delicious meal end up on the floor, and will we be served with an empty pot? After all these years of effort?

ECO knows that when it comes to issues of agriculture, considerations of equity must be central. Adaptation is key to future food security. Efforts to reduce emissions in agriculture are essential to limit warming to 1.5°C and avert runaway climate breakdown. Parties must target the biggest and most historically

responsible polluters, and not put the burden on those that have done the least to cause the climate crisis and who are already experiencing severe impacts. Navigating this pathway may be tricky, but it’s not impossible. ECO thinks that most chefs in the Koronivia kitchen would agree that we need to change large-scale polluting factory farming systems, while protecting smallholder pastoralist systems. Language that reflects this nuance should be the basis of discussions about livestock and agriculture.

A procedural text without any real recommendations would be a terrible waste of the time the Koronivia family has spent in the kitchen, and a tragic waste of the delicious dish that we smelled earlier. We implore you, please don’t give up on serving up some delicious and gender-responsive agroecological recommendations that strengthen resilience, help to keep the planet from going over 1.5°C of warming, and that keep the terrible taste of big polluters out of our food. It’s in all of our interests.

# Lobbyists, Bartenders and First Ladies: Meet Brazil's Monster Delegation

If you're squeezing through the corridors of COP26 or eternally queuing in the rain to get in ("come prepared with appropriate gear"), odds are that you've heard a lot of Portuguese these days. In fact, Brazil has the biggest national delegation in Glasgow: a stunning 479 people. That's roughly twice as much as the host country, the UK. ECO smelled stale açai in that number, so we did some further digging into the list. What we have found was that many of those precious pink badges are dangling from very strange necks.

Among Brazilian "party" or "party overflow" delegates there are members of agribusiness lobby organizations (9), industry lobby organizations (6), business (25), spin doctors (8) hired to showcase "the real Brazil" (sic) in Glasgow, and even a bartender (which might actually explain why their positions on Article 6 sound so much like drunk talk).

And while young indigenous activist Txai Suruí, the only Brazilian voice in the Leaders' Summit, had to search far and wide for an accreditation to attend the conference, the first ladies of four states and one major city were happily added to the delegation bandwagon. Brazil really likes its double counting: one for the husband, one for the wife.

Now, older ECO readers know that past COPs

also had huge Brazilian pinkbadgery. That was due to the Foreign Office's official policy of democratically accrediting whoever asked for it, from subnational governments to environmentalists, social movements, Indigenous representatives and the private sector. Ever since Jair Bolsonaro took office, that policy was scrapped. In Glasgow the government simply divided civil society in two: their friends from the rural and industry lobbies, who were warmly welcomed to the delegation (whisky, anyone?), and the folks Mr. Bolsonaro has famously called "a cancer I can't kill" – enviros, Indigenous Peoples and youth – who aren't allowed as much as a snack in their lavish pavilion in the Blue Zone.

As if exclusion and double standards weren't enough, Bolsonaro's Brazil has also bred a bizarre new kind of UN Constituency: the pink-badge bullies. Indigenous observers have been openly harassed in Glasgow by rural lobby representatives, who lumber (pun intended) around the corridors searching for "bad Brazilians" to call out.

At least this time around Bolsonaro doesn't seem to have sent secret agents to spy on civil society like it did at COP25. Although ECO wouldn't bet on this, given that Brazil's mammoth delegation has a dozen people identified only by their names. Some of them may like their caipirinhas, shaken, not stirred.

## Fossil of the Day

### The Polish Government awarded Fossil of the Day for walking a very crooked line

It appears that the Polish government isn't exactly telling the truth about their pledge to quit coal.

Now if you're sitting comfortably we'll begin this sorry tale of coal addiction:

On the 3rd of November, as part of an international agreement, Poland, along with 40 other countries and organisations, pledged to quit coal. The agreement was that major economies phase out coal in the 2030s and poorer ones in the 2040s. All fine so far.

Being based on trust, countries were able to choose which decade they would stop this nasty addiction.

But here the story gets a bit murky.

The Polish ministry of climate and environment decided that, despite being the 23rd largest global

economy, (forecast to grow further in the coming years, according to the World Bank) and with ambitions to join the G20, to put the country in the 'poorer' category.

According to ministry boffins, they weren't a "major economy" anymore and the phase out could wait until, not just the 2040's but - wait for it- 2049!

The story ends badly (for the moment) with Poland dodging its coal commitment at a time when it's absolutely paramount that they, and all OECD countries, stick to the 2030 deadline and keep global temperatures from rising more than 1.5C degrees, to avoid extreme climate breakdown. We sincerely hope that's not the end of the story though. We hope that they will listen to the voices of those fighting on the frontlines as their homes and countries face destruction and quit coal sooner than later.



# The Kids Will Be Alright (If We're Not Lost and Damaged by COP26)

*This ECO article is directed at decision-makers at COP26. It has been co-created this week by 60 young people from all over the world, to make a unified call for climate justice. Most of us didn't grow up speaking English and we had not met each other before. Yet in just four hours, we listened to each other, shared our experiences, and put together our vision for the future we want to inherit. If we can do this, decision makers can do it too.*

There is a Palauan proverb that says A klukuk a rkemei, which translates as 'tomorrow is still to come'. It teaches young kids in Palau the importance of taking care of the future. Our actions today define what tomorrow looks like. Yet, these same children experience enormous loss and damage because of the current climate crisis they didn't cause.

We are 60 young people. We come from Burkina Faso, Burundi, Niger, the Central African Republic, Columbia, the Netherlands, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Belgium, and Spain. We come from diverse backgrounds, but all experience the devastating effects of the climate crisis, and are united in our demands for decision makers at COP-26.

We demand that Loss and Damage be a priority at COP26 and a permanent theme in the COPs and intersessionals that follow. We believe that he who breaks the vase must pay for it.

Today the opposite is true: he who breaks the vase, lets someone else clean up the mess. The climate crisis is caused by people and countries that don't put care at the centre of proverbs, let alone policies. The violent climate of hurricanes, droughts, and flooding is not the root cause of this problem, but the consequence of a climate of violence. A climate fuelled by greed, exploitation, competition, colonization, inequality, racism, intergenerational injustice, and gender-based violence.

If this is all a bit too abstract, allow us to illustrate what this looks like. Imagine your livelihood depends on the cultivation of land you don't own and can't inherit because of your gender, yet you break your back every day to change it into fertile ground. Your neighbours have the biggest house on the block and generate a lot of waste that pollutes your land. Your ground becomes infertile. You lose your income, livelihood and eventually your house. You try to claim reparations in the local court but you are ignored. You try to get your plea across the ocean, where policymakers are deciding over the fate of the trees, water, and air of your community. But your voice isn't heard. You end up with nothing but the clothes on your back, unsheltered from all kinds of violence. You follow in the footsteps of the 30 million people who became climate refugees before you.

This story echoes the innumerable stories of people affected by the climate of violence. People we have encountered here at COP26, who become activists so others don't have to experience what has become their daily reality. People like

Marinel Sumook Ubaldo, a 24 year old Filipino whose family lived a harmonious life with nature, before they became victims of Typhoon Haiyan, victims of our climate of violence. She became an activist, not by choice, but out of necessity, to prevent this happening again to her community or others.

We must move to a climate of care, and place care at the centre of loss and damage policies. A climate of care addresses the physical, economic and severe psychological burdens caused by loss and damage. A climate of care could be based on community, local solutions, collective efforts, equality, intersectional responses, power sharing and attention to mental health.

How do we disrupt our climate of violence?

First, let the person who breaks the vase pay for it. The countries and corporations who contributed the most to the climate crisis should be held accountable. This can no longer be a voluntary commitment, but must become a systemic and legally binding responsibility. There's a need for a structural framework where historical damage is considered and where adaptation and mitigation must be prioritized to avoid future loss and damage. Funding must be based on responsibility, not on guilt or out of charity, and it must be separate from, and additional to, the funding that is needed for adaptation and mitigation. More regular NDCs which include regular, explicit, and legally binding Loss and Damage contribution plans, will help ensure that those who are responsible are kept to their commitments.

Second, put communities at the head and heart of Loss and Damage policies. Those who have been affected know the extent to where Loss and Damages reaches, let them decide the scope of policies. Let communities manage Loss and Damage resources and programs and make sure that women and youth are represented. To avoid further Loss and Damage, forests and natural habitats should be protected by their rightful guardians so that once again they can buzz with the rich biodiversity we rely on to thrive.

Putting the most affected communities at the heart of Loss and Damage also acknowledges the psychological impacts. Provide support and take into account emotional wellbeing.

Finally, let's rethink what global citizenship looks like in light of climate related displacement. People should be able to move by choice, not by tragedy. Resources, land, and reparations must be accessible and shared equitably.

Rethink what childhood you want to give to us, children, so that we no longer need to carry the weight of the world as we become adults in the midst of an emergency.

Don't let this climate of violence be our legacy, because we are your tomorrow.