

ECO

TIME TO MAKE PROGRESS

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The GST's Journey From Bonn to Sharm el-Sheikh

Farewell, farewell...

ECO assisted the last events on the Global Stocktake on Tuesday with the plenary session and the Joint Contact Group meeting, where sadly observers could not take the floor during the second one.

The World Café was probably the highlight of this first technical dialogue. Even if the place was noisy and a bit crowded, we had useful conversations across several themes and also between parties, observers and non-state actors. ECO recommends prioritising this format for Sharm el-Sheikh, which means smaller groups, on more specific topics, and more importantly, with the same diversity of views and actors. The participation of observers and non-state actors beyond the UNFCCC constituencies is critical for the success of the Global Stocktake. Without this, it cannot be meaningful.

However, some key issues for the transition were missing from the conversations, especially for the roundtables. ECO welcomes the fact that losses and damages were discussed at the adaptation and means of implementation roundtables: we are in an emergency crisis and we must respond to the needs of the most vulnerable. The GST should most definitely be a key support to increase loss and damage assessment in terms of impact, good practices, and dedicated finance. However, fossil fuel issues did not receive sufficient focus.

Let's not be shy about this: we will not achieve 1.5°C without phasing out of fossil fuels before 2050. We need dedicated discussions on this transition, that needs to be just, in Sharm el-Sheikh. Additionally, human, gender and Indigenous rights, and roles and knowledge were absent from the debate.

ECO highlights the need for the presence of frontline communities, of women in all their diversity, and Indigenous leaders at each panel of the next roundtables to ensure their views are considered. This is surely relevant for another priority topic: the role of land and coastal ecosystems in mitigation and adaptation (see Box). However, the large gaps that must be addressed to enable implementation of ecosystem-based approaches were notably absent from the discussions on finance and capacity building.

To finish, ECO wishes to elaborate on our expectations for the joint contact group this year. We see considerable value in a decision text at COP27 that goes further than mere platitudes. Let us not waste the work we have done here in Bonn. A COP27 decision outcome could serve to build greater momentum for a high ambition outcome of the GST through 2023 and COP28, sending important signals that can elevate the Global Stocktake and build a bridge from the technical work done here in Bonn to the ultimate political outcomes taken in the UAE.

ECOSYSTEMS

Land and the role of ecosystems was a key topic in the GST discussions on mitigation and adaptation in Bonn. Protecting and restoring ecosystem integrity, and sustainably managing production systems on land and in marine areas, are critical to reaching 1.5°C and our adaptation goals to protect the most vulnerable and to enhance biodiversity protection - and assessing how this contributes to the Paris goals is critical for the GST. However, ECO would like to remind Parties that climate action to protect nature must be *alongside*, not instead of the urgently needed just transition away from fossil fuels and industrial agriculture.

As a YOUNGO delegate highlighted, exotic forest plantations, biofuels and BECCS can harm biodiversity, are unproven climate solutions, and often fail to protect human rights and development needs. The GST has heard from expert scientists on the technical accounting challenges (and ECO has shared solutions on this too) but where are the voices of Indigenous Peoples and local communities? We urgently need to include their knowledge and experiences in GST discussions to ensure that action in the land sector and in the ocean delivers ambition on all parts of the Paris Agreement.

Adaptation Finance: Poetry in Motion

ECO loves poetry. We can be found jotting little rhymes in quiet moments while waiting for plenaries to open (or finish). That's why ECO has been keenly listening into the Global Goal on Adaptation, the NCQG, and the Nairobi Work Programme for signs of inspiration – since nowhere is there so much potential for poetry as in adaptation finance. ECO is hearing some signs of progress, but lots of delegates seem to have a bad case of writer's block, so here are some top tips to write the perfect adaptation finance poem by COP27:

A good poem is the right combination of both quantitative and qualitative elements, with the right balance of numbers (of lines, stanzas and syllables). In adaptation finance, Parties know the overarching principle should be the balance between mitigation and adaptation finance promised back in Copenhagen, but some seem to find it hard putting it into practice. This should equate to at least 50 per cent of all climate finance flows, including the annual US\$100 billion pledge. More adaptation finance needs to go to Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States who

are not getting enough. Beyond this a more complex numerical structure deepens poetic effect: targeting gender-transformative action in all adaptation finance and tracking delivery to the local level is key.

Quality of finance will build the story. Targeted grants-based finance, improvements to support for agriculture, as well as threading adaptation through all sectors will build a rich narrative. And don't forget, there are rich poetic traditions and forms from all around the world – support to implement their own adaptation actions should go to Indigenous Peoples, CSOs, smaller actors and locally led action, beyond the usual international organisations and national level implementers. For this accessibility to finance needs to improve.

The Adaptation Finance Champions Group can help with getting this poem written, but we really need more Parties moving things forward and adding their style. And let's not forget the importances of better transparency when reporting and measuring impact to allow the story to be told properly.

Target the Climate Crisis, Not the People

Last week, ECO shared its renewed hopes that, in Bonn, Parties would finally start delivering climate justice for people on the frontlines. The negotiations on Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and loss and damage (L&D) are dashing our hopes.

ECO reminds Parties that while you squabble over an ACE action plan, environmental defenders – actively participating and taking climate action, the very point of ACE – are being targeted. In the two weeks you have been blah blah-ing, an average of eight environmental human rights defenders were killed. And while you wrangle over L&D, communities are devastated by the dire reality of rising sea levels, floods, droughts, and hunger. People are targeted by corporations and States, and by the disastrous impacts of the climate crisis.

As the end draws near, it is becoming clear that Bonn will not bring justice for environmental defenders and victims of L&D. After a disappointing conclusion at COP26 for ACE (and more), last week, Parties publicly affirmed the importance of including

rights-based activities in the ACE action plan but seem to have lost their way; again failing to safeguard rights, defenders and their ability to participate. The Glasgow Dialogue on L&D has fulfilled ECO's prediction: another talk-shop that couldn't deliver a finance facility. Parties didn't even manage (yet) to put L&D on the agenda for COP27.

ECO wonders why Parties thought they were coming to Bonn. Are you confused about your target or is it too many trips to the Biergarten? Here's a friendly reminder: you've come here to target the climate crisis, not the people! You've come here to target fossil fuels, stay below 1.5°C, deliver climate finance, increase communities' resilience, protect the natural world on which we all depend, and ensure justice for peoples and their planet. You've come here to protect the climate, and those who defend it.

So, dear Parties, before packing your bags for Sharm el-Sheikh, do some target practice, because you keep missing the mark!

Santiago Network; A Bridge Too Short?

We are hearing a lot from wealthy economies about a sense of urgency to operationalize the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage (SNLD). But are these genuine calls for accelerated action or are they the actions of a dodgy salesperson trying to convince a desperate customer to purchase something that isn't what they need?

The Santiago Network was born at the Chilean COP25 as a ray of hope to finally start delivering on the missing third function of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM), enhancing action and support; including finance, technology, and capacity-building to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Since the establishment of the WIM back in 2013, the people impacted by the climate emergency have been desperately waiting for action in this respect. This gaping hole in the global architecture was exposed in 2019 at

the WIM review prior to COP25. The review made it crystal clear that the absence of any action to address loss and damage was a major flaw in the WIM despite this function clearly being the third pillar of their mandate.

So, we are now hearing about urgency to act, and that we need to get the SNLD established as quickly as possible, but what is actually being offered? The scale of the climate emergency was highlighted by the latest IPCC WG2 report with losses and damages documented throughout. The scale of the challenge facing the SN is huge, and therefore we need a network that is fit for purpose. You don't build a bridge based upon how much material you have. You build a bridge that spans the gap, that is fit for purpose and does the job it is designed to do. Sadly, with the SNLD, we seem to be offered a bridge that fails to span the gap, because of the scant resources on offer.

EU and Africa: Renewables Boost Instead of Fossil Fuel Imports

COP27 is a critical opportunity to put Africa's priorities for tackling the climate crisis in the spotlight. Importantly, it is also a chance for others to step up and support Africa's agenda. ECO particularly looks towards Europe building on its responsibilities as former colonisers, neighbours, and resource extractors. Faced with huge challenges of addressing energy poverty while securing a just transition away from fossil fuels in some countries, and leapfrogging fossil fuelled development altogether in others, Africa is a continent at a crossroads with two possible futures. Africa can become a clean energy leader with decentralised renewables powering a more inclusive society and a greener economy, or it can become a large polluter that is burdened with stranded assets and economic instability.

Africa's situation deserves extraordinary attention as it is the continent least responsible for but most threatened by the climate crisis. Africa's 1 billion citizens have contributed less than 1 per cent of the world's cumulative greenhouse gas emissions but are facing huge adaptation challenges and increasing climate-driven losses and damages. ECO also wants to stress the importance of pursuing a sustainable development-centred approach to climate and energy goals, which respects African ownership, community, and civil society participation. Despite these challenges, Africa has expertise in adaptation and climate innovations, abundant renewable energy (RE) potential, a young and growing population that is ready to work, and goods and raw materials – especially the critical minerals needed for renewable energy technologies.

The energy sector is critical to enabling socio-economic development, tackling gender inequalities, addressing health challenges, and stimulating economic recovery. The energy cooperation between Europe and Africa should focus on (1) ending energy poverty through universal (decentralized) renewable energy access (including to clean cooking), (2) accelerating renewable energy financing and deployment, (3) powering key industries and sectors for Africa's socio-economic

transformation, and (4) maximizing energy efficiency.

Support to tackle these issues requires financing, complemented by technology transfer and capacity-building. Additional financing for Just Energy Transition Partnerships should focus on these priorities and cannot waste time and resources on euphemistically named 'transition' fuels (fossil gas) which will lock Africa into a slow and expensive build out of stranded assets.

The European Commission's plan for energy security (REPowerEU) was released recently and includes boosting renewables and an energy savings plan. These are good steps, but insufficient to deliver energy security for all, and not sufficiently compatible with the Paris Agreement. However, the self-imposed imperative of moving away quickly from Russian fossil gas is leading to a rush into other gas imports from regions across the world, while also deploying plans for new LNG infrastructure at a speed never seen before.

EU Commissioners and some governments' representatives have been seen travelling to African countries and are now prioritising investments into new gas purchases. But fossil gas must be kept in the ground to get the world on a 1.5°C pathway (and failing to do so will have particularly dire consequences in Africa). The EU's plans could contribute to locking in developing and EU neighbouring countries to fossil fuels, sending a torn message leading up to COP27 in Egypt.

The EU should not achieve its emission reduction targets and energy security at the expense of outsourcing its energy transition to vulnerable countries, which face the biggest impacts of climate change and need support in switching to energy efficiency and renewable energy for their own domestic needs. Instead, the EU should more quickly reduce its reliance on fossil gas use overall and fulfil its obligations to massively increase support for its African neighbours by accelerating the financing and use of renewable energies, as envisaged in many African NDCs.

Social Protection to Deal with Loss and Damage

You might have heard some chanting in the Bonn corridors – “No more blah blah blah, loss and damage finance now!” – but let it be clear, it's not just ECO in support. At Saturday's action, TUNGO said it loud and clear: “Loss and damage is a trade union issue!” So, we invited them to explain this a little more.

In April, intense rains hit the eastern coast of South Africa, causing floods and landslides. More than 400 people died as a result of the floods, which also destroyed more than 12,000 houses and forced an estimated 40,000 people from their homes.

In July last year, unprecedented rains hit the Rhine basin, with devastating consequences in Germany and Belgium. At least 243 people died, tens of thousands of homes were flooded and power supplies disrupted.

While the mud that comes in through the floods might be very much the same in South Africa and Germany, the trail it leaves is very different.

Every life lost and every home destroyed is a human tragedy. However, the people who got injured or sick in Germany may benefit from medical coverage. Those who lost their jobs (maybe temporarily) due to the closure of their workplace, will have unemployment benefits, guaranteeing their livelihoods. This is not a given. More than four billion people in the world do not have any social protection at all; they often work in informal jobs. When the heat wave strikes and they cannot go to work, they have no pay. If floods take away their jobs, they have no unemployment benefits.

ECO agrees with the unions: social protection is a part of just transition, and it's a part of the answer to meaningfully address loss and damage. When Parties are talking about the buzzword 'just transition', they should know what this means: including social protection in the New Collective Quantitative Goal, the Global Goal on Adaptation, and in the Loss and Damage Finance Facility that should be established at COP27.

Russian Actions Jeopardize Ukrainian and Global Climate Efforts

Ukraine has made a lot of efforts to increase climate ambition at the legislative level and achieve Paris Agreement goals during the last years. In July 2021, the government approved an updated NDC target for an actual reduction of GHGs. Ukraine committed itself to a 7 per cent emission reduction by 2030 compared to 2019. The first Strategy on Environmental Security and Adaptation to Climate Change was approved and Ukraine has pledged to achieve carbon neutrality in 2060. In recent years, the number of renewable energy sources has increased significantly and, also, the share of renewables in the total balance of electricity production exceeded 13 per cent in 2021.

However, on February 24, 2022, Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine – an escalation of the protracted war in Donbas and occupation of Crimea since 2014. Since then, in 112 days, tens of thousands of people have been killed, thousands of homes destroyed, more than 200 industrial facilities were bombed, about 40% of all renewable energy facilities were occupied or destroyed, and 20% of Ukrainian territory is now occupied by the Russian military. The war directly hit the agricultural sector in Ukraine, and damaged wetlands, forests, and marine ecosystems, causing irreversible damage. War and climate change, hand in hand, have hit the most vulnerable segments of the population the hardest, which could result in additional casualties.

40 per cent of Russia's federal budget comes from the export of fossil fuels, which also make up 60 per cent of Russia's exports. The Russian invasion has not only hurt Ukraine, but also jeopardized the implementation of global climate goals and the world's ability to adapt

to climate change. Instead of an accelerated transition to renewable sources and the development of energy efficiency, countries are looking to replace Russian fossil sources with fossils from other countries. As a result, an increase in oil, gas, and coal production is expected.

Reducing the flow of revenue to Russia from its exports of fossil fuels can play a role in ending the war in Ukraine and prevent future resource-based conflicts. The war has already reshaped global trade in fossil fuels and highlighted our continued dependency on them. Much more acceleration of trade in clean energy flows, finance and equipment is essential to prevent more losses, help reduce a key driver of international conflict, and accelerate the effort to avoid runaway climate change.

For all its present horrors, Ukraine is strengthening its commitment to a sustainable future and continues to support the vision of the EU Green Deal and pathways for green and sustainable recovery. The world needs a clean energy transition, and rapidly accelerating investments in the development of energy efficiency and renewable energy to increase energy security and speed up climate action for every country. To ensure adequate climate action in fragile and war-affected countries, and that climate adaptation is supported at the local level, transparent and flexible mechanisms of access to climate finance should also be developed and supported.

On June 16, at 8.30 am, please join a solidarity action in the main hall of the UNFCCC building in Bonn to highlight the need to stop fossil fuel's dependency and the subsequent wars and conflicts they provoke.

An Independent Grievance Mechanism Can't Wait

Dear Article 6 negotiators, ECO knows you did a lot of work over the last several years and that you have a long work plan this year. So, we don't want to add too much to your plate. However, we would be remiss if we didn't point out the importance of establishing the independent grievance mechanism.

ECO celebrated in Glasgow when the final decision at COP26 included the establishment of an independent grievance process. Having an avenue for communities to seek remedy when they're harmed is essential for respecting the rights of local communities and Indigenous Peoples. But that's not where the work ends. Now, Parties must establish this process, and it can't wait. The independent grievance mechanism should be set up before any Article 6 activities take place.

Structures and procedures should be put in place to ensure the independent grievance mechanism is legitimate, accessible,

equitable, predictable, transparent, rights-based, and a source of learning. The past has shown us that carbon market activities can and do negatively impact people and their environment. Respecting the right to access effective remedies requires that communities have a place to go when this happens. And that really means when it happens or when they think it will happen, and not years in the future.

Also, don't limit it to activities under the 6.4 mechanism. To be an ITMO, the cooperative approach must respect human rights including the rights of Indigenous Peoples, and so if someone is negatively impacted by such an activity, they should have access to the grievance mechanism. The right to access effective remedy is a human right.

So, as you work to make Article 6 operational, one of the first things you must do is establish an effective independent grievance mechanism.

Theatre of the Absurd: SBI Missing the AIM on Observers Engagement

Through all the years in print and on your electronic devices, ECO has rarely been at a loss for words. But as several observer constituencies were prevented from taking the floor during three consecutive contact groups dedicated to – you guessed it – enhancing observer engagement, we wondered whether “clueless,” “hypocritical,” or some other word is the right way to portray this deliberate exclusion.

No observer disputes the fact that we operate in a Party-driven process. Indeed, we desperately want Parties to show more ownership and live up to their commitments. But would it not make sense for observers to contribute in particular to those negotiations related to the improvement of our engagement?

The utter nonsense that we witnessed in the AIM

(“Arrangement for Intergovernmental Meetings”) contact group cast a shadow over the sincerity of the ongoing process led by the Secretariat to strengthen stakeholders' engagement. If civil society cannot even respond to proposals focused on enhancing our participation, were all reaffirmations of the importance of inclusiveness only a smoke screen?

Here is one of the proposals that constituencies hoped to put forward: to turn the commitment to inclusiveness into a concrete and actionable recommendation that the Secretariat and the COP hosts can ensure at UNFCCC sessions will be accessible to all – including persons with disabilities. ECO counts on Parties to relay this proposal and fix the AIM conclusions. Actions, after all, do speak louder than words.