

# ECO

## FINANCE CLIMATE ACTION, NOT GENOCIDE

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## Who's the elephant NOT in the room in the NCQG? It's time to Make Polluters Pay!

While many developed countries are busy repeating arguments about expanding the contributor base for the New Collective Quantified Goal on climate finance (NCQG), they are ignoring the climate-wrecking elephants that are not in the room: the fossil fuel industry, the super rich, and other big polluters. When you look at the huge sums of money that could be raised through innovative mechanisms to make polluters pay, it's clear that there's no shortage of public finance that developed countries could raise to meet their obligations.

The latest NCQG text rightly highlights that global fossil fuel investments averaged US \$958 billion per year in 2021-2022, and that fossil fuel subsidies averaged \$1.1 trillion per year in 2021-2022. That's before we even get on to profits - Shell's most recent quarterly profits were £4.6 billion, while Exxon raked in \$8.6 billion over the same period. Oil Change International also found that Global North countries can mobilize over \$5.3 trillion per year through a range of measures like redirecting fossil fuel subsidies, taxing fossil fuel extraction, levies on high emission sectors like aviation and shipping, raising corporation tax and financial transaction taxes.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist to contrast these figures with the growing costs of devastating floods, storms and typhoons around the world and see that some of the money should be redirected for international climate finance.

Thankfully, we're starting to see some movement towards this in the negotiations. Paragraph 122 in the latest NCQG text "acknowledges the need" for innovative instruments "targeted towards the fossil fuel sector and other high-emitting sectors." This is a great start, but it needs to be strengthened so that developed countries have a clear signal coming out of this COP that they must crack on with introducing 'polluter pays' taxes and levies when they get back home - specifically to increase the public finance pot for the NCQG.

The political mandate for this is clear. World leaders and experts have spoken up repeatedly in support of this huge opportunity to make polluters pay, and momentum is growing. Here's just a few examples:

- Barbados Prime Minister Mia Amor Mottley said: "if you have contributed to the problem, you should contribute to the solution. We know that levies on shipping,

aviation and fossil fuel extraction could raise a combined \$350bn a year!"

- Ali Mohamed, Climate Envoy, Kenya, said: "By investing in solidarity levies, we invest in a shared future and our humanity."
- The Colombian Minister this week called for global taxes to raise public funds for international climate finance.
- EU Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra said: "We need to mobilise the necessary finance... The polluter pays principle should be at the heart."
- The most recent EU Council conclusions endorsed supporting climate vulnerable countries through innovative sources of funding, including from the fossil fuel sector.
- And the UN Secretary General said one of his top five priorities for the NCQG is innovative sources of finance like taxes on marine, shipping, fossil fuel extraction.

So is COP29 the moment to turn these words into action? ECO urges negotiators to seize this huge opportunity and secure agreement in the NCQG text that mandates developed countries to lead in increasing taxes and levies on polluting industries for international climate finance.

## NAPs, time to snap out of the slumber

Growing up, ECO was told naps are good for you, so when ECO attended a COP and saw NAPs on the agenda for the first time, it was a nice surprise. Alas, turns out these NAPs are of a whole different kind where one never gets a rest and leaves the room in a bad mood.

Surely, after four days of informals and watching one huddle after another happen without a resolution, ECO could

use some uplifting news from negotiators. NAPs or National Adaptation Plans drive adaptation action and investment in developing countries. The finance gap, however, keeps growing. NAPs are an opportunity to consolidate the strategies of people, families, communities, districts and regions into a countrywide strategy.

The same countries that agreed to establish NAPs 14 years ago in Cancun in

recognition of the urgent need for countries to address climate risks now cannot seem to agree on a single decision text for the last three SB sessions.

Those risks have long since become impacts that are never going away, while new risks emerge by the day. NAPs are too important to be left hanging until the next meeting. Let's get them sorted now, and then we can take that well deserved nap.

# The GST UAE dialoguZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ

This is probably not news: climate change is a reality. There are thousands of people losing their lives, livelihoods, and cultures because of it. Also, more pragmatically, this is costing a lot of money to Parties. So ECO would imagine that they have an interest to mitigate the effects of climate change and protect their people, in an equitable and feminist manner.

But wait! Amazing, we had the Global Stocktake that happened at COP28! Parties agreed that they have to do more-- and much faster. And they also agreed that they will create a dialogue to follow-up on this. This is great right?

\*crickets\*  
Right??

Zzzzzzzzz

Why can't ECO hear anything???  
Aah it is because there is no movement in the UAE negotiations since the beginning of the week. Parties are spending hours proclaiming how they disagree, instead of trying to work on the divergences they have. They must be tired from the hours of presidential consultations the night before. None of the options they are proposing seem suitable to ECO.

It is not that complicated: Finance and the GST are not pawns to be played against each other. There is an urgent need to move forward with adequate financial means of implementation. We will not achieve anything without money. So

besides an equitable NCQG, we are asking the UAE dialogue to talk about: financing and implementing a just transition aligned with workers' rights, accessibility of finance for vulnerable people, the anchoring of strong social protections, respect for our ecosystems, financing for addressing the impacts of climate change, and the monitoring of finance and means of implementation. And we are asking for the dialogue to be inclusive and participatory, in order to effectively incorporate the views of all rights holders.

You see Parties, that was one ECO paragraph. If ECO can do it, you can too. You must work on a draft decision text and get progress. The world is watching you.

## Breaking the Climate Stalemate: All eyes on the World's Court

Climate negotiations have been stuck in a loop of empty promises and the International Court of Justice (ICJ) might just bring the plot twist we've been waiting for. This December, right after the dust settles at COP29, the world's highest court will tackle the heavyweight title fight of its history: what States owe the planet.

For too long, climate-vulnerable nations have been stuck playing tug-of-war with the world's super emitters, making compelling but ignored calls for responsibility, financing and reparations. Imagine the ICJ flipping the script with an advisory opinion providing a clean legal blueprint for climate action—no loopholes, no excuses. Suddenly, the game shifts, and the rules favor justice.

And this isn't just about the

UNFCCC's endless wrangling. The ICJ will go wide-angle, tying together international law and human rights to deliver justice to those most affected. It's like switching from blurry analog TV to crystal-clear 4K. ECO will be watching eagerly how the Court will provide legal clarity on how climate action, human rights, and accountability fit together under binding international legal standards.

Climate change is not just an environmental issue; it's a profound threat to human rights worldwide. This advisory opinion offers a rare opportunity to establish climate obligations as an undeniable human rights issue: something even the slickest lobbyists can't greenwash away! In practice, the advisory opinion can provide a new way of holding polluters accountable. For example, we could raise human rights

concerns over weak NDCs and address historical emissions and inequities. It could also become a powerful negotiation tool by clarifying the legal principles that should, at the very least, underpin UNFCCC processes.

After years of youth-led campaigning, spearheaded by Vanuatu, the UN General Assembly made history on 29 March 2023, with the unprecedented unanimous adoption of a resolution requesting this advisory opinion. Now, States need to step up and hold the line during their pleadings. No half-baked arguments. No dodging responsibility. ECO calls on participating States to amplify the voices of Indigenous communities and youth, and to make strong arguments for climate justice, human rights, and intergenerational equity.

## Where's the ambition in the COP29 Global Energy Storage Pledge?

ECO is keenly following the invitation given to countries at COP29 to join the Global Energy Storage Pledge. The aim of the pledge is to increase global energy storage capacity sixfold to 1,500 GW by 2030. Initiated and supported by G7 nations, it follows International Energy Agency (IEA) recommendations and the agreement reached at COP28 to triple global renewable energy capacity by 2030.

ECO thinks this pledge is a step in the right direction with its short-term measurable target, but it still falls short of what's needed in an energy landscape that's rapidly evolving. The Global Renewables Alliance has also called for more comprehensive targets, especially for long-duration storage.

For one, it would seem that the ambition purported in the pledge is quickly being surpassed by business-as-usual

forecasts. In the last two years BloombergNEF has raised its forecast around 250% from 411GW in 2022 to 1019GW in 2024. And so, the real ambition of this pledge to increase that capacity by 50% at the end of the decade – a far cry from the 600% increase that's being claimed in the pledge. It would hardly be a surprise if the ambition in the pledge is dwarfed by expansions in capacity given the rapid advancements in technology and shifting market dynamics.

Regional sub-targets are also crucial. Else, it risks over-reliance on China's progress, leaving other developing countries behind. Regional targets coupled with financial support at scale are needed, particularly for less developed areas.

The scope of the pledge should encompass the whole energy sector, and not just the power sector. It must establish a separate, ambitious target for thermal

energy storage, to achieve substantial growth in global energy storage capacity and facilitate the electrification and decarbonization of heating.

As it stands, this pledge is an illusion of ambition.

You know ECO never shies away from giving unsolicited advice, so here are our top picks to improve the pledge and elevate its ambition:

1. Raise the Pledge's target to 2 TW (or 20 TWh by 2030), effectively doubling global power storage capacity.
2. Set sub-targets for different regions (such as LDCs and SIDS) and adequate financial support mechanisms for developing countries to achieve the goals.
3. Establish a separate target for thermal energy storage.
4. Accelerate adoption of bidirectional charging in electric transportation.

# Off to new agricultural dimensions - A magic portal?

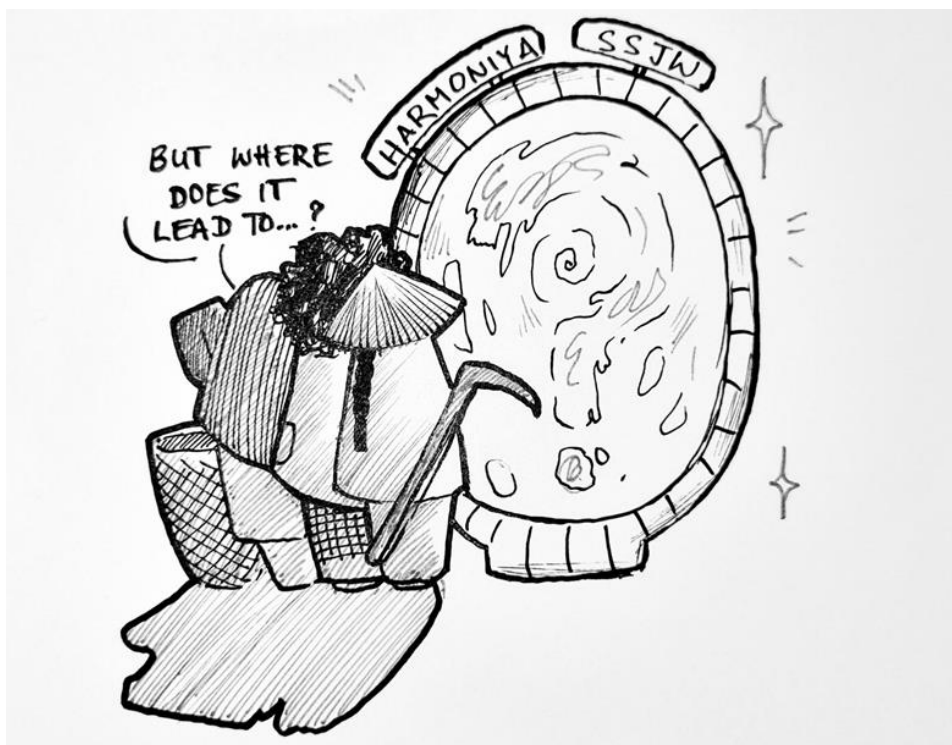
As heated negotiations took place elsewhere at COP29, the delegates of the Sharm el Sheikh Joint Work on the Implementation of Climate Action in Agriculture and Food Security (SSJW) had other horizons in mind. They are preparing to embark on a journey to a galaxy far, far away - to a place none other than the future of agriculture. Their means of transportation: an online portal for sharing projects, policies and initiatives (prepared and improved with great attention to detail during this year's SSJW negotiations.) And this is in addition to another online portal, to be launched on Food Day next week as part of the Harmoniya Initiative, to assemble existing initiatives!

ECO cannot blame delegates for wanting to explore the sky after long days in badly lit rooms. But we are wondering: where will all these portals lead, and will delegates abandon the mothership (the actual negotiations) in favour of dangerous side quests?

ECO hopes that behind the portal, we will not find false agribusiness solutions that entrench the deeply unjust and polluting agro-industrial system, but

instead a real, socially just and agro-ecological transformation of food systems that places animals, the environment and communities at its heart and is inclusive of smallholder producers, Indigenous Peoples

and their knowledge, women, youth and other marginalised groups - all of those are on THIS side of the portal, on planet Earth. Ticketing for the SSJW spaceship needs to be inclusive of all!



## Will Art. 6.4 lay waste to the ocean?

As ECO has pointed out a few times already during this COP, delegates are not stepping out of their bubble where carbon credits appear like a magic solution to the climate crisis. The article 6.4 Supervisory Body's new removals standard has even been heralded with a CMA decision on Monday evening.

They can't undo that decision anymore. But they can give strong guidance to the Supervisory Body to ensure science-based, precautionary rules. One of the areas where that is direly needed is marine Carbon Dioxide Removal (mCDR).

This is a catch-all term for a bunch of speculative techniques to remove CO2 from the atmosphere and store it in the oceans as if they are an inert volume of water that can be manipulated without consequences - that couldn't be further from the truth! The enormous scale at which marine geoengineering techniques would need to be deployed to have any meaningful impact on the climate - e.g. an estimated 10% of the ocean's surface for ocean fertilisation or ocean

alkalinity enhancement - poses serious risks including the disruption of marine ecosystems, destabilising delicate marine food webs, substantial loss of biodiversity and changes in ocean chemistry. In fact, some techniques may disrupt the ocean's biochemical processes to the extent of risking turning the Earth's largest carbon sink into a carbon source.

All that comes on top of the fact that the oceans already suffer badly from the impacts of climate change, pollution and overfishing. There are serious governance and human rights concerns too. Methods such as ocean fertilisation or large-scale seaweed plantations risk putting coastal communities and Indigenous Peoples at severe risk by disrupting their food systems and livelihoods and violating their rights.

To transcend the COP29 carbon bubble, it is imperative to heed the science and respect human rights, honoring the commitment parties made at COP28 to align climate action in ecosystems with

the KMGBF. Removals under 6.4 must ensure ecological as well as environmental integrity. It also means taking a close look at what other conventions have decided. Just under two weeks ago, CBD COP16 reaffirmed its longstanding moratorium on geoengineering and the need to adopt a precautionary approach, partly in response to the alarming increase in open-water marine geoengineering experiments. But Baku doesn't seem very keen on picking up the phone when Cali calls!

Perhaps London's call offers a stronger warning: Over the past decade, the London Convention/London Protocol on marine pollution has developed rules that prohibit the use of techniques like ocean fertilisation, including for offsets purposes. Are negotiators here ready to ignore this and the decisions of the UNFCCC's biodiversity sister convention?

ECO likes to believe they aren't and urges them to leave this COP with strong guidance to prevent the 6.4 market mechanism causing irreversible harm to ecosystems like the ocean.

# Waste Not the Global Methane Pledge

To slash methane emissions, we need to tackle methane from the waste sector. Methane accounts for over 30% of current global warming and cutting methane is one of the fastest paths to keeping a safe 1.5°C future within reach. Rapidly scaling up action in the waste sector can account to roughly 20% global methane emissions reduction. Landfills alone constitute 11% emissions, so managing organic waste in particular is an urgent need.

Yesterday, the Global Methane Pledge Ministerial brought together countries that have championed this effort. Indeed, reducing methane emissions is an urgent complement to our transitions and decarbonisation strategies with immediate benefits - as long as effective action is taken, along with appropriate finance and fit-for-purpose solutions.

Despite its climate mitigation potential, the waste sector is severely

underfunded. Worse still, finance is going into the wrong pockets. Upstream solutions such as waste prevention, source-separation of organic discards, composting and other methods have the potential to reduce waste methane emissions by as much as 95% by 2030. They can also replace fossil fuels in energy generation and/or in fertilizers, and create good jobs for waste pickers and community-based organizations who are the 'de facto' recycling system in the Global South.

Yet, these solutions are only receiving 1% (US\$22M) of all climate finance for methane abatement, while dirty and greedy waste-to-energy incinerators receive 94% (\$4.08B). Of this financing, 54% come from the private sector, according to the Climate Policy Initiative.

For the Global Methane Pledge to succeed, aligning implementation with a just transition pathway in the waste sector is a

must. The Environmental Justice Principles for Fast Action on Waste and Methane are a critical tool to guide action. For that to happen, climate finance in the waste sector must shift dramatically from waste disposal to scaling and replicating successful community-led zero-waste initiatives that deliver the greatest environmental and social justice benefits

Notably, a coalition of countries from Latin America and the Caribbean have committed to include the waste sector in their NDCs for 2025, and it is expected that the declaration will align with environmental justice principles. Well done to Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Panama, Uruguay - and maybe more in coming days. May this be a first step towards the effective implementation of real solutions. Needless to say we need to watch closely, make sure that these good intentions become reality. There is no time to waste.

## Looking for Promised Guidance

ECO remembers hearing that we shouldn't worry about the unacceptable process the CMA followed for accepting the Supervisory Body recommendations without any discussion. Don't worry, you said, the Parties can still give guidance. Don't worry, we'll exercise oversight of the Supervisory Body. And clearly you need to.

So far, these promises seem empty because when ECO looked at the draft 6.4 text, it seemed many things were missing and there was lots of room for improvement. ECO wonders if you were listening when the constituencies spoke at the first Contact Group or if all the Parties just tuned out.

Don't worry. You have time to fix it. And you need to because otherwise the door could be flung open to risky/dangerous activities and contain huge loopholes for environmental and ecological integrity.

ECO has warned over and over

about the removals requirements. And there is still a lack of clarity on key issues that have to be addressed to prevent harm. SO tell the Supervisory Body to close these loopholes.

Mandate that there has to be a minimum post-crediting monitoring period that's in line with the best available science and that reflects the lifetime of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere (because once it's up there, it accumulates and causes more harm).

Also tell the Supervisory Body that its Risk Assessment Tool must be science-based, applied conservatively, and informed by proactive consultations with stakeholders that do not have conflicts of interest. It must also ensure that there is a maximum risk threshold above which projects are ineligible. And what's the point of a buffer pool if the credits in it and canceled from it aren't the same as the credits they are trying to make

up? Instead, demand that rules are set and consequences are established.

Just because activities may satisfy the CDM or REDD doesn't mean they automatically satisfy 6.4 rules. So, if you're going to try and credit these forest activities then make sure they are additional under the removals standard.

CMA should instruct the Supervisory Body to ensure all of its standards and policies are in line with science, human rights, and international law (think precautionary principle, other international environmental conventions like the CBD, human rights law, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, among others.) And any time the SBM creates new standards or policies or updates existing ones, demand that the current ones are treated as the floor and that they are improved in line with best available science and international law.

## First Fossil of the Day award of COP29: the G7

The first Fossil of the Day at COP29 in Baku has been collectively awarded to the countries of the Group of Seven: United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom. The G7 have received the award for spending the past 20 years dodging, skirting, and running away from their fiscal responsibility to pay up for their growing climate finance debt.

The G7 countries think they can hide behind each other but civil society sees right through their strategy. They have come to COP29 without putting forward any proposed figure for the Climate Finance

Goal (NCQG). While these countries may not be a voting bloc in these halls, they have certainly been able to BLOCK progress here. This exclusive club, whose members are among the top 10 historical emitters, wants everyone else to have equal responsibility for fixing the climate crisis they majorly contributed to - where is the accountability for their actions?

Just the other day, the US was pushing forward an 'onion approach' to finance, sneaking in profits for its friends through private finance, within 'multiple layers of investments', when public finance

is what's needed - and available - for the climate finance goal.

Even with the increasing impacts of climate change coming to their shores doesn't seem to make the G7 countries realise what is needed. Halfway through the critical decade of climate action (2020-30), the G7 is still standing in the way of delivering much-needed progress to meet the 1.5°C goal and prevent us from joining the dinosaurs and becoming extinct. Meanwhile, Japan has to reduce their emissions by 81% by 2035 from 2013 levels to be in line with the Paris 1.5°C goal.