

# SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBSERVER

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**IDN-InDepthNews**  
Analysis That Matters

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**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OBSERVER ISSUE 15 NOVEMBER 2022**

## **COP 27 – AGREEMENT TO PAY COMPENSATION ..... IS IT REALLY?**



**We were the ones whose blood, sweat and tears financed the industrial revolution. Are we now to face double jeopardy by having to pay the cost as a result of those greenhouse gases from the industrial revolution? That is fundamentally unfair - Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados at COP 27**

## FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to our 15<sup>th</sup> issue of Sustainable Development Observer focusing almost exclusively on COP 27 – or what is known as the annual UN climatic change conference.

Three decades after small island states introduced the term "loss and damage" to the United Nations, the world has finally agreed to set up a fund to help vulnerable countries cope with climate risks. But who pays, who receives and how much money should be raised are all open questions, to be settled in the next year or so (at COP28?). At this year's talkfest, rich nations insisted that the payments should not be about liability and compensation.

Thirteen years ago, at COP15 Copenhagen, developed nations made a significant pledge. They promised to channel \$100 billion a year to less wealthy nations by 2020, to help them adapt to climate change and mitigate further rises in temperature. That promise, however, was not kept.

Meanwhile, China is one of the main funders of renewable-energy projects in Africa. At last year's China-Africa Cooperation forum, Beijing committed to ramping up investments in solar, wind, and other renewables across the continent and has made no overseas coal power investments since 2021. It is also one of several nations funding the International Monetary Fund's \$20 billion IMF Resilience and Sustainability Trust on pandemics and climate change resilience.

In comparison, similar accomplishments by the US are very few. The US government has funnelled more than \$9 billion into oil and gas projects in Africa since it signed up to restrain global heating in the 2015 Paris climate agreement, a tally of official data shows, committing just \$682 million to clean energy developments such as wind and solar over the same period. Two-thirds of all the money the US has committed globally to fossil fuels in this time has been ploughed into Africa, a continent rich in various minerals but also one in which 600 million people live without electricity. European leaders also received criticism from African activists who accuse Europe of using Africa as a personal gas station. Germany has been pursuing development of a gas field in Senegal to plug its energy crisis while demanding that African governments fast-track renewable energy for their own electricity needs.

At a press conference, Mohamed Adow, director of Power Shift Africa, an energy and climate think-tank, commented: "Having been thrust to the front lines of a climate crisis we did not cause, Africans have long urged rich countries to wean themselves off fossil fuels and slash their greenhouse-gas emissions. But, instead of heeding our calls, the rich have remained addicted to oil and gas - much of which, in Europe's case, has come from Russia. Now they are taking this insult a step further: in their drive to end their dependence on Russian energy, the world's wealthiest economies are turning to Africa".

There will be no issue next month, but we will be back in January 2023.

Dr Kalinga Seneviratne - Editor

**Issue 15 – November 2022**  
Bringing You Stories and Issues Relevant  
To Achieving The SDGs in The  
Post-COVID Era

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## Climate Deal Disappoints Climate Activists

By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK | SHARAM EL-SHEIKH, Egypt — Delegates to the UN climate conference (COP27) reached a compromise to create a fund for disadvantaged countries coping with climate disasters worsened by pollution, mainly from wealthy nations.



Aftermath of cyclone in the South Pacific.  
Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

The meeting of almost 200 countries, ending on November 20 after two weeks of talks, put a finishing touch to one of the most contentious issues dogging the UN group that saw years of discussion but no agreement on how to phase out fossil fuels or meet the urgent needs of African and other regions of the Global South.

The compromise was a new “loss and damage” fund - a win for poorer nations that have long called for cash, sometimes viewed as reparations - for the costs of destructive storms, heat waves and droughts fueled by global warming.

The United States and other wealthy countries have long rejected the loss and damage concept, fearing they could be held legally liable for the greenhouse gas emissions that are driving climate change.

Although the Americans have now agreed to add to a fund, money must be appropriated by the US Congress. Last year, the Biden administration sought \$2.5 billion in climate finance but secured just \$1 billion, and that was when Democrats controlled both chambers. With Republicans in power, who largely oppose climate aid, the prospects for approving an entirely new pot of money appear dim.

Collins Nzovu, Zambia's minister of green economy and environment, called the latest development “a very positive result for 1.3 billion Africans”.

But many African climate activists were dismayed by the small steps taken by the global delegates and also by the African delegations who, they said, used the conference to embrace the new scramble for oil and gas on the continent.

“For any meaningful outcome to be achieved in Egypt,” wrote Tal Harris of Greenpeace, “delegates must listen to the people of Africa- not the fossil fuel sector - and collectively commit to a phase out of all fossil fuels”.

Other outspoken critics of fossil fuel development were Kenyan climate activist Barbra Kangwana of Safe Lamu. The group squashed government efforts to build a coal plant at Lamu, a UNESCO world heritage site, in the name of boosting the national electricity supply.

“The community raised its voice, lobbied, signed petitions, went to court, and eventually the people won,” she said.

Patience Nabukalu, an activist from Uganda, has been organizing against an East African crude oil pipeline (EACOP), calling it “a clear example of colonial exploitation in Africa and across the global south”.

“EACOP is not going to develop our country: peoples’ land was taken, leaving many homeless and poor and critical ecosystems and biodiversity at risk of oil spills such as lake Victoria, rivers, National Parks, animals and birds, as well as aquatic life. We remain hopeful and vigilant as banks and insurers have withdrawn their support. We will continue to resist until everyone involved abandons it completely.”

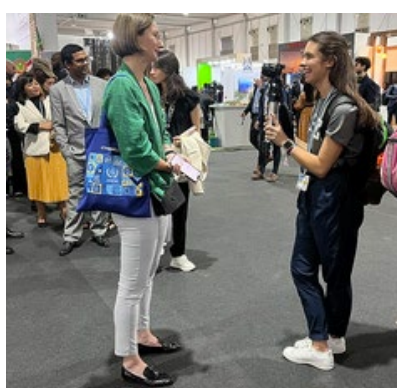
“The fossil fuel industry has degraded our people, our lands, our oceans and our air,” charged Mbong Akiy with Greenpeace Africa. “Enough is enough. No matter how many deals they sign, no matter how many bribes they pay, or how fancy the suits they wear: we shall wait for them in our communities, we will wait for them on the frontlines.

“We will not stop until we see a complete transition to clean, renewable energy that is guaranteed to take millions of Africans out of energy poverty... . In South Africa we have won against big oil, we sent Shell packing, and we will send them all packing again.”

“Fossil fuel production, if adopted, will stop Africa from leapfrogging towards a renewable and clean energy future,” said Dean Bhekumuzi Bhebhe of Powershift Africa. “We pledge to continue pushing for The Africa We Want beyond COP27.”

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews on 22 November 2022]

## Done Deal on Loss and Damage but More Work on Cutting Emission



Delegates and the Media at COP 27.  
Photo Credit: Wikimedia commons

By Busani Bafana

SHARM EL-SHEIKH — Developing countries hard hit by climate change are set to get funds to help them deal with climate disasters after delegates to COP27 agreed to establish a long-sought Loss and Damage Fund but made little progress about cutting carbon emissions responsible for them.

Following around-the-clock negotiations that saw COP being extended by a day, negotiators from 200 countries struck an early morning deal on Sunday to establish a historic loss and damage fund.

While the details of the fund in terms of eligible countries to benefit from the fund will be finalized at the next climate conference (COP28) in the United Arab Emirates in 2023, a transitional committee will oversee the operationalization of the fund.

The Loss and Damage Fund, which for the first time made the COP27 agenda is part of the Sharm El-Sheikh Implementation Plan<sup>1</sup> on climate change. Parties agreed to recommit keeping the 1.5°C target for global temperature alive. The draft deal noted that the impacts of climate change exacerbate the global energy and food crises and vice versa, particularly in developing countries.

Loss and damage is about the destructive impact of climate change that cannot be avoided either by mitigation which is avoiding and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It can also be through adaptation which is adjusting to current and future climate change impacts. It means that climate change is already having negative effects on ecosystems, infrastructure, and people’s health and livelihoods globally. Loss and damage can be classified into economic and noneconomic losses which can include the loss of biodiversity and cultural heritage through severe weather events such as droughts and floods which are due to climate change. Developing countries have campaigned for the loss and damage fund for the last 30 years since small island countries under the Alliance for Small Island States (AOSIS), pushed for it.

Under Article 8<sup>2</sup> of the Paris Agreement Parties recognize the importance of averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate

<sup>1</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2022\\_L21\\_revised\\_adv.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2022_L21_revised_adv.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups\\_committees/loss\\_and\\_damage\\_executive\\_committee/application/pdf/ref\\_8\\_decision\\_xcp.21.pdf](https://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/loss_and_damage_executive_committee/application/pdf/ref_8_decision_xcp.21.pdf)

change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events, and the role of sustainable development in reducing the risk of loss and damage.

“We heard the calls, and we responded,” said COP President Sameh Shoukry, it was only appropriate that COP27 dubbed ‘the implementation COP in Africa’ is where the fund was finally established.

“Millions around the globe can now sense a glimmer of hope that their suffering will finally be addressed, swiftly and appropriately,” Shoukry said.

UN Climate Change Executive Secretary said the outcome had determined a way forward on a decades-long conversation on funding for loss and damage and deliberation on how the impacts on communities whose lives and livelihoods have been ruined by the very worst impacts of climate change can be addressed.

The African Group of Negotiators (AGN) welcomed the agreement on the establishment of the Loss and Damage Fund.

“After 30 years of endeavour on African soil, the world has arrived together to establish a new fund and funding arrangements for assisting developing countries to address loss and damage by providing and assisting in mobilizing new and additional resources to the continent that are particularly the most vulnerable to the adverse effect of climate change,” said Collins Nzovu, Minister of Green Economy and Environment for Zambia in a statement, on behalf of the AGN.

Nzovu said the AGN was at COP27 to advance the implementation of climate actions and to address the escalating climate emergency affecting millions of vulnerable people, especially in Africa and other developing countries.

“We believe that with the adoption of the decisions here today, some ray of hope may shine on our planet. It is our expectation that through the commitment and actioning of the words, the burden of the poorest may be minimized,” said Nzovu.

A report<sup>3</sup> by Climate Policy Initiative - US-based research and climate policy organization - found that it would cost around US\$2.8 trillion between 2020 and 2030 to implement Africa’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). African governments have committed US\$264 billion of domestic public resources and are banking on international funders to provide US\$2.5 trillion. According to the report, Africa needs about US\$250 billion per year to meet the 2030 climate goals.



The State of Climate Finance in Africa:  
Climate Finance Needs of African Countries

June 2022

Equating climate chaos to a crisis of biblical proportions, UN Secretary-General António Guterres said COP27 was driven by justice for those on the frontlines who did not cause the climate crisis and the ambition to pull humanity back from the climate cliff by keeping the 1.5-degree limit alive.

“This COP has taken an important step towards justice,” said the UN chief. “I welcome the decision to establish a loss and damage fund and to operationalize it in the coming period. Clearly, this will not be enough, but it is a much-needed political signal to rebuild broken trust.”

Mr Guterres, highlighting that the planet was still in the emergency room, called for accelerated action to drastically reduce emissions, an issue he said COP27 did not address.

“A fund for loss and damage is essential - but it’s not an answer if the climate crisis washes a small island state off the map - or turns an entire African country to the desert,” he said.

<sup>3</sup><http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/file/state%20of%20climate%20finance%20in%20africa%202022.pdf>

The Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that Africa will be impacted more than any other continent despite the continent only contributing less than 4% of the world's total emissions. The report estimates that adaptation costs in developing countries will reach US\$127 billion, and Africa needs up to US\$86.5 billion annually by 2030.

Mary Robinson, Chair of *The Elders* and former President of Ireland, said in a year of multiple crises and climate shocks, the historic outcome on loss and damage at COP27 shows international cooperation is possible, even in testing times.

"Equally, the renewed commitment on the 1.5 °C global warming limit was a source of relief. However, none of these changes the fact that the world remains on the brink of climate catastrophe," Ms Robinson said in a statement released by the Elders, a group of independent leaders founded by Nelson Mandela in 2007.

"All climate commitments must be transformed into real-world action, including the rapid phase-out of fossil fuels, a much faster transition towards green energy, and tangible plans for delivering both adaptation and loss and damage finance," said Robinson, lamenting the slow progress made on mitigation since COP26 in Glasgow.

Robinson's counterpart and Deputy Chair of *The Elders* and first Education Minister of Mozambique, Graça Machel, added that the multiple crises of food, energy, and the impacts of climate change on vulnerable nations were at the forefront of the 'African COP'.

"Though there were restrictions on civil society in Egypt, people living on the frontlines of the climate crisis still made their voices heard: their cries for a loss and damage fund for nations devastated by climate impacts were heeded. Now rich countries must deliver on their promises and ensure the funding starts to flow as quickly as possible."

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews – 21 November 2022]

*\* This article has been published by IDN with the support from MESHA/IDRC grant for the coverage of COP27.*

## **COP27: Leaders Launch Global Alliance Against Future Drought Impacts**

By Rita Joshi

BONN | SHARM EL-SHEIKH — Leaders from over 25 countries and 20 organizations have launched the International Drought Resilience Alliance to accelerate action and help countries to be better prepared for future droughts.

Drought represents the most serious hazard to livestock and crops in nearly every part of the world, and ranks among the greatest threats to sustainable development, especially in developing countries, but increasingly so in developed nations too.



Unprecedented droughts have far-reaching impacts on agriculture, energy, transportation, tourism, and human health. Photo: Source: International Drought Resilience Alliance

In the declaration made in the margins of UN Climate Change Conference, leaders from all sectors pledged on November 7 to drive change in how the world tackles the growing drought risks: moving from emergency response to building long-term resilience.

Presidents Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón of Spain and Macky Sall of Senegal rallied world leaders to create the Alliance as “a specific solution for the United Nations” to the impacts of climate change.

In a joint communication, Presidents Sánchez and Sall declared: “We are only as resilient to climate change as our land is. Building resilience to drought disasters is the way to secure the gains we make on each sustainable development goal, particularly for the most vulnerable people. The mission of the alliance is to give political impetus to make the land’s resilience to drought and climate change a reality by 2030.”

Ibrahim Thiaw, Executive Secretary, United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), said: “We are in a race for drought resilience —and it’s a race we can win. Drought is a natural hazard but does not have to lead to human disaster. The solutions are available, and we can create a drought resilient world by increasing our ambition, harnessing the political will, and joining forces to act together.”

The Alliance will be bolstered by new political commitments, including a Euro 5 million seed fund announced by Spain, co-convenor of the event with Senegal, to support the work of the Alliance and catalyze a process to mobilize more resources for this agenda, and a commitment made by the President of Kenya, William Ruto, to plant 5 billion trees in the next 5 years, and 10 billion trees in 10 years.

The Alliance calls on leaders to make drought resilience a priority in national development and cooperation, including deepening the engagement of stakeholders, such as the private sector, in work on drought resilience.

Among the key objectives of the Alliance is promoting the consolidation of regional initiatives to fast-track sharing of innovation, technology transfer and mobilization of resources.

The Alliance will also collaborate with other platforms, including the initiative launched by the United Nations Secretary-General and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to achieve universal coverage of early warning systems and regional initiatives to reap the maximum benefits of working together on drought resilience.

Building drought resilience presents an opportunity to significantly reduce the high human, social and economic costs of drought. These range from the loss of life, livelihoods and biodiversity, to water and food insecurity, to disruption in the energy, transportation and tourism sectors, as well as forced migration, displacement, and conflicts over scarce resources.



### **Drought in numbers**

According to the latest *Drought in Numbers*<sup>4</sup> report compiled by UNCCD, droughts have increased in frequency by 29 per cent since 2000, with some 55 million people affected every year.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects that droughts will be more frequent, severe and last longer. Climate change bears much of the responsibility, but so does how we manage our land and water resources.

The IPCC estimates that three out of every four people in the world will be living in drier, water-scare conditions by 2050. Between 1900 and 2019, droughts impacted 2.7 billion people worldwide and caused 11.7 million deaths.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.unccd.int/resources/publications/drought-numbers>

From 1998 to 2017, drought generated economic losses of about US\$124 billion across the world, not to mention the cost in human suffering and lives.

Drought is a driver of migration: water deficits explain 10% of the rise in total migration.

The latest IPCC report projects that by 2030, drought will displace 700 million people in Africa alone. By 2040, an estimated one in four children will live in areas with extreme water shortages.

Up to 216 million people could be forced to migrate by 2050, largely due to drought in combination with other factors including water scarcity, declining crop productivity, sea-level rise, and overpopulation.

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews — 08 November 2022]



Massive protest at COP27 demanding leaders to address vital issues related to agriculture, adaptation and climate resilience. Photo Credit: Laura Quinones

### **A New Initiative Seeks to Transform Agriculture & Food Systems**

By Bernhard Schell

SHARM EL-SHEIKH — The Egyptian Presidency of the UN Climate Conference COP27 has launched a new initiative *Food and Agriculture for Sustainable Transformation* or FAST, to improve the quantity and quality of climate finance contributions to transform agriculture and food systems by 2030.

The cooperation programme will have concrete deliverables for helping countries access climate finance and investment, increase knowledge, and provide policy support and dialogue.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), along with other UN agencies, will be the facilitator of this initiative, which, according to Zitouni Ould-Dada, Deputy Director of the agency's Climate and Environment Division, puts agriculture at the heart of efforts to tackle climate change.

While the agricultural and food sector is profoundly impacted by climate change, it also contributes around a third of global greenhouse emissions, from production to consumption, Mr Ould-Dada explained, saying that there must be a transformation of the agri-food systems.

He told *UN News*, "We can't continue with the current model of producing food and then degrading the soil, declining biodiversity, affecting the environment. No. It must be sustainable".

The expert highlighted that if the right choices are made, agriculture can be an important part of the solution to fight the climate crisis by sequestering carbon in soil and plants and promoting



adaptation and resilience. “We can’t produce the food to feed and nourish a growing population with the current model, with the threat of climate change. We can’t.”

The first thing the world should be tackling, he says, is addressing food waste, which is responsible for 8 per cent of global gas emissions. “We have around 828 million people who go hungry every day. And yet, we throw away a third of the food that we produce for human consumption. We need to change our mindset, our production model, so that we don’t lose and waste food,” he emphasised.

He added that in terms of solutions, harnessing the power of innovation is crucial to reduce emissions, helping adapt agriculture to a changing climate, and making it more resistant against adversity, not only caused by climate change, but also by pandemics or war, such as the current situation in Ukraine.

“Innovation in the broader sense like precision farming where you have drip irrigation combined with renewable energy so that you have efficiency. But also, innovation harnessing traditional knowledge of smallholder farmers is also important, because it is happening all the time,” Mr. Ould-Dada emphasized.

Small-scale farmers from developing countries produce one-third of the world’s food, yet they only receive 1.7 per cent of climate finance even as they are forced to cope with droughts, floods, cyclones and other disasters.



Small-scale farmer in Fiji.  
Photo Credit: Kalinga Seneviratne

This sentiment echoed through dozens of pavilions and conference rooms in Sharm el-Sheikh on November 12 as COP27 turned its attention to the vital issues of adaptation, agriculture and food systems in the context of climate change.

“We need to help rural populations build their resilience to extreme weather events and adapt to a changing climate. If not, we only go from one crisis to the next. Small scale farmers work hard to grow food for us in tough conditions,” Sabrina Dhowre Elba, Goodwill Ambassador for the UN International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), said during a press conference.

Dina Saleh, the Regional Director of IFAD, explained that failure to help rural populations to adapt could have dangerous consequences, leading to longer poverty, migrations and conflict.

“This is why today we are calling on world leaders from developed nations to honour their pledge to provide the \$100 billion a year in climate finance to developing nations and to channel half of that to have that amount to climate adaptation,” she underscored.

Thirteen years ago, at COP15 Copenhagen, developed nations made a significant pledge. They promised to channel \$100 billion a year to less wealthy nations by 2020, to help them adapt to climate change and mitigate further rises in temperature. That promise, however, was not kept.

Ms Saleh cautioned that there is a “narrow window” to help rural poor people to survive and protect their communities, and that crop yields could reduce by as much as 50 per cent by the end of the century.

“The choice is between adapting or starving,” she warned, urging COP27 to be about action, credibility and justice for the invisible and the silent.

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews on 12 November 2022]



Photo Credit: Pesticide Action Network – North America

## **Agroecology, The Antidote for Climate Change?**

By Busani Bafana

SHARM EL-SHEIKH — The world needs to dump the false solutions of industrial agriculture for food and nutritional security and adopt agroecology in tackling climate change, says Edward Mukiibi, president of Slow Food, a global organization promoting local food and traditional cooking.

Agroecology rejects chemical fertilizers and tackles climate change while making it possible to move from exploiting resources to regenerating them. Instead of taking away from the planet, it brings back diversity, valuing local varieties, biodiversity, and knowledge.

Promoters of agroecology say it offers an inclusive and complete path toward transformation because it links the social and environmental aspects of sustainability, addressing the entire system. It is attentive to inequalities of power and to farmers' earnings and draws on a plurality of bodies of knowledge, including marginalized voices.

"World leaders need to acknowledge that agroecology is the only path towards resilience and to listen to the needs and solutions of small-scale farmers," Mukiibi said in a statement at the close of COP27.

"Slow Food calls for a shift from a system based on climate-intensive global food trade to one promoting fair and short distribution networks. We need a holistic transformation of food systems that encompasses all links in the chain, from production to consumption," said Mukiibi, lamenting that COP27 fell short of delivering an ambitious plan for the future of food.

Agriculture through crop and livestock production has a huge environmental footprint. The livestock sector alone contributes 14.5 per cent of harmful global greenhouse gasses, specifically methane produced through their digestion and waste.

According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), agriculture employs over a billion people and generates about \$2.4 trillion for the global economy.

## **A solution to climate change**

However, agriculture can also be a solution to climate change through mitigation and the absorption of carbon emissions - agriculture and food systems featured in many sessions at COP27 held in Egypt.

Agriculture, for the first time, was integrated into United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the climate action body with governments signing off on the 'Koronivia' package.

The Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA)<sup>5</sup>, a landmark decision under the UNFCCC, recognizes the unique potential of agriculture in tackling climate change. The joint work addresses issues of soils, nutrient use, water, livestock, methods for assessing adaptation, and the socio-economic and food security dimensions of climate change across the agricultural sectors.

Mukiibi noted that the agreed Koronivia joint work on agriculture does not include food systems and sidelined agroecology altogether as a potential solution for adaptation to climate change, despite its proven multiple benefits.

"Without an ambitious mandate for the Koronivia mechanism, the world will not be able to deliver sustainable, fair, and resilient food systems that enable people and nature to prosper within planetary boundaries," Mukiibi said.

Slow Food condemns the false solutions that keep being put forward in international climate talks, such as GMOs (Genetically Modified Organisms). If we want to ensure both long-term food security and the survival of the planet, such techno-fixes must be out of the picture.

Financing developing countries to address adverse effects of climate change without addressing the root causes and mitigation measures of the crisis will not help, said Mukiibi adding that "It will only give industrial agriculture giants more freedom to propel their greenwashing false solutions".

The International Panel of Experts on Sustainable Food Systems (IPBES) expressed disappointment that Koronivia negotiators did not agree to address 'sustainable food systems'—meaning that wider issues like food waste and loss, nutrition, healthy sustainable diets, and resilient supply chains will continue to be left out of the UN climate agreement and unfunded.

### **How about small-scale farmers?**

"Even more dismaying, across COP27, small-scale farmers have been left outside the tent, and the solutions they propose, such as diverse and resilient 'agro-ecological' food and farming, deleted as a potential solution for adaptation to climate change, despite compelling evidence of its benefits," IPBES said in a statement.

Million Belay, coordinator of the Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa and panel expert with IPES-Food, said small-scale farmers who are being hit first and worst by climate change struggled to have their voices heard at COP27, amongst the record-high agribusiness lobbyists.

"They demanded support and climate finance for diverse and resilient agroecological food systems to help adapt to the floods and droughts they are facing—but they leave with very little. World leaders must not leave Africa's producers to their own fate," said Belay.

The FAO has announced that it will launch a roadmap for the Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) sector to make food systems more sustainable in line with the 1.5C target by 2050.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.fao.org/koronivia/en/>

FAO will launch the road map intended to lower global greenhouse gas emissions from food and agriculture systems by COP28. This follows an urgent call by investors managing \$18 trillion in combined assets for the FAO to produce a Global Roadmap to align with the 1.5 degrees C, nature and nutrition security goals.

The international non-governmental organization, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), said it was disappointing that, with an agreement formally adopted, the mandate for the successor of the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture remained narrowly focused on agricultural production. The agreement, according to WWF, did not recognise the importance of food systems transformation in preventing the most severe impacts of climate change.

Approximately 100 organizations from the food, climate and nature sectors signed a joint open letter to negotiators and ministers urging for the inclusion of food systems in the new mandate of the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture.

“Sadly, the new agriculture and food security agreement fail to provide an ambitious framework to limit the impacts of food systems on climate change, “Joao Campari, Global Food Practice Leader at the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) said, adding that limiting climate change to the 1.5 degrees Celsius will require action across the entire food system, including production, consumption and loss and waste.

“Ignoring these solutions leaves us hurtling towards irreversible damage to our planet. We are deeply disappointed that the coalition of approximately 100 organizations that we convened to urge focus on food systems approaches was not listened to.”

Campari believes hope is not lost as the establishment of a four-year joint work on agriculture and food security offered a possibility to increase ambition and take a truly holistic approach in its implementation.

Good and agricultural systems account for one-third of global greenhouse gasses, which are responsible for a warming planet. There have been calls for COP to recognise not just agriculture, but the use of broad food systems is key to climate change adaptation and mitigation.

[ransmitted by IDN-InDepthNews on 22 November 2022]

*\* This article has been published with the support of the MESHSA/IDRC grant for the coverage of COP27.*



Photo Credit: China Briefing

### **Africa: China Ramps Up Funding for Renewable Energy**

By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK — China is one of the main funders of renewable-energy projects in Africa. At last year's China-Africa Cooperation forum, Beijing committed to ramping up investments in solar, wind, and other renewables across the continent and has made no overseas coal power investments since 2021.

It is also one of several nations funding the International Monetary Fund's \$20 billion IMF Resilience and Sustainability Trust on pandemics and climate change resilience.

In comparison, similar accomplishments by the US are very few. The US government has funnelled more than \$9 billion into oil and gas projects in Africa since it signed up to restrain global heating in the 2015 Paris climate agreement, a tally of official data shows, committing just \$682 million to clean energy developments such as wind and solar over the same period.

Two-thirds of all the money the US has committed globally to fossil fuels in this time has been ploughed into Africa, a continent rich in various minerals but also one in which 600 million people live without electricity and where floods, severe heatwaves and droughts are taking an increasingly devastating toll as the planet heats up due to the combustion of coal, oil and gas. President Joe Biden pledged to increase international climate financing from \$5.7 billion to \$11.4 billion per year by 2024. However, Congress approved just \$1 billion this year.

“I was thrilled with the promises from the Biden administration but over the last two years it's been a slow walk back to the point where you couldn't tell the difference between Biden and [Donald] Trump on overseas fossil fuel finance,” said Kate DeAngelis, international finance program manager at Friends of the Earth, who said it was “absurd” that wealthy oil companies were supported by US taxpayers.

“It's been frustrating and tiresome to see so many opportunities lost to transition away from fossil fuels,” she said. “It's just business as usual. We are seeing some of the most vulnerable communities in Africa be negatively impacted and they don't have a voice.”

One analysis by Carbon Brief, a UK-based website specializing in the science and policy of climate change, concludes that taking account of historic carbon emissions with proportional contributions to the \$100 billion pledge, the U.S. owes developing countries nearly \$40 billion.



Colonialism Revisited: Then looking for land, now looking for oil.  
Photo Credit: Wikimedia Commons

European leaders also received criticism from African activists who accuse Europe of using Africa as a personal gas station. Germany has been pursuing development of a gas field in Senegal to plug its energy crisis while demanding that African governments fast-track renewable energy for their own electricity needs.

Power Shift Africa, an energy and climate think-tank, commented: “Having been thrust to the front lines of a climate crisis we did not cause, Africans have long urged rich countries to wean themselves off fossil fuels and slash their greenhouse-gas emissions.

“But, instead of heeding our calls, the rich have remained addicted to oil and gas - much of which, in Europe's case, has come from Russia. Now they are taking this insult a step further: in their drive to end their dependence on Russian energy, the world's wealthiest economies are turning to Africa.

“Here is a message we want to send to German Chancellor Olaf Scholz,” said Adow. “The days of colonialism are over. We won't accept energy colonialism.”

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews on 15 November 2022]



The Champions of Earth laureates 2022. Photo Credit: UNEP

## UN's Top Environmental Award Supports Ecosystem Restoration

By Devendra Kamarajan

NAIROBI — A conservationist, an enterprise, an economist, a women's rights activist, and a wildlife biologist have been honoured by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) with its 2022 Champions of the Earth award for their transformative action to prevent, halt and reverse ecosystem degradation.

This UN's highest environmental honour has been bestowed every year since 2005. To date, the award has recognized 111 laureates: 26 world leaders, 69 individuals and 16 organizations. This year a record 2,200 nominations from around the world were received.

"Healthy, functional ecosystems are critical to preventing the climate emergency and loss of biodiversity from causing irreversible damage to our planet. This year's Champions of the Earth give us hope that our relationship with nature can be repaired," said Inger Andersen, Executive Director of UNEP.

"This year's Champions demonstrate how reviving ecosystems and supporting nature's remarkable capacity for regeneration is everyone's job: governments, the private sector, scientists, communities, NGOs and individuals."

UNEP's 2022 Champions of the Earth laureates, announced on November 22, are:

- Arcenciel (Lebanon), honoured in the *Inspiration and Action* category, is a leading environmental enterprise whose work to create a cleaner, healthier environment has laid the foundation for the country's national waste management strategy. Today, arcenciel recycles more than 80 per cent of Lebanon's potentially infectious hospital waste every year.
- Constantino (Tino) Auca Chutas (Peru), also honoured in the *Inspiration and Action* category, has pioneered a community reforestation model driven by local and Indigenous communities, which has led to three million trees being planted in the country. He is also leading ambitious reforestation efforts in other Andean countries.
- Sir Partha Dasgupta (United Kingdom), honoured in the *Science and Innovation* category, is an eminent economist whose landmark review on the economics of biodiversity calls for a fundamental rethink of humanity's relationship with the natural world to prevent critical ecosystems from reaching dangerous tipping points.
- Dr Purnima Devi Barman (India), honoured in the *Entrepreneurial Vision* category, is a wildlife biologist who leads the "Hargila Army", an all-female grassroots conservation movement dedicated to protecting the Greater Adjutant Stork from extinction. The women create and sell textiles with motifs of the bird, helping to raise awareness about the species while building their own financial independence.
- Cecile Bibiane Ndjebet(Cameroon), honoured in the *Inspiration and Action*category, is a tireless advocate for the rights of women in Africa to secure land tenure, which is essential if they are to play a role in restoring ecosystems, fighting poverty and

mitigating climate change. She is also leading efforts to influence policy on gender equality in forest management across 20 African countries.

Following the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), this year's awards shine a spotlight on efforts to prevent, halt and reverse ecosystem degradation globally.

Ecosystems on every continent and in every ocean face massive threats. Every year, the planet loses forest cover equivalent to the size of Portugal. Oceans are being overfished and polluted, with 11 million tonnes of plastic alone ending up in marine environments annually. One million species are at risk of extinction as their habitats disappear or become polluted.

Ecosystem restoration is essential for keeping global warming below 2°C and helping societies and economies to adapt to climate change. It is also crucial to fighting hunger: restoration through agroforestry alone has the potential to increase food security for 1.3 billion people. Restoring just 15 per cent of converted lands could reduce the risk of species extinction by 60 per cent. Ecosystem restoration will only succeed if everyone joins the #GenerationRestoration movement.

UNEP is the leading global voice on the environment. It provides leadership and encourages partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

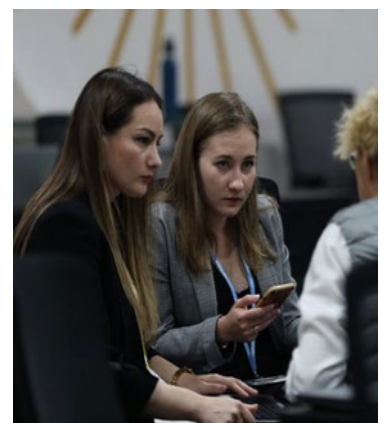
The UN Environment Programme's Champions of the Earth honours individuals and organisations whose actions have a transformative impact on the environment. The annual Champions of the Earth award is the UN's highest environmental honour. It recognizes outstanding leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector.

UNEP, together with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the UN, leads the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration (2021-2030), which the UN General Assembly is designed to prevent, halt, and reverse the loss and degradation of ecosystems worldwide. It aims at reviving billions of hectares, covering terrestrial as well as aquatic ecosystems. A global call to action, the UN Decade draws together political support, scientific research, and financial muscle to scale up restoration massively.

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews on 22 November 2022]



### **CROSS-CULTURAL INTRIGUE, COLLABORATION AND QUESTIONS AT COP 27**





A family gathers sticks and branches for firewood and making a shelter to protect them from the elements and wild animals and flee for refuge. The carcasses of animals, which have perished in the drought are strewn across the desert. Photo Credit: Andy Hall/Oxfam

### **The Climate Dispossessed are not Refugees**

Viewpoint by Teall Crossen

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — Let's be clear, people displaced by climate breakdown are not climate refugees under international law. They are not being forced from their countries because of persecution by their own government. Nor are they migrants. They are not leaving in search of work or education, or to be closer to family.

Rather, many millions of people are likely to be dispossessed from their homes by the choices of other countries to continue to pollute the atmosphere, without a legal framework to protect them.

In the past, Bangladesh and the Maldives have both called for the Refugee Convention to be extended to protect people displaced by climate change, without success. The UN Human Rights Committee has rejected a claim against New Zealand for deporting Ioane Teitiota back to Kiribati, despite rising seas and other climate damage imperiling his life.

While a pathway to safety from deportation in the future may be possible under international human rights law, there are no guarantees, and no enduring solution on the horizon for the millions of people at risk of being dispossessed by climate damage.

Forced relocation of communities is already happening internally in the Pacific region. Recent floods in Pakistan highlight the gravity and immediacy of the crisis, with millions of people displaced from their homes across a country that is currently, literally, drowning. Without urgent and deep emission cuts beyond the commitments in the Paris Agreement, entire nations, particularly those in the Pacific region, are in jeopardy.

The international legal system is ill-equipped to respond to climate displacement - of both people and countries. Deeply troubling questions remain unanswered. How would international law



protect the sovereign rights of a country destroyed by climate impacts? What would the legal status be of citizens from an island country no longer habitable, and could the country exercise their sovereignty elsewhere? Calls have been made for new norms to fill the legal void.

But, in advocating for an international legal regime to protect the climate dispossessed, we admit that it is too late to abate the warming climate. We concede that climate displacement across international borders is inevitable. This approach comes with major hazards.

When we plan how to provide for people threatened by climate displacement, we provide an excuse to continue to pollute the atmosphere; it privileges polluting countries where displacement is not a serious threat and entrenches unequal global power dynamics. It appears cheaper, and likely easier, to look at migration as a climate solution, rather than giving up our addiction to climate pollution.

Islands have been thought dispensable in the past to further economic progress. Following the Second World War, most of the people of Banaba Island in what is now Kiribati were relocated to Fiji to enable the colonial government to expand phosphate mining operations.

Similar plans were made to relocate the entire population of Nauru to Curtis Island off the coast of Australia, again to allow the expansion of phosphate mining to enhance the profits accruing to Australia, Britain and New Zealand from industrial agriculture. Nauruans rejected the proposal, preferring to maintain their national sovereignty and identity.

Of course, there is also a danger in not planning for all eventualities, including the possibility of cross-border displacement. Tuvalu, one of the most vulnerable Pacific countries to climate change impacts has called for a United Nations resolution to establish a legal process to protect the human rights and lives of those displaced by climate change.

There is also ongoing work by the Taskforce on Displacement under the Climate Convention, including in relation to enhanced cooperation for displacement and planned relocation. The Taskforce seems to be taking only tentative steps, however, in recognition that its very existence admits failure. The ultimate goal of the Convention is to prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and the likely prospect of millions of displaced people seems beyond dangerous.

Any approach to climate displacement, including the development of new legal norms, needs to be firmly grounded in existing international law. The Refugee Convention does not provide answers for the climate dispossessed. The liability of polluting countries for climate damage, however, is more instructive as a foundation. Countries most at risk of forced displacement are the least responsible for causing rising temperatures and the ensuing loss and damage.

Therefore, providing climate reparations to vulnerable countries so that remaining in their own territories is a viable option is a far better approach, that will protect both people and the sovereign identity of countries at risk.

\* **Teall Crossen** is an environmental barrister with two decades of experience advocating for environmental justice in Aotearoa and overseas. She has worked for Forest & Bird (New Zealand), Greenpeace International, and served Pacific Island countries at the United Nations. Teall is the author of *The Climate Dispossessed: Justice for the Pacific in Aotearoa?*

[Transmitted by IDN-InDepthNews on 16 November 2022]

### **COP27: Amid compromises, world finds solace in loss and damage breakthrough**

Developing countries now dare to hope that they have enough money to tide through rising climate risks, though many details need to be ironed out in the coming year. Efforts to slash emissions, meanwhile, appear to have taken a back seat.



Source: Eco-Business - <https://www.eco-business.com/news/cop27-amid-compromises-world-finds-solace-in-loss-and-damage-breakthrough/>



### **The voices missing at COP27: Where is the global south?**

Some of the loudest voices at COP27 were those of educated, English-speaking young people from around the world. Very few were from vulnerable communities living with the realities of climate change.

Source: Eco-Business - <https://www.eco-business.com/opinion/the-voices-missing-at-cop27-where-is-the-global-south/>

### **Pakistan hails 'pivotal step' as countries adopt COP27 deal with 'loss and damage' fund**

Pakistan on Sunday welcomed the announcement that countries adopted a hard-fought final agreement at the COP27 climate summit that sets up a fund to help poor countries being battered by climate disasters.

Source: Dawn (Pakistan) - <https://www.dawn.com/news/1722046>

### **COP 27 ends with historic win and abysmal fail**

The COP27 climate negotiations staggered to an historic agreement on finance for developing countries on Sunday morning. But failed abysmally to curb fossil fuels or greenhouse gas emissions. A viewpoint from New Zealand.



Source: Newsroom - <https://www.newsroom.co.nz/sustainable-future/cop-27-ends-with-historic-win-and-abysmal-fail>

## **India Could Navigate the G20 Next Year in a New Direction**

Viewpoint by M. K. Bhadrakumar

NEW DELHI — The seventeenth G20 Heads of State and Government Summit held in Bali, Indonesia, on November 15–16 stands out as a consequential event from many angles. The international politics is at an inflection point and the transition will not leave unaffected any of the institutions inherited from the past that is drifting away forever.

However, the G20 (or Group of Twenty - comprising 19 most of the world's largest economies, including both industrialised and developing nations and the European Union) can be an exception in bridging time past with time present and time future.

The tidings from Bali leave a sense of mixed feelings of hope and despair. The G20 was conceived against the backdrop of the financial crisis in 2007 - quintessentially, a western attempt to burnish the jaded G7 by bringing on board the emerging powers that stood outside it looking in, especially China, and thereby inject contemporaneity into global discourses.

The leitmotif was harmony. How far the Bali summit lived up to that expectation is the moot point today. Regrettably, the G7 selectively dragged extraneous issues into the deliberations and its alter ego, North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), made its maiden appearance in the Asia-Pacific. Arguably, the latter must be counted as a fateful happening during the Bali summit.

What happened is a negation of the spirit of the G20. If the G7 refuses to discard its bloc mentality, the cohesion of the G20 gets affected. The G7-NATO joint statement could have been issued from Brussels or Washington or London. Why Bali?

The Chinese President Xi Jinping was spot on saying in a written speech at the APEC CEO Summit in Bangkok on November 17 that "The Asia-Pacific is no one's backyard and should not become an arena for big power contest. No attempt to wage a new cold war will ever be allowed by the people or by the times."

Xi warned that "Both geopolitical tensions and the evolving economic dynamics have exerted a negative impact on the development environment and cooperation structure of the Asia-Pacific." Xi said the Asia-Pacific region was once a ground for big power rivalry, had suffered conflicts and war. "History tells us that bloc confrontation cannot solve any problem and that bias will only lead to disaster."

The golden rule that security issues do not fall within the purview of G20 has been broken. At the G20 summit, the western countries held the rest of the participants at the Bali summit to ransom: "Our way or no way". Unless the intransigent West was appeased on Ukraine issue, there could be no Bali declaration, so, Russia relented. The sordid drama showed that the DNA of the western world hasn't changed. Bullying remains its distinguishing trait.

But, ironically, at the end of the day, what stood out was that the Bali Declaration failed to denounce Russia on the Ukraine issue. Countries such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey give reason for hope that G20 can regenerate itself. These countries were never western colonies. They are dedicated to multipolarity, which will ultimately compel the West to concede that unilateralism and hegemony is unsustainable.

This inflection point gave much verve to the meeting between the US President Joe Biden and the Chinese President Xi Jinping at Bali. Washington requested for such a meeting on the sidelines of the G20 summit, and Beijing consented. One striking thing about the meeting has been that Xi was appearing on the world stage after a hugely successful Party Congress.

The resonance of his voice was unmistakable. Xi underscored that the US has lost the plot, when he told Biden: "A statesman should think about and know where to lead his country. He should also think about and know how to get along with other countries and the wider world."

The White House readouts hinted that Biden was inclined to be conciliatory. The US faces an uphill challenge to isolate China. As things stand, circumstances overall work to China's advantage.

The majority of countries have refused to take sides on Ukraine. China's stance amply reflects it. Xi told Biden that China is "highly concerned" about the current situation in Ukraine and support and look forward to a resumption of peace talks between Russia and China. That said, Xi also expressed the hope that the US, NATO and the EU "will conduct comprehensive dialogues" with Russia.

The fault lines that appeared at Bali may take new forms by the time the G20 holds its 18th summit in India next year. There is reason to be cautiously optimistic. First and foremost, it is improbable that Europe will go along with the US strategy of weaponising sanctions against China. They cannot afford a decoupling from China, which is the world's largest trading nation and the principal driver of growth for the world economy.

Second, much as the battle cries in Ukraine rallied Europe behind the US, a profound rethink is under way. Much agonising is going on about Europe's commitment to strategic autonomy. The recent visit of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz to China pointed in that direction. It is inevitable that Europe will distance itself from the US cold war aspirations. This process is inexorable in a world where the US is not inclined to spend time, money or effort on its European allies.

The point is, in many ways, America's capacity to provide effective global economic leadership has irreversibly diminished, having lost its pre-eminent status as the world's largest economy by a wide margin. Besides, the US is no longer willing or capable of investing heavily in shouldering the burden of leadership. Simply put, it still has nothing on offer to match China's Belt and Road Initiative. This should have had a chastening influence and prompted a change of mindset toward cooperative policy actions, but the American elite are stuck in the old groove.

Fundamentally, therefore, multilateralism has become much harder in the present-day world situation. Nonetheless, the G20 is the only game in town to bring together the G7 and the aspiring developing countries who stands to gain out of a democratised world order. The western alliance system is rooted in the past. The bloc mentality holds little appeal to the developing countries.

The gravitation of Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Indonesia toward the BRICS conveys a powerful message that the western strategy in conceiving the G20 - to create a ring of subaltern states around the G7 - has outlived its utility.

The dissonance that was on display in Bali exposed that the US still clings to its entitlement and is willing to play the spoiler. India has a great opportunity to navigate the G20 in a new direction. But it requires profound shifts on India's part too - away from its US-centric foreign policies, coupled with far-sightedness and a bold vision to forge a cooperative relationship with China, jettisoning past phobias and discarding self-serving narratives, and, indeed, at the very least, avoiding any further descent into beggar-thy-neighbour policies.

*\* Ambassador M K Bhadrakumar is a former Indian diplomat. He served the Indian Foreign Service for more than 29 years.*

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