



01 October 2024

Recommendations for the Environment (ENVI) Council Conclusions on preparations for COP29

Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe is Europe's leading NGO coalition fighting dangerous climate change. With 200 member organisations active in 40 European countries, representing over 1,700 NGOs and more than 40 million citizens, CAN Europe promotes sustainable climate, energy and development policies throughout Europe.

To: EU Ministers for Environment and Climate

We are writing ahead of the Environment (ENVI) Council 14 October 2024 in which the Council conclusions on preparations for the 29th Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC will be adopted.

As we approach COP29 and as the adoption of conclusions for COP29 is on the agenda of the 14 October ENVI Council, we urge the European Union to demonstrate bold leadership by advancing a more ambitious, people-centred, nature-centred, just, transparent, and equitable approach. In a year marked by devastating climate impacts, violent geopolitics, and widening gaps in global action, the EU must step up to champion a transformative agenda that aligns with scientific urgency, prioritises peace and justice, and centres the needs of those most affected.

Significantly Scaling Up International Climate Finance

COP29 must establish a significantly more ambitious New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) that reflects the needs of developing countries. The NCQG should strive to channel a minimum of \$1 trillion in public grants and grant-equivalent finance to trigger and support the necessary transformations in the global south. Distinct, quantified public finance sub-goals on mitigation, adaptation and and loss and damage action should give orientation for channelling that finance¹.

The EU should continue to strategically lead allies from rich countries to realise significantly scaled up financial commitments. CAN Europe does not support an EU position that frames the expansion of the group of contributors as a prerequisite for an ambitious NCQG in a situation where developed countries have not yet made any clear offer on how they would step up public climate finance.

A key lesson from the previous \$100 billion international climate finance goal (2020-2025) is that especially in climate vulnerable and fragile contexts, market-driven private finance is insufficient, unavailable, ill-suited, and generates unsustainable debt.

In addition, the EU must advocate for the further capitalization in accordance with needs of the Loss and Damage Fund at COP29. The Fund should prioritise just, fair, and direct access for frontline local communities, especially those that have been historically marginalised.

¹ CAN International submission on the NCQG (August 2024):

https://climatenetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Climate-Action-Network_NCQG_August-2024.docx.pdf

The EU must also champion innovative and sustainable sources of finance, such as global, EU, and national subsidies, taxes and levies on the fossil fuel industry and other high emitting sectors, in line with the Polluter Pays Principle, to provide long-term, equitable support as part of the NCQG framework. Such funding sources can redirect trillions of public financial support to climate action, including to the Loss and Damage Fund, and simultaneously stimulate the just transition to a green economy in Europe - levelling the playing field for green industries to compete against traditional high-emitters including fossil fuel companies, corporate agribusiness, airlines, and multinational financial institutions.

Implementing the Global Stocktake

The response to the Global Stocktake must reflect the latest scientific findings from the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report while upholding the principles of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities, and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC). Central to the GST is the recognition that the 1.5°C is the uppermost acceptable warming limit, requiring all Parties to align their actions accordingly. COP29 must deliver actionable, time-bound pathways to meet the Paris Agreement goals, focusing on mitigation, finance, adaptation, ecosystem protection, loss and damage, and transforming food systems.

GST outcomes should prioritise inclusivity and human rights, particularly the rights of marginalised people including Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Outcomes should be cognisant of the intersectional nature of injustice, and incorporate gender-responsive, disability-responsive, and socially just approaches. It is crucial that policies reflect the lived experiences of frontline communities, ensuring marginalised voices not only contribute but lead the process.

Rapidly Phasing Out Fossil Fuels

The EU must be at the forefront of a global movement to phase out fossil fuels, without caveats such as “unabated” fossil fuel phaseouts. This means committing to an end of domestic use of coal by 2030, fossil gas by 2035, and oil by 2040. There must be an immediate halt to all new fossil fuel projects, and a firm commitment to not rely on Carbon Capture Usage and Storage (CCUS) technologies, which remain costly and unproven.

We therefore call for the EU to utilise COP29 to declare that ambitious, 1.5°C aligned and equitable fossil fuel phase out dates will be part of the upcoming EU NDC. The EU should also clearly demonstrate its support for other countries for including such dates and respective plans and strategies in their NDCs.

The continued use of fossil fuels is severely damaging the planet’s ability to provide critical ecosystem services, including stable weather systems, clean air, fresh water, fertile soils, and biodiversity, with particularly alarming impacts on oceans, which absorb around a quarter of global CO₂ emissions and are suffering from acidification, warming, and deoxygenation.

We call on the EU to support a COP29 conclusion to at least triple global renewable energy capacity to 11,000 GW by 2030 and to adopt national and EU binding targets to reach at least 50% renewables by 2030 and 100% by 2040. Alongside this, substantial improvements in energy efficiency must be prioritised in the EU, aiming for at least 20% energy savings by 2030 and halving energy consumption by 2040. The EU must also phase out all fossil fuel subsidies by 2025, avoiding qualifiers like “environmentally harmful” that dilute commitments.

Mitigation Ambition Aligned with Science and Equity

The IPCC has made it clear: to limit warming to 1.5°C, global greenhouse gas emissions need to peak before 2025 and be cut by at least 43% by 2030 and 60% by 2035, compared to 2019 levels. Current pledges remain insufficient. All UNFCCC Parties, including the EU, must enhance their current NDCs to close both emissions and implementation gaps, with robust policies and measures to achieve these targets.

It is time for the EU to adopt an ambitious 2040 target - CAN Europe urges for net zero by 2040 at the latest to reflect ambition and fairness required for 1.5°C compatible climate action - and a related 2035

target (at least 82% gross reductions) to be included in the new Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The EU can also set an important example by pursuing a trio of targets for the overall 2040 target, including a) gross emission reductions; b) net sequestration in the LULUCF sector; c) permanent industrial removals.

The world is watching whether the EU will be among the first and most ambitious NDC movers. This will give other major emitters the confidence to submit ambitious NDCs early, ideally by the UNFCCC agreed timeline of February 2025. Although EU decision-making processes can be slow, ministers cannot afford to be complacent - the EU only met the previous NDC submission deadline due to the postponement of COP26 caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. EU leaders must reassure the world of their sustained ambition at COP29, and intervene if necessary at the December EUCO to accelerate the adoption of an NDC early enough to live up to the EU's status as a climate leader.

It is also essential to accelerate implementation and increase the EU's ambition by 2030 to harness the socio-economic benefits of climate action, securing Europe's long-term prosperity and reaching climate neutrality, according to a CAN Europe report². CAN Europe calls the EU to overachieve its 2030 ambition, reaching at least 65% gross emission reductions (76% net emission reductions), in order to align with the 1.5°C goal and fully harvest these socio-economic benefits.

Human Rights and Civil Society Participation

There is no climate justice without human rights. The EU must lead in ensuring human rights are safeguarded within international, regional, and national climate processes; and must fight to ensure civil society and frontline communities can meaningfully participate. Tangentially, international human rights and strong environmental safeguards should be central considerations for the EU when signing or implementing bilateral agreements (e.g. on climate and energy) with third countries.

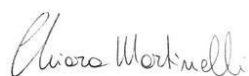
Independent monitoring of transnational climate governance by civil society is not a 'nice to have' - it is intrinsic to the success of the UNFCCC process, and should not be subjugated to private interests, harassment, or intimidation. Furthermore, local activists should be protected from harm, including in COP host countries.

Strengthening Accountability and Addressing Conflicts of Interest

The influence of the fossil fuel industry continues to hinder meaningful climate action. We call on the EU to push for a robust UNFCCC Accountability Framework to define and regulate conflicts of interest, ensuring that the integrity of international climate negotiations is upheld and that policy decisions prioritise the public interest over private profits.

We believe that the EU has the opportunity to set a powerful precedent at COP29 by championing a truly transformative and just approach that puts people and nature at the centre of the climate agenda. We stand ready to support you in achieving these goals.

Yours sincerely,



Chiara Martinelli, Director of Climate Action Network Europe

² Bold climate action: new report reveals potential €1 trillion savings for EU (January 2024)
<https://caneurope.org/bold-climate-action-report-trillion-savings/>