



THE  
LUTHERAN  
WORLD  
FEDERATION

## LWF Engagement at COP28

### Introduction

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has a long-standing commitment to Climate Justice<sup>1</sup>. **Since 1977**, the LWF has been engaged in theological reflections on the care of creation and the mutual responsibility to respond to ecological challenges, issuing substantive statements on climate justice and resources promoting faithful earth keeping.

**Climate change is affecting disproportionately** the livelihoods of **the poor and most vulnerable** worldwide, especially those who are often faced with different forms of discrimination and marginalization, such as women in situations of poverty, youth, children, people with disabilities, and indigenous people.

LWF recognizes the urgency for taking action against the climate emergency. **The Paris Agreement** that was adopted in December 2015 and entered into force in November 2016, sets long-term goals to guide all nations in substantially reducing global greenhouse gas emissions in order to limit the global temperature increase this century well below to 2°C, while pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase further to 1.5°C, and to avoid or reduce adverse impacts and associated loss and damage.

In March 2023, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the Synthesis Report of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)<sup>2</sup>, confirming that human-induced global warming of 1.1 degrees C has caused changes in the Earth's climate that are unprecedented in recent human history. More than ever, deep near-term reductions in greenhouse gas emissions are needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C, with reductions of 43% by 2030 and 60% by 2035, compared to 2019 levels.

The ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement is of crucial importance! The LWF advocates for common but differentiated climate action at all levels, from individual behavioral change to socio-economic transformation and policy change. **We call on everyone but especially the major emitters, as a matter of climate justice, to take the necessary steps by implementing the emission reduction measures in accordance with**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lutheranworld.org/climate-justice/resolutions-statements-climate>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>

**1.5°C.** High-emitting emerging economies such as Qatar, Singapore and China are also encouraged to contribute to the necessary mobilization of climate finance, and new sources of finance such as carbon levies on maritime transport and international flights should be explored.

The climate finance target of US\$100 billion per year set by developed countries has been missed; based on current accounting and reporting practices of climate finance contributors, total reported climate finance in 2020 was US\$83.3 billion.

According to the IPCC, climate finance will need to increase by a factor of 3 to 6 by 2030 to meet mitigation targets alone; and estimates that developing countries will need \$127 billion per year by 2030 and \$295 billion per year by 2050 for adaptation, in addition to the funds needed to prevent, minimize and address loss and damage. **Developed countries must adequately scale up climate finance, prioritizing the most vulnerable communities to adapt to unavoidable climate impacts and to compensate for losses and damages beyond the limits of their adaptive capacity.**

## 1. LWF Climate Justice Commitment and Action from Local to Global to Local

The LWF is committed to strengthening efforts for climate justice. Climate change is a fundamental threat to the full enjoyment of human rights, human dignity, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Climate justice is a multidimensional concept. LWF has been particularly attentive to some of its dimensions:

- **Justice for the climate vulnerable:** Poor and climate-vulnerable people bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change, mostly in developing countries, while they have contributed the least to it. This makes climate change an issue of social and economic justice.
- **Gender justice:** Women in situations of poverty are disproportionately affected by climate change impacts. This makes climate change an issue of gender equity.
- **Intergenerational justice:** The future of the youth and coming generations is at stake. Climate change puts at risk the right to a future of self-determination.
- **Faith-based cooperation and witness:** Faith-based organizations function as important relays for forming alliances for climate justice in civil society.

Moreover, climate change becomes a question of justice for other disadvantaged groups like indigenous people, disabled people, elderly people, migrants, and other minority groups. Due to the deadly threat of climate change for many animal and plant species, climate change is not the least an issue of **environmental justice**.

The LWF is **committed to a climate-resilient, zero-carbon development pathway**: In the 2014 Public Statement on Climate Justice, the **LWF committed** to do its part by becoming carbon neutral by 2050; in 2015, the LWF announced the decision to **divest from fossil fuels** as a first concrete step towards this goal and as a contribution to the transition to a low-carbon economy.

More recently, at the 13th LWF Assembly in September 2023: "We commit ourselves to be more effective advocates for economic and climate justice and to safeguard the planet and its resources for future generations. Together, we affirm that creation is not for sale."

In line with this, the LWF reaffirmed its commitment and decided to update and strengthen its goal to become carbon neutral by 2030 in light of the climate emergency we are all experiencing. As part of its commitment, it has also encouraged the LWF member churches to integrate campaigns for climate justice into their activities.

LWF is a global communion of churches, engaged at the grassroots level in nearly every region of the world. **LWF is particularly exposed to climate risks**: 68 of our member churches, representing 45.9% of LWF's membership, are located in 34 countries that belong to the group of most climate vulnerable countries. **We work on the front lines of climate change by developing initiatives to address loss and damage, improve adaptation and mitigate climate change, in response to people's needs.**

With observer status, LWF has been **engaged with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** since many years. We participate in COPs and other processes, actively contributing in areas where we have expertise, especially by giving most vulnerable communities a voice and by engaging on climate justice issues. That we send **youth delegations with members from all continents** to the COPs underscores our confidence in the **power of youth to bring about change towards intergenerational climate justice**.

Climate justice requires climate action all around the year and at all levels, from local to national to global and back to local. Therefore, LWF set up a **permanent climate advocacy hub**, called '**Action for Justice**'. It is a collaborative effort that accompanies and supports member churches, ecumenical and faith-based organizations, civil society, as well as communities either affected by climate impacts or being engaged in climate change mitigation to strengthen advocacy for climate justice.

## 2. The Importance of COP28

The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change**, adopted in 1992, ratified by 197 countries and entered into force in 1994, calls on parties to host every year a **Conference of the Parties (COP)**. The UNFCCC, aiming at preventing dangerous human

interference with the climate system, turns 30 this year, while the Paris Agreement, adopted at COP21, turns seven.

The **Paris Agreement**<sup>3</sup> is the **most important multilateral climate policy framework** and the central tool for mobilizing international commitment to address climate change. LWF advocates for the full and most ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement and its main instruments for implementation at national level: The **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**, **National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)**, and **Long-term (Decarbonization) Strategies (LTS)**.<sup>4</sup> Other important elements like climate finance, technology transfer, capacity building, transparency framework, and frameworks for international cooperation are crucial to support their ambitious implementation, especially in the Global South.

COP27 addressed the impacts of the climate crisis with a landmark decision for the most vulnerable on "loss and damage"; more progress was made than many thought possible; all governments at COP27 agreed to establish a Loss and Damage Fund, giving hope to the most vulnerable people on the frontlines of climate change impacts.

However, COP27 failed to address the root causes of climate change and set clear pathways and plans to achieve 1.5C, there was no decision to phase out fossil fuels. Thus, governments continue jeopardizing the main goal of the Paris Agreement, to keep global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius, and if possible, at 1.5 degrees Celsius.

COP28 takes place in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), from November 30<sup>th</sup> to December 12<sup>th</sup>. The climate summit 2023 comes as temperature records continue to be broken and the world experiences the hottest year on record. The UN's Global Stocktake synthesis report shows that much more needs to be done to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement. COP28 is a critical opportunity to put the world on a more sustainable path.

### 3. LWF Expectations and Policy Demands for COP28

COP28 is taking place in a challenging global political and economic context, where growing populism and authoritarianism, wars and international tensions continue to escalate. In the current global context, it has become even more difficult to reach consensus on major global crises like climate change and the required solutions. Mutual trust and deepened cooperation among governments and other major stakeholders is crucial in order to overcome the climate crisis. LWF will therefore **promote trust, dialogue and listening to each other**, as important elements to finding just solutions and advancing the policy and political discussions at COP28.

#### Global Stocktake

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<sup>3</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-critical-role-faith-actors-national-climate-debate>

The first Global Stocktake, mandated under the Paris Agreement, is the centerpiece of COP28. It is the key link between the long-term goals of the agreement and the national implementation actions because it shows the progress made towards achieving the goals. The discussion on the synthesis report of the Global Stocktake must be robust and should lead to the adoption of measures to ensure that the goals can still be achieved within the required timeframe. This is particularly important because all indications so far show that the collective efforts and climate actions towards mitigation, adaptation, provision of finance and other means of implementation as well as addressing loss and damage are far below what is required to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

**We call on Parties to conduct the Global Stock-take with a view to regain the momentum towards ambitious climate action.** The science is clear – every effort must be made to keep global warming below 1.5 degrees and communities affected by the impacts of climate change must be supported. This means that **states must reach an agreement to move from incremental to transformative climate action and submit appropriately renewed NDCs by 2025.**

### Climate change mitigation

Rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions remains the most important measure to mitigate the climate crisis. In particular, **fossil fuels**, which are responsible for 70 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions, **must be replaced quickly and completely by renewable energy.** The main obstacle remains governments and companies that continue to invest in and protect fossil fuels with false claims that a secure and affordable energy supply can only be achieved with oil, gas and coal. Investing in renewable energy would increase the prospects for achieving the mitigation goal of the Paris Agreement.

We call on Parties to agree to **double energy efficiency and triple renewable energy capacity by 2030, and support a similar call** by the COP28 Presidency, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), and the Global Renewables Alliance (GRA)<sup>5</sup>. In addition, the total length of the global electricity grid must be doubled by 2040 to ensure a smooth energy transition to carbon neutrality. To achieve these goals, **a credible and robust financing strategy, that shifts investments from fossil fuels to renewable energy, must be put in place.** We expect global fossil fuel emissions and consumption to peak in 2025 and begin to decline sharply by 2030.

### Climate finance

COP28 and the fight against climate change can only succeed if sufficient financial resources are made available.

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<sup>5</sup> [https://mc-cd8320d4-36a1-40ac-83cc-3389-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2023/Oct/COP28\\_IRENA\\_GRA\\_Tripling\\_renewables\\_doubling\\_efficiency\\_2023.pdf?rev=7824ef3346f64e7daa784f3440e30d27](https://mc-cd8320d4-36a1-40ac-83cc-3389-cdn-endpoint.azureedge.net/-/media/Files/IRENA/Agency/Publication/2023/Oct/COP28_IRENA_GRA_Tripling_renewables_doubling_efficiency_2023.pdf?rev=7824ef3346f64e7daa784f3440e30d27)

The credibility of the developed countries stands or falls on finally delivering on their repeatedly broken financial commitments and providing evidence that the 100 billion USD in annual climate finance has been made available to developing countries. Without provision of climate finance and other means of implementation such as technology transfer and capacity building, the trust in the global climate regime is severely weakened.

In addition, **investments by all actors must be consistent with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement**. This also means that the IMF and development banks focus on protecting global public good, that greenhouse gas emissions are levied (including maritime shipping and aviation), and that the funds generated are prioritized to finance the transformation in the Global South, especially in countries that cannot meet the costs of transformation on their own. This includes the costs of enhancing climate resilience and compensating for climate-related losses and damages.

**We call on developed countries to fulfil the annual 100 billion USD climate finance commitment and on all major emitters to contribute to mobilizing of additional finance to at least double the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCAG) for post 2025 climate finance.**

**We call on all governments to speed up the reform of the climate and development finance architecture**, reflecting the new geopolitical and economic realities in a balanced way, and leading to the mobilization of at least 1 trillion USD per year for the transformation of the Global South, as recommended by the IPCC in its 6th Assessment Report<sup>6</sup>.

**We call for carbon levies and the mobilization of climate finance from new sources, such as shipping and aviation.**

**We call on all investors**, including private investors, **to invest in the transition to a sustainable, climate-resilient and decarbonized future**, i.e., to align all their investments with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

### Climate adaptation

Climate adaptation has not received sufficient attention in the run-up to COP28, despite the IPCC's warnings that climate adaptation thus far is only incremental and not transformative, that far too little investment in resilience is being made, and that the limits of adaptive capacity would quickly be reached, especially in coastal regions and other particularly climate-vulnerable systems.

The growing adaptation gap is fundamentally at odds with the core priorities, human rights and survival of vulnerable people and countries.

**We call on developed countries to ensure that the commitment to double adaptation finance by 2025 is on a robust path to be achieved.**

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/>

**We call on all parties to set a target of at least doubling adaptation finance in the context of the post-2025 NCQG on climate finance.**

**We call on parties to agree on a comprehensive framework for the Global Goal on Adaptation to be agreed at COP28.** This should include measurable, reportable and verifiable targets to measure progress in resilience building for all the key risks identified by the IPCC: low-lying coastal systems; terrestrial and marine ecosystems; critical physical infrastructure, networks and services; living standards; human health; food security; water security; and peace and migration.

**We call on all parties to develop and implement National Adaptation Plans - NAPs that address all key climate risks,** that prioritize the specific **needs of the most vulnerable** communities, and that are transformative, participatory, inclusive and adheres to human rights and gender justice principles.

#### **Financially redressing loss and damage**

In 2023, all heat records have been broken once again and climate-related losses and damages are expected to add up to a new all-time high. The negative economic impacts exceed the capacity, especially in the most climate-vulnerable countries, to cope. The non-economic losses to biodiversity and ecosystems, the livelihoods of indigenous communities, and the cultural heritage and social cohesion of local communities, among others, because of the climate crisis cannot be overestimated. COP28 must deliver on the commitments on Loss and Damage made at Sharm-El-Sheikh by fully operationalizing the Loss and Damage Fund.

**We call on all parties to engage in constructive, result-oriented negotiations on loss and damage and to operationalize and provide resources for the Loss and Damage Fund or funding arrangements as per the decisions of COP27.**

The Loss and Damage Fund should be established under the COP and the CMA, with a governance system that is fit for the primary purpose of serving **the needs and priorities of those impacted by climate-induced loss and damage.** The governance and administration of the fund must ensure effective and expedited decision-making and the immediate release of funds in the event of a sudden onset event.

All developing countries should be eligible for the Loss and Damage Fund, but with a **particular focus on those which are most climate vulnerable.** The **Loss and Damage Fund should also provide direct access to local communities and civil society organizations that are directly running programs responding to climate induced loss and damage.**

The Loss and Damage Fund should be designed and governed in a way that makes it easy to financially contribute to it. In addition to financial contributions from donor countries, which we expect to make early pledges, it should be open to contributions from all others.

We call on Parties to ensure that the Loss and Damage Fund is capitalized with at least USD 100 billion<sup>7</sup> as recommended by the Transitional Committee. **We expect all major emitters to assume their responsibilities and contribute with early pledges in accordance with the principles of the Convention.**

The Loss and Damage Fund needs a long-term, stable and independent funding base with a growing financial volume. **Funding for loss and damage must be additional and separate from existing humanitarian and development funds.** Therefore, new and stable sources of funding that reflect the polluter-pays principle must be developed. Suitable sources include CO2 taxation, such as new levies on aviation and shipping.

#### 4. LWF Delegation at COP28

The faith-based perspective of the LWF member churches provides the basis for mobilizing short-term responses as well as motivating long-term change to address the spiritual and social roots of the current ecological crisis. **A faith-based approach** emphasizes the need for **compassion for all living beings** and the **moral imperative to care for the earth while protecting the lives, livelihoods and dignity of communities vulnerable to climate change.**

#### 5. LWF Advocacy at COP28

LWF considers COPs as an important platform to influence negotiations and decisions being taken by governments to address climate change at the global level. For this reason, the LWF engagement has a strong advocacy agenda, specifically:

- LWF will follow and seek to influence the negotiations particularly on agenda items that relate to the priorities of member churches, as above all adaptation and resilience building, addressing loss and damage, climate finance, and mitigation.
- LWF will join the advocacy and policy engagement of its ecumenical partners, particularly in the ACT Alliance and the World Council of Churches, and as appropriate, its interfaith partners, particularly the Interfaith Liaison Committee to the UNFCCC.
- LWF will contribute to the advocacy of the wider civil society, including especially the Climate Action Network and the Youth Constituency - YOUNGO. Therefore, LWF will take part, as appropriate, in collective advocacy and campaigning of these umbrella groups.

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<sup>7</sup> [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/23\\_08\\_23\\_Final\\_Submission\\_TC\\_3.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/23_08_23_Final_Submission_TC_3.pdf)



LWF advocacy happens both at the climate conference itself and in parallel at national and regional level, where member churches engage with their governments on climate change issues.

## **6. LWF Communications channels at COP28**

LWF communication channels during COP28 ensure information about and exchange between and with LWF delegates in Dubai; delegates participating online in the event; and LWF members engaged in climate action and campaigns at the local or national level.

A detailed communication plan is available for all delegates, members of the LWF Advocacy Hub, and other subscribers. The plan will be updated on a regular basis, outlining specific communication projects, activities, and key advocacy messages.

- We inform about LWF's climate justice engagement and the care for creation.
- We explain LWF's role and engagement at the COP.
- We communicate about LWF's advocacy activities.
- We feature individual LWF delegates and their engagement and concerns.
- We inform you about our LWF exhibition and side events at COP28.
- We promote joint activities with ecumenical and interfaith partners.
- We offer interviews and share press releases.
- We provide you with information materials and connect you with our delegates

## **7. Partnership and collaboration**

LWF can point to a number of successes in building new and innovative alliances for climate justice that could involve faith-based organizations, academic institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) the UN, and the public and private sectors.

The LWF works closely with the World Council of Churches (WCC) and Action by Churches together (ACT Alliance) in a spirit of ecumenical complementarity. We are also an active member of the Interfaith Liaison Committee to the UNFCCC and the Geneva Interfaith Forum on Climate Change, Environment and Human Rights.

In addition, LWF cooperates closely with Caritas International, All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), Brahma Kumaris, Bread for the World, Christian Aid, Dominicans for Peace, Franciscans International, The Episcopal Church, among others.