



LWF Expectations and Policy Demands for COP29

Action for Justice unit



THE
LUTHERAN
WORLD
FEDERATION

Action for Justice

Introduction

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has been deeply committed to climate justice since 1977 and has continuously reflected on ecological responsibility and issued substantive statements on climate justice and resources that promote faithful stewardship of the earth and the whole creation.

The LWF acknowledges the urgent need to address the climate emergency¹, particularly its disproportionate impact on the most vulnerable groups, including women, youth, children, indigenous peoples, migrants and persons with disabilities. The LWF advocates for a just and transformative approach to climate action, ensuring that the rights and needs of these marginalized communities are at the forefront of global responses. The LWF stresses the importance of inclusive policies and actions that leave no one behind.

The LWF recognizes the urgent need for countries to meet the targets set in the Paris Agreement, which aims to limit the global temperature increase to well below 2°C, with efforts to keep it below 1.5°C.

Climate change has already reshaped ecosystems, altered weather patterns, and disrupted livelihoods, and will continue to do so as the Earth's average temperature rises largely due to intensive fossil fuel extraction and burning.

Based on the global average temperature for the most recent 10-year period (2014-2023), the Earth is now about 1.2°C warmer than it was in the pre-industrial era. The impacts of this warming disproportionately affect the world's most vulnerable populations—particularly those who already face systemic inequalities, such as women in poverty, youth, children, people with disabilities, and i These groups are often hardest hit by climate change and have limited resources to adapt to or recover from its impacts.

The LWF strongly emphasises the need for differentiated climate action and calls for major polluters to take greater responsibility in addressing the climate crisis. The LWF underlines the critical importance of full and ambitious implementation of the Paris Agreement.

In line with the principle of “common but differentiated responsibilities”, the LWF advocates for common but differentiated climate action at all levels, from individual behaviour change to socio-economic transformation and policy change, taking into account different national circumstances. In particular, the LWF urges the largest emitters to lead by example and commit to mitigation actions consistent with the 1.5°C objective, as a key issue of climate justice.

The LWF urges the mobilization of climate finance to support mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage efforts, especially in the global South, to avert catastrophic climate impacts. With temperatures exceeding the critical 1.5°C threshold for several months in 2024, the urgency for immediate action is clear.

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:

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

- **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 and girls, in all their diversity 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.

Moreover, climate change becomes a question of justice for other disadvantaged groups like indigenous people, persons with disabilities, elderly people, migrants, and other minority groups. Due to the deadly threat of climate change for many animal and plant species, climate change is also a significant issue of environmental justice.

The LWF is committed to a climate-resilient, zero-carbon development pathway: In its 2014 Public Statement on Climate Justice, the LWF pledged to become carbon neutral by 2050. A significant step toward this goal was taken in 2015, with the decision to divest from fossil fuels, contributing to the shift toward a low-carbon economy.

At its 13th Assembly in September 2023, the LWF strengthened its climate commitments, updating its carbon neutrality goal to 2030. This decision reflects the escalating urgency of the climate emergency. Additionally, the LWF encourages its member churches to integrate climate justice advocacy into their ongoing work, emphasizing the safeguarding of the planet for future generations.

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 2010. We participate in COPs and other processes, actively contributing to 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 COP29

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 Paris Agreement² is the single 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).³ 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.

COP28 ended with a landmark decision to “transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science”⁴. This decision was reiterated by heads of states in the Pact for the Future, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly during the Summit of the Future in September 2024.

COP29⁵, to be held in Baku, Azerbaijan, from 11 to 22 November 2024, has a critical task: to adopt a new collective quantified goal (NCQG) for the post-2025 period. This goal is essential to mobilise the necessary financial resources, both in terms of quantity and quality, to achieve global climate goals.

COP29 will also serve as a key step in preparing the submission of the next generation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by Parties in 2025, which will be reviewed and adopted at COP30 in Brazil. Achieving NDCs consistent with the 1.5°C objective is unlikely without sufficient climate finance.

3. LWF Expectations and Policy Demands for COP29

COP29 is being held under the theme "In Solidarity for a Green World", focusing on three critical areas of negotiation that need to be balanced in order to achieve results that are ambitious enough to make COP29 a success:

- Adoption of a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for climate finance beyond 2025, addressing issues of quantity, quality, transparency and accessibility
- A COP decision with a strong commitment of parties to deliver an ambitious, 1.5C-aligned next generation of NDCs.
- Decisions with clear mandates for the next phase of the Gender Action Plan, progress on Global Goal on Adaptation (indicators), Just Transition work programme, Article 6 (carbon markets), and the scope and scale of addressing loss and damage, including non-economic impacts, with strong political, technical, and financial support.

There is still a long way to go for Parties to achieve a well-balanced and ambitious outcome. The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) calls for concrete progress in implementing the Paris Agreement, stressing that promises alone are not enough.

² <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

³ <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-critical-role-faith-actors-national-climate-debate>

⁴ <https://unfccc.int>

⁵ <https://cop29.az/en/home>

NCQG: Mobilizing and accessing climate finance in quantity and quality

The financial need for climate mitigation, adaptation and redressing climate-induced loss and damage in the Global South is estimated at 2.4 trillion US-Dollar annually by 2030.⁶ The current developed countries' climate finance commitment of 100 bn US-Dollar annually for 2020-2025, on the other hand, is insufficient in terms of both, quantity, quality, and transparency.

The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) for the years beyond 2025, due at COP29, provides an opportunity to agree on a financial target that is aligned with the real needs of the most vulnerable countries and includes three pillars: mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage.

The discussion around the NCQG will not be easy, as various economic and emissions factors⁷ need to be taken into account to determine how responsibility for climate finance can be equitably distributed among countries, taking into account the contributor base according to climate justice and the polluter pays principle.

- ⇒ LWF calls on developed countries to lead by significantly increase their financial contributions under the NCQG;
- ⇒ LWF calls on other major emitters with high income and new economic capacities to contribute to the NCQG;
- ⇒ LWF calls on all parties to ensure, apart from adequate quantity, the necessary quality and high transparency of the NCQG;
- ⇒ LWF calls on the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, as well as on other Multilateral Development Banks, to significantly step up their contribution to climate finance at highly concessional conditions;
- ⇒ 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;

Global Goal on Adaptation

Climate adaptation continues to not receive the high level of attention it deserves, despite more and more intense extreme climate events, hitting climate vulnerable communities on an almost regular basis. Access to climate adaptation finance is critical for becoming resilient, but still not provided.

The Climate Adaptation Finance Index 2024 shows that there is an even growing lack of distributional climate justice in adaptation finance, as compared to the previous year. Even more concerning is the empirical fact, that people in those countries being at the highest climate risk, as well as people in the poorest nations and the most fragile states get the least access to adaptation finance despite being those most in need. Based on these facts,

- ⇒ LWF urges the parties to increase support for climate adaptation significantly, including by earmarking a specific quota for adaptation in the NCQG, and to provide available funds more effectively to the most vulnerable countries and people;
- ⇒ In addition to quantity and access, the quality of adaptation finance is crucial, particularly in terms of how effectively adaptation projects enhance the resilience of vulnerable populations. **LWF calls on parties to make progress in defining**

⁶ <https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/A-Climate-Finance-Framework-IHLEG-Report-2-SUMMARY.pdf>

⁷ <https://www.wri.org/data/climate-finance-calculator>

measurable, reportable and verifiable indicators for the Global Goal of Adaptation, that contribute to enhance concrete outcomes, defining priorities, and improve transparency in adaptation action.

Minimizing and addressing loss and damage, including non-economic loss and damage

As long as emissions continue to rise rather than fall and adaptation measures remain inadequate, climate-related losses and damages will continue to increase and require greater attention.

- ⇒ LWF calls on the parties to accelerate the speed in which the Loss and Damage Fund is being operationalized, and calls on all developed countries as well as other economically capable high-emitting countries to contribute financially to the capitalization of the Loss and Damage Fund;
- ⇒ LWF emphasizes the need for further progress in recognizing and addressing **non-economic loss and damage and loss and damage resulting from slow onset changes**, as sea level rise. These issues should receive greater attention within the expanding institutional framework focused on loss and damage, including the Warsaw International Mechanism, the Santiago Network, and the Loss and Damage Fund. This includes, among other things, addressing loss and damage related to climate-induced human mobility, migration, and displacement, as well as the connections between loss and damage, human rights, debt, and litigation for reparation.
- ⇒ LWF strongly calls on all parties to **include loss and damage** in the next generation of **NDCs and NAPs**.

Implementation of the UAE Consensus: Aligning the next generation of NDCs with 1.5°C

The Dialogue on implementing the outcomes of the Global Stocktake will continue at COP29 under the leadership of the COP Troika, formed by the outgoing COP presidency UAE, Azerbaijan as the incoming presidency, and Brazil, which will take the COP30 presidency in 2025, when the next generation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) is due.

The ambition level of the new NDCs decides whether or not the 1.5°C limit of global warming remains at least in reach. If the states fail to deliver NDCs aligned with this target, the last chance to stay at 1.5°C will be lost.

COP29 is decisive to frame the ambition level, by setting the benchmark, building on the decisions taken at COP28, especially the commitments to triple renewable energy capacity, to double the rate of energy efficiency improvements, to accelerate efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power, and to transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems.

- ⇒ LWF calls on the COP Troika to lead the way how to implement the UAE Consensus, including by organizing a coalition of early adopters;
- ⇒ LWF **calls on all parties**, especially all major emitters including the G20 members, to **develop and present 1.5°C-aligned⁸ NDCs**

⁸ 1.5°C-aligned NDCs includes Coverage of all greenhouse gases, setting clear peaking dates for GHG emissions; absolute economy-wide emission reduction targets; halting and reversing deforestation by 2030, phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies that do not address energy poverty, ambitious renewable energy and energy efficiency targets, incorporation of adaptation and loss and damage, and alignment with national development plans.

Just transition: Progressing from talking to implementing:

In the UAE Just Transition Work Program (JTWP), the focus and understanding of just transition has become wider as previously, going beyond the just transition of the workforce from brown to green jobs and the creation of decent work.

LWF supports this move which encompasses pathways across renewable energy, socioeconomic, workforce and other dimensions as a more inclusive approach that aim at leaving no one behind. However, LWF is concerned that the work program has not yet made significant progress and risks becoming merely a forum for discussion.

Additionally, it's essential to address the challenges posed by some "green alternatives," which, while intended to avoid environmental damage, can still have negative impacts on people and ecosystems. One example is the extraction of minerals needed for green energy and new technologies, which is often associated with environmental degradation and social risks.

- ⇒ LWF calls on the parties at COP29 to adopt a more proactive approach to work that prioritizes actionable solutions for just transition, focusing on outcomes that genuinely benefit people rather than just rhetoric;
- ⇒ LWF recommends to explicitly refer to and mainstream just transition components in the next generation of NDCs and NAPs.

Gender Action Plan

At COP25 in Madrid, the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender (LWPG) and its Gender Action Plan (GAP) were adopted, recognizing the critical need for gender mainstreaming in climate change policies and actions, given the significant gender impacts of climate change due to existing inequalities.

An enabling environment is essential for the effective integration of gender considerations into climate action, in particular climate policies, legislation, budgets, strategies and programs.

As the five-year Enhanced LWPG and GAP conclude at COP29, LWF conducted an assessment of the GAP's implementation in 20 countries and identified significant gaps. Despite these gaps, there are valuable practices to build on. Key drivers for gender-responsive climate action include strong representation of women in leadership, collaboration among diverse stakeholders, international exchanges, and a culture of cooperation that prioritizes the involvement of often marginalized women, particularly from rural or Indigenous communities.

However, significant barriers remain, including persistent discrimination against women in many countries, the lack of political will to overcome power structures that are unfavorable to women, the lack of strong institutional structures for implementing targets and plans, and the lack of gender-disaggregated data and monitoring tools. Based on these findings,

- ⇒ LWF **calls on the parties to decide at COP29 to set up a new Work Program on Gender that continues to promote the Gender Action Plan** with its five priority areas, i.e. gender capacity, gender balance, gender coherence, gender implementation, and gender monitoring.
- ⇒ LWF strongly recommends,
 - To undertake multi-stakeholder national stock-takes on gender responsive climate action in the beginning of the new Work Program;
 - To **strengthen institutional capacities** for mainstreaming gender and better understand gender-based vulnerability drivers and barriers to gender-transformative approaches specifically in legislation and policy;

- To explicitly refer to and **mainstream key GAP components** in the next generation of **NDCs and NAPs**.

4. LWF Delegation at COP29

The faith-based perspective of the LWF member churches provides the basis for mobilizing short-term responses as well as motivating long-term changes 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 COP29

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 follows and seeks to influence the negotiations particularly on agenda items that relate to the priorities of member churches, as above all mitigation aligned with 1.5°C, adaptation and resilience building, climate finance, addressing loss and damage, gender, and just transition.
- ⇒ LWF joins 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 contributes to the advocacy of the wider civil society, including the environmental, gender, and youth constituencies. Therefore, LWF will take part, as appropriate, in collective advocacy and campaigning of these umbrella groups.
- ⇒ LWF advocacy happens both at the COP itself and in beforehand and in parallel at national and regional levels, where member churches engage with their governments on climate change issues.

6. LWF Communications channels at COP29

LWF communication channels during COP29 ensure information about and exchange between and with LWF delegates in Baku; 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 COP29.
- 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.

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