

LAUDATE DEUM: **Advocacy towards COP28**



Pope Francis's *Laudate Deum* exhortation, released just a few weeks before COP28, calls on governments and other stakeholders to step forward and responsibly address the climate emergency to mitigate and eventually reverse this truly global crisis afflicting God's beloved creation and our poorest sisters and brothers.

- 1 Global Stocktake (GST)
- 2 Mitigation
- 3 Climate finance
- 4 Loss and Damage
- 5 Adaptation
- 6 Civil Society



ACT: Proposals for advocacy action towards governments

Laudate Deum is a concrete call for truly ensuring multilateralism as a governance capable to establish and implement global and effective rules for “global safeguarding”. A democratic and inclusive space where civil society voices could be heard, where all countries have a role to play, where the compass is the common good and not a “world authority concentrated in one person or in an elite with excessive power” (LD 35).

Looking towards COP28, each State party is currently finalizing its negotiating position. It is therefore **most important** to advocate within each country or region to arrive in Dubai with clear commitments to implement the Paris Agreement:

1 Global Stocktake (GST)

- *“If there is sincere interest in making COP28 a historic event that honors and ennobles us as human beings, then one can only hope for binding forms of energy transition that meet three conditions: that they be efficient, obligatory and readily monitored”* (LD 59). This year’s COP aims to mark a milestone in the implementation of the Paris Agreement as it will set up the Global Stocktake for the first time since 2015, which is the assessment mechanism under the Paris Agreement.
- **The GST outputs and related COP28 decisions must propose clear, actionable, and specific paths forward to get on track with the Paris goals, with concrete policies and plans** that take an evidence-based and human rights-based approach, including the rights of Indigenous Peoples, taking into account social justice and inter-generational equity.

- Achieving the Paris Agreement objective of limiting global warming to 1.5°C requires immediate and unprecedented action to rapidly reduce GHG emissions, particularly in the short term, through a commitment to phase out all fossil fuels. The call in *Laudate Deum* is an alarm reminding us that *the 1.5 threshold is not a mere number, it's a moral imperative* (LD 56). **All Parties to the UNFCCC should increase before COP28 (or commit to increase) their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in order to close the “emissions gaps”, as well as to close the “implementation gaps” by increasing the implementation of policies to achieve a fossil fuel phase-out.**
- **All UNFCCC parties should agree to a rapid, just and equitable global phase-out of all fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) in all sectors** in line with the 1.5°C temperature limit by 2050 at the latest, and binding commitments to ensure that each country does its part, with historically and presently large and rich polluters moving earlier¹. Halt the development of new pipelines, mines and infrastructure that perpetuate our dependence on dirty, dangerous, and expensive fossil fuels.
- *“We must move beyond the mentality of appearing to be concerned but not having the courage needed to produce substantial changes”* (LD 56). **Parties should agree on a just transition framework with a set global renewables target: To triple global renewables capacity to 11,000 GW by 2030, deploying at least 1,500 GW per year by 2030.**
- All governments should adopt a parallel **Fossil Fuels Non-Proliferation Treaty** as a critical tool to complement and strengthen the Paris Agreement, whose text omits any reference to fossil fuels despite being the main climate disrupter. The adoption of a fossil fuel treaty will overcome this loophole of the Paris Agreement, leading to more concrete commitments in NDCs.

- **False solutions - Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) and other “abatement” technologies’ primary function is to distract from the need to phase-out fossil fuels.** *“To suppose that all [climate] problems in the future will be able to be solved by new technical interventions is a form of homicidal pragmatism, like pushing a snowball down a hill”* (LD 57). CCS has a decades-long history of overpromising and under-delivering, and despite being around for decades, CCS facilities currently capture less than 0.1% of global emissions. CCS and other technologies should not distract from the key goal of reducing GHG emissions through a just transition from fossil fuels.

3 Climate finance

- *“The necessary transition towards clean energy sources such as wind and solar energy, and the abandonment of fossil fuels, is not progressing at the necessary speed.”* (LD 55). Emerging and developing economies are set to account for the bulk of emissions growth in the coming decades, and an unprecedented increase in clean energy spending is required to put countries on a pathway towards net-zero emissions.
- Developed countries have so far collectively failed to deliver on the **\$100 billion climate finance goal** which should be delivered annually from 2020-25: **developed countries should ensure that it can be met and disbursed on average over 2020-2025, making up for shortfalls in delivery in the first years;**
- Shifting all financial flows in line with Paris Agreement objectives: All Parties to the UNFCCC should phase out direct and indirect fossil fuel subsidies.

Climate finance

- International financial architecture reform: major international financial institutions should swiftly adopt fossil fuel exclusion policies, stronger human rights safeguards, more democratic governance structures including mechanisms for participation of and monitoring by developing countries, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, and communities, and develop climate and biodiversity finance targets; and take urgent action on debt relief.
- The energy transition risks being unjust again if it only involves replacing the burning of fossil fuels with the use of renewable energy without changing unsustainable lifestyles and destructive modes of production and consumption. A just transition necessitates providing financial and technological support to the least developed countries, ensuring fairness and equity in the process.
- Clean energy financing should not take the form of debts and private sector loans, which will further drive emerging and developed countries into “debt traps”. Wealthier countries have an “*ecological debt*” (LS 51) that they must repay through public finance.
- The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance must be informed by the needs on the ground, and sufficient to meet the full scale of the costs required for countries to play their full role in achieving the Paris Agreement.
- Pope Francis's statement in *Laudate Deum* emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the measures adopted at COP28 are not just mere aspirations but are binding and enforceable. These measures should meet three key criteria: they must be **efficient, obligatory, and readily monitored**.

Following the historic decision to establish new funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage, including a fund, with the Transitional Committee drawing up recommendations for consideration and adoption at COP28, parties should move forward on the following points and be ready to agree in Dubai on:

- Finance to address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change should be new, additional and predictable public funding clearly prioritising grants, and we underline the focus of the loss and damage fund to be on “addressing” loss and damage according to COP27 outcomes;
- **The Loss & Damage fund should be central to the existing funding arrangements in order to catalyse the majority of the funds and coordinate the existing funding arrangement to ensure complementarity, coherence and address the financing gaps;**
- The Loss and Damage fund must be easily **accessible**, ensuring that communities in need across the Global South get the money they require to recover, and be masters of their own future; **comprehensive** to support both responses to economic as well as non-economic losses and damages, for extreme weather events and slow-onset events; **restorative** by providing grants not loans on the basis of the polluter pays principle; **representative underpinned by human rights** and the principle of subsidiarity, and governed by an equitable board acting in the common good, and efficient and effective by acting as the flagship global fund to address losses and damages alongside other funding arrangements.

5 Adaptation

Adaptation efforts are not keeping pace with increasing climate impacts. The IPCC AR6 Report indicates that adaptation planning is increasing but implementation is inadequate. There is an urgent need to elevate the political discussion on adaptation at the UNFCCC:

- Parties should adopt a permanent agenda item on Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).
- Substantive progress on designing the framework and guidelines of the GGA is needed with a view to the operationalization of the GGA at COP28, by way of a credible, robust and implementable global goal on adaptation (GGA) framework to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change;
- The goal should be designed to support coordination, processes and actions on adaptation at a regional and national levels and sub-national and locally derived goals and led plans and actions; ecosystem- and community-based adaptation; inclusive approaches and Indigenous peoples' wisdom, values and knowledge.
- Parties should scale up their commitments and present a definitive roadmap for a collective doubling of adaptation finance by 2025, based on 2019 levels, with the aim to achieve a balance between mitigation and adaptation finance.
- The UAE COP28 presidency has called for a Food Systems Declaration at COP28. Governments need to commit to reducing agricultural emissions and to transform agriculture for the planet and for people. At COP28, by empowering local food systems and amplifying the voices of farmers, the commitment could catalyze finance and therefore make significant progress across food systems, fostering a sustainable future that is both meaningful and enduring.

Meaningful engagement of civil society, especially youth activists, is imperative for effective and rights-based climate action. Their active involvement ensures diverse perspectives, innovative solutions, and accountability, enhancing the overall quality and impact of climate initiatives. *“The demands that rise up from below throughout the world, where activists from very different countries help and support one another, can end up pressuring the sources of power.”* (LD 38). We urge open and transparent participation of civil society without fear of repercussions.

For the sake of our common home, please bring the above concrete demands to the urgent attention of your national government and international bodies.

In parallel, as people of faith grounded in the conviction that Creation is a sacred gift from God, we are called to also transform the values of our communities and societies. Ultimately, *“There are no lasting changes without cultural changes”* (LD 70).