

Media brief - COP28 UN Climate Summit, UAE

Latin America and the Caribbean face a historic opportunity for development*

UN Climate talks to address fossil fuel phaseout and just transition

** This content has been prepared in the context of the next climate summit, to be held from November 30 till December 12 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The document belongs to and is validated by the following groups and organizations who are partners/members of the [Global Gas and Oil Network \(GGON\)](#): 350.org, AIDA, Alianza de Organizaciones por los Derechos Humanos del Ecuador, Amazon Watch, Asociación Argentina de Abogados/as Ambientalistas, Centro de Derechos Económicos y Sociales del Ecuador (CDES), ClimaInfo, Coalizão Energia Limpa, Coordinadora Ecuatoriana de Organizaciones para la Defensa de la Naturaleza y el Medio Ambiente (CEDENMA), Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN), Fundación Quantum, Fundar Centro de Análisis e Investigación México, Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature (GARN), Grupo Regional para una Transición Energética Justa en América Latina y el Caribe (GRTEJ ALC), Instituto de Energia e Meio Ambiente (IEMA), Instituto de Abogados para la Protección del Medio Ambiente (INSAPROMA), Latinoamérica Sustentable (LAS), Movimiento Ciudadano frente al Cambio Climático (MOCICC), Oceana, ProBioS, Publish What You Pay (PWYP), Unión de Afectados y Afectadas por las Operaciones Petroleras de Texaco (UDAPT).*

NOTE TO EDITORS

The **GGON network's LAC spokespersons list for COP28** includes indigenous leaders, experts and environmental advocates from Argentina, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru and Suriname. Available to address the following: fossil fuel phase-out, false solutions/dangerous distractions, Loss and Damage, a just transition and energy transition linked to critical minerals, NDCs/Ambition, energy security, fossil fuel subsidies, stranded assets, national oil companies, regional perspective ahead of COP30 in Brazil, grassroots movements, territorial resistance and communal alternatives, indigenous rights and criminalization of environmental defenders, among other topics.

For extra quotes, interviews and other inquiries, please contact:

Danae Alexia Tzicas (in Dubai from 11/30 to 12/12).

Senior Communications Coordinator, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) at GGON

+541133802441 // danae@ggon.org

CONTEXT

1. Since the [climate crisis is a fossil fuel crisis](#), there is increasing [global consensus](#) to phase them out. This UN Climate Summit (COP28) is expected to be a decisive moment to establish the way forward.

- If Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) ally themselves with Africa and Asia to boost a transformative agenda on the basis of human and collective rights and gender equality, they will free themselves from the structural limits imposed that pigeonhole them as suppliers of raw materials, including fossil fuels.
- With an ambitious climate agenda, the region will find greater benefits if it coordinates demands and actions towards a just global energy transition.
- Measures should include scaling up and effectively implementing the existing mechanisms to reduce inequalities; respecting, protecting and implementing human and collective rights; and adapting and transforming its economies; through the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund and the fulfillment of the belated finance of 100 billion dollars yearly.
- Consideration of other measures such as a global windfall profits tax on large oil companies and petro-states, and a debt swap for effective climate action that is not based on the commodification of nature are fundamental to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.
- COP28 spaces should also discuss how to facilitate the access and transfer of renewable energy technologies and the sustainable and just participation of the region in the industrial and manufacturing supply chain.

2. In addition to international support, renewable energy must be increased while redistributing energy consumption for a dignified life that allows the exercise of human rights, diversifying economies and sources of income, redistributing wealth internally and moving towards a planned reduction of fossil fuels. Fossil fuel projects threaten surrounding populations and their territories, the climate and the development of countries.

- There is no more room for new hydrocarbon projects globally. This implies that [the industry will be obsolete](#) in a few years; including existing infrastructure and the areas under exploration and expansion, e.g. new gas infrastructure. [Rich and historically responsible countries](#) must move faster towards decarbonization.
- Only [Guyana, Brazil and Argentina](#) are expanding their production (of mainly crude oil) at a large scale specifically for export purposes. This limits the opportunity for a just energy transition as large amounts of public funding is invested into dirty fossil fuels which benefits small portions of the population in the short term. In a [shrinking market](#), new stakeholders and investments are not expected. International finance is being redirected towards renewables, which alone will not be enough to sustain the pace of concentrated and unequal consumption.
- De-escalating economies and energy systems will be a slow but steady process by 2050. Countries such as Colombia are leaping ahead by marking alternative paths to reduce consumption levels and advance a just energy transition.

- Where governments are lagging behind, [collective civil society efforts are leading to changes](#). Examples include: the recent [Amazon Summit](#), which positioned the ending of fossil fuels (hydrocarbons) as an urgent objective and the [national referendum in Yasuni](#), Ecuador, where communities together with the government banned the fossil fuel industry from the area.

EXPECTATIONS FOR COP28 IN UAE

A new independent future is possible, with its own clean, diversified and accessible energy for the people, strengthening political, economic and ecological sovereignty throughout Latin America and the Caribbean.

The pollution, inequality and violence caused by fossil fuels extraction and expansion prevent them from being a tool for development. For years, scientific consensus has established that they are the main cause of the climate crisis. The only way to avoid the worst effects and keep the temperature increase below 1.5 °C is to stop new projects and move forward with a planned and equitable reduction of fossil fuels before 2050. This path is tied to a reduction in consumption, inequality and poverty.

As countries plan for a "green transition," their leaders must not replicate the human rights violations and environmental damage caused by the fossil fuel industry, especially now with the "critical minerals mining boom". It is time to remedy, repair, and achieve a just transition. Fossil gas, wrongly called "natural", is not an adequate fuel for the transition.

Environmental, health and other specialists, civil society organizations and indigenous peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean, represented by the signatures subscribing to this document, make the following demands to their representatives and other negotiators at the Summit, reinforcing that a central element of all these points is democratization and popular participation:

- *STOP NEW coal, oil and gas exploration, production and infrastructure projects.*
- *PHASE OUT COAL, OIL AND GAS PRODUCTION IN A PLANNED AND EQUITABLE WAY: with rich and historically responsible countries first and urgently setting an intermediate and a final date for the closure of all current fossil fuel extraction and achieve a rapid, just and equitable transition.*
- *CLOSE GAPS: prevent/stop support for carbon capture and storage (CCS) or other dangerous distractions that delay the phaseout of coal, oil and gas; do not repeat financial mechanisms that rely on plundering the most vulnerable sectors.*
- *INCREASE renewable energy by 2030 to redistribute and achieve a dignified life that allows the exercise of human and collective rights for the population, as well as to free patents and transfer technologies, implementing an energy system that*

meets the needs of the population and allows secure and universal access to energy services.

- *TRANSFER 1 TRILLION US DOLLARS in financing for adaptation and mitigation in developing countries and a rapid, just and equitable transition to 100% renewable energy systems; both through new taxes and through instruments such as debt cancellation.*

Spokesperson quotes, by country

From Argentina

"The scientific evidence on the need to move away from fossil fuels is overwhelming. However, financial actors such as Multilateral Development Banks, Development Banks of the global north and Export Credit Agencies continue to finance fossil fuels in the Global South. And in collusion, governments in the region grant direct subsidies to hydrocarbon companies. A just energy transition requires a review of the policies of financial actors and national states.

"In Argentina, for example, much of the new infrastructure to extract Vaca Muerta gas's and have the additional gas destined for export could be financed by Brazil's BNDES and CAF. New infrastructure allows the amount of fracking to accelerate, which translates into more water injected, more demand for silica sands, more fugitive methane emissions, and more seismic induced by the fracking sets."

- **Ariel Slipak, coordinator of the Research Area at Fundación Ambiente y Recursos Naturales (FARN)**

"The energy transition is still in dispute. From the Global South, we cannot surrender to the processes of extracting common goods from our territories in their name. There is not enough lithium for every person in the world to have an electric car. If we do not get out of the extractivist model that violates human and environmental rights in our region, no discussion about a just energy transition will be possible".

- **Enrique Viale, founder of the Asociación Argentina de Abogados/as Ambientalistas**

From Belize

"Amidst the global shift towards sustainable energy, Latin American nations are leading the charge to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. In Belize, our commitment goes beyond energy. We embrace democratic principles, recognizing that our choices today shape the world we leave for generations to come. Our pursuit is one of collective wisdom, informed choices, and transparency. Together we forge a path that respects our shared future. The recent Referendum Amendment Act gives Belizeans the opportunity to determine the fate of offshore oil. This

amendment is a direct response to the voices of 22,090 Belizean voters who called for legislative amendments that would require a referendum should the government contemplate lifting the moratorium on offshore oil exploration. The amendment has laid the foundation for a profound shift in people's participation in our Belizean democracy."

- **Janelle Chanona, vice president of Oceana**

From Brazil

"In the face of worsening climate change, thinking about ways to make a post-carbon world possible is not a utopia, it is a pressing necessity. The Global South can lead an ambitious climate policy that opts to leave oil in the ground. From Latin America we are beginning to change the course of history and to confront, with the necessary boldness and courage, the effects of climate change, the most serious crisis threatening humanity. The Global North must respond accordingly and, in addition to phasing out fossil fuels in its countries, enable economic mechanisms that allow the Global South to implement a large-scale fossil fuel phaseout policy".

- **Carolina Marçal, projects coordinator at ClimalInfo**

"The evidence that we need to replace oil, gas and coal with renewable energy and an energy system that respects the rights of communities is overwhelming. A just energy transition will allow us to save millions of lives and provide better conditions for the most vulnerable communities, as well as avoid the scenes of horror that can be caused by increasingly intense weather extremes."

- **Ilan Zugman, 350.org Director in Latin America**

"Although Latin America is well positioned in terms of natural resources for renewable energy production, only a few countries have followed a successful trajectory in the development of this industry, still below what is projected by the International Energy Agency to meet the climate commitments of the Paris Agreement. In addition to correcting this path, the most important task for Latin America is for countries to present concrete plans for the transition of oil and gas production and consumption."

- **Ricardo Baitelo, Project Manager at Instituto de Energia e Meio Ambiente (IEMA)**

From the Dominican Republic:

"The countries that are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change are the island states. Added to this is the poverty in which most of their peoples live, as in the case of Haiti, Cuba, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic, which are amongst the most affected victims of climate change in Latin America and the Caribbean. The Dominican Republic, in particular, is in the path of hurricanes and was recently hit by storm Franklin, which

left more than 30 dead people and billions of dollars in material losses. It will take a long time to recover, and one thing that can't be restored is people's lives. That is why we demand that world leaders at COP28 commit to phase out fossil fuels, the main cause of climate change, and inject resources into Loss and Damage to restore the devastation already caused by the climate crisis, as well as for mitigation and adaptation to this phenomenon that is decimating us little by little, depriving us from a healthy habitat to live in."

- **Euren Cuevas Medina, founder and executive director at Instituto de Abogados para la Protección del Medio Ambiente (INSAPROMA)**

From Ecuador:

"Oil blocks occupy 9.4% of the surface of the Amazon (80 million hectares). 43% of the oil blocks are located in protected areas and indigenous territories. 89% of the crude oil exported from the Amazon comes from Ecuador and its main destination is the United States. More than half (52%) of the Ecuadorian Amazon is taken by oil blocks. It is for this reason that the democratic triumph of the popular consultation on Yasuní is a historic event where it was decided to prioritize life over extractivism. The life of the Tagaeri-Taromenane peoples in voluntary isolation and the protection of one of the most important biomes in the world depend on its immediate implementation. In addition, this is an example for the world in the urgent mission to abandon fossil fuels.

- **Paola Maldonado, Field Advisor - Amazon Watch**

"The Global Stocktake is a key milestone to strongly affirm the need for the urgent abandonment of the exploitation and use of all fossil fuels, through a just transition with a human rights and gender focus. Latin America has a great role to play in this COP28 decision, and Ecuador, by implementing the people's decision in the popular consultation to protect the Yasuni National Park, can set a successful precedent to take the first concrete step in promoting the necessary energy transition worldwide. It is essential that the next Ecuadorian government highlights this progress at COP28 and seals this climate commitment by including it in the update of its NDC."

- **Javier Dávalos, Climate Program Coordinator AIDA**

"We cannot trust the big oil companies and the interests they represent to lead the energy transition, because they are the cause of the climate crisis. They knew about the problem long before the rest, but they hid it to increase their business. Those who caused climate change will not solve it, because they are addicted to the system that causes the problem. The per capita energy consumption of developed countries is simply not sustainable, but in their logic it must be fed. For that reason, we believe that the energy transition will be bottom-up, from those communities that know well the immediate effects of oil exploitation and have struggled and

survived in spite of it. Those who know that neither hospitals nor medicines bought with oil money can restore health to the biological community. We are convinced that the key to the energy transition is not held by those who administer the poison, but by our indigenous communities, who all their lives have fought against oil exploitation and have taught us to live in harmony with nature. The energy transition is not only a change of energy sources, but also, a shift in the way we relate to nature”

- **Julio Prieto, president of Centro de Derechos Económicos y Sociales (CDES)**

“It is essential to ensure international cooperation to guarantee that the process of closing Block 43 is carried out immediately, that the best available technology is used and that the Yasuní National Park, the indigenous communities living there and the peoples in isolation are effectively protected.”

- **Vivian Idrovo, coordinator at Alianza de Organizaciones por los Derechos Humanos del Ecuador**

"It is imperative to address the civilizational crisis beyond sustainable development and renewable energies. The change in the energy matrix is causing unprecedented socio-environmental conflicts in human history. A profound change is needed, driven not only from civil society, as demonstrated by the Quito Sin Minería and Yasuní popular consultation, which instilled hope in the majority of Ecuadorians and young people who aspire to a promising future, but also from the political class and from the business sector. A new paradigm that includes degrowth, deceleration and regeneration of human communities in harmony with nature".

- **Inty Arcos, member of the Quito Sin Minería collective and part of the Andean Chocó community**

From Mexico

"It is true that in the past fossil fuels allowed an economic boom and some development in several countries in the region, but at what cost and for whom? Where the oil wells are, there are no schools or clinics but devastating impacts on local economies, the environment and the culture. The industry displaced traditions, affected the relationship with the land, turned peasants into workers and generated a relationship of exploitation and dependence. If we are not cautious, the energy transition will benefit those historically favored by extractivism.

- **Alejandra Jiménez, regional coordinator at Acción Solidaria en Defensa del Territorio Huasteca Totonacapan - CORASON**

"We cannot think of the energy transition as a simple technical-technological shift from fossil fuels to renewable energies; it is essential to transform the energy paradigm in its entirety to prevent the transition from replicating the injustices of the extractivist model. In this sense, a just

energy transition must promote clean, democratic energy systems that combat inequalities, including gender inequalities, and ensure universal access to energy sources.”

- **Alejandra Lozano, Economic and Environmental Justice Program Officer at Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

"The impacts of climate change have become more present around the world and Mexico is no exception. There is vast scientific evidence that fossil fuels seriously increase greenhouse gasses. In Mexico, energy and climate policy is focused on fossil fuels even though we have reached peak oil since 2004. The budget for resources for adaptation and mitigation of the effects of climate change amounts to 233,961 million Mexican pesos, of which 36,872 million will be used to transport fossil gas. While the current administration has put the brakes on mega-projects that violate human rights, so far there is no clear plan to move towards decentralized systems that gradually leave behind dependence on fossil fuels. Mexico must reorient the way it spends to confront the strong pressures of the impacts of global warming and allocate sufficient budget for mitigation and adaptation programs that have a direct relationship to combat the onslaught of the climate crisis that the planet is suffering".

- **Ariana Escalante Kantún, researcher of the Land and Territory Program at Fundar, centro de análisis e investigación México**

From Peru

"The dependence on fossil fuels in the current development model has not only brought us to the brink of a climate catastrophe. In the Peruvian case, more than 50 years of oil exploitation have meant dispossession of indigenous territories and local communities, degradation of ecosystems and impacts on the way of life, health, economy and food of the population. It remains for us to fight for a just and popular energy transition, which implies an abandonment of fossil fuels but does not impact the territories, especially those where the critical minerals for the transition are extracted, and which deepens democracy and respect for human rights".

- **Augusto Duran, regional coordinator for the Fossil Fuel Treaty - MOCICC**

From Surinam

"We should ask world leaders and multinationals how much longer they will be blind and deaf to the pain of our Mother Earth. How many more forest fires do they need to open their eyes. How many more animals and trees burned. How many monster hurricanes to see that our climate is changing. How many more pandemics to understand that we are destroying our biodiversity. How many heat waves to understand that the Earth is reaching its boiling point. How many more extreme rains and floods. How many more polar ice caps and glaciers must melt for you to stop warming our planet. How many more COPs for rich countries to see the injustice of their greed. When will you start listening to the scientists who are sounding the alarm? How deaf can

you be to the pleas of climate activists and indigenous groups to save our planet and its forests. When will you stop the search for fossil fuels to end this madness once and for all?".

- **Erlan Sleur, president of ProBioS Surinam**

Press contact

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Senior Communications Coordinator, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) at GGON

+541133802441 // danae@ggon.org