



## COP27 CARITAS CONFEDERATION POSITION

Twenty-six COPs later and in the light of the evident messages in the recent IPCC reports, we have a much clearer understanding of the extent of the potential climate crisis and what needs to be done to address it effectively. **COP27** is an opportunity to showcase unity against an existential threat that we can only overcome through concerted action and finding the appropriate mechanisms that ensure the availability of requisite means of effective implementation, especially for those in need of support to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change. To that effect and in responding to the *Laudato Si'* invitation to realize an Integral Ecology and advocate for climate justice, Caritas organizations call on States participating in COP27 for outcomes that **ensure climate and social justice**, by safeguarding human rights and protecting the populations who have contributed very little to climate change, yet are most vulnerable to it.

This position includes inputs from Africa, Asia, Europe, Middle East and North Africa, Latin America and Caribbean's, North America and Oceania regions. The position also integrates some [messages](#) from the **Africa Climate Dialogues**, a process that was convened by the Catholic Church actors and civil society to discuss, learn from each other and identify key policy priorities ahead of COP27 in Egypt with lived experience of climate impacts from Africa and different regions.

At COP27 State Parties must:

- 1. *Ensure science reflects and integrates lived experiences and local knowledge to respond to Climate Change.***
  - In Caritas' experience, we see how communities rely on their indigenous knowledge of their territories to farm. They are maximising the use of locally available resources such as farmyard manures, botanical pesticides and green manure to increase yields and improve food security while at the same time contributing to important adaptation and mitigation benefits. In addition, the traditional agroforestry systems been applied in many Amazonian communities is already contributing to reducing logging of new forest areas while capturing CO<sub>2</sub> and solving the food and economic needs of families. Therefore, in the current context where climate change continues to make resources scarcer and the carbon footprint more relevant, **Caritas Internationalis encourages decision** makers to mainstream indigenous knowledge and agroecological practices alongside science and technology.
- 2. *The Global Goal on Adaptation to point the world towards enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change while averting, minimizing and addressing Loss and Damage.***
  - As financing for climate change adaptation remains insufficient at the global level and the climate adaptation processes at the local level neither participatory nor financed by the large climate funds, Caritas challenges national governments and asks that the adaptation component in the NDC<sup>1</sup>s receive greater focus. These efforts should focus on key economic sectors and services, coastal and low-lying areas, disaster risk management (DRM) and other human habitats, and ocean ecosystems. Caritas calls on the global community to increase finance allocation to adaptation and invest it at the local level dedicated to strengthening climate resilience and risk reduction. These funds should be provided in form of grants and not loans.
  - Furthermore, as developing countries continue to face institutional, technical and financial capacity gaps with respect to implementation of the adaptation strategies, **Caritas Internationalis** asks the global community to give capacity to local institutions involved in adaptation activities responding to climate change. In addition and to enhance emergency response and address gaps between adaptation and loss and damage, **Caritas Internationalis calls on states to strengthen their capacity in risk assessments in order improve** disaster risk reduction plans in NDCs, National Adaptation plans (NAPs) and programmes.

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<sup>1</sup> Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

Further, **states should enhance** synergies and coordination with local communities on climate adaptation initiatives that obstruct adaptive capacity, resilience strengthening and reducing vulnerability.

3. ***Addressing the losses and damages caused to communities affected by climate change adverse effects and enhancing their protection needs.***

- **It is fundamental for climate-vulnerable countries, that the issue of *Loss and Damage* is recognized.** [A Catholic narrative](#)<sup>2</sup> to give visibility to this issue and recognize the sufferings of the Global South has been developed. According to *Laudato Si'*, such a responsibility should be recognized in the name of the ***ecological debt*** of the global North towards the global South (LS, §§ 51-52). In his latest encyclical, Fratelli Tutti, Pope Francis proposes dialogue and encounter as a means of building a more just and healthier world. This framework could be useful in discussing and enacting the needed response to Loss and Damage
- The L&D examples show the limits of adaptation in some contexts and include the most important damages caused by climate change. At the same time, the lack of structural funding for L&D in international climate policies prevents the implementation of responses that support populations affected by climate hazards, whether through humanitarian aid or social protection. **Without a reliable and comprehensive financing facility to ensure finance to help countries cope with climate-induced loss & damage, the most vulnerable countries will sink deeper into debt and poverty every time they are hit by climate disasters they did not cause.**
- That is why Caritas Internationalis urges States to support the creation of a "loss and damage" financing mechanism and the operationalization of the Warsaw Mechanism on Loss and Damage and the Santiago network. This should have sufficient economic endowment to finance the recovery and rehabilitation of the various climate-related disasters that continue to occur more frequently each year. These funds should be delivered in a democratic and locally led way in form of grants and not as loans. The above should be supported by including **a standing agenda item on loss and damage under the UNFCCC.**
- The issue of climate-induced migration and displacements needs to be part of the discussions on Loss & Damage. To that effect, Caritas Internationalis calls on the states and the global community to ensure that displacement, migration and planned relocation related to climate change is addressed across many policy frameworks and actions. The non-economic loss and damage that include loss of cultural heritage and identity due to displacement, and poorer health and psychological outcomes, which are difficult to quantify should be considered.
- COP27 should speak out on the injustice of Loss & Damage, which is a uniquely moral issue, as it relates to the historic and contemporary systems of oppression against the poorest countries in the world. **Addressing this narrative will be an indicator of progress on delivering the Paris Agreement.**

4. ***Climate finance should be invested at the local level to address the needs of poor and vulnerable communities and structured to mitigate economic risks and debt distress created by climate change.***

- In the experience of Caritas, there is limited and lack of transparency and accountability with climate funds reaching the poor and vulnerable communities that are on the frontlines of the climate crisis. To address these problems, Climate finance must be anchored in the principles of subsidiarity to enable local organizations and communities to access funding and participate in the coordination and utilisation of the climate funds. It is important that donors provide greater transparency and clearer communication on climate financing, so that the funding committed and disbursed can be easily tracked and contributors held accountable. To that effect, **Caritas Internationalis asks governments, donors and public authorities to include risk-communities in climate action planning, allocation of resources, implementation, and evaluation** to increase community led- resilience and adaptation projects. To augment the above, donors must **set in a climate finance criteria that require recipients to have specific objectives and indicators to target vulnerable communities.**
- Further and in profound reflection on Climate Finance, there's need to recognize the tight nexus between climate impacts and other macroeconomic issues, especially sovereign debt. While the climate crisis and increased debt levels are creating the conditions for a perfect storm for developing countries, Sovereign debt is drawing resources away from climate adaptation and addressing the losses and damage of climate change. As evidenced in Caritas [Oceania research report](#)<sup>3</sup>. If climate finance is delivered as loans, especially

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<sup>2</sup> A [Theological reflection](#) on Loss and Damage by Caritas Scotland (SCIAF)

<sup>3</sup> Caritas Oceania report on Climate Finance and Debt launched on Oct. 4th, also in view of addressing the Climate Finance

the case addressing loss and damage finance, which by definition cannot led to new economic growth but simply help recover from the growth losses caused by damage to/loss of infrastructure, will make this situation worse rather than better. **To that effect, Caritas Internationalis urges the global community to ensure that Climate finance to vulnerable countries is delivered in the form of grants and not loans.**

- Lastly, **Caritas Internationalis calls on richer countries<sup>4</sup>** to mobilize at least \$100bn per year, additional to existing aid commitments, and equally shared between mitigation and adaptation programs. A meaningful, new post-2025 collective climate finance goal must be sought to rebuild trust and accelerate action.
- 5. ***COP27 as an Implementation and Agriculture COP should contribute to making a climate resilient Agriculture sector a reality.***
  - Smallholder farmers are on the frontlines of the climate crisis, experiencing the effects of erratic weather. Caritas identifies Agriculture as a key sector for adaptation but often adaptation for this sector is not linked to agricultural priorities and investment plans. In addition, support for the Agro-ecological transition is quiet limited in the case of national, international policies related to agriculture, emphasis is still on planning, and less attention and assistance is going to the actual implementation of adaptation plans. As such, a globally coordinated policy response is urgently needed to enhance adaptation in the Agriculture sector and contribute to build food systems that are more resilient to diverse climate shocks.
  - To that effect, Caritas Internationalis **asks governments and the global community to ensure Agriculture and food play a central role in global climate change governance and decide on the new** mandate for the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture (KJWA). Specifically the UNFCCC should support the food system approach by;
    - **Enhancing adaptation in the Agriculture sector anchored in the principles of subsidiarity** and address food insecurity and resilience building with a focus on innovations that **build sustainable local food systems rooted in local realities, inclusive and resilient to climate shocks worldwide.**
    - **Use the Green Climate Fund to identify key priorities to support transition to agroecological practices to build sustainable food systems.** This should aim at doubling adaptation funding and carve out some of that money to go specifically to smallholder agriculture. Currently, **only 1.7<sup>5</sup> per cent of climate finance goes to the Agriculture sector with a questionable fraction—supporting small-scale farmer given their disproportionate vulnerability to the impacts of climate change.** In addition, these finances should to be dedicated to local actors, channelled by civil society, and dedicated to strengthening the resilience of local food systems in order to contribute to more stable environments.

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<sup>4</sup> Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for the coming generations” (Laudato Si. 67).

<sup>5</sup> [Examining the Climate Finance Gap for Small-Scale Agriculture - CPI \(climatepolicyinitiative.org\)](https://climatepolicyinitiative.org/publication/examining-the-climate-finance-gap-for-small-scale-agriculture/)