

# Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance Statement

October 27, 2022



## URGENT AND ACCELERATED IMPLEMENTATION NEEDED TO CURB EMISSIONS AND ENSURE CLIMATE JUSTICE AND THE RESILIENCE OF CARIBBEAN SMALL ISLAND STATES AND OTHER VULNERABLE REGIONS

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As we look to the 27th Conference of the Parties (COP27) in Egypt in November, the Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance is **calling for urgent and accelerated implementation to tackle the climate crisis and address the needs of Caribbean small islands developing states (SIDS) and other vulnerable countries.**

The findings from the latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sixth assessment report[i] are clear and highlight the need for urgency and decisiveness. An increase of over 1°C in global temperature above 1850-1900 levels has already been observed between 2010-2019 as greenhouse gas emissions from human activity drive widespread and unprecedented climatic changes. Further, under the five emission scenarios ranging from business-as-usual to a future with ambitious emission cuts, a dangerous increase of 2°C or more above 1850-1900 levels is projected by 2100. The critical 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement will be exceeded during the 21st century unless there are deep reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions in the coming decades.

**With 70% of the Caribbean population living and working in coastal areas, where most of the infrastructure is located, climate change poses an existential threat to our communities, economic sectors and natural ecosystems.** Impacts are already being felt through coastal erosion due to sea level rise, coral bleaching and marine ecosystem damage with higher sea surface temperatures and ocean acidification, water shortages due to rainfall variability and saltwater intrusion, and more intense hurricanes and storms among others[ii]. If greenhouse gas emissions continue unabated, and global temperature exceeds 1.5°C, these impacts will worsen and threaten the very existence of our way of life in the Caribbean and other SIDS[i] that have contributed the least to global emissions. The havoc wreaked by the Category 5 Hurricanes Irma and Maria in 2017 and Hurricane Dorian in 2019 and most recently by the Category 4 Hurricane Ian in 2022 provide a glimpse into this stark future.

Bringing together civil society organisations, grassroots leaders and activists, academics, creatives and the media, the **Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance seeks to amplify the voices of the most vulnerable communities and groups on the frontlines and catalyse actions for climate justice** and local resilience in Caribbean SIDS. Working closely with vulnerable communities, our allies are seeing first-hand the impacts of climate change on these communities, their livelihoods and the resources they depend upon. These impacts are often hardest on the most vulnerable and marginalised groups, including small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, rural women producers, elderly and disabled persons, the income poor, migrants, LGBTQIA+ persons and Indigenous Peoples.

Based on a series of deliberative dialogues with these vulnerable groups and wider Caribbean civil society, the Alliance is calling for **five priority areas for action at COP27** to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and the needs of Caribbean SIDs and our most vulnerable:

1. Curbing emissions to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C
2. Scaling up locally-led and ecosystem-based solutions for adaptation and resilience
3. Improving access to and delivery of climate finance for frontline communities, small and microenterprises and civil society organisations as part of a 'whole of society' approach
4. Ensuring additional and dedicated finance for loss and damage and fully operationalising the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage
5. Supporting a just transition for pro-poor, inclusive, sustainable and resilient development

The Caribbean Climate Justice Alliance looks forward to a Global Stocktake process that is inclusive and delivers in the five priority areas for action at COP27 and beyond. The Alliance is also calling for a **rights-based and earth-centred approach** in addressing all these priority areas, taking into account the rights of women, youth, persons with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ persons, Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants, migrants and other marginalised groups, the rights of future generations, rights to a healthy and safe environment as an autonomous right, and the right to self-determination.

### Curbing emissions to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C

Urgent action and strengthened commitments are needed from the **world's largest economies and emitters to set ambitious emissions targets for 2030 and reach net zero by 2050 to limit global temperature to 1.5°C and tackle the climate crisis**. All countries, and especially the G20 that account for around 75% of global greenhouse gas emissions[i],[ii], must show resolve and step up their actions starting now if we want to keep the 1.5°C goal within reach. Current pledges to reduce greenhouse gas emissions under the Paris Agreement and legally binding net zero targets are far from sufficient. These put us on a pathway to 2.4°C warming by 2100 according to the 2021 report by Climate Analytics and World Resources Institute[iii].

Ambitious efforts to rapidly cut emissions and drive action for a just transition away from fossil fuels during this decade are needed to set us on an achievable and robust pathway to net zero. **G20 countries must immediately stop subsidising the fossil fuel industry**, as they have done to the amount of US\$3.3 trillion between 2015 and 2019[v]. G20 countries also need to update and align their 2030 Nationally Determined Contributions to a 1.5°C compatible emissions pathway and commit to net zero emissions by 2050[iii],[iv]. Other countries must commit to reduce their emissions consistent with a 1.5°C pathway. Similarly, the aviation and shipping industries must ensure that their emissions are reduced and made compliant with the goals of the Paris Agreement[iii].

### Scaling up locally-led and ecosystem-based solutions for adaptation and resilience

The Alliance is calling for scaled up support for locally-led adaptation that empowers local actors, including Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendants and frontline communities, enterprises and resource users like small-scale farmers and fisherfolk, to have a voice in decisions that directly affect their lives and livelihoods and design and implement solutions. **Locally-led adaptation must be included in the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), with the objective to effectively track and measure progress** aligned with the Principles for Locally-led Adaptation[iv] and account for the quantity and quality of climate finance allocated. There must also be **active engagement of frontline communities and civil society organisations in the Glasgow-Sharma El-Sheikh (GlaSS) work programme** within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process.

**Scaling up and integrating ecosystem-based approaches to adapt and build local resilience is also key**. Natural ecosystems have intrinsic value, as well as serving as natural defences and being critical to major economic sectors in the Caribbean region, including tourism, agriculture and fisheries, and the livelihoods of rural and Indigenous communities. Investing in conserving, sustainably managing and restoring ecosystems can provide multiple benefits in terms of building ecological, economic and social resilience as well as mitigation co-benefits through carbon sequestration by forests and mangroves. However, there is a danger that ecosystem-based approaches are implemented without stakeholder engagement and consideration of livelihoods. **Taking into account how stakeholders are engaged, use of local alongside scientific knowledge and how to ensure good governance and balance conservation and development goals for socio-economic benefits is critical** to respond to local needs, especially of the most vulnerable, and to achieve fair and equitable outcomes.

## Improving access to and delivery of climate finance for frontline communities, small and micro-enterprises and civil society organisations

Caribbean SIDS are investing in climate mitigation and adaptation, but need the financial and technical support to deliver emissions reductions rapidly and adapt and build their resilience to the unavoidable climate change impacts that are already underway. **Wealthy developed countries must fulfil their promise of US\$100 billion annually from 2020 through to 2025 to support developing countries** in this transition and scale up action under the Paris Agreement. A roadmap and work plan should be adopted at COP27 for setting and delivering the new climate finance goal beyond 2025, recognising the need to mobilise trillions rather than billions to achieve the 1.5°C goal and low-carbon and resilient transformation.

In scaling up climate finance, it is critical that this is mainly grant-based, predictable, transparent and the mechanisms are in place to ensure that these funds are channelled to the local level to meet the needs of frontline communities and build resilient livelihoods and ecosystems, including for the most vulnerable and marginalised groups. **We not only need to double financing for adaptation by 2025, but ensure that at least 25% of total adaptation finance supports locally-led adaptation in SIDS and other developing countries.** This must include finance to strengthen the capacity and actions of frontline communities, enterprises and civil society organisations to adapt and build their resilience.

## Ensuring additional and dedicated finance for loss and damage and operationalising the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage

Loss and damage must be high on the agenda at COP27. For 2022 alone, we have witnessed the devastation caused by Hurricane Ian in the Caribbean and eastern United States, severe flooding in Pakistan and Nigeria and the ongoing drought in the Horn of Africa where 22 million people are at risk of starvation[vii].

A finance facility to provide additional and dedicated finance to address loss and damage, which is separate and apart from mitigation and adaptation finance, is urgently needed. The Santiago Network on Loss and Damage also needs to be operationalised as an effective mechanism to catalyse and deliver the required technical assistance to vulnerable countries. A decision establishing this entity and plans for resourcing it should be agreed at COP27. As with broader climate finance, it is important to ensure that mechanisms are in place to ensure that loss and damage funds and this technical assistance are channelled to the local level to support frontline communities.

## Supporting a just transition for pro-poor, inclusive, sustainable and resilient development

The Alliance is also calling for a just transition of the workforce, including formal and informal workers, across various economic sectors and re-orienting development towards a model that diversifies the energy matrix, moves toward clean, renewable technologies, energy efficiency and sustainable agri-food systems. This includes the recognition of the importance of small and micro-enterprises as a pathway to pro-poor, inclusive, sustainable and climate resilient development. Aligned with the International Labour Organization's Just Transition Guidelines[viii] and Labour Standards[ix], we need to ensure decent and safe work that pays a living wage as part of the low-carbon and resilient transformation. We need to recognise the issues linked to informality and ensure adequate social protection. In particular, promoting gender equality and social inclusion and addressing widening structural inequalities that are at the root of poverty and vulnerability in Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries is key.

Leveraging trade and investment in support of just transition ideals is also important and ensuring open and informed engagement of civil society, including frontline communities and enterprises, in setting priorities to shape COVID-19 recovery and future development and assessing implementation and progress achieved. This process should build linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and international human rights standards[x] to ensure pro-poor, inclusive, sustainable and resilient development and the protection of human rights.

**COP27 is a pivotal moment. With bold action, in line with the science of the latest IPCC reports, we can keep the 1.5°C goal alive, avoid the most devastating climate change impacts and support Caribbean SIDS and other developing countries to shift to just and resilient development pathways.**



## List of Allies:

Caribbean Natural Resources Institute; Climate Analytics Caribbean; Climate Change Adaptation and Resilience Research Centre at University of The Bahamas; Climate Tracker; Environmental Protection in the Caribbean (EPIC); Freedom Imaginaries; GirlsCARE Jamaica; International Development Empowerment and Representation Agency (iDERA); Panos Caribbean; Shridath Ramphal Centre for International Trade Law, Policy and Services at University of the West Indies, Cave Hill (SRC); SOLORICON for the Caribbean Climate Justice Project; The Breadfruit Collective; The Cropper Foundation; Malcom Ferdinand, Researcher, University Paris Dauphine; Simone Ganpat, Kairi Initiatives; Emma Lewis, Blogger and Activist; Danielle Nembhard, Ph.D. Researcher, James Cook University; Vanda Radzik, Gender and Environment Activist; Christianne Zakour



Caribbean  
Climate  
Justice



FREEDOM  
IMAGINARIES



iDERA



PANOS  
CARIBBEAN



UNIVERSITY  
OF THE BAHAMAS

Climate Change Adaptation and  
Resilience Research Centre

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