



## COP28 CARITAS CONFEDERATION POSITION

*"What would induce anyone, at this stage, to hold on to power, only to be remembered for their inability to take action when it was urgent and necessary to do so" Laudate Deum 60*

### PRIORITY AREAS FOR DELIVERY AT COP28

- Loss and Damage
- Climate Finance
- Adaptation
- The Global Stocks take
- Mitigation
- Food and Agriculture

With twenty-seven climate conferences behind us, Pope Francis, in Laudate Deum<sup>1</sup> (LD), reminds us of the need for a new framework for effective cooperation in our increasingly multipolar and complex world. He emphasizes the necessity of establishing global and effective rules to facilitate this global safeguarding. He notes that the agreements, while proclaimed with noble principles, have suffered due to insufficient oversight mechanisms and penalties for noncompliance [LD42]. International negotiations have been hindered by countries prioritizing their national interests over the global common good. Those who bear the consequences of our actions will not forget this failure of conscience and responsibility. [LD52].

Reflecting the sentiments of Pope Francis in Laudate Deum, COP28 must signify a profound transformation, authenticating the sincerity of all actions made since 1992. Caritas organizations emphasize the need for states to ensure that COP28 exceeds symbolic gestures, evolving into a strong support moment for those disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. It is a moment for significant course correction, which means accelerating a just energy transition, promoting adaptation, and substantially augmenting climate finance to cater to the needs of the global south and those requiring support from the loss and damage fund. In these dire times, an unwavering commitment to equity, transparency and accountability must underpin the very essence of COP28. The urgency cannot be emphasized enough – the world is watching, and urgent action is imperative.

This position includes inputs from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean's, North America and Oceania regions, and integrates messages from a [faith statement](#) derived from an online dialogue where faith leaders and experts worldwide delved into the compelling issue of Loss and Damage—the moral imperative for action.

### At COP28 State Parties must:

- ❖ *Establish a fit for purpose Loss and Damage (L&D) Fund that truly meets the needs of people at the frontlines of the climate emergency.*

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<sup>1</sup> Laudate Deum: [https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/20231004-laudate-deum.html).

The L&D 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 that integrates local actors and acts in the common good, and **efficient and effective** by acting as the flagship global fund to address losses and damages alongside other funding arrangements. It is clear that the proposals by some parties for the Fund to be hosted by the World Bank could not ensure adherence to these guiding principles, and therefore Caritas believes that alternative arrangements under the UNFCCC are required to ensure the Fund is successful.

Furthermore, climate change has clearly become a significant factor driving displacement, leading to multiple human rights violations. Testimonies<sup>2</sup> from national Caritas Members underscore how those forced to migrate due to climate change endure violations of economic, social, cultural, civil, and political rights. Displacement is one of the most detrimental outcomes of loss and damage, reversing development and undermining the dignity of people. It results in broad cascading impacts that have immediate and long-term effects. When – despite all mitigation and adaptation efforts – people are obliged to move from their homes and relocate, the Loss & Damage Fund mechanism should ensure fair compensation for losses, including non-economic losses. In this regard, Caritas calls on governments to ensure that funding modalities grant displaced people direct access to livelihood opportunities, essential services, land, and resources, enabling them to safeguard their cultural heritage within host communities.

❖ *The New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance to serve as an opportunity to rebuild confidence in the transformational change that is required - to mobilize and deliver finance in a way that addresses the needs of developing countries.*

COP28 represents a pivotal moment for climate finance, catalyzing the US\$100 billion commitment promise and ensuring that funds for Agenda 2030 are provided as grants, not loans. The NCQG on climate finance must be grounded in the needs on the ground and be sufficient to cover the full costs required for countries to fulfill their roles in achieving the Paris Agreement. Crucially, the NCQG should establish targets for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage funding, recognizing the financial costs associated with each of these actions. Currently, these costs are disproportionately borne by countries that have contributed the least to global warming.

Pope Francis's statement in *Laudate Deum* underscores the importance of ensuring that measures adopted at COP28 are not just aspirations but are binding and enforceable. These measures must meet three key criteria: they should be **efficient, obligatory**, and readily **monitored**. This message emphasizes the urgent need to deliver climate finance strategically and equitably, directing resources toward the communities most affected by climate change. This targeted approach, grounded in **principles of justice and accountability**, is crucial in addressing the disproportionate impacts of climate change on vulnerable populations.

At COP28, the expectation is for nations to commit to concrete and binding agreements, ensuring that climate finance is allocated where it is most needed. **Caritas echoes Pope Francis's call for binding and**

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<sup>2</sup> Caritas Internationalis paper titled "[Displaced by a changing climate- Caritas Voices: Protecting and supporting people on the move](#)"

**enforceable measures, emphasizing efficiency, obligation, and monitoring.** We call for strategic and equitable climate finance, directing resources to the most affected communities.

- ❖ *Framework on the Global Goal on Adaptation pursues equity, shared priorities and provides flexibility that facilitates country-driven and locally led adaptation and improves coordination within the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement and with external organizations.*

In line with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDRRC) as outlined in the convention, the framework on the Global Goal on Adaptation serves as a catalyst for accelerating effective adaptation actions. As COP28 approaches and parties deliberate on the framework, **Caritas emphasizes the necessity of transformative climate change adaptation centered on the principles of the common good and equity.** Caritas calls on governments to prioritize the GGA framework, emphasizing dignity and fundamental rights.

Drawing from our experiences working closely with local communities, we have observed the transformative impact of how initiatives aligned with equity, informed by empathy and justice have empowered communities, leading to meaningful and enduring changes that benefit society at large. Therefore, **Caritas urges commitments to unpacking adaptation strategies with a focus on collective well-being and equitable outcomes.**

Furthermore, **Caritas urges national governments to double climate finance commitments for adaptation at COP28.** Insufficient funding at the global level and lack of local support demand immediate action to build resilience and protect vulnerable communities

- ❖ *COP28 to provide an objective and constructive manner of dialogue to ensure the purpose of the Global Stocktake and motivate parties and international cooperation to demonstrate progress, enhance climate action and support.*

On the Global Stocktake (GST), Caritas has identified the lack of emphasis on key principles such as differentiation and obligations. There is also insufficient consideration on the essential provision of finance for enhancing adaptation, and addressing Loss and Damage. It is crucial that losses and damages are adequately assessed in the GST if it is to provide a full, robust and politically acceptable summation of the state of global progress towards the Paris Agreement. As COP28 concludes the inaugural Global Stocktake, there is a collective hope for accelerated decisions that should direct global climate efforts, particularly towards the Global South. These nations, burdened by mounting debt and scarce resources to combat escalating climate impacts, urgently need increased financial support. Without such measures, extreme poverty and inequalities will continue to rise.

As an urgent call to action, COP28 is expected to facilitate objective and constructive dialogues. **Caritas calls on governments to have positive negotiations aligning with the Paris Agreement goals. We stress the need for ethical decisions and meaningful dialogue to address the climate crisis.** This appeal aligns with Pope Francis's moral imperative outlined in *Laudate Deum*. His message stresses the ethical responsibility of leaders to prioritize long-term well-being over immediate gains, emphasizing the pressing need to address global issues such as environmental degradation and social injustice. In the context of COP28, Pope Francis's words serve as a powerful reminder, urging leaders to act decisively, collaborate internationally, and prioritize the welfare of current and future generations. **Caritas emphasizes the importance of meaningful, boundary-transcending dialogue among leaders,** highlighting the necessity of selfless, morally grounded decisions in addressing the mounting climate crisis.

Reflecting on the GST further, **Caritas also urges developed countries to lead in enhancing climate ambition by strengthening their NDCs, aiming for the 1.5°C goal.** Additionally, Caritas emphasizes the importance of accurately assessing losses and damages in the GST to track progress effectively

❖ *Keep 1.5°C within reach* by *accelerating and equitably shifting away from fossil fuels*

**Caritas echoes Pope Francis's urgent call to move beyond the cover-up of concern and gather the courage needed for substantial change.** The scientific warnings are dire: we are dangerously close to surpassing the 1.5°C limit, facing a looming risk of reaching 3°C and crossing a point of no return. We cannot afford to delay. The consequences are clear - disastrous outcomes and the need for hasty, costly measures with severe economic and social effects. At COP28, governments need to boldly commit to stringent measures, accelerating the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, transitioning to renewable energy, and embracing sustainable practices.

Furthermore, **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.

❖ *Transforming food systems and agriculture*

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 so it is better for the planet and for people. The transformation of food systems should use the opportunity to act jointly on climate change and improve the access to healthy and nutritious food. The declaration holds immense potential, but its impact will be truly transformative when rooted in the wisdom and resilience of local communities and smallholder farmers who are sustaining their communities and protecting the environment based on the principles of Agroecology. **Caritas urges a focus on accelerating these existing initiatives ensuring that these efforts are community-driven, inclusive, and tailored to the unique challenges faced by those on the ground.** 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, agriculture, and climate action, fostering a sustainable future that is both meaningful and enduring.