



Key issues and priorities for COP29

October 2024

The process and global climate context

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) commits countries to work together on tackling climate change through reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adaptation efforts, in line with particular principles of action (including that developed countries most responsible for causing climate change should bear the most responsibility for addressing it).

Each year countries meet at the Conference of the Parties (COP) to discuss progress towards achieving the targets in the [Paris Agreement](#), which every country in the world has now signed up to, and articulates clearly how efforts to tackle climate change should be achieved. This is primarily through a system of nationally determined contributions towards the global temperature goal of “well below” 2C and to “pursue efforts” towards limiting global warming to 1.5C.

Most estimates currently show that [the planet's heating is very close to the 1.5C temperature goal](#), and that this will be breached in the very near future. This is already driving increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, with particularly devastating impacts on countries in the Global South. The losses and damages due to climate change are [estimated to already be costing hundreds of billions of dollars annually](#), exhibited through both “sudden” and “slow onset” events, with the costs being borne mostly by households, communities and governments with little responsibility for causing the climate crisis.

Key Issues at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11th to 22nd November 2024

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS) calls on the UK, in its role as a party to the UNFCCC, and Scotland, as co-chair of the [Under2 Coalition](#) and President of [Regions4](#), to promote urgent action to meet the commitments of the Paris Agreement and for officials and ministers to do all they can to achieve the outcomes below on several key issues at COP29:

1. New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG)

Both the UNFCCC principles and the Paris Agreement articles set a requirement for developed countries to provide finance to developing countries to address climate change - this is the only way to unlock global climate action that will put the world on a path to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C, enable adaptation, and address the now unavoidable loss and damage from climate change impacts falling on those least responsible.

In 2009 developed countries pledged to mobilise \$100bn per year of climate finance by 2020. This figure was largely symbolic and political in nature, but was affirmed formally in



the Paris Agreement in 2015, alongside an agreement that before 2025 a “new collective quantified goal” would be set.

COP29 is being billed as the “Finance COP” since the most significant area of the negotiations that must be concluded is an agreement on a higher NCQG for climate finance from 2025 onwards. It is hoped that the new goal will be more rooted in what is actually needed by countries to address climate impacts, with a clearer plan set out on how to achieve it. Negotiations at COP29 on this issue are likely to be fierce and combative, including in relation to the overall target (some nations calling for \$1–1.3tr per year), the contributor base (i.e. if only developed countries are required to pay in) and the extent to which private loans and other financial flows can be counted towards this target. A summary of the latest negotiations on the NCQG and the positions of key country groupings can be seen [here](#).

Priorities for the NCQG:

- COP29 should agree to a new climate finance goal that is based on at least \$1tr per year in grants and grant-equivalent finance.
- This goal should include explicit provision for mitigation, adaptation and Loss and Damage. The obligation to achieve this goal should sit with developed countries, with other developing countries with the means to do so encouraged to contribute additional climate finance voluntarily.
- The UK Government should reset their relationship with Global South partners and fully deliver upon its global responsibilities on climate finance while ensuring it is:
 - fully additional to Official Development Assistance;
 - delivered as grants not loans (to avoid increasing the debt burden on nations);
 - achieves a balance between adaptation, mitigation and Loss and Damage finance;
 - Champion an NCQG centred on the needs of developing countries, having a guaranteed portion of public finance provision, whilst encouraging the private sector to pay its share.

2. Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)

One of the key elements of the Paris Agreement is that every 5 years parties must submit their contributions towards the overall temperature goal set in the Paris Agreement. In practice, these NDCs usually include a headline target for emissions reductions over the next 10 years, often alongside detailed sectoral targets and means of achieving the overall goal. NDCs may also include signals from countries about their contribution towards the efforts of other countries to achieve their goals (e.g. by including reference to the amount of climate finance given) and of their own domestic adaptation plans, alongside details on how the overall NDC will be monitored and implemented. Parties are required to submit their new NDCs by February 2025, therefore COP29 is a key moment to drive up ambition.



The [Climate Action Network](#) has called on countries to reflect equity through fair shares, climate justice and adequate finance in their enhanced NDCs.

Priorities for NDCs:

- COP29 must deliver a 'Roadmap for 1.5 & Climate Justice' providing guidance to the NDC enhancement process and sending a clear message on how the outcomes of all processes (MWP, JTWP etc) support designing and delivering on ambitious national climate commitments.
- COP29 must provide strategic guidance to countries on how to translate 1.5°C alignment and climate justice in their current and future NDCs.
- The UK government should submit an ambitious, 1.5°C aligned NDC, including sectoral emission reductions targets and without reliance on negative emissions technologies, transitioning away from fossil fuels, and clear principles of its international climate finance. The [Climate Change Committee advice on the NDC](#) should be the floor, but not the ceiling, of UK climate ambition and action.
- The Scottish Government should commit to producing a Climate Change Plan before the 2025 summer recess, that sets out how Scotland will meet its international responsibilities to reduce emissions, without reliance on negative emissions technologies, and with a full explanation of the anticipated and actual amounts of emissions planned to be 'captured' using these technologies.

3. Loss and Damage

A global fund for Loss and Damage was established at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheik and then operationalised at COP28 in Dubai. This year, a board for the fund has been established which is now working out the details of how the fund will operate, but none of the \$700m pledged to the fund at COP28 has yet been distributed.

The board will produce a report to COP29 on progress, and a high-level dialogue will be convened during COP29 to engage political leaders in commenting on how it is developing. Crucially, there remains much concern amongst developing countries that the newly titled "Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage" could yet fall short of the scale of ambition required to truly meet the need. Many developing countries and civil society organisations will therefore be pushing at COP29 for a defined target for L&D to be set under the NCQG, and this is likely to be a highly contentious area of conflict in Baku.

Furthermore, it is hoped by the COP29 Presidency that significantly more pledges towards the fund will be made during the conference. The Loss and Damage Collaboration published a [briefing on what needs to happen on Loss and Damage in 2024](#) and Christian Aid are [calling for community access to the funds to ensure equitable access and distribution](#).



Priorities for Loss and Damage:

- COP29 must agree to include a target for Loss and Damage finance as part of the NCQG, and ensuring available funds are disbursed quickly and fairly.
- The UK Government should show integrity and deliver on its obligations to climate-vulnerable communities by delivering the UK's fair share of finance for climate mitigation and adaptation, and commit to providing new and additional finance for loss and damage, including raising some of this by making polluters pay.
- The Scottish Government should build upon its positive record by championing the priorities of the Global South and using its role as co-chair of the Under2 Coalition and President of Region4 to call for other rich countries to increase their financial support.
- In acknowledging the role of Global North countries in historic and ongoing injustices, the Scottish Government should continue to explicitly use the language of reparations in conversations on Loss & Damage.

4. Fossil Fuel phase out

While the Paris Agreement set a crucial target for reducing emissions, many governments – including self-proclaimed climate leaders – have continued to approve new coal, oil and gas projects even though burning the world's current fossil fuel reserves would result in seven times more emissions than what is compatible with keeping warming below 1.5°C.

Action to phase-out fossil fuels has barely been mentioned at COPs before or after this, but COP28 in Dubai reached an historic agreement to “transition away from fossil fuels” after much debate and discussion. However, there was no money committed to pay for that transition in developing countries, so COP29 must now affirm the commitment and make sure it is realised by ensuring that across negotiation streams there are tangible steps put in place to deliver a fast and fair transition, that parties must report on at future COPs.

Priorities for fossil fuel phase out:

- COP29 must advance the mitigation discussions, including how to finance & realise a socially just fossil fuel phase out. The Mitigation Work Programme needs to be reformulated to provide a productive space for country parties and other stakeholders to engage.
- The UK and Scottish Government could show global climate leadership by championing the [Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty](#), as a complement to any agreement at COP29, building international cooperation to stop new fossil fuel extraction, phase out current production and manage a global transition away from oil, gas and coal in a manner that is both fast and fair, particularly to the Global South.



- The UK-led [Global Clean Power Alliance](#) must address the financial barriers faced by developing countries; enable a just transition to genuinely clean and sustainable power (no large-scale biomass or other dangerous distractions); improve energy access particularly for those most marginalised; and set and uphold high environmental and social safeguards around the use of critical minerals.

5. Article 6 – carbon markets

The Paris Agreement includes provision for countries to effectively “trade” their emissions reductions in order to meet their NDCs. Stipulated in article 6 of the Paris Agreement, the idea is that through the production of carbon sinks (such as afforestation or technological carbon sequestration) countries can exchange their reductions with others for finance. Since the Paris Agreement was agreed in 2015 this article has been subject to intense scrutiny and debate, with many observers and parties concerned that it may open the door to bad accounting and ultimately drive down real action on reducing emissions. This article will be negotiated again at COP29, where the ambition is to finalise agreement on the definition and content of the article, plus project eligibility and review processes. More on this issue can be read [here](#).

For further information on the key issues at COP29 and the role of the UK Government, see the [Climate Action Network UK briefing](#).

Human Rights at COP29

SCCS is deeply concerned about the human rights situation ahead of COP29 in Baku. Azerbaijan has a troubling record when it comes to freedom of speech, assembly, and the treatment of civil society, and we fear that these issues may hinder meaningful participation during the climate negotiations. Climate campaigning relies on the ability of activists, indigenous groups, and environmental defenders to speak freely, share their perspectives, and hold decision-makers accountable.

In Azerbaijan, there are alarming reports of repression against political dissent and restrictions on NGOs. This creates a hostile environment for both local and international environmental advocates, whose contributions are crucial for shaping ambitious, just, and accountable climate policies. Without the ability to organise and protest freely, the voices of those most impacted by climate change—especially marginalised and vulnerable communities—may be silenced.

We also emphasise the importance of including indigenous peoples, women, and other marginalised groups in the discussions. Climate action must be inclusive and equitable, and their participation is essential to achieving that goal. We call on the Azerbaijani government and the UN to guarantee a safe and open space for all participants, ensuring that human rights are respected throughout COP29, and for UK and Scottish Governments to champion progressive, transformative, human rights-based, and inclusive processes



and outcomes across the UNFCCC and COP spaces, and advocate strongly for full respect for the freedom of expression and of peaceful protest in Azerbaijan and at COP29.

The call by Azerbaijan for this COP to be a '[peace COP](#)', while welcome, is open to accusations of hypocrisy given the [actions of the Azerbaijani government in Nagorno Karabagh in 2023](#). The importance of the intersection of conflict and climate change should be recognised, but endorsement of Azerbaijan as a champion of peace should be avoided.

About Stop Climate Chaos Scotland

Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (SCCS) is a diverse coalition of over 70 civil society organisations in Scotland who campaign together on climate change. Our members include environment, faith and belief groups, international development organisations, trade and student unions and community groups. We believe that the Scottish and UK Governments should take bold action to tackle climate change, delivering our fair share of action to keep global temperature rises to 1.5 degrees and supporting climate justice around the world.