

Climate Action Network UK (CAN-UK)

COP29 Briefing



What is COP29?

COP29 is the 29th Conference of Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) taking place in Baku, Azerbaijan from 11th to 22nd November 2024. It is being billed as the “Finance COP” since the most significant area of the negotiations that must be concluded is an agreement on a new collective quantified goal (NCQG) for climate finance. Last year, [we left COP28 in Dubai with a global agreement to transition away from fossil fuels, but no money on the table to pay for that transition in developing countries](#).

What is at stake at COP29?

After 30 years of negotiations, the UNFCCC process is on a knife-edge. While much progress has been made and many agreements reached, the failure of developed countries to provide adequate finance for developing countries to address the climate emergency not of their making, has stalled progress, and embedded frustrations and resentments. In almost every negotiating room, lack of the means of implementation has blocked the path to progress. COP28's agreement to transition away from fossil fuels and COP27's establishment of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, lack funding. Finance 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. The problem is not a lack of finance, but of political will. Every year, trillions in public finance is spent on subsidies and tax breaks that fuel the climate and biodiversity emergencies, whereas trillions could be generated through fair taxes on polluting activities and the wealthiest in our societies. The money must flow to the help, not the harm. Failure on finance at COP29 will have implications across all areas of global cooperation to tackle climate change, including stalling progress on the global fossil fuel phaseout and undermining the prospects of ambitious new NDCs needed for a successful COP30 in Brazil.

Where is the UK?

The Labour government came to power in July with a commitment to become a climate leader and reset the UK's relationship with Global South partners. The de facto ban on onshore wind has been reversed and a commitment made to end new oil and gas licences. Becoming a clean energy superpower by 2030 is a primary focus, however dangerous distractions are part of the mix, with a recent announcement of £22bn investment - almost twice the UK's five-year commitment to international climate finance - for unproven Carbon Capture and Storage. Linked to these domestic plans, the UK is expected at COP29 to launch a Global Clean Power Alliance to accelerate the clean energy transition globally. A just transition must be at the heart of this initiative, and environmental, human rights, and conflict risks related to the production and supply of critical minerals must be addressed.

Climate and nature have been put at the centre of the new government's foreign policy, with new envoys appointed [for climate](#) and [for nature](#), and a series of recent speeches from Ministers demonstrating a significant and positive change of tone, including [highlighting climate justice and its linkages to racial justice](#). However, to date none of the harmful policies or positions of the last government have been reversed on the most vital issues for COP29 and for resetting the UK's relationship with Global South partners. Notably there has been no reversal of the cut to UK ODA or last year's climate finance accounting changes (itself effectively a £1.6bn cut), no new approach to the NCQG negotiations, and no change of approach on the UK NDC which is set to just rearticulate the existing sixth carbon budget already in UK law rather than increase ambition.

There is a real opportunity ahead of COP29 for the new government to rebuild trust with Global South partners and demonstrate climate leadership by adopting clear and tangible changes of policies and negotiating positions on public finance. [Oxfam research](#) shows that reasonable measures to make polluters pay could have generated £23bn in the UK in 2022 for climate action at home and overseas, without unfairly costing UK households. As the fifth largest historical emitter and the sixth largest economy in the world, the UK has both the responsibility and the capability to do significantly more to act on climate change.

What is CAN-UK calling for from the UK?

1. Concretely demonstrate the promised new climate leadership and reset of relationship with Global South partners that is truly transformative and inclusive in its approach.
2. Champion a NCQG centred on the needs of developing countries and provision of public finance, with UK commitments to improve and increase UK ICF.
3. Announce an ambitious UK NDC that is aligned with 1.5°C and the Global Biodiversity Framework, the UK's historical responsibilities and economic capabilities, and that increases ambition on the sixth carbon budget to catalyse greater ambition from others.

Summary of COP29 policy asks

The COP29 Presidency has [outlined priorities](#) and [14 Action Agenda Initiatives](#), and negotiations continue across all areas of the UNFCCC. Here are some of the key ones and our demands:

Climate finance and the NCQG

A new regime for financing the climate emergency is needed to replace the inadequate \$100bn goal. It must provide:

- Public grant finance provision core of \$1tn within the context of the wider mobilisation goal.
- Subgoals for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage, for transparency and accountability.
- Climate finance that is additional to existing ODA commitments.
- Ratchet mechanism, every 5 years.
- Developed countries lead on polluters pay taxes and redirection of harmful subsidies.

Adaptation

Adaptation is urgent for developing countries facing the worst impacts of climate change, yet remains woefully underfunded. We need:

- Greater political attention on adaptation.
- Scaled up and improved access to adaptation finance via the NCQG and Global Goal for Adaptation (GGA) indicators.
- Updated NAPs from all Parties by 2025.
- A permanent agenda item on the GGA.

Loss & Damage (L&D)

Set-up of the new Fund for Responding to L&D (FRLD) is progressing but we need at COP29:

- A subgoal for L&D in the NCQG.
- Grant finance that reaches communities on the frontline and marginalised groups.
- New and additional pledges to the FRLD.
- Agreement for a L&D Gap report.

Nature

The science is clear, the climate and biodiversity crises must be tackled together in order to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C, by:

- Strengthening joint climate and biodiversity ambition and synergies between the UNFCCC and CBD.
- Prioritising protecting and restoring ecosystems in NDCs and aligning them with NBSAPs.

Just and equitable 1.5°C aligned NDCs

Countries must publish 2035 NDCs by February. NDCs announced at COP29 should build momentum to go further and faster:

- Integrate COP28 Global Stocktake energy and nature outcomes into NDCs.
- Align with science, 1.5°C, and equity.
- Developed countries go further and faster.
- Agree a roadmap to track 1.5°C delivery.

Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP)

Justice and equity must be at the heart of the global transition for workers and communities:

- Recommend actions based on the JTWP Dialogues.
- Agree to deliver a Just Transition Action Plan by COP30.

Carbon Markets / Article 6

CAN unequivocally rejects the practice of offsetting to tackle the climate crisis, therefore:

- Article 6.2 and 6.4 outcomes must uphold human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples, secure environmental integrity, and fully guarantee transparency.
- Any voluntary use of Article 6 must raise rather than displace ambition.

Gender

Finalise updates to the Gender Action Plan and Lima Work Programme at COP29 that are:

- More progressive, transformative, inclusive.
- Provide greater coherence with other tracks, clarity (clear indicators and timeframes for tracking progress), intersectionality, and the necessary finance to operationalise.

Civic space and human rights

Shrinking civic space globally is limiting the right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly. COP29 will be held in a country with severe restrictions on civic space where government critics, journalists, media representatives, and human rights defenders face violence, harassment, and arbitrary arrests. There is no climate justice without human rights. We call for:

- Full respect for the freedom of expression and of peaceful protest for all participants before, during, and after COP29.
- An inclusive and accessible COP29.
- Human rights-based and inclusive processes and outcomes across UNFCCC and COP spaces.

CAN-UK asks of the UK government at COP29

To become a climate leader and reset UK relationships with the Global South, we call on the UK to:

- **Champion a NCQG centred on the needs of developing countries for at scale provision of new and additional public grant finance** for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage, that addresses the actual costs of climate change currently falling unfairly on countries and communities least able to afford it.
- **Increase the quality and quantity of UK climate finance (ICF) by:**
 - reversing last year's ICF accounting changes and returning ODA to 0.7% GNI,
 - commit to additionality of future ICF by implementing fair polluter pays mechanisms.
 - provide a new and additional contribution to the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage.
 - prioritise locally-led adaptation, and gender equity, human rights, and inclusion in ICF4.
- **Announce [an ambitious 2035 UK NDC](#)** that:
 - is aligned with 1.5°C and the Global Biodiversity Framework,
 - maximises the contribution of nature in addition to deep decarbonisation of the economy,
 - increases ambition - over and above the current sixth carbon budget and the Committee on Climate Change recommendations - by incorporating this government's new ambitions and plans for UK climate leadership, restoring and protecting nature, and becoming a clean energy superpower.
 - concretely integrates the COP28 Global Stocktake energy outcomes with an end to all new fossil fuels, a clear end-date for all fossil fuel production soon after 2030, and a just transition plan that supports workers, triples renewables, and doubles energy efficiency.
- **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.
- **Ensure the UK-led Global Clean Power Alliance addresses the financial barriers faced by developing countries;** enables a just transition to genuinely clean and sustainable power (no large-scale biomass or other dangerous distractions); improves energy access particularly for those most marginalised; and sets and upholds high environmental and social safeguards around the use of critical minerals.

About CAN-UK

Climate Action Network UK (CAN-UK) is the UK node of CAN, a global network of more than 1,900 civil society organisations in over 130 countries driving collective and sustainable action to fight the climate crisis and to achieve social and racial justice. <https://climatenetwork.org/>

CAN-UK brings together 45 international development and environment organisations in the UK working on the poverty-nature-climate agenda to advocate for climate justice and sustainable development for all.

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