Introduction

The climate crisis stands as one of the most pressing emergencies of our time, unleashing devastating episodes of loss and damage that undermine the welfare of humans and the planet. Worldwide, frontline communities grapple with the severe consequences of Climate-induced Loss and Damage (L&D), which is no longer an abstract prediction but a common reality. While 2022 was already a record breaker in terms of the severity of loss and damage phenomena experienced, it was quickly surpassed by 2023. The climate crisis is escalating and intensifying.

In July 2023, the world witnessed its hottest day on record. Extreme weather events, including floods, storms, droughts, and wildfires, have become a disturbing norm, leading to the loss of lives and livelihoods, landscapes, coastlines, crops, livestock, ecosystems, biodiversity, and infrastructure. Cases abound: in August 2023, China experienced its most devastating floods to date, reflecting a global surge of unprecedented climate events. Similar disasters were observed in Rwanda, where heavy rains caused flooding and landslides, which killed over 130 people, injured 77 more, and destroyed over 5,000 homes.

Tropical cyclone ‘Freddy’ devastated Madagascar, Malawi, and Mozambique, causing more than 600 deaths and displacing over a million people. Cyclone Freddy exacerbated the ongoing cholera epidemic, destroyed homes, roads, farmland, and hospitals, and strained the capacity of healthcare facilities. Likewise, the category four cyclone ‘Kevin’ hit Vanuatu, which brought gale-force winds and rainstorms to the Pacific nation. Tragically, the island nation was recovering from its second major cyclone that week after Cyclone Judy ravaged Port Vila, causing blackouts and forcing residents to evacuate. Beyond its economic and material consequences, the climate crisis is responsible for enormous non-economic loss and damage. Extreme weather events, both in the short and long-term, disrupt social cohesion, increase global inequality, erode cultures, knowledge, and heritage, and undermine mental health.

Inexplicably, despite such alarming signals, world leaders and decision-makers persist in delaying the urgent measures necessary to address the climate crisis at the appropriate scale. Developed nations, in tandem with the fossil fuel industry and its many offshoots, deny and downplay their indisputable responsibility whilst pursuing profit growth at the expense of human and non-human lives. The upcoming COP28, taking place from November 30 to December 12, 2023, in the United Arab Emirates, has the potential to become a landmark moment as parties will be called to clear out a number of longstanding pending issues. For instance, this includes the long-awaited first global stocktake (GST) and opportunities for countries to offer an ambitious political response to decarbonisation. The Global Stocktake is an opportunity to address outstanding issues in climate action such as gaps in adaptation, loss and damage, finance, mitigation, and response measures. It is an opportunity to inform and guide a new forward toward achieving the goal of the Paris Agreement.

Following the establishment of a Loss and Damage Fund (L&DF) and its funding arrangements, the recommendations of the Transitional Committee regarding the effective operationalization of this fund will also be critical. Other Loss and Damage issues, such as the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD) that need to be fully operationalised by agreeing on its host and source of funding, will be of key importance. Lessons from the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, a credible call for a fossil fuel phaseout from several stakeholders, including several countries, and pending negotiations around adaptation, mitigation, and climate finance will also be crucial.

While Loss and Damage is a pillar of meaningful climate justice, it has been neglected and seen little attention since 1992. Yet we acknowledge that some progress has been made on issues related to loss and damage through other agenda items.

We, the Loss and Damage Youth Coalition (LDYC), partners, friends and colleagues, acknowledge the progress made on Loss and Damage at COP27, and during the second Glasgow Dialogue at the Bonn Climate Conference. We understand the critical importance of the upcoming COP28.

As a coalition of over 900 members from 70 countries stretching across the Global North and South, the LDYC adds its voice to the collective demands of global civil society for concrete and action-oriented measures to address the climate crisis and to operationalize loss and damage finance NOW!
Climate Justice requires the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund and its funding arrangements at COP28. As we eagerly await the Transitional Committee’s final recommendations, we emphasize an urgent need to operationalize the Loss and Damage Fund (L&D) at COP28. Moreover, we demand that the Fund be designed to respond concretely to the needs of marginalized and most impacted communities, especially from the Global South by unlocking additional and accessible Loss and damage funding (#LossandDamageFinanceNow!). The Loss and Damage Fund and the funding arrangement should be based on the best available science to strengthen the existing finance mechanism and to address past, current, and future L&D. We demand that:

- The L&D Fund must be a new and stand-alone entity hosted under the UNFCCC and guided by common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, equity, historical responsibility, and the best available science. It should have clear guidance regarding funding actions to address loss and damage across the full spectrum while supporting country-owned responsive strategies.

- The L&D Fund must be predictable, adequate, new, additional, accessible, and grant-based to not increase countries’ debts. The L&D Fund should receive consistent and predictable finance from various streams. Such funding should come with specific disbursement criteria that allow frontline countries (from developing countries, least developed countries, and small island states and communities) direct and timely access to these resources. L&D finance does not originate from a development fund. Therefore, accessibility to the L&D Fund should be grant-based. This will prevent increasing the debt burden of developing countries. The Fund should also allow countries to regain their economic development lost to the negative impacts of climate change by having windows such as post-event reconstruction, rehabilitation, relief, and economic regeneration.

- The Loss and Damage Fund must be the centrepiece of the loss and damage funding arrangements, with the fund’s governance reflecting a holistic approach to action to address loss and damage within and outside the UNFCCC. It should allow a range of resources with transparency that allows the finance to address loss and damage to be new, additional, predictable, and accessible. The L&D funding should be under the oversight and supervision of the COP and CMA under the guidance/backing of the multilateral climate regime to ensure that it is inclusive and responsive to the needs and priorities of developing countries.

- The Loss and Damage Fund and its funding arrangement must incorporate children’s rights as a guiding principle. Economic and non-economic loss and damage impacts affect all children’s rights, including those to decent work, to protection, clean water and food, education, and cultural heritage. As such, actions to tackle loss and damage should the children’s particular needs and vulnerabilities.

- Civil society organizations, particularly women-led and youth-led, must play a crucial role in implementing national actions to address loss and damage. Such actions must strengthen the capacity of state and non-state actors and improve their access to the fund. The Loss and Damage Fund and its funding arrangements should align with the Lima Work Plan on Gender, its action plan, international humanitarian rights, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the 10-Year Glasgow Action for Climate Empowerment plan.

The full operationalization of the Santiago Network on Loss & Damage (SNLD) must clearly define both an agreed host and the funding for its activities.

The Santiago Network on Loss and Damage is the mechanism designed to provide technical assistance of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts for the implementation of relevant approaches to avert, minimize, and address loss and damage at the local, national, and regional levels, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. We demand that:

- The SNLD secretariat must be independent from the host institution to improve impartiality and mitigate conflicts of interest in the provision of technical assistance.

- The host institution should have established relationships, presence, and history in developing countries. This should allow for timely and effective responses in the implementation of the SNLD functions. The host should have a wide range of skills and knowledge on loss and damage and to inform the implementation on SNLD activities.

- The SNLD secretariat must be accountable to the Conference of the Parties and to Parties to the Paris Agreement to allow a party-driven process around the SNLD’s activities, and to guide its approach in addressing loss and damage.

- The SNLD must have reliable and unpredictable finance in the operationalisation of its functions. This will facilitate the effective implementation of its activities, particularly for developing countries which will gain access to the technical assistance required for averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage in their unique national contexts.
100 Billion goal Failed! The New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) must raise ambition and accelerate momentum 100 billion dollars dedicated to climate action every year was promised by developed countries in 2009. While the OECD reports that $63.3 billion in climate finance was provided in 2020, an Oxfam report shows that the amount provided amounted to $24.5 billion at most. At COP21, the new collective quantified goal on climate finance was introduced as a baseline to match the science and to rectify the financial gap, disabling some countries from taking concrete climate action. Setting a quantifiable goal will provide a clear, evidence-based financial target rather than nebulous, uninformed financial objectives, as seen with the $100 billion goal. **We demand that:**

- The new collective quantified goal reflects the priorities and needs of the frontline communities
- The new collective quantified goal must include loss and damage as an additional sub-goal to mitigation and adaptation efforts.
- The new collective quantified goal must be a transparent process with an accountability model that allows the verification of support provided and received. The NCQG should thus be linked to the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETP).
- The NCQG must be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibility, equity, climate justice and polluter pays to principle, all to ensure that the financial targets can be met.
- The NCQG is designed in a manner that doesn’t drive developing countries into debt

Rating the Paris Agreement through the Global Stocktake (GST)
The Paris Agreement includes a process of collective assessment on efforts to keep 1.5 alive with a review every five years, the first of which occurred in 2023. The collective assessment has already been made, and the next step is to determine how countries will respond with political momentum to the outcomes. **We demand that**

- Loss and damage must be considered as separate items under GST discussions, joining the rank of existing items such as mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. This will allow the possibility of ambitious, nationally determined contributions to respond to the current climate crisis.
- The political response to GST should clearly recognise Loss and damage as the third pillar of the Paris Agreement rather than minimizing the item by compartmentalizing it under comprehensive risk assessment, recovery, adaptation, resilience, etc.
- The political response to GST should take stock of existing challenges and roadblocks in the achievement of the Paris Agreement, including the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to reach net zero, the implementation of the national adaptation plans, and the unlocking of relevant finance, which can inform opportunities and lay the groundwork for the next round of NDCs.

- The political outcome of the GST should inform the progress on the Global Goal of Adaptation as the need to meet the doubling of the adaptation finance within its work program is crucial in driving ambitious climate action.

- Climate Adaptation must be recognised as vital for climate justice
In 2010, during COP16, the formulation and implementation of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) took into account medium- and long-term adaptation needs. In 2015, the Global Goal on Adaptation was established to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts. **We demand that**

- The Global Goal on Adaptation framework must have a clearly articulated, overarching goal with set targets and indicators that guide international efforts on climate change adaptation. Objectives should be aligned with existing international commitments while exploring efforts to mainstream adaptation in national priority areas or sectors using tailored methodologies according to national contexts.
- National adaptation plans must have adequate finance through finance commitments (e.g. Global Environment Facility, the doubling of adaptation finance, NCQG) to allow the implementation of adaptation plans especially for countries who are at the forefront of the climate crisis.
- The finance mechanism for NAPs must integrate capacity-building of national institutions, in particular for those of least-developed countries and developing countries, to improve access for locally-led adaptation funds.
- Youth and Children must be included in the implementation of adaptation action at all levels to minimize intergenerational knowledge gaps, and to empower youth as leaders and experts of tomorrow.

Empowering youth as active stakeholders of climate action through the Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE)
Action Climate Empowerment is a term adopted in 2015 to describe the work under Article 6 of the UNFCCC and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement. Its goal is to empower all segments of society to effectively engage in climate action through six pillars: education, participation, awareness, cooperation, access, and training. At COP27, a four-year action plan under the ten-year work plan was adopted to set out short-term, clear, and time-bound activities in four priority areas: policy coherence, tools and support, coordinated action, monitoring, evaluation and reporting. In the context of the current work plan, **We demand that**:

**LDYC COP 28 Demands**

**COP28 Demands**
We demand that:

- The Loss and Damage Fund and its funding arrangement must have a youth advisory board made of youth and children to contribute to the development and planning of actions taken to address present and future loss and damage.
- Access to loss and damage information (i.e. knowledge, research, decisions, actions) must be made accessible to youth and children globally, so that their voices, visions, concerns, and efforts can be informed and supported in the context of international processes on Loss & Damage.

Transparency must define climate action at the local, national, and international levels

An item on transparency was introduced in the Paris Agreement to encourage countries to report and review global efforts to meet the 1.5-degree objective. In terms of providing information in relation to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement, We demand that:

- Each party must be required to provide information on their efforts to tackle loss and damage in the biennial transparency report.
- An issue report mechanism on loss and damage finance must be established to differentiate loss and damage finance from adaptation finance.

Promoting Carbon Markets per Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

Carbon markets are trading systems in which carbon credits are sold and bought, which allow countries to meet their NDC targets. Carbon markets are expected to follow strict regulatory frameworks which incorporate considerations around environmental integrity and sustainable development. We demand that:

- Environment integrity must be recognised as an accounting criterion when reporting and reviewing information provided.
- Carbon markets must be recognised as an important tool to keep to the 1.5 goal as stated in the Paris Agreement.
- Article 6.8 must recognise “addressing loss and damage” activities within the work program framework for non-market approaches.

Keeping 1.5 alive through mitigation and a just equitable transition

Addressing climate change requires a radical structural shift to build a low-carbon, climate-resilient world. This shift must incorporate a just transition for present and future workforces, guaranteeing decent work and training opportunities. Yet, there is currently no agreed general definition of ‘Just Transition’ within the UNFCCC. At COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh (CMA4), a work program on the ‘just transition’ was established to discuss pathways to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. However, there are still ongoing discussions about the work program. We demand that:

- Just Transition’ must be defined in a way that recognizes the views of vulnerable countries, and considers good practices to address loss and damage.
- Finance for just transition and related means of implementation (e.g. capacity building, technology, etc...) must be made available, especially for the most vulnerable countries to ensure that none is left behind.

The Loss and Damage decision-making process belongs to everyone

The Loss and Damage decision-making process should be inclusive and consider the needs and priorities of children, youth, and women, particularly those located in the marginalized and frontline communities within the UNFCCC process and beyond. We demand that:

- Active participation of Youth and Children in climate change decisions on the national and international levels are active stakeholders in taking concrete action to address the climate crisis.
- Equal partnerships must be established, where all stakeholders are recognised according to their unique strengths and contributions.

DEMANDS SUMMARY

1. Operationalize the Loss and Damage Fund: COP28 is the time to operationalize the dedicated fund to support those hardest hit by climate impacts. It should be a new, standalone fund, avoiding debt burdens, and with additional finance.
2. Empower the Santiago Network (SNLD): to operate with adequate financial resources, and with an independent secretariat hosted within an institution offering a wide range of skills for its implementation to support countries facing climate-related setbacks to access technical assistance.
3. Set a Realistic New Climate Financial Goal: The $100 billion pledge failed. Let’s set a climate finance goal that aligns with actual needs and reflects the concerns of frontline communities.
4. Include ‘Loss and Damage’ in the Global Stocktake (GST): As we assess global climate action every five years, ‘Loss and Damage’ should be a distinct category, ensuring it gets the attention it deserves.
5. Stress the Importance of Climate Adaptation: The National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) should have adequate, clear, and accessible finance. Youth should be involved in building a resilient future.
6. Boost Participation via ACE (Action for Climate Empowerment): We want youth representation, especially when it comes to ‘loss and damage’. Empower everyone to act on climate change through information and engagement.
7. Prioritize Transparency in Climate Action: Detailed ‘loss and damage’ reports should be mandatory for every nation. Openness and accountability are crucial.
8. Ensure the Carbon Market Respects the Environment: Emissions trading under Article 6 should prioritize our planet’s well-being. It’s also an opportunity to support ‘loss and damage’ initiatives.
9. Push for a Just Transition: As we move toward a sustainable future, it must be fair for all. We need clear definitions, ensuring vulnerable nations are supported.
10. Uphold Inclusivity: ‘Loss and damage’ decisions and action should include perspectives from youth, children, women, and marginalized groups.