

# ECO

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*Editorial: Andres Fuentes*

## The Proverb of the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA)

In the rich tapestry of African wisdom, proverbs have long been used to convey complex ideas through simple, powerful metaphors. Let's explore the critical need for a strong Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) framework through the lens of an African proverb:

"As the baobab tree stands sturdy, branching towards the sky, so must our GGA framework be – robust and reaching high."

Just as a baobab tree supports many branches with its vast and sturdy trunk, a strong GGA framework must support a range of actions and goals. A tree without roots cannot stand - just as a framework without robust support and targets, including Means of Implementation (Mols), is incomplete. Like a tree that grows but bears no fruit, a framework with targets but no metrics to measure progress also fails to fulfill its purpose.

We find ourselves at a crossroads, much like a traveler at the

edge of the savannah, with a narrow path leading to 2040. This path is our opportunity to adapt at all levels with the scale and urgency required. Our GGA framework must be like a well-planned journey – purposeful, principled, covering all dimensions and themes, and mindful of the cross-cutting issues that intertwine like the roots of the great baobab.

In African wisdom, less action is likened to less rain for the crops: the less we adapt, the more we risk crossing the limits of adaptation, leading to irreparable loss and damage. A robust GGA framework helps protect us from harsh winds of change. But, the stark reality of the adaptation finance gap looms over us like a dry season threatening our harvest. The need for financial support is as crucial as the need for rain in a drought.

ECO's message resonates strong and clear like the beat of the djembe drum: The GGA framework is

a tool for all - communities, parties, stakeholders - to enhance our collective capacity. Without it, we risk not fulfilling the Paris Agreement, akin to a fisherman who ventures out to sea without fixing the holes in his net. Like the village elders offering advice and wisdom, the GGA embodies climate multilateralism, listening to and providing solutions for the most vulnerable. The GGA helps form a larger tapestry, weaving into the threads of other international agreements and initiatives.

Developing and implementing the GGA framework must be ambitious and accelerated. It is a collective process of learning and adapting, much like the communal sharing of stories and wisdom under the baobab tree. This journey is not just about reaching a destination, but about strengthening the trust and unity in our global village as we face the challenges of climate change together.



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# It's My Party And I'll Cry If I Want To

Time for cake today: it's the Universal Declaration of Human Rights' 75th birthday! ECO went all out to organize a surprise party at COP28 and invited a number of important guests, but no one showed up. What a pity that due to very foreseeable circumstances, the Right to Freedom of Expression couldn't be there, and the Right to Peaceful Assembly could barely hobble in. In typical fashion, the Right to Remedy failed to RSVP, and the Right to Life canceled. The new kid on the block, the Right to a Clean, Healthy and Sustainable Environment, said the fine particulate levels were too high to make it to the party.

But don't worry! ECO found a few extra guests to invite at the last minute. The Paris Agreement showed up and brought some friends: the Global Stocktake, the Just Transition Work Programme, and the Global Goal on Adaptation. They don't know the Declaration that well yet, but nothing like free drinks to kickstart a long-lasting relationship. Human rights must be at the operational core of the COP28 outcome for all our new guests:

it will make them more effective - as confirmed by the IPCC - and in line with Parties' international obligations.

Although ECO was pleased to fill the room on such short notice, the glaring absence of the initial invitees signals that we don't have much to celebrate. While we commemorate this important milestone, atrocities and international crimes are happening just 2500 km away from COP28, political prisoners are being unjustly deprived of their freedom much closer, and voices are being silenced even in the Blue Zone.

Let us not forget that a human rights crisis is what gathers us here. Climate change threatens the right to life, health, water, food, and housing of billions, to name a few. The ultimate injustice? Those who contributed the least to the crisis, suffer the most.

ECO demands an immediate ceasefire, the release of all political prisoners, and climate justice. There is no climate justice without human rights, and no human rights without climate justice. Let's hope we can have a proper party for the UDHR's centenary.



# The first round of the 100% Renewable Race ends with no champion and vague promises

What a day! ECO had the privilege of attending the first Renewable Energy Tracker Race. It featured 60 national teams, cheered on by over 70,000 spectators chanting "Just! Fast! Fair! Renewables for All!" Teams competed in a relay, propelled by their energy mixes and respective capabilities. Advanced or emerging and developing economies (EMDEs) had differentiated challenges and specific rules respectively to ensure that the race would be equitable - what an exciting competition!

As the race kicked off, it became quickly evident that the winner would be an unexpected one. No country reached the finish line on time, but Chile, Brazil and China secured the first three places. In the middle of the pack, four EMDEs (Vietnam, Colombia, Jordan and India) overtook many rich nations, which were seen panting and struggling, held back by their lack of ambition, efforts and investments. Some were also spotted losing time burning wood logs to fuel their engine - a wrong tactical move that gave wind and solar-propelled teams a significant advantage!

As the race neared the end, the crowd's boos got

louder: South Korea, Saudi Arabia and Italy - among the rich and high emitter teams - had barely moved beyond the starting line. Many sub-Saharan African teams, short of funding and struggling to gather enough energy, were unable to even detach themselves from the starting blocks.

As ECO made its way through the mixed zone, it heard the head of the Rich Countries delegation commenting on the poor results: "We haven't done enough, and we need to include the rapid, just, and sustainable scaling up of sustainable in the final rulebook so we can better prepare for the coming years. In the spirit of fair play, we also commit to financially support teams that need it".

ECO was skeptical, having learned that such promises are rarely met, but a glimpse at the stadium gave us hope: supporters had unveiled a giant banner reading "100% Renewables, 100% Financeable". Their chants echoed for miles, suggesting that a race for a Just and Equitable Phase Out of Fossil Fuels was on the horizon.

# In search of Fossil Free Food



This COP promised big steps for food and climate, so ECO wonders where food systems transformation is in the GST. Did it get lost on the way? ECO really wanted fossil free food, but the COP only served this, right from the can! (or was it an oil barrel?)



# Net Zero Heroes Provide Pathways to Doubling Energy Efficiency

ECO is excited to drop some knowledge to help Parties better understand a critical way to increase energy efficiency. Increasing efficiency of the appliances' sector, which is responsible for nearly 40 per cent of all energy-related emissions, will contribute significantly towards achieving the global target of doubling energy-efficiency by 2030 put forth in this COP.

The recent report by international non-profit CLASP, Net Zero Heroes, provides pathways to rapidly achieve this target. It highlights 10 specific appliances for action: LED lighting, air conditioners, comfort fans, refrigerator-freezers, electric motors, electric cooking equipment, televisions and solar water

pumps, and heat pump space heating and water heaters. These actions have the potential to cut 9.2 GT of CO2 emissions by 2050. By prioritising them, governments can realise vital adaptation and resilience benefits and improve the lives of millions.

Emissions from appliances are projected to overshoot the International Energy Agency's (IEA) net zero mitigation target by at least 9 GT of CO2 emissions in 2050. Simultaneously, appliances are not on track to benefit the billions of people who need them.

Energy efficiency provides a low-cost, straightforward solution for both challenges. By taking advantage of time-tested, easy-to-implement policy levers

such as **minimum energy performance standards (MEPS)** and **energy labeling**, governments can rapidly supercharge appliance energy efficiency. They will drive down emissions while making appliances more affordable and accessible.

Recommendations have been laid out for each appliance, providing the means for policymakers to take prompt action and realise a massive return on investment with meaningful co-benefits.

Energy efficiency is the lowest hanging fruit for climate mitigation. With provision of adequate finance and support, governments have the tools they need - it is high time to translate these recommendations into reality and become Net Zero Heroes.

# Global Day of Action

Photos by:  
Konrad Skotnicki  
Wschod





# Attention EU: Loss and Damage is Part of the NCQG

The EU might have escaped winning Fossil of The Day by championing progressive leadership, but that has all changed due to their ongoing opposition to including Loss and Damage in the negotiations of the New Collective Quantified Goal. It appears to be a clear signal that they don't want to secure long-term finance for those affected by climate change.

Any further celebrations after they adopted the Loss and Damage fund on the first day will be cancelled if the fund is not continuously filled. Attention EU! Did you miss the memo? COP28 is the conference where the fossil fuel era ends, once and for all. To align with the 1.5°C liveable target, we must deliver an energy package that is fast, fair, feminist, forever, and FUNDED. Yes, that's right EU, countries need financing for the energy transition, and in case you didn't realise the energy package includes technical and financial support, essential to accelerate the transition. This is crucial; the lack of support from the EU and other rich nations is halting the progress of these negotiations. Maybe we should organise a bilateral with the EU and other rich nations to go through the definition of equity, and while we're at it, we can also define 'Just Transition', 'unabated', and 'ambitious' for them.

It is true that some finance was choreographed in the early stages of these negotiations, but did you really think that would pull the wool over our collective eyes?

Climate finance for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage must be multiplied, and financing for the longer term secured.

The alarm bells are ringing, the EU needs to step up now.

## Runner-up - Vietnam

We must be in fashion! A lot of different countries are talking up the crucial role of civil society at COP for brownie points, but forgetting about it when they get home.

Step forward the Vietnamese Prime Minister Phạm Minh Chính, who came to COP28 to launch the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) implementation plan. The announcement cited the JETP Political Declaration which states that 'it is vital that civil society is actively involved in a transparent manner at all stages of the JETP to make sure the necessary transition will be just and inclusive.'

Too bad that back home Vietnam has arrested and detained the country's most prominent climate leaders on trumped-up charges of "tax evasion" and "appropriation of information." This after they sought greater accountability in Vietnam's climate change and energy investments. NGOs leading projects and activities related to clean energy and the protection of the environment are also being shut down. These sneaky antics are not going unnoticed by wider civil society, we see the empty seats and we will not remain silent.

We know when we're winning

by how the opposition reacts... and of course, that OPEC letter that happened across our desks. Six prominent individuals who were working on Vietnam's transition from coal have been targeted, including environmental justice lawyer Mr. Dang Dinh Bach, who is serving a sentence of five years in prison. The UN Human Rights Council Working Group on Arbitrary Detention stated that Bach's imprisonment is in "violation of international law" and that there is a "systemic problem with arbitrary detention" of numerous environmental defenders in Vietnam. Also targeted were former Obama Foundation scholar, Ms. Hoang Thi Minh Hong, founder of the environmental group CHANGE VN; Ms. Ngo Thi To Nhien, Executive Director of Vietnam Initiative for Energy Transition, an independent Vietnamese energy think tank; Goldman environmental prize winner Nguy Thi Khanh; and Mai Phan Loi and Bach Hung Duong from the Center for Media in Educating Community.

These environmental defenders are instrumental in highlighting the gaps between government commitments and actual action. The lack of safeguards for environmental rights defenders within the JETP framework is deeply concerning for the future accountability of states.

For jailing climate activists and shutting down civil society space on climate issues, Vietnam is well deserving of a Fossil of the Day.

**Want to talk about climate justice? Check out the Civil Society Climate Justice Hub**

*Find us in Blue Zone, B7, Building 88 ("Energy, Finance), top floor"*

Check out  
our events  
schedule

