



National Climate Assembly
6th November 2024
Kathmandu, Nepal

Civil Society Declaration

We, the representatives of the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in Nepal, comprising of networks, associations, alliances, and federations representing human rights organisations, peasants' organisations, trade unions, women rights activists, Indigenous peoples, Dalit rights activists, the youth, Community-Based Organisations, Community Forestry User Groups (FCUG) and Association of International NGOs Nepal met at the National Climate Assembly, in Kathmandu, Nepal with the title "Integrating Climate Justice Agendas into National and International Strategies" on the 6th of November, 2024, organised by Rural Reconstruction Nepal (RRN) in collaboration with various national, regional and global networks and alliances for the preparation of COP 29, scheduled to be held from November 11 to 22, 2024, in Baku, Azerbaijan.

The planet is in the midst of a climate crisis already affecting millions of lives. Global action to address climate change has been far too slow and inconsistent. Without urgent efforts geared toward change, and upholding the principles of human rights, we are on the path to increased human suffering and the death of ecosystems. **The climate crisis is widening inequality and more than multiplying the sufferings of people already burdened by the global injustices of poverty, hunger, dispossession, and violation of human rights.**

In the context of Nepal, climate change impacts are increasing every year. These include intensified natural disasters like floods and landslides, and erratic rainfall patterns affecting agriculture and food security. The melting of the Himalayas, leading to water scarcity and increased vulnerability for communities reliant on mountain ecology and heightened risks to biodiversity and ecosystems, both in upstream and downstream communities, is further threatening livelihoods, increasing displacement and exacerbating poverty and inequality.

We recognise the Paris Agreement signed during COP21 under the UNFCCC, aiming to limit the global temperature rise below 1.5°C from pre-industrial levels, seeking to mitigate climate change risks, fostering adaptation and resilience with new, additional, adequate, and predictable means of implementation, coherent with the principles of climate justice, with due recognition of the principles of equity and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBD-RC).

We acknowledge the Government of Nepal's efforts to address the climate crisis through policy development and implementation. However, further action is essential to achieve climate justice

and reduce climate impacts. Recognising the interconnected, cross-border nature of environmental challenges, a comprehensive and collaborative approach is crucial.

United in our urgent concern for the precarious ecological state of our country and the planet, we collectively and urgently demand to:

1. **Acknowledge and recognize** the escalated impacts of climate change, addressing it as an urgent environmental concern necessitating immediate attention by the Government of Nepal. This entails concrete, specific, and ambitious actions that reflect the urgency to address the crisis. The rich and industrialized developed countries must commit to phasing out fossil fuels immediately and further provide means of implementation to developing countries to support them for a just and equitable transition to 100% renewable energy sources.
2. **Recognize and protect** the rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), acknowledging their role as custodians of biodiversity and natural resources and traditional knowledge; ensuring their active and meaningful participation and consent in all decision processes concerning land, water, and forests. Similarly, Community Forestry User Groups (CFUGs) as grassroots institutions exemplify community-led stewardship of forest resources and sustainable practices that benefit both ecosystems and livelihoods.
3. **Address the pressing issue of the melting Himalayas**, also known as the “Water Tower of Asia”, addressing severe environmental consequences; urgently developing and implementing measures to mitigate the impacts of glacial melting, safeguarding the region’s unique ecosystems and communities dependent on them.
4. **Recognize the plight of those displaced by climate change**, both in Nepal and worldwide, and commit to comprehensive policies that protect the rights and dignity of climate refugees. Work collaboratively at the international level to establish mechanisms for the fair and humane treatment of climate refugees. Invest in sustainable infrastructure that supports vulnerable communities and reduces future displacement risks due to climate impacts.
5. **Recognize the disproportionate vulnerability of women** to the impacts of climate change, as they bear the disproportionate burden of increased challenges related to livelihood, food security, access to water and other natural resources and human health and suffering. Uphold women's rights, especially in planning and decision-making, by implementing targeted measures that address these vulnerabilities.
6. **Ensure that the youth, minority and excluded groups** such as Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), Dalits, Persons with Disabilities (PWDs), LGBTQIA+, and other socially marginalized groups and communities are protected, engaged and equipped with tools and resources that increase their resilience to climate change impacts.
7. **Acknowledge the heightened vulnerability of workers**, especially in informal sectors, to climate impacts and climate policies on livelihoods, jobs, health, and income. Uphold workers' rights through the creation of decent, climate-friendly jobs, social protection, and social dialogue and inclusive decision-making that addresses their specific climate-related

risks, emphasizing a just transition framework that aims to ensure adequate, equitable and robust support to all workers as we move toward a greener economy.

8. **Amid the climate crisis, we urge governments to prioritize robust, climate-resilient food systems** that serve local populations over global market demands. This requires significant investment in agricultural research to develop sustainable, agroecological practices that ensure everyone has access to adequate, nutritious food.
9. **Ensure developed countries fulfill their climate finance commitments** toward developing nations, without creating debt for those impacted by climate change. Urgent, full delivery of climate finance obligations should be non-negotiable, and historical responsibilities must be acknowledged through debt cancellation and climate reparations. Additionally, simplify access to climate finance mechanisms for local institutions and communities.
10. Nepal must continue to **lead efforts at COP29 to strengthen the newly operationalized Fund for Responding Loss and Damage**, ensuring that it remains robust, easily accessible, and centered on the needs of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) like Nepal, the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which are rendered the most vulnerable of countries due to climate change. This fund must deliver new, additional, adequate, and predictable non-debt-creating finance from developed countries, particularly those with historically high emissions. Nepal should advocate for transparent and equitable allocation of these resources to ensure that funding reaches the communities most affected by climate impacts.

This declaration reflects our unwavering commitment to climate justice and our resolve to push for rapid, equitable, and just transformative actions. We call upon all stakeholders to heed this urgent call and act decisively to safeguard our countries and the planet.