

L20 Statement to the G20 Environment and Climate Ministers

We must return to the Planet more than we take and we must give back hope to the present and future generations. (G20)



The L20 welcomes the focus on climate and the environment as a key pillar of the Italian G20 Presidency and the commitment to pursue an ambitious vision, in line with the 2030 Agenda.

Nevertheless, the commitments made by the various governments are still far from the level of ambition needed to limit climate change to 1.5°C and achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. At the same time, the Covid-19 emergency has made clear the close connection between health, environment, climate, society and economy. Climate justice and social justice are linked for the success of the 2030 Agenda and global solidarity, through finance and technology sharing and backed by universal social protection, is essential to build resilience against future global shocks. The pandemic has made evident also the ever-growing inequality between developed countries and the Global South.

To make the declared ambitions a reality, G20 governments must provide leadership on implementing the Paris Climate Agreement, deliver on climate targets, including climate finance, and support investments in green sectors. As governments set clear and ambitious climate targets ahead of COP26, attention needs to turn to decarbonising the critical sectors that underpin the global economy and promoting the growth of new green sectors. This presents opportunities for quality job creation, reskilling, upskilling, and entrepreneurship that should be incorporated into all countries' Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

A Just transition, inclusive of social partners, is crucial in garnering the support for the fundamental changes of our development models that are needed to support bold action on climate and the environment. G20 ministers must make sure that people, workers, and the planet are at the centre of a sustainable recovery that accelerates rather than postpones the need to tackle climate change in a just and inclusive manner.

The G20 should increase climate ambition through a Just Transition. For a fair and equitable transition, social dialogue, collective bargaining, and support for workers through re-skilling, job creation and social protection, in accordance with the ILO Just Transition Guidelines, are essential.

Ending the pandemic must go hand in hand with delivering on climate action and a successful COP26 later this year. So far, world leaders have failed to deliver a solution for the lack of vaccines in the Global South. The G20 must take concrete steps, starting from supporting the TRIPS waiver at the WTO, to further support in closing the productive capacity and guarantee access to Covid-19 vaccines, treatment, and testing for all, including developing countries. Recovery Plans, in the G20 as well as in other countries, are a unique opportunity to implement strong public policies to tackle climate change and rebuild more inclusive, equitable, resilient, and sustainable societies. Climate considerations must be integrated into all policies and programs. All investments in Recovery Plans must be consistent with the Paris agreement and with the SDGs of the UN 2030 agenda. Recovery Plans must not finance projects and activities that jeopardize or cause damage to the climate and the environment.

The L20 asks the G20 to take the following steps towards fulfilling its climate ambitions:

- Provide leadership towards implementing the Paris Climate Agreement and increase ambition to reach the 1,5°C target with a view to the COP26. Endorse future investments that create quality jobs via climate friendly employment plans and just transition strategies designed with social partners that ensure protection and training for those working in high carbon industries. Enhanced NDCs must incorporate these commitments and set out how they will address energy poverty and support developing countries affected by climate change and climate migration.
- Commit to setting up and implementing Just Transition plans and measures in their respective NDCs in the runup to COP26 to reach their commitments to net zero emissions no later than 2050 and to halve their collective emissions by 2030 in a fair and equitable way. These must be based on tripartite negotiations with business and workers organisations, and involvement of communities and other stakeholders as defined in the ILO Just Transition Guidelines. Getting social support from all sectors of society, including the affected workers and their families, is crucial to realise the necessary transition.
- Enhance green, care, health, education, and digital public infrastructure spending by matching the most ambitious plans in the G20 – and in doing so apply a regional and community lens – and foster coordination on industrial policies that lead to more inclusive and green economies, and close digital divides through targeted public investments and procurement.
- Provide climate finance. Developed countries are still not meeting their already 10-year-old commitment of providing by 2020 US\$ 100 billion a year included in the Paris Agreement.
- Adopt a set of criteria to engage the private sector when considering green finance, which ensures an aligning of the financial system with sustainable development, public control and ownership and involvement of the social partners and stakeholders.
- Provide support for UNEA 5.2 for a mandate to start negotiations for a legally binding instrument to tackle plastic pollution. Marine plastic pollution must be stopped at the source, reducing production and use of plastics. Increasing recycling and circular design come in a second stage.
- Involve teacher’s organisations and unions and recognize the important role they play in the initiative of the G20 to promote Environmental Education
- Consult social partners, following the ILO Guidelines for a Just Transition, on the “G20 vision on environmental fiscal reform”. Adopt a strategy with clear commitments and a timeline for phasing out of environmentally harmful subsidies, which has been on the agenda of the G20 for many years, in accordance with the recent report of the International Energy Agency ‘Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector’ that supports an ambitious strategy out of fossil fuels.

The G20 must recognize that when designing environmental policies, the impact on workers, their families, and communities must be considered. A Just Transition with democratic participation and social dialogue, as outlined by the ILO, is key to create the social conditions and garner support for the structural transformations needed to protect the planet and achieving the goals outlined in the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.