

# Own-initiative opinion in preparation for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27)



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## 1. **Context**

- [a] The FRDO-CFDD wants to continue contributing to the international process of combating climate change. Therefore, in preparation for the Sharm el-Sheikh COP, the council has decided to submit an own-initiative opinion containing the priorities for our country.

## 2. **Opinion**

### 2.1 **Goals and reporting**

- [1] In the Glasgow Climate Pact, the States Parties reaffirmed their commitment to continue their efforts to limit temperature increases to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels. They do so recognising that the impacts of climate change will be much lower in that case than in the case of a 2°C rise.
- [2] The FRDO-CFDD believes it is important for Belgium to honour its international commitments made at previous climate conferences.
- [3] However, there is still a gap between the expected impact of the nationally determined contribution package (NDCs) and the efforts that would be needed to stay well below a 2°C increase in global average temperature in line with the Paris Agreement.

The FRDO-CFDD therefore asks Belgium to push for a higher level of ambition so that the efforts of all states involved are more in line with the Paris Agreement.

- [4] The council welcomes the agreements reached on annual reporting of climate efforts and invites Belgium to advocate that such reporting to the UNFCCC:
- would become uniform, making the data clearer and easier to interpret and process
  - would look not only at what has been achieved, but also at what has not been achieved and how policies should be adjusted to still achieve it.

### 2.2 **Principles and conditions of Belgium's negotiating mandate at COP27**

- [5] The FRDO-CFDD calls on Belgium to advocate that the negotiations at COP27 take into account the following:

- the respect for environmental limits and the will to combat climate change, according to the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities
- the importance of a high-performance economy with secure energy supplies and a global approach, leading, inter alia, to a 'level playing field' for businesses
- the importance of social justice and a just transition, taking into account the five pillars: social dialogue, job creation (investment, research and development, innovation), training and skills, respect for human and workers' rights, and strong, coordinated social protection. The council recalls that the International Labour Organisation has developed guidelines<sup>1</sup> for implementing policies and measures for a just transition
- the importance of policy coherence for climate and sustainable development, with attention to the fact that transition in Belgium should not be at the expense of sustainable development in developing countries.

[6] The FRDO–CFDD calls on Belgium to make the necessary efforts to implement the many declarations<sup>2</sup> signed at COP26.

### 2.3 Human rights

[7] The FRDO–CFDD calls for Belgium to play a leading role in international climate negotiations regarding the protection of human rights and the impact of climate change on human rights.

### 2.4 Gender

[8] The council recalls the Lima Work Programme<sup>3</sup> and its Gender Action Plan (see Decision 3/CP.25) and calls on Belgium to continue to effectively integrate gender justice into all aspects of climate action at the national and international levels.

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<sup>1</sup> International Labour Organisation (ILO), *Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all*, 2015. | [https://www.ilo.org/africa/whats-new/WCMS\\_432859/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/africa/whats-new/WCMS_432859/lang--en/index.htm)  
<sup>2</sup> (1) Forest Agriculture Commodities and Trade Dialogue, <https://www.factdialogue.org/> | (2) Alliance for the Conservation of Rainforests, <https://www.oneplanetsummit.fr/en/coalitions-82/alliance-conservation-rainforests-194> | (3) Global Coal-to-Clean Power Transition Statement, <https://ukcop26.org/global-coal-to-clean-power-transition-statement/> | (4) Supporting the conditions for a Just Transition internationally, <https://ukcop26.org/supporting-the-conditions-for-a-just-transition-internationally/> | (5) Global Methane Pledge, <https://www.globalmethanepledge.org/> | (6) Glasgow Leaders' Declaration on Forests and Land Use, <https://ukcop26.org/glasgow-leaders-declaration-on-forests-and-land-use/> | (7) Global Forest Finance Pledge, <https://ukcop26.org/the-global-forest-finance-pledge/> | (8) COP 26 Congo Basin Joint Donor Statement, <https://ukcop26.org/cop26-congo-basin-joint-donor-statement/> | (9) Statement on Public Support for the Clean Energy Transition, <https://ukcop26.org/statement-on-international-public-support-for-the-clean-energy-transition/> | (10) COP26 declaration on accelerating the transition to 100% zero emission cars and vans, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cop26-declaration-zero-emission-cars-and-vans/cop26-declaration-on-accelerating-the-transition-to-100-zero-emission-cars-and-vans> | (11) Clydebank Declaration for Green Shipping Corridors, <https://ukcop26.org/cop-26-clydebank-declaration-for-green-shipping-corridors/> | (12) India - UK Green Grids Initiative, <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-and-india-launch-new-grids-initiative-to-deliver-clean-power-to-the-world> | (13) Because the Ocean, <https://www.becausetheocean.org/> | (14) Climate resilient and low carbon Health Systems, <https://www.bmj.com/content/375/bmj.n2734> | (15) Blue Leaders Declaration, <https://www.theblueleaders.org/> | (16) Breakthrough Statements, <https://ukcop26.org/cop26-world-leaders-summit-statement-on-the-breakthrough-agenda/> | (17) Declaration on Zero Emission Shipping by 2050, <https://em.dk/media/14312/declaration-on-zero-emission-shipping-by-2050-cop26-glasgow-1-november-2021.pdf> | (18) Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones, <https://www.forumsec.org/2021/08/11/declaration-on-preserving-maritime-zones-in-the-face-of-climate-change-related-sea-level-rise/> .  
<sup>3</sup> <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NWPSStaging/Pages/Lima-Work-Programme-on-Gender.aspx>

[9] The FRDO-CFDD also calls for even better integration of gender mainstreaming into climate decision-making and action processes, such as the global global global stocktake of the implementation of the Paris Agreement (Global Stocktake) and the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan.<sup>4</sup> The council calls for the designation of national focal points for gender and climate change in all national and regional delegations.

## 2.5 Climate financing

[10] In its opinion<sup>5</sup> in preparation for the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26), the FRDO-CFDD had made a series of recommendations on climate finance, which remain relevant today and some of which are recalled below.

[11] According to the council, the target of \$100 billion per year for climate finance (both public and private) should be met and even increased, although this target does not appear to be met by 2020 according to projections. The council stresses the importance of a renewed commitment by all Annex II countries to eliminate the financing gap in the period up to 2025. Moreover, this should be accompanied by the development of an action plan on how this target will be achieved and the introduction of a uniform reporting mechanism to promote transparency and good governance. In this context, it recalls the COP26 decision that *"Urges developed country Parties to at least double their collective provision of climate finance for adaptation to developing country Parties from 2019 levels by 2025 (...)"*<sup>6</sup> The council also recalls the importance of taking into account the gender dimension in this context.

[12] The FRDO-CFDD calls on Belgium to work proactively at the international level to reach clear agreements on the process to achieve a new target for international climate finance by 2025 that is significantly higher than the current target and includes specific sub-objectives.

[13] The council reminds Belgium of its duty to contribute to international climate finance with "new and additional" resources and stresses the importance of international climate funds such as the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund and the Least Developed Countries Fund, to ensure predictability of funding, balanced decision-making, a balance between adaptation and mitigation funding and direct access to finance.

[14] The council wants federal and regional entities' commitments<sup>7</sup> to international climate finance to be seen as a bare minimum, to represent incremental progress (in line with Article 9.3 of the Paris Agreement) and not to burden the development cooperation budget in line with Article 4.3 of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

## 2.6 Loss and damage

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<sup>4</sup> <https://unfccc.int/topics/gender/workstreams/the-gender-action-plan>

<sup>5</sup> 2021a13, 2021/09/24 | <https://www.frdo-cfdd.be/en/publications/advices/opinion-preparation-united-nations-climate-change-conference-cop26>

<sup>6</sup> The Glasgow Climate Pact, §18. [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021\\_10\\_add1\\_adv.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021_10_add1_adv.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Agreement of 15/09/2022 on the distribution of proceeds from the auctioning of allowances in the European ETS, climate responsibility, the guarantee of a Belgian minimum target for renewable energy and international climate financing.

- [15] For the council, it is essential that Belgium advocates through the European Union position to keep the issue of loss and damage financing on the COP27 agenda and effectively discussed during the negotiations.
- [16] The FRDO-CFDD calls for adequate attention to the damage that climate change is already causing to vulnerable countries and communities. In this regard, it calls for recognition of the urgency of creating a robust, comprehensive and reliable specific loss and damage financing facility within the UNFCCC, including details of how this mechanism will be funded on an annual basis.
- [17] The FRDO-CFDD calls for a process to determine the scale of loss and damage resources needed and how these resources can be channelled to developing countries in a way that respects the UNFCCC's fundamental principles of equity, fairness, impartiality and access.
- [18] The council also calls for the full operationalisation of the Santiago network<sup>8</sup> in its mission to support the most vulnerable states.

## 2.7 Climate migration

- [19] The council calls for the recognition of the growing problem of displacement due to climate change and the need for a strategy and concrete solutions at national and international levels.
- [20] In this context, the FRDO-CFDD stresses the importance of implementing the recommendations of the *UNFCCC Task Force on Displacement*<sup>9</sup> at national and international level.

## 2.8 Carbon market

- [21] At COP26, agreements were reached to concretely implement Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. Nevertheless, there are still some uncertainties. Therefore, the council asks that our country advocate for the realisation of an impact analysis of the agreements on this issue, to check whether they are in line with the San Jose principles.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.9 Sector measures

- [22] It calls for Belgium - along with other member states of the *Powering Past Coal Alliance*<sup>11</sup> - to re-propose a timetable for a final phase-out of coal as an energy source.
- [23] Agriculture is very sensitive to and often first to experience the effects of climate change. The FRDO-CFDD therefore likes to draw attention again to the *Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture*.<sup>12</sup> The FRDO-CFDD asks that Belgium would certainly insist that recommendations relating to food security - thus in line with Article 2, §1.b, of the Paris Agreement - be included in the COP27 decisions.

<sup>8</sup> <https://unfccc.int/santiago-network/about>

<sup>9</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/constituted-bodies/WIMExCom/TFD>

<sup>10</sup> <https://cambioclimatico.go.cr/sanjoseprinciples/about-the-san-jose-principles/>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.poweringpastcoal.org/>

<sup>12</sup> The objective of the *Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture* is to promote the transformation of our agricultural and food system and seek synergies between mitigation, adaptation and agricultural activities.

## **2.10 Research**

- [24] Recalling the importance of innovation to achieve climate ambitions, the FRDO-CFDD calls for Belgium to advocate allocating sufficient resources to research and development.
- [25] The council calls for encouraging qualitative and quantitative research on the (potential) impacts of climate change on both people and biodiversity.

## **2.11 Civil society involvement**

- [26] The council calls for ensuring access to negotiations for all parties and observers, with a particular focus on better representation of women's organisations, LGBTQI+ persons and marginalised groups.
- [27] Finally, the FRDO-CFDD demands to ensure the protection of activists on Egyptian territory before, during and after COP27.