

ECO

THE DIS-COVER THE AMBITION ISSUE

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Beyond Oil & Gas Alliance Shows a Path Forward

Today in Glasgow, Denmark and Costa Rica will announce a new and exciting alliance of countries and jurisdictions committing to something long a 'verboten' topic at the UNFCCC — **an end to oil and gas expansion, and a managed and equitable phase-out of existing extraction.**

ECO welcomes the groundbreaking announcement of the **Beyond Oil & Gas Alliance (BOGA)**. The science is clear that such an effort would have been even better a few decades earlier...but there's no time like the present to commit to real climate leadership!

The alliance is BIG news because BOGA represents the first diplomatic initiative to focus on the **oil and gas production** dimension of the climate equation, aligning with the strong scientific evidence from the International Energy Agency, UN Environment Programme, and others that a rapid and steep decline of fossil fuel production is essential to limit warming to 1.5°C. Core members must have already ended new licensing, concessions or leasing rounds for oil and gas production — an essential and urgent first step to showing real leadership.

BOGA's launch marks a departure from decades of international climate policy in which the need to align the production of fossil fuels with global carbon budgets was largely ignored — an omission which has

cost us all dearly and made the path ahead very steep. The launch comes the week of the 26th anniversary of Ken Saro-Wiwa and the Ogoni Nine's murder at the hands of Royal Dutch Shell and the Nigerian government, a painful reminder that the costs of extraction and greed run far deeper than carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

ECO hopes BOGA settles in and redefines what it means to be a 'climate leader'. Countries, jurisdictions and companies committing to net zero emissions by 2050, while refusing to end the expansion of fossil fuel production cannot and should not claim this title — it should be reserved for those equitably tackling both the supply and demand of fossil fuels. To be successful, BOGA will need to listen closely to ECO's advice:

BOGA should grow and redefine climate leadership: Success hinges on convincing a growing number of jurisdictions to end expansion of oil and gas production and commit to a Paris-aligned phase-out. This means mobilizing BOGA's global platform and diplomatic resources to grow the list of members and normalize the need to phase-out fossil fuel production as a key expectation for countries and subnational actors. BOGA should also focus on creating support mechanisms to encourage Global South countries to join.

BOGA should define an equitable

phase-out: Members will make headlines for their commitments to stop new extraction, but the second part of their commitment is equally important. BOGA has the opportunity to catalyze a conversation on equitable Paris-aligned phase-out dates for oil and gas production, which is desperately needed. New climate commitments are being made every day without reality checks on what gets us to real zero on fossil fuels in a fast enough and fair way.

BOGA should be guided by science and maintain integrity: Wealthy, economically diversified countries joining BOGA should go beyond a licensing ban and commit to stop all new development of oil and gas, including in licensed areas, as well as accelerate the phase-out of existing production. To align with the ambition-ratcheting spirit of the Paris Agreement, BOGA should be clear that its members' ambition will increase over time and encourage members to go beyond existing commitments.

The creation of the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance is an important development and a welcome first step towards a global managed phase-out of fossil fuel production. ECO urges more countries and subnational actors to join this initiative to create momentum to end fossil fuel expansion and to align existing production with the 1.5°C limit.

Un-Cover-ing Essential Ambition

ECO would like to offer some observations on the cover texts and suggestions for how they can better reflect the desperate urgency for action that is needed. The texts fail to reflect the urgency being called for by the people of the world, especially those already suffering the impacts of climate change.

The texts remain worryingly unbalanced between the issues. Whereas ECO is pleased to see many mitigation elements and details on operationalizing these elements – ECO wonders whether Parties misunderstood that we are in fact experiencing increasing climate impacts as we currently move on an uncertain temperature pathway. So then if climate mitigation is not the only solution to the climate emergency – Parties should also want to address Loss and Damage Finance and Adaptation in equally detailed ways as the mitigation section!

There is a need for more clarity on how the solidarity elements around loss and damage finance, adaptation and finance more generally are to be mobilized in time and in sufficient quantity to address existing and future needs of developing countries.

Greater precision is needed so the world can hold Parties to account, including clear time bound processes and outcomes rather, than generalized calls for more action. Also ECO wonders where is the recognition of the gross inadequacy of the existing pledges of mitigation targets and finance and the need to bring these in line with the 1.5°C goal – we need urgency rather than ‘urging’, perhaps.

Overall the texts feel very incremental. Can it be true that even after the IPCC 1.5°C report, Parties are content to refer to a 2°C goal first introduced by the EU in the distant mists of the past (1996)? Even after the IPCC 1.5°C report, and the ones on oceans and land, there is no sense in the text on the table of the wider potential for sustainable development that realizes co-benefits across a variety of social and environmental challenges.

Another area where new advances in the external world are not reflected is the lack of reference to the UN Human Rights Council resolutions on the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment and the new Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Climate Change. All this should be recognized in the text - simply recalling the Paris preamble does not add much six years later.

The text is a floor, we must look to raising the ceiling.

LOSS AND DAMAGE

Loss and damage is an issue of climate justice and should be recognized as such. Actions in response to loss and damage need to reflect the needs of those affected responding to the real and escalating costs of loss and damage. The cover text should also acknowledge the ongoing and increasing reality, including the scientific basis, of loss and damage for many of the poorest people around the world that is associated with rising temperatures.

Parties should be invited to submit loss and damage assessments/impacts studies by COP27 to inform the GST. It is crucial that these assessments be incorporated into planning processes, and that requires enhanced support for the development of assessment methodologies.

As in other sections of the cover decisions, urgency of action should be underscored and unlocked through increased and additional financial support. Many people around the world are already losing their homes, livelihoods and even lives to climate impacts. Schools and hospitals are being destroyed. Without such finance, these people will continue to struggle to rebuild their lives.

ADAPTATION

While the text is quite strong on impacts, needs and scaling up, it does not give any recognition of the importance of locally led adaptation, despite its effectiveness and relevance. ECO is waiting for the important final decision text on the Global Goal to have this reflected in the text, but reflected it should be.

ADAPTATION FINANCE

The call for doubling adaptation finance is too weak as it is neither time bound nor a commitment. The texts need to express an explicit commitment by developed countries to increase the share of adaptation finance to reach 50% of total public climate finance before 2025.

MITIGATION

ECO welcomes the call in the texts for a high level dialogue with the UNSG and the mandate for an annual synthesis report – although to be useful an annual report requires ambition to be raised

each year.

While there are welcome details and suggestions in the text on raising mitigation ambition, there is a lack of concrete and active calls for countries to raise their NDCs in line with 1.5°C. This is, after all, a goal of the Paris Agreement, and the ambition and implementation gaps have to be closed within the next few years. Because of this, we need to see regular and annual ambition raising. And the link between ambition raising and the temperature goal needs to be explicit in the text.

The text should clearly recognise the role of nature as an essential component of keeping 1.5°C within reach, alongside accelerated fossil fuel phase out. Ecosystem protection and restoration must be carried out **as well as** not instead of ending the use of fossil fuels, and must respect the rights of Indigenous Peoples and local communities and of human rights.

The text needs to land a strong broadside against fossil fuels, calling for an acceleration of the global energy transition, including the phase-out of fossil fuels. The many announcements made during this COP reflect this need. The decision needs to include the phase-out of all fossil fuels and related subsidies on an ambitious timeline, driving a just transition as the world moves away from their use.

FINANCE, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND CAPACITY BUILDING FOR MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

While the draft text regrets that the promise by rich countries to ramp up climate finance to US\$100 billion a year by 2020 has not been kept, it only expresses regret and fails to strongly commit rich countries to compensate for the failure in later years so that, on average, \$100b is provided in each of the years 2020 through to 2025, as promised in Copenhagen and Paris. This fulfillment of the promise made by developed countries needs to be clearly reflected.

The draft text is completely silent about the fact that most of public finance comes in the form of loans, further increasing high levels of debt for countries many of which have had no role in causing the crisis but are suffering from the worsening impacts. The need for grants based finance should be expressed in the cover texts.

California in the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance Would be a Moment to Celebrate — But There's More Work to Be Done

ECO's sources tell us it is increasingly likely that California will be joining the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA) at today's official Alliance launch as an inaugural associate (second-tier) member. If true, ECO warmly congratulates California on this important development. Since the last COP, California Governor Gavin Newsom has pledged to ban fracking by 2024 and to study the phase-out of oil and gas production by 2045. Most recently, Newsom announced the nation's largest state-wide setback distance between oil and gas wells and communities.

These important steps will have helped earn California's associate membership status in BOGA. However, even with partial BOGA membership, the climate emergency demands that Newsom and California do more to phase-out oil and gas production faster. ECO urges the state to join BOGA as a full member, and do what science and justice demand.

Behind its green image, California has a dirty secret: It's the 7th largest oil producing state in the U.S. What's more, the oil produced in California is some of the filthiest and most climate-damaging in the world, devastating to both public health and the climate.

The landmark setback proposal announced last month is a long overdue sign of hope for the millions of Californians who live within one kilometer of an oil or gas well. But for decades, California has allowed toxic oil drilling near homes, schools and other sensitive sites. Overwhelmingly located in low-income communities and communities of colour, drilling spews chemicals that cause severe health harms including cancer, respiratory illnesses, and reproductive

complications. If fully implemented, the new rule would finally limit the oil industry's relentless poisoning of frontline communities.

California's BOGA membership would validate these important steps towards climate action and environmental justice. But ECO also recognizes that California would, as yet, only be an associate member. California has yet to meet the criteria for full membership, including adopting a full fossil fuel licensing ban. In fact, since taking office, Governor Newsom has issued permits for more than 5,000 new oil and gas wells. The approved wells will produce an estimated 144 million metric tons of carbon dioxide pollution — equivalent to the emissions from an extra 31 million cars on the road for a year. Those emissions could cause as many as 97,500 excess heat-related deaths worldwide by 2100.

Moreover, California is the world's 5th largest economy and, as such, has a moral responsibility to be a "first mover" and phase-out its oil production much faster than poorer countries that are more dependent on the oil industry and less able to rapidly diversify their economies.

Therefore, ECO calls upon Governor Newsom of California to end the issuance of all permits for new oil and gas wells today, and to accelerate its phase-out of oil and gas production to no later than 2035 to align with climate science and international equity. And finally, ECO calls upon Newsom to defend the new health and safety rule from Big Oil's inevitable attacks and strengthen it to stop existing oil production next to where people live. With these steps, California could mature into a fully-fledged BOGA member and a climate justice leader.

Something Is Missing from the COP Decision: the Global Stocktake!

As ECO has already explained, the GST is the guardian of the Paris Agreement. It is about protecting people and ecosystems from climate change impacts, and it's about saving lives, cultures, and livelihoods. Yet looking at the draft COP cover text, you would hardly know that Glasgow is the moment that will kickstart the first Global Stocktake – it's tucked away at the end of the CMA decision.

This process requires a lot of work for Parties, but also for all the constituencies of the UNFCCC, who are invited to be part of the discussions, submit inputs and coordinate. ECO knows that civil society is ready to engage in the work to be done so that the GST is a real technical and political success.

However, that effort will need support to achieve success. The first submission phase will start soon and is expected to finish by February 2022. As such, all constituencies are expected to submit reports, data and inputs for the GST by this deadline, and should ideally consolidate a submission with summaries of the main inputs of their members. English language is required of course, but to ensure inclusivity, all UN languages should be accepted. But ECO is concerned that meeting these deadlines will be hard to achieve. Civil society has very limited capacity to carry

out such a momentous task on such a shortened timeline. If civil society is to accomplish that, it will need strong engagement from Parties to support this.

Thus, ECO proposes the following bullet point in the COP26 decision text:

Recalling 19/CMA.1, paragraph 37(i), point 1, notes parties agreed that UNFCCC observers were included in the non-exhaustive list of inputs for the Global Stocktake; requests Parties to support the submission and participation processes of the nine constituencies; and invites the three COP presidencies of each Global Stocktake process to facilitate and ensure the financial, logistical, and technical support and resources needed for these constituencies to be able to fully participate and submit their inputs.

We think that the COP Presidencies' duty during the three submission phases and the technical dialogues should be to ensure the support of constituencies in the GST process.

The participation and inclusion of the most vulnerable, of women, Indigenous Peoples, youth organisations, and civil society in general, is a key element of the success of the GST, and we need a strong commitment from Parties here.

Unusual Support for 1.5°C

Over the last decades, many ECO contributors have worked behind the scenes to influence important international energy organisations, or openly campaigning against them. This year, the International Energy Agency, arguably the most influential energy agency globally, has thankfully changed sides.

In two reports this year, Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector, and the World Energy Outlook 2021, the IEA showed strong evidence that the world can go to literally zero emissions in the energy sector by 2050. Standing up against its former allies in the fossil fuel sectors and aligned governments, the IEA recommended that all new investments in fossil fuels have to stop – **now**. The IEA further suggests a very high deployment of solar and wind at more than 70% of all energy used eventually; along with a tripling of annual energy efficiency globally across all economic sectors.

The IEA used the IPCC-defined yardstick of a remaining carbon budget of about 500 Gt CO₂ and applied that to its analysis, while rejecting offsets beyond boundaries of the energy sector. The

IEA scenario projection lands at about 1.4°C above pre-industrial temperatures.

ECO is very pleased to see that the IEA-proposed measures and policies, laid out in detail with milestones, will lead to almost 50% CO₂ reduction by 2030 worldwide while focusing the strongest actions on rich and developed countries. The IEA also finds that this requires 4-5-fold growth in annual investments in clean technologies, renewables, energy efficiency and infrastructure to about US\$4.5 trillion annually in the next few years. Most of that is profitable compared to a business as usual pathway.

ECO is still concerned that some of the proposed “zero-carbon” technologies included by the IEA will have detrimental effects on land and people. ECO is especially concerned that the projected growth in biomass energy and CCUS needs to be curtailed. Furthermore, the suggested doubling of nuclear power in the next decades is highly unsustainable, expensive and contributing to a super-toxic waste legacy that remains unresolved – which is why ECO has always and continues to promote a full phase out of nuclear.

Plastic: The “Other” Fossil Fuel

The fossil fuel industry must have been nervous about this COP, since it brought a delegation larger than any single country. But it also has a backup plan, just in case, Parties get serious about cutting back on fossil fuels: plastic. While transportation fuel demand is flat, plastic production is growing at 4% per year; with ExxonMobil and others investing billions in new and expanded facilities to produce ever-increasing quantities of plastic. Oil and gas provide both the feedstock and the energy source for plastic production, giving it an enormous carbon footprint. If plastic were

a country, it would rank 5th in GHG emissions, right between Russia and Indonesia. While parties rightly focus on reducing fossil fuel consumption and deforestation, they’re letting increased plastic production slip under the radar. An analysis of 99 revised NDCs by GAIA, found only 11 that entertained any measures to restrict plastic. Meanwhile, the plastics industry is selling pipedreams of “carbon neutral plastic” through a mix of offsetting, greenwashing, and technologies that don’t even exist. Plastic is carbon, after all, and needs to be zeroed out along with the rest of fossil fuels.

The Energy We Want

The world is getting closer than ever to a global fossil fuel phase-out. So ECO is crossing its fingers in the hope that COP26 will conclude with a call for a coal phase-out and a global end to fossil fuel subsidies. To tackle climate change we need a rapid phase out of fossil fuels and sustainable energy solutions. This is why ECO is so fond of renewable energy, particularly when coupled with energy efficiency. There are a wealth of solutions that are fast to implement, affordable, sustainable, and that can provide sustainable energy access to all.

ECO calls upon all countries to include in their climate plans a transition to renewable energy, in a sustainable and energy efficient manner. The good news is that renewable energy resources are distributed around the globe, and several studies show that all countries can be fully supplied with renewable energy, enabling energy access for all.

All over the world, civil society is ready to take part in the transition process so that solutions and ways of implementation are adapted to local needs. All technologies, including renewable energy, can be misused and poorly planned projects can create local problems. But with locally directed choices, including many small solutions that are often missed, a real, sustainable transition is possible.

ECO hopes that when we meet again at COP27 that many countries will have integrated the transition to sustainable use of renewable energy into their climate plans, and in this way enable a stronger and more sustainable path for faster emissions reductions.

Not All That Shines Is Right ...

ECO is concerned that amongst all the climate solutions that are presented at COP26 there are promoters who are queuing up to receive climate finance for proposed technologies that create at least as many problems as they attempt to solve.

At COP26, the very visible promoters of nuclear power and their industry backers, are somehow forgetting to mention that nuclear is much slower to implement than sustainable renewable energies, much more costly and uses a hugely unsustainable amount of water, often from sources that could be used as drinking water, cleaning water and/or for agricultural purposes. The technology is unsafe and there’s also the still unsolved problem of radioactive waste. Funding spent on nuclear power is money that slows down climate action. Building nuclear power puts countries in debt for decades, and the costs of accidents are not even in the budget. Faster and stronger emissions reductions will be realized if the same money were spent on renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Unsustainable biomass use is another problematic ‘solution’ that can increase climate change while also creating many local problems, and harming populations and nature around the world. This includes much of liquid biomass that is blended into transport fuels, as well as large scale biomass that’s imported into countries that want a quick fix for replacing coal use.

A Cover[Up] Decision to Rescue a Failed COP?

ECO is happy to share this part of our publication with the Indigenous Peoples Caucus (IPO) to help amplify their voice. This article reflects the views of the IPO.

The Indigenous Peoples Caucus has been working around the clock these past two weeks to advance text on Article 6, climate finance, gender, and mechanisms that support a rights-based framework. However, as we move towards the final days of the COP26, and many of the negotiation tables are asserting their final positions, some in civil society have switched their focus to influencing the Cover Decision.

So can the Cover Decision be a saving grace for inclusion of our rights, or is it merely a glossy Cover Up over a COP that has already failed communities on the frontlines?

With real opportunities on negotiation items dwindling, for some, the Cover Decision has become a final glimmer of hope, where civil society may be able to find a home for strong human rights language, commitments to cutting fossil fuel extraction, and other essential demands that have thus far failed to materialise at COP26. The Indigenous Peoples Caucus maintains that inclusion in the Cover Decisions is better than no inclusion at all, but we know that even the strongest and most justice-focused Cover Decision risks merely window-dressing a failed COP if we give up advocating for our rights to be included elsewhere.

For Indigenous Peoples, the Cover Decision **must center a rights-based approach** that uplifts the distinct rights of Indigenous Peoples and remains in line with the minimum standards of the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Any regression on these minimum standards risks COP26 falling woefully short on its promise to be the 'People's COP', with no meaningful protection for human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. We have already seen Parties actively remove rights-based language in the ACE room, and in others, our rights are still imprisoned by square brackets. We have been working too hard, and our communities have sacrificed too much for Parties to backpedal on our rights in these negotiations.

Human rights and Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the Cover Decision is our red line, and we will fight to the last breath of this COP to protect it.

Fully supporting Indigenous Peoples requires strong human rights language and ensuring that rights of Indigenous Peoples are at the centre of all decisions at COP26 - from Article 6, to Loss and Damage, to the Cover Decision. This means *explicit* references to the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People (UNDRIP), the UN Convention of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCPRD), and specific references to the human right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, supported by the recent decision at the Human Rights Council.

These declarations, signed and affirmed by a majority of Parties in attendance, have already paved the way for the protection and safeguarding of our rights. **We deserve fully operational and explicit language that can be used to hold Parties accountable.**

Additionally, the draft Cover Decision text fails to adequately address the need for a just transition away from fossil fuels to reach 1.5°C and protect our communities. Instead, the current text falls flat in *only* mentioning **coal** and **subsidies** of fossil fuels as part of the phase out and just transition strategy, thereby sanctioning the continuation of destructive fossil fuels extraction. This amounts to a light slap on the wrist for these extractive industries who are responsible for and continue to profit from the growing climate crisis, all the while appropriating and destroying Indigenous lands and enacting gender-based violence, criminalization, and assassination on our frontline land defenders. This is an even more important rights issue when we consider that fossil-fuelled violence disproportionately harms Indigenous Women, Girls, Queer, Trans, and 2 Spirited peoples, as we heard in the powerful Gender Day MMIW memorial earlier this week.

We must end negotiations this week with clear commitments from Parties that ensure the protection of human rights and the rights of Indigenous Peoples in all decisions, including the Cover Decision. #DeleteTheBrackets, not human rights.

Fossil of the Day

And it's GOLD for Australia at last at COP26 here in Glasgow!!

The day has finally come. After bagging four fossil awards so far at COP26 Australia has now won its first GOLD (applause, please). All that hard work and effort has paid off after:

No new policies to reduce emissions or phase out fossil fuels; Failing to deliver ambitious NDCs; Approving three new coal projects in the last months; Ruling out signing the Global Methane Pledge; An 'inaction plan' for EVs in favour of gas guzzling cars; Rolling out the red carpet for gas-giant Santos in their COP pavilion; Inviting consultation on ten new areas for offshore petroleum exploration; Not updating the 2030 target.

Now safely back in Oz, the PM has outdone himself by announcing another truly brilliant #ScottyFromMarketing plan. To keep the fossil fuel ball rolling he's going to invest a whopping US\$740 million in fossil fuel tech, such as Carbon Capture and Storage, which Australia's public green bank is going to be forced to swallow.

All eyes are on Glasgow and draft texts at the moment but Scott John Morrison, you're still catching our eye by flying the carbon emissions flag down under - whatever next.

Brazil wins second place for transporting an entire country back in time

A report released, this week, by the Brazilian NGO Instituto de Estudos Socioeconômicos (INESC) showed that Brazil has increased the volume of direct and indirect subsidies granted to fossil fuel companies by 25% from 2019-20 – an astronomical \$22b.

This eclipses, by some way, the country's education budget, which the nation's Chamber of Deputies has reported fell by 56% between 2014 and 2018, from about \$2.3b to just over \$1b.

Decisions that lead to such breathtaking disparity are very difficult for us to comprehend. We started to understand the mindset that can lead to such inequality after hearing comments from the Brazilian Minister of the Environment, Joaquim Leite, during the COP26 plenary, on Wednesday:

"We have to recognise that where there is a lot of forest, there is a lot of poverty"

On first reading, we mistakenly assumed the statement actually came from the travel journal of an opium-addled 18th century missionary coloniser. But no, those words were actually spoken in Glasgow, in 2021. Unfortunately, they only go to confirm the Brazilian Government's illogical, and very dangerous, rationale. These are sobering figures and comments that make us wish we had a time machine to send Bolsonaro's government back to the prehistoric age, where their ideas and policies belong.