

**October 14, 2022**

## **Open Letter**

### **Statement on the World Bank Action Day 2022**

To the Governors and Executive Directors of the World Bank Group

CC: Mr. President Malpass,  
President of the World Bank Group

Dear Governors and Executive Directors,

One thing is clear: our planet's rising temperature is deadly. It threatens everyone. The extraction and use of fossil fuels is damaging the Earth and poses imminent dangers to all people who inhabit it. Among them, those in marginalized communities around the globe suffer the most.

The World Bank must exit all fossil fuel projects where it is currently involved, be it directly or indirectly through policy-based lending or financial intermediaries, and redirect that support towards countries' just transition to renewable energy and green, resilient economies. This should include the democratization of energy planning processes. No public assistance should be used to prop up the development of fossil fuels. From 2016 to 2020, over a dozen countries received technical assistance, including Pakistan's Thar lignite coal fields, Mozambique's coal and liquified natural gas (LNG) blocks, or Brazil's pre-salt offshore oil fields. In at least 18 countries, World Bank policy reforms promoted benefits that incentivize fossil fuel investments, including in Colombia (e.g., VAT tax exemptions favoring oil and coal), Egypt, Ghana, Guyana, Indonesia, Iraq, Pakistan, and Senegal.

Your institution's commitments to ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity are irreconcilable with your support for fossil fuels. The two can never co-exist. The CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the continued use of oil, coal, and gas will not benefit the people – neither local communities nor humanity at large. The immense damage to ecosystems and biodiversity is not only causing tremendous suffering; it brings about an economic disaster. The money earned by a few from the exploitation of fossil fuels cannot make up for the climate backlash in the shape of hurricanes, floods, droughts, or earthquakes that hurt millions.

In 2017, the World Bank and nine other multilateral banks committed to align their financial flows with the goals of the Paris Agreement. In the first 3 years since that pledge alone, over US\$ 12 billion went into direct fossil fuel investments. In 2021, the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) was released without a transparent and public

discussion with civil society. As a result, the Plan is slow and rife with loopholes. It also fails to address the crucial areas of policy-based lending and financial intermediaries. Most disappointingly, CCAP allows money to flow into false solutions like carbon trading or carbon capture and storage (CCS), which is yet to demonstrate any semblance of effectiveness at scale. With the emphasis on private finance, the World Bank shirks responsibility, making it harder for civil society to hold it accountable for not investing into renewable energy.

Our planet badly needs the burning of fossil fuels to stop – NOW. There is no time to waste. Our demand is: Exit all involvement in fossil fuels and end all forms of assistance for oil, coal and gas. This means especially the big western fossil fuel companies that enjoy many kinds of monetary support from the World Bank and other multilateral financial institutions.

It is clear to all of us that the World Bank has failed to lead the world on a just transition out of fossil fuels. Shareholders and directors should face the fact that, because of global warming, the World Bank actively promotes disaster and poverty. It does so with public money. We now raise our voices and take our protest to the streets. These failures are damaging humanity's wellbeing and our very future on this planet.

Until and unless the World Bank radically changes its ways and starts doing what is right, we will keep up the conversation. We will continue standing up for the people we love and for the planet we call home.

Yours sincerely,

- AbibiNsroma Foundation ANF
- African Coalition for Sustainable Energy and Access
- Alliance Sud
- AllRise
- Arab Watch Coalition
- Asian Peoples' Movement on Debt and Development (APMDD)
- Bank Information Center
- Big Shift Global
- Both ENDS
- Bretton Woods Project
- Buliisa Initiative for Rural Development Organisation (BIRUDO)
- Center for Energy, Ecology and Development
- Centre for Financial Accountability
- Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL)
- Christian Aid
- Civic Advisory Hub - CAH
- CNCD-11.11.11
- Community Empowerment and Social Justice Network (CEMSOJ)
- Crude Accountability
- Defenders Protection Initiative
- Eurodad
- Foundation for Environmental Management and Campaign Against Poverty
- Freedom from Debt Coalition
- Fridays for Future

- Friends of the Earth US
- Friends with Environment in Development
- GAIA AP
- Gender Action
- Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives - Asia Pacific
- groundWork, Friend of the Earth South Africa
- IBON International
- Institute for Policy Studies Climate Policy Program
- International Rivers
- Jubilee Australia Research Centre
- Lumière Synergie pour le Développement
- Money Rebellion
- NGO Forum on ADB
- Nu Climate Vision
- Oyu Tolgoi Watch
- Pakistan Fisherfolk Forum
- Philippine Movement for Climate Justice
- Researcher\*
- Rivers without Boundaries Coalition
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
- The New Environmental Justice Solutions
- Urgewald
- Waterberg Women Advocacy Organization
- 350.org