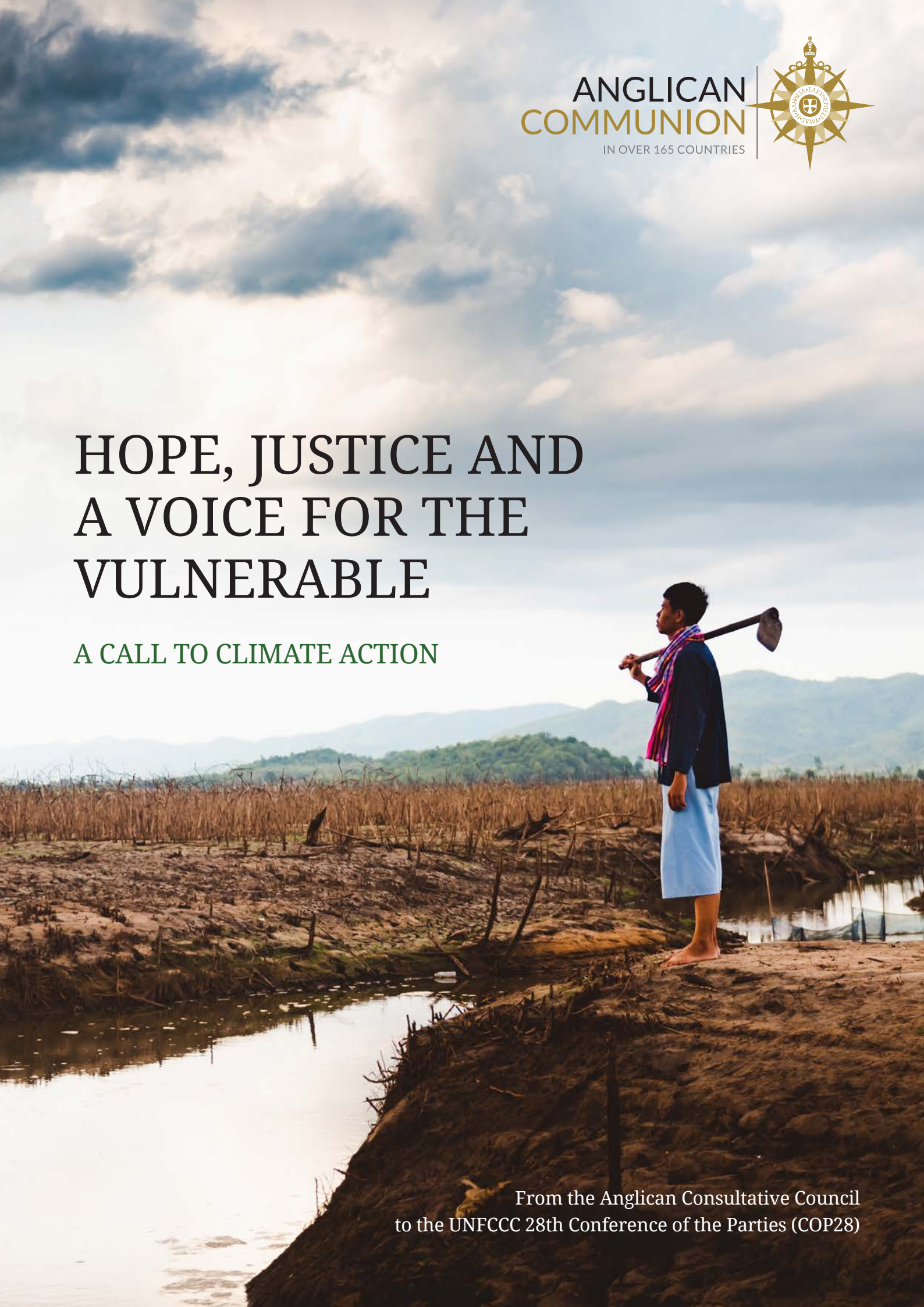
ANGLICAN COMMUNION
IN OVER 165 COUNTRIES

HOPE, JUSTICE AND A VOICE FOR THE VULNERABLE

A CALL TO CLIMATE ACTION



From the Anglican Consultative Council
to the UNFCCC 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28)

HOPE, JUSTICE AND A VOICE FOR THE VULNERABLE

A CALL TO CLIMATE ACTION

The Anglican Communion is the world's third largest Christian community with 85 million members in over 165 countries. Many Anglican churches are in communities that face the realities of climate crisis every day. This paper represents the voices of millions of Anglicans around the world to leaders at COP28. It calls the parties at COP28 to respond to the climate crises with urgency, ambition, and justice. It also calls Anglican churches to support outcomes of COP28, locally and globally.

WE CALL FOR

We urge policy makers to take these calls into the negotiations with them, putting the needs of those most impacted by climate change at the heart of efforts to reach agreement. Simultaneously, we hope that faith actors and other stakeholders utilise these policy recommendations to influence leaders in their countries in taking action for climate justice.

1. A JUST TRANSITION:

Commitment at COP28 to phasing-out fossil fuels, fastest in the highest polluting countries, ensuring dialogue with affected sectors and overcoming barriers to transitions in emerging markets.

2. RESILIENCE BUILDING IN VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES:

Double funding for adaptation, working strategically with faith groups already in vulnerable communities and making sure women, youth and indigenous peoples are at the table.

3. JUST FINANCING:

Countries that have done little to cause climate change should not have to pay for the damage it causes or the changes we need to limit it. This requires immediate action (payment into the loss & damage fund agreed at COP27) and long-term change (reforming financial systems driving debt and inequality).

OUR VISION

As a community of Christians, we have a particular responsibility to be articulators of hope and justice, and to raise the voice of the most vulnerable, who are often absent in spaces where decisions are taken. Our faith teaches that all are made in the image of God; that the earth and its people belong to God and are loved by God; that we are all deeply and inextricably interconnected: "if one part of the body hurts, all parts hurt with it" (1 Corinthians 12:26).

WHY NOW?

The global response to the climate crisis has been wholly inadequate—both in the level of resources dedicated to the response and the urgency of action from those with the power to make radical change. As the world concludes the first Global Stocktake on Climate Change under the Paris Agreement, COP28 is a chance for states and faith groups to turn and act.

HOW?

As a global family of faith, we are embarking on net zero initiatives, divesting from fossil fuels and investing in building the resilience of our communities most at risk. We are acting to keep alive the hope that global temperatures will not increase by more than 1.5°. We call on the parties at COP28 to do the same. We take inspiration from those who have gone before us, working courageously for societal change in times past. We know such transformation is not easy – but that it is possible.

We have a responsibility to those who are suffering to make sure something changes… Religious leaders listen to the voice of the young people around the world: ***"you can do more"****.*
The Right Revd Julio Murray, Anglican Bishop of Panama

OUR CALLS TO COP28 AND TO CHURCHES OF THE ANGLICAN COMMUNION

1. JUST TRANSITION: PHASING OUT FOSSIL FUELS FAIRLY

OUR CALLS TO MEMBER STATES:

Increase ambition on climate mitigation activities and prioritise energy transition from fossil fuels to renewables. COP28 should take a decision to phase-out fossil fuels, fastest in the highest polluting countries, ensuring dialogue with affected sectors and overcoming barriers to transitions in emerging markets. We know such transformation is not easy – but that it is possible.

ANGLICAN COMMUNION CONTRIBUTIONS TO A JUST TRANSITION

We have signed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty calling on states to end the expansion of coal, oil and gas production; establish an equitable plan for the wind-down of existing fossil fuel production, where nations with the capacity and historical responsibility for emissions transition fastest, providing support to others around the world; and fast-track the adoption of clean energy and economic diversification away from fossil fuels so that no worker, community or country is left behind. We believe dialogue with affected sectors is key to preventing prejudice, resistance and injustice entering into this transition.

Member churches of the Anglican Communion are adopting policies and practices that are reducing use of carbon-based energy sources and increasing adoption of renewable energy sources. Some churches like the Anglican Church in Wales, Church of England, Anglican Church of Canada are implementing net-zero strategies; some like the Church of England have divested from fossil fuel companies.

A majority of Anglican churches are increasing their carbon sinks through nature-based solutions of tree growing and ecosystem conservation. The Anglican Communion has launched The Communion Forest – a worldwide initiative to conserve, protect and restore our degraded ecosystems. It is a symbol of our collective commitment to safeguard the integrity of creation and renew the earth. The Communion Forest is inspired by, and builds on, the many tree growing and ecosystem conservation, protection and restoration activities happening across the Anglican Communion. For example, in Kenya alone, the Anglican Church has planted over 4 million trees, and similar initiatives are spreading through Anglican churches in Zimbabwe (reforestation and conservation), the US (prairie restoration), the Philippines (mangrove restoration), Brazil and many more countries.

We believe these nature-based solutions are the most feasible, sustainable, and effective carbon sinks and need to be invested in rather than solutions that retain fossil fuel technologies as part of the manufacturing process.

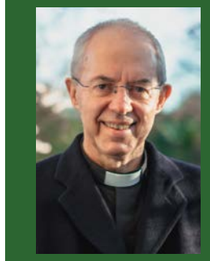
WHY IT MATTERS

A Just Transition will mean new technologies are made available for energy production and ways of using energy do minimal harm to the earth and foster the flourishing of people in all nations. This will require states and companies to cut ambitiously emissions from the most polluting sectors like energy, agriculture, and transport in a just manner as these sectors transition to low-carbon pathways of operation.

Without this ambitious action, our efforts in community resilience building and adaptation will be quickly undermined. But action must also be affordable, equitable and just, accounting for states' differing responsibilities for emissions, their differing capacities to act and the impact of this transition on particular industries and livelihoods. A just transition means that all nations and people emerge from the current global warming crisis without discrimination or unfairness; it means mutuality, relying on the knowledge and resources of each other, because the crisis is global.

The Anglican Communion understands justice as acting in ways that are based on principles of law, morals, fairness, and equity. God is the ultimate source of justice, and we honour God when we act on these principles – particularly as we prioritise those who are most vulnerable, who are often without the power to claim just outcomes for themselves. We believe that our actions and behaviour in response to this existential threat of a changing climate must be based on justice and love for all people and the Earth itself.

These are atrociously difficult decisions politically, but this is a crisis that calls for leadership, and the leadership of people of faith could not be more important. Faith leaders represent the great majority of people across the world, both in developed and developing countries. We can demonstrate to world leaders that people of faith want to see, and are willing to support change. We can lead by example. We can let world leaders know they have a mandate for bold, ambitious, decisive decision making at COP28.



The Most Revd and Right Honourable Justin Welby, The Archbishop of Canterbury

2. RESILIENCE BUILDING IN VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

OUR CALLS TO MEMBER STATES:

Double contributions to the adaptation fund. Work strategically with faith groups already active in the most vulnerable communities – they know the context best and have long-term sustainable networks of influence. Build local communities' capacity to respond to climate shocks by accelerating technological transfer and improving their technical capacity. Ensure active participation of and benefits for all members of these communities, particularly those often marginalised, such as youth, women, and indigenous peoples.

ANGLICAN COMMUNION CONTRIBUTIONS TO RESILIENCE BUILDING IN VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES

The Anglican Communion has been at the forefront of community resilience building for many years. It is a priority because communities that come together to plan and prepare for a stronger future have better capacity to withstand shocks, such as drought and floods, than those that have not. Early work on a disaster preparedness and response toolkit for local churches in 2013-2014 led to implementation workshops in countries like Zimbabwe, where local communities were facing challenges around drought, hyperinflation and political tension. These workshops grew into a worldwide programme, Partners in Resilience and Response: an Anglican initiative to help churches build their resilience and capacity for disaster preparation and response. As part of the programme, individuals and organisations with skills in these areas are being identified, trained and supported accompany local churches in times of disaster, when their capacity is overwhelmed.'

What has become clear through this work is that community resilience comes particularly from improved community cohesion and human capital, as well as diversified livelihoods. This is why faith groups are key strategic partners for states and multilateral organisations attempting to work on resilience. Faith groups are already embedded in local communities, with long-term and trusted networks of influence. Faith groups are well placed to meet needs that outside agencies can't, such as providing safe spaces for the vulnerable, social and spiritual support, someone trusted to listen to the traumatised to help overcome loneliness, despair and hopelessness, caring for the most vulnerable such as the elderly, the very young and those with disabilities.

Faith groups are also able to ensure the most vulnerable are at the table in discussions about resilience building and climate planning that affect them, including women, youth and indigenous peoples, who are disproportionately affected by climate shocks. For example, in Madagascar, following the recent famine, many women were left to fend for themselves and their families in the wake of a massive rural exodus. Mothers' Union (a partner organisation of the Anglican Communion and the world's oldest women's association) was able to provide significant support, firstly by giving food to tackle starvation and then by increasing communities' resilience by offering advice on training on drought resistant crops and other diversification.

WHY IT MATTERS

The Paris Agreement's global goal on adaptation is to increase the ability of countries to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production. This goal is far from being achieved.

The Glasgow Climate Pact went further and resolved to double the adaptation fund. Contributions to this fund remain inadequate and its access is still largely loan based, increasing the debt burden of poor climate-vulnerable countries who are depending on it. Recent extreme weather events have only continued to expose how vulnerable populations are to climate disasters and how great are the global inequalities in relation to disaster preparedness, resilience and resources to respond.

Yet investing in resilience through disaster prevention makes economic and moral sense. The United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction in their report, **Financing prevention and de-risking investment**, notes that between the period 2005 to 2017, $137 billion was provided in development assistance related to disasters, wherein $9.60 out of every $10 was spent on emergency response, reconstruction, relief, and rehabilitation; while less than 4%, $5.2 billion, was invested into disaster prevention, mitigation, and preparedness. The report demonstrates that investing in prevention mitigates loss. According to the estimates, global investments of €1.6 trillion in appropriate disaster risk reduction strategies could avoid losses of €6.4 trillion.

The impact on vulnerable communities of not meeting adaptation commitments cannot be over-emphasized. The world witnessed the devastating 2022 floods in Pakistan and 2023 floods in Malawi. In Pakistan, torrential rains and flooding impacted an estimated 33 million people and caused more than $40 billion in economic damage. The catastrophic flooding left 1,700 people dead, 2 million homes destroyed and killed over 900,000 livestock. Parts of the country saw five to six times the normal amount of rainfall. In Malawi, tropical cyclone Freddy affected over 2.2 million people. The impact of the floods and mudslides destroyed and damaged 260,681 houses forcing almost 700,000 people to leave their homes and shelter in displacement sites; at least 1,000 people were killed, and economic losses worth $506.7 million incurred.

Floods like Pakistan's and Malawi's spark humanitarian crises, with lasting impacts and compounding effects on housing, damaged infrastructure, energy access, food security, water security, and public health. Affected communities are experiencing inadequate sanitation and health services, disease outbreaks and lack of access to clean water, toilets, medicine, sufficient food and more.

"We must take responsibility for the care and preservation of our planet in a sustainable manner. We Anglicans have it in us to spark a movement of positive change. Let us come together and make it happen."

The Right. Rev Dr Vicentia Refiloe Kgabe, Bishop of Lesotho

3. JUST FINANCING

OUR CALL TO MEMBER STATES:

See financing of these changes as a matter of justice. We want to see countries that are historically responsible for climate change contribute more to climate finance. We observe that for this to happen, there is need for immediate action (payment into the loss & damage fund agreed at COP27) and long-term change to transform governance arrangements for international financial systems (frameworks, rules, institutions and markets) that are currently driving greater economic inequalities and slowing progress on making change.

ANGLICAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO JUST FINANCING

In May 2022, the Church of England Pensions Board convened twelve UK Pensions Funds (representing 18 million members with assets of £400bn) to commit to supporting just transitions in emerging markets. Their collaboration recognises the complexity of financing transitions in states that need to prioritise rapid development and which are vulnerable to major climate shocks. But it also recognises that opportunities can be found through principled investment and dialogue between pensions funds and the wider financial sector, including private and multilateral financing. The coalition is working towards increased transparency and awareness of need in emerging markets, derisking investments and improving structures for financing the changes needed. There will be no just transition without recognising these needs.

WHY IT MATTERS

We recognise that some societies bear greater responsibility in contributing to climate change and that they ought to bear similar responsibility in financing its mitigation and adaptation to its impacts.

There is currently a significant gap between financing needed for climate action and the mobilised climate finance. Recent analysis from the Climate Policy Initiative suggests that global finance flows for climate action have almost doubled over the past decades to reach $653 billion in 2019/20, up from $574 billion in 2017/18. The UNFCCC's Standing Committee on Finance provides higher figures, with climate finance flows amounting to $803 billion in 2019/20, up from $775 billion in 2017/18. But this still falls short of the amount needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change and support adaptation and resilience in vulnerable countries.

The Independent High-Level Expert Group on Climate Finance in their November 2022 report – **Finance for climate action: scaling up investment for climate and development**, portend that emerging markets and developing countries other than China will need to spend around $1 trillion per year by 2025 (4.1% of GDP compared with 2.2% in 2019) and around $2.4 trillion per year by 2030 (6.5% of GDP) in climate related investments. These numbers are based on assessment of sector and geographical requirements for investments and actions to keep the target of capping warming at 1.5° in reach and to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement across all its dimensions.

The report also notes that loss and damage from the impacts of climate change have cost 20% in lost GDP in Vulnerable Twenty (V20) economies over the last two decades. It further estimates future loss and damage to cost $150–300 billion by 2030 in coping with immediate impacts and for subsequent reconstruction.

This gap in necessary funding is made worse because existing funding is hard to access by those most in need. Access to finance for large-scale projects, whether from public or private sources, has proved challenging for poor and vulnerable countries. Additionally, the complexity of application processes to access financing, for example from multilateral climate funds, has posed significant challenges for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries. There are also delays in disbursements of climate finance to activities in developing countries.

To see change based on the principles of justice, the Anglican Communion's calls for:

a. Contributions to the Loss and Damage Fund – We highly welcomed COP27 decision to establish a loss and damage fund to compensate vulnerable nations for losses and damages arising from the now more frequent and severe climate-induced disasters. We have closely followed conversations facilitated by the Transitional Committee in their three workshops since COP27. We have noted contentious issues in the negotiations for the fund and would like to see an agreement for a just fund that is contributed to primarily by developed countries who are historically responsible for climate change and by countries who are currently high carbon emitters. It needs to be accessed by climate-vulnerable poor countries, to be grant-based and with an ambitious target amount above $100 billion annually.

b. Reform to global financial architecture – We are in support of the principles of the Bridgetown Initiative in acknowledging the need to reform the current global financial architecture to realize just financing for climate action. The cost of capital is currently too high for developing countries and much lower for their developed counterparts, for example, countries that issue an international reserve currency borrow 10-year money at 1–4% per year today, while developing countries borrow at an average of 14%. This disparity is made worse by the fact that one-third of all developing countries and two-thirds of low-income countries are currently at high risk of debt distress in a context of climate emergency primarily caused by the developed countries. We call on all stakeholders to invest in reforms and transform the status quo which is driving greater economic inequalities and slowing progress on making change.

"I am living on the front lines of the climate crisis. We have to keep reminding people that we have that courage and that capacity to demand world leaders do what they can."

Elizabeth Wathuti, Kenyan climate campaigner and founder of the Green Generation Initiative

PLANTING HOPE

THE REASON FOR OUR CALLS AND HOPE

Around the globe, Anglicans are actively working to respond to climate crises. Through churches, networks and community presence, the Anglican Communion has a web of relationships that allows the sharing of wisdom, knowledge and experience from the grassroots to those in power.

The communities we serve feel every part of the story of climate change. We are the people facing devastation in disaster-stricken communities and the polluters in wealthy countries; we are those living in poverty and those wielding power and political influence; we are investors with financial capital and first responders to disasters.

Through this life together, and through our faith in a God who loved the world enough to give his son for us (John 3:16), we become people of hope: we believe in metanoia (sometimes rendered “repentance”) – a transformative change of heart and mind that is about turning around, seeing things differently and setting out on a new, lifegiving path.

The climate crisis needs profound changes in attitudes and ways of seeing. Because the climate emergency is a global existential threat, we are being forced to embrace what indigenous peoples have long told us and what is core of our faith – that extractive, consumeristic and individualist mindsets will only take us so far and in many ways cause great damage. We need to look beyond our national interests and borders and act in costly ways that restore our relationships with others and with creation.

The climate crisis is the product of an inherited Western mindset, including globalization, capitalism and individualism, one that was nurtured by empire and colonialism. The response therefore needs to be underpinned by other ways of thinking and of being, especially that of indigenous ways in which the environment and humanity are interconnected as part of creation. Therein lies the path to true justice and peace for our planet.
The Most Revd Don Tamihere, Pihopa o Aotearoa, or leader of the Maori Anglican Church, and Venerable Dr Hirini Kaa, The Archdeacon of Tairāwhiti

ANGLICAN COMMUNION
IN OVER 165 COUNTRIES

JOIN ANGLICANS IN WORKING FOR CLIMATE JUSTICE

We invite Anglicans to advocate to their leaders for the true transformation that earth and its people desperately require.

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The Lambeth Call on Environment and Sustainable Development. Read it here

An information sheet on Anglican involvement with Environmental issues: Read it here

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SUSTAIN AND RENEW THE LIFE OF THE EARTH