



Real Solutions, Real Zero: How Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement Can Help Pave the Way to 1.5°

Inadequate climate action amidst a climate emergency

Escalating frequency and intensity of extreme climate-related events show that already today's 1° warming is utterly dangerous. We are living in a climate emergency, with the greatest impacts being borne by the countries and communities that have contributed the least to global greenhouse gas emissions. In this moment of emergency and greatest urgency, the Paris Agreement, as the current vehicle for international collaboration on climate action, must deliver the deep reductions in global emissions needed to limit global temperature rise to below 1.5° Celsius. However, current government commitments set us on a course to a catastrophic 3° Celsius world.¹

The landmark 1.5°C², oceans and cryosphere³, and land⁴ reports released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) over the past two years clearly show how little carbon budget remains. These reports also reveal that real, ambitious and immediate action across all sectors may still keep us under 1.5° Celsius.⁵

False solutions and half measures are no solutions

Yet, numerous measures being considered by countries are not only inadequate, but outright problematic and in several cases harmful. A few of these include:

- **Offsets and trading in emission reductions.** These are not workable pathways to limit global warming to 1.5° Celsius or to real zero emissions. In a world that must reduce emissions to zero as fast as possible, there is simply no room for offsets where developed countries and fossil fuel, aviation (via the Carbon Offsetting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation or CORSIA) and other corporations can continue to pollute and delay deep emissions reductions. In addition, carbon markets and offsets are inherently flawed with loopholes of double

counting, fraud, and shifting of burdens to those least responsible and away from developed countries,⁶ where the deepest direct emissions cuts must be made.

- **Bioenergy, and carbon capture and storage (BECCS).** This technology has been uncritically assumed in most "net zero" emission pathway models in ways that dangerously mask the magnitude and urgency of the necessary real reductions. BECCS would lead to massive land use change, monoculture tree plantations,⁷ and human rights conflicts over land, and can in practice never deliver what's assumed in the models.
- **Other geoengineering schemes.** These planetary-scale technofixes – such as spewing particles in the air to reflect incoming sunlight, or absorbing CO₂ through vast algae blooms in the oceans – pose unimaginable risks and cannot be assumed to work.⁸ The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has already adopted a moratorium on geoengineering.⁹

These faulty schemes are risky and distract from much needed, proven, and ambitious climate action. In addition, they are rife with loopholes that exacerbate and proliferate inequity and human rights violations, particularly to indigenous peoples, women, and communities in the South.

The reality is that the climate crisis demands the world reach 'real' zero emissions as soon as possible. The biggest cuts must happen in the next decade, with developed countries owning up to their fair share by reaching near zero emissions by 2030, and simultaneously supporting countries least responsible and hardest hit through massive and unconditional climate finance. There can be no trading away or "offsetting" of these obligations, and no reckless deployment of unproven and risky technologies.

Real solutions. Real ambition. Real zero.

Thankfully, there are a plethora of real solutions at hand, which only require the political will to help make them accessible

and implementable at scale. **These solutions can restore balance with nature, not further abuse it, and are equitable, cost effective, respect indigenous peoples' knowledge, and improve quality of life and environmental integrity while drastically decreasing greenhouse gas emissions.**¹⁰

Encouragingly, people around the world are waking up to the seriousness of the crisis, and the need to address it in transformative, bold ways through real solutions. Proposals highlight the importance of massive public investments, producer subsidies, support for workers under just transitions, outright bans and stringent standards, expansion of public democratic ownership of universal services, rapid phase out of fossil fuels, and curbing of corporate power. These are the kinds of measures negotiations under the climate convention should recognize and promote (see Box 1).

Article 6.2 and 6.4 of the Paris Agreement: A road to climate catastrophe

Article 6 of the Paris Agreement outlines three ways in which countries can voluntarily cooperate with other countries to achieve higher ambition in their mitigation and adaptation

activities, such as meeting the emission reduction targets defined in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Article 6.2 and 6.4 are both focused on carbon trading, or so called “market-based” – instead of cutting emissions, a country can use markets to buy carbon credits. Article 6.2 allows for direct bilateral exchanges so that emissions reductions implemented in one country can be transferred to another country. Article 6.4 establishes a new carbon market instrument – the Sustainable Development Mechanism – which can be accessed by countries and by sub-national and private sector entities. Article 6.8, on the other hand, invites Parties to utilize “integrated, holistic and balanced non-market approaches” in achieving their NDCs, including through mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer, and capacity building.

Articles 6.2 and 6.4 are being used as vehicles for devising false solutions like offsets and emissions trading schemes. They are not sustainable pathways to emission reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions, and they are certain to contribute to further human rights and indigenous rights violations, and exacerbate gender inequalities. UN REDD+ programs, for example, have not led to secure land tenure for indigenous peoples as recommended by the 2019 IPCC report on land. In

Box 1: EXAMPLES OF REAL CLIMATE SOLUTIONS BY SECTOR.

This list illustrates just some examples of real solutions and policy tools countries should use immediately to effect meaningful change, though they will all play out at different time scales (further underscoring the need to implement them immediately and alongside behavioral and consumption changes). Many of these are already implemented at local and national levels. Several of these measures can be easily implemented directly, while others require international cooperation. As relates to the latter, the Paris Agreement’s Article 6.8 should create platforms for such cooperation.

BEHAVIOR, CONSUMPTION, AND EQUITY

- Drastically target the excessive and wasteful consumption of corporations and wealthy elites.
- Reduce absolute levels of energy use and overall consumption amongst the richer part of the world’s population.
- Ensure just transitions across all sectors that ensure workers are able to move into new, secure green jobs.
- Ensure these kinds of real solutions are made possible in developing countries that have done the least to cause climate change, in line with fair shares and Common But Differentiated Responsibilities.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Plan for and transform energy systems away from centralized corporate-controlled fossil fuels and other

harmful technologies such as nuclear, mega-hydro, and biofuels to clean, safe systems that empower people and communities.

- Implement policies, public investments, and incentives for a just and equitable transition to 100 percent renewable energy (by 2030 for developed countries), that enables energy democracy, creates new job opportunities, encourages distributed renewable energy, promotes local control and community ownership, and protects workers and communities most affected by extractive economies.
- Implement climate finance, technology and capacity schemes under the UNFCCC, and other means to support, in accordance with countries’ fair shares, enabling developing countries to rapidly move to 100 percent renewable energy.
- Remove intellectual property rights or other barriers to affordable and accessible environmentally sound technologies.

FOSSIL FUELS

- Create an immediate moratorium on all new fossil fuel extraction.
- Develop treaties and legal agreements for an equitable, rapidly managed decline of existing fossil fuels.
- End producer subsidies promoting fossil fuels.

EDUCATION AND PARTICIPATION

- Enhance and expand environmental education relating to the sustainable use of resources and climate change

Chile, the Alto Maipo hydroelectric project, registered under the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and financed by the International Finance Corporation and the Inter American Development Bank, threatens the human rights of local communities, the water supply for over 7 million Chileans, and will have long-term devastating environmental impacts.¹¹ Instances like these abound.

Tackling false and real solutions at the UNFCCC

Article 6.8: A possible road to real solutions, real action, real zero?

While the prospects of Articles 6.2 and 6.4 lock in further emissions and essentially guarantee the impossibility of keeping global temperature rise to under 1.5° Celsius, Article 6.8 on Non-Market Approaches (NMA) provides a critical opportunity to enshrine policies and practices via voluntary cooperation among countries that will help deliver deep emissions cuts while advancing equity, environmental protection, and quality of life.

in school curricular, to facilitate people's participation in climate action and to develop the real solutions needed to address the climate crisis.

- Ensure access to public information in a manner that is accessible and understandable, and that empowers people to participate in developing climate solutions.

FOOD & LAND

- Leave the ecological integrity of natural ecosystems unharmed and conserve biodiversity.
- Secure land and tenure rights for indigenous peoples and local communities.
- Rapidly transform industrial agriculture towards agroecological practices through proper incentives and policies combined with removal of perverse subsidies, and phase out artificial fertilizers.
- Promote and support ecosystems- and community-based solutions to address climate change, including agroecological farming systems, and community conservation of biodiverse ecosystems, such as but not limited to grasslands and forests. These are community-based solutions that protect biodiversity and ecosystem integrity while safeguarding food sovereignty and rights, all while providing substantial mitigation benefits.
- Vastly scale up ecological restoration to recover natural forests, peatlands, and other degraded ecosystems for both climate and biodiversity, through securing of land and tenure rights for indigenous peoples and local communities,

The inclusion of NMA in UNFCCC negotiations was in part a response to the acknowledged failure of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and the realization that emissions, particularly in developed countries, are not coming down.¹² The essence and spirit of NMA, therefore, encompasses a climate action regime, addressing Common But Differentiated Responsibility (CBDR) and equity. This means that developed countries take the lead in limiting emissions through policy and regulation targeting polluting industries and sectors, and contributes through public funding the climate actions in developing countries through technology transfer, capacity building, mitigation and adaptation to promote protection and conservation of carbon sinks and sequestration. All of this must be done in the spirit of recognizing the rights of indigenous peoples, local communities, and women, and while ensuring livelihood, food security, and contribute to human well being.

NMAs offer a space to address the real drivers of carbon emissions and destruction of natural ecosystems and biodiversity. Embracing NMAs as central to meaningful international action and to ratchet up and realize NDCs is critical.

proper public policies, and public financing.

- Embrace community governed forest conservation by passing governmental policies that support security of tenure and access to land, sustainable agriculture, food sovereignty and sustainable livelihood options that respect rights and traditional knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local communities.

HOUSING

- Create public investment schemes that ensure retrofitting of old inefficient houses and passive heating standards for all new buildings.
- Set new standards for high-efficiency cooling with targeted measures to ensure affordability for all.

TRANSPORT

- Invest in infrastructure of electrified, mass public transit, with free or heavily subsidized fares.
- Make cities car free and subsidize bikes and electric bikes.
- Set stringent emissions standards for all new cars with e.g. 10 percent tightening per year. Ban sale of fossil fuel cars (by 2030 in developed countries).
- Ensure major public investments in electric trains.
- Immediately ban expansion of airports, particularly in developed countries.
- Set new standards for high-efficiency cooling with targeted measures to ensure affordability for all.

At COP25, chart the missing pathway to 1.5 by rejecting Article 6.2 and 6.4 and advancing Non-Market Approaches in Article 6.8

In an era of climate emergency, there is no time to waste. During COP25 in Madrid, governments will attempt to finalize the guidelines for Article 6 of the Paris Agreement—the only remaining section of the guidelines for implementation that are yet to be agreed upon. They can choose to lock in decades more of soaring emissions. Or, they can choose to embrace real solutions that will deliver real action, equity, and ambition.

This is why, at COP25, governments should:

- Agree to develop a Work Programme under Article 6.8 (Non-Market Approach) facilitating climate actions and pathways to 1.5° Celsius and real zero as soon as possible.
- This work programme should:
 - facilitate climate actions including through removing producer subsidies and incentives to both production and consumption sectors that emit greenhouse gases, redirecting those to develop real solutions including renewables, public transport and small holder agroecology;
 - allow for the transfer of finance and technology to promote mitigation and adaptation in developing countries to develop low carbon economies, ensuring protection and conservation of natural ecosystems with enhancement of carbon sinks and added co-benefits such as providing livelihood and food security, right to health, clean air, and water;
 - allow for the support for ecosystem based adaptation solutions which are community based.

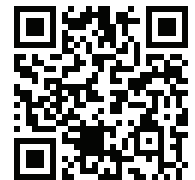
- Commit to respecting Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) and equity as enshrined in the Paris Agreement, and recognize and respect the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities and gender justice as a pre-condition to develop such a Work Programme.
- Annex 1 Parties should commit to an unhindered financial flow that allows for the provision of public financial resources that are non-debt creating and that are not dependent upon offsets and trading of emission reductions under Articles 6.2 and 6.4.

Every day of inadequate action costs lives and further delay, while people and ecosystems are already dying. Article 6.8 should help deliver the real solutions people need right now to keep temperature rise to under 1.5° Celsius.

Presented by the **Working Group for Real Solutions**, a coalition of climate justice advocates and global policy experts committed to advancing meaningful solutions to address the climate crisis.

Contributors to this briefing include:

Patricia Bohland, LIFE - Education, Sustainability, Equality
Niclas Hällström, What Next Forum
Rachel Rose Jackson, Corporate Accountability
Souparna Lahiri, Global Forest Coalition
Don Lehr, media and public affairs consultant
Alberto Saldamando, Indigenous Environmental Network,
Martin Vilela, Plataforma Boliviana Frente al Cambio Climatico



corporateaccountability.org/wgrscop25

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