

Global Climate Justice Group

Climate Cymru, an active movement of 380 diverse organisations from across Welsh society who share a desire for urgent, fair action to address the climate and nature emergencies, has launched its Global Climate Justice working group during the Wales Climate Week in November 2024 with a Panel event (Passcode: D2@KFp3h) hosting experts from the Global South.

The Global Climate Justice Group aims

- to unite diverse organisations, groups and individuals passionate about global climate justice,
- to ensure diverse voices, especially from the Global South, are represented and heard,
- to accelerate collective action for global climate justice in Wales and beyond.

The Global Climate Justice Group has developed a collaborative paper, laying out 4 priorities to install global climate justice and equity across all public policy and is **calling on Welsh**

Government to champion:

- Climate Action
- Human Rights
- Loss and Damage
- Global Citizenship

Small nation, global impact

Wales is a small nation, but its potential to influence global climate justice and equity is significant. Its leadership in initiatives like Fairtrade, Sanctuary, Anti-Racism, and the Well-being of Future Generations Act have inspired others to take similar actions. We urge the Welsh Government to embed global justice and equity across all action plans and policies.

The most vulnerable - people of colour, women, Indigenous Peoples, LGBTQi+, disabled people, and the elderly - are disproportionately affected by climate change. The Global Climate Risk Index shows that countries contributing least to global emissions are often those most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. This inequity underscores the urgent need for climate justice, as communities in the Global South suffer the consequences of a crisis they did not cause.

As Wales strives to confront the climate crisis, it is vital that we uphold and promote human rights and comply with the United Nations' 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Our actions to combat climate change must be just, equitable, and in alignment with international human rights law. Climate mitigation is not only a matter of environmental responsibility but is also key to the realisation of human rights globally, ensuring that the most vulnerable are not left even further behind.

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As part of our commitment to become an Anti-Racist Wales, we must **recognise our historical legacy of colonialism**, which has contributed to global inequalities and environmental degradation. This needs to be acknowledged and included as a key part of any conversation about climate justice and a just transition.

Youth, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are disproportionately impacted by climate change, yet their voices are often excluded from decision-making. Including young people in policy discussions ensures that climate solutions are both sustainable and intergenerational.

Guided by the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, Wales can lead by example in promoting global climate justice and equity, ensuring that actions today benefit all, without compromising the well-being of future generations.

We urge the Welsh Government to install global climate justice and equity at the heart of all public policy, including climate, procurement, trade, farming, pension and education.

1) Champion Climate Action

We need an urgent and fair transition to net zero. Wales must navigate this transition in a just and equitable way, taking into consideration the diversity of voices and needs of the people of Wales and the most vulnerable around the world. We must continue to act with greater depth and speed towards the goal of Net Zero by removing barriers to decarbonisation and delivering accelerated practical action. Coordinated area-based plans to drive society-wide decarbonisation are crucial to Wales achieving its carbon emissions reduction targets.

We call on the Welsh Government to:

- Fully adopt the Wales Net Zero 2035 Challenge Groups' recommendations
- Account for Wales's consumption emissions & take action to reduce them
- Endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-proliferation Treaty
- Ensure no more coal is extracted from Wales by closing the 'exceptional circumstances' loopholes currently being exploited by the coal industry
- Comply with Sustainable Development Goal 13
- Make Wales the first Race to Zero Nation to unlock effective, fair and community led climate action across Welsh society to rapidly reduce our global impact

2) Champion Human Rights

Human rights are at the core of the fight for climate justice. Climate change impacts not only the environment but also people's fundamental rights to life, health, food, water, and housing. As Wales strives to tackle the climate crisis, it is essential to protect and promote human rights,

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ensuring that all actions to combat climate change are just, equitable, and in line with international standards.

JNCC Report 743 commissioned by the Welsh Government shows that an overseas area close to half the size of Wales is used to grow commodities imported here (including palm oil, soy, cocoa). These imports are driving deforestation and human rights abuses overseas, including the abuse of Indigenous Peoples rights, child and forced labour. Public procurement can play a key role in ensuring that supply chains are fair, ethical and sustainable and combat deforestation and human exploitation.

As a globally responsible nation we need to look beyond Wales and reduce reliance on importing unsustainable goods. Every year 94,600 hectares is used overseas to produce soy for Wales. Nearly 80% of imported soy is used to feed Welsh livestock according to the Wales & Global Responsibility Report. The Sustainable Farming Scheme can play a key role in addressing this issue.

Welsh public sector pension funds are funding the expansion of fossil fuel extraction, driving deforestation and the expansion of the weapons industry - fuelling climate change. The Wales Pension Fund Partnership (WPP) has at least £227.9M invested in fossil fuel companies and £1.8 billion across the WPP is at a high risk of financing deforestation. Fossil fuel investment exposes public sector pensions to financial risks of stranded assets as the world makes a transition away from destructive industries.

Wales needs to change what it buys, consumes and invests in.

We call on the Welsh Government to:

- Develop and implement a plan to reduce Wales' global footprint by 30% before 2035
- Ensure that the statutory guidance for the Social Partnership and Public Procurement (Wales) Act includes robust standards to promote global responsibility and ethical procurement practices that uphold human rights and environmental standards such as deforestation free practices. This would involve adopting the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.
- Ensure that the UK Government conducts robust human rights and equality impact assessments for existing and emerging trade policies
- Legislate within the Sustainable Farming Scheme to significantly reduce imports of unsustainable goods (like soy to feed livestock) within the agricultural sector to stop further deforestation and biodiversity loss overseas
- Work with the Wales Pension Fund Partnership to bring forward an enhanced timetable and deliver divestment from arms, fossil fuels and deforestation by 2030
- Lobby the UK Government to amend UK pension law ensuring that pension fund investments align with ethical and climate-friendly practices
- Adopt the recommendations of the 'Strengthening and advancing equality and human rights in Wales report' and the Welsh Government Human Rights Advisory Group to make international human rights part of Welsh law. Human rights should be embedded in

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all policy and strategic planning processes. The Welsh Government should provide stronger guidance on the relationship between equality and human rights

- Lobby the UK Government to reverse laws imposed on protesting in the UK. The right to protest is a fundamental cornerstone of any democratic society and has been the driver of progress for human liberty and freedom. Recent restrictions on protest in the UK threaten this right, limiting the ability of citizens to advocate for climate action and justice.

3) Champion Loss and Damage

Climate change affects everyone, but not all are impacted equally. Communities that have contributed the least to the climate crisis, especially those in the Global South, are already experiencing its most devastating impacts. These include extreme weather events, sea-level rise, droughts, and floods that result in significant loss and damage. Early industrialised nations, as the major contributors to global emissions, bear a historic responsibility to support those communities on the frontlines of climate breakdown. It is estimated that the world's most vulnerable countries could experience cumulative economic losses of \$400 billion annually by 2030 due to the impacts of climate change. On average, African governments are spending seven times more on external debt payments than on measures to adapt to climate change.

The Welsh Government must show leadership in championing Loss and Damage, both within the UK and globally, advocating for equitable solutions and adequate compensation for affected communities.

We call on the Welsh Government to:

- Establish a Wales Loss & Damage Fund to provide fast and direct financial assistance to frontline communities most affected by climate impacts
- Lobby the UK Government to be a global advocate for fair loss and damage and commit the UK's fair share of funding in support. This includes lobbying for the establishment of robust international funding mechanism for Loss and Damage, separate from existing climate finance streams, ensuring that it is accessible to the most vulnerable countries.
- Call on the UK government to implement taxes on fossil fuel profits to fund global climate adaptation and mitigation efforts
- Call on the UK Government to introduce legislation to support debt relief for lower income countries which could enable governments to better address the basic needs of their people and respond to the climate crisis
- Advocate globally for equitable loss and damage finance, ensuring that grants, not Loans, form the majority of support mechanisms
- Advocate for the UK Government to play its part in forging a new global agreement on making lending and borrowing more responsible and more sustainable

4) Champion Global Citizenship

Climate education needs to include a broader understanding of global citizenship, so learners can understand the factors that interlink with climate such as inequality and poverty. The Welsh Government must lead the people of Wales in building a better understanding of our colonialist past and the role of systematic racism in the current climate and ecological crises. Global citizenship education takes a positive approach, avoiding eco-anxiety, emphasising the importance of working together towards a common goal. Supporting learners to understand that they can make a positive impact in the world. We want people to move away from being passive consumers to active citizens of Wales and the world.

We call on the Welsh Government to:

- Embed comprehensive global citizenship competencies (knowledge, skills, and values) in lifelong learning across all public bodies in Wales
- Strengthen education settings and public bodies to be actively anti-racist, prioritising learning among staff, through continued support of initiatives like the Diversity and Anti-racist Professional Learning project under the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan
- Ensure climate education as part of the curriculum follows an intersectional approach to help learners understand how climate change is interlinked with colonialism, racism, and systemic inequalities
- Ensure peace education is at the heart of the curriculum
- Invest (financially and otherwise) in community engagement activities where people can learn more about climate justice and their responsibilities in protecting the planet