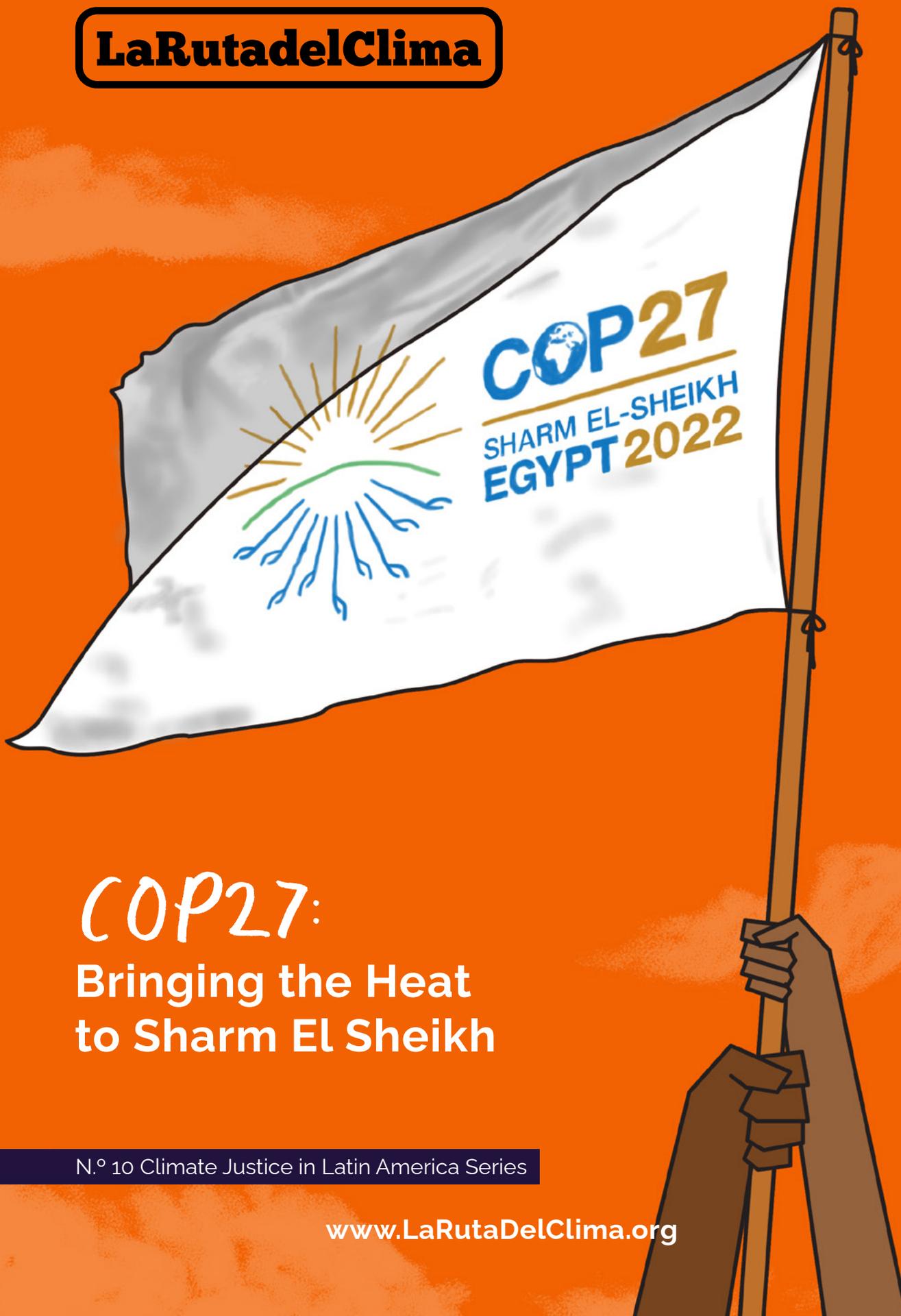


LaRutadelClima



COP27:

**Bringing the Heat
to Sharm El Sheikh**

N.º 10 Climate Justice in Latin America Series

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Credits

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Introduction

At the 2022 UN Climate Change Conference (COP27), to be held from November 6 to 18 in Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt, negotiators will attempt to build on the Glasgow Climate Pact that was agreed to at COP26.

The need for scaling up climate action is more dire than ever as much of the world is experiencing serious flooding, drought, and fires, major economies are doubling down on their embrace of fossil fuels, and the divide between developing and developed nations has reached a boiling point on the issue of loss and damage finance.

Although far from perfect, the Glasgow Climate Pact calls for the “phasedown” of coal, urges the scaling up of adaptation finance, and agrees to fund the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD). Nations at COP26 finally reached a decision on rules to implement global carbon markets and complete the Paris Rulebook.

“It’s meek, it’s weak and the 1.5°C goal is only just alive, but a signal has been sent that the era of coal is ending. And that matters,” [said](#) then-Executive Director of Greenpeace International Jennifer Morgan, who is now Germany’s Special Envoy for International Climate Action.

There were also a series of key pledges made on finance, methane, and deforestation. More than 20 countries, including the United States and Canada, pledged to stop financing fossil fuels abroad, and over 100 countries signed the Global Methane Pledge to slash methane emissions 30 percent by 2030. Costa Rica and Denmark launched the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA), a coalition of governments and partners working to phase out fossil fuel production.

COP26 will also be remembered for its failure to deliver on loss and damage finance. At this year’s conference, loss and damage will likely take center stage once again as developing nations push to add it as a permanent agenda item and establish a finance facility in the face of Global North opposition. The divide between developing and developed nations on this issue has become increasingly contentious.

The modest progress made at COP26 in Glasgow is vulnerable to backsliding due to the significant geopolitical headwinds nations are facing heading into COP27. The current war in Ukraine has disrupted the global energy supply, leading to a “perilous doubling down of fossil fuels by the major economies,” as UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres put it.

With a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on the horizon, the Egyptian host has pushed to prioritize climate finance as many developed nations are failing to pay their fair share of the already modest \$100 billion goal. The Global Stocktake (GST) and Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) will also be key agenda items.

The Egyptian government’s crackdown on civil society has helped highlight the importance of safeguarding human rights and has made protecting civil spaces a priority at COP27. It is still unclear what forms of dissent will be tolerated at the conference.



An Unambitious Host

Despite its vulnerability to climate change, Egypt, a fast-growing exporter of liquified natural gas (LNG), has shown little ambition in its climate targets. The country's human rights record also sets a dangerous atmosphere for the conference.

Egypt's densely-populated Nile Delta and Mediterranean coastline are highly vulnerable to the effects of sea level rise. As indicated in its [Nationally Determined Contribution \(NDC\)](#), a 1.0 meter sea level rise would sink several coastal areas in the Nile Delta, the Northern Coast, and Sinai. Economic losses from decreased food production, increased risks to human health, and adverse impacts on the country's tourism sector [could reach](#) six percent of Egypt's GDP in the coming decades.

Egypt's 75.5 trillion cubic feet of natural gas reserves are the [fifth largest](#) in Africa and [comprise](#) 1.1 percent of the world's total known reserves. The country is the [fastest growing LNG exporter](#) in the Arab world, with exports [increasing](#) by 98 percent to nearly \$4 billion between January and April of this year. Egypt [has touted](#) natural gas as a "lower carbon intensive fuel."

"We might see in gas a transitional source of energy with certainly less emissions," [said](#) Egypt's foreign minister and COP27 President Sameh Shoukry, speaking to the AP.

Egypt submitted an updated NDC this year that was [rated](#) "highly insufficient" by Climate Action Tracker (CAT) and consistent with global warming of up to 4°C. According to CAT, the revised 2030 target is barely an improvement on Egypt's original submission, and this "weak" goal increases Egypt's emissions 50 percent by 2030 from current levels. CAT's current policy projections show that Egypt's policies already put the country on track for a 15-40 percent increase in emissions by 2030.

Also concerning are Egypt's egregious human rights abuses and the fear that the country may use its position to [build credibility](#) within the international community and "whitewash" its conduct. Human rights groups [estimate](#) that there are 60,000 political prisoners in the country, including opposition politicians, activists, journalists, and academics. Arbitrary arrests, detainment, and torture of the LGBTI community have been [well-documented](#).

"Of all the countries to host they chose the one banning protest and sending everyone to prison, which tells me how the world is handling this issue. They're not interested in finding a joint solution for the climate," [said](#) Alaa Abd El Fattah, one of Egypt's most recognizable political prisoners.



A New Sheriff of the UNFCCC

On August 15, UN Secretary-General António Guterres appointed Simon Stiell as the new Executive Secretary of the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat to replace Patricia Espinosa.

Stiell served as Grenada's Minister for Climate Resilience and the Environment from 2018 to June of this year. He has also held posts as the Minister for Education and Human Resource Development, Minister of State with responsibility for human resource development and the environment, and as a Parliamentary Secretary within the Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Forestry, and Fisheries.

The appointment of a prominent Small Island Developing State representative was seen as a positive move by many advocates from the Global South. Stiell represents a clear upgrade from the United Kingdom's Alok Sharma, the UK Conservative Party's cabinet secretary who presided over COP26 and [was rumored](#) to be in the running for Executive Secretary.

Grenada, like other island nations, has been a longtime champion in fighting for adaptation and loss and damage finance. Stiell, who co-chaired the High Ambition Coalition in 2021, has long advocated for causes important to the developing world. At COP26, Stiell [expressed](#) his concerns about how talks on loss and damage were progressing, noting that it "sticks out like a sore thumb."

At the conclusion of COP26, Stiell promised to keep fighting, [tweeting](#):

"The issue of Loss and Damage will not go away. We will be back!"

All Eyes on Africa

COP27 is the first time the conference has been held on the continent of Africa since Morocco hosted COP22 in 2016.

The conference represents a great opportunity for its host to highlight key issues facing the region, particularly adaptation, climate finance, and loss and damage.

"Africa is at the forefront of the climate crisis, but it is also a place of immense potential for action. COP27 in Egypt represents a unique opportunity to accelerate implementation of effective climate solutions," said UNEP Executive Director Inger Andersen at Africa Climate Week in Gabon.

In 2021, the African Group of Negotiators set a new price tag for climate finance, [calling for](#) \$1.3 trillion dollars per year by 2030. This is a 1,300 percent increase from the \$100 billion goal established in 2009.

This year, the group once again reaffirmed that they will be pushing to ramp up climate finance ambition. A common draft position by the negotiators [calls for](#) an increase in climate finance from the established floor of \$100 billion to \$150 billion by 2025. It also sets a range for the NCQG of \$750 billion to \$1.3 trillion by 2030.

According to documents obtained by *The Guardian*, many African countries [are expected to make the case for](#) massive new investments in fossil fuels at COP27, and in particular natural gas. With the disruption in the global energy supply, developed countries, including members of the European Union, have indicated that they would back such fossil fuel developments.

This could make for a very contentious conference.

"We are already seeing signs of potential backtracking from countries like Germany and others. All of a sudden, Europe has been turning Africa into a shopping mall for fossil fuels," said Romain Ioualalen, Global Policy Campaign Manager at Oil Change International. "That will be quite detrimental to overall climate ambition at COP if countries renege on their commitment."

The Divide Grows in Bonn

The 56th sessions of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) were held in Bonn in June and set the stage for a heated round of negotiations in Egypt. The intersessionals clearly highlighted growing tensions between rich nations and the developing world.

The issue of loss and damage was central to the talks in Bonn. The United States, European Union, and Switzerland once again took an obstructionist position, [best described](#) as a "talk to the hand" approach. Rich nations thwarted efforts to establish loss and damage as a permanent agenda item and shut down progress towards a funding facility.

Developing nations also lamented the lack of movement on the SNLD, which [was established](#) at COP25 to catalyze technical assistance for the "implementation of relevant approaches for averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage at the local, national, and regional level."

"One of our main concerns is that we did not make too much progress in terms of the operationalization of the Santiago Network," said Angela Patricia Rivera Galvis, Colombia's lead negotiator on adaptation and loss and damage. *"It is quite frustrating for us that developed countries do not want to move on their positions. We should refrain from continuing treating loss and damage exclusively as a risk, as something that will happen someday in the future"*

While the loss and damage talks once again resulted in a lack of progress, other areas offered more signs of hope. The negotiations kicked off the Technical Dialogue (TD), the second phase of the Global Stocktake (GST) that will continue in Egypt. During the TD, state and non-state actors sit down together to discuss and process information collected during the first phase of the GST.

"It requires an open, constructive, and facilitative dialogue," said Tom Evans, Policy Advisor at E3G. *"What we saw in Bonn was this approach to try and get non-state actors and negotiators around the same table and have those sorts of conversations. It was really successful."*

The Bonn intersessionals also kicked off talks on the Mitigation Work Programme that is expected to be launched this year in Egypt. The Glasgow Climate Pact calls for nations to "urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation" by 2030. In its draft conclusion, the SBI and SBSTA [noted](#) "constructive discussions" taking place among parties, but failed to address anything more concrete in the lead-up to COP27.

Also of note at the Bonn talks were discussions to move forward on the GGA, which was established in Article 7 of the Paris Agreement, and a "technical expert dialogue" on the NCQG that is scheduled to be set prior to 2025.



Protecting Civic Spaces

Protecting civil society organizations has been an ongoing challenge at recent COPs.

At COP24, the Polish government [moved to](#) stifle dissent and undermine civil society by detaining and deporting over a dozen activists. In the run-up to the conference, the government passed legislation [banning](#) so-called "spontaneous" protests and allowing Polish authorities to collect data on environmental activists.

COP25 had to be moved at the last minute from Santiago to Madrid after Chile pulled out due to social unrest and the government's violent crackdown on its own population, [leaving](#) many civil society representatives stranded.

The high cost of hotels and Airbnb rentals, coupled with logistical challenges tied to the pandemic and vaccine inequality, presented a major barrier to entry at COP26. The conference in Glasgow [was called](#) "one of the whitest" in years. [Over half](#) of the badge holders at COP26 were from the United States, Europe and other countries from the Global North.

This year's conference in Egypt presents a unique set of potential barriers to participation heading into November. Speaking to the Associated Press, Shoukry [indicated](#) the host will allow protests to occur, but implied they could be restricted to government-designated areas. His comments alarmed many human rights organizations.

"We still don't know if there will be the possibility of demonstrations and public protests. Even if the Egyptian authorities allow limited protests in relation to COP, we are concerned that they would brutally crush other protests as they have always done, in many cases with lethal results" said Chiara Liguori, Climate Justice Policy Adviser and Researcher with Amnesty International. "Furthermore, there are fears of reprisals, but also fears of human surveillance in Egypt, to which Egyptian activists and human rights defenders are currently subjected to."

The high costs of accommodations and Egypt's targeting of the LGBTI community and other marginalized groups present additional concerns about participation. Ahead of the conference, the Egyptian Hotel Association [hiked rates](#) by up to five times the usual cost, making it difficult for civil society representatives and delegates to attend the conference and raising concerns Egypt could be a repeat of the COP26 fiasco. Egyptian security forces' [well-documented](#) abuse of LGBTI people and civil rights suppression has helped make for a dreadful backdrop for marginalized people hoping to attend the conference.

In August, *The Guardian* [reported](#) Egyptian civil society organizations have complained that their government is blocking them from attending through a covert registration process. When asked about these questionable moves, the UNFCCC stated that host nations can invite organizations for one-time access at their discretion. Ian Fry, the UN Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change, [has expressed](#) particular concern about the safety of activists based in Egypt.



Human Rights in the Spotlight

Egypt's rampant human rights abuses will help put this issue at the center of this year's COP. Fighting to include human rights references in the text and enacting decisions that protect human rights in a substantive way will be a critical part of the negotiations. While there isn't an area of negotiations devoted specifically to human rights, it remains a key cross-cutting issue.

"Human rights are not negotiable," said Camila Isabel Zepeda Lizama, General Director of Global Issues for Mexico's Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "There's always a concern that when we are designing policies or projects, it has to include a human rights approach given that we have seen over and over that those vulnerable groups are the most affected by climate change. They have specific circumstances that we need to take into consideration when designing any kind of fund, program, or policy."

It is imperative to follow up on the human rights references in the agreement reached at COP26 pertaining to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, which addresses international carbon markets and non-market mechanisms. With this agreement, negotiators were finally able to finish the Paris Rulebook and make the Paris Agreement operational, after failing to do so in the previous two conferences.

By only including limited references to human rights in the final text on international carbon markets and other cooperative approaches for emission reductions, the agreement did not go as far as protecting human rights as many had hoped. Violations in the context of land-based carbon markets are [well-documented](#), especially for indigenous peoples in rainforest areas. Still, building on the human rights safeguards that were included at COP26 will be of paramount importance for advocates.

"How do we concretize the human rights references related to Article 6 that were included in the COP26 agreements?" asked Liguori.

Taking the IRA to COP

On August 16, Joe Biden signed into law the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), the most significant piece of climate legislation passed in the United States.

The bill provides \$369 billion in investments for climate and energy programs. The Rhodium Group, an independent research provider, [estimates](#) that the bill can cut US net greenhouse gas emissions down to 31 to 44 percent by 2030 from its 2005 levels. The bill moves the U.S. substantially closer to meeting its target of reducing emissions 50 to 52 percent by 2030.

While a major step forward, the bill falls short of what Biden had proposed in the Build Back Better Framework. The IRA mandates federal onshore and offshore leasing and expands tax credits for carbon capture technology.

What's more, to secure his vote, West Virginia Senator Joe Manchin negotiated a side deal with Democratic Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer to fast track fossil fuel infrastructure projects. The deal could advance the \$6.6 billion Mountain Valley Pipeline, a 488-kilometer natural gas pipeline. According to Oil Change International, the pipeline [would create](#) 89 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, about the same amount produced by 19 million passenger vehicles or 26 coal plants. However, climate advocates caught a break in September when Manchin pulled the side deal language from being voted on in the Continuing Resolution over a lack of support.

The Biden Administration has shown little interest in reversing its obstructionist position on financing loss and damage and may lack the political capital to ramp up its climate finance commitments. By any metric, the U.S. [has fallen woefully short](#) of meeting its "fair share." For the U.S. 2022 fiscal year, Congress has only approved \$1 billion in funding for direct international climate accounts and [appears unlikely](#) to come anywhere close to meeting Biden's \$11 billion goal for fiscal year 2024.

"I think the likelihood of the United States this year committing to the provision of additional climate finance is slim to none. The Biden Administration, even with a razor-thin Democratic majority, was not able to get some significant climate finance provisions into some of the budget plans," said Liane Schalatek, Associate Director at the Heinrich Boell Stiftung's Washington office.



A New Hope in Latin America

2022 represented a major turning point in Latin American politics with several new leaders pushing bold green agendas. This political shakeup could bring new life to the negotiations, particularly for the AILAC negotiating block comprised of Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, and Peru.

"There is a lot of movement happening in Latin America around fossil fuels. If we can get new players in this field from middle-income Global South countries like Colombia to announce policies to phase out fossil fuels, I think that could have a tremendous political impact," said Ioualalen.

On June 19, ex-rebel Gustavo Petro defeated the right-wing business tycoon Rodolfo Hernández to capture the Colombian presidency. Petro is the first leftist President in Colombia, basing his campaign around principles of climate justice and taking a definitive stance against fossil fuels. Petro [has vowed](#) to block new oil exploration permits and [has proposed](#) a debt-for-nature swap to protect Colombia's jungles, forests and wetlands. His vice president, Francia Márquez, was the 2018 recipient of the Goldman Environmental Prize for her work as a grassroots activist fighting illegal mining.

"Colombia will put its international emphasis on reaching the most ambitious agreements possible to curb climate change and defend world peace," Petro [said](#) in his inauguration speech.

The election of 36-year old leftist Gabriel Boric to the Chilean Presidency was a historic victory for the country. Boric quickly set himself apart from his predecessor, Sebastian Piñera, pledging to overturn the economic model put in place by the former dictator General Augusto Pinochet.

Shortly after assuming office in March, he signed the Escazu Agreement, a key environmental treaty in the region that seeks to allow public access to information, promote citizen participation in environmental governance, and protect the rights of

environmental defenders. Boric made a splash by appointing Maisa Rojas, a renowned climatologist who has helped author reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), as Minister of the Environment. Boric backed a new constitution for Chile, rooted in ecology and environmental rights, although voters ultimately rejected it.

Xiomara Castro, the wife of Manuel Zelaya who was overthrown in a right-wing coup back in 2009, assumed the Honduran presidency in January. She [campaigned on](#) adopting protections for human rights defenders and demanded justice in her inauguration speech for Berta Cáceres, the Goldman Prize-winning activist who was brutally murdered in 2016.

The most important election this year in Latin America is Brazil's presidential runoff set for October 30. Far-right President Jair Bolsonaro is squaring off against Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, who held the presidency from 2003 to 2010.

Brazil is the world's [fifth largest](#) greenhouse gas emitter and deforestation is the largest source of the country's emissions. Under Bolsonaro, deforestation in the Amazon has accelerated and greenhouse gas emissions [have risen](#) 10 percent. In contrast, deforestation rates dropped dramatically under Lula's administration, falling by as much [14 percent](#) in one year. Lula, who holds a commanding lead in the polls, [has pledged](#) to achieve net-zero deforestation if elected.

While much of the region appears to be moving in the right direction, Costa Rica is likely headed toward a period of environmental backsliding under its new President Rodrigo Chaves. The new administration has already gutted the previous government's plans to build an electric train that is at the heart of the country's decarbonization plan. Chaves [dismantled](#) the executive authority overseeing the construction, saying he will propose a new plan based on an old proposal that will be based on a single line and much smaller in scale. The new Minister of the Environment [has also entertained](#) the possibility of facilitating natural gas exploration in the coming years.

A New Collective Quantified Goal

Climate finance is critical for developing nations to make large-scale investments in mitigation and adaptation measures. The Global South needs support from developed nations like the United States to fund clean technologies and sustainable infrastructure.

In the 2009 Copenhagen Accord, developed nations agreed to mobilize the \$100 billion per year by 2020. This \$100 billion goal was reaffirmed in the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Recent OECD research [shows](#) that rich nations only mobilized \$83.3 billion in 2020, falling far short of the already modest \$100 billion goal. Of the \$68.3 of public climate finance that was mobilized, 71 percent was granted in the form of loans.

"At the end of the day, we are just putting our own money to deal with our own climate change problems," said Rivera Galvis. "Developing countries cannot bear alone the burden of recovering and rebuilding from experienced losses and damages associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Around 80 percent of financial instruments being used for climate action take the form of loans and are actually reducing developing countries' fiscal space to invest in climate action."

Negotiators are in the early stages of determining the NCQG that is scheduled to be set prior to 2025, as stipulated by the COP Decision accompanying the Paris Agreement. Key to the NCQG will be establishing an amount based on the needs and economic realities of developing countries rather than an arbitrary figure dictated by rich nations.

"Obviously one of the core principles or preliminary aspects of framing the discourse of the New Collective Quantified Goal is that it has to learn from the mistakes of the \$100 billion goal," said Schalatek. "It needs to be needs-based and not the lowest common denominator of what developed countries find to be politically feasible."

Fleshing Out the GGA

The effort to ramp up adaptation finance was given a much needed boost at COP26. The UNFCCC Standing Committee on Finance [has estimated](#) that only 20 to 25 percent of committed concessional finance is set aside for adaptation, lagging significantly behind funds earmarked for mitigation. The Glasgow Climate Pact “urges developed country Parties to at least double their collective provision of climate finance for adaptation to developing country Parties from 2019 levels by 2025.”

This year, the focus will shift toward the Global Goal of Adaptation (GGA). Article 7 of the Paris Agreement established the GGA with the intention of “enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change.” Scaling up adaptation efforts will be a priority for developing countries that are already struggling to adapt to a changing environment.

At COP26, parties established the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GlaSS). This two-year program was created to help enhance the understanding of the GGA and how to move ahead to better meet that goal, although much of the details remain hazy. The first GlaSS workshops were held at the Bonn intersessionals this year.

“At the end of the day, we achieved a good decision in Glasgow with clear objectives for the GlaSS,” said Rivera Galvis. “We need to go into substance in terms of methodologies, indicators, data and metrics, monitoring and evaluation with a view to be able to produce a concrete outcome at COP27 to inform the first Global Stocktake.”

In addition to GlaSS, tracking progress in framing the GGA will also likely play an important role in the Technical Dialogue (TD) for the Global Stocktake (GST) in Egypt. The Paris Agreement explicitly states the GST will review progress made in achieving the GGA.

The Need for a Finance Facility

For many countries and civil society organizations, a successful COP will come down to finance for loss and damage. Developing nations and activists have been working tirelessly to have loss and damage given equal consideration as the third pillar of climate action, alongside mitigation and adaptation.

“Our priority is loss and damage and, in particular, the financial mechanism for it,” said CANLA coordinator Alejandro Aleman.

In the final days of COP26, 135 nations comprising the Group of 77 (G77) plus China were in lockstep in proposing a Glasgow Facility, a critical step in securing funding from historical emitters for losses and damages. The proposal for a finance facility was ultimately blocked by the United States, European Union, United Kingdom and other nations, although parties did agree to provide finance for the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage.

While the proposal ultimately came up short, the dialogue around finance for loss and damage has changed dramatically, and the issue has now taken center stage at the negotiations. Even with the setbacks in Bonn, there does seem to be some positive momentum for a loss and damage finance facility. As the World Resources Institute [noted](#), Canada, Denmark, Germany, New Zealand, Scotland, and the Belgian province of Wallonia have signaled that they support loss and damage finance to some extent.

While developing nations appear to be in solidarity once again on securing finance for loss and damage, there are some concerns about creating an entirely separate facility.

“We are a bit concerned that creating a new facility or a new funding mechanism is a long process and it always comes with political issues and bureaucratic new procedures that we would have to learn,” said Zepeda Lizama.

Stalling on Santiago

The Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD) was created with the vision of bringing together various actors to catalyze technical assistance on loss and damage.

It was one of the key outcomes at COP25 in 2019 and talks to advance the network from an abstract concept to something more concrete continued into Glasgow. The Glasgow Climate Pact welcomed the further operationalization of the network and decided that it would be provided with funds for supporting technical assistance, but little was done to advance the SNLD in Bonn.

Progress on the SNLD has lagged as the divide between developed and developing nations has grown with countries offering differing visions of what the network should be. While developing nations seek a network that meets their individual needs, many developed countries [continue to treat the network](#) as a “checkbox exercise.”

“Developed countries just want to establish the Santiago Network as a matchmaking facility,” said Rivera Galvis. “We do not see the Santiago Network as a mere matchmaking facility, but as having a much more active role in assisting developing countries, similar to a wedding planner. We see the Santiago Network helping us understand our needs assessments on loss and damage.”

A Robust Technical Dialogue

The Global Stocktake (GST), set forth in Article 14 of the Paris Agreement, is designed to periodically assess the collective progress toward meeting the Agreement and its long-term goals. The GST was created to help parties update and inform their NDCs and other climate action plans, as well as enhance collective action toward meeting the Agreement.

The first GST will conclude in 2023 and will continue every five years thereafter. The process began at COP26 and can be broken down into three phases: collecting and preparing information, technical assessment, and presentation of key findings.

The information collection phase gathers reports that assess how parties are doing and what needs to be done. The documents include national climate plans, scientific studies, country reports, and other sources and are submitted through the GST Information Portal.

During the technical assessment phase, governments and non-state actors collaborate to digest the information. The first ever Technical Dialogue (TD) took place in Bonn and will continue in Egypt. The TD is critical to understanding if nations are on track to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and will ultimately inform the political considerations surrounding the GST at COP28.

“If we don’t have a good technical assessment at COP27, and if we don’t have constructive dialogue, how do we enhance our ambition?” said Evans. “It’s important that the inputs now aren’t rubbish but are really high quality and informative so we have something useful to talk about.”

Ultimately, the key findings of the TD coming out of COP27 will be discussed and presented at COP28. A robust TD will help inform parties to step up ambition and ensure they are on track to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

ACE in the Hole

Another important area of the negotiations will be Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE). As stated in Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, ACE is critical to “enhance climate change education, training, public awareness, public participation, and public access to information.”

At COP26, parties adopted the 10-year Glasgow Work Programme on ACE after the previous agreement established at COP18 in Doha had ended. While the work programme provided some degree of continuity, it [ultimately ended up](#) “stripping out all meaningful references to human rights.”

In its [policy brief](#) released ahead of COP27, Amnesty International calls for parties to adopt an action plan for the new program that references and contributes to the fulfillment of each state’s human rights obligations, recognizes the role of human rights defenders, and adopts provisions that measure progress through human rights indicators, targets, and benchmarks.



Will BOGA Expand?

During the second week of COP26, Costa Rica partnered with Denmark to launch the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA). These two countries, along with fellow core members France, Wales, Greenland, Ireland, Quebec, Sweden, and California, have partnered to elevate the dialogue around fossil fuel phase-outs in the negotiations. The alliance represents a comprehensive step forward for fundamental change, rather than inadequate half-measures.

“Science is clear that it is imperative to limit their supply and set an end for oil and gas production. Almost 20 years ago, Costa Rica took the brave decision to ban oil and gas exploration and exploitation. Now, along with Denmark we are calling other governments to join BOGA and move away from oil and gas,” [said](#) Andrea Meza, the former Minister of Environment and Energy of Costa Rica.

Since the formation of BOGA, there have been several factors working against the alliance’s favor. The war in Ukraine, which has sent energy prices soaring, has led many countries to double down on their dependency on oil and gas, [prompting](#) a fossil fuel “gold rush.” Even before the war began, a recent OECD-IEA analysis [showed](#) fossil fuel subsidies in 51 economies increased from \$362.4 billion in 2020 to \$697.2 billion in 2021, nearly doubling in size. This number is expected to grow even more in 2022. Despite these issues, BOGA members have still not backtracked on their commitments.

“It’s very important that BOGA becomes that counterpoint to the narrowly defined energy security conversation that’s been happening for the past six months that is squarely around the availability of fossil fuels and not the transition away from fossil fuels,” [said](#) Ioualalen.

Also concerning is new Costa Rican President Rodrigo Chaves’ ambiguous stance on fossil fuel exploration. Speaking to La República, environmental minister Franz Tattenbach [indicated](#) that “natural gas could be a bit interesting as a transition fuel.”

While the alliance has been fairly quiet since its launch, it named Siân Bradley, senior research fellow in the Environment and Society Programme at Chatham House, as its inaugural head of Secretariat. The rest of the Secretariat team has yet to be named.

The alliance held its first event since COP26 in Bonn and is expected to be active in Egypt. It remains unclear if BOGA will announce new members at COP27, but with exciting new governments in countries like Chile and Colombia that have put forth bold green agendas, BOGA could help facilitate an expansion even under these difficult circumstances.