



COP 30

CLIMATE ADAPTATION SOLUTIONS THAT LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND



ENSEMBLE,
CONSTRUIRE
UN MONDE JUSTE
ET FRATERNEL



OCTOBER 2025

As COP 30 approaches, the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights, SAF/FJKM (Madagascar), Caritas Brazil and Secours Catholique – Caritas France are calling for strong action to bring about fair climate adaptation — to truly meet the moment with solutions based on the needs of the most vulnerable populations. Our associations conducted a study in 14 territories to document local realities and develop recommendations based on the experiences of communities. Against a backdrop of rapid worsening of the effects of climate change, a fair approach to adaptation must be prioritized to ensure the protection and respect of the rights of the most vulnerable. To achieve this, it is essential that the States Parties to the COP, particularly those countries that have historically been the largest emitters, increase their commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

CLIMATE JUSTICE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST POVERTY: ONE AND THE SAME

More and more each year, our organisations have made the same observation: **the impacts of climate change are exacerbating poverty**. This is all the more true given that people living in precarious situations do not have the same means as others to adapt and recover after climate shocks. However, it is often the case that **the poorest people are overlooked in climate policies**.

In light of this dynamic, **we sought out perspectives of people affected by climate change as well as actors on the ground in various territories**, including Brazil's Amazonas state, where droughts and floods are becoming increasingly severe; Tunisia's Mahdia governorate, where droughts are becoming more intense and frequent; Madagascar's Sava region and on the islands of Réunion and Mayotte, where cyclones and droughts strike in turn; French Guiana and mainland France, where droughts, floods and coastal erosion are becoming increasingly more severe. In total, **over 150 people shared their stories with us, which were then analysed** to identify the impacts of these climate shocks and the needs of people on the ground.

These testimonies leave no doubt: the effects of climate change are being felt more and more intensely around the world, with **numerous and varied impacts on housing, infrastructure, agriculture, access to clean water, transport, education, physical health, mental health, household expenditure and economic stability**. In this context, the lack of risk management and inadequate adaptation policies create a **vicious circle in which precariousness is both a cause of vulnerability to climate shocks and a consequence of them**.

“Single people and retirees are much more vulnerable than young people, who bounce back more quickly, and young families with small children will always be given priority because children must receive housing. [...] It's as if these groups weren't included as part of society. The forgotten members of society, people with disabilities, the elderly, single women.” Marie-France, a resident of the Alpes-Maritimes region, who was renting a house that was swept away during Storm Alex in 2020. She then found herself without housing and with little support in the face of the trauma she had experienced.

On the one hand, **precariousness does indeed make people more vulnerable to climate shocks**. People who are already vulnerable (living on the streets, with little or no income) are more likely to live in exposed areas. This is because the land there is cheaper and at times unregulated, or considered unbuildable, and thus offers shelter for people who lack access to other forms of housing. Habitats for such people can be very precarious and therefore both more exposed and less resistant to extreme weather events. Thus, such individuals find it all the more difficult to recover because they face various vulnerabilities (age, gender, irregular administrative status, social isolation, economic insecurity, exclusion from political decision-making, etc.).

“In terms of housing, everything that was precarious is gone [...]. Those who lived in tin shacks are, for the most part, foreigners with more or less regular status, and they have seen everything disappear.” Marc, a Secours Catholique staff member, during Cyclone Chido, which swept across the island of Mayotte in December 2024.

On the other hand, **climate shocks lead to greater insecurity**. The cost of basic needs in these scenarios skyrockets while incomes decline, especially for fields of work that depend on the climate, such as farming. This imbalance leads to lasting impoverishment, which makes any recovery more difficult, particularly for those who are already vulnerable.

“We have been greatly affected by drought, which has reduced pastures and vegetation. We have suffered greatly. Before, my husband and I could fill one or two carts of grass per day to feed the cattle. We stopped using natural grasses as the main feed for livestock and had to resort to industrial feed, such as hay. [...] My income has decreased while my expenses have increased. Since my only source of income is raising cows and selling milk, I had to borrow money to feed my livestock: I was forced to go into debt so that my cows would not go without food. [...] Our financial and family situation has deteriorated. I can no longer provide for my family as I once did.” Hnia, a farmer in the Kerker region of Tunisia, where prolonged drought has prevented grass from growing, forcing her to buy expensive industrial feed for her livestock while the price she receives for her milk remains low.

The prevailing feeling is one of irreversible change, a “before” and “after,” and an obligation to rethink everything: lifestyles, agricultural systems, public policies. However, the responses remain largely inadequate.

“ Here, in our community, there has been no outside support. It feels like we have become invisible. There has been no assistance for rebuilding houses, even though our village was severely damaged.” Bakatestao, a resident of a town in northeastern Madagascar affected by repeated cyclones.

COLLECTIVE MOBILIZATION TOWARDS COP 30

COP 30, which will be held in the Brazilian Amazon in November 2025, will mark a decisive step forward. **Ten years after the Paris Agreement**, countries must **strengthen their commitments to reducing emissions, an essential element of the climate regime, but also advance the agenda on adaptation, financing, loss and damage, and climate justice**.

Adaptation is a core challenge for climate policies, but it cannot be effective unless it is developed with equity in mind. The IPCC highlights the principles of climate justice that should be taken into account in adaptation options. This involves **ensuring the equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities related to climate responses, recognizing the knowledge and priorities of the populations concerned, and considering people's participation in decision-making processes**¹. It is on this basis that adaptation can become a lever for social transformation, rather than a mere technical response.

“ I fear that we are actually implementing solutions to cope with these climate changes that are not suited to our region. When proposing these solutions, it is essential to consider who we are and, above all, what environment we are in. We are Amazonians. The solutions really need to be Amazonian. [...] And in fact, we must stop trying to import solutions from outside. We are the ones who must provide the solutions. It is up to us to propose them and not simply endure them.” Franck, expert in water management in French Guiana.

In the areas where we have carried out our work, individuals and communities facing droughts, floods, and coastal erosion remind us of the urgent need to ensure fairness is at the heart of our adaptation policies. **It is crucial that the commitments made at COP 30 reflect the real needs of the affected populations and keep locally built solutions as the central focus.**

“ How will they represent us, how will they act on our behalf, if they don't come and ask us what we want, how we feel? We must be consulted. Because every branch of the river has a different reality. Every community has its own way of thinking and behaving.” Terezinha, leader of the Gavião community in the Brazilian Amazon.

1 Pörtner, H.-O., et al. (Eds.). (2022). *Climate change 2022: Impacts, adaptation, and vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009325844>.



ÉLODIE PERRIOT / SDCF

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

FINANCING ADAPTATION IN A FAIR AND ACCESSIBLE MANNER

01

Despite the call in the Paris Agreement to achieve a better balance in funding for mitigation and adaptation, the latter remains significantly underfunded, with amounts falling far short of what is needed. According to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), between \$215 billion and \$387

billion per year will be needed by 2030 to finance adaptation in developing countries¹. International public funding dedicated to adaptation has been estimated at \$28 billion for the year 2022². In addition, **available funding often flows through complex channels that are difficult for local actors to access**. According to UNEP, less than 17% of all adaptation funding between 2017 and 2021 has been directed towards local communities³. The quantitative and qualitative limitations of adaptation funding reveal a serious failure on the part of the countries that have historically been the biggest emitters, yet are responsible for supporting the adaptation of the most vulnerable.

- 1 United Nations Environment Programme (2023). *Adaptation Gap Report 2023: Underfinanced. Underprepared. Inadequate investment and planning on climate adaptation leaves world exposed*. Nairobi. <https://doi.org/10.59117/20.500.11822/43796>.
- 2 United Nations Environment Programme (2024). *Adaptation Gap Report 2024: Come hell and high water — As fires and floods hit the poor hardest, it is time for the world to step up adaptation actions*. Nairobi. <https://doi.org/10.59117/20.500.11822/46497>.
- 3 United Nations Environment Programme, 2023.

Indeed, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which implies increased support from historically high-emitting countries for mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage.

Even though a New Collective Quantified Goal for climate finance was adopted at COP 29, it falls far short of actual needs and still does not include specific targets for adaptation or loss and damage, which are highly concerning omissions.

THAT IS WHY WE RECOMMEND:

- ▶ Significantly increasing funding for adaptation, in particular by setting a dedicated funding target, and committing to mobilizing secure and predictable public funding in the form of grants, so as not to generate additional debt.
- ▶ Allocating a larger share of this funding to local actors (civil society organizations, communities, indigenous peoples, etc.).

CO-DEVELOPING ADAPTATION POLICIES BASED ON RIGHTS AND LOCAL KNOWLEDGE 02

Appropriate responses to the climate crisis cannot be imposed from the top down. They must instead be grounded in local realities, recognize local knowledge, and ensure the participation of the communities concerned. At COP 28, the Parties agreed on a framework for monitoring the Global Goal on Adaptation, and UAE–Belém was created, a work program that should be finalized at COP 30 in Belém. The objective is to define comprehensive indicators to assess progress in adaptation across seven thematic targets: water, agriculture

and food, health, ecosystems, social protection and poverty reduction, cultural heritage, and infrastructure. **The challenge is including community or local data** to prevent indicators from being overly technocratic or based solely on national or international data.

THAT IS WHY WE RECOMMEND:

- ▶ Ensuring that the qualitative indicators in the UAE–Belém work program include the collection of testimonials from people affected by climate change, as well as resource indicators, in order to assess the integration of local communities and actors in the development of decisions that affect them and to avoid the risks of maladaptation.
- ▶ Ensuring that National Adaptation Plans pay particular attention to people facing structural inequalities (women, people in precarious situations, indigenous populations) and provide for programs or funding dedicated to these specific groups.

SUPPORTING RESILIENT AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS AND THE RIGHT TO WATER 03

Smallholder farming, particularly involving women, is on the front line when it comes to the effects of climate change. However, it plays a key role in adaptation, provided it is supported by coherent public policies based on agroecology—meaning agricultural practices that respect ecosystems and local knowledge. These approaches are discussed in climate negotiations within the UNFCCC's work program on agriculture⁴. It is essential that they be fully recognized as structural solutions.

⁴ The work program that succeeded the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture is now called the "Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on the Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security" (SJWA), adopted at COP 27 in 2022. It builds on the joint work of Koronivia by focusing on the practical implementation of agricultural adaptation and food security measures.

THAT IS WHY WE RECOMMEND:

- ▶ Supporting agroecology as a sustainable adaptation solution, ensuring healthy soil, water and biodiversity.
- ▶ Integrating support for agroecology into National Adaptation Plans with targeted funding for small-scale producers and livestock farmers.
- ▶ Ensuring, through National Adaptation Plans, the right to water for all: sufficient quantity, quality, geographical and financial accessibility.

RESPONDING TO LOSS AND DAMAGE IN AN EQUITABLE MANNER

Many communities are already experiencing irreversible climate impacts due to a lack of resources and adequate conditions to cope with them, such as economic and non-economic losses, destruction of homes, land rendered uncultivable, forced displacement, and cultural losses. **The longer adaptation is delayed or insufficient, the worse these losses become.** There is also an increased need for funding for loss and damage to help people recover from disasters, including compensating them for the loss of their homes, crops and livelihoods. The creation of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage at COP 27 marked a historic step forward, but its effectiveness will depend on sufficient, sustainable funding that is accessible to the populations most affected. The outcome of COP 29 on the New Collective Quantified Goal did not explicitly secure long-term financing for loss and damage.

THAT IS WHY WE RECOMMEND:

- ▶ Making loss and damage one of the pillars of the UNFCCC, alongside mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation.
- ▶ Ensuring the swift and equitable implementation of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage, with 100% donations and direct access for local communities.
- ▶ Recognising the psychosocial impacts of climate change as a form of non-economic loss, in order to make them eligible for loss and damage funding.
- ▶ Paying particular attention to people facing structural inequalities in the funding released under the loss and damage fund and ensuring that they have the most direct access to funding possible.



ADAPTATION IS A CORE CHALLENGE FOR CLIMATE POLICIES, BUT IT CANNOT BE EFFECTIVE UNLESS IT IS DEVELOPED WITH EQUITY IN MIND.



This project was funded by Secours Catholique-Caritas France and the French Development Agency, as part of a multi-year partnership agreement aimed at promoting a just ecological transition. The ideas and opinions expressed herein are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of the French Development Agency.

Cover photo credit: Gael Kerbaol/SCCF