



Climate Action Network

Comments on the post-2015 zero draft

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Climate Action Network International (CAN-I) is the world's largest network of civil society organizations working together to promote government action to address the climate crisis, with more than 900 members in over 100 countries. www.climatenetwork.org

Climate Action Network values the efforts by the Co-Chairs to put forward a zero draft text to move the discussions on the post-2015 agenda forward. We believe the proposal's structure can facilitate further discussions on some of the key principles and elements to strengthen the declaration in order to guarantee the desired implementation and outcome of the goals and targets. However, the preamble and declaration in the zero draft fall short of adequately addressing the important issue of climate change and sustainable energy access. We note with great concern that the framing and inclusion of these issues have been weakened from the chapeau of the OWG report¹ and the Secretary General's Synthesis Report².

Climate change impacts are unfolding rapidly, thereby undermining the livelihoods of the poor and vulnerable. The declaration must drive inspiration and help communicate what the new development agenda is about. It must ensure that climate change is treated as a development issue because it threatens poverty eradication and puts at risk the achievement of the sustainable development goals and targets. It must be clear about the causes of climate change and that it impacts the poorest and most vulnerable the hardest. But it must also recognize that solutions such as sustainable energy systems are emerging rapidly, which can inspire all members of society to act against climate change and end poverty in the next 15 years.

Climate Action Network would like to offer our immediate comments in order to further strengthen some of the key elements of the declaration to effectively reflect the severe threat emerging from climate change, and the opportunities of decisive action to achieve real sustainable development.

To emphasize the need for ambitious action, recognizing the new solutions available, Climate Action Network recommends strengthening the following paragraphs of the Post-2015 Declaration as set out and highlighted below:

¹ A/68/970 'Report of the Open Working Group of the General Assembly on Sustainable Development Goals'

² A/69/700 'The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet – Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda'

Preamble:

Headlines

General comment:

The purpose and value added of the list of nine headlines is not clear, but if retained, then each of the goal areas and the integration of the social, environmental and economic dimensions of sustainable development should be reflected.

Specific proposals and insertions:

- Secure education, health, **universal access to clean energy** and basic services for all;

Rationale: The nine headlines fail to address sustainable energy access, which is a crucial element of the post-2015 agenda that can achieve multiple objectives such as poverty eradication while combating climate change. CAN strongly recommends including reference to access to sustainable energy in Headline 2 of the preamble on essential human needs that must be met.

- Foster inclusive **and sustainable** economic **development growth, sustainable consumption and production and** shared prosperity for all;

Rationale: The proposed changes better reflect the integrated nature of the goals. As well as being inclusive, economic development must also be sustainable, taking into account the impact on the planet and the three pillars of sustainable development. Sustainable consumption and production is a crucial aspect of this universal agenda that will contribute to climate change mitigation and should be reflected adequately in the headlines.

- Promote safe, inclusive, **resilient and sustainable** cities and human settlements;

Rationale: The proposed changes better reflect the integrated nature of the cities goal and the need for cities to be resilient to climate change and disaster impacts.

- Protect the planet, ~~fight climate change, use~~ **and safeguard the** natural resources ~~sustainably and safeguard our oceans~~ **on which we all rely for the wellbeing of present and future generations;**
- **[New headline] Combat the causes and impacts of climate change;**

Rationale: We propose separating climate change and natural resources in the headlines to give each issue the prominence it deserves and to reflect the proposed separation of the issues in the main body text. Currently climate change and natural resources are siloed in one 'planet' bullet, portraying them as solely environmental issues. This needs to be adapted to better reflect the interdependent nature of the environmental, social and economic dimensions. The proposed changes emphasize that this agenda will tackle both the causes and the impacts of climate change, reflecting the inequitable nature of climate change. Furthermore, natural resources are not simply worth protecting for the sake of the

planet, they are also essential for sustainable economic development, social wellbeing and poverty eradication.

Declaration:

Introduction

3. ~~We recognize~~ **This agenda is the international community's commitment to** poverty eradication ~~is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for~~ **and** sustainable development. We intend, between now and 2030, to end poverty and hunger once and for all; to combat inequalities; to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its essential resources; **to tackle climate change and promote sustainable patterns of consumption and production**; and to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and **sustainable economic development** ~~sustained economic growth~~ and shared prosperity.

Rationale: The proposed amendments revert to the language in UNGA Resolution 68/6 that 'the post-2015 development agenda should reinforce the commitment of the international community to poverty eradication and sustainable development.' Poverty eradication and sustainable development are both global challenges that this framework must address. Neither can be achieved without the other. Poverty eradication will not be achieved unless climate change is addressed and sustainable consumption and production is a key aspect of this universal agenda. Both should therefore be given key prominence in the introduction.

7. This is a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity which also seeks to strengthen universal peace in larger freedom. It will be implemented by all of us acting in collaborative partnership. We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to ~~heal and secure~~ **safeguard** our planet's **resources and climate** for **the prosperity and wellbeing of present and** future generations. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps needed to shift the world onto a sustainable footing.

Rationale: The planet's climate and natural resources are not simply worth protecting for the sake of the planet; they are essential to sustainable economic development, social wellbeing and poverty eradication. These interlinkages need to be drawn out and emphasized.

Our vision

15. In the goals and targets which we have agreed, we are setting out a supremely ambitious vision. We envisage a world free of poverty, hunger, disease and ~~want~~ **environmental degradation**. A world of safe and nutritious food; of affordable drinking water; of universal access to basic education **and sustainable energy**; of physical, mental and social well-being. A world of universal respect for human rights and human dignity; of justice and equality; of respect for race and ethnicity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of human potential while promoting shared prosperity. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and all barriers to their empowerment in our societies have been removed. A just, equitable, tolerant and inclusive world. ~~And one in which humanity lives in~~ **A world on track towards complete decarbonization of the economy, in which we**

safeguard and invest in a healthy environment and adopt lifestyles in complete harmony with nature.

Rationale: The last line on environmental considerations reads like an afterthought. The proposals intend to give greater prominence and integration to environmental issues, by providing more clarity and detail, and to incorporate energy and climate considerations.

The New Agenda

24. We will seek to build strong economic foundations for all our countries, **including through the preservation of the natural resource base. Sustained and inclusive economic growth is essential for prosperity.** We will work to build **dynamic, equitable, resilient, low-carbon** and people-centred economies [...]. We will therefore adopt policies which increase productivity and productive employment, financial inclusion, **sustainable** agricultural and industrial development, sustainable transport systems and ~~modern~~ **sustainable, renewable and efficient** energy provision.

Rationale: Sustainable economic development and sustainability must go hand in hand to successfully meet today's challenges. The text insertions underline that we need solutions that will support and drive sustainable economic development while reducing pollution, energy wastage and preserving natural resources.

26. [...] We will reduce the negative impacts of urban activities, including through the safe management and use of chemicals, the reduction and recycling of waste and more efficient use of water and energy, **and shifting to sustainable renewable energies.** And we will work to minimize the impact of cities on the global climate system, **and ensure the cities are climate and disaster resilient.**

Rationale: Managing growing cities in a sustainable manner will be a complex task. The text suggestions underline that the role of cities in relation to climate change is twofold: to provide solutions to mitigate climate change and to build resilience for millions of citizens.

27. We are determined to address decisively the threat posed by climate change and environmental degradation, **and to ensure that this new agenda drives low-carbon and climate resilient development.** The global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible international cooperation aimed at accelerating the phase-out ~~reduction~~ of global greenhouse gas emissions **with a long-term goal of phasing-out fossil fuel emissions and a renewable energy future for all by 2050.**

Without rapid action to reduce global carbon emissions and to keep global average temperature below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, sustainable development will be undermined and the poorest, most vulnerable communities will be hit hardest. Looking ahead to the COP 21 conference in Paris in December, we underscore the ~~historic~~ responsibility of all States to work for **an ambitious, equitable,** meaningful and universal climate agreement which ~~will put in place~~ **underpin the achievement of a sustainable, equitable and poverty-free world .**

Rationale: The outcome document must recognize the role of the post-2015 development agenda in tackling climate change, as well as send a strong signal of political ambition for COP21. The proposed changes strengthen the climate change language with the addition of references to the temperature target and long-term goal, and emphasize the links between climate and the achievement of equity, development and poverty eradication. In the absence of a separate paragraph on energy, we would

also like to highlight that transforming our energy systems is an essential building block of climate protection, as well as reducing energy poverty.

The other aspects of environmental sustainability seem to have been added as an afterthought and need greater emphasis; therefore we propose the separation of climate change and other environmental aspects into two separate paragraphs – see new paragraph below.

27bis: We ~~must~~ **will** also safeguard our oceans and seas, protect biodiversity and promote resilience and disaster preparedness. **We recognize that nature and the services it provides underpin the economy, human development and quality of life. The sustainable and equitable management of our natural resource base is therefore essential to ensure economic prosperity, social well-being and poverty eradication.**

Rationale: This proposed new paragraph makes it clear that our social and economic development is dependent on the Earth's natural resources and therefore that countries have a responsibility to commit to the sustainable and equitable use of ecosystems and the services they provide. This is in line with text in the OWG outcome which states that the protection and management of the 'natural resource base of economic and social development' is an essential requirement for sustainable development (para 4) and the Rio+20 outcome document, that states that sustainable development should be achieved by 'promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and human development while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration and restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges.' (para 4)

Implementation

32. Official Development Assistance remains important in supporting the sustainable development needs of countries and regions, in particular least developed countries, small island developing states and Africa. We shall accelerate full implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway and the Vienna Programme of Action for Land-Locked Developing Countries.

32bis. We stress the need to maximize resources for investment in low-carbon development paths through adequate and appropriate financing, technology transfer and capacity building for poorer countries so they can ensure cleaner energy systems. In particular, we encourage rebalancing the current bias in public subsidies away from polluting fossil fuels towards renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Rationale: The proposed additional paragraph mentions the need for financial and non-financial means of implementation to support low-carbon development paths when pursuing the achievement of the SDGs and targets. This should be done through climate-proof financial means but also through technology transfer and capacity building for poorer countries so they can leapfrog to clean and sustainable energy systems. There should also be a reference to phasing out public subsidies for fossil fuels and channelling these instead? towards sustainable energy systems.

A call for action to change our world

41. Today we are taking a decision of comparable significance. ~~Ours can be the first generation to succeed in ending poverty; just as we are the last to have a chance of saving the planet.~~ **Our generation must be the first to achieve an end to poverty and to put development on a truly sustainable and climate-safe path.** We have resolved to build a better future for millions of people in our world, millions who have been denied the chance to lead decent, dignified and rewarding lives and to achieve their full human potential. The world will be a better place in 2030 if we succeed in our objectives.