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**LAUDATO SI'
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Catholics for Our Common Home

Statement on COP 28

The 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP28) will be held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from November 30 to December 12, 2023. Despite scepticism, this is an important turning point in realising the aims of the 2015 Paris Agreement. This COP comes in the context of Pope Francis's apostolic exhortation *Laudate Deum (LD)*, which addresses the state of the climate crisis since the Paris Agreement. The Pope comments that to “say that there is nothing to hope for would be suicidal, for it would mean exposing all humanity, especially the poorest, to the worst impacts of climate change.” (LD 53). Therefore, the European Laudato Si Alliance (ELSiA) is aware of the importance of COP 28. We are committed in our support for ambitious policy decisions and constructive dialogue at the conference and that it might follow the Pope's call to “make COP28 a historic event that honours and ennobles us as human beings” (LD 59).

For more than 30 years the scientific consensus has agreed more and more on the human origin of climate change and its explicit link to the use of fossil fuels. According to the UN Emissions Gap Report 2023 “the world is heading for a temperature rise far above the Paris Agreement goals unless countries deliver more than they have promised.” If the world continues to fail on its climate commitments then reaching temperatures of ‘between 2,5°C and 2,9°C by the end of the century’ can be expected.

The climate crisis has devastating consequences for the biodiversity of the earth. Pope Francis urges that we consider this a “global social issue and one intimately related to the dignity of human life” (LD 3). Those in the Global South are the most affected yet are responsible for a minimal portion of historic emissions. In the wake of extreme rainfall, small-scale agricultural failures and exacerbating food and water vulnerabilities of marginal communities we must “hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.” (LS 49). The Global North has a specific responsibility to ensure a just transition and to ensure that the Loss & Damage fund truly meets the needs of people at the frontlines of the climate emergency.

The COP 28 needs to “achieve the beginning of a new process marked by three requirements: that it be drastic, intense and count on the commitment of all. [...] Only a process of this sort can enable international politics to recover its credibility, since only in this concrete manner will it be possible to reduce significantly carbon dioxide levels and to prevent even greater evils over time.” (LD 59).

The concrete steps ELSiA is pressing for the European Union to take at COP28 are:

- Contribute to outputs of the Global Stocktake that propose clear, actionable, and specific paths to achieve the Paris goals.



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- Increase its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) far beyond -55% in order to close the “emissions gaps”, as well as to close the “implementation gaps” by increasing the implementation of policies to achieve a fossil fuel phase-out.
- Agree to a rapid, just and equitable global phase-out of all fossil fuels (coal, oil and gas) in all sectors by adopting a parallel Fossil Fuels Non-Proliferation Treaty to complement and strengthen the Paris Agreement.
- Deliver with the other contributors the promised \$100 billion USD yearly in climate finance to developing countries and shift to policies that promote more sustainable economies like the European Green Deal.
- Take the lead in pledging and making substantial commitments to fund the Loss & Damage with new and additional public funding.

As people of faith grounded in the conviction that Creation is a sacred gift from God, ELSiA recommits itself ahead of COP28 to be diligent in its promotion of integral ecology and accompaniment of climate policy through its advocacy.

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