

Interventions on behalf of YOUNGO at the fourth Just Transition dialogue

DAY 2

What could be some concrete and actionable outcomes for the JTWP in the context of just energy transition pathways and holistic approaches to just transitions?

How can the JTWP best capitalize on synergies within and outside the UNFCCC in this context, including through its dialogues?

These past sessions were valuable in highlighting again what the challenges and barriers to a just transition are, but also what is already working well. Let us be frank: while this exchange is valuable and necessary, a lot of these views have been shared before in dialogues and contact groups. Meanwhile, back home, the transition is already underway, and while some promising just transition policies exist, justice is still far from being at its heart, leaving many communities to bear the brunt of change.

That is why, alongside our allied constituencies, YOUNGO has been calling for the establishment of a Global Just Transition Mechanism since the third dialogue in Panama this year. As also echoed by our colleague from UNCTAD in the scene setting presentation there is the need for new cooperation mechanisms. Our proposed mechanism would be such a tool to address the challenges voiced by all of you, including through coordination of existing just transition activities to maximize efficiency and targeted support for developing countries in developing and implementing their nationally defined just transition pathways.

On the question of synergies: such a mechanism would be linked to relevant UNFCCC bodies and workstreams, leveraging synergies within the climate regime. Additionally, it would include a network of experts.

In the interest of time I will not go further into any details, since ENGO already did so, and at SB62 we submitted a detailed outline of what this mechanism could do and how it could be structured—in a manner that is resourceful and does not duplicate existing efforts within the UNFCCC.

Nevertheless, we want to use this moment again to call on all parties to constructively engage in discussions about such a mechanism. Finally, let me emphasize that the activities of such a mechanism must be rooted in principles of equity as well as the goal of the Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees.

DAY 1

On the changed modalities of the dialogue

First, allow me to thank the Secretariat team for organizing this important event and the Ethiopian government for hosting the second climate week this year.

As youth representatives, we came here today to engage in real dialogue—not a negotiation-style exchange that inherently disadvantages civil society and prevents genuine exchange of ideas.

The adoption of the World Café format was born out of lessons from the first dialogue. It responded to the clear need for inclusivity and has proven to create the conditions for more constructive discussion. In this setting, political divisions fade into the background, and what emerges is the possibility of building bridges across different realities, united in the common struggle of advancing just transition pathways.

The Secretariat encouraged us to bring the same open and constructive spirit into this plenary session. Yet, what we have witnessed during the past hour resembled a contact group in disguise. This risks turning what should be a unique and valuable space into another exchange of entrenched positions.

This should not be a rhetorical exercise. It is an urgent and lived reality that requires courage, openness, and trust. To make the most of this dialogue, we call on every participant—whether present in this room or joining virtually—to resist falling back into negotiation patterns. Instead, let us use this space for honest reflection, constructive listening, and collective problem-solving.

The youth are ready to contribute in this spirit. We ask you to do the same.

On climate finance:

What lessons are being learned on financing nationally defined just energy transition pathways aligned with the outcome of the first Global Stocktake, including through enhancing access to climate finance, innovative and blended finance, crowding in of the private sector in a way that complements public finance, and financing for social protection systems?

What innovative financing mechanisms and policy frameworks could support enhancing the provision of climate finance for transitioning away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly, and equitable manner, in line with national development priorities and while safeguarding affected workers and communities?

We welcome the rich discussions on this intricate topic, as we all know finance is nearly always the bottleneck.

On blended finance, we must conclude that the so-called “billions to trillions” promise has proven a myth. Evidence shows that every public dollar invested by MDBs mobilizes on average only 37 cents in low-income countries. Instead of financing what matters for a just transition, like grid expansion, worker reskilling, or social protection, blended finance channels public money into de-risking private returns. Scarce public resources are diverted away from essential public goods without delivering the promised scale, while the logic of profit maximization remains incompatible with equity and community needs.

Instead of continuing to believe in the promise that blended finance will mobilize the necessary sums, deeper structural barriers must be addressed, requiring a reform of the current international financial architecture.

This means addressing what is actually hindering money from flowing where it is needed: limited fiscal space for governments to implement just transitions due to debt burdens, unfair tax systems, and investment regimes biased toward short-term profit rather than long-term sustainable development.

Here I want to specifically highlight the potential that lies in taxation and subsidy reform;

- With their ability to reprice and redistribute, taxes can accelerate mitigation and advance justice—for example, international solidarity levies on aviation, shipping, and fossil extraction can raise predictable revenues for climate action in communities least responsible and most affected, operationalizing the polluter pays and CBDR-RC principles.
 - Here, even making the tax system work as it is intended to be would greatly benefit the just transition. Currently African countries are losing more in tax evasions than they receive in development aid; clearly any discussions about climate finance cannot be siloed from those structural barriers.
 - With the FFD4 having sent strong signals on aligning our tax systems with sustainable development, we must seize this momentum, considering that the negotiations for a UN tax convention are taking place at the same time as COP30.
- Equally important is an immediate phase-out of fossil fuel subsidies paired with robust just-transition measures, not just supply side but also production side, while managing the demand. The freed-up fiscal space from subsidy reform should be used to fund worker reskilling and education programs, social protection, and regional diversification so transitions are equitable for affected workers and communities.

Closing intervention

We have spent these sessions debating just transitions in our economies, in our energy systems, and in global trade. But we must remind ourselves of something essential: the “just” in just transition is not a slogan. It is not a branding tool. It is, and must remain, an abbreviation of justice—justice for workers, justice for communities, justice for Indigenous Peoples, and justice for the billions still waiting to share in the benefits of clean, affordable, and sustainable energy.

Too often, our conversations drift into technocratic language and economic trade-offs, while the core principle of justice slips into the background. A transition that leaves 1.18 billion people still cooking with wood and charcoal, that overlooks the 4 million lives lost each year to indoor smoke, or that ignores the 600 million still in the dark cannot be called just.

So let us be clear: a truly just energy transition means financing and technology transfer that close these gaps now, not in 2050. It means cross-border cooperation that lifts up the Global South, not unilateral measures that punish it. It means embedding human rights, free, prior, and informed consent, and labor protections into every solar panel, every wind turbine, and every battery.

Justice is not a footnote to the transition. It is the foundation. Without justice, we are not transitioning: we are simply shifting burdens. With justice, we can build an energy future that is fair, inclusive, and sustainable for everyone, everywhere.