



**Republic of the Marshall Islands**

**Submission on the COP 30 Presidency Roadmap on the Transition Away from Fossil  
Fuels in a Just, Orderly and Equitable Manner**

**10 April 2026**

## Introduction

As a low-lying atoll nation, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) is on the frontlines of the climate crisis. We continue to face urgent threats from rising sea levels, increasingly extreme tidal events and droughts, intense rainfall, coastal flooding, heat waves, and ocean acidification and heating.

Additionally, as a fossil fuel energy importer with little market influence and no physical capacity to create stockpiles, we are highly vulnerable to supply shocks and disruptions. These risks impact not only our social and cultural traditions, but key sectors such as fisheries and shipping, agriculture, public health, physical infrastructure, and tourism, undermining livelihoods and impacting our long-term development.

The need for urgent action to transition away from fossil fuels is reinforced by recent scientific findings on the pace and severity of climate change. According to the World Meteorological Organization<sup>1</sup>, the last three years have been the hottest on record, with an additional warming spike in 2024 that indicated at least a temporary surpassing of 1.5°C. The 1.5°C threshold is a scientific, ethical, and moral boundary that the energy transition must be designed around.

The Roadmap must be grounded in the best available science, as provided by the IPCC, and aimed at delivering our shared commitments under paragraphs 27 and 28 of the decision text for the first Global Stocktake for the Paris Agreement.

In particular, paragraph 28 committed Parties to transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in line with 1.5°C pathways. Delivering on this commitment is crucial for achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, and for delivering universal access to secure energy.

Keeping 1.5°C within reach will require rapid reduction in the use of fossil fuels. This will require policymaking interventions that rapidly reduce demand for fossil fuels (while expanding energy access and eliminating energy poverty), as well as policymaking interventions that rapidly reduce the supply of fossil fuels. These efforts must be closely aligned: focusing only on reducing demand for fossil fuels will lead to price declines and the “rebound effect”, widely noted in the academic literature, including IEA’s Net Zero by 2050 Report<sup>2</sup>. Seeking only to reduce the supply of fossil fuels risks unduly increasing their cost, with negative consequences particularly for those countries most dependent on imported

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<sup>1</sup> <https://wmo.int/news/media-centre/wmo-confirms-2025-was-one-of-warmest-years-record>

<sup>2</sup> “Anticipating and mitigating feedbacks from the supply side is a central element of the discussion about orderly energy transitions. A drop in prices usually results in some rebound in demand, and policies and regulations would be essential to avoid this leading to any increase in the unabated use of fossil fuels, which would undermine wider emissions reduction efforts.” International Energy Agency, “Net Zero by 2050: A Roadmap for the Global Energy Sector” 2021, p 52.

fossil fuels, such as SIDS. A primary contribution of the Roadmap will therefore be establishing the conditions to ensure that both the supply of, and demand for, fossil fuels, falls rapidly in line with a 1.5°C trajectory, in an orderly manner that keeps prices for consumers stable and predictable.

Setting a clear 1.5°C-aligned trajectory away from fossil fuels is also necessary to maintain the effectiveness of adapting to the impacts of climate change. SIDS, especially low-lying atolls like the RMI, face hard limits to adaptation, beyond which no feasible response can prevent the loss of territory and livelihoods. Every tonne of carbon dioxide emitted through the continued burning of fossil fuels accelerates RMI's trajectory towards those limits.

The Roadmap needs to deliver a global framework with shared benchmarks, for an orderly, just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels in line with the 1.5°C limit. It should act as a pacemaker for coordinated country-driven action. It should also guide country-driven processes for national roadmaps that help countries manage the transition, reshape their economies as fossil-fuel revenues decline, and move together toward a credible renewable-energy future. The Roadmap can set principles, track progress, identify support needs and enabling conditions, share best practice, and tackle systemic barriers.

By compiling the steps that Parties are already taking, and clearly communicating the economic and social benefits and challenges of developing alternatives to fossil fuel infrastructure in energy systems, and in transport and industrial sectors, a practical roadmap would also help build understanding that a just, orderly and equitable transition away from fossil fuels represents a better deal for governments, industry and society, underpinning flexible, affordable, accessible energy and mobility services, resilient competitive industries and supply chains, and broad-based benefits for workers and communities.

In summary, we want to see a Roadmap that:

- covers fossil fuel supply and demand and spans all economic sectors;
- draws on best available data and pathways to guide Parties to 1.5°C-aligned just, orderly and equitable transition, including by comparing the benefits of such a transition to those of an unjust, disorderly, inequitable transition led by market dominance and competitive geopolitics;
- profiles the plans, policies and regulatory measures Parties are already implementing including those set out in NDCs, long-term strategies and domestic energy plans;
- identifies further potential supply side and demand side measures for adoption tailored to different circumstances;
- links to platforms for available finance and technology;
- clearly communicates expected global milestones for the transition away from coal, oil and gas;

- provides guidance to Parties on constructing their own national and regional roadmaps, translating these roadmaps into updated domestic energy plans, NDCs and long-term strategies and on accessing support for these undertakings;
- suggests a way forward for a programme of regional, sectoral and consumer-producer dialogues to facilitate knowledge sharing between inter-dependent economies on future plans, and shared efforts and analysis on the transition away from fossil fuels;
- offers guidance on the indicators and metrics that can guide and accelerate implementation of Paragraph 28 of the GST;
- recognizes that the fossil fuel transition and effective climate adaptation are inseparable objectives; and
- extends well beyond the life of the current COP Presidency.

A suggested skeleton for the contents of the Roadmap is included in Annex A.

### **Consultation Questions**

*What are the most critical barriers — whether physical, economic, financial, institutional, technological or social— preventing a transition away from fossil fuels?*

The greatest barrier preventing a transition away from fossil fuels is political will. The long-term economic, financial, technological, social and above all environmental benefits are clear and we expect that many respondents to this call for submissions will evidence those in great detail so we won't dwell on them further.

That political will is undermined by several factors, including an unawareness of the true costs of continuing on with a fossil-based economy, in part due to deliberate disinformation campaigns and vested interests trying to protect the profits from their current polluting activities including through exercising political influence.

The extent and power of this disinformation is apparent even amongst the current severe supply disruptions with arguments still being made to double down on fossil fuels rather than investing in home-generated renewable power which has the ability to get countries like the Marshall Islands off the fossil fuel price rollercoaster.

Greater political will to act on reforming international financial architecture could also deal with the unequal distribution of capital in part caused by uneven costs of borrowing for renewable investment across the globe.

The Roadmap also needs to be cautious in considering the alternatives to fossil fuels, and what the transition might entail. The transition to clean energy potentially introduces new dependencies that will have to be managed carefully, such as the issue of critical minerals for clean energy technologies. The Roadmap should encourage diversification of clean energy supply chains and investment in recycling and circular economy approaches in a

collaborative rather than competitive manner to ensure that the transition does not simply replicate the geopolitical vulnerabilities of the fossil fuel era in a different form.

The Roadmap should also consider how to deal with approaches such as nuclear energy, switching from coal to gas, and carbon capture and storage (CCS). Critically, emissions must be halved this decade, a window within which nuclear and CCS cannot meaningfully contribute regardless of the scale of investment committed to it today. The Roadmap should note this clearly to ensure that nuclear and CCS's longer-term potential in larger economies does not delay or divert resources from near-term deployment of solar, wind, and storage, where solutions are already proven, cost-effective, and available; and that CCS and marginal emission reductions from switching from coal to gas, are not used to justify locking in fossils for the long-term.

Another key structural barrier is the deliberate maintenance of fossil fuel dependence as an instrument of geopolitical power. The ongoing conflict in the Middle East has severely disrupted shipping through the Strait of Hormuz, triggering what the IEA has described as the largest supply disruption in the history of the global oil market, pushing IEA crude oil prices above \$100 per barrel and driving even sharper increases in diesel, jet fuel and LPG. For RMI, this is not an abstract geopolitical event: it is a direct threat to the cost and availability of fuel that powers communities in our atolls. This crisis is a predictable consequence of structural dependence on fossil fuels concentrated in geopolitically volatile regions. As a result, the Marshall Islands has had to declare a state of emergency to deal with the rising costs of not just fossil fuel imports but all goods shipped or produced using fossil fuels.

RMI faces several barriers that are common to other SIDS:

- Land scarcity: the extremely limited land area in RMI constrains the deployment of renewable energy. Competing demands for land from agriculture, housing, and cultural uses mean that solar installations must be designed to integrate into existing land uses rather than occupy dedicated sites.
- High cost of energy storage: maintaining grid stability on small, isolated atolls and islands requires battery energy storage systems. At the scale of RMI's grid, these storage systems represent a disproportionately high per-unit cost relative to larger national markets where the economics of storage are more favorable.
- Supply chain fragility: the procurement, transport, installation, and maintenance of renewable energy equipment across all atolls introduces logistical costs and delays that do not apply in continental or larger island contexts. Spare parts supply chains are long and vulnerable to disruption.
- Limited domestic market size: the small scale of RMI's energy market prevents the realization of economies of scale that drive down renewable energy costs elsewhere. Financing instruments designed for large national utilities or major infrastructure projects are not suited to the micro-scale project finance requirements of atoll and small island grids.

Several further barriers common to SIDS' efforts to transition the workforce to embrace renewable energy were noted in AOSIS' submission to the Mitigation Work Programme in 2023<sup>3</sup>:

- Geographical constraints: fossil fuel and clean energy resources do not usually share the same location, making it harder for workers and their families to move across the country and leave their communities behind.
- Skill mismatch: Most conventional renewable jobs have lower wages than the fossil fuel industry, increasing the need to reallocate workers beyond the energy sector. Creating high-quality jobs in the service sector will benefit vulnerable countries that do not have extractive industries.
- Absence of training programs in the institutional and societal level: In most developing countries including SIDS, there is a limited number of qualified workers in the clean energy sector, yielding to an overreliance on external consultants and volunteers with high turnover and no capacity retention. Increased qualified capacity to deploy, operate and maintain clean energy technologies will accelerate renewable energy deployment and implementation processes.
- Insufficient workforce data in developing countries: Data constraints on job markets in developing countries are important limitations in the execution of socio-economic assessments and feasibility studies for new project pipelines.

The existing burdens of fossil fuel dependence and the benefits of the transition away from fossil fuels are currently not gender neutral. Women, particularly in rural, remote, and energy-poor communities, often bear disproportionate costs from fossil fuel dependence and lack of inclusion in energy policy-making. At the same time, the economic opportunities created by the clean energy transition have not been equally accessible as women remain underrepresented in energy jobs. The roadmap should promote a gender-responsive approach and address social inequalities to the transition away from fossil fuels.

Finally, international investment law, and in particular the possibility of investor-state dispute settlement proceedings, has long been identified as a key legal barrier to the transition. As clarified by the recent Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on the Obligations of States in Respect of Climate Change, however, there are strong legal grounds for states to successfully reject this threat in circumstances where they are taking legislative or administrative steps designed to reduce the production of fossil fuels.<sup>4</sup>

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<https://submissions.unfccc.int/api/files/download?serverRelativeFilePath=/submissions/Archive/202305261550---AOSIS%20MWP%20Submission%20-%20Final.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Hailes, Fossil fuel abolition in international law and arbitration, *Journal of Environmental Law*, 2026; <https://doi.org/10.1093/jel/eqaf039>

*What potential levers, whether economic, financial, institutional, social or technological, exist for accelerating the implementation of the transitioning away Commitment?*

Governments setting out clear commitments at the global, regional and national level should be the first step in leveraging accelerated action to implement the energy transition. Those commitments should be based on the scientific and economic evidence set out by the international expert agencies like the IPCC and IEA. They can be informed through producer- consumer dialogues exposing the risks of stranded assets; intergovernmental initiatives; sectoral demand commitments; and peer-to-peer learning.

Several relevant organizations and initiatives already exist for stabilizing the price of fossil fuels, which is a global public good. A notable recent example was the response of many major oil producers to the abrupt collapse in demand for oil triggered by the outbreak of the COVID 19 pandemic. At the 10th Extraordinary OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting on 12 April 2020, participating countries in the Declaration of Cooperation agreed to adjust downwards their overall crude oil production by 9.7 mb/d from 1 May 2020<sup>5</sup>. This coordinated multilateral decision to reduce oil production ensured that supply remained in balance with demand, stabilizing the market for the benefit of all. Equivalent coordinated efforts must expand from emergency and short term stabilization to medium and long term planning for the managed decline of fossil fuel industries.

The Marshall Islands is a member of several intergovernmental energy initiatives related to the transition away from fossil fuels including the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance; the Clean Energy Transition Partnership; the Coalition on phasing out Fossil Fuel Incentives including Subsidies; the Global Methane Pledge; and the Powering Past Coal Alliance. The implementing measures and enabling mechanisms developed by such alliances can serve as a good foundation for the practical examples the Roadmap can set out.

In addition to those alliances and the International Energy Agency, there are many other international and intergovernmental organizations with important roles to play in establishing the international conditions needed to ensure the just, orderly and equitable transition, such as the International Renewable Energy Agency, Sustainable Energy for All, the International Energy Forum, the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development, the International Methane Emissions Observatory, and the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries and its associated Charter of Cooperation.

The upcoming conference in Santa Marta will hopefully provide political and practical inspiration for the Roadmap and we encourage all those invited to engage closely in its delivery.

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<sup>5</sup> “The 10th (Extraordinary) OPEC and non-OPEC Ministerial Meeting concludes,” OPEC Press Release. [https://www.opec.org/pr-detail/310-12-apr-2020.html#:~:text=Ministerial%20Meeting%20concludes-,The%2010th%20\(Extraordinary\)%20OPEC%20and%20non%2DOPEC%20Ministerial%20Meeting,Energy%20of%20the%20Russian%20Federation.](https://www.opec.org/pr-detail/310-12-apr-2020.html#:~:text=Ministerial%20Meeting%20concludes-,The%2010th%20(Extraordinary)%20OPEC%20and%20non%2DOPEC%20Ministerial%20Meeting,Energy%20of%20the%20Russian%20Federation.)

While coalitions of the willing can lead progress, these efforts should be backstopped through multi-lateral commitments. We call on future COP Presidencies to join with Brazil and take the Roadmap process on to COP31 and beyond. As part of the COP31 partnership we expect Pre-COP to highlight progress on the transition away from fossil fuels, including under this Roadmap process. The plans, policies and regulatory measures identified in the Roadmap should also be taken up through the Global Implementation Accelerator and the Belem Mission to 1.5.

The removal, reduction and repurposing of fossil fuel subsidies will be a vital component in freeing up capital and revenue to support clean energy technologies and to end unfair competitive advantages enjoyed by the fossil fuel industry, and to end the current massive taxpayer burden.

Faster reform of the international financial architecture (IFA) is also vital for accelerating the transition away from fossil fuels. The decision on the New Collective Quantified Goal made at COP29, amongst others, made clear recommendations on IFA reform. The bottleneck is implementation. Without multilateral development banks, climate funds, and bilateral providers moving faster and more ambitiously to translate those recommendations into practice, the transition will remain out of reach for many of the countries that need it most, regardless of the strength of their political commitments or the clarity of their national roadmaps.

We need to learn the lessons of the current supply crisis, and avoid solutions predicated on doing more of the same and hoping for different outcomes. A transition driven by severe and unpredictable fluctuations in the availability and price of fossil fuels is in no country's interest, but it is the transition we will inevitably face without an effectively designed and consistently implemented Roadmap. The Roadmap should respond to President Lula's framing of the problem being as much a security dependency issue as an environmental, social and economic issue, and consider in depth the energy security dimension. A world less dependent on fossil fuels is one in which international leverage is diminished and the sources of many contemporary conflicts are reduced.

Technology plays a crucial role in delivering the transition away from fossil fuels. Accelerating the transition to stay in line with 1.5°C will require deploying a range of available and emerging clean energy technologies complemented with capacity building for their long-term use, with solutions that match national circumstances and needs. Transitioning industries away from using fossil fuels, such as the maritime and aviation sectors, will require clear alternatives and incentives for those alternatives.

The Roadmap process should provide examples and guidance and inspire offers of other forms of practical support to countries for producing their own regional and national roadmaps. Science-driven, high-level milestones for the transition away from different fuel-types could be an important guide to countries in developing these roadmaps.

*What country, regional or sector roadmap experiences, best practices, and lessons learned can be shared?*

Pacific Islands have set out a commitment for a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific powered by 100% renewables. A Pacific Roadmap can help plan for that outcome and we hope that this can act as an exemplar for other regions.

As the Marshall Islands we can share our experience in developing our Low Carbon Transport programme as part of that Roadmap. Our efforts to tackle sea transport emissions have placed the RMI at the cutting edge of low carbon shipping, while fostering a resurgence of traditional boatmaking skills.

RMI has established its own research center, the Micronesian Center for Sustainable Transport. As part of the Pacific Blue Shipping Partnership, RMI already has a national vision to reduce domestic shipping emissions by 40% below 2010 levels by 2030 and full decarbonization of the sector by 2050.

Consequently, the country is actively working on zero and low-emission technologies for low carbon sea transport. For example, with the bilateral pilot project Low Carbon Sea transport, RMI has partnered with the German International Cooperation which has provided a prototype low emission vessel, designed by the University of Applied Sciences Emden-Leer in joint partnership with MCST. The Juren Ae is a hybrid vessel designed to reduce carbon emissions in providing services for RMI's inter-island transport needs. It was launched in 2024 and combines wind-assisted propulsion, fuel-efficient engines, and solar power, making it a pioneering innovative solution tailored to the needs of RMI and SIDS.

NGO Waan Aelōñ in Majel (WAM)-Canoes is also spearheading an initiative to decarbonise transport inside atoll lagoons. This initiative focuses on developing sustainable, traditional vessels like the WAM Catamaran and WAM Proa prototypes. These designs incorporate Indigenous eco-friendly materials and skills alongside modern technologies, promoting both cultural preservation and environmental sustainability, while WAM is training Marshallese youth in boatbuilding skills to take back to their home atolls so this initiative can expand across the Marshall Islands.

*How can a just, orderly and equitable transition best reflect the diverse realities of countries at different stages of development and with different degrees of dependence on fossil fuels?*

A just, orderly and equitable approach to the transition requires a tailored approach to the particular circumstances of each country, supporting those that most need assistance and relying on urgent action from those best able to afford it. Richer and well-diversified economies need to be amongst the first and fastest to transition, but others may benefit from being early movers too, whether because they face the greatest risk of unaffordable stranded assets, or of undertaking the wrong development model, or the size of their production means

that we cannot reasonably expect to collectively meet the 1.5°C limit without their full, fast, and fair contribution. Many, including the Marshall Islands, could immediately reap the economic benefits of a transition to home-produced renewable energy if support for the upfront costs were in place. While technological solutions exist, circumstances differ. We need SIDS-specific solutions and support for countries like the Marshall Islands, with small markets; little spare land; and a highly dispersed population.

While it is clear that there are far more fossil fuel resources available globally than can be safely produced, the question of which reserves and resources should be left undeveloped is a complex one that must be approached with due regard to the best available science and the principles of justice, equity, and economic rationality.

Countries that benefit from producing fossil fuels do so at the expense of all, and in particular the most climate vulnerable and future generations. While unilateral production reductions have been shown to meaningfully reduce global emissions, such actions also disproportionately benefit those producers unwilling to shoulder an equivalent share of the burden.<sup>6</sup> Accordingly, discussions on the development of equitable global burden-sharing principles should form a part of Roadmap discussions. While all fossil fuels create climate harms and the transition must be global, the relative emission intensities of production have an important place in this conversation. The elimination of venting, flaring and fugitive emissions of non-CO<sub>2</sub> gases is an urgent priority.

While poorer countries should be supported through the transition, we must avoid directing limited resources toward major producers who have already derived fossil-fuel revenues available to invest into diversifying their economies.

A genuinely just transition must empower countries that face the greatest risk from delayed action. For the RMI and other SIDS, justice in the transition is not simply a matter of receiving support to decarbonize domestic economies, it is a matter of whether the global transition occurs in time to preserve the physical conditions under which our nations can continue to thrive. The hard limits to adaptation concept operationalizes what the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C target represents for countries like RMI: a threshold below which adaptation remains feasible, and above which it does not. A 'just transition' framework that fails to keep 1.5°C within reach is not just, regardless of how equitably the burdens of transitioning are shared among those with burdens to share. The Roadmap must incorporate this temporal dimension of justice, and address the coherence between the pace of the global fossil fuel transition and the ability to adapt to climate change.

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<sup>6</sup> Prest et al., "Estimating the Emissions Reductions from Supply-side Fossil Fuel Interventions" Resources for the Future, Working Paper 23-12, April 2023, Updated March 2024.  
[https://media.rff.org/documents/Prest\\_Fell\\_Gordon\\_Conway\\_2024\\_Updated\\_-\\_Combined.pdf](https://media.rff.org/documents/Prest_Fell_Gordon_Conway_2024_Updated_-_Combined.pdf)

## **Annex A –**

### **Elements for the Roadmap:**

#### *Case for a Roadmap*

- Energy, economic, and social systems are interconnected and cross borders.
- Without cooperation and coordinated planning, countries risk energy insecurity, economic shocks, stranded assets, and social disruption.
- Only coordinated action can uphold CBDR-RC, ensure adequate support for those who need it, and prevent deepening inequities in the transition.
- The energy transition generates substantial co-benefits across multiple domains, including universal energy access in line with SDG 7, the reduction of energy poverty, enhancement of decent work opportunities in line with SDG8, improvements in public health, the enhancement of gender equality, and the conservation of biodiversity.

#### *Goal setting*

- Analysis of 1.5 compliant pathways at global and regional level
  - Regional pathways
  - Sectoral pathways
  - Fuel-specific pathways
  - Consideration of the role of CCS, hydrogen etc.
- Aspirational phase-out goals building on:
  - the analysis above
  - current govt membership initiatives e.g. BOGA, PPCA, CETP
  - current national transition plans
- Strengthened methane reduction targets

#### *Transition Benefits*

- Economic
  - Stabilised prices
- Energy Access
- Health
- Peace and security
  - Domestic supply chains
  - Diversified sources
  - Reduced political influence
- Biodiversity Protection
- Improvement toward Gender Equality

#### *Supply Side*

- Current financial dependencies
- Economic diversification opportunities including examples and workforce transition links
- Decommissioning inefficient infrastructure
- Moratoria on new exploration, development including examples

### *Reducing demand*

- Energy
- Land transport
- Sea transport
- Air transport
- Agriculture
- Industrial sectors

### *Just Transition planning*

#### *Fossil Financing*

- Decommissioning costs, including environmental remediation and monitoring plans
- Current explicit and implicit fossil fuel subsidies
- Removal, repurposing of subsidies including examples, particularly from COFFIS
- End to public financing including examples

#### *Enabling Transition*

- Extent of new energy financing needs
- Financial support
- Technology transfer
- Example regulation
- International energy investment agreements
- International cooperation

#### *Implementation Process*

- Global dialogues
- Regional dialogues
- Sectoral dialogues
- Economic diversification dialogues
- Progress monitoring
- National Roadmap Processes:
  - Start from the economic reality, not the headline target: Frame the national roadmap as a managed economic transition
  - Use global benchmarks and pathways to guide domestic pathways allowing multiple credible routes consistent with 1.5°C
  - Make it dialogue-led and problem-first, using evidence and modelling to surface trade-offs, risks and fair-share implications before setting targets or support packages
  - Monitor and report on delivery including on e.g. production, emissions, demand-side activities, methane leakage, and decommissioned sites over time

#### *Monitoring and Reporting*

- Tracking and reporting on delivery of roadmap aims, objectives and commitments