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To: COP30-TAFF-Roadmap@unfccc.int

On Transition away from Fossil Fuel,

COP30 TAFF Roadmap

Submission by Iceland

Iceland welcomes the opportunity to participate in the preparation of the COP 30 Presidency´s roadmap on phasing out Fossil fuel. Iceland also welcomes the initiative Columbia, and the Netherlands have taken in co-hosting the conference in Santa Marta in April, the first global conference that is specifically focused on discussion on the issue of phasing out fossil fuels. We expect that the outcome of the conference will also serve as an input to the COP 30 Presidency´s roadmap.

When it comes to the task of phasing out fossil fuel, we need just, practical and country-specific phase out plans.

We would like to stress that it has to be recognized how the best available science indicates growing risks, with each increment of temperature rise above today's, of crossing major tipping points for glacier loss, permanent sea-level rise from ice sheet melt, widespread ocean acidification especially of polar oceans, coral reef dieback, slowdown of key polar-driven ocean currents, loss of the Amazon Rainforest and growing feedbacks from permafrost thaw and sea ice loss.

Newly developed pathways stress the urgency of limiting overshoot of 1.5 C by:

- Deep and immediate emissions reductions through phaseout of fossil fuels to reach net-zero emissions by mid-century;
- Maximum sustainable carbon dioxide removal to bring CO2 levels down as rapidly as possible.

This would cause temperatures to be close to today's levels by 2100, and reach 1°C by 2150, halting or slowing continued global damage from cryosphere loss.

Failure will result in multi-generational losses and damages, e.g. from cryosphere loss, including lives and property, biodiversity, and agricultural productivity.

In the current global context, it has become increasingly clear how dependent many countries remain on fossil fuels – and how important it is to accelerate the transition to renewable energy, with energy security as a central priority. The science is clear: The question is no longer whether to transition, but how to do so effectively.

It must be acknowledged that this transition will not happen overnight. However, a clear roadmap with defined milestones is essential to accelerate progress and guide the phase-out of fossil fuels.

Certain key principles must guide this effort: fairness; energy security and investment in renewable energy that replaces fossil fuels, not merely adds capacity to meet growing demand.

While meaningful progress has been made, including the rapid expansion of renewable energy, we are still far from the finish line.

New scientific findings show an increased likelihood of a collapse of the Atlantic Ocean current – the AMOC – beyond this century if global emissions are not drastically reduced. This tipping point could be reached within just a few decades.

For Iceland, an island in the North Atlantic, such a collapse could potentially be catastrophic. It would bring profound disruption to our infrastructure, economy, ecosystems and living conditions. It is important to ensure that this potential existential threat receive the attention it deserves. In this regard, Iceland wants to stress three key messages.

First, the urgency to act cannot be overstated. While other crises dominate the headlines, the climate crisis is unrelenting. It demands constant attention and concrete actions. We must accelerate emission cuts, prioritize multi-beneficial climate action and integrate climate risk into national security and foreign policy.

Second, we must take greater responsibility for future generations. The Icelandic government is committed to a long-term, intergenerational approach to policy – not just short election-cycle thinking. We must invest in innovative research and development, like carbon capture and storage, and superhot geothermal – while also implementing tangible climate action which emphasizes the responsibility of business and industries to do their part.

Third, we must protect the world's natural carbon sinks, our oceans, wetlands and forests. We need to recognize that the climate and biodiversity crises are inseparable and the solutions align.

Protecting our rich and diverse ocean ecosystems is not a constraint, it is the backbone of resilience along with wetlands and forests as well.

Improved understanding of ocean circulation dynamics is essential for assessing future climate risks, including impacts on regional weather patterns, marine ecosystems, sea level, and cryosphere–ocean interactions.

Phasing out fossil fuel and cutting emissions from burning fossil fuels is the most critical thing the global community must deal with, and this has to be dealt with globally, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, by multilateral and international cooperation. Therefore, we welcome the work lead by COP 30 Presidency, on the roadmap on phasing out fossil fuel.

Two examples of successful fossil fuel phase out from Iceland:

Phasing out fossil fuels in house heating:

For decades, renewable energy has powered Iceland's society and economy. Iceland offers a strong example of a successful transition from fossil fuels for house heating to domestic renewable geothermal energy. The transition took place through effective incentives and long-term planning and today, over 90% of buildings in Iceland are heated by domestic geothermal sources.

This transformation did not happen overnight. It required significant financial investment and political commitment. The goal, however, was clear: to harness domestic energy resources and eliminate reliance on imported—and costly—coal and oil.

Municipalities played a key role by investing heavily in district heating systems. At the same time, the government established an Energy Fund that provided subordinated loans to support exploration and drilling for geothermal resources. Importantly, if exploration efforts were unsuccessful, municipalities were not required to repay the loans. This system meant reduced risk and encouraged innovation.

Electrification of the transport sector

While electricity production and house heating in Iceland are driven by renewable energy, hydro and geothermal, the challenge is to achieve energy transition in the transport sector.

Iceland has in the past decade progressed towards electrification of the transportation sector, especially passenger vehicles and public transportation. Through the national climate action plan several actions support the goal of increasing the share of electric vehicles, strengthening infrastructure for electric transportation and incentives for trucks and busses.

Iceland is at the forefront of this development and is in a good position to become one of the first countries to completely stop the use of fossil fuels, thus setting an example for the rest of the world in tackling climate issues. Registrations of private vehicles in 2026 are 90% EV, hybrid and plug-in hybrids.

There is need for clear policy and incentives to make the transition possible.

- Making electric car ownership more common, with the right incentives.
- Strengthening EV charging infrastructure especially in rural areas and tourist destinations, making the use of electric vehicles easier across the country.
- Strengthening EV infrastructure to accommodate larger vehicles such as trucks and busses.
- Regulatory framework and various systems need to be adapted to the changing conditions.