



## 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council General Debate - Item 3, 21 September 2022

The Center for International Environmental Law (CIEL) welcomes the OHCHR's report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level<sup>1</sup> and the Secretary-General's report on national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights,<sup>2</sup> which underscore the centrality of National Human Rights Institutions (NHRIs) for integrating human rights in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Whether in countries most vulnerable to climate impacts or in countries with the capacity and the responsibility to provide technical and financial assistance, NHRIs have a key role to play in the context of climate change. The landmark inquiry of the Philippines Commission on Human Rights recognized the duty of all governments to cooperate to protect people from climate-related harm.

NHRIs are notably suited to help States better understand and address climate-induced loss and damage. Climate-related events are already leading to economic and non-economic loss and damage, affecting a wide range of human rights, with a disproportionate impact on those who are already in vulnerable situations because of existing inequalities. Thus, addressing loss and damage is key to the effective implementation of numerous SDGs, beyond SDG13 on climate action, including SDG1, SDG2, SDG3, SDG5, SDG6, and SDG10.

The OHCHR's report includes relevant suggestions for enhancing coordination between NHRIs and national statistical offices. This approach is crucial to understanding the necessary pathways towards remedy and redress in the context of loss and damage, and developing appropriate related mechanisms.

As stated by the report, NHRIs can support States in applying a human rights lens to financial mechanisms at the national and international level. This is particularly relevant in the context of climate change as States must ensure that appropriate, rights-based financial mechanisms are set up to help the most vulnerable groups and communities address the losses and damages suffered because of climate impacts both within their national boundaries and extraterritorially through international cooperation. The need for financial support to ensure access to effective remedies for those most affected by climate change was recognized by GANHRI in their 2020 statement on climate change.<sup>3</sup> More recently, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change<sup>4</sup> called for the establishment of an international loss and damage fund.

As recommended by the Secretary-General's report, NHRIs should continue to engage with international and regional human rights mechanisms and should continue to advocate for their independent participation in relevant United Nations mechanisms and processes. We urge NHRIs to actively support the domestic implementation of all aspects of the UN Climate Agreements to ensure that domestic climate policies are implemented in a manner coherent with States' existing human rights obligations.

Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> *Best practices, challenges and lessons learned concerning integrated approaches to the promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level - Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights* (UN Doc A/HRC/51/9).

<sup>2</sup> *National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights - Report of the Secretary-General* (UN Doc A/HRC/51/51)

<sup>3</sup> *GANHRI Statement adopted at the GANHRI ANNUAL CONFERENCE on Climate Change: The role of National Human Rights Institutions held on 4 December 2020*

<sup>4</sup> *Report of the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change - Promotion and protection of human rights in the context of climate change mitigation, loss and damage and participation* (UN Doc A/77/226)