

# **The IPCC must make clear: a liveable future requires a rapid and equitable phase-out of fossil fuels, not reliance on speculative technologies.**

We — frontline communities, Indigenous Peoples, civil society organizations, and climate justice movements — welcome the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) over the last months and years of the 6th Assessment Cycle (AR6) in collating the available literature on climate change. As governments come together to conclude AR6, we are calling on the IPCC and governments to ensure that the upcoming Synthesis Report (SYR) and Summary for Policymakers (SPM) provide a clear, sufficient and honest account of the real drivers of the climate crisis. These documents must prioritize pathways that focus on near-term climate action, real solutions and system change.

The IPCC's own findings make it clear that a rapid and equitable phase-out of all fossil fuels is necessary to avoid overshoot and minimize irreversible harm to people and ecosystems. Given the inequitable and catastrophic impact that exceeding a global temperature rise of 1.5°C will have on human rights and equity, planning for overshoot on the premise that it can be reversed by geoengineering techno-fixes is indefensible. The scientific findings collated by the IPCC in underlying reports must not be compromised by political pressure to weaken language on well-known risks and instead highlight real solutions.

The AR6 Synthesis Report must be a wake-up call to decision-makers around the world and provide clear guidance for these critical years of ambitious climate action and climate justice.

**For the AR6 Approval Session coming up in Interlaken, Switzerland, 13-17 March 2023, the undersigned urge that the AR6 SYR Summary for Policymakers:**

- 1. Clearly foregrounds the central role and scale of fossil fuel production and use in driving the climate crisis and the need for a rapid and equitable phase-out of all fossil fuels (oil, gas and coal).** The SPM must highlight the necessity and feasibility of rapidly reducing (via emission cuts, not emission removals) CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions across global industries and supply chains to avoid overshooting 1.5°C and unleashing further irreversible harm. The IPCC must resist political pressure that would lead to misrepresenting, ignoring or downplaying core findings from its own reports regarding the central role of fossil fuels.
- 2. Provides an accurate account of the risks, implications, and dangers of relying on large-scale Carbon Dioxide Removal (CDR) and Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technologies, in line with findings in the IPCC's own reports.** The IPCC must not suggest speculative technologies or offsets that provide excuses to not pursue deep emissions reductions achieved through transformative changes to systems and societies. These speculative technologies not only assume a continued use of fossil fuels, they are also expensive, ineffective and trade-off rights and ecosystem protection while delaying a fossil fuel phase-out and a just transition to 100% renewable energy. The IPCC must protect the integrity of the scientific findings from political manipulation to not mislead policymakers. The IPCC should emphasize the core findings from its AR6 reports that outline the danger that speculative technologies pose to human safety, biodiversity and rights.
- 3. Centres equity, social justice and rights-based approaches and prioritizes realistic scenarios and pathways that do not depend on speculative technologies.** There are real

and proven solutions that centre justice, equity and rights-based approaches and could avoid catastrophic climate chaos. They include: immediately slashing emissions through rapid and equitable phase-out of fossil fuel production and use; halting deforestation and industrial agriculture; changes to industrial and global supply chains; fairly transitioning to renewable energy; equitable climate finance to underpin solutions in the Global South and in marginalised communities; drastically reducing the excessive overconsumption of the Global North and elites in the Global South; rectifying the accumulation of carbon inequality; challenging the (extractive and unsustainable) dogma and drivers of economic growth and corporate profits; respecting and fulfilling the rights, sovereignty and jurisprudence of Indigenous Peoples' lands and territories while respecting and upholding their traditional knowledge; and supporting peasants' rights.

4. **Transparently and responsibly communicates any limitations and assumptions in the Integrated Assessment Models and pathways.** Many of the modelling frameworks relied upon in the IPCC AR6 Working Group III Report assume an increase of global inequalities and incorporate the drivers of the crises: endless economic growth, continued fossil fuel production and extractivism whilst excusing the responsibility of historical emitters and discounting the possibility of social, political and economic change. The assumptions in these models go against the IPCC's own findings, which acknowledge economic growth as a driver of climate change as well as inequity and vulnerability caused by historical and ongoing patterns of colonialism. Policymakers' reliance on these models for decision-making about real-world policy choices risks cementing business as usual and increasing inequalities.

Worryingly, the pathways relied upon in the IPCC reports are dominated by speculative technologies with unrealistic technical assumptions as opposed to pathways that achieve emission reductions via systemic change. The models and academic literature underpinning the pathways currently used have severe gaps and limitations that do not reflect our complex world. They exclude and discount, amongst other things, Traditional Indigenous Knowledge (TIK), community knowledge, present-day evidence of the feasibility of renewable energy roll-out, and societal tipping points in the transformation. They also disregard international precautionary regulations that caution against testing and deployment of geoengineering, including a de-facto moratorium on all geoengineering agreed by the Convention on Biological Diversity (X/33, 2010).

5. **Emphasizes the dangers and risks of Solar Radiation Modification (SRM).** The Synthesis Report and Summary for Policy Makers must reinforce clear warnings of the IPCC's Working Group II SPM on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability as well as the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C on the novel and possibly catastrophic risks that the deployment of Solar Radiation Modification (SRM) would pose for people and ecosystems, as well as for international cooperation, global security and peace.

**The stakes could not be any higher and the imperative for immediate action any greater. The IPCC AR6 reports show clearly: Thriving life, communities and ecosystems depend on fundamental system changes, not on incremental steps or disruptive techno-fixes. The Synthesis Report's SPM must uplift these critical findings — not bury them.**