SUBMISSION BY COLOMBIA ON BEHALF OF THE AILAC GROUP OF COUNTRIES – CHILE, COLOMBIA, COSTA RICA, HONDURAS, GUATEMALA, PANAMA AND PERU

August 1st, 2025

Subject: Views on opportunities, best practices, actionable solutions, challenges and barriers relevant to the topic of the fourth dialogue under the Just Transition Work Programme - Just energy transition pathways and other sectoral approaches to just transitions, based on nationally defined development priorities

1. Introduction

In recent decades, just transition has demonstrated its mobilizing potential, evolving from a trade union objective to a global framework that embraces climate change and social justice concerns. The establishment of the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) within the UNFCCC [1], under the objective of discussing pathways to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement [2], supports this recognition of just transition as crucial in strengthening the response to the threat of climate change in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

While the energy dimension is currently attracting much attention, primarily due to its mitigation benefits, discussing the element b) of the JTWP should recognize as a premise that the energy transition must be accompanied by a multidimensional and multisectoral approach, which are principles of a just transition. Then, during the coming dialogue Parties must be able to discuss all dimensions of element b (*i.e.* energy, socioeconomic, workforce and others) with equal importance to allow the expressing of diverse views, promote learning from other experiences and give countries the opportunity to improve their just transition processes on the sectors it deems appropriate, under their own priorities and capabilities. This also provides an opportunity to obtain specific considerations that can be discussed and adopted by the Parties in the upcoming negotiations in Belém.

In this regard, the following sections provide AILAC's views on opportunities, best practices, actionable solutions, challenges and barriers related to all dimensions and concepts included in the element b of paragraph 2 of decision 3/CMA.5, as well as the topic for the fourth dialogue communicated by the Secretariat. Considering its cross-cutting nature, the socioeconomic dimension and international cooperation are included throughout all the sections.

2. Just energy transition pathways and other sectoral approaches to just transitions, based on nationally defined development priorities

Under just transitions contexts, countries may experience structural rearrangements and transformations at all levels of development, across all industry sectors, and in urban and rural areas alike [3]. Then, the understanding of just transition policies and impacts must be extended to other sectors beyond fossil fuels [4], in order to promote a comprehensive approach of just transitions that considers the specific needs and priorities of all countries, particularly the developing ones. Then, facing the impacts of climate change, beyond energy systems decarbonisation, also requires a rapid transition in other high emitting and vulnerable industries.

2.1. Energy dimension

Energy systems have been under transitions due to, among other, industrial development, urbanization processes and new technologies that unlock and require new energy sources and formats. Nowadays, climate change effects have led to the definition of goals related to decarbonisation and net zero, thus driving a new energy transition. Considering the harms and benefits of this transition, governments and civil society are increasingly aware that the decarbonisation of energy systems must be aligned with justice principles of recognition, distribution, restoration and process, and that these principles shall inform the design and implementation of energy policies and projects.

Related to these principles, transition processes and measures should recognize the interests and concerns of all stakeholders, especially from the local actors that are directly impacted by the transition. Some researchers [5] have noticed that, while institutional actors focus on the energy security and economic growth associated with renewable energy and other energetic projects, local actors are more concerned about the respect of human rights and the opportunities for employment, education, and inclusiveness. Therefore, the feasibility and fairness of the current energy transition, which significantly relies on transitioning away of fossil fuels and scaling up renewables sources, will depend on both local and global social, economic, environmental and technical factors, as well as its implications in terms of energy poverty and justice in developing countries, especially from the global South.

In this sense, as energy systems restructure, it is crucial to consider the existing inequities within the global energy system, as well as explicitly recognize and address the people and environments that are part of those systems and are vulnerable to the transition-related risks and challenges. For instance, countries with high dependence on fossil fuels (coal, oil and/or gas) will experience important changes in the energy generation, distribution, storage and usage [6], but also a complex set of interconnected social, political and economic rearrangements that could generate socioeconomic impacts, reinforcing existing vulnerabilities or even creating new sources of vulnerability.

To reduce the socioeconomic risks of transition to low-carbon development models, countries need policies and resources for targeted and proactive measures that minimize any negative social, environmental or economic impacts, while maximizing benefits for those

disproportionately affected [7] or whose livelihoods depend on fossil fuel industries, ensuring that all people and countries leverage the opportunities offered by building future societies in line with the Paris Agreement goals [8]. These measures could include actionable solutions such as retirement bridging, investments in infrastructure and public research institutes, the creation of new government jobs, reskilling and upskilling, protection of consumers from rising electricity prices and financial grants for implementing local projects [4], which could foster the participation of local actors and communities in planning and decision-making, thus promoting the decentralization of energy systems.

Moreover, just energy transition should look more comprehensively at the natural environment and human-environment interactions and the impacts that energy projects can have in terms of resource access and ecosystem impacts. In this vein, in Latin America and other regions there is a growing interest in the notion of "socioecological transition", which implies a deeper and more comprehensive approach at the interrelations between the social and ecological systems during the transformations of the different sectors, aiming to reduce or avoid impacts in the well-being of communities and ecosystems. This kind of approach could enlighten new ways for including and interlinking social, environmental and economic aspects in decision-making, and for ensuring that systems transitions, including energy and other sectors, are not only more sustainable, but also more just and inclusive.

Guiding questions

a) What are the main risks and opportunities of transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, especially for directly involved communities?
b) What examples are available of (sub) national policies, plans or strategies for just energy transitions that considered inclusive and participatory approaches in its design and implementation?
c) What international support or partnerships are currently available for just energy transition processes and how can that support be enhanced and expanded?

2.2. Mining

The demand of "transition minerals", which includes elements such as copper, lithium, nickel, cobalt and rare earth, is significantly increasing worldwide, mainly due to the rapid expansion of clean energy technologies and other electronic devices. Under conservative scenarios, the demand will double to 2030 with continued growth thereafter, and could even triple under net zero scenarios [9].

However, as the UN Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals stated, without proper management, this increasing demand could lead to "perpetuating commodity dependence, exacerbating geopolitical tensions and environmental and social challenges" [10], including impacts on landscapes, biodiversity, greenhouse gases emission, livelihoods and human rights [11]. These impacts could undermine the efforts towards a just transition and are especially concerning in our countries, some of which have been historically dependent on

mineral resources and that nowadays plays a crucial role in the supply chains of products such as copper and lithium.

In line with the recommendations of the Panel, during COP16 a declaration about responsible mining practices was released, which recognizes that, despite the crucial resources that critical minerals provide to the energy transition, these activities could generate local impacts such as habitat fragmentation, deforestation, water pollution and land use changes, which have consequent effects in climate change and affects the right of indigenous people and local communities to a healthy environment.

Therefore, a just transition approach could offer unique opportunities towards fairness and equity in the mining industry. This approach could foster sustainability, biodiversity protection, gender equality, and the respect for human rights, labor rights, and the rights and ancestral knowledge of Indigenous Peoples along the entire minerals value chain, contributing to the development of local economies, good practices and fair market within the framework of mineral-dependent sectors transitions.

Guiding questions

a) What examples are available of (sub) national policies, plans or strategies that foster just transition and sustainability of the mining sector, including ecosystem restoration and conservation?
b) What responsible mining practices have been implemented and that are aligned with just transition principles, including social dialogue, respect for human rights and gender equality?

2.3. Transport

In respect of transportation, the decarbonisation of this sector represents one of the major opportunities for transitions to create fairer societies, due to its eventual impacts on sustainable mobility, connectivity and territorial planning. However, the slow progress on reducing carbon emissions from transport have positioned it as one of the highest emitting sectors in many societies, with road vehicles representing almost three-quarters of global CO2 emissions from transport [12].

Due to this, electrification of road transport has been one of the focus of the energy transition, but policies should encourage shifts to reduce the carbon intensity of all transport modes. In this sense, the cornerstones of transition in the transport sector may include avoiding traffic as much as possible, shifting unavoidable traffic to sustainable modes of transport, and the improvement of fuel and vehicle technologies [13].

More broadly, the current transport systems exhibit large inequalities between people and places, especially in terms of access and sufficiency, which may be expressed in diverse spatial and temporal patterns. Transitions in the transport sector involve many environmental,

economic and social aspects, and then offers multiple opportunities to advance equity and social justice. However, related research shows that economic concerns still dominate over social justice in transport issues and that excluding the public in decision-making may exacerbate existing inequalities and create new ones, especially considering that the most vulnerable communities are those who contribute least to climate emissions from transport.

Taking into account that transport emissions are concentrated in urban environments, it is also important to consider the interdependence of elements in transportation systems and urban mobility, which may include the relationship between transport modes, housing markets, gender aspects, social practices, among others. Urban planning must prioritize making transportation accessible to all residents, with special attention to the most disconnected neighborhoods and people with reduced mobility. It must also increase the supply and use of multimodal transportation in cities to ensure an integrated infrastructure with greater interconnectivity between different modes of public transportation.

Therefore, the transition of transport systems should aim to not only reduce emissions, but also to enable adequate socioeconomic development, provide equitable access to opportunities and improve life quality. This kind of combination of low-carbon ambition and attention to contextually differentiated effects is precisely what lies at the core of a just transition, and the transport sector with its deep imbrication in public life and territorial planning can be taken as a good example.

Guiding questions

a) How can transition policies for the transport sector be designed and implemented to ensure that shifts to low-emission transport modes promote equitable access, especially in developing countries?

2.4. Agriculture

Other relevant sector involved in the just transition agenda, especially in global south countries, is agriculture, which is one of the most important drivers of environmental pressures and directly influences natural resources and ecosystem services. For instance, agriculture, including animal agriculture, is responsible for about one-third of total anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions [14], for 72% of global freshwater withdrawals, and unsustainable practices are worsening soil degradation, deforestation and biodiversity loss [15].

Climate change is increasingly impacting the agricultural sector, with agrifood systems being among the most vulnerable sectors to these impacts [16]. This situation affects food production and security, undermining the achievement of the Article 2b of the Paris Agreement and the related SDGs. To address these challenges, there is an urgent need to accelerate the transition to sustainable agriculture practices globally [17] and take measures to promote adaptation and climate resilience in agriculture and other land uses, in line with the long-term global climate objectives.

In order to address the mentioned environmental and social pressures, the agricultural transition towards more sustainable systems shall include, among others, the design and management of farming systems according to ecological principles (also known as agroecology); the optimal use of soil and nutrients, including organic fertilizer and enhanced manure management; and supporting synergies within agricultural systems.

As decision 3/CP.27 noted, "implementing sustainable approaches can render multiple benefits for society, such as improved water quality, higher biodiversity and increased soil organic matter", which may lead to "climate-resilient, sustainable food production systems and can contribute to global food security". Further, the same decision recognized that "socioeconomic and food security dimensions are critical when dealing with climate change in agriculture and food systems", so any transition process in this sector shall integrate these considerations to take full advantage of its benefits and outcomes.

Guiding questions

a) How can transition policies for the agriculture sector be designed and implemented to ensure the inclusion of just transition principles and the promotion of sustainable approaches and food security, especially in developing countries?

2.5. Social protection to mitigate potential impacts associated with the transition

Although transitioning to an economy aligned with environmental and climate objectives is essential, an equally fundamental consideration is the social component of the transitions. Under these contexts, social protection acts as a pivotal mechanism to overcoming both short-term and long-term challenges caused by the structural transformation processes towards low-carbon and climate-resilient economies and societies. Currently, more than half of the world's population lacks access to any form of social protection [18], thus directly affecting the capacity of adaptation and resilience to climate change impacts, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

Due to its crosscutting nature, social protection systems could support these structural transformations and serve as a catalyst for inclusive sustainable development and eradication of poverty, thereby ensuring that societies share the challenges and opportunities of transitions more equally. By strengthening people's capacities and supporting them in navigating transitions, social protection will contribute to inclusive growth and social justice [19], reduce vulnerabilities and enhance resilience to climate change, support livelihood adaptation, and limit the adverse effects of both mitigation and adaptation climate policies [20]. Universal access to other elements of social protection floors, such as child benefits, maternity benefits and access to essential healthcare are also vital for further amplifying the benefits of social protection on economic and social development.

Among the opportunities related to social protection, we highlight the UN Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions, and the Global Coalition for Social Justice, which provide collaborative spaces where partners aim to reduce inequalities and poverty, strengthen just transitions and the social dimension of sustainable development, trade and investment, and reinforce social dialogue institutions.

Guiding questions

a) What are practical examples and actionable solutions to support developing countries in building social protection systems that contribute to reducing vulnerabilities, enhance resilience to climate change, support livelihood adaptation, and limit the adverse effects of transition processes?

3. Closing remarks

3.1. Inclusive and holistic approaches for just transitions

Acknowledging the multisectorial and multidimensional nature of just transitions, the previous sections noted the need for a whole-of-economy approach to design and implement just transition pathways, with special focus on those sectors that implies significant socioeconomic risks and benefits. Beyond that, we also want to emphasize the importance of effectively involving all stakeholders and groups involved in transition processes, especially the most vulnerable, which encourage Parties to implement people-centric, bottom-up and whole-of-society approaches for their just transition processes.

Despite the fact that energy dimension is crucial to achieve the mitigation long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, we advocate for a more holistic approach for just transitions that address social and cultural dimensions, which implies incorporating the knowledge and traditional practices of Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendents and other local communities in the design and implementation of climate policies. This should be considered under a broader human rights perspective that respects the diverse cultures and identities within the context of justice and sustainability. In this regard, we recognize as an opportunity to discuss the recent advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice [21] and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights [22], in order to explore the opportunities and eventual influences of those opinions in the implementation of climate and just transition policies.

3.2. Modalities and outcomes of the dialogues

In line with the previous section, the fourth dialogue, as well as the forthcoming, shall consider the diverse realities and contexts of just transition processes, something feasible with the involvement of the directly involved actors in the transition process of developing countries. Then, dialogues the selection of experts and organizations for the dialogues must be transparent and include representatives from the global South.

Finally, as stated in the document FCCC/SB/2024/L.5, we recall the encouragement to the Chairs to prepare and publish an informal summary of the discussions of each dialogue, including on opportunities, best practices, actionable solutions, challenges and barriers, ensuring that those discussions are reflected in a comprehensive and balanced manner. Moreover, as we proposed during SB62 session, we further recall the Chairs to apply a more analytical approach while preparing the dialogues reports, in order to provide clear messages about the views shared during dialogues, thus effectively supporting the discussions of the contact groups, promoting an action-oriented outcome, and contributing to other work streams under the Convention and the Paris Agreement.

References

[1] UNFCCC. (6th – 20th November 2022). Decision 1/CMA.4. Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan. Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement on its fourth session, Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. https://unfccc.int/documents/626569

[2] UNFCCC (30-13 December 2023). Decision 3/CMA.5. United Arab Emirates Just Transition Work Programme. Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement on its fifth session, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. https://unfccc.int/documents/637073

[3] ILO and UNEP. (2023). Just Transition Finance: Pathways for Banking and Insurance. Geneva. https://www.unepfi.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Just-transition-finance_Pathway-for-Banking-and-Insurance.pdf

[4] KCI. (2025). Just transitions in national climate frameworks and climate policies: Experiences in alignment, planning and progress tracking. Bonn: UNFCCC. https://unfccc.int/documents/645834

[5] Siciliano, G., Wallbott, L., Urban, F., Dang, A. N., & Lederer, M. (2021). Low-carbon energy, sustainable development, and justice: Towards a just energy transition for the society and the environment. Sustainable development, 29(6), 1049-1061.

[6] De Coninck, H., Revi, A., Babiker, M., Bertoldi, P., Buckeridge, M., Cartwright, A., ... & Sugiyama, T. (2018). Strengthening and implementing the global response. In Global warming of 1.5 C: Summary for policy makers (pp. 313-443). IPCC-The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

[7] Pathak, M., Slade, R., Pichs-Madruga, R., Ürge-Vorsatzm, D., Shukla, P., y Skea, J. (2022). "Technical Summary" in Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change. Cambridge University Press, 75. https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_TechnicalSummary.pdf

[8] UNDP. (No data). *Areas of work: Just Transition*. https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do/areas-of-work/just-transition

[9] IEA. (2024). Global Critical Minerals Outlook 2024. IEA, Paris https://www.iea.org/reports/global-critical-minerals-outlook-2024.

[10] UN Secretary-General's Panel on Critical Energy Transition Minerals. (2024). Resourcing the energy transition. Principles to guide critical energy transition minerals towards equity and justice.

https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/report_sg_panel_on_critical_energy_transition_minerals_11_sept_2024.pdf

[11] UNEP. (February 19, 2024). *What are energy transition minerals and how can they unlock the clean energy age?* https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/what-are-energy-transition-minerals-and-how-can-they-unlock-clean-energy-age

[12] IEA. (July 11, 2023). *Transport*. https://www.iea.org/energy-system/transport

[13] Turan, B., Hemmelmayr, V., Larsen, A. et al. Transition towards sustainable mobility: the role of transport optimization. Cent Eur J Oper Res 32, 435–456 (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10100-023-00888-8

[14] FAO (November 14, 2024). *Greenhouse gas emissions from agrifood systems. Global, regional and country trends, 2000–2022.* https://www.fao.org/statistics/highlights-archive/highlights-detail/greenhouse-gas-emissions-from-agrifood-systems.-global--regional-and-country-trends--2000-2022/en

[15] FAO & OECD. (2023). Environmental Sustainability in Agriculture 2023. https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/32da2942-3854-4736-af19-877b3ab22d35/content

[16] FAO. (2024). Submission by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in relation to the Sharm el-Sheikh online portal under the mandate of decision FCCC/SB/2024/L.2, paragraph 4. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/FAO_20241231.pdf

[17] World Economic Forum. (April 25, 2023). *7 ways to accelerate the transition to sustainable agriculture.* https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/04/7-ways-to-accelerate-the-transition-to-sustainable-agriculture/

[18] ILO. (2023). A global employment divide: low-income countries will be left further behind without action on jobs and social protection. ILO Monitor on the world of work. Eleventh edition. https://www.ilo.org/sites/default/files/wcmsp5/groups/public/%40dgreports/%40dcomm/%40publ/documents/briefingnote/wcms_883341.pdf

[19] UNEN. (No data). Thematic Brief. A global green new deal for a sustainable recovery and a resilient future. https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/ggnd_brief_v2.pdf

[20] ILO. (2024). Mapping Just Transition in NDCs: an overview. https://www.ilo.org/publications/mapping-just-transition-ndcs

[21] International Court of Justice. (2025). *Obligations of States in respect of Climate Change* (Advisory Opinion). https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/187/187-20250723-adv-01-00-en.pdf

[22] Inter-American Court of Human Rights. (2025). *The Climate Emergency and Human Rights* (Advisory Opinion AO-32/25). https://jurisprudencia.corteidh.or.cr/en/vid/1084981967