

Scottish Government Debate: Scotland's Commitment to International Climate Justice

27 October 2026

Executive Summary

Climate change is devastating lives, undermining development and pushing people who have contributed least to the crisis deeper into poverty. This debate provides an opportunity to reaffirm Scotland's commitment to international climate justice, demonstrate continued leadership on Loss and Damage, and support an ambitious outcome at COP31 in Antalya, Türkiye.

Asks of the Scottish Government

International Climate Justice:

- Increase Scotland's Climate Justice Fund (CJF) to the equivalent of £15m each year from 2027–2028, and ensure that it increases above inflation each year. It should have parity with the International Development Fund.
- Increase Loss and Damage funding to 50% of Climate Justice Fund.
- Work with the multilateral [Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage \(FRLD\)](#) to encourage it to move faster and distribute funds to impacted communities.
- Take a leadership role in mobilising other sub-national governments to develop a joint package of contributions to the FRLD.

Action at home:

- Set the rate of the [Private Jet Tax](#) – a flagship climate justice policy – at a meaningfully high rate (at least 10x higher than the current Air Passenger Duty higher rate) in the upcoming budget. Use the revenue to invest in reducing emissions and poverty, like home insulation through Warmer Homes Scotland.
- The Scottish Government should publicly oppose the approval of a new Rosebank oil field. The approval of Jackdaw by the UK Government is fundamentally misaligned to climate justice. Together, Jackdaw and Rosebank could cause the [deaths of at least 65,000 people](#) (equivalent to the population of Inverness), and would impact livelihoods of the most vulnerable people around the world.
- Get Scotland on track to deliver the Climate Change Plan and reduce emissions by 75% by 2035. This would reduce devastation internationally, and reduce Scotland's exposure to volatile fossil fuel markets which drive up energy bills.

Context

Climate change is not affecting everyone equally. The poorest 50% of the world's population are responsible for only around 10% of global emissions, yet they are among [those most exposed](#) to climate risks and impacts. Communities that have contributed least to the climate crisis are often those facing its most severe consequences. Recent devastating floods in Nepal and prolonged drought across East Africa demonstrate how climate change is increasing poverty, hunger and inequality.

This is why climate change is also a matter of justice. Since 1992, [the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) has recognised that Global North countries should take the lead in tackling climate change and supporting Global South countries to adapt and pursue sustainable development. [The Paris Agreement](#) reinforced this principle, including a commitment to limit global warming to 1.5°C. Alongside this, Global North countries [agreed to mobilise \\$100 billion a year](#) in climate finance to support lower-income countries in reducing emissions and adapting to climate impacts.

Scotland has played a distinctive role in advancing climate justice through leadership on loss and damage finance and through the [Climate Justice Fund](#).

What can Scotland do now?

There are two main ways that developed countries can correct this climate injustice:

1. **Reduce emissions at home.** While Scotland's share of global emissions is relatively small, the collective impact of small nations reducing their emissions remains essential if global climate goals are to be achieved.^{1,2}
2. **Provide International Climate Finance** to support the most vulnerable countries and communities to adapt to the impacts of climate change, build resilience and repair damage after climate disasters. A just and peaceful world requires investment in tackling and adapting to climate change, at home and abroad. This is not only morally right; it is also in our nation's self-interest, and it is required under international legal agreements such as the Paris Agreement.

¹ The UK is responsible for about 1% of global emissions. Combined with 26 other countries whose emissions are also 1%, [this totals more emissions than the US and India](#) – which have a population of nearly 2 billion, combined.

² Over 70% of countries have a net zero target; if they are all achieved, [this will eliminate 77% of the world's emissions](#).



The rest of this briefing focuses on strand 2: Climate Finance. Scotland can make a distinctive contribution through the Climate Justice Fund, Loss and Damage funding and support for the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD).

Climate Justice Fund

The Scottish Government established Scotland's [Climate Justice Fund](#) in 2012. Scotland was the first nation to commit funds specifically to climate justice. During the last Parliamentary term it disbursed £36m to projects that support our partner countries to become more resilient to climate impacts.

A review of the fund is currently underway. The next round of Climate Justice funding should continue to fund community access programmes via Scotland-based non-governmental organisations, such as SCIAF and Oxfam Scotland.

We are calling on the Scottish Government to:

- Match the funding to the International Development Fund, starting at £15m/year.
- Prioritise funding for Scotland-based NGOs, not foreign-based for-profit entities.

Loss & Damage

For decades, climate-vulnerable countries and civil society organisations have called for recognition of Loss and Damage as a third pillar of international climate action, alongside mitigation and adaptation. Loss and damage is the loss of life, livelihoods, homes, infrastructure and sites of cultural and personal significance, like burial sites.

Scotland was the first country in the world to pledge money to address Loss and Damage at COP26 in Glasgow, and the Scottish Government continues to champion action. Crucially, this pledge helped build political momentum on Loss and Damage internationally, and was a major contribution to the global agreement to establish the FRLD at COP27 Egypt.

While Scotland has demonstrated global leadership, the £10m spent so far on loss and damage is modest, and Scotland will need to continue to innovate to maintain its position of leadership.

We are asking the Scottish Government to:

- Allocate half of its Climate Justice Fund to projects that address Loss & Damage
- Work multilaterally to increase contributions to the international Fund for Responding to Loss & Damage (see below).

Fund for Responding to Loss & Damage (FRLD)

The Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) is a multilateral climate fund established through UN climate processes. Climate loss and damage drives increased conflict and poverty around the world, fuelling more investment in arms. To combat this, countries must step up and invest in securing a peaceful world where we can all survive and thrive.

The scale, predictability and accessibility of funding through FRLD is critical. Failure is not an option, as it would cause a huge rupture between the Global North and South. So far, no money has been dispersed but the first projects are expected to be approved in December 2026. Current pledges (around \$800m) are only an estimated 1% of the funding needed, and the fund is [at risk of running out](#) without more contributions.

We are therefore calling on the Scottish Government to:

- Reaffirm the importance of the FRLD, and encourage and support the Fund to move at a quicker pace to disperse funds directly to communities.
- Work towards making a contribution to the FRLD, potentially by working with other sub-nation states to start building a package of contributions.

Further Information

- COP31 starts on 9th November. Climate finance will be a key focus for COP, from civil society. For example, see [Climate Action Network UK's urgent call for grant-based climate finance from developed countries](#).
- For further details on FRLD see the newly published SCIAF/CARITAS paper: [Too Big to Fail: Finance for Loss and Damage in a Rupturing World](#)
- For case studies, see the briefing from Scotland's International Development Alliance which will be circulated for this debate, or the [SIDA manifesto](#). Also: [Examples of L&D projects](#) / [Report on Scottish Government-funded L&D projects](#).

[Stop Climate Chaos Scotland](#) is a coalition of over 70 civil society organisations working to secure fast, fair and funded policies to tackle climate change and its impacts, in Scotland and around the world. Our International Climate Justice group includes Oxfam Scotland, Christian Aid Scotland, SCIAF, Quakers in Scotland, Scottish Fair Trade Forum, and we work closely with SIDA, Scotland's International Development Alliance.

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