

Civil Society Reflections on the Final Report of the First TAFF Conference: Implementing and building on the outcomes of Santa Marta

2 July 2026

Dear Minister van Veldhoven,
Dear Delegation Leads,
Dear Members of Parliament,

At the beginning of the same week that an extreme heatwave broke records and killed more than [1300 people](#) across the Netherlands and Europe, the Netherlands and Colombia presented [the final report](#) of the First Transition Away from Fossil Fuels (TAFF) conference on 23 June 2026 at the London Climate Action Week. The First TAFF conference, held in April 2026, convened 57 countries and over 1000 stakeholders to discuss the end of the fossil fuel era, showing the growing international momentum for a just fossil fuel phase-out. This commitment and political leadership is urgently needed to break the deadlock in UN climate negotiations, tackle fossil fuel dependence and fight the climate crisis.

It is no surprise but still encouraging that many of the barriers and solutions we previously shared with you have been included in the final report. As Co-host and part of the coordination group of the TAFF process, the Netherlands remains uniquely positioned to shape the ways of working of the 3 workstreams that have been established as the implementation arm of the TAFF process, and to keep the momentum and exercise leadership at international and national level. Together with a coalition of civil society organisations, we present to you our reflections on the final report and the way forward.

The 10-point “Santa Marta Vision”

We welcome the “Santa Marta Vision” that signals a shared commitment to the TAFF process and goal.

- It rightly emphasises that a just transition away from fossil fuels can only succeed if it is based on human rights. It should be structured around justice, redistribution and democratic control, and not reproduce inequalities within or between countries, nor create new forms of extractivism or dependence. Therefore, we call on you to embed a human rights-based approach to every pathway of the next TAFF conference.
- It also rightly emphasizes that a just transition should be rooted in international cooperation. In fact, this should be more than a political aspiration: states have a primary legal obligation to prevent significant harm to the environment and a legal duty to cooperate. In the context of the climate system, the International Court of Justice has been clear that fossil fuel production, consumption, licences and subsidies may constitute an internationally wrongful act. Addressing existing governance gaps that result from a lack of cooperation is essential to overcome the obstacles that have kept the fossil fuel system in place for so long. This includes opening the space for new legally binding international instruments that accelerate action and enhance coordination and accountability for both states and corporations, for example through supporting a Fossil Fuel Treaty.
- It rightly indicates that for many countries addressing debt burdens, high costs of capital, limited fiscal space, technological barriers and investment frameworks are essential and that Multilateral Development Banks (MDB) support, expanded non-debt-creating finance, technology transfer and capacity building are ways to do so.
- It rightly recognizes that transitioning away from fossil fuels requires whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches, which requires the active involvement of ministries that control economic policy. We encourage you to translate this into action and ensure that at the next conference also Ministers of Finance will attend. Importantly, the whole-of-society

approach doesn't mean we should wait with action until everybody is on board. The Dutch government should encourage frontrunners and a frontrunners mentality - and thereby set an example itself.

- While it rightly points to the fact that fossil fuel subsidies and misaligned financial incentives keep fossil fuels artificially competitive, we feel the solutions presented could have been much stronger. Publication of national inventories and research on how to reform are milestones but no solution, as is visible in the stalled progress in addressing fossil fuel subsidies of recent years. A successful fossil fuel phase-out depends on political strategy, social protection, transparency, and international coordination and in particular coordinated subsidy reform.

Pathway 1: The Santa Marta process and its participatory methodology.

The multi-stakeholder participatory methodology of the conference allowed a diverse group of stakeholders to shape the agenda and outcomes of Santa Marta. It is hopeful to see that the methodology of Santa Marta is suggested as a standard for the subsequent TAFF conferences. However, while transparency and conflict of interest around stakeholder engagement were on the agenda, a true inclusive and fossil free conference needs more. Declaring the TAFF conference a "fossil free conference" is simply contradictory when allowing for instance ING, one of Europe's biggest fossil fuel financiers, a seat at the table. As part of the coordination group of the TAFF process, the Netherlands should work to ensure to:

- Grant no access to private actors, including banks and insurers, that have vested interest to keep the fossil fuel industry alive or have no credible climate transition plan in place that includes phasing out (the financing of) fossil fuels.
- Be transparent in the parameters applied in order to determine whether a contributor and their submission aligns with the overarching goal of the TAFF conference. Inputs should be aligned with climate science, adopt a human rights-based approach, aim at absolute emission reduction, avoid pursuing false solutions such as carbon capture and storage (CCS), geoengineering, and carbon offset schemes, and promote a real decline in fossil fuel consumption, production and investment while being grounded in principles of justice and equity.
- Outline a clear process beforehand for how and when contributions will be considered and included in all phases of the conference.

Pathway 2: Complementarity with existing processes and exploring new initiatives.

The report rightly emphasises the need for the TAFF process to complement the UNFCCC processes and other (voluntary) existing initiatives that contribute to the phase-out of fossil fuels. At the same time, there is no comprehensive global instrument regulating the fossil fuel phase-out and operationalising differentiated responsibilities. The urgency of the climate crisis calls indeed for an action-oriented approach, which should be one where the biggest polluters (state and non-state actors like multinational corporations) can be effectively held to account through new complementary binding initiatives. It should be prevented that TAFF conferences become just another voluntary initiative where actors merely share best practices or a process that risks being swallowed by the UNFCCC process. As a Co-host of the First TAFF conference and part of the coordination group of the TAFF process, the Netherlands should:

- Exercise leadership to expand the TAFF coalition and work together with the Brazilian initiative for a global roadmap to secure complementarity at UN level in the run up to COP31.
- Deliver on the commitment of the Dutch Parliament to bring the conference outcomes to the EU (Environment and Energy Council) and continue to advocate for strong support and EU-wide implementation of Santa Marta outcomes.

- Support the development of an international legally binding framework to close governance gaps and to enable a coordinated fossil fuel phase-out, such as the Fossil Fuel Treaty.
- Acknowledge that a fossil fuel phase-out requires additional policy, which includes emission reductions as one of the advantages. A just fossil fuel phase-out addresses the main driver of the climate crisis, economic dependence and injustices, and creates a credible pathway to limiting global warming to well below 1.5°C.

Pathway 3: Develop or strengthen national and regional roadmaps to transition away from fossil fuels as a coherent domestic strategy to phase out domestic fossil fuel production and use.

As both a significant producer of fossil gas and consumer of fossil fuels, the Netherlands must adopt and implement ambitious policies that phase out the production and consumption of fossil fuels, centred on justice and equity and the remaining global carbon budget for limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Policies to phase out fossil fuels and scaling up renewable alternatives can be implemented at the same time, as both processes will reinforce each other in the light of the climate urgency. We are awaiting the announced roadmap of the Netherlands as part of the updated National Energy System Plan (Nationaal Plan Energiesysteem, NPE) before COP31, which should at least include:

- No new exploration and production licenses and subsidies for new oil, gas and coal projects.
- Adopt time-bound end dates: 2030 for coal, 2035 for gas and 2040 for oil covering both extraction and use across the entire economy.
- Ensure a just transition for workers and communities with retraining and economic support, with a specific focus on women, children, youth and marginalised groups. Ensure employment guarantees for young people within a clean energy value chain.
- Adopt and implement binding and enforceable national regulation that clarifies corporations' existing obligations by requiring the adoption and implementation of 1.5°C-aligned climate transition plans, as well as responsible and rights-based business conduct towards workers and communities affected by projects' divestment and closure.
- Avoid false solutions like CCS, carbon offsets or vague "net zero" promises, and focus on absolute emissions cuts by phasing out fossil fuel supply at the source.
- Stop incentivising fossil fuel use through a ban on fossil advertising and marketing, for example for air travel holidays and cruises, which drive unnecessary demand.

Pathway 4: Overcoming fossil fuel-related macroeconomic dependencies, scaling up transition investment, and addressing barriers in the international and domestic financial architecture.

The report rightfully points out the distortions that the fossil fuel economy creates in global capital flow infrastructure, and the challenges within the fiscal space of both producing and importing countries. Among others, these include tax arrangements that enable major polluters to minimize taxable income in host countries, while also benefitting from extraordinary profit gains; the high cost of borrowing and restrictions in technology transfers that would enable an accelerated shift towards clean energy sources.

However, it must be acknowledged that injustices in the global financial and economic architecture harm Global South countries disproportionately more than advanced economies. Given that many elements of the unjust global financial and economic architecture were set up to protect the interests of colonial powers over natural resources throughout the decolonization period, Global North countries, including the Netherlands, hold reparative responsibility towards the Global South. Moreover, recognizing the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC), Global North countries such as the Netherlands hold a particular responsibility to address injustices.

- Actively promote debt cancellation initiatives for the benefit of developing countries, so that

their public resources are not burdened with repayment obligations.

- Improve the Dutch fossil fuel subsidies phase-out plan to cover a fast phase-out of *all* subsidies and include flanking policy measures to protect people, especially low-income communities.
- Redirect public resources toward renewables and energy efficiency, just transition programs, social safety nets and international climate finance.
- Support global governance frameworks on taxation aimed to effectively tackle tax havens and outlaw tax avoidance schemes used by multinational corporations, while also effectively taxing extraordinary profits made by major polluters.

Pathway 5: Aligning producers and consumers towards decarbonised trade balances and supporting green economic transformation.

The report rightly highlights that a phase-out of fossil fuel production and consumption requires a broad transformation of economic and energy systems and trade relationships, and mentions investor-state dispute settlement (ISDS) as a structural barrier. ISDS mechanisms allow corporations to bring substantial compensation claims against public resources and against governments' progressive climate action, exposing a deep structural misalignment between the financial, economic and legal systems needed to deliver a fossil fuel phase-out. This is not a hypothetical risk for the Netherlands: Shell and ExxonMobil are currently pursuing investment arbitration claims against the Dutch State over measures linked to the Groningen gas field, illustrating the fiscal and regulatory exposure that ISDS coverage creates even for a Global North country. As one of the world's principal ISDS treaty hubs, the Netherlands carries particular responsibility to reduce this exposure. It should, at a minimum:

- Support the creation of a coalition of states committed to exiting ISDS, including a moratorium on ISDS provisions in future treaties and contracts, and work towards a multilateral instrument for the termination of existing treaties and the neutralisation of sunset clauses.
- Critically assess its network of around 70 active investment treaties containing ISDS provisions, and take concrete steps to terminate these treaties or amend them to eliminate ISDS.

We call on you to carry the momentum and commitment of the TAFF process forward, and implement the necessary steps at the national and international level that the climate urgency, human rights and equity considerations demand. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss our reflections in more detail and engage in a continued dialogue with you about the outcomes and continued TAFF process, and its implementation in the Netherlands and beyond.

