
[Open letter to the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change](#)

In view of the upcoming meeting in Cancún of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, WRM is circulating an open letter addressed to the government delegations attending the meeting. It is aimed not only at denouncing the criminal inaction of governments, but also – and more importantly – at encouraging people to exert greater pressure on governments to force them to adopt the necessary measures to prevent the imminent climate disaster. The letter says:

Conference of the Parties
Framework Convention on Climate Change
Distinguished government representatives:

As you well know, climate change is happening and its consequences are already being suffered by millions of people around the world – especially the most vulnerable- and there is every indication that the problem is growing worse. The causes of global warming are perfectly well known, as are the measures needed to stop it from becoming more acute and eventually affecting humankind as a whole. Nevertheless, you know as well as we know that the governments you represent continue refusing to do what they have an obligation to do in order to seriously confront the problem.

It is worth recalling that in 1992, all of the world's governments pledged their commitment, through an international agreement, to adopt measures to prevent a climate disaster. This is what gave rise to the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which almost all of the world's governments have signed and ratified. Since then, 18 years have passed in which governments have done little or nothing to confront the problem. In other words, for almost two decades, they have been violating the spirit of the Convention, which was aimed at preventing climate change from taking place. Given the potential consequences for the survival of humankind, such a violation could be classified as a crime against humanity.

Of course, we are fully aware that governments do not act alone, and that operating under their jurisdictions there are large companies – state-owned and private – that profit from the exploitation and sale of fossil fuels, which we all know to be the main cause of climate change. We are also aware of the power that these companies wield over many of the governments you represent. However, this does not absolve your governments of their responsibility – assumed by signing this Convention – to protect this common good of all humankind, the global climate.

For the sixteenth time, you will be participating in a meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. The last several meetings have not moved beyond negotiating over secondary issues – with very little success – and have failed to tackle the crux of the problem: the need for the total elimination of fossil fuel emissions in the shortest time possible. There is every indication that the next meeting in Cancún will follow in these same footsteps.

Nevertheless, the world still has hope that governments will adopt the decisions needed to prevent a

climate disaster, and it is prepared to support them. In order for this hope to inspire this support, what is needed are clear signs of a complete change of attitude. In this regard, the main sign would be placing fossil fuels at the centre of the debate. The time has come to put aside discussion of false solutions that have been so eagerly espoused (“carbon sinks”, “avoided deforestation-REDD”, the “Clean Development Mechanism”, “carbon offsets”, etc.) to focus on the real problem: how to move beyond the fossil fuel era as quickly as possible.

As a first step towards restoring their lost credibility, your governments should begin by committing themselves in Cancún to an immediate and permanent halt on the search for new fossil fuel reserves in their territories. At the same time, they should channel their efforts towards finding mechanisms of compensation to ensure that reserves already identified but not yet exploited remain untouched. Finally, they should set concrete deadlines for the total eradication of fossil fuels.

We realize that this is an enormous challenge, but is it really too much to ask, when what is at stake is nothing less than the survival of life on earth?

World Rainforest Movement
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