



PLATAFORMA  
**CIPÓ**

# GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE:

Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis  
through Improved Global Governance



Major Findings  
and Recommendations

RECIFE, **BRAZIL**

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# 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Triple Planetary Crisis (TPC), the nexus between climate change, loss of biodiversity and nature, pollution and contamination, is perhaps the single greatest challenge of our times: a problem of planetary scope that must be tackled not only within individual countries, but can only be meaningfully addressed through international cooperation. Much like concepts such as “Anthropocene” “climate emergency” and “planetary crisis” the term TPC is an effort to capture the complex, intertwined crises faced by humanity as a result of accumulated human action over the past two centuries, and which has accelerated considerably over the past half century.

The current global governance system has proven highly ineffective in tackling the TPC. In addition to rollbacks in climate commitments by wealthy countries – including in response to the impacts of the war in Ukraine – older problems remain. Key institutions of global governance, including central elements of the United Nations (UN) system, remain highly porous to global power geopolitics; specialized silos within the system often preclude a coordinated response to cross-cutting issues like climate change; and the developing world has become fragmented in its approach to global governance reform.

Against this backdrop, from January 19-20, 2023, Plataforma CIPÓ, Global Governance Innovation Network, Stimson Center, Global Challenges Foundation, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and Heinrich Böll Foundation, convened a Global Policy Dialogue (GPD) on Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis through Improved Global Governance, in Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil.

This report summarizes the ideas and policy proposals generated at this GPD across four broad themes: Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade; Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage; Climate, Gender and Human Rights; and Biodiversity and Climate Governance. Policy recommendations raised at the GPD – attended by 53 select diplomats, researchers, and experts from the UN Secretariat, think tanks, universities,

## Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade

- Reforming the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Bretton Woods Institutions to boost their ability to regulate and enforce strict social-environmental criteria in trade and finance flows, as well as enhance the latter's capacity to provide climate financing, not only for mitigation but also for climate adaptation and loss and damage;

- Creating a global tax body to coordinate fiscal responses to promote just transition, including: suggesting and/or implementing variable taxation rates to different energy sources in accordance with their rate of greenhouse gas emissions. As efficiency is increased, tax rates could be reduced accordingly;

- Promoting change in behaviour consumption patterns to prevent excessive use of conventional energy and natural resources, as well as the exacerbation of associated environmental harms and inequalities; Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage

## Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage

- Developing a strategic plan – led by the Global South – containing a collective vision on climate adaptation and loss and damage to provide clarity on key concepts, needs and criteria, as well as serve as a basis for international cooperation initiatives based on common priorities for developing nations;

- Creating a platform of good practices – where successful climate adaptation projects would be mapped, assessed and connected to international bodies and funding agencies, such as the Green Climate Fund, which would be dedicated to allocating the necessary resources to give scalability to these initiatives. In addition to making use of existing funding mechanisms, resources for the platform could be gathered through the creation of a mechanism to allow Emissions Trading System contributions, taxes and exceptional levies on major polluters, in accordance with the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities;

- Reforming the World Trade Organization (WTO) and Bretton Woods Institutions to boost their ability to regulate and enforce strict social-environmental criteria in trade and finance flows, as well as enhance the latter's capacity to provide climate financing, not only for mitigation but also for climate adaptation and loss and damage;
- Fostering a New Global Deal to facilitate universal access to technology, capacity building and Research and Development (R&D), combined with macroeconomic and financial strategies to ensure the financial means required to develop technological solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change;

### Climate, Gender and Human Rights

- Promoting and disseminating research and data on how the triple planetary crisis affects people differently, acknowledging intersectionality – different aspects of harm and discrimination and how they amplify the negative and unequal impacts of the TPC;
- Developing communication and education strategies to make discussions on climate more accessible, including with regards to instructions on how to behave in practical circumstances, such as when flooding and other extreme events occur.
- Increasing accountability for the state's insufficient response to the TBC, including by ensuring greater participation of civil society in the design, monitoring and implementation within countries of relevant climate conventions;

### Biodiversity and Climate Governance

- Creating greater synergies between the "Rio '92 Conventions": the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). This could be advanced via greater cooperation channels between the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the UNCCD's Committee on Science and Technology (CST), among other expert and scientific bodies;

- Promoting a "Super COP" on climate, biodiversity and desertification, where some sessions and official events could be dedicated to addressing common challenges and solutions related to the UNFCCC, CBD and UNCCD agendas collectively;

- Making use of the consecutive presidencies of the G20 by developing nations (India, Brazil and South Africa) to enhance the synergies between the G20, Bretton Woods Institutions and other key global governance structures to strengthen the climate and biodiversity agenda, especially with regards to global south priorities such as greater finance for adaptation, halting and reversing biodiversity loss and loss and damage.

## 2. INTRODUCTION: THE TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS AND THE NEED FOR GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

The Triple Planetary Crisis (TPC) – the nexus between climate change, loss of biodiversity and nature, and pollution and contamination – is perhaps the single greatest challenge of our times: a problem of planetary scope that must be tackled not only within individual countries, but can only be meaningfully addressed through international cooperation. Much like concepts such as “Anthropocene”, “climate emergency” and “planetary crisis” the term TPC is an effort to capture the complex, interlined crises faced by humanity as a result of accumulated human action over the past two centuries, and which has accelerated considerably over the past half century. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres put it in his foreword to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)’s Making Peace with Nature report, “Humanity is waging war on nature. This is senseless and suicidal.” <sup>1</sup>

Rising temperatures fuel extreme weather events, sea-level rise, melting glaciers and other disruptive processes. Loss of biodiversity - the very basis for our own survival - undermines our food security, the availability of many medicines, and even our ability to breathe. Pollution and contamination affect people’s health and well-being and poison food chains. These processes are not separate, but rather interlinked in complex ways. For instance, climate change can aggravate the destruction of natural habitats, and pollution can lead to increased biodiversity loss. The effects of our inability to address these problems include massive losses, increasing harms and, ultimately, existential risks to life on this planet. These include a fivefold increase in deaths due to weather-related disasters and the displacement of 21.5 million people due to climate-related disasters annually. <sup>2</sup>

Although wealthy countries also feel the impacts of climate change - as recent fires in the United States and heat waves in Europe vividly show - climate-related disasters often have a disproportionate impact upon people in the developing world. Out of more than 11,000 climate-related disasters registered from 1970 to 2019, more than 91 percent of over two million deaths over this period took place in developing countries. <sup>3</sup> And this is without taking stock of the material losses and damage, forced displacement and other human suffering caused by other climate change impacts.

These problems cannot be considered in a vacuum. They intersect and aggravate risks resulting from other challenges, many of them also transnational. The Covid-19 pandemic and the highly unjust responses to it - including the dearth of vaccines and protective equipment in much of the developing world - have led to serious setbacks in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, increasing poverty and hunger. The World Bank estimates that approximately 97 million more people worldwide are living on less than \$1.90 a day because of the pandemic, increasing the global poverty rate from 7.8 to 9.1 percent. <sup>4</sup> Socioeconomic inequality has sharpened too, even as a massive global recession sets in. <sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> UNEP (2021). Making Peace With Nature. [online] UNEP - UN Environment Programme. Available at: <https://www.unep.org/resources/making-peace-nature>.

<sup>2</sup> UN News (2021). Climate change link to displacement of most vulnerable is clear: UNHCR. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/04/1090432>.

<sup>3</sup> UN News (2021). Climate and weather related disasters surge five-fold over 50 years, but early warnings save lives - WMO report. Available at: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2021/09/1098662>.

<sup>4</sup> Sánchez-Páramo, C; Hill, R; Mahler, D. G.; Narayan, A; Yozan, N. (2021). COVID-19 leaves a legacy of rising poverty and widening inequality. [online] Available at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/covid-19-leaves-legacy-rising-poverty-and-widening-inequality#:~:text=About%2097%20million%20more%20people>.

Political extremism has also grown, especially among far-right groups that are organized transnationally and that threaten democracy and human rights, including in major democracies such as Brazil, the United States and India. Typically, this reemergent far right promotes climate denialism as one of its principal tenets, posing additional barriers to mitigating and adapting to climate change, or to protecting biodiversity and holding back desertification and land degradation. Such groups also attack the legitimacy of global governance institutions, for instance by spinning conspiracy theories about “globalism” In sum, they are diametrically opposed to solutions to the TPC.

At the same time, the deepening of geopolitical tensions, including growing tension between the United States and China, places new pressures on other countries as they vie for new alliances, whether based on economic rationale or political alignment. Global powers continue to provoke new wars. The Russian invasion of Ukraine has not only created a new humanitarian emergency in Europe, adding to many others around the globe, it has also produced new challenges for food and energy security that reach far beyond the region and have grave consequences, especially for developing countries. The conflict, too, has led to considerable backsliding in commitments to climate, biodiversity and sustainable development issues,<sup>5</sup> especially by wealthy countries as they double down on fossil fuels, renege on promises made in the past, and increase military spending. And it has made it harder for global governance institutions to address major challenges, even beyond the paralysis of the UN Security Council.

All of this takes place in a worrying context of a slowdown in the global economy: according to IMF data, from 6% in 2021 to 3.2% in 2022 and a predicted 2.7% for 2023.<sup>7</sup> This would be the worst performance of the global economy since 2001, with the exception of the global financial crises and the most acute phase of the Covid-19 pandemic. At the same time, a significant increase in global inflation is expected, from 4.7% in 2021 to 8.8% in 2022.<sup>8</sup> Even if the expected partial reduction of this rate materializes — to 6.5% in 2023 and 4.1% by 2024 — global economic conditions are expected to continue disproportionately affecting the most vulnerable populations. They will also weaken states capacity to provide essential public services - including environmental protection and climate action - and to coordinate preventive actions and responses to emerging challenges. This effect is particularly strong among developing countries, for whom the TPC is interwoven with the immense hurdles they

### 3. NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE SOUTH

Although industrialized countries also feel the effects of these juxtaposed crises, their heaviest impacts are often felt in developing states. According to the 2021 Global Climate Risk Index,<sup>9</sup> 9 out of the 10 most climate-vulnerable states are developing countries.<sup>9</sup> They also have the most to lose with respect to the destruction of nature and the loss of biodiversity: most of the megadiverse countries - of which a total of 17 - are in the Global South.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, in comparison to industrialized parts of the world whose high

<sup>5</sup> Ferreira, F (2021). Inequality in the time of covid-19. Available at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2021/06/inequality-and-covid-19-ferreira.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Nugent, C (2022). The Unexpected Climate Impact of Russia’s War in Ukraine. Available at: <https://time.com/6257491/russia-ukraine-war-climate-impact/>.

<sup>7</sup> FMI (2023) “World Economic Outlook”. Available at:

<https://www.imf.org/en/Publications/WEO#:~:text=Global%20growth%20is%20forecast%20to,of%20the%20COVID%2D19%20pandemic.>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Global Climate Risk Index (2021). Available at: <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/cr/>

<sup>10</sup> The World Conservation Monitoring Centre (WCMC) of the United Nations Environment Program has identified a total of 17 mega-diverse countries:

Australia, Brazil, China, Colombia, Ecuador, United States, Philippines, India, Indonesia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Democratic Republic of Congo. More on: WEB.pdf.[https://wdpa.s3.amazonaws.com/Protected\\_Planet\\_Reports/2445%20Global%20Protected%20Planet%202016\\_](https://wdpa.s3.amazonaws.com/Protected_Planet_Reports/2445%20Global%20Protected%20Planet%202016_)

consumption levels are also a major driver of the TPC, these are the countries with less access to resources, as well as lower capacity to design, implement, assess and scale-up public policies relating to mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development, in addition to having the greatest direct reliance on services from nature.

There is also a mismatch between decision-making and local experiences with the TPC. Even though local communities are often sources of traditional and first-hand knowledge of potential solutions to promote climate adaptation and the preservation of biodiversity locally, decision-making on policies to tackle the challenges stemming from the TPC typically takes place at higher levels of aggregation, from the national to the globe. This means that policymakers often make choices based on insufficient information and without adequately taking into account grass-root experiences and priorities. The resulting gap between demands and responses – or the lack of solutions altogether – impacts disproportionately low-income communities and highly exposed groups such as indigenous and traditional communities, women, youth, the elderly, LGBTI+ groups and migrants – among others – all of whom frequently lack adequate access to development, climate adaptation, and humanitarian resources, including for preventive approaches. This is a problem not only for national governments, but also for global governance, insofar as local actors are seldom heard in global governance debates.

More generally, global governance finds itself at a crossroads. Despite success in many areas, from social development to the environment,<sup>11</sup> there are still major gaps, redundancies and contradictions, all of which pose hurdles to addressing the world's greatest challenges. The cornerstone of the global governance system, the United Nations - is by far the most representative space in global governance, with 193 member states at present<sup>12</sup> -- it has shown limited effectiveness, in great part because of outdated structures dating back to the post-World War II period.

In addition to the aforementioned backsliding on climate, biodiversity and environmental commitments, the UN has been sharply criticized for its record in peace and security - especially in terms of resolving prolonged armed conflict - as well as in areas of human rights and humanitarian action. And, over time, the development pillar of the UN has been weakened even as demands for support and cooperation grow. As some experts and UN officials acknowledge, today's UN continues to offer 20th century solutions to 21st century problems.<sup>13</sup>

But the problem of global governance does not stop with the UN. Spaces for coordination, such as the G7 and G20, have moments of greater relevance, yet have been unable to set a new course for the global financial system, let alone global governance more broadly. Coalitions of developing countries, such as the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and MIKTA (Mexico, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Turkey and Australia), which over the years have pushed for reform of established institutions, would have to regain steam in order to effect real change.

Larger groupings of developing countries have also faced difficulties in coordinating for more effective global governance. Although facing the same broad set of challenges - from a diverse yet disadvantaged perspective - the set of states often referred to as the "Global South" finds itself largely fragmented. Developing countries are seldom able to coordinate on global issues as in previous decades. Too often, the Group of 77 (G77, a coalition of 124 developing countries founded in 1964) and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM, created in 1961) are found taking defensive positions rather than putting forth proposals for reform. This is problematic because developing countries form the vast majority of states represented at the UN -- no less than 152 out of the 198 member states. This represents almost 80% of the UN votes, as well as 83% of the world's population (up from 66% in 1950).<sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Seventieth Anniversary (2015). 70 Ways the UN Makes A Difference. Available at: <https://www.un.org/un70/en/content/70ways/index.html>

<sup>12</sup> United Nations (2023). About Us. Available at:

<https://www.un.org/en/about-us#:~:text=The%20UN&#39;s%20Membership%20has%20grown,the%20current%20193%20Member%20States.>

<sup>13</sup> Bremmer (2016). Q&A with UN Secretary-General Candidate Igor Luksic. Available at:

<https://time.com/4415370/qa-with-un-secretary-general-candidate-igor-luksic/>

It is worth underscoring that, despite frequent comments by North actors that the Global South is too heterogeneous,<sup>15</sup> these countries were able to come together in the past on several initiatives. To pick just one from each decade: in the 1950s, Asian and African countries met at the Bandung Conference (1955). In the 1960s, they successfully pushed for the creation (achieved in 1964) of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). The 1970s brought the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (1978). In the 1980s, faced with the “lost decade” of neoliberal hegemony, G77 members launched the South Commission.<sup>16</sup> In the 1990s, developing countries successfully pushed for the formalization of the principle of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). In the current decade, the November 2022 agreement on the creation of the climate loss and damage fund at the UNFCCC COP27, in Egypt, was largely a result of coordinated action by developing countries - as was the announcement, later that same year, that a funding mechanism for biodiversity will be created within the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).<sup>17</sup> In all of these instances, developing countries worked together to find “lowest common denominators” around which to build a common vision of the road to development. In addition, developing countries have resorted to a number of diplomatic strategies of “minilateralism” - from forming regional blocs to building loose coalitions among emerging powers or smaller economies, such as the BRICS or the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) -- to influence agenda-setting and implementation in international politics.

**In other words, despite its immense diversity with respect to geography, climate, politics and culture, the developing world has a proven history not only of coordinated participation in global norms-making and agenda-setting, but also of pushing for global governance in ways that truly reflect developing countries’ demands, priorities and realities - and that respects their national sovereignty. It is often not heterogeneity but divisive politics at home in light of the growing global challenges - as well as the need to prioritize basic necessities, or even survival - that impose constraints on the coordination capacity of developing countries. From the small size of their UN delegations - often, a fraction of the teams sent by rich countries to the UN - to the “tradition” of keeping certain agencies, funds and programmes under the leadership of nationals from Western global powers to insufficient resources, countries from the Global South face considerable barriers to maintaining a continuous and meaningful presence in certain decision-making spaces or hosting major conferences.**

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<sup>14</sup> UNCTAD (2022). Now 8 billion and counting: Where the world’s population has grown most and why that matters. Available at: <https://unctad.org/data-visualization/now-8-billion-and-counting-where-worlds-population-has-grown-most-and-why#:~:text=As%20the%20population%20has%20grown,should%20reach%2086%25%20by%202050.>

<sup>15</sup> Haug, S (2020). A Thirdspace approach to the ‘Global South’: insights from the margins of a popular category. *Third World Quarterly*, Volume 42, Issue 9. Available at: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01436597.2020.1712999>

<sup>16</sup> The South Commission, launched in 1987, recognized the need to strengthen South-South cooperation in international affairs. Its report *The Challenge to the South*, issued in 1990, emphasized the need for countries of the South to work together at the global level, especially through South-South cooperation.

<sup>17</sup> More information on this at: Earth Negotiations Bulletin (2022). Summary of the UN Biodiversity Conference. Available at: [https://enb.iisd.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/enb09796e\\_0.pdf](https://enb.iisd.org/sites/default/files/2022-12/enb09796e_0.pdf)



More broadly the widening gap in development between the North and South has prompted the latter to take on overwhelmingly reactive positions rather than propositional stances in global debates. Although there are still some exceptions, including in the climate and environment sphere, overall, the terms of global governance debates and reform efforts have never been as heavily dominated by states and other actors (think tanks, universities and private companies) from the North, as they are now. And as a result, not only does the functioning of the system tend to overlook Global South's priorities, so do proposals for reform put on the discussion table, which fundamentally favor the status quo.

For example, most of those drafting the UN Secretary General's Our Common Agenda,<sup>18</sup> built around the 75th anniversary of the UN, come from the Global North, as do its gatekeepers. Although the points raised include essential cross-cutting topics, the agenda doesn't dedicate enough attention to issues raised by the South, such as climate finance and loss and damage. It also introduces new concepts (such as "global commons") that have not been subjected to negotiations and are faced with resistance by Global South players. Similarly, in the scope of the negotiations of UNFCCC and CBD's decision texts, while all countries are on the table, the larger and more technically equipped delegations from developed nations tend to lead the drafting of key components of such documents.

Broadly put, such efforts often overlook many historical demands made, both substantively and with respect to reform, by developing countries, including reform of the UN Security Council. This is a crucial point that bears on all other areas of reform: without addressing the underlying geopolitical dynamics and the locked-in power distribution in the system, meaningful reform is not possible -- including in terms of addressing the TPC.

But true reform should go beyond Council expansion and changes to voting -- it also needs to bring greater attention and resources to all parts of the UN sustainable development agenda -- environment, economic and societal. In this regard, reforms to the different aspects of the environmental component, the "Rio 92 agenda," are key. In other words, more needs to be done to ensure an effective and more balanced implementation of the three conventions approved during the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio 92), namely the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

The three agreements are crucial to developing countries but have been comparatively neglected. Within the UNFCCC, there is a need to balance the mitigation agenda, which rich countries have pushed for since the regime's inception, with greater attention and resources to adaptation, loss and damage, and climate finance, under the general banner of climate justice. More broadly, the two other conventions, CBD and the UNCCD, need to be brought into the spotlight, not least because addressing them would contribute immensely to mitigating climate change. Additionally, there is a need to boost the international development agenda, as China has noted through its call for a Global Development Initiative. In addition to support for social policies, there remains a huge infrastructure gap in the South that is filled only partially by emerging economies, especially China. And the gaps are widening between the commitments made by wealthy countries on development assistance and climate finance and the resources that are actually made available -- even as the same states increase their military spending.

This gap is then reinforced by the power asymmetry in global civil society. Many northern institutions, universities and think tanks draw on considerable resources, well-maintained networks and geographic proximity to UN campuses to directly influence decision-making in global governance. Meanwhile, their Southern counterparts possess far less funding and contacts and face additional challenges to engaging with global governance, even when participatory spaces exist (and often, they do not). The disparity becomes sharply visible in the key spaces for negotiation and decision-making around the TPC, such as the climate, biodiversity and desertification COPs. In such spaces, organizations and activists from and based in the developing world often face additional financial, language and visa barriers - including those imposed within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.<sup>19</sup> This is especially true of those led by black, indigenous communities, women, LGBTQIA+ and other underrepresented communities domestically and within international forums. But these disparities are also apparent within the UN Secretariat, which all too often relies on Northern think tanks and institutes for policy inputs.

<sup>18</sup> The Our Common Agenda report looks ahead to the next 25 years and represents the Secretary-General's vision on the future of global cooperation. <https://www.un.org/en/common-agenda>  
<sup>19</sup> Nihad, N; Abdenu, A (2022). Civil Society Participation at COP26: Barriers and Contributions. Available at: [https://together1st.org/blog/civil\\_society\\_participation\\_at\\_cop26\\_barriers\\_and\\_contributions](https://together1st.org/blog/civil_society_participation_at_cop26_barriers_and_contributions)

More than ever, and in light of the mounting challenges and growing uncertainties of the present period, global governance should be a space for effective decision-making, not only in reaction to ongoing events and emerging challenges, but also in anticipation and mitigation of forthcoming risks. And the principles, parameters and dynamics of these roles should reflect the realities and priorities of the majority of states - as well as the majority of the world's populations - rather than a narrow minority of either. However, the anchors of global governance, including the UN system and the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO), remain largely “unfit for purpose” unable or unwilling to address the gaps and work across silos to face the challenges of our times, including the TPC. Even when initiatives come out of the Global South, as in the case of the Bridgetown Initiative <sup>20</sup> (an agenda for the reform of the global financial architecture to help developing nations fight climate change launched in 2022 by the government of Barbados, led by Prime Minister Mia Mottley) is now being advanced primarily by Northern states and think tanks without broad engagement of the South. <sup>21</sup> Both France and the United States have announced that they will put forth related initiatives for reform of the global financial system, but it remains unclear the extent to which these will incorporate voices, demands, priorities and realities from the developing world.

The gaps in effectiveness of the global governance system and the insufficient space occupied by the Global South in agenda-setting are interrelated: inadequate representation and participation by developing states and other actors from the South leads to decision-making that, at best, leaves the most vulnerable behind when it does not push them even further behind. Ultimately, everybody ends up losing as a result of the disparities between the Global North and the Global South.

#### 4. RECIFE GPD: A GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE HELD IN (AND LED BY) THE SOUTH

Considering this challenging scenario, how can Global South actors push for a stronger and more democratic global governance one that is able to tackle the multidimensional challenges of the TPC even as it addresses the myriad other problems faced by humanity today? This report summarizes the ideas, proposals and questions generated by the Global Policy Dialogue (GPD) on Addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis through Improved Global Governance, held in January 2023 in Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil. The event was organized by Plataforma CIPÓ in partnership with the Global Governance Innovation Network, Stimson Center, Global Challenges Foundation, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) and Heinrich Böll Foundation.

<sup>19</sup> Nihad, N; Abdenur, A (2022). Civil Society Participation at COP26: Barriers and Contributions. Available at: [https://together1st.org/blog/civil\\_society\\_participation\\_at\\_cop26\\_barriers\\_and\\_contributions](https://together1st.org/blog/civil_society_participation_at_cop26_barriers_and_contributions)

<sup>20</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados (2022). The 2022 Bridgetown Initiative. Available at: <https://www.foreign.gov.bb/the-2022-barbados-agenda/>.

<sup>21</sup> See, for instance: <https://www.e3g.org/news/the-bridgetown-initiative-a-climate-and-development-plan-for-cop27/> and <https://www.wionews.com/world/cop27-barbados-pm-calls-to-reform-imf-and-world-bank-finds-support-from-us-france-533033>

The GPD is a space designed to explore key global issues and generate innovative proposals for solutions, whether to specific problems or for reform of global governance. These workshops have fed into policy-making processes in global governance, achieving an impact on key events, deliberations and official documents. Past GPDs have been held in Washington DC (including at both the World Bank and Stimson Center), Geneva, Seoul, and Doha; virtual sessions have also been held for Africa and the Americas. The key idea behind organizing an in-person GPD in the Global South and led by a think tank in a developing country was to incorporate more leadership and voices from developing countries into debates about global governance, whether related to the established spaces such as the UN and Bretton Woods institutions, more ad-hoc arrangements like the G20 and the BRICS and the critical environmental challenges posed by the TPC.

In light of the recent political turbulence in Brazil, holding the GDP in Brazil, a decision taken by the organizing partners in mid-2022, was a bet that paid off. Presidential and congressional elections held in October 2022 resulted in the election of Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva. After four years of a government that actively denied the impacts of the climate crises and endangered the Amazon rainforest through deforestation, violating the rights of traditional communities and other forms of environmental degradation a new coalition government, led by the Workers Party, offered an opportunity not only to re-engage Brazil in global governance discussions, but also to broaden these debates to amplify Global South perspectives, especially Latin American ones. As part of his new government's foreign policy, Lula has called for new ideas for multilateral engagement, including in the climate and environmental field, underscoring the lack of implementation of key regimes, such as the Paris Agreement.<sup>22</sup>

Plataforma CIPÓ proposed that the GPD be held in the Brazilian city of Recife, a cosmopolitan city home to nearly 1.5 million people in the North-eastern state of Pernambuco.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), Recife is the 16th most vulnerable city in the world to climate change. The city (and, more broadly, the Brazilian Northeast region) has a track record of progressive policymaking and has made considerable gains towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including through some climate innovations and participatory governance. The region is also home to the Inter-State Consortium of States for Sustainable Development, known as the Northeast Consortium, comprising nine Brazilian states<sup>23</sup> that have joined forces to advance the sustainability agenda.

The event was designed to bring together leaders from governments, civil society and global governance officials and experts to debate the key challenges and potential responses to the Triple Planetary Crisis. The GPD sought, first and foremost, to offer concrete and creative proposals for effective global governance reform. Within the UN, this includes policy uptake in following-through on the goals and commitments made through the Paris Agreement, the COP-26 and COP-27 Climate Summits, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework adopted in December 2022, the preparations for the September 2024 Summit of the Future in New York, and the search for more effective spaces centered on, and led by, the Global South. The Recife GPD also sought to promote ways to improve coordination among developing countries to advance an effective reform agenda for global governance, with a focus on challenges related to the Triple Planetary Crisis. In this multi-stakeholder discussion, 53 select diplomats, researchers, and experts from the UN Secretariat, think tanks, universities, international organizations and civil society worked together to:

<sup>22</sup> See Lula's speech at COP27, in Sharm el-Sheikh (<https://lula.com.br/discurso-do-presidente-eleito-lula-na-cop27/>) and his inauguration speech (<https://noticias.uol.com.br/politica/ultimas-noticias/2023/01/01/posse-lula-integra-discurso-rampa-faixa.htm>)

<sup>23</sup> Alagoas, Bahia, Ceará, Maranhão, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Piauí, Rio Grande do Norte and Sergipe. See <http://www.consorcionordeste-ne.com.br/>

- Propose new ways to improve coordination among developing countries through ad hoc coalitions such as the G20 and BRICS, as well as the G-77 and the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) so as to ensure that reform agenda for a just, democratic and effective global order is on the table;
- Debate and recommend specific global institutional, policy, legal, normative, and operational innovations that could inform the agenda of the proposed intergovernmental processes relevant to the TPC, including the “Our Common Agenda”;
- Discuss possibilities for advancement, as well as gaps in the Secretary-General’s “Our Common Agenda” vision of a more inclusive and networked multilateralism, particularly by reflecting on the role of the Global South in addressing the Triple Planetary Crisis of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Nature Loss, and Pollution and Waste;
- Consider and enhance recommendations from the Climate Governance Commission and other global governance policy innovators, to raise the ambition of international policy discussions in the run-up to the highly anticipated November 2023 UNFCCC COP-28 gathering in the United Arab Emirates and the September 2024 Summit of the Future in New York.

## 5. UNPACKING THE TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS

The three pillars of the TPC are interrelated. As a result, all decarbonization strategies and technologies must be tested not only against climate targets, but also biodiversity ones, as well as food security, circular economy and regeneration principles.

Even as the three pillars of the TPC are interrelated, each of these topics, namely climate, biodiversity and pollution have their own causes and effects. The main driver of climate change is human action, for instance through the burning of fossil fuel for energy production, deforestation, industrial expansion, vehicular emissions and agriculture. Among its key impacts are increased flooding, droughts, sea-level rise, wildfires, heatwaves, melting polar ice and glaciers, biodiversity loss and severe weather events. Biodiversity loss refers to the decline or disappearance of biological diversity: not only animals and plants, but also entire ecosystems. Among the key causes are unsustainable agriculture practices, ranching and other land-use change, overexploitation such as through fisheries, climate change and pollution. Its main impacts are reduced productivity and functioning of ecosystems, and thus of provisioning of benefits to people such as for food, water supply and other benefits, and extinction of species and loss of genetic diversity.

A number of global frameworks and instruments are in place to tackle each of these interlinked problems. Within the UN system, the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) addresses environmental issues broadly.<sup>24</sup> Major conventions, especially those that originated in the 1992 Earth Conference in Rio de Janeiro, known as Rio 92, and their respective secretariats tackle specific dimensions of the TPC. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) tackles climate change, the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) focuses on biodiversity loss and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) addresses land degradation, especially due to drought. Dozens of other lesser-known conventions, such as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm conventions on hazardous chemicals, address different dimensions of the TPC.

<sup>24</sup> At times, inter-agency cooperation has been undertaken to address the TPC; for instance, in 2021, UNFCCC, UNEP and CBD worked together to map solutions to the TPC in collaboration with other UN agencies, and to build capacity among UN resident coordinators and country teams to help governments address different aspects of the crisis. See: United Nations Environment Management Group (2022). Mid-Term Technical Segment of the 28 th Senior Officials Meeting Meeting Report. Available at: [https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Mid-Term-Technical-Segment-Minutes\\_May-2022.pdf](https://unemg.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/Mid-Term-Technical-Segment-Minutes_May-2022.pdf)

Sustainable development frameworks are also directly relevant to the TPC. In particular, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda are essential not only due to SDG 13 (“Climate Action”), but also because the TPC is a cross-cutting issue that intersects with all other SDGs, including numbers 6 (“Clean Water and Sanitation”) 7 (“Affordable and clean energy”), 11 (“Sustainable Cities and Communities”), 14 (“Life Below Water”) and 15 (“Life on Land”). Also, the Addis Ababa Action plan, which seeks to align financing flows and politics with economic, social and environmental priorities, is vital for the implementation of responses.

Beyond the UN, there are other institutions whose mission and activities are relevant to addressing the TPC. These include, at the global level, the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), which have come under heavy criticism for failing to adequately incorporate climate and sustainability dimensions;<sup>25</sup> the World Trade Organization (WTO), where discussions of trade and sustainability remain fragmented despite a promising Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, reached in 2022; and country groupings such as the G7, G20 and BRICS, where the TPC-related issues have been incorporated unevenly and whose economies disproportionately drive the TPC. Regional organizations (whether or not they are part of the UN system), sub national governments, civil society entities and private sector actors are also relevant stakeholders. The degree to which all of these actors respond to the TPC varies widely across both space and time, and many gaps, distortions, contradictions and duplications remain to be corrected.

Broadly put, despite major improvements in the architecture to combat TPC, humanity is falling behind in implementation. In 2022, a multi-agency report coordinated by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) highlighted the huge gap between climate aspirations and reality. It underscored that greenhouse gas concentrations continue to reach new peaks, and that the ambition of emissions reduction pledges for 2030 needs to be seven times higher to be in line with the Paris Agreement goal of maintaining global warming to 2°C (and preferably 1.5°C) compared to pre-industrial levels. The publication warns that: without more ambitious action, the physical and socioeconomic impacts of climate change will become increasingly catastrophic.<sup>26</sup> In addition to the mitigation backsliding, there are widening gaps in adaptation, loss and damages (despite the creation of a fund at COP27, in Egypt) and climate financing.

There are also failures to address and reverse loss of biodiversity. The Living Planet Report 2022 warns that wildlife populations have fallen by 69% over the past five decades, although the extent of decline varies in different parts of the world and between species.<sup>27</sup> CBD COP15 yielded a landmark agreement, the Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework (GBF), to address biodiversity loss, restore ecosystems and protect indigenous rights.<sup>28</sup> Although this was widely touted as the CBD’s “Paris Agreement moment” funding for the biodiversity agenda remains scant. The gap in political and financial commitments is even weaker when it comes to the UN Convention to Combat Desertification, which – despite establishing a reporting framework – suffers from an insufficiency of data and monitoring of the effects of drought, let alone political clout and financial investments. And many other conventions, frameworks and mechanisms created to tackle different socio-environmental challenges exist on paper only, or are subject to lagging commitment and backsliding.

<sup>25</sup> Farand, C.; Darby, M (2019). ‘New Bretton Woods’ needed to fix global system and climate: outgoing UN official. Available at: <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2019/09/26/outgoing-un-official-calls-new-bretton-woods-fix-global-system-climate/>

<sup>26</sup> United Nations Climate Change (2022). United in Science: We are Heading in the Wrong Direction. Available at: <https://unfccc.int/news/united-in-science-we-are-heading-in-the-wrong-direction>

## 5.1 FOUR “BASKETS” OF PROPOSALS

In the context of the crisis of multilateralism, it is necessary to strengthen dialogue, cooperation and coordination between the countries of the South, in order to also open new bridges for South-North cooperation: spaces that reduce distances, but whose terms are established by the majority of states and the world's population while prioritising those in the South.

**The timing for the Global Policy Dialogue in Recife is ripe. The need for more effective and credible global governance has become glaring in light of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The decision by many developing countries to remain neutral in the war opens up space for new sources of leadership in the South, without recreating the rigid and ideologically driven blocs that characterized the Cold War. A new drive for effective and democratic global governance need not be determined by positions vis-à-vis a particular conflict; there is room for flexibility.**

There are also resurging sources of leadership and mobilization power. Brazil, after four years of a government that openly attacked international cooperation, undermined science and education, and actively promoted environmental crimes, now has a new, progressive government that has displayed its commitment to the defence of multilateralism.

Among the top priorities of this new government are issues at the heart of tackling the TPC, such as ending deforestation and other environmental crimes, but also defending a more effective, democratic and just global governance architecture. And Brazil is far from being the only country in Latin America to do so. This moment therefore represents an opportunity to brainstorm paths to tackling the Triple Planetary Crisis, especially from a Global South perspective.

In light of these urgent demands and new possibilities for action, **the next section of this report summarizes the ideas and proposals generated by both the working groups of the January 2023 GDP, as well as its preceding three-week online consultation on key proposals to improve governance responses to the TPC.** The debates were organized around four broad topics: Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade; Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage; Climate, Gender and Human Rights; and Biodiversity and Climate Governance. While these topics are not exhaustive, they are an attempt to capture key challenges and corresponding responses to the TPC.

<sup>27</sup> Latin America showed the highest regional decline in average wildlife population abundance at 94%-- but the data analyzed ran only until 2018 -- a year before an openly anti-environment took power in Brazil and undertook the most devastating effort to legalize environmental crimes in the Amazon since the military dictatorship, with new peaks in deforestation, forest fires and other environmental crimes -- as well as the labor and human rights violations associated with those activities -- reaching new peaks. See: WWF (2022). Living Planet Report 2022 – Building a naturepositive society. Available at: [https://wwfipr.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/lpr\\_2022\\_full\\_report\\_1.pdf](https://wwfipr.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/lpr_2022_full_report_1.pdf)

<sup>28</sup> UNEP (2022). COP15 ends with landmark biodiversity agreement. Available at: <https://www.unep.org/news-and-stories/story/cop15-ends-landmark-biodiversity-agreement>

## 5.2 JUST TRANSITION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND TRADE

At the High-Level opening of COP27, the UN Secretary General António Guterres stated, “The science is clear: any hope of limiting temperature rise to 1.5°C means achieving global net zero emissions by 2050. But that 1.5°C goal is on life support – and the machines are rattling” Notwithstanding the SG’s warning, the states most responsible for climate change did not raise their ambitions on emissions reductions nor sufficiently addressed the dominant cause of global warming by failing to include the phase-out of fossil fuels – and therefore deliver a more credible pathway to a green transition – in the official COP27 decision text.

Despite these political hurdles, there is broad consensus that addressing TPC challenges requires countries, regions and the global community as a whole to undergo a transformation so as to make economies and energy models more clean, sustainable, and inclusive. However, ideas and ideals of just transition vary broadly, in part because the energy matrix, labour markets, and socioeconomic characteristics vary widely – as do the historical (cumulative) contributions towards the TPC. This idea dovetails and overlaps with that of sustainable development and trade, which constitute a significant source of carbon emissions, as well as nature loss. How, then, to structure investments, industrial policy, development plans and other basic instruments so as to promote just transition and sustainable development and trade?

**First, participants underscored that the strategies to make the transition to a greener economy can only work if they are perceived as fair, and that there can be no fairness without a comprehensive and universal implementation of SDGs.** Therefore, more resources and political will must be mobilized to address the many differences within and between countries, as well as between generations, regarding their capacities to implement the SDGs.

**Second, it was noted that despite a significant expansion in global trade in the past 50 years, the global rules of trade between nations are still being governed within a WTO framework agreed in the post-war period, since attempts to adequately modernize the organization’s institutional design are often faced with political resistance.** As a result, the WTO is ill-equipped to shape new patterns of international trade and a reconfiguration of global value chains to put sustainable development and energy transition at their core. Hence, a reform of the WTO to boost its ability to regulate and enforce strict social-environmental criteria in trade flows was deemed urgently necessary.

**Third, participants addressed the issue of finance and the need to reorient the international finance institutions (IFIs), especially the Bretton Woods institutions, to both ensure a broader representation of developing countries, as well as avoid excessive indebtedness and reliance on foreign finance.** It was acknowledged that improvements have been made over the years to enhance IFIs ability to promote sustainable development. For instance, the IMF increased finance and technical support to help states and municipalities build urban solutions for sustainable mobility. However, many of these solutions are too costly and top-down and often exacerbates countries’ dependence on foreign capital.

Fourth, one e-consultation participant suggested creating a global tax body to coordinate fiscal responses to promote just transition. Such tax authority should be tasked with suggesting and/or implementing variable taxation rates to different energy sources in accordance with their rate of greenhouse gas emissions. As efficiency is increased, tax rates could be reduced accordingly, ultimately resulting in significant financial incentives for the adoption of sustainable energy sources.

A mechanism to ensure financial support for developing countries who require funding to promote energy transition would need to be considered, so as to avoid 'fiscal poverty'. While initially implemented in the area of energy transition, such a global tax structure could expand its mandate to also generate incentives to the promotion of climate adaptation, compensation for loss and damage, among other areas.

**Finally, participants noted the disparity between consumption patterns worldwide and the need to implement changes in behaviour consumption to prevent excessive use of energy and natural resources, as well as the exacerbation of associated environmental harms and inequalities.** Science-policy, demand-driven and action-oriented networks based on a justice perspective should be mobilized to promote policy responses that move away from approaching one crisis at a time but rather understanding the climate emergency as part of an integrated "earth system" that requires collective action.

### **5.3 BALANCING THE COP AGENDA: CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND LOSS AND DAMAGE**

On the climate agenda, much of the focus (driven by North countries) falls on mitigation, while adaptation, loss and damages and climate financing receive comparatively little attention and resources. Despite COP27's landmark agreement to provide "loss and damage" funding for vulnerable countries hit hard by climate disasters, there were also disappointments: namely, rich countries backtracked on mitigation commitments even as they ramp up military spending, and the scale and criteria for loss and damage remains unclear.

**First, participants agreed that the Global South must be more engaged and less responsive in rebalancing the UNFCCC COP agenda and, more broadly, in addressing the TPC.** "Otherwise, we will always depend on national government money transfers and/or international donations." The first step suggested was to map the gaps and achievements, as well as create greater synergies between processes that already exist, such as the SDGs and their high-level panels and summits, climate and biodiversity COPs, and reform processes such as the Our Common Agenda. Brazil's presidency of G20 in 2024 and its proposal to host COP30 in 2025 represents an important open door for the Global South to strengthen their climate priorities at the international level. Participants noted that the G20, in collaboration with IFIs, should play a more significant role in the adaptation and loss and damage agendas in particular.

**Second, discussions noted that while frequently demanding more funding and more ambitious action from Northern countries, the Global South still lacks a coherent narrative and concrete plan that clearly lays out their priorities and needs with regards to adaptation and loss and damage.** To change this scenario, Global South actors need to embrace their "South citizenship" and develop a collective strategic vision that provides clarity on key concepts, needs and commitments, as well as indicates proposals for the design of international cooperation initiatives based on common priorities for developing nations. Funding is imperative to implement actions, but equally important is explaining in clear and convincing terms to others what adaptation, loss and damages represent the Global South. The international community needs to know exactly what they can do to promote and improve developing countries; response to climate change impacts.

**Third, the group proposed the creation of a platform of good practices – where successful projects would be mapped, assessed and connected to international bodies and funding agencies, such as the Green Climate Fund, dedicated to allocating**



**the necessary resources to give scalability to these initiatives.** Since there are multiple good practices in terms of climate adaptation strategies around the world at multiple levels (municipal, state and federal), including successful South-South cooperation projects that are proven to work but often lack visibility and scalability, special attention should be paid to local experiences and to South-South cooperation.

In operational terms, in addition to making use of existing funding mechanisms, resources for the platform of good practices could be gathered through the creation of a mechanism to allow Emissions Trading System contributions, taxes and exceptional levies on major polluters in order to finance adaptation and loss and damage in the most vulnerable countries and areas. In other words, this funding mechanism would be guided by the Common But Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) principle, representing an operationalization of the polluters pay concept.

**Fourth, the sessions and online consultation addressed the role of agents and stakeholders.** Among the responses, there was consensus on the crucial role that the United Nations has in ensuring accountability and to scale climate ambition. In addition, according to some, the UN should remain a key actor in advocating for the necessary reforms to improve the ambition, pace, scale, predictability and localized access to funding.

Other players were also mentioned. It was suggested, for instance, that the finance sector play a role in adopting sustainable practices themselves and pressuring companies in their portfolio to act in the same manner. Since resources currently rely heavily on private investments the WTO, the IMF, World Bank and other IFIs should become implementation agencies accountable to global climate governance, including by playing a greater role in climate adaptation and loss and damage. This also means updating their mandate and instruments to reflect a greater commitment to sustainability and climate action.

**Finally, participants agreed that individual action by states is not enough – a New Global Deal is needed to facilitate universal access to technology, capacity building and Research and Development (R&D).** The new deal should also include macroeconomic and financial strategies to ensure the financial means required to develop technological solutions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In addition, new technological solutions should be promoted by public procurement contracts and include provisions for technological transfers to developing countries.

## 5.4 CLIMATE, GENDER AND HUMAN RIGHTS

The challenges posed by the Triple Planetary Crisis should not be underestimated. UN Secretary General António Guterres has referred to the TPC as “our number one existential threat” requiring “an urgent, all-out effort to turn things around.” In an attempt to counter the alarming deterioration of the world’s nature and their consequences upon peoples’ rights, in July 2022, the United Nations General Assembly declared that everyone on the planet has a right to a healthy environment. The resolution sent the message that climate change and environmental degradation are some of the most pressing threats to humanity’s future and called on states to step up efforts to ensure their people have access to a “clean, healthy and sustainable environment.”

**Yet, challenges are not evenly distributed. Participants emphasized that the TPC affects people very differently, through processes that are highly unequal, unjust and have negative consequences on one’s enjoyment of human rights.** Indigenous and traditional communities, black women, youth, the elderly and migrants among others, lack adequate access to development, climate adaptation, and humanitarian resources, including for preventive approaches.

There are also human rights violations involved in the way that responses to climate crises are designed – or failed to be designed – which often amplify the impacts of the TPC. These challenges not only exacerbate existing inequalities, but also have profound socio-economic and human rights implications. In this regard, participants noted that measures are needed to ensure that potential solutions to climate change do not “cause even more harm to vulnerable and marginalized communities and individuals that are already most affected by the effects of the climate crisis.”

**First, there was consensus in the discussions that the promotion and protection of human rights is needed to address the TPC.** Some pondered that, in order for this to be achieved, it is necessary to reform existing institutions and commitments to fill the most urgent gaps, especially with regards to the enforcement of existing human rights provisions.

**Second, participants expressed the urgency for a greater understanding of how the TBC affects people differently, including the specificities of potential human rights violations and inequalities in access to rights, including the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment, widely regarded by the participants as a human right in itself.** This gap could be addressed through the development of data, tools, and analytical processes that are nuanced and take into account the reality of developing countries. For instance, in Brazil, black women tend to bear a disproportionate burden of the TPC when compared to women in general. Consequently, this knowledge creation process needs to acknowledge intersectionality – different aspects of harm and discrimination and how they amplify the negative and unequal impacts of the TPC.

**Third, there was a widespread view that climate discussions are not sufficiently accessible nor tangible to the people that are most affected by it, often preventing them from adequately understanding their rights and assessing the risks posed to them by the TPC.** How to ensure affected groups their right to information and participation in decisions impacting them?

Participants suggested that this information gap should be addressed by developing communication and education strategies to make climate discussions more accessible, especially in the Global South. Emphasis should be placed on the fact that human rights are interconnected to climate change, governance and gender politics. It is also necessary to guarantee the right to information, including by overcoming language and related barriers.

With respect to education, participants recommended that the environment crisis be included in school and university curricula and more broadly. For instance, people should not only have access to key concepts, but also have the information on how to act to protect themselves and their families in practical circumstances, such as when flooding and other extreme events occur.

**Finally, participants highlighted the accountability gap – the fact that there are no binding instruments or effective mechanisms to hold governments accountable for failing to address the human rights and gender implications of the climate crisis.** The reform proposals on these issues put forth in different multilateral bodies deal almost exclusively with norms-setting. Concrete enforcement mechanisms remain scarce, making it necessary to build binding commitments.

Accountability must also be enhanced through greater participation. “Civil society must be on board”, not only in the design of responses, but also in their monitoring. It was also reiterated that funding, especially more direct funding for civil society in the developing country, is needed to guarantee that broader participation takes place, so that barriers to occupy some leading positions can be broken.

## 5.5 BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE GOVERNANCE

The so-called “Rio Conventions” include the UNFCCC, the CBD and the UNCCD. Among the three agreements, the UNFCCC – and more specifically, the mitigation agenda – has reached gigantic proportions and become a stage for heads of state and governments to announce new commitments, whereas the two other agreements are seldom in the headlines. This is problematic not only because biodiversity and desertification are urgent issues, especially in and to the Global South, but because science shows that addressing those conventions will take humanity a good deal of the way towards mitigating and adapting to climate change.

**Preserving biodiversity is not only essential to tackle the climate emergency, but also to ensure food and water security, reduce our vulnerability to future pandemics and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, including through a just and sustainable use of genetic resources.** The countries with the highest levels of biodiversity are precisely those in the South, with Brazil at the top of the rank. However, the global agenda of biodiversity faces a series of hurdles, some of political nature. The CBD is yet to reach a “Paris Agreement moment”, although the landmark Kunming-Montreal Biodiversity Framework (GBF) was reached in 2022 to guide all conservation efforts up to 2050, with the year 2030 as an intermediate milestone. There is also the challenge of defining a global action plan and developing a broad-ranging biodiversity narrative, as was done in the case of the mobilization around the Paris Agreement 1.5°C-2°C target. A fundamental problem, which relates to the design of current global governance structures, is the weak integration between the global decision-making spaces on climate, biodiversity and desertification, and of these with the global economic and financial structures that must be transformed to more efficiently support efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss.

**During the breakout group discussions, a series of solutions were identified to address this problem. Connecting the climate, biodiversity and the desertification agreements will require, in the first place, better links between the IPCC,**

**the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), the UNCCD’s Committee on Science and Technology (CST), among other relevant expert and scientific bodies.**

There is also a need to create a common vocabulary. For instance, the term “nature-based solutions”; is used in very disparate ways across the conventions. To inform concrete and effective policies, more clarity is needed with regards to what can be considered nature-based solutions, and how they can lead to an effective protection, sustainable management, and restoration of ecosystems, while also addressing climate change and desertification issues where appropriate.

A foundational step for establishing pathways out of the joint crises is the preparation of integrated assessments and reports, that identify and explore overlaps and common solutions across the three agendas. These should integrate concepts on climate (mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage), biodiversity and desertification to identify solutions with multiple ‘wins’ across the three issues and diverse actors. Already, the joint IPCC-IPBES workshop report on climate and biodiversity, and the IPBES Nexus Assessment, due in 2024, are paving the way but greater integration of the science-policy-action agendas. Particular attention to emerging planetary crises and global South vulnerabilities and priorities, will be needed.

**In light of the need for better implementation mechanisms of the conventions on the ground, another solution proposed by the participants pertains to implementation and localization within countries.** To achieve this, it is necessary to improve governance, for instance through a “nested governance” that encompasses federal, state and municipal and rural actors, not only through bodies such as advisory and participatory councils and committees, but also at the level of policymaking. As part of the accountability process, there is a corresponding need for capacity building and technical support to allow subnational actors and civil society to monitor the practical implementation of the conventions; provisions.

**Participants also highlighted the need to boost financing.** Not only in terms of diversification in the allocation of resources - as per the saying “MMMA”-- more money more action -- but also through ways to ensure that the resources reach those on the ground. Connecting to the local economic rationale, especially in terms of the need to create local income, is also important to prevent conflicts, for instance in the implementation programs that are essential to addressing climate and biodiversity issues, such as the creation of conservation units and other protected areas. At the level of international cooperation, it is necessary to look at protected areas as “areas of convergence” for promoting synergies between the climate and biodiversity conventions and attracting funding for both agendas. **Finally, the participants noted that in order for this set of solutions to be considered and taken forward, global governance structures will need to be re-designed to open space for mainstreaming the climate, biodiversity and desertification issues in their normative and policy development processes.** This includes different spaces and forums at the UN level, for instance, through the organization of a joint “super COP”, where some sessions and official events could be dedicated to jointly addressing the UNFCCC, the CBD and the and the UNCCD agendas, but also within the scope of regional organizations and in ad hoc arrangements, such as the G20, especially in light of the consecutive presidencies of three developing nations: India, Brazil and South Africa..

## 6. CONCLUSION

Even as the world faces a prolonged pandemic, a looming recession, an armed conflict with global impact, and grave setbacks in poverty alleviation, climate change continues to pose growing challenges. Heat waves, flooding, droughts, landslides and rising sea levels are just a few of the impacts felt disproportionately by the world’s poorest, especially in the Global South, even as gaps widen in the commitments made in climate cooperation, including climate financing. But these problems do not occur in isolation; rather, they are increasingly interconnected in complex and unpredictable ways. The term ‘Triple Planetary Crisis’, tries to capture the complex interplay and mutual reinforcement between climate change, biodiversity and nature loss and pollution and waste.

The current global governance system has proven highly uneven in tackling the TPC. In addition to rollbacks in climate commitments by rich countries -- including in response to the impacts of the war in Ukraine -- older problems remain. Key institutions of global governance, including central elements of the UN system, remain highly porous to global power geopolitics; specialized silos within the system often preclude a coordinated response to cross-cutting issues like climate change; and the developing world has become fragmented in its approach to global governance reform.

In light of the need to promote a more inclusive and effective approach to global governance reform, especially with respect to the TPC,

the January 2023 Recife Global Policy Dialogue brought together 53 policymakers, researchers, activists and other stakeholders to discuss key challenges and solutions, which were summarized in this report.

Following the GPD, Plataforma CIPÓ, the Global Governance Innovation Network, Stimson Center, Global Challenges Foundation, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS), Heinrich Böll Foundation and other relevant partners will work towards identifying key spaces for advancing some of the recommendations proposed in this report, including in the lead up to the November 2023 COP28 in the United Arab Emirates and the September 2024 Summit of the Future. In addition, Brazil’s Presidency of the G20 from November 2023 to November 2024 represents an unique opportunity during which to boost coordination and cooperation amongst the world’s largest economies on key issues of the triple planetary crisis, whilst also incorporating Global South perspectives and priorities in the grouping’s action plan and decisions, which have repercussions at the global level. As a Brazil-based organization, Plataforma CIPÓ will work with partners to strengthen the role of the Rio-92 agenda (the conventions on climate, biodiversity and desertification) in the lead up, during and after Brazil’s presidency’s of the G20 and in preparation of the country’s potential hosting of COP30 in 2025, including by fostering additional dialogues, producing content and advancing policy and reform proposals, such as those proposed in the Recife Global Policy Dialogue.

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS



### Plataforma CIPÓ

Plataforma CIPÓ is an independent, non-profit, women-led research institute dedicated to issues of climate, governance and international relations from Latin American and Global South perspectives. CIPÓ supports local and national governments, international organizations and civil society entities in developing effective responses to the emerging challenges of the climate crisis. The following research team led the logistical and conceptual development of the Recife Global and the present summary report: Maiara Folly, Co-founder and Executive Director; Adriana Erthal Abdenur, Co-founder and former Executive Director (2020-2023); João Cumarú, Researcher and Marília Closs, Researcher.



### The Stimson Center and GGIN

The Stimson Center promotes international security, shared prosperity & justice through applied research and independent analysis, deep engagement, and policy innovation. Stimson's Global Governance, Justice & Security Program aims to advance more capable global and regional institutions to better cope with existing and emerging global challenges, and to create new opportunities through effective multilateral action, including with the global business community and civil society.



Visit the new **Global Governance Innovation Network (GGIN)**, a collaborative project of the Stimson Center, Academic Council on the United Nations System (ACUNS), Plataforma CIPÓ, and Leiden University: <https://ggin.stimson.org>. The GGIN brings together world-class scholarship with international policy-making to address fundamental global governance challenges, threats, and opportunities.



### Global Challenges Foundation

The Global Challenges Foundation is dedicated to raising awareness of global catastrophic risks and strengthening global governance to address them. The foundation's objective is to mitigate major global catastrophic risks that threaten humanity effectively and equitably. Their efforts aim to create a more secure and sustainable future for all, and the foundation is based in Sweden.



### Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

The Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS) is the think tank of the progressive political family at EU level. Its mission is to develop innovative research, policy advice, training and debates to inspire and inform socialist and social democratic politics and policies across Europe. FEPS works in close partnership with its members and partners,22 forging connections and boosting coherence among stakeholders from the world of politics, academia and civil society at local, regional, national, European and global levels.

## HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG

### Heinrich Böll Foundation

The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a German political organization present in over 30 countries and connected to the German Green Party. Its Latin American offices have a special commitment to progressive civil society organizations because they believe these are fundamental to democratic strengthening. Promoting dialogues for democracy and seeking to guarantee human rights; acting in defense of socio-environmental justice; defending women's rights and positioning itself as anti-racist are the values that drive the ideas and actions of the Foundation. In Brazil, the organization supports projects from various civil society organizations, organizes debates, and produces publications for free distribution. In the field of socio-environmental justice, it seeks to strengthen a public debate that combines environmental defense with the guarantee of the rights of rural and forest peoples.

## Annex I - Participants List <sup>29</sup>

**Adam Day**, Head of the Geneva Office, United Nations University Centre for Policy Research

**Adriana Erthal Abdenur**, Executive Director, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Alessandra Nilo**, Co-founder and Executive Director of Gestos

**Aline Burni**, Policy Analyst in International Relations, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

**Aline Piva**, Regional Coordinator for Latin America, Progressive International

**Andrea Q. Steiner**, Professor in the Department of Political Science, Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil

**Anne Heloise Barbosa do Nascimento**, Marielle Franco Institute

**Annette Von Schönfeld**, Director of the Heinrich Böll Foundation Office in Brazil

**Carlos Lazary**, Executive Director, Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization

**Danielle Amaral**, Executive Coordinator, Engajamundo

**David Obura**, Founding Director, CORDIO East Africa

**Eduardo Zanatta**, Councilor for the city of Balneário Camboriú (Santa Catarina, Brazil), Workers Party

**Elia Elisa Cia Alves**, Associate professor, Department of International Relations of the Federal University of Paraíba, Brazil

**Fernanda Carvalho**, Head of Policy, Climate and Energy, WWF International



<sup>29</sup> Participation in the Recife Global Policy Dialogue does not presuppose endorsement of the policy recommendations and the content of this report.

**Fernando Andrade**, Climate Change Regional specialist for Latin America and the Caribbean, United Nations Development Programme

**Flávia do Amaral Vieira**, Senior Researcher, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Hugo Mariz**, Public manager, Recife's Secretary of Sustainable Development and Environment

**Iago Hairon**, Senior Climate Justice Program Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean at the Open Society Foundations

**Imme Scholz**, President of the Heinrich Böll Foundation

**Inamara Mélo**, Secretary of Environment and Sustainability of the City of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil (2018-2022)

**Izabella Teixeira**, Former Minister of Environment of Brazil (2010-2016)

**João Cumarú**, Researcher, Plataforma CIPÓ

**José Bertotti**, Professor at the Federal University of Pernambuco, Brazil

**José Graziano**, Director-General, Fome Zero Institute

**Juan Fernando Lucio Lopez**, Director, One Earth Future Foundation/PASO Colombia

**Keisha McGuire**, President and CEO, Present and Future Institute

**Linda Burenius**, Head of Development, Global Challenges Foundation

**Luísa Falcão**, Junior Researcher, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Magnus Jiborn**, Head of Research, Global Challenges Foundation

**Maiara Folly**, Co-Founder and Programme Director, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Maja Groff**, Convenor, Climate Governance Commission

**Marcele Oliveira**, Agenda Realengo 2030 & Coalizão Clima de Mudança (Climate for Change Coalition)

**Marcelo Montenegro**, Programs and Projects Coordinator, Heinrich Böll Foundation's Office in Brazil

**Maria João Rodrigues**, President, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

**Marília Closs**, Project coordinator, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Mary Robinson**, Former President of Ireland and former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

**Maurício Guerra**, Public manager, Secretariat of Environment and Sustainability of Recife, Pernambuco, Brazil

**Michael Collins**, Executive Director, Institute for Economics & Peace

**Muhammad Makarfi Ahmad**, Nigeria's Ambassador to Brazil

**Nudhara Yusuf, Facilitator**, Governance Innovation Network (GGIN) with Stimson Center's **Global Governance**, Justice & Security Program

**Rayana Burgos**, Climate activist, Youth Climate Leaders

**Renata Albuquerque Ribeiro**, Senior Researcher, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Renata Neder, Program Lead**, Climate and Land Use Alliance (CLUA)

**Richard Ponzio**, Director, Global Governance, Justice & Security Program & Senior Fellow, Stimson Center

**Samanta Della Bella**, Public manager, Environment Agency of the State of Pernambuco, Brazil

**Sunday Edmund**, First Secretary to the Nigerian Ambassador to Brazil & Senior Foreign Service Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria

**Sylvia Siqueira**, Rede Pernambuco

**Thainá Leite**, Project Officer on Climate and Environment, Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS)

**Thilmeeza Hussain**, Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations

**Tiago Masrour**, Regional Representative of the Bahá'í International Community to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)

**Txai Suruí**, Indigenous activist leader, Coordinator of Rondônia & Indigenous Youth Movement & Kanindé Association

**Viviana Porto**, Researcher, Plataforma CIPÓ

**Waldemar Ingdahl**, Communications Officer, Global Challenges Foundation

## Annex II - Recife Global Policy Dialogue Agenda

### GLOBAL POLICY DIALOGUE

## ADDRESSING THE TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS THROUGH IMPROVED GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

RADISSON HOTEL RECIFE, BRAZIL (19-20 JANUARY)

### DAY 1, THURSDAY

8:45 am: Opening Session: “**Global Governance and the Triple Planetary Crisis of Climate Change, Biodiversity and Nature Loss, and Pollution and Waste**”



• **WELCOME REMARKS:**

- **Dr. Adriana Erthal Abdenur**, Executive Director of Plataforma CIPÓ
- **Dr. Richard Ponzio, Director**, Global Governance, Justice & Security Program, Stimson Center
- **Dr. Magnus Jiborn**, Head of Research, Global Challenges Foundation
- **Annette Von Schönfeld**, Director of the Heinrich Böll Foundation in Brazil

• **LEAD-OFF REMARKS:**

- **H.E Mary Robinson**, Chair of the Elders; Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; Former President of Ireland (virtual)
- **Dr. José Graziano**, Director General of Zero Hunger Institute; Former Director General of Food and Agriculture Organization, FAO
- **Dr. Izabella Teixeira**, Former Minister of the Environment of Brazil; Co-President of the International Resource Panel-UN; Member of the UN-DESA board
- **Dr. Maria João Rodrigues**, President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS); Former Member of the European Parliament

• **MODERATOR:**

**Maiara Folly**, Programme Director, Plataforma CIPÓ

10:30 am: **Group Photo and Brief Tea/Coffee Break**

10:45 am: **Breakout Group Session 1:** Building a shared understanding of the challenges posed by the Triple Planetary Crisis. Four groups:

- Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade
- Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage
- Climate, Gender and Human Rights
- Biodiversity and Climate Governance

We ask all of the breakout groups to mainstream the concepts of climate justice, climate financing, gender equality and the rights of future generations during the breakout groups discussions.

12:30 pm: **Hot Lunch**

2:00 pm: **Breakthrough Groups Session 2:** Analyzing and critiquing the status-quo: Strengths and weaknesses of current global governance responses to the Triple Planetary Crisis. Four groups:

- Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade
- Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage
- Climate, Gender and Human Rights
- Biodiversity and Climate Governance

3:45 pm: **Brief Tea/Coffee break**

4:00 pm: **Plenary Session 1**

This session will feature 3-4 minute overviews per breakout group on the shared understanding and analysis/critique of the status-quo global governance response to a particular global problem-set; after a group's members have added any additional points, we will welcome a 15-20 minute discussion with the full plenary, before proceeding to the next breakthrough group.

● **CO-MODERATORS:**

- **Dr. Adriana Erthal Abdenur**, Executive Director of Plataforma CIPÓ
- **Dr. Richard Ponzio**, Director, Global Governance, Justice & Security Program, Stimson Center

5:20 pm: **Conclude and take shuttle bus to reception and dinner**

6:00 pm: **Reception**

● **OPENING REMARKS:**

7:00 - 8:00 pm: Networking discussion: challenges and responses to the impacts of TRIPLE PLANETARY CRISIS UPON INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES AND PERIPHERAL REGIONS

● **REMARKS:**

- **Txai Suruí**, Coordinator of the Ethnoenvironmental Defence Association and of the State of Roraima & Indigenous Youth Movement
- **Marcele Oliveira**, member of a Climate for Change Coalition
- **Rayana Burgos**, Youth Climate Leaders Pernambuco

● **MODERATOR:**

**Iago Hairon**, Senior Climate Justice Program Officer for Latin America and the Caribbean at Open Society Foundation

## DAY 2, FRIDAY

8:45 am: The UN and the Triple Planetary Crisis: the role of the Global South

● **SPEAKERS:**

- **H.E. Ambassador Thilmeeza Hussain**, Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations
- **Dr. Adam Day**, Head of the Geneva Office of the United Nations University Center for Policy (UNU-CPR)
- **Dr. David Obura**, Earth Commission's Commissioner

- **MODERATOR:**

- **Dr. Fernanda Carvalho**, WWF Global Climate and Energy Policy Leader

- **REFLECTIONS:**

- **Dr. Imme Scholz**, President of the Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung Foundation and co-chair of the Global Sustainable Development Report 2023 (virtual)
- **Juan Fernando Lucio Lopez**, Director PASO Colombia, One Earth Foundation

10:15 am: **Brief Tea/Coffee Break and Proceed to Morning Breakout Rooms**

10:30 am: **Breakout Groups Session 3:** Debate and elaborate on a select number of existing proposals under consideration in the scope of biodiversity and climate COPs, Our Common Agenda and other relevant global governance structures in response to the Triple Planetary Crisis (and related gaps in global governance) – whether of an institutional, legal, policy, normative, or operational nature. Four groups:

- Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade
- Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage
- Climate, Gender and Human Rights
- Biodiversity and Climate Governance

12:00 pm: **Hot Lunch**

1:30 pm: **Breakthrough Groups Session 4:** Debate new (or complementary to) reform proposals already under consideration in the UN system in response to the challenges related to the Triple Planetary Crisis – and discuss how to implement these reform ideas, whether of an institutional, legal, policy, normative, or operational nature. Four groups:

- Just Transition and Sustainable Development and Trade
- Balancing the COP Agenda: Climate Adaptation and Loss and Damage
- Climate, Gender and Human Rights
- Biodiversity and Climate Governance

2:45 pm: **Session on South-South and inter-regional cooperation towards achieving climate justice and promoting a just transition**

- **SPEAKERS:**

- **H.E Ambassador Carlos Lazary**, Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization Executive Director
- **H.E. Ambassador Keisha McGuire**, President and CEO of Present and Future Institute (PFI) and former Permanent Representative of Grenada to the United Nations

- **H.E Ambassador Muhammad Ahmad Makarfi**, Federal Republic of Nigeria's Ambassador to Brazil
- **Dr. Maria João Rodrigues**, President of the Foundation for European Progressive Studies (FEPS); Former Member of the European Parliament
- **Fernando Raul Andrade Henao**, Climate Change Technical Specialist for the United Nations Development Programme (virtual)

- **MODERATOR:**

- **Nudhara Yusuf**, facilitator of the Global Governance Innovation Network (GGIN) with Stimson Center's Global Governance, Justice & Security Program

- **REFLECTIONS:**

- **Dr. Adriana Erthal Abdenur**, Executive Director, Plataforma CIPÓ

4:15 pm: **Short Tea/Coffee Break and Proceed to Concluding Session**

4:30 pm: **Concluding Plenary and GPD Closing Session:**

Final report-backs from four breakout groups (4-5 mins per group elaborating on global governance innovation proposals to more effectively address a global problem-set). After a group's members have added additional points, we will welcome an 8-10 minute discussion with the full plenary.

- **CO-MODERATORS:**

- **Dr. Adriana Erthal Abdenur**, Executive Director, Plataforma CIPÓ
- **Dr. Magnus Jiborn**, Head of Research, Global Challenges Foundation
- **Nudhara Yusuf**, facilitator of the Global Governance Innovation Network (GGIN)

5:45 pm: **Vote of thanks**

- **Dr. Richard Ponzio**, Stimson Center
- **Maiara Folly**, Programme Director, Plataforma CIPÓ

6:30 pm: **Bus leaves the hotel to the farewell dinner**