

# CLIMATE ACTION NOW!

## Manifesto for Climate Action

**Pakistan is home to a number of ecosystems, each facing unique threats, making Pakistan and Pakistanis incredibly vulnerable to climate change. Pakistan needs to prioritize not only adaptation efforts but become part of a global collective to reduce carbon emissions.**

We urge you to stand with the people of Pakistan, and those across the world, and immediately take steps to address the climate crisis by, first and foremost:

- 1. Declaring a climate emergency;**
- 2. Demanding climate justice through a global coalition;**
- 3. Adopting a low-carbon economy; and**
- 4. Ensuring grassroots level climate adaptation efforts.**

The climate crisis requires urgent action at every level to minimize irreversible damage to the planet's biodiversity. We are facing extinction unless immediate steps are taken to reach zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by mid-century.

The failure of the international community to address the climate crisis brings undue burden on developing countries like Pakistan. Pakistan may not be a massive emitter of greenhouse gases, but our population and economy are bearing a disproportionate burden as a consequence of global GHG emissions. Nevertheless, we believe that Pakistan's Federal, provincial and local governments, as well as ordinary citizens, must accept responsibility and play their part in reducing GHG emissions, before we transition to a zero carbon economy.

It is for this reason that we protest. Pakistan's Climate Change Policy, 2012, to the extent that it is implemented at all, is ignorant of the growing climate challenges in the country. Fossil fuel-based commercial and industrial practices are no longer acceptable as a means of economic development, the returns of which are in turn inequitably distributed. These practices have polluted our soil, air and water and led to glaring social and economic disparities, whilst exacerbating the climate crisis. GHG intensive industries cannot form the basis of sustainable development. We believe the wasteful and inequitable consumption of resources, especially water, in particular by the export-oriented industry, needs to be checked. We believe Pakistan and Pakistanis can live within their means by redefining development. Development cannot and must not lead to ecocide and genocide.

We appreciate this Government's commitment to afforestation and carbon capture through its Billion Tree Tsunami Projects, and encourage further linkages with civil society and local businesses to scale up tree-planting initiatives throughout the country. We look to the government's coming update on Pakistan's Nationally Determined Contributions (to be submitted to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change) to reflect the scale of the challenge Pakistan faces.

## Demands for Climate Action in Pakistan

**Declare a climate emergency and focus national, provincial and district-level efforts to formulating and implementing climate laws and policies to protect the lives and properties of the citizens of Pakistan.**

**1. We demand the Federal Government convene a meeting of the National Climate Change Council** and prioritize the establishment of the National Climate Change Authority.

**2. We demand the inclusion of women and marginalized communities in decision and policy making regarding climate change and the environment.** The climate crisis impacts women and marginalized communities disproportionately, through a number of ways, including limiting of access to safe drinking water and depleting natural resources that directly impact their sources of livelihood.

**3. We demand the National Climate Change Policy be reviewed** and revised per a bottom-up policy approach, starting with the provincial climate policies and culminating in an updated national policy. Provincial climate policies should be ready by the end of FY 2019-2020 and the review of National Climate Policy complete by 31 December, 2020. All policies should provide mechanisms of coordination between Federal, provincial and local tiers of government, with clearly defined responsibilities for each.

**4. We demand citizens become a part of the decision making process.** Democratic participation through city and/ or region specific climate advisory councils be encouraged that work in tandem with the government. Demands from areas especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change should be prioritized.

**Demand climate justice through a global coalition of developing countries to hold developed countries accountable and financially liable for abetting the climate crisis. We demand climate justice, in that the rights of the most vulnerable people in all countries- rich or poor- are safeguarded, and the burdens and benefits of climate change are shared equitably and fairly.**

**1. We demand Pakistan employs its diplomatic machinery to build a coalition of countries** dedicated to ensuring climate justice, which can in turn, hold developed countries accountable and financially liable for abetting the climate crisis since it is clear that the historical culpability for GHG emissions lies with the global North.

**2. We demand immediate and full write-off of Pakistan's debts,** in alignment with the principles of the Debt Jubilee Coalition, so that Pakistan can retain its funds for local investment in sustainability transition. Moreover, we demand that the world's biggest polluters begin providing string-free cash to our country by June, 2020, as climate reparations for their role in destabilising the global atmosphere as well as impoverishing our region.

**3. We demand legal recognition and protection of climate affectees and migrants and the release of all persons arrested or detained for demanding their climate and environmental rights.** The climate crisis is bringing death and destruction for many. For some, migration is the only option. We must protect the most vulnerable of our populations by recognizing the rights of climate affectees and migrants. The crackdown against the affectees of the Attabad landslide disaster is an example of violating the due rights and status of climate affectees. Affectees of the landslide, including Baba Jan, have remained

detained under trumped up terrorism charges for demanding just compensation for the 2010 Attabad landslide disaster. We demand the immediate release of the residents of Hunza Valley, arrested and still detained, for demanding compensation and support in rebuilding their lives following the total inundation of their villages.

## **Adopt a low-carbon economy and sustainability as the foundations of our model of development.**

**1. We recognize that the climate crisis is a direct consequence of inequality, late capitalism and consumerism** and that low-income, working class people and those with marginalised identities will need the greatest support as they are on the front lines of the climate crisis. We therefore demand a redesign of our markets to reward and incentivise carbon neutral economic activity, and to favor “green new deals” over outdated economic practices that reward profit over the environment.

**2. We demand that Pakistani governments and businesses make all efforts to develop internal climate funds, generated from any emissions-based activities,** to gain more ownership of the climate crisis and for negotiating strength at the international level. Such funds must be publicly disclosed and target the development of green bonds and indices, as a means of locally-sourced sustainable development.

**3. We demand farming practices that are injurious to the environment and farmers should be immediately outlawed. Farmers should be subsidized and incentivised to transition to holistic, less water intensive or sustainable crops.** Monocropping and monoculture should be discouraged, biodiversity promoted and the use of GMO seeds should be rolled back with farmers allowed to breed and retain ownership in their own seeds. Women’s contribution to farming should be recognised and rewarded, and they be economically empowered to help farming transition to more sustainable practices. Benefit sharing mechanisms should be developed so

that commercial entities profiting from developing seeds are required to pay contributions to the farming communities from whom they gathered their knowledge. Halt farming practices that introduce more GHG like methane into the atmosphere. Hand more and more farmland back to nature, so it can have a corrective effect on our carbon emissions.

**4. We demand a shift to affordable, decentralized and renewable energy sources and a policy discouraging costly fossil-fuel based sources.** Renewable energy should form the basis of the transition to a less carbon-intensive and more sustainable energy system that will reduce GHG emissions and improve air quality.

We demand that the Federal Government prioritise and incentivize the setting up of renewable energy power plants. The Federal government must set clear and ambitious targets for the integration of renewable technologies into the national grid. We demand 25% of the power generated in Pakistan by 2025 be based on renewable technologies.

## **Ensure grassroots level climate adaptation efforts**

**1. We demand urban development consider mitigating GHG emissions by promoting public transport** and discouraging the use of private cars. The transport and energy needs of urban areas be met by clean fuels and alternative energy. Budget for eco-friendly public transportation be increased.

Cities must build infrastructure to promote the use of cycles and pedestrian transport, including bicycle lanes, adequate sidewalks, safe street crossings and public shade. More public spaces and parks should be provided to help green the city and encourage community cohesion. All such spaces should be clean, safe and free for all.

**2. We demand provincial governments formulate and implement emissions standards for motor vehicles and enforce them.** The Federal Government must direct refineries and crude oil importers to bring fuel quality to Euro 4 Standard

and to reduce sulfur content in diesel to less than 50 parts per million over the course of the next 1-3 years.

### **3. We demand a mass transit infrastructure**

based on zero- or low-emission transportation.. Private automobile ownership be discouraged and the production/assembly of electric vehicles be incentivised.

### **4. We demand the Government recognize the public health repercussions of toxic air pollution**

resulting from the indiscriminate use of dirty fuels in the energy, industrial and transportation sectors and demand the government regulate the types of fuels permitted for use in these sectors.

### **5. We demand the water resources of Pakistan be sustainably utilized and protected.**

It is imperative that the government avoids adding to the climate crisis by building financially and environmentally risky dams and instead finds sensible means to conserve our plentiful water resources, such as through rainwater harvesting and better irrigation practices. Immediately halt polluting economic activity that will speed up the destruction and melting of the glaciers of the Himalayan, Karakoram and Hindu Kush mountain ranges.

**6. We demand a halt on the operation of all coal powered energy plants** as well as the granting of licences for the construction or development of any future coal-fired energy plants. We demand the closure of coal mines.

**7. We demand the government develop and enforce standards for energy conservation and efficiency** in all sectors of our industry.

**8. We demand the completion of Federal, provincial and local-level adaptation assessments** in order to understand the efficacy of systems in place to address the effects of the changing climate. Such an assessment will allow us to develop effective mechanisms moving forward.

## **Summary of demands:**

### **Declare a climate emergency**

1. Convene a meeting of the National Climate Change Council
2. Include women and marginalized communities in decision and policy making
3. Create a revised National Climate Change Policy
4. Citizens become a part of the decision making process

### **Demand climate justice through a global coalition**

1. Hold developed countries accountable and financially liable for abetting the climate crisis
2. Write-off of Pakistan's debts and retain funds to build climate resilience
3. Provide legal recognition and protection of climate affectees and migrants

### **Adopt a low-carbon economy**

1. Reward and incentivise carbon neutral economic activity
2. Develop internal climate funds from any emissions-based activities
3. Shift away from unsustainable farming practices
4. Shift to renewable energy sources and outlaw fossil-fuel based sources

### **Ensure grassroots level climate adaptation efforts**

1. Redesign urban development to mitigate GHG emissions
2. Formulate and enforce emissions standards for motor vehicles
3. Develop a mass transit infrastructure
4. Recognize air pollution as a public health emergency
5. Protect water resources through sustainable utilization
6. Halt all coal powered energy plants
7. Develop standards for energy conservation and efficiency
8. Assess the efficacy of systems in place to address the effects of the changing climate