

INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AND CLIMATE JUSTICE: A PROPHETIC CALL TO ACTION

For COP30, Belém do Pará, Brazil

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Prepared with contributions from grassroots communities connected with the Claretian Missionaries around the world.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A decade after the *Paris Climate Agreement* (2015) and Pope Francis's *Laudato Si'*, the world stands at a defining moment. Global temperatures have already surpassed 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, and current *Nationally Determined Contributions* (NDCs) project a catastrophic 2.7°C rise by 2100. This path threatens humanity's shared future, devastating the world's poorest communities, Indigenous peoples, and fragile ecosystems.

COP30, convened in the Amazon region of Brazil, embodies both the urgency of the ecological crisis and the promise of justice-centered transformation. After synodal journeying with the masses who have are gravely suffering from social impact of climate change , uniting their cry with Brazil's slogan of *Global mutirao* , guided by Catholic Social Teaching and the *preferential option for the poor* and drawing from the lived witness of the Claretian Family in frontline communities, Proclade calls upon nations, multilateral institutions, peoples movements and civil society to act decisively—to advance *integral ecology*, which unites social and environmental justice, and to reject the false promises of “green capitalism” and technocratic solutions.

This policy brief presents Proclade's position for COP30 through seven strategic calls that reflect the teachings of Pope Francis, the experiences of communities on the margins, and the prophetic responsibility of faith-based actors today. These calls address structural injustices embedded in climate negotiation processes and advance concrete pathways toward a just, sustainable future rooted in human dignity, community sovereignty, and ecological restoration.

Seven Strategic Calls to Action

1. Immediate and Just Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels—No Delay, No Exception
2. Reparative Climate Finance, Debt Cancellation, and Full Operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund
3. Just Energy Transition—Decentralized, Democratic, and Community-Led
4. Rejection of False Solutions and Protection of Community Rights
5. Food Sovereignty, Agroecology, and Land Rights
6. Rights, Participation, and Protection of Frontline Communities
7. Decriminalization of Environmental Defense and Demilitarization of Biodiverse Territories

These calls are anchored in three core commitments: Integral Ecology, Preferential Option for the Poor, and Prophetic Witness.

1. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

A. The Crisis: A Convergence of Injustices

The climate emergency is fundamentally a crisis of justice. It is not a crisis of nature alone. It is also a crisis of procedural justice in terms of justice delayed in the form of calculated strategy to slow decision making in negotiating processes and decision making. It exposes global systems that concentrate power and wealth and decision-making in the hands of the few while imposing irreversible harms on the many. It is not merely environmental degradation—it is social and moral collapse.

The Scale of Injustice:

- 2024 was the warmest year on record, with global temperatures averaging 1.55°C above pre-industrial levels.
- Over 500 million people already face desertification and irreversible ecological damage.
- By 2030, an additional 132 million people could fall into extreme poverty due to climate impacts, a large proportion of whom are women and girls.
- The Global South, responsible for less than 10% of cumulative emissions, suffers 90% of climate-related losses.
- 3.8 billion people lack social protection from climate shocks and disasters.

Responsibility and Ecological Debt

Wealthy nations have accrued an enormous *ecological debt* through centuries of extraction and high-emission development. The Global North, responsible for 75% of cumulative emissions, must lead by example by purposing to move beyond dialogue into implementation in the phasing out fossil fuels; providing debt-free, reparative climate finance; compensating for loss and damage; and transforming their economies from exploitation to regeneration.

Criminalization and Militarization the Hidden Frontline of Environmental Defense

In biodiverse regions globally, those who defend natural resources face stigmatization, criminalization, persecution, and violence. Environmental defenders are targeted by extractive companies, illegal networks, and governments that prioritize profit over life. They endure unjust laws, smear campaigns, and fabricated proceedings designed to silence resistance. Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia account for the majority of murders of environmental leaders, where impunity prevails and state complicity is routine.

These attacks are not isolated acts of violence but symptoms of a predatory development model that values profit over life. Defending nature must never be a death sentence—it is a right that upholds the survival of the planet itself. Environmental defense is not a crime; it is an act of survival for all humanity.

The False Solutions Problem

Current dominant frameworks —carbon markets, offsets, “green growth,” and critical mineral extraction—sustain the very systems that created this crisis. These models commodify nature,

displace Indigenous communities, and delay real emissions reductions while enriching corporations. Such mechanisms deepen inequality instead of restoring balance.

B. Proclade & Claretian Position: Integral Ecology and Climate Justice

Across continents and cultures, the Claretian Missionaries stand with communities on the frontlines of suffering: indigenous peoples defending ancestral lands, families displaced by conflict or disaster, migrants seeking dignity, and the urban poor fighting for justice. They not only accompany these communities in solidarity, but actively live and embody it through their presence and work. In these encounters, they witness how climate breakdown becomes violence against the vulnerable, yet also discover resilience, solidarity, and ecological harmony that sustain hope and inspire transformation.

Claretian charism—to proclaim liberation to the oppressed—compels us to speak truth at COP30. We reject market illusions and incrementalism. What the world needs is *ecological conversion* and structural transformation grounded in integral ecology, human rights, and justice for the poor.

Proclade's advocacy at COP30 is shaped by three interrelated commitments drawn from the lived witness of the Claretian Missionaries in the periphery missions:

I. Integral Ecology

Environmental devastation and human suffering spring from the same root—exploitative systems that commodify both people and their common home, planet. True ecological restoration demands social transformation thoroughgoing policy changes with implementable decisions. Defending human dignity and restoring Earth's integrity are one and the same. As Pope Francis reminds us in *Laudato Si'*, "Everything is connected." COP30 must reflect this inseparable truth: earth, human and spiritual dimension drives to the integral understanding of reality and its care.

II. Preferential Option for the Poor

Climate action must be measured by its benefit to the most vulnerable. Policies must have pro-poor indicators, empower frontline communities, ensure direct access to finance, protect Indigenous lands, and defend the rights of informal workers and smallholder farmers. Any solution that marginalizes or displaces the poor is no solution at all.

III. Prophetic Witness

Faith demands the audacity to name and confront injustice and stand with those who suffer it. This means challenging extractivism, debt bondage, militarism, and corporate capture. It means advancing solidarity, sufficiency, and restoration—uplifting movements led by Indigenous peoples, women, youth, and the poor. Our advocacy arises not from theory but from the lived experience of those who resist, rebuild, and reimagine life in harmony with creation.

2. Seven Strategic Calls to Action

Call 1: Immediate and Just Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels—No Delay, No Exception

COP30 must adopt binding, time-bound commitments to end all fossil fuel extraction and subsidies. Developed nations should complete phase-out by 2040 and developing nations by 2050, with Global North support through grants, debt relief, and technology transfer. All new fossil fuel projects must cease immediately.

The \$7 trillion spent annually on fossil fuel subsidies must be redirected to community-controlled renewable energy systems that ensure access, equity, and local ownership, and equitable benefits. Fossil fuels are incompatible with both climate stability and justice. Their continued expansion deepens inequality, destroys ecosystems, and accelerates planetary collapse. “Net zero” schemes relying on offsets or carbon capture only prolong dependence on extraction. A just phase-out, by contrast, centers human dignity and community well-being. A just transition requires dignified work, social protection, and community-led renewable systems governed democratically.

COP30 must embed fossil fuel phase-out targets within all Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), with clear timelines, sectoral goals, and enforcement mechanisms. The transition must honor community leadership and uphold Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC).

There can be no climate justice without a complete and just fossil fuel phase-out—no delay, no exception.

Call 2: Reparative Climate Finance, Debt Cancellation, and Full Operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund

Global Climate finance must move from charity to reparation and justice. The present system deepens dependency and debt, allowing the Global North to pollute with impunity. True climate finance begins with debt cancellation for impoverished nations and acknowledgment of ecological debt: the moral and material obligation of wealthy, high-emitting countries to repay what they owe for centuries of environmental destruction.

All financing must be grant-based, free from austerity or corporate conditionality. The Loss and Damage Fund must be fully operationalized, capitalized at no less than \$300 billion annually, and accessible directly to local communities, Indigenous peoples, and grassroots organizations.

A justice-centered financial architecture must also ensure equitable climate funding through a new collective goal is needed to meet adaptation and mitigation needs, prioritizing the Global South. Financing must also recognize non-economic losses—cultural heritage, traditional livelihoods, and spiritual bonds with land and ecosystems. Reparative finance is not aid; it is restitution for harm done and an investment in shared survival.

Proclade urges COP30 to institutionalize this justice-centered finance through the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage, (*The Santiago Network on Loss and Damage supports vulnerable countries in addressing climate impacts and protecting environmental defenders*) expanded for direct community access, and through a Debt-to-Development Observatory to ensure accountability.

All international climate finance must comply with human rights standards and community-led accountability. The era of debt-driven, top-down climate finance must end—justice demands reparation, not charity.

Call 3: Just Energy Transition—Decentralized, Democratic, and Community-Led

A just energy transition must serve people, not profit. It should put workers and communities, not corporations, at the center. Workers and communities must shape the process through collective bargaining, living wages, and union participation. Transition funds must be publicly accountable and free from corporate control or governments alone.

Renewable systems should be decentralized, cooperatively managed, and guided by FPIC. No “green” project should proceed on Indigenous lands without consent and fair benefit-sharing. The transition must also advance transportation justice through accessible, affordable public systems and protection for transport workers.

Proclade calls for a Global Just Transition Fund, managed by representatives of workers and communities, and national Just Transition Councils to ensure transparency.

Energy is not a commodity—it is a human right. A democratic, community-led transition will power dignity and life for all.

Call 4: Rejection of False Solutions and Protection of Community Rights

COP30 must reject carbon markets, offsets, and “net zero” pledges that commodify nature and perpetuate injustice. These false solutions enable polluters to continue emitting while displacing Indigenous and local communities.

Proclade also rejects extractive “green transitions” that exploit critical minerals like lithium or cobalt in Indigenous territories and farming communities without Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). Instead, nations must commit to sufficiency and circular economy models that reduce material demand rather than reproducing extractivism under a green label.

We reject the financialization of nature through biodiversity credits and blue bonds which undermines the sacredness of creation. Likewise, large-scale renewable projects imposed without consent repeat the logic of energy colonialism that displace people and destroy ecosystems under a green banner.

Proclade calls for a Global Covenant on the Prohibition of False Solutions. Every climate investment must pass rigorous human rights and environmental due diligence.

True solutions restore balance and uphold the rights to communities, the first guardians of creation.

Call 5: Food Sovereignty, Agroecology, and Land Rights

Global food systems must shift from industrial agriculture to agroecological, community-led models. Industrial farming drives deforestation, soil degradation, and nearly one-third of global emissions. At least 30% of climate finance must support agroecology led by smallholder farmers, Indigenous peoples, and peasants that gives autonomy and self-sufficiency to the local communities.

Food sovereignty begins with secure land and territorial rights. COP30 must affirm Indigenous and peasant land ownership as central to climate mitigation and adaptation.

Zero deforestation by 2030 can only be achieved through territorial protection and Indigenous land stewardship—not through market-based offsets.

Governments must end land grabs, guarantee Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and ensure women’s equal ownership and decision-making in food and land governance.

Agricultural trade frameworks must be reoriented to support agroecology, protect Indigenous seeds and traditional knowledge, and promote local markets that strengthen community resilience and nutrition security.

Agroecology is not nostalgia—it is the future of resilient, just, and nourishing economies. Food is not a commodity; it is a human right.

Call 6: Rights, Participation, and Power of most affected communities

Most affected communities—Indigenous peoples, women, youth, and marginalized groups—must move from the margins of decision-making to the center of climate governance. Climate justice cannot be achieved through token consultation or symbolic inclusion; it requires the redistribution of power.

COP30 must institutionalize mechanisms that guarantee shared decision-making authority, binding consent, and direct access to climate finance for frontline communities. At least 50% of all climate finance must be channeled directly to community-led adaptation, mitigation, and restoration initiatives—without intermediaries or corporate control.

Governments must legally recognize Indigenous and community governance systems as co-equal in environmental policy and land management. The wisdom and leadership of women and youth must be embedded in national and international climate frameworks as agents of transformation, not afterthoughts.

Participation must mean more than presence—it must mean power. Most affected communities are not beneficiaries of aid; they are architects of survival and regeneration.

Climate justice demands dismantling the hierarchies that silence them and building governance rooted in equity, autonomy, and solidarity.

Call 7: Decriminalization of Environmental Defense and Demilitarization of Biodiverse Territories

Environmental defenders are frontline leaders in climate action, not criminals. Yet they face systematic persecution, criminalization, and murder by states and extractive corporations intent on silencing resistance.

This violence must end immediately.

COP30 must adopt binding commitments to:

1. decriminalize environmental defense and repeal all laws used to persecute defenders;
2. establish international accountability for violence against environmental leaders;
3. guarantee Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) as absolute protection for Indigenous and local communities; and
4. demilitarize biodiverse territories by ending armed occupation protecting extractive projects.

States must establish independent, community-led oversight to investigate and prosecute attacks on defenders and publicly recognize Indigenous guardianship as central to climate mitigation.

Environmental justice must replace militarization and repression.

Defending life is a universally protected right, never a death sentence. The protection of environmental defenders is foundational to climate action. COP30 must decriminalize resistance and demilitarize territories where life is under siege.

3. IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK AND KEY ACTIONS

Mechanisms for Monitoring and Enforcement

Proclade calls for binding accountability mechanisms to ensure that COP30 commitments translate into real, measurable action. Commitments without enforcement perpetuate injustice. COP30 outcomes must be binding and measurable.

- **Community Climate Justice Observatories:** Grassroots networks documenting fossil expansion, rights violations, and policy gaps, producing annual *People's Climate Reports* for the UN.
- **Ecclesiastical Observatory on Climate Justice:** A Faith-led monitoring mechanism through the Ecclesial Conference of Global South and interfaith networks to track commitments and the risk situation of environmental defenders, publish accountability reports based on morality and the defense of rights.
- **Independent Verification and Enforcement:** An UN-led system to monitor NDCs and climate finance, imposing sanctions or suspensions for non-compliance and ensuring compensation for communities harmed by unjust projects.
- **Gender and Ethnic Perspective:** The implementation of COP30 commitments must adopt an intersectional gender and ethnic approach that recognizes the vital leadership of women, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities in defending land, water, and ecosystems. Climate policies and financing mechanisms must guarantee their full and meaningful participation in decision-making processes and ensure protection from all forms of violence, exclusion, and criminalization. Integrating gender justice and cultural integrity into every level of action, monitoring, and accountability is not optional — it is foundational to achieving true climate justice.
- **Supporting civil society and grassroots movements:** Proclade supports the strengthening of civil society as the backbone of climate justice. It will amplify grassroots voices, provide advocacy and technical training, and mobilize institutions for ecological conversion and collective action.

Recognizing the numerous initiatives already undertaken across parishes, schools, and congregations, the Church is invited to further reinforce and expand community-led efforts in renewable energy, agroecology, and climate adaptation. By continuing to stand in solidarity with communities resisting displacement and environmental degradation, the Church deepens its witness to integral ecology and its commitment to the care of our common home.

4. THE CLARETIAN COMMITMENT AT COP30 AND BEYOND

Proclade reaffirms the prophetic witness of the Claretian Missionaries and their commitment to justice through faith, action, and solidarity. At COP30 and beyond, Proclade will present these seven demands, mobilize partner networks, and stand with frontline communities to hold power accountable.

It will document violations of community rights and unjust climate projects for international accountability, strengthen alliances with civil society and Indigenous movements, and refuse compromise on the core principles of integral ecology and justice.

Proclade will partner with communities to build decentralized, community-owned renewable energy systems, just transitions for workers, and agroecological renewal for smallholders.

Claretian institutions will model this shift by converting their facilities to renewable energy, forming Just Transition Councils, and fostering North–South solidarity through technology transfer and capacity-building.

The Claretians will deepen their formation in Catholic Social Teaching and ecological spirituality, fostering a conversion that resists unjust extraction and embodies alternative models of sustainability.

They will promote lifestyles rooted in simplicity, solidarity, and care for creation, while developing concrete responses to the climate crisis—such as adaptation support, food security, and sustainable livelihoods.

Through Proclade, the Claretians will strengthen collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, popular movements, and civil society organizations to weave together justice, ecology, and human dignity across continents, ensuring that the call for transformation echoes far beyond COP30.

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6. CONCLUSION: PILGRIMS OF HOPE FOR INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

We approach COP30 as *Pilgrims of Hope*—not in naïve optimism, but in the steadfast hope born of resistance, faith, and shared commitment to life. A different world is possible; it is already being imagined, nurtured, and lived by Indigenous guardians of the Amazon, small farmers restoring the soil, women and youth leading movements for justice, and countless others who embody care and creativity in their daily work.

Across the world, educators who awaken ecological consciousness, media professionals who speak truth with integrity, scientists advancing knowledge for the common good, and uncorrupted public servants striving for ethical governance all contribute to this unfolding transformation. Their courage and fidelity remind us that change is not only necessary, it is already taking root in many hearts and communities.

The seven demands of this brief are not radical; they are the minimum moral required by science, justice, and faith. COP30 must mark a turning point from market centered management to genuine ecological conversion and structural justice.

We call on governments to act with courage; on financial institutions to redirect resources toward community-led solutions; on corporations to end extraction and exploitation; on civil society to rise in prophetic unity; and on the Church deepen formation in integral ecology and stand unequivocally with the poor and the planet.

As Pope Francis wrote in *Laudato Si'*:

“We are called to be witnesses to a different way of understanding progress, where the goal is not accumulation the accumulation of profits but the promotion of human dignity.”

Pope Leo XIV echoes this call:

“We cannot claim to love God while disregarding His creation. Every person of conscience must compel governments to adopt and enforce just and rigorous environmental policies.”

Proclade and the Claretians will not remain silent.

We will speak truth to power, stand with the vulnerable, and proclaim liberation to the oppressed.

We will work tirelessly for the day when integral ecology and climate justice become the foundation of how humanity inhabits this sacred Earth.

This is our hope. This is our call. This is our commitment—at COP30 and beyond.

KEY REFERENCES

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- *UNFCCC, Paris Climate Agreement (2015)*
- *United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals (2015)*
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- *Catholic Bishops of the Global South, Statement on Climate Justice and Integral Ecology (2025)*
- *Caritas, CIDSE, and Heinrich Böll Stiftung on debt and finance*
- *Loss and Damage Collaboration, UNFCCC, and Adaptation Without Borders on loss and damage*
- *WWF, Just Transition Finance Lab, and Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative on energy transition*
- *FAO, AFSA, and Global Alliance for the Future of Food on agroecology and food systems*

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