Joint input to the ongoing Vendepunkt process

Framtiden i våre hender is Norway's largest solidarity and environmental organisation, promoting ethical and sustainable consumption as well as fair distribution. We are 50,000 members who want a socially just world within planetary boundaries.

Oxfam is a global confederation of 24 individual affiliates with activities in more than 90 countries. Oxfam is working closely with Framtiden i våre Hender to promote climate justice, focusing particularly on vulnerable people in the Global South.

Our joint input emphasises that the Vendepunkt process should align foreign aid with other areas of Norwegian foreign policy – and stresses the need to address climate change and promote fair distribution in every aspect.

Climate inequality

The climate crisis is fundamentally unfair. It is largely caused by wealthier people and the rich part of the world, while it is the poorest people and countries that are hit hardest by climate change. The most important thing Norway can do to contribute to global climate justice is therefore to reduce our emissions as much as possible. In addition, we must contribute much more through international climate financing to countries in the global south.

Oxfam estimates that since the Paris Agreement in 2015, the richest 1 % of people in the world have burned through more than twice as much of the remaining carbon budget than the poorest half of humanity combined[1], and that the investments of the world's billionaires are particularly carbon intensive.[2] The strong link between rising inequality, extreme private wealth and large emissions suggests that ultra-rich individuals should contribute more to climate finance and to mitigating emissions to make a fair transition.

[1] https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/climate-plunder-how-a-powerful-few-are-locking-the-world-into-disaster-621741/

[2] https://policy-practice.oxfam.org/resources/carbon-billionaires-the-investment-emissions-of-the-worlds-richest-people-621446/

Norway's fair share

Norway's carbon footprint is massive given its relatively small population. The country's role as an oil producer and the population's overconsumption place it on both the supply and demand sides of carbon emissions.

Applying the Climate Equity Reference Framework, a recently published report scrutinises Norway's fair share of emissions reduction. The report finds that Norway's fair share amounts to a 411 % emissions reduction by 2035. If 60 % of this reduction is achieved within the country's borders, the remaining 351 % must be achieved through climate finance and emissions reductions in other countries. The concept of a fair share implies a duty to provide climate finance as part of the annual budget – not as part of ODA (official development assistance).

Tax is crucial for development and climate adaptation

Putting inequality at the centre of Norwegian development policy is essential to promote a just green transition. Data clearly illustrates the responsibility of rich polluters. However, internationally and in Norway, climate policies are being weaponised by populist movements calling out climate policies as 'elitist' and 'against ordinary people'. To maintain and strengthen public support for a green transition it must be fair, taking into account the costs for low-income families globally and in Norway, and target rich polluters, fossil fuel companies and large corporations who can afford to pay the price for their oversized climate footprint.

Advocating for and promoting fair taxation should be a priority for Norwegian development policy. A progressive tax system for people and companies can achieve at least three important purposes at the same time: Raising the revenues needed to achieve development goals, reducing economic inequality, and reducing the high carbon emissions normally associated with extreme wealth. A fair tax system is transparent, reduces inequality, and promotes climate-friendly behaviour. Tax-funded social protection schemes in the global south will break cycles of aid dependency and point beyond the age of aid.

According to Tax Justice Network, more than USD 492 billion are lost every year due to tax evasion. Today's fragmented tax system, full of loopholes, makes it possible for multinational enterprises, rich polluters, and wealthy individuals to avoid lawful taxation. The ongoing UN process for a tax convention presents a much-needed opportunity to create a fair and climate-friendly tax system globally.

Recommendations:

- Draw upon the Sending committee's recommendations for a clearer categorising of different forms for Norwegian development aid, where risk reduction and responses to global challenges – such as climate change – to a larger extent is kept separate from poverty reduction and development i the poorest countries. Climate financing should be considered just compensation and should be kept outside of Norway's 1 % ODA target.

- Support climate adaptation for vulnerable people and contribute to financing loss and damages caused by the overconsumption of the climate budget by the wealthy and by industrialised countries.
- Apply an inequality lens to all climate and environmental policies, ensuring that the necessary green transition does not have adverse unjust impacts on low-income countries and vulnerable people or perpetuate existing structural inequalities.
- Strengthen the power and voice of civil society to hold governments and polluters to account for just climate policies and to get a seat at the table when fiscal and climate policies are determined; and address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on women, girls, and minorities.
- Norway should adopt and promote a consumption-based approach in addition to territorial climate policies. It is necessary to include the concept of fair consumption space as part of environmental and developmental policy, in order to secure decent living standards for all within planetary boundaries.
- Norway should prioritise small-scale farmers in order to support their efforts towards sustainable farming and to mitigate the severe consequences of climate change.
- Support the International Panel on Inequality to strengthen scientific evidence to inform consolidation and coordination in the fight against inequality, including the integration of climate inequality perspectives.
- Support countries to develop National Inequality Reduction Plans as suggested by the G20 Stiglitz commission to agree on time-bound, targeted reductions in inequalities based on input from diverse groups of national stakeholders.
- Norway should contribute around NOK 100 billion per year to climate finance over the coming ten years: NOK 62 billion for emissions reductions, NOK 15-23 billion for climate adaptation and NOK 20 billion for loss and damage.
- Norway should support progressive measures in the UN Tax Convention and its Protocols that will enable countries in the global south to mobilise sufficient domestic resources to fund their own development, including strong democratic institutions and quality public services.
- Norway should advocate for a permanent global excess profit tax on fossil fuel companies and on companies contributing to over-consumption through the production of short-lived, low-quality products. The purpose of the tax is twofold: to raise revenues to combat climate change and to decrease production and demand for these goods.

- Norway should support the ongoing initiatives in several countries to introduce a global wealth tax for ultra-rich individuals, in order to reduce global inequality and mobilise capital for climate finance and development aid.
- Increase taxes on, or ban outright, excessively carbon-intensive luxury products and activities such as private jets and superyachts.

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