



CAN EECCA Consolidated Regional Position

before the UNFCCC COP26

Who we are

Climate Action Network Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (CAN EECCA) is a network of non-governmental organisations committed to combatting climate change, with 60 members from 11 countries.

We work to ensure that the region's civil society is strong and organised, that the EECCA countries implement policies leading to climate neutrality and green economies, and that both processes are coherent based on climate justice. Our network exists since 2008, and is a part of the Climate Action Network International that unites over 1,500 social organisations in 130 countries.

The EECCA region often falls off the world's radar due to political instability, corruption and repressed media. **We work to consolidate and promote the priorities of the EECCA region's NGOs at the international level.**

In our region, the public doesn't yet have sufficient power to shape their countries' public policies, since they are often subject to repressions, have plenty of obstacles to sustainable financing and are unable to fully utilise the participatory mechanisms in decision-making. **We strengthen the voice of the public at both the regional and international level, communicate the demands of the network's members to the decisionmakers and promote the mechanisms for civil society engagement in decision-making.**

The EECCA region is highly dependent on fossil fuels. The countries are reluctant to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions and implement climate policies that would be truly ambitious. **We analyse how the countries are progressing towards climate neutrality and directly appeal to the decisionmakers, calling them to take concrete measures in order to combat the climate crisis.**

For the first time in 2021 CAN EECCA comes forward with a consolidated regional position in advance of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP26). Despite the region's great diversity, we managed to find common challenges and demands that have already been repeatedly voiced by the members of our network, but were never heard by the governments of the EECCA countries.

The COP26 conference itself exemplifies the crisis in which we ended up. Obviously, making it safe, inclusive and just will be an impossible task due to inability to provide access to COVID-19 vaccines to millions of people in poor countries, increasing travel and accommodation costs (including the costs of quarantine isolation in the UK), visa regime with each of the EECCA countries, and the general COVID-19 related uncertainty.

Despite all this, we are not going to sit and wait for the climate crisis to intensify. The countries of the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia region are already affected by climate change. Each of the EECCA countries has documented the increase of

average annual temperature. Central Asia is considered one of the most vulnerable regions in the world. The EECCA countries have already been experiencing changes in the duration of seasons, the amount and distribution of the perspirations, as well as draughts, flooding, and deterioration in water supply. The negative impact will only increase as the global temperature rises further.

Every country of the EECCA region has ratified the Paris Agreement, having set a goal of limiting the global warming to 2°C, preferably to 1.5°C, by making a significant effort. We can't help but wonder whether those commitments were taken in earnest and with comprehension.

In this Position, we cover what the actions of the countries really intending to prevent a climate crisis should be, and which mechanisms should be launched on a first-priority basis.

The Network's demands

1. We call on the EECCA countries to implement ambitious national climate policies to achieve climate neutrality in 2050.

- We welcome the fact that many countries in the region (namely Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan, Belarus and Tajikistan) have submitted their updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the UNFCCC. However, almost every one of those NDCs implies escalation of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, which should occur under no circumstances if the countries really mean to implement the Paris Agreement. **All the subsequent updated NDCs should only set goals of decreasing greenhouse gas emissions compared to the 2019 levels.**
- The Network also supports the leadership of Kazakhstan, Ukraine, Russia and Kyrgyzstan in the pursuit of climate neutrality. We must remind that, within the framework of the Green Deal, the EU intends to promote the climate neutrality for the whole European continent by 2050. **We call upon the governments of the EECCA countries to commit themselves to achieving climate neutrality by 2050.**
- Representation of the EECCA countries in the UN international climate negotiations is often disproportionate. We believe that active participation of experts from our countries in the international processes is a necessity for strengthening partnerships, sharing experiences and capacity building for implementing the best practices at national level. **We urge the EECCA governments to thoroughly prepare their delegates for participating in COP and seek advice from international partners and NGOs. We also urge international organisations to support the participation of experts from the**

EECCA countries in COP26, and to involve their delegates in organizing joint events at the Conference.

- Fossil fuels are still in the EECCA countries' climate plans. To achieve climate neutrality, it is crucial to stop the geological exploration and developing of new deposits of fossil fuels (namely coal, oil and gas), and minimise their use by 2030. **We urge the EECCA countries to officially announce the date of moving away from coal, oil, and gas.**
- Our Network is of the persuasion that nuclear energy is deadly and extremely expensive, and fails to resolve the problems with the climate crisis. A technology capable of eliminating nuclear waste does not exist. **We urge that the Central Asian countries should remain a nuclear power plant-free zone, and that the countries already using nuclear power plants plan phasing out the exiting power units.**

2. We encourage the EECCA countries to use financial mechanisms in regulating greenhouse gas emissions.

- In order for the gas emissions reduction goals to be recognized and monitored both nationally and internationally, **every EECCA country must have a functioning greenhouse gas monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) system in place.**
- The only country in the region that does charge a carbon tax (around EUR 0.35 per tonne of CO₂) is Ukraine. **We urge every EECCA country to introduce a CO₂ emission tax of at least EUR 5 per tonne.**
- Despite all the ambitious statements about climate neutrality and green economy, the EECCA countries still subsidise their fossil fuel industries (in stark contrast to the producers of renewable energy who don't get such funding). The taxpayers' money is annually spent on supporting the industries that endanger the well-being of the citizens. **The EECCA countries should stop subsidising the dirty fossil fuels industry, investing instead in the development of affordable decentralized renewable energy.**
- Some of the EECCA countries are very vulnerable to climate crisis and will not be able to cope with their losses and damages without external funding. **COP26 should provide the vulnerable EECCA countries with additional funding so they could cover losses and damages resulting from climate disasters.**
- Effective allocation and use of any climate finance require improving the local governments' procurement skills, as well as involving the general public and specifically the vulnerable social groups at an early stage. **We urge the EECCA countries, as well as international climate funds, to maximise their work with the general public at the local communities in terms of climate finance**

projects, in order to achieve more equitable, systematic and effective results.

3. We urge the EECCA countries to implement the climate policies, being fair towards the people, and hold meaningful public consultation.

- Climate change is a social issue. The impacts of the climate crisis are exacerbating the pre-existing unfair social conditions. **We urge the EECCA countries, while implementing any climate and energy policies, to consider their impact on vulnerable social groups and to prioritise projects in more vulnerable communities.**
- Without adequate preparation, phasing out fossil fuels can leave entire cities unemployed, with disastrous social consequences. **We urge the EECCA countries to carry out a just transition, taking into consideration the opinions and well-being of local residents and providing them with alternative economic opportunities.**
- As of today, the general public's involvement in developing and updating the NDCs in the EECCA countries is insufficient. **We urge the governments of the EECCA countries, along with the international organisations providing assistance in developing the climate policies of our countries, to use effective mechanisms to engage the general public to the cause, taking their comments and experiences into consideration.**
- Regrettably, the strategies drafted on the national level tend to be implemented poorly at the local level. This hinders public access to planned improvements, new technologies, and the opportunity to be heard. **Climate strategies and energy systems transformation can't be implemented effectively unless the general public and the local authorities are consulted and involved since the initial stages of creating the local roadmaps, as well as vest with enough authority to implement them.**

We, the Climate Action Network in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia region, will continue to monitor our countries' climate policy implementation, from local to international level. The COP26 will be an excellent opportunity for building a dialogue between delegations from different countries, international organisations and general public. We kindly hope that this Position will serve as a good reference point for both the governments of the EECCA countries and our international colleagues eager to learn more about priorities in the work in our region.



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