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F20'S RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE G20

UNDER THE SOUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENCY

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INTRODUCTION

Dear All,

We invite you to read and engage with F20's *2025 Recommendations to the G20 under the South African Presidency*. These Recommendations shall guide and inform influential policymaking for climate action and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) throughout 2025. As the name suggests, the recommendations are aimed towards influencing G20 processes under the current South African presidency, but they are also guided by F20's own commitment to achieving the SDGs and the Paris Agreement.

The approach to shaping these recommendations was guided by the South African G20 Presidency's commitment to **Solidarity, Equality, and Sustainable Development**. The G20 leadership, which inspires global progress, can advance an innovative agenda around reinforcing multilateralism, supporting equality within and amongst G20 countries, and recommit leaders to the realisation of the SDGs.

The Recommendations reflect the combined focus of the entire F20 network, a group of foundations and philanthropic organisations from around the world who are all committed to implementing effective climate action, sustainable development and inclusive societies. Philanthropies play a critical role in advancing climate action, sustainable development, and the creation of inclusive societies. They often act as catalysts to attract further investment from larger stakeholders and serve as vital data collection hubs to inform scalable, impactful interventions. They also help ensure that climate and development efforts are equitable, inclusive, and sustainable and are indispensable partners in building resilient societies and achieving the 2030 Agenda.

The world needs transformative climate action, so we advocate for G20 countries to establish robust policy frameworks, regulatory certainty, inclusive decision-making processes, and financial incentives that drive sustainable investments and innovation, and prioritise regenerative practices to actively restore biodiversity and rebuild ecological resilience. Supporting communities is especially urgent in a turbulent global political landscape marked by rising inequality and a deprioritisation of collaborative climate action, which threatens intergenerational equity and planetary health.

The F20 Recommendations span a broad spectrum, from reforming the global financial system to ensuring a just transition, and from embracing intersectionality to leveraging country platforms – and many of them echo longstanding global agreements. However, they are not exhaustive. We urge policymakers to adopt an integrated and coordinated approach that addresses interconnected challenges such as short-lived climate pollutants, air pollution, and plastic waste, all of which exacerbate climate change and environmental degradation.

This set of policy asks for G20 decisionmakers is actionable, global, climate-focused, and deeply rooted in socio-economic transformation. For their effects to be long-term and to inspire tangible change, collaboration is essential. This includes cross-sector cooperation and more equitable collaboration between countries in the Global North and Global South. The very existence of these recommendations, which combine the expertise, varied concerns, and genuine advocacy of a large group of philanthropies is testament to the power and possibility of cooperative climate action. The only way we can achieve long-term, inspirational action on climate is by building bridges between the South African G20 presidency and all G20 member countries, civil society actors, philanthropic organisations, and the private sector. We are hopeful that 2025 will be a year that reflects our global priorities of biodiversity, social equality, and the health of our planet for future generations.

Kind regards,

**Raisa Cole (F20 South African Chair)
& Katrin Harvey (F20 Secretary General)**



F20's Recommendations to the G20 under the South African Presidency

The G20 holds the power and responsibility to drive transformative global progress. By accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its SDGs, the G20 can strengthen societal resilience and address the most pressing challenges of our time.^[i] As we enter an era of increased political, economic and social polarisation, reinforcing collaborative action is more important than ever. The rising tide of inequality, biodiversity loss, climate change and its cascading health impacts require bold and unified action. At the same time, continued fossil fuel investments and unstable governance systems exacerbate these crises. Through strong leadership, the G20 can unlock significant opportunities to drive the climate and development investments needed to combat the climate crisis and pave the way for equity, sustainable growth and well-being for all.^[ii]

It is essential that the G20 countries create an enabling environment for transformative action by establishing strong policy frameworks, regulatory certainty, inclusive decision-making and financial incentives that drive sustainable investments and innovation. The data is clear: seizing these opportunities can lead to strengthened livelihoods, economic prosperity, nature conservation and measurable progress toward global climate goals.^[iii] Conversely, the cost of inaction is alarmingly high, with severe consequences for communities, ecosystems and global stability that far outweigh the investments required for meaningful positive change.^[iv]

The time to lead is now. The world cannot afford to wait. Transform today, thrive tomorrow.

Therefore, **we call on G20 leaders to commit to the following recommendations:**

1 Take Action to Foster Economic Prosperity through a Just and Inclusive Shift to Renewable Energy

The shift to renewable energy is a transformative opportunity towards a net zero world. At the COP28, the G20 committed to triple global renewable energy capacity by 2030;^[v] as such, member states and the communities they serve have a powerful economic driver on a clear path toward achieving greater energy security,^[vi] climate resilience and global equity that safeguards vulnerable communities. The 6th IPCC report emphasises that this transition should be swift, ambitious and inclusive; and it should be grounded in policies that deliver justice, socioeconomic equity and sustainability.^[vii] Building on [Brazil's G20 EcoInvest Initiative](#), which aims to scale up risk-mitigating financial mechanisms, countries have committed to expanding these instruments to attract more investment. The International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) projects that transforming the energy system could add \$98 trillion to global GDP by 2050 and create 42 million renewable energy jobs, nearly four times today's figures.^[viii]

We call upon the G20 to accelerate the expansion while considering the following points:

Encourage Renewable Energy Expansion that Upholds Social and Environmental Standards by developing and enforcing policies that promote social ownership, integrated development and resource planning. The G20 must support legal and accountable frameworks to protect affected populations, ensure affordable and democratic energy transitions, provide safety nets like retraining programmes and respect the land rights of local and vulnerable communities, including Indigenous Peoples.

Support Responsible Mining and Critical Minerals Practices that minimise ecological degradation, protect biodiversity, advance social equity and uphold human rights, including those of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Critical minerals are essential for renewable energy technologies, including lithium-ion batteries that power electric vehicles and renewable energy grids.^[ix] We recommend benefit-sharing mechanisms and circular approaches in the critical minerals value chain, such as repairability, recycling and resource-efficient production.

Build on the [Bioeconomy Initiative](#) as agreed under Brazil's G20 presidency in 2024 by championing a circular bioeconomy rooted in sustainable, locally driven value chains. In alignment with the [Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework](#), these efforts must be nature-positive, ensuring that bio-based production replaces fossil fuels while preserving ecosystems and biodiversity ^[x]. To maximize impact, this approach should include tailored policies and investments in bio-industrial sectors, which can spur innovation and improve cost efficiency and price competitiveness while minimising carbon footprints and respecting local rights and knowledge.



2 Implement Measures to Catalyse Sustainable Industrial Decarbonisation

Accelerating industrial decarbonisation is essential for meeting climate targets and fostering sustainable economic growth. Industrial sectors, such as steel, cement and chemicals, account for about 30% of global GHG emissions, yet they present substantial opportunities for innovation, efficiency and sustainable transformation.[xi] Sweden, for example, has demonstrated the feasibility of decoupling emissions from economic growth: a high carbon tax (€125 per tonne of CO₂) has reduced emissions by 33% since 1990, while the economy grew by 92%.[xii] A holistic approach must ensure that affected communities are supported through this transition, with investments in re-skilling, fair labour practices and environmental protections. Decarbonisation should also address short-lived climate pollutants like black carbon, targeting high-impact sectors such as waste management, shipping and agriculture.

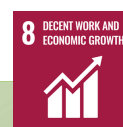
We urge the G20 to implement a justice-focused policy framework and take the following steps:

Adopt Carbon pricing mechanisms and incentives[xiii]: Implement carbon taxes and other pricing tools to incentivise the transition from fossil fuels to electrification, renewable energy and energy efficiency in industrial processes. This should be complemented by targeted R&D funding, sector-specific roadmaps and circular economy strategies. Provide support for early adopters to accelerate innovation and set benchmarks for industrial transformation.

Establish Interoperable Standards for Measuring and Verifying Industrial GHG Emissions[xiv]:

Develop harmonised global systems for tracking the GHG intensity of industrial goods, including along their value chains, creating clear definitions for "green" products based on the principles agreed on by the Climate Club[xv]. Supporting initiatives like [RE100](#), [EP100](#), and [EV100](#) showcases the potential of holistic corporate sustainability.[xvi] Over time, the G20 should work toward mandatory global standards for GHG emissions, fostering international alignment and scaling ambition.

Investing in Grid Modernisation and Infrastructure[xvii]: Mobilise resources to ensure reliable, resilient energy systems that meet the growing demands of industrial electrification while supporting decentralisation in both innovation and governance, to ensure access to clean energy for all. Facilitate the integration of low-carbon technologies by leveraging impact-focused public-private and philanthropic partnerships and green bonds to scale investment.



3 Transform the Global Financial System to Drive Climate and Development Goals

Meeting the growing financial demands of climate action and sustainable development requires a bold transformation of the global financial system. Current investment in climate mitigation and adaptation must increase three- to eight-fold, particularly in the least-developed countries.[xviii] The International Financial Architecture (IFA) must be reformed to align financial flows with low-carbon, climate-resilient development pathways, as outlined in the Paris Agreement (Article 2.1c) and along the framework presented in the Bridgetown Initiative[xix]. Done strategically and with a focus on justice, these reforms can unlock significant potential for reducing poverty, improving international trade and investment, supporting development and managing financial crises.[xx]

We urge the G20 to take the following actions:

Reform International Financial Institutions (IFIs), such as Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) and align their governance, structures and practices with human rights, environmental obligations and the SDGs. Ensure fair participation of developing countries in decision-making by increasing their voting power and representation on boards and strive for gender-balanced leadership across governance structures. Additionally, MDBs should continue enhancing their risk appetite, leverage donor guarantees and recycle Special Drawing Rights (SDRs) to boost lending capacity and actively promote locally led solutions, while also increasing incentives to attract philanthropic partners into partnerships.

Expand Access to Liquidity and Debt Relief.[xxi] The IMF should improve access to rapid credit and financing facilities for countries in distress, suspend surcharges and fees that exacerbate debt burdens, and incorporate climate and disaster risk into its debt sustainability analysis. The G20 should commit to reforming the global debt architecture and advancing the recommendations of the Expert Review on Debt, Nature, and Climate[xxii] once published. Additionally, leveraging initiatives like the Global Shield, proposed by the G7 and the V20 in 2022, can enhance financial resilience, allowing countries to prioritise crisis response while maintaining stability.[xxiii]

Mobilise New Sources of Climate and Development Finance through accountable Tax Justice. [xxiv] The G20 must prioritise mobilising scalable and innovative finance sources, such as catalytic capital, mission-led blended as well as concessional finance and models like the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF)[xxv]. We call for strengthening the Rio de Janeiro G20 Ministerial Declaration on International Tax Cooperation to ensure effective, fair and progressive taxation.[xxvi] For example, a global billionaire's tax set at 2% of wealth could generate \$250 billion annually, while a strengthened global minimum tax on multinational corporations could raise an additional \$250 billion each year. [xxvii] Expand discussions on globally coordinated levies following the polluter-pays principle, considering the work currently underway by the Global Solidarity Levies Task Force[xxviii]. Strong accountability systems[xxix], anchored by a fair international tax framework under the UN Model Taxation Convention, must be followed to promote trust, equity and effective deployment.



4 Strategically Align and Mobilise Flexible Financial Resources with Climate Goals and Sustainable Development

Unlocking climate finance is fundamental to achieving the Paris Agreement and the SDGs; governments must submit new and ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the UNFCCC in 2025 that reflect such finance needs. By enhancing and innovating financing mechanisms, nations can bridge investment gaps, reduce systematic inequalities, manage risks and reduce the cost of capital for vulnerable and marginalised communities. Climate change disproportionately affects these communities, including women, Indigenous Peoples, and economically disadvantaged groups, amplifying intersectional vulnerabilities.[xxx] Prioritising community-driven financial mechanisms that centre on historically excluded groups has the potential to drive inclusive development and foster long-term resilience.

We call upon the G20 to:

Phase Out Fossil Fuel Subsidies: Fulfil the long-standing G20 commitment to phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, first pledged in Pittsburgh (2009)[xxxi], then reiterated in Delhi (2023) as well as in Rio (2024). However, the G20 must go beyond these promises to include the phase-out of all fossil fuel subsidies, redirecting these funds toward climate action and sustainable development, which could free up \$7 trillion globally for investments.[xxxi]

Facilitate Accessible, Long-Term and Flexible Financing,[xxxi] particularly through grants and investments in local infrastructure and ecosystems. Simplify funding processes to enable vulnerable communities to access grants and investments, reaching local stakeholders. Streamline application procedures and reduce technical, financial and legal barriers.

Implement the G20 Sustainable Finance Roadmap to scale up sustainable finance. This includes fostering international cooperation to align financial flows with long-term climate and development objectives. Political leaders must incentivise private-sector and philanthropic investment toward clear sustainability goals[xxxiiv] and create risk-sharing mechanisms to encourage funding in underserved markets. The implementation of the roadmap should include accountability measures to ensure transparent reporting of financial flows and outcomes.



5 Drive Solutions for Climate-Smart Agriculture to Promote Food Security and Biodiversity

Promoting regenerative and low-impact farming techniques like agroecology, which enhance soil health and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, is essential in mitigating food security risks and strengthening environmental resilience. These efforts should also ensure sustainable livelihoods for marginalised groups, including women, Indigenous Peoples and landless farmers. Building on the "Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty" initiative, the G20 has a critical opportunity to lead on climate-smart agriculture and protect ecosystems. Trade and tax policies should be recognised as powerful tools to drive system-wide change across global supply chains. Increasing trade transparency and empowering the World Trade Organisation (WTO) to mediate disputes[xxxv] can help correct market distortions and improve global food distribution.

We call upon the G20 to:

Prioritise Direct Climate Finance to Grassroots Farming Organisations.[xxxvi] Funds like the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF) should refine their strategies and prioritise empowering these groups to lead their own projects. Small-scale, landless and women farmers must be included in decision-making processes, such as policy design and project steering committees, ensuring they are recognised as critical partners in climate action.

Integrate Sustainable Food Systems into National Climate Strategies.[xxxvii] Align agricultural policies with climate goals by incorporating sustainable food systems into Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). National regulations around managing agricultural residues, including strict enforcement of bans on open burning would help reduce pollution linked to agricultural practices, enhancing health and biodiversity.

Create an Enabling Environment to Support Small-Scale and Climate-Smart Agriculture. Implement preferential government purchasing policies, subsidies, tax incentives and revolving funds to enable small-scale farmers to compete with large-scale agriculture and multinational corporations. Develop legal frameworks for equitable and accessible climate insurance to safeguard crops and small businesses against the impacts of extreme weather events.[xxxviii] Establishing a global public-private food reserve could also stabilise food prices and supply volatility, mitigating climate and conflict-related disruptions that often lead to food crises.[xxxix]



6 Advance Intersectional Environmentalism for Equitable Climate Solutions

Addressing climate change and environmental degradation requires an inclusive approach that recognises how injustices against marginalised communities and ecological harm are interconnected. Notably, groups that contribute the least to emissions often face the most severe consequences.^[x] An intersectional perspective ensures that climate solutions are equitable, acknowledging the contributions and vulnerabilities of those most affected by environmental challenges. These groups often have invaluable knowledge and practices that can drive transformative change. Indigenous communities, for example, manage territories that house most of the world's remaining biodiversity, despite comprising only about 5% of the global population.^[xli]

We call upon the G20 to implement strong state-led frameworks and:

Institutionalise Meaningful Civil Society Engagement like the G20 Social. Create robust mechanisms and inclusive opportunities for sustained engagement with diverse civil society groups within G20 and other multilateral spaces and processes. These civil society groups include youth-led organisations, women's funds, grassroots movements, Indigenous Peoples, local communities, Afro-descendant peoples and other marginalised groups.

Raise Awareness of Environmental Racism and Educate Policymakers. Promote understanding of environmental racism and inclusive diversity perspectives by integrating them into public discourse and education. Conduct capacity-building programmes for policymakers to equip them with the knowledge and tools to identify and address structural inequities in environmental policies and practices.

Support Regional Leadership for Climate-Smart Development: Utilise the African Agenda 2063 as a framework for advancing climate-smart initiatives that address regional challenges, complementing the global priorities set by the SDGs to accelerate sustainable development. Facilitate partnerships between governments, regional organisations and local communities to address challenges like water resources, gender equality and access to quality education or healthcare.



7 Strengthen Country Platforms for Effective Development Cooperation

We strongly recommend the adoption and expansion of country platforms as a promising approach in achieving systemic change. By aligning national priorities with international support, country platforms offer a transformative approach to development cooperation, as emphasised by the Task Force on Global Mobilisation against Climate Change (TF CLIMA)[xlii]. They provide a framework for collective action, enabling governments, multilateral institutions, civil society, private stakeholders and philanthropy of all sizes, from international to local community foundations, to work collaboratively. Where appropriate, country platforms should adopt thematic focuses, such as energy transition or climate resilience, and reflect local specificities to address concrete challenges more effectively and maximise impact. In fragile states, where 80% of the world's extremely poor are projected to reside by 2030, these platforms can address systemic challenges by fostering coherence, resilience and local ownership.[xliii] Climate governance should increasingly shift from national to sub-national levels, with the rise of city network governance models. Empowering regional and municipal leadership within country platforms will enhance such localised climate action.

We urge the G20 to take the following actions to strengthen and scale country platforms:

Institutionalise Country Platforms as Core Coordination Mechanisms. Promote the adoption of country platforms as country-owned and country-led tools by building institutional capacity to establish a shared vision and development priorities. Encourage MDBs and NDBs to integrate country platforms into their operational frameworks, shifting from project-based models to multi-year, sectoral, or thematic programmes. Foster alignment between country platforms and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that all efforts are directed toward achieving the SDGs. At this stage, it is crucial to involve youth, integrating their perspectives and specific needs to ensure inclusive and future-oriented policymaking.

Enhance Financial Coordination, Transparency and Resource Mobilisation. Support the establishment of pooled funding mechanisms that harmonise development flows and reduce fragmentation, while providing transparency on financial information to all stakeholders. Replicate innovative models, such as multi-donor funding facilities[xliv] to streamline resource allocation and ensure that investments are aligned with national development plans and local priorities. Philanthropy, as “patient capital,” can provide long-term, flexible funding to de-risk investments and catalyse broader financial commitments. Establish feedback loops to promote a process of learning by doing, ensuring continuous improvement and adaptability to emerging challenges. Ensure accountability for results through rigorous, agreed impact monitoring that involves local communities.

Integrate Risk and Resilience into Development Strategies. Shift the focus of development cooperation from short-term poverty reduction to long-term resilience and risk management. Foster adaptive, iterative approaches to address the root causes of fragility and conflict, emphasising scalable solutions and systems reform over isolated projects.



The time to lead is now. The world cannot afford to wait. Transform today, thrive tomorrow.

Recommendations at a glance

- 1 Take Action to Foster Economic Prosperity through a Just and Inclusive Shift to Renewable Energy
- 2 Implement Measures to Catalyse Sustainable Industrial Decarbonisation
- 3 Transform the Global Financial System to Drive Climate and Development Goals
- 4 Strategically Align and Mobilise Flexible Financial Resources with Climate Goals and Sustainable Development
- 5 Drive Solutions for Climate-Smart Agriculture to Promote Food Security and Biodiversity
- 6 Advance Intersectional Environmentalism for Equitable Climate Solutions
- 7 Strengthen Country Platforms for Effective Development Cooperation

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Steering Group

Dasra

**Democracy Works
Foundation**

Fondazione Cariplo

Fundación Avina

Instituto Clima e Sociedade
(ICS)

King Khaled Foundation

Global Commons Alliance
(GCA)

**Renewable Energy Institute
(REI)**

Rockefeller Brothers Fund (RBF)

SEE Foundation

Shakti Foundation

Stiftung Klimawirtschaft

Stiftung Mercator

Stiftung Zukunftsfähigkeit

The Habibie Center

**Umweltstiftung Michael Otto
(UMO)**

World Future Council (WFC)

ABOUT F20

The Foundations Platform F20 is an international network of around 80 foundations and philanthropic organisations that calls for joint transnational action towards sustainable development.

We are an independent engagement group to the G20 with a concrete focus on aligning the G20 agenda with the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Climate Agreement. Our aim is to provide solutions for today's most pressing challenges – climate change and a just transition based on renewable energy and sustainable development.



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