

Press briefing

Kenyan climate activist Elizabeth Wathuti visiting Brussels to urge decision makers to act on Loss and Damage

As part of European tour to urge decision makers in Europe to act on Loss and Damage, Elizabeth Wathuti, a young Kenyan climate activist, will be one of the activists leading the Climate March on 23 October in Brussels, where she will also give a key note speech. Next to attending the march and meeting with politicians, Elizabeth will visit Trooz, a town affected by the 2021 floodings and meet with local inhabitants.

This visit comes at an important moment as on Monday 24 October, EU Environment ministers adopt Council conclusions that will serve as the EU's general negotiating mandate for the 27th United Nations Climate Change conference (COP27). Elizabeth also visited the European Parliament on 17 and 18 October ahead of their plenary vote on their COP27 Resolution and met co-rapporteurs of the Resolution. MEPs called attention to Elizabeth's stories in the plenary debate on COP27, and voted to support a loss and damage finance facility at COP27 in their resolution.

Elizabeth Wathuti

Elizabeth Wathuti is a Kenyan climate activist and the Founder of Green Generation Initiative. She addressed world leaders at the UN climate negotiations in November 2021, urging them to 'open their hearts' to the plight of communities on the frontlines of the climate crisis and act at a scale and speed needed to secure a livable future. In September she was selected to be in this year's [TIME100 NEXT list](#), as one of the most influential people of her generation.

Her attendance at the Climate March is part of a European tour to advocate for climate justice which she also has done in her open letter addressing the COP27 presidents on the urgency of action. In [an emotional letter](#), which has already been endorsed by more than 100.000 people, she is asking for the COP27 climate change talks to deliver a dedicated finance facility to help frontline communities deal with the loss and damage they are already experiencing.

After speaking to MEPs at the European Parliament in Strasbourg and joining Luisa Neubauer at the Garzweiler coal mine protest in Germany, Elizabeth is now coming to Belgium. On 22 October Elizabeth Wathuti will visit the Wallonian towns of Trooz and Verviers, to talk to local inhabitants affected by 2021 summer floodings and see the destruction the floodings left behind.

Loss and damage, COP27

We are in the era of climate change induced Loss and Damage. The last few months have seen heatwaves, droughts and floods sweep through several continents. In the Horn of Africa communities are facing famine-like conditions due to persistent drought. This is not a crisis of the future, nor one confined to national boundaries. This crisis calls for a step up in global leadership, multilateralism and cooperation at all levels.

Loss and damage funding arrangements are on the provisional agenda for COP27. This will give much needed space for parties to agree on the urgent action that is needed. As droughts, floods and heatwaves hit frontline communities and climate vulnerable developing countries harder each year, everyone is looking at the EU on loss and damage and adaptation finance ahead of and at COP27 for an appropriate response.

At the UN General Assembly [Denmark became the first EU Member State to come out and make a L&D finance pledge](#). Momentum is building.

Strengthening existing humanitarian aid and development channels is important but it is not enough. The EU needs to be proactive and constructive to address the gaps revealed already by the Glasgow Dialogue via a Loss and Damage Finance Facility under the UNFCCC, as demanded by countries which suffer from the climate crisis today. This should be done at the nearest opportunity - COP27.

Further background

There is no finance under the UNFCCC to address Loss and Damage. Finance for relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and unavoidable relocation, is currently missing from the financial architecture of the UNFCCC. Finance needs to be provided in the form of grants and be additional to Official Development Assistance, emergency humanitarian aid, finance for mitigation (averting Loss and Damage) and adaptation (minimising Loss and Damage). It must not only be based on insurance, which is clearly insufficient and not fit for purpose given the current and future risks.

We expect the EU to proactively and constructively engage in exploring the role of a Loss and Damage Finance Facility under the UNFCCC, as demanded by developing countries, and that this be established at COP27, with further technical work on its most effective set-up be undertaken immediately afterwards.

Media inquiries:

Elizabeth Wathuti will be available for interviews in Brussels after the march, and also on the 24th and 25th of October.

Photo and video material from her trip in Europe is available on request.

For interview requests with Elizabeth Wathuti, please contact:
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