

Media Toolkit for Journalists

Climate Crisis in Central America



If you are a journalist reporting about Central America and the climate crisis, you will find useful material in this toolkit. The intention is to provide you with both basic information as well as voices regarding climate justice in Central America. Please explore the links as well and contact the CIR if there are any questions or needs:

Christliche Initiative Romero e. V.
Schillerstraße 44a
48155 Münster
cir@ci-romero.de
www.ci-romero.de



facebook.com/ci.romero
instagram.com/romeroinitiative
twitter.com/CI_Romero

CONTENT

Pan-European Project Game On – Don't let climate change end the game	2
The Romero Initiative (CIR) and its Work for Climate Justice	3
Activities for Climate Justice within the Game On Project.....	3
CIR's Partner Organisations.....	4
Climate Justice and Weather Extremes	5
Responsibility and Consequences.....	5
What Does Climate Justice Mean?.....	6
Weather Extremes in Central America	7
The Climate Crisis in the Dry Corridor	9
Climate Change Adaptation.....	9
Demands of the Romero Initiative (CIR)	10
Voices on the Climate Crisis	11
Voices from Central America	11
Voices from Game On Youth Ambassadors	14
Imprint	15

Pan-European Project

Game On – Don't let climate change end the game

game on | DON'T LET CLIMATE CHANGE END THE GAME!



This project is funded by the European Union

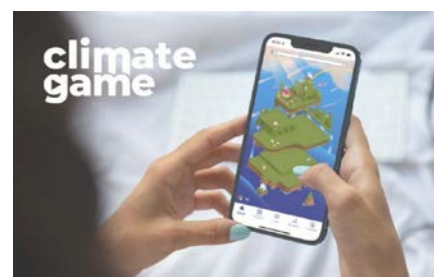
The project 'Game On! Don't let climate change end the game' is an initiative of 10 organisations from eight Central and Eastern European countries to activate the global youth and react to the existential threat climate change represents for the future of humankind. The project has been made possible thanks to the co-financing of the European Development Education and Awareness Raising (DEAR) programme.

The project partners strongly believe in the energised, strong will of younger generations to push forward for the urgent systemic change required to overcome the challenges posed by climate change. Thus, the project has strived to activate this energy all across the region and the globe through a 'gamification' approach to initially tackle three core areas: biodiversity conservation, adaptation and mitigation, and climate justice.

To do so, we have directly involved over 400 young people from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania and Slovakia to build their capacities and become the project's Young Climate Ambassadors. Fact-finding missions, workshops, wilderness camps, climate communications trainings and more have been at the core of the activities to enhance their skills aligned to their will to have a positive impact.

Parallel to that, the project has also developed a range of products to raise awareness to the general population and become tools for the Young Climate Ambassadors to further their work. The consortium has, thus, developed:

- **ClimateQuest- Geocaching**, see: climategame.eu/climatequest/home (EN)
- **Boardgame: Terra Futura**, see: climategame.eu/terra-futura (EN)
- **ClimateGame- Mobile App**, see: climategame.eu/mobileapp (EN)
- **Stand-up comedy shows and improvisation theatre performances**, see: climategame.eu/activities/improvisation-theatre (EN)
- **Climate Compact e-Learning Platform**, see: climategame.eu/elearning-platform (EN)
- **EduQuest- educational material**, see: climategame.eu/activities/climateeducation (EN)
- **Festival Greening Handbook**, see: climategame.eu/greener-festival/en (EN)
- as well as **Museum overlaying exhibitions**, see: climategame.eu/activities/museum-exhibition (EN)



Photos: climategame.eu

All our activities have had but one goal: to help raise awareness about the problems of and solutions to climate change, as well as to push for a massive mobilisation of people to demand and make the changes we need.

Website: climategame.eu



facebook.com/climate.game.on

instagram.com/climategameon

youtube.com/@climategameon

twitter.com/ClimateGameOn

The Romero Initiative (CIR) and its Work for Climate Justice

The Romero Initiative (CIR) is a human rights organisation based in Münster, Germany. CIR's vision is a just world based on solidarity, where good life is possible for all. The organisation supports the independent work of its partners, grassroots movements and organisations in Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, and does campaigning and educational work in Germany, building bridges between Central America and Europe. The CIR works on Climate Justice within the pan-European project 'Game On! Don't let climate change end the game'.

CIR's work for climate justice is supporting its partner organisations from Central America in implementing climate protection and climate change adaptation measures as well as calling for more solidarity with population groups severely affected by climate change. Efforts and costs for mitigation and adaptation, as well as for loss and damage, must be distributed fairly and socially just in accordance with the 'polluter pays' principle.

Lisa Kirtz, CIR advisor on climate justice and project manager of the German part of the Game On project:

Knowing that she wanted to contribute to a fairer world, Lisa Kirtz studied languages as well as geography. She holds an international Master's degree in Rural Development and worked for five years as a consultant and trainer, focusing mostly on climate change adaptation issues in an international context. Witnessing the always growing effects of the climate crises and the sharp contrast of progress in climate politics, Lisa decided to shift her work towards climate justice. As advisor on climate justice and project manager of the German part of the Game On project, Lisa raises awareness amongst young Europeans and decision makers alike.

Activities for Climate Justice within the Game On Project

CIR's climate campaign work includes trips to Central America as well as speakers tours from Central American activists to Europe.

- **In a camp in the summer of 2022**, 40 young climate activists from Europe and Central America learned about the consequences of the climate crisis in Guatemala and worked together on ways to achieve climate justice. The diverse excursions, some with long-standing CIR partner organisations, were dedicated to topics such as the effects of climate change on agriculture, environmental effects of palm tree plantations, mining, water management, adapted agriculture, but also memory work and the economic autonomy of women (see ci-romero.de/bericht-climate-camp-guatemala (GE)).
- **In the fall of 2022**, the international climate conference COP27 in Egypt, climate speakers from CIR's partner countries in Central America travelled around Europe and made their voices heard (see ci-romero.de/cop27-klimaforderungen-mittel-amerika (GE)). This diverse group brought together a wide range of expertise on climate-related issues from different perspectives, including community environmental protests, access rights to land and water, and policy negotiations. Among other things, the speakers met political decision makers to sensitise about the dimensions of the climate crisis in Central America, discuss climate financing and loss and damage, and communicate demands to the Global North in terms of measures that need to be taken to achieve climate justice (see: Voices from Central America).
- **In July 2023**, journalists from the Game On project countries in Europe will be collecting evidence of the climate crisis on a tour in Honduras.



LISA KIRTZ, CIR

on climate justice and Central America:

'For climate justice, we need to be many – in Germany and the EU, in Central America and worldwide.'

'I have seen the people in Central America struggle for fertile land, their harvests and their lives: for a better future, despite the climate crisis! But they can't do it alone, and they shouldn't have to. That would be neither feasible nor just. This is why we fight with them, by clearly saying: industrialised countries of the world, keep your climate promises: financially and by cutting down emissions!'

See the video and how you can take action here: climategame.eu/petition (EN)

See the participants' blog articles here (all EN):

climategame.eu/news-article/in-guatemala-a-farmer-s-dream-for-food-put-at-risk-due-to-the-climate-crisis

climategame.eu/news-article/water-as-a-source-of-life-and-a-scarce-resource-in-guatemala-s-high-mountains

climategame.eu/news-article/climate-camp-in-guatemala

CIR's Partner Organisations

Among CIR's many partner organisations, several are concerned with climate justice and employ experts in this field. We present two organisations as examples.

CDH

The CDH Centro de Desarrollo Humano (engl.: Centre of Human Development) is a civil society organisation dedicated to the promotion of human rights associated with alternative, integral and sustainable human development. The CDH was founded in 1985 with the aim to provide strategic support to increase civil society participation in their region and Central America and operates as a private development organisation. They accompany processes of social, political, economic, ecological and cultural empowerment of local and national actors with a special focus on youth, women and indigenous peoples with a perspective of social movement. The CDH is also a longstanding partner of Romero Initiative in projects on political participation, implementation of human rights and local resilience including climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Their three main goals are to: (1) support and contribute to the strengthening, consolidation, unity and self-management of the target group and their organisations, (2) stimulate participatory processes and other actions of the beneficiaries, in pursuit of the defense of their individual and social rights, (3) achieve the economic, social, political and cultural well-being of the target group.

Since 2004, the CDH has started operating on a global scale, expanding and developing its programme areas on local resilience, political management and human rights. Since then, the topic of climate justice has formed a strategic axis and receives priority attention. In cooperation with organised civil society (farmers and trade unions) and primarily youth, women and local people.



UNES

Climate change in El Salvador further worsens the negative impacts of other processes, such as the expansion of monocultures: it leads to a loss of fertile soil, restricts access to water and decreases biodiversity. This has a direct effect on food security and food sovereignty of small-scale farming families. The International Center for Tropical Agriculture estimates that El Salvador will see harvest losses in maize up to 34% due to climate change if adaptation measures are not taken.

CIR's partner organisation UNES supports families in planting fruit and vegetable gardens, which will increase food security with healthy and pesticide-free food. Reforestation efforts with native trees aim at restoring ecosystems, contributing towards the mitigation of climate change. With sensitisation campaigns, UNES raises awareness about the impact of climate change.



Photos: CIR

Climate Justice and Weather Extremes

Responsibility and Consequences

Tropical storms like Eta and Iota, floods due to heavy rainfall or extreme periods of drought: Central America is particularly hard hit by the effects of climate heating. At the same time, the share of Central American countries in the causes of climate change is low.

1.74 trillion tonnes – that's how much CO₂ was blown into the atmosphere between 1750 and 2021. Germany, for example, is in fourth place among the countries with the highest CO₂ emissions, with around 93.29 billion tonnes (Figure 1). More than 30% of historical emissions are Europe's fault. The countries of the Global South, on the other hand, have had, and still have, only a very small share. If the emissions of individual countries are put in relation to the number of inhabitants, the global differences become clear (Figure 2): The countries of the Global North emit significantly more CO₂. For example, while Honduras' CO₂ emissions currently stand at 1.1 tonnes of CO₂ per capita, Germany emitted an average of over 8.1 tonnes of CO₂ per capita in 2021. Although the Global North's responsibility for the climate crisis is obvious, its support to Central America's in dealing with its consequences remains insufficient.

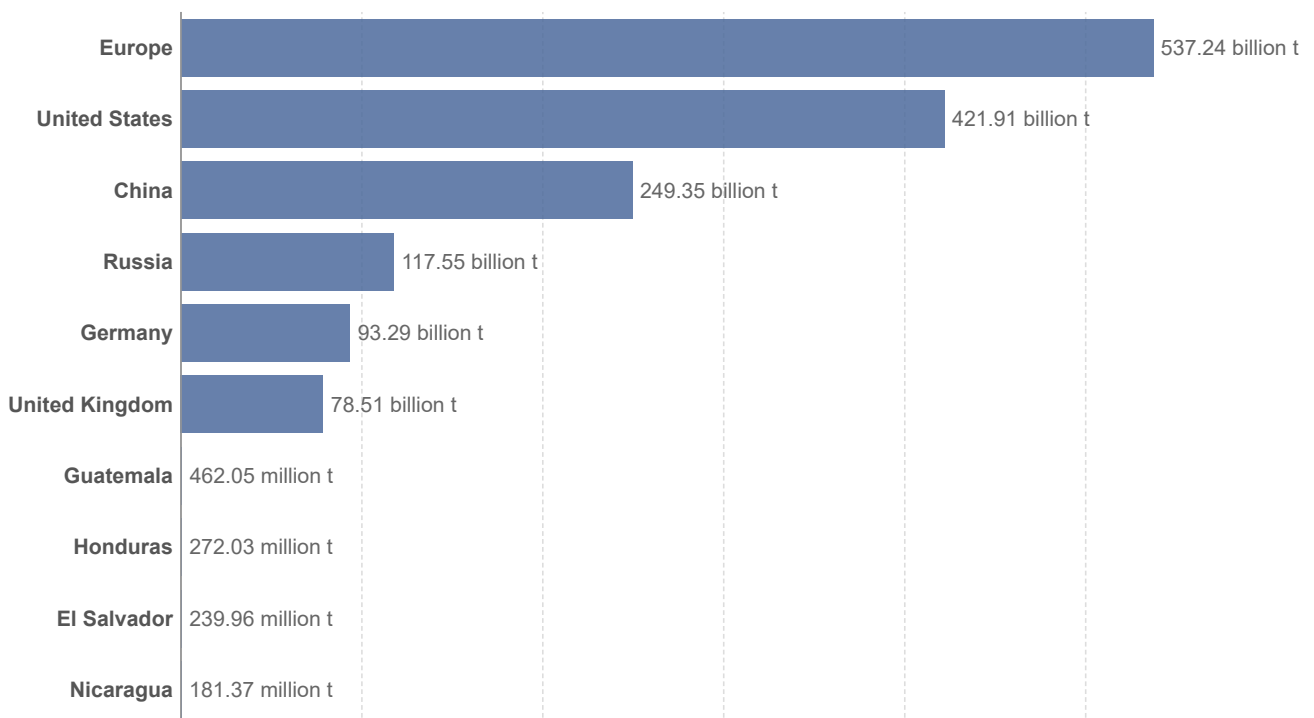
From CIR's brochures (GE)
[ci-romero.de/produkt/
wo-soll-die-reise-hingehen](https://ci-romero.de/produkt/wo-soll-die-reise-hingehen)
and
[ci-romero.de/produkt/
hintergrundpapier-
klimawandel](https://ci-romero.de/produkt/hintergrundpapier-klimawandel)

Figure 1:

Cumulative CO₂ emissions, 2021



Cumulative emissions are the running sum of CO₂ emissions produced from fossil fuels and industry¹ since 1750. Land use change is not included.



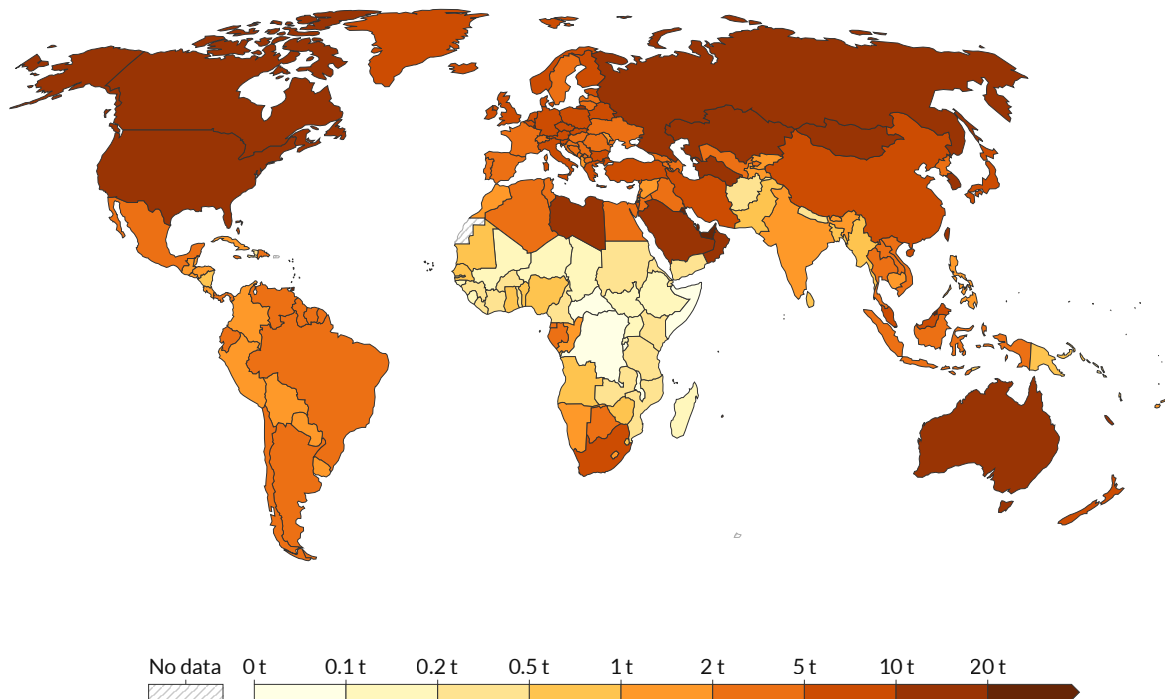
Source: Our World in Data based on the Global Carbon Project

OurWorldInData.org/co2-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions • CC BY

1. Fossil emissions: Fossil emissions measure the quantity of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emitted from the burning of fossil fuels, and directly from industrial processes such as cement and steel production. Fossil CO₂ includes emissions from coal, oil, gas, flaring, cement, steel, and other industrial processes. Fossil emissions do not include land use change, deforestation, soils, or vegetation.

Note: Depending on the source, different figures can be found for per capita emissions. Compare, for example, the figures for Germany in 2022 here: <https://www.bmu.de/media/kohlenstoffdioxid-fussabdruck-pro-kopf-in-deutschland>

Figure 2:

Per capita CO₂ emissions, 2021Carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from fossil fuels and industry¹. Land use change is not included.

Source: Our World in Data based on the Global Carbon Project (2023)

OurWorldInData.org/co2-and-greenhouse-gas-emissions • CC BY

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What Does Climate Justice Mean?

The responsibility for the climate crisis lies largely in the Global North, but the effects are felt in the Global South. Different countries and regions of the world, and also different population groups within societies, are affected differently by climate change. The fields of small farmers in Central America, for example, are exposed to the weather extremes of climate change such as droughts, storms or heavy rainfall. The result is crop failure and food insecurity. Smallholder farmers are thus more exposed to the climate crisis than populations using other economic practices. Furthermore, adaptive capacity also varies and depends on whether the person has sufficient access to income, (land) property, work, mobility, technology, credit and political decision-making processes. Those who have this can better protect themselves against the impacts of climate change. 'And this access often depends on (constructed) categories that hierarchise our societies, such as gender, socio-economic status, race, age and disability. Thus, the climate crisis reinforces existing social inequalities and

injustices¹. Particularly affected by the climate crisis are therefore indigenous communities, smallholder farmers, women, children and the elderly and sick. The concept of climate justice seeks to distribute the burdens and opportunities of climate change in a globally equitable manner (BMZ)². It is the central demand of the climate movement and has various dimensions. The historical emissions of the Global North give good reason for restorative justice: the consequences of the climate crisis should be fairly compensated. But it is also about, for example, the questions of how emission reductions are distributed fairly (distributive justice) and how especially people who are most affected by the climate crisis can participate in climate policy decisions (procedural justice)³.

- bpb.de/themen/klimawandel/dossier-klimawandel/515255/klimagerechtigkeit
- bmz.de/de/service/lexikon/klimagerechtigkeit-125076
- bpb.de/themen/klimawandel/dossier-klimawandel/515255/klimagerechtigkeit

Weather Extremes in Central America

From CIR's brochure (GE)
[ci-romero.de/produkt/
wo-soll-die-reise-hingehen](https://ci-romero.de/produkt/wo-soll-die-reise-hingehen)

Higher frequencies, shorter time spans: In November 2020, the tropical storms Eta and Iota hit within just two weeks of each other.

8,3 million people in Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua were affected: they lost their homes, had their crops fail, or were cut off from the world by floods.

The frequency of extreme weather events in Central America increased from one event every ten years on average to more than ten events per year.

In 2020, there were 30 tropical storms in the Atlantic – the highest number ever recorded. 12 of these storms hit Central America.

The likelihood of a tropical storm in Central America turning into a severe hurricane has increased by about 8% per decade since 1980.



Photo: ERIC – Radio Progreso

NORMA FLORES,
AFFECTED BY THE
TROPICAL STORMS
IN HONDURAS:

'My dream is to be able to rebuild my little house. That is what I ask God for the most. Because where I live now, there is no bathroom, there is no floor – there is nothing.'



Photo: Henry/stock.adobe.com

ROSIBEL BLANDON,
AFFECTED BY THE
TROPICAL STORMS
IN HONDURAS:

'We worry all the time, especially when it starts raining. Sometimes we can't sleep because we fear that at any moment a flooding or a storm could come.'

In Central America, extreme weather events such as floods, longer periods of drought and tornadoes have been increasing in both frequency and intensity for years as a result of climate change. In November 2020, there was a record number of tropical storms in the Atlantic. Category 4 hurricane Eta and hurricane Iota, which was in the highest category as a category 5 hurricane, hit Nicaragua's coast with wind speeds up to 230 km/h and swept over the countries of Central America, with Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador being affected the worst. Massive flooding and landslides occurred, resulting in severe crop failures. 189 people lost their lives, over 400,000 people turned to emergency shelters, 225,000 people in need were cut off from humanitarian aid for weeks. The damages in Nicaragua alone were estimated around 738 million US dollars (USD) (6.2% of GDP), and the United Nations estimated the need for an additional 50.9 million USD in international humanitarian aid efforts, with less than half of that being covered by April 5, 2021. The Munich-based reinsurance company Munich Re estimated the economical damage incurred by hurricane Eta to be around 5 billion euros. These current examples show how much the Central American countries are affected by extreme weather events. Different actors have long stressed it in their analyses and assessments. In the Global Climate Risk Index 2019, Germanwatch researched how much different countries in the world were affected by extreme weather events between 1998 and 2017. Honduras placed second in this ranking, Nicaragua sixth. The countries of the global south are especially affected by extreme weather events. The structures and resources both to put in place preventative measures as well as for being able to act swiftly in the event of a disaster and to manage the results of these nature events are often lacking. According to the Index for Risk Management (INFORM), Guatemala and Honduras, together with Haiti, are part of the group of countries in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean which are at very high risk for disasters and humanitarian crises. A similar verdict can be found in the Global Climate Risk analysis: the Central American countries are afforded a very high disaster risk due to their exposition for extreme weather events as well as their vulnerable societal background.

From ci-romero.de/produkt/hintergrundpapier-klimawandel (GE)

November 2020 – severely affected by hurricanes Eta and Iota: Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Nicaragua



- 🌀 **189** people lost their lives
- 🌀 **400,000** people sought shelter in emergency shelters and camps
- 🌀 **225,000** people could not be reached by humanitarian aid efforts for weeks
- 🌀 Severe **crop failures** due to massive flooding and landslides
- 🌀 **738 million USD** (6.2 % of GDP) damages in Nicaragua alone
- 🌀 An additional **50.9 million USD** needed in international humanitarian aid by the United Nations
- 🌀 **5 billion euros** in economic damages caused by hurricane Eta alone, according to the reinsurance company Munich Re

The Climate Crisis in the Dry Corridor

The dire consequences of these extreme weather events are felt in particular by population groups that have a lower economic standing. The population of the Dry Corridor can be mainly characterised as 'vulnerable' in terms of their means of subsistence. 62% of families in the rural areas of the Dry Corridor are dependent on subsistence farming based on maize and beans. 80% of households that are dependent on producing basic foods live below the poverty line, and 30% of those live in extreme poverty. This makes them even more susceptible to drought periods, storms and strong rains. These events often mean severe crop failures for the small-scale farmers in the region. A drought year can be compensated by keeping food stocks and other strategies. But if farmers face crop failures two or three years in a row, it can lead to massive nutrition crises. This was the case after the drought years of 2014 to 2016, when just in Guatemala and Honduras, 2.8 million people were dependent on humanitarian aid in 2016.

The warming of the climate has a direct and immediate effect on the means of living of the people in the Dry Corridor, and especially on small-scale farming families. A lot of them are lacking the resources to adapt to the climatic changes or to mitigate damages and losses. This would suggest that in future, a growing number of people will be increasingly affected.

The effects of climate change impact other crises in Central America as well: high rates of unemployment, violence, struggles for land and other natural resources, as well as the environmental pollution and destruction (due to converting forests into farmland, monocultures, mining etc.) have a negative impact on the livelihoods of the population. In addition, corruption and a lack of prosecution for crimes and injustices particularly in the countries of the northern triangle of Central America lead to a large number of people migrating. As a result, 22.1% of the total population of El Salvador, which lies firmly in the Dry Corridor, have emigrated (Honduras: 8.9%, Guatemala: 5.8%). Migration of Central Americans to the north has increased, especially since 2013. Studies prove that climate change and food insecurity have become a growing factor for migration in the last years.

From ci-romero.de/produkt/hintergrundpapier-klimawandel (GE)

Climate Change Adaptation

There are some outstanding initiatives for climate change adaptation in Central America. Some examples are:

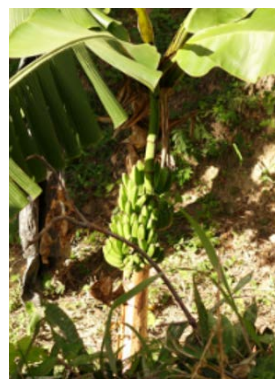
From ci-romero.de/produkt/hintergrundpapier-klimawandel (GE)



- ✓ **Early warning systems for flooding in Honduras and El Salvador: early warning systems help evacuate people in time and save lives.**



- ✓ **Community-based seed banks: they improve access of small-scale farming families to high-quality seeds and reduce crop failure.**



- ✓ **Family gardens help secure food sovereignty: in El Salvador, UNES supports people in, e.g., securing food sovereignty by starting food and vegetable gardens.**



- ✓ **Community network of climate watchers in Central America: Permanent climate monitoring helps small-scale farming families to adapt to result of climate change.**

Demands of the Romero Initiative (CIR)

See ci-romero.de/produkt/hintergrundpapier-klimawandel
(GE, here: updated)

1. Climate goals must be adhered to

In order to finance measures for adjusting and reducing greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation measures) in the Global South, the industrial countries at the Copenhagen Climate Summit 2009 agreed to pay 100 billion euros in climate relief to the countries of the Global South, per year, starting in 2020 – this has never been adhered to until now!

Thus, the EU must provide the promised climate relief. The beneficiaries must be especially those countries that are particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

2. Climate relief, not climate loans

A large part of the funds have been given out as loans to the beneficiary countries, meaning they have to pay them back. As a result, the countries of the Global South fall even deeper into the debt trap.

This needs to change: Financial aids to the countries of the Global South must no longer be given as loans.

3. More support for adaptation measures in the Global South

Decision makers in the EU – according to the Paris Agreement – have to give 50% of climate relief to climate change adaptation measures, and thus, enable more people living in the Global South to adapt to climate warming.

4. Recognise Central America as an especially vulnerable region

In the international climate relief efforts, countries that are deemed especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change by the international community are prioritised. Despite the devastating impacts of climate change on the high vulnerability of Central America, the region has not yet been recognised as a member of the vulnerable regions – this has to change!

5. Climate relief must sufficiently compensate for damages and losses

Long have the representatives of the Global South demanded compensation for damages and losses caused by climate change. Their pleas fell on deaf ears. After the last Climate Summit, the industrial countries finally decided to start a fund for damages and losses. This fund must be sufficiently financed by the members of the EU, among others, and must benefit those who experience severe losses or damage due to climate change.

Voices on the Climate Crisis

Voices from Central America

JERÓNIMO CARRANZA ZEPEDA (60), HONDURAS

Coordinator of the Territory Department at the Jesuit research centre Eric in El Progreso, Honduras, which is supported by the Romero Initiative (CIR) and the Latin America relief organisation Adveniat, about the situation one year after Eta and Iota.

'Sidewalks, bridge superstructures, houses, they're still destroyed. The people return to their homes, they clean up, but they're also thinking about how to renew the infrastructure, how to open farming operations back up – and they're often doing it with their own money, since the state doesn't provide funds.'

That's shameful, and sometimes, we can help them thanks to organisations that we're friendly with, like the Latin America relief organisation Adveniat or the Christian Initiative Romero. We were able to help 1,500 farmers return to farming. But that's just cosmetic. The valley is integral in food production.

So farmers are now farming again on their land that was flooded, but the soil hasn't recovered yet, the yield is lower. And there's not enough building materials to repair and rebuild ...'



From blickpunkt-latein-amerika.de/artikel/honduras-die-landwirtschaft-dem-klimawandel-anpassen (GE)



see ci-romero.de/ergebnisse-der-cop-27 (GE)

LUIS GONZÁLEZ, UNES EL SALVADOR

about the climate crisis and the results of COP27

'The countries of the Global North, among them the United States, the United Kingdom and the countries of the EU, historically bear the greatest responsibility for the emissions. They have enriched themselves for centuries in the colonisation of indigenous peoples and the continuous exploitation of communities and nations in the Global South, including indigenous peoples all over the world, and they refuse to do their fair share in trying to stem this crisis, i.e., paying out climate relief and reparations for the damages and losses that they have caused.'

'It is without a doubt a step in the right direction, setting up funds and the structures that come with it! But we're still missing important resolutions about financing and about who can access the fund. This has not been properly fleshed out and visualised yet.'

On a visit to Lützerath, a village in western Germany that was mined for lignite, became a symbol of the German climate movement for the 1.5-degree limit in early 2023 and is next to the open pit mining site Garzweiler, Luis González was shocked by the extent of the devastation of the landscape:

'When I see sights like this, I think of Latin America, not Europe.'



Luis González and Marlen Corea (see next page) on their visit to Lützerath in the end of 2022



MARLEN COREA, HONDURAS

Environmental Coordinator of the indigenous Lenca community in Honduras, about the climate crisis:



'We see climate change most in natural phenomena, as they are the result and effect of climate change: droughts, flooding, hurricanes, global warming, to name but a few. In addition, these effects of climate change are forcing more people to migrate.'



'We are those who best nurture and protect nature, but we are also those who feel the impact and effects of climate change strongest. The industrial countries have to take responsibility for the damages and losses that occur in the most affected countries due to climate change, immediately. International politics and resolutions have to be implemented now, and green financing has to reach people where it is needed. If we don't do it now, who will? And when will they do it?'

The following three quotes are from the video "Climate Justice for Guatemala!":



ES with GE subtitles: youtube.com/watch?v=PvVICJz0tdE&t=108s

ES with EN subtitles: youtube.com/watch?v=c0j7RK4nXsw&t=20s



PEDRO JUAREZ MARÍN, GUATEMALA

Farmer



'We urgently want the EU to support reforestation and ban deforestation, which is flourishing in our communities. Because if there are no controls, no one is looking.'

GUIDO CALDERÓN, GUATEMALA

from CIR's partner organisation ASEDE



'In many communities there used to be two maize harvests and one bean harvest per year. At the moment, sometimes we don't even have a maize harvest, sometimes we have a small bean harvest.'

CATARINA MÉNDEZ PÉREZ, GUATEMALA

Leader of an indigenous youth group



'We work with a climate station to document the temperature fluctuations.'





FRANCISCO CARREÑO, EL SALVADOR

Human rights defender and climate activist

Francisco Carreño's commitment to the human right to water is particularly important to him. In an interview with CIR, the 30-year-old activist tells us why the availability of clean drinking water for everyone in El Salvador is at risk, what the climate crisis has to do with it, how he campaigns for improvements and what hurdles he has to overcome. Find here the most important quotes:

The whole interview can be found here (GE): ci-romero.de/recht-auf-wasser-el-salvador



'In El Salvador, drinking water is becoming scarce. A lot of it has to do with the deforestation and pollution that's going on in the lakes and rivers and in the groundwater of the hydrographic basins. Climate change makes this problem worse, especially in drought periods, and increases the scarcity of water, both for people and for the ecosystems.'

Along the rivers, lakes and mangroves, raw material is often extracted. Crops are planted in monocultures, and surface and groundwater are inconsiderately used for irrigation. The soil is exhausted, and the ground water is often polluted with agricultural chemicals. This is very often the case with sugar cane farming. On top of that, the state has poor water management.'



'We are losing entire harvests – the majority of the population is involved in farming. This leads to less food sovereignty. Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent with every season. One problem that is increasing every year in my community is the lack of access to water during the summer season, as the aquifers are dried up.'



'Since 2012, I am taking part in demonstrations, in community forums and work groups for a general water law. When the government passed a law about water resources in 2021 without including the organised population, it was a great disappointment for me.'



'We have to consider the risk of repression on a national level. We are in a state of emergency now, so we have to take additional security measures. For example, in order to hold peaceful demonstrations. And we have to watch what we post on social media.'



'Economic and political interests are the greatest hurdles on the way to making water accessible for all. Added to that, the lack of awareness in the population about their own rights and how to fight for them. This is because the majority of the people thinks activists are crazy, and identifies them with a political ideology. Another hurdle is the media which bombards people with a seeming truth that does not represent reality.'

game on | DON'T LET CLIMATE CHANGE
END THE GAME!This project is funded
by the European Union

Voices from Game On Youth Ambassadors

**PAULINE HAUPT, GERMANY**

“The Climate Camp and Game On have shown me how powerful the potential for change is when individuals from different backgrounds come together and share their stories, their activism and the projects they’re passionate about, and when they won’t accept a “game over”!

This is what the CIR and the Game On project means to me: Whether it’s in Guatemala, Germany, El Salvador or the Czech Republic, we will resist, we will enact change and we will look for solutions for a climate-just world together!

**GABIJA GOROBCAITE, LITHUANIA**

on fossil fuels and pollution
(original post see: [facebook.com/gabija.gorobeca](https://www.facebook.com/gabija.gorobeca))

“One of the things in Guatemala that caught my eye, my nose to be exact, was air pollution. In Central America, the buses of the United States of America are used, and the streets are full of vehicles, followed by balls of black smoke. We ride that school bus for a few hours. It’s hot, we have the windows open, but because of the weather we’re traveling through, we often had to close the windows... Through the windows of the bus, we can see residential buildings and understand that people breathe air filled with solid particles and other pollutants here every day... We also see Shell gas stations. Oil giants whose products have contributed greatly to the climate crisis, who knew about it years ago, whose products pollute the air, are reaping profits from people who are already affected by accelerated climate change.

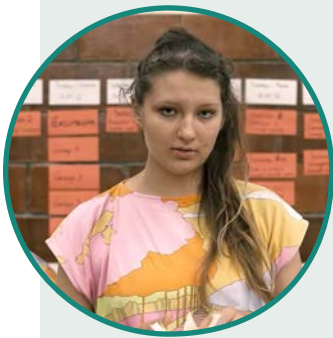
It seems hopeless at first, but for now, I will be happy that in Guatemala there are activists and social-environmental organisations, people are starting to understand what the climate crisis is, and they are fighting for their future despite often being prosecuted by the authorities.’



The whole statement
can be found here (EN):
[youtube.com/
watch?v=AQnK4IGLZ4w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AQnK4IGLZ4w)

ANDREI DINU , ROMANIA

“Mankind and nature are cogs in the same huge system, the harmony of which should be guarded carefully. So it is particularly alarming when large corporations disrupt this delicate balance for their own self-interest and profit. This is what is happening in Guatemala right now, where the frightening growth of the palm oil industry is creating a multitude of environmental and social problems. Associations and local organisations are trying to combat this, and environmentally conscious individuals are also becoming increasingly aware of the need to act. Watch our video to find out what we can do personally or by helping organisations to create a quasi “counter-campaign” to the palm oil industry’s excellent marketing strategy’



The whole statement
can be found here (EN):
[youtube.com/
watch?v=mcSOEib7as8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcSOEib7as8)

ESTER HALAGOVA , SLOVAKIA

“Guatemala is the 8th largest coffee exporter in the world. However, climate change is also leaving its mark on the traditionally coffee-producing region. As a result, coffee farmers are earning very little income due to low yields. The solution may be direct trade and the purchase of organic coffee. Watch our video to see how you can help support fair trade when it comes to a fresh cup of steaming coffee.’

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A VOICE FOR JUSTICE

game on | DON'T LET CLIMATE CHANGE
END THE GAME!

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Published by:
Christliche Initiative
Romero e.V. (CIR)
Schillerstraße 44a,
48155 Münster
Tel: +49 251 674413 0
ci@ci-romero.de
ci-romero.de

Responsible according to the
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climategame.eu
communication@climategame.eu

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