CITIES CALL FOR A FOSSIL FUEL NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY

What is the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty?

The Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is a global campaign for fossil fuel phase-out and a just energy transition. We take inspiration from historical treaties such as the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Mine Ban Treaty, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, among others, in which nations came together to face a global threat. Today we are proposing a multilateral agreement among governments to stop the expansion of fossil fuel production and pursue a global equitable and just transition away from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy systems. Like so many pressing global issues, the leadership of local governments is pivotal and we are looking to your leadership today.

Support for the treaty is growing in momentum. In recent months, 101 Nobel Laureates, over 2,500 scientists and academics, parliamentarians from around the world, major cities including Barcelona, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Sydney and Toronto, as well as more than 850 civil society organisations have endorsed the call for the three pillars of the proposed Treaty:

- **Non-Proliferation** - stop all new coal, oil, or gas exploration and expansion
- **Fair Phase-Out** - equitably phase-out existing fossil fuel production and stockpiles in line with a 1.5°C pathway
- **Just Transition** - increase renewable energy access and ensure no community, country or worker is left behind

Why a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty?

An unprecedented level of global cooperation and coordination is called for as the world faces the COVID-19 pandemic, extreme economic inequality, social injustice and the climate emergency – all at the same time. A Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty is needed to accelerate a global and equitable transition away from fossil fuels to clean, low-carbon energy and economies.

Coal, oil and gas are the biggest culprits of the climate emergency we all face today, making up nearly 80 percent of all carbon emissions released since the industrial revolution. **Governments and the fossil fuel industry continue to ignore science by planning new projects that will result in 120 percent more GHG emissions by 2030 than what is needed to limit warming to 1.5°C** and avert catastrophic climate disruption. Emissions from existing production capacity alone make it impossible to stay within that threshold.

Without addressing the production of fossil fuels we will dangerously overshoot our climate targets. With the recent IEA and IPCC reports, it is time to put the question of managing an equitable transition away from fossil fuels on the international agenda.

The Treaty will complement existing climate treaties, such as the Paris Agreement, that never explicitly mentions or addresses the fossil fuel industry, by generating momentum for stopping fossil fuels at source and phasing-out all coal,
oil and gas production. A Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty offers a mechanism for governments, communities and citizens to work together to accelerate the shift to renewable energy while ensuring the burdens and benefits are shared with poorer countries and fossil fuel workers and communities.

**What is the role of cities in the campaign for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty?**

More than four billion people call cities home, and this number is on the rise every day. These urban centres play a vital role in the global energy transition. Cities dominate global energy use, making up "two-thirds of global energy consumption and more than 70% of annual global carbon emissions." They are sites of both climate havoc, facing heatwaves, flooding and wildfire smoke, and of climate solutions, stopping extractive projects, electrifying local grids, and taking urgent action to protect their communities from climate disruption.

Cities face increasing pressures on their public budgets and policymaking from the climate crisis. Instead of supporting them, national governments tend to bail out fossil fuel producers, funnelling trillions of dollars into a polluting industry. The latest data from Energy Policy Tracker indicates that, since the beginning of the pandemic, at least $296 billion has been committed to fossil fuels by G20 governments. It is therefore in the best interest of cities to support a fossil fuel phase-out and a just energy transition that can free up and redirect these financial resources to help them prepare for and fight the climate emergency.

Cities on the frontline of the climate crisis can move swiftly to phase-out fossil fuels and propel an equitable and just energy transition that relies on cooperative and clean energy sources. Cities play a pivotal role in building collective pressure from below to push national governments to end the fossil fuel era and invest in renewable energy systems. By taking this bold leap, cities can remove the social license of the fossil fuel industry and phase-out coal, oil and gas from their own jurisdictions to make way for renewable energy. This way cities can become laboratories that show what is possible for sustainable urban futures. Cities endorsements grow the public profile of the campaign, spur momentum for the treaty and ultimately put pressure on national governments to sign and ratify such a treaty. This model of city-led global change has powerful historical precedents such as anti-apartheid, nuclear disarmament, and other global movements where cities have set the agenda for nations and the rest of the world to follow.

Major cities and jurisdictions across the world such as Barcelona, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Sydney and Toronto are leaders in a global network of cities committed to fossil fuel non proliferation. Climate justice coalitions and concerned city councillors are coming together for cities to leave fossil fuels in the ground, phase-out existing reserves, and expand renewable energy access for all.

We have plenty of resources to support your city's commitment to the transition from fossil fuels, including an overview of the mighty and influential role cities can play in the global campaign for a Fossil Fuel Treaty, draft treaty endorsements in multiple languages that have helped inspire successful treaty resolutions in cities across the world, and lessons from grassroots movements on how to influence local governments. Reach out to our Global Cities Campaign Lead for more support!
**What are the gains in endorsing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty?**

Cities play a catalytic role in phasing-out fossil fuels, transitioning to renewable energy, and building momentum and collective pressure from below for national governments to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Endorsing the treaty as a city can serve in:

1. **Harnessing the catalytic role of cities to create systemic change.** Just as cities in the 1970s and 1980s declared themselves [Nuclear Weapons Free Zones](#) (NWFZ) to build collective pressure in the nuclear disarmament movement, cities endorsing the Fossil Fuel Treaty can grow momentum and influence national governments to phase-out fossil fuels and transition to clean energy.

2. **Redirecting public money from fossil fuels to a just recovery.** The [G20 governments bailouts of the fossil fuel industry](#) are not unique — globally the International Monetary Fund estimated that $5.9 trillion were funnelled into fossil fuel subsidies in 2020. This vast amount of public money that is funding the climate emergency and shrinking cities’ public budgets can be redirected to support stimulus funding for a just recovery and renewable energy for all.

3. **Protecting urban communities from climate disruption.** Cities are on the frontline of the climate crisis, facing wildfires, flooding and heatwaves at an escalating scale. Phasing-out and removing the social license of fossil fuels in cities protects communities from the harms and hazards of resource extraction and fossil fuel pollution, while limiting the principal drivers of climate disruption (coal, oil and gas).

4. **Accelerating a transition in global energy hotspots.** Cities are home to more than four billion people, or more than 55% of the global population — this figure is set to rise to nearly 70% by 2050. As cities dominate global energy consumption and annual emissions, what happens in cities affects the entire planet. This means urban action to phase-out coal, oil and gas and propel a just energy transition can accelerate renewably powered urban futures where the majority of humanity resides.

5. **Backstopping efforts to stop fossil fuel extraction.** Cities are exemplifying bold leadership by becoming laboratories of fossil free futures. But these efforts to phase-out extractive projects and herald a transition to renewable energy are being undermined by fossil fuel expansion. Endorsing the Fossil Fuel Treaty can end this destructive cycle by moving beyond site-battles against fossil fuel production and instead ensuring no new fossil fuel expansion moves forward to safeguard our planet.

6. **Bolstering climate emergency declarations.** Thousands of cities around the world have passed climate emergency declarations. Despite these resolutions, the fossil fuel industry continues to expand unabated. Calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty endorsement in your city can reinforce these climate emergency declarations and signal to national governments that a transition away from fossil fuels must happen now.

7. **Building collective pressure from the ground up.** Cities are visionaries, with the ability to move much more swiftly than sub-national and national governments to shift the urban energy matrix to renewable energy systems and protect their communities from climate chaos. A groundswell of cities calling for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty in a particular country can create a critical mass of cities and a positive tipping point that influences the national government to phase-out fossil fuels and transition to clean energy.
8. Creating diverse coalitions to make fossil fuels history. Cities around the world, such as Barcelona, Vancouver, Los Angeles, Sydney and Toronto are among a rising tide of global cities calling for a global fossil fuel phase-out. These cities are connected to a growing chorus of Nobel Laureates, parliamentarians, young people, academics and scientists, and civil society organisations who are demanding an end to the fossil fuel era and a just energy transition for all.

**How do you join the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty campaign?**

Municipal governments can endorse the Treaty by passing formal motions. Organizations and individuals can endorse the call for a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty here.

If you are interested in drafting a motion, or launching a campaign calling on your city to endorse the Treaty, you can explore our cities campaign resources here or reach out to our Global Cities Campaign Lead, Seble Samuel on seble@fossilfueltreaty.org.