

To:

- Ministry of the Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands
- Technical Secretariat of the Non-Proliferation Treaty

The Latin American Network on Extractive Industries (RLIE), composed of the following organizations: Fundación Terram (Chile), Fundación Jubileo (Bolivia), FUNDAR (Mexico), Grupo Faro (Ecuador), Fundación Foro Nacional por Colombia, Ibase (Brazil), Congcoop (Guatemala), CEDLA (Bolivia), FUNDEPS (Argentina), Entre (Mexico), Grupo Propuesta Ciudadana (Peru), Cooperación (Peru), and DAR (Peru); in alliance with the Coordination of Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin (COICA), hereby express our recognition for the organization of the First International Conference for the Transition Beyond Fossil Fuels, given the regional need to lead its own development pathways for energy integration and planning, in accordance with its environmental, social, economic, and institutional characteristics.

It is important to note that RLIE and COICA consider it essential to establish spaces for regional coordination, as well as to deepen the multi-stakeholder public debate that promotes an energy transition prioritizing human rights, gender equity, and environmental protection, while actively countering regulatory and institutional weakening in the mining and energy extractive sectors. It is also a priority to advance energy planning that includes communities that still lack access to energy, recognizing such access as an enabling condition for the enjoyment of other rights.

In this regard, we would like to present five key issues for consideration in the dialogues of this Conference:

1. The need to implement a Latin American perspective on Energy Justice.

There are currently different theoretical and conceptual approaches to energy justice and how it can contribute to the development of a common, decolonial vision of what justice should mean for Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), based on territorial and social perspectives. Starting from the premise that not all members of society start from a position of equality regarding environmental and energy problems, especially in countries of the Global South where, historically, situations of territorial dispossession and environmental impacts have occurred, generating socio-environmental conflicts linked to extractive activities—including, in some countries of the region, large-scale renewable energy plants that are understood as false solutions. Therefore, it is necessary for energy justice to recognize the importance of rethinking the perspective of energy as a simple commodity, eliminating all forms of oligopoly in its generation, transmission, and distribution process. Therefore, it must be understood as collective heritage, a key human right to reduce the gap in energy access and energy poverty, focused on improving the living conditions of communities. In this sense, energy justice must recognize structural inequalities, as well as the past, present, and future injustices experienced by Latin American countries (Roza, 2023).

Energy justice must also generate better and different processes: participatory mechanisms for binding decision-making, accountability spaces, and facilities for access to information that include communities, civil society, academia, and unions, among other social organizations, so that the diverse sectors of society historically excluded from energy development are recognized (Araya, 2023). All of this should be based on democratic principles that provide social and political legitimacy to the processes undertaken.

2. Climate goals must include social, economic, and environmental justice concepts.

There is undoubtedly a relationship between the change of the energy matrix toward renewable energies and the decarbonization process, which constitutes one of the main goals of the Paris Agreement. However, climate goals, as designed for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, are insufficient to address energy justice in Latin America and the Caribbean. This is because the establishment of climate goals has not strengthened binding spaces to include the voices of indigenous peoples, Afro-descendants, peasants, women, among others, who today cannot directly influence climate decisions and policies.

Similarly, there is a disconnection between the climate commitments of countries in the region and their areas and/or territories highly affected by the crisis, presenting objectives centered on economic development and closing the gap in energy access for productive sectors, while relegating the right to energy of the people, without safeguarding their fundamental rights and well-being. This has caused the energy transition to be focused mainly on its macroeconomic value and to a lesser extent on its social and climatic potential (DAR, 2026).

3. Energy alternatives that benefit the most vulnerable.

Energy consumption in Latin America and the Caribbean still maintains a high dependency on fossil sources; although on average hydroelectricity is still the most relevant source, the truth is that this implies interconnection to national systems that transport electricity. When analyzing energy consumption by economic sector, significant gaps are observed by type of sector, with firewood still prevailing as the main energy source consumed by the most vulnerable population in some countries (OLADE 2024).

On the other hand, the primary energy supply is also largely based on the exploitation of oil and natural gas, fundamentally oriented toward export to generate foreign exchange and oil revenue in each country. However, the gaps in energy access between urban and rural areas of our countries have not been resolved; this has caused such an energy dependency that it permanently increases the need to exploit more hydrocarbons, especially in sensitive ecosystems.

Although policies exist for generation from renewable sources, these are focused on self-generation and not on distributed generation policies, which are ideal in countries with photovoltaic potential. Water sources have also been focused on the development of mega-dams for electricity export or the power supply of large urban centers, leaving aside the necessary connection with rural areas and indigenous communities that require energy; in these cases, small-scale run-of-river hydroelectric generation, which has potential throughout LAC, could be enhanced.

These elements motivate us as civil society to once again put people at the center of energy generation and consumption. An energy transition cannot be just if it is limited only to generation sources and does not also consider consumption patterns, security, autarky, and energy sufficiency.

4. The phase-out of fossil fuels cannot promote greater "green extractivism," a higher demand for minerals, and the definition of "sacrifice zones."

The gradual exit from fossil fuels in the region must not be understood as an opportunity to continue a new generation of dependent extractivism in LAC. In fossil-dependent countries, the urgency stems from recognizing the potential that subnational territories have to promote diversified economic development that does not depend on the extraction of commodities. The environmental and social impacts of the exploitation of non-renewable natural resources are the starting point for rethinking the productive and economic policy of the territories, promoting environmental protection and the inclusion of communities in the development of their regions.

The narrative asserting that the energy transition requires strategic minerals needs to be discussed in incident governance spaces where civil society can raise its concerns from notions of justice and where public authorities guarantee the inclusion of their demands. In this way, democracy is strengthened by allowing a concerted decision on the development of territories, reducing the invisibility that social sectors and groups under special protection have experienced in these decision-making processes.

The alternative cannot be replacing one extractivism with another. The alternative must be to strengthen science, technology, and innovation, strategic efficiency in the management of public resources, and institutional strengthening, among other elements. This will allow for leadership in building shared development visions that have positive impacts on economic, environmental, social, and community development by allowing labor inclusion, productive and labor conversion, and the construction and strengthening of value chains in goods and services, guaranteeing the conservation and care of natural resources and the environment.

5. Indigenous peoples: central actors for a real change in the energy transition.

Today, one of the lessons learned from climate negotiations is the weak implementation of actions for the energy transition in indigenous territories. In this framework, the indigenous peoples of the Amazon, Andean peasant communities, rural, Afro-descendant, and coastal communities have historical demands that must be reclaimed in the transition processes and placed as central actors.

Today, through this letter submitted by COICA and RLIE, we want to express that it is necessary for the energy transition to be planned from the territories, knowing the contexts; as well as amplifying legal security processes to avoid overlap and conflicts with other activities. Furthermore, it is necessary to think of energy as a condition for exercising human rights such as health, education, among others. At the same time, it is necessary for new technologies to be well known by the peoples themselves to strengthen their autonomy. Finally, and most importantly, it is necessary to respect the implementation and fulfillment of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent agreements, which have been weakened in recent years under legal instruments or safeguards that should not replace collective rights; as well as to strengthen the participation spaces

established within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), both at the national and regional levels.

Finally, the burning of fossil fuels—including coal, oil, and gas—has reached record levels of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, causing humanity to experience an unprecedented climate emergency. Added to this, 16% of the world's fossil fuel infrastructure is located in indigenous territories (Amnesty, 2025). Therefore, they are the ones suffering the direct impacts of the fossil industry, such as health impacts (cardiovascular diseases, reproductive problems) as well as those caused by the contamination of freshwater sources. The fossil industry has developed in a scenario of social and climate injustice that must be repaired, reversed, and progressively eliminated. For this, it is necessary for the region to develop its own planning based on its territories, biodiversity, and political diversity, materializing fossil-fuel-free zones, demanding respect for human rights, improving socio-environmental and economic regulatory frameworks, and implementing energy alternatives respectful of life. This is with the purpose of repairing historical debts with the peoples of LAC and improving the quality of life through access to energy that is not commodified and thinks of people and nature.

RLIE Organizations:

