GLOBAL TAX TREATY NEGOTIATORS MEET AS RECORD HEAT INTENSIFIES WORLDWIDE

Why the Global Tax Treaty, also known as the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation (UNTC), matters now

As communities in the Northern Hemisphere endure another summer of deadly heatwaves and wildfires, and living costs and ocean temperatures are rising across the globe, the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC-5) on the Global Tax Treaty comes at a pivotal moment. With major oil and gas companies expected to announce second-quarter profits at even higher levels than the 80% quarter-on-quarter increase announced in April and May, the negotiations are an opportunity for governments to advance fairer global tax rules that help fund climate action, public services and a just transition. They would also strengthen states' capabilities to meet sustainable development goals.

Fossil fuel corporations and the super-rich, through their carbon intensive investments, are polluting and profiting. According to a recent Greenpeace Africa report, the world's richest 0.01% are linked to an estimated US$992 billion in climate debt in 2022 alone, through their ownership of and investments in highly polluting industries like oil and gas. That is close to the entire grant-based public climate finance needs of developing countries each year - estimated at at least US$1 trillion.

Governments need funds for a fair and green transition; in the Global South especially, there is an urgent need for public climate finance that has been promised and still not delivered. But for as long as global tax rules are not reformed and countries don't align their fiscal policies with international climate and nature goals and agreements, countries will continue to lose an estimated US$492 billion every year to multinational corporations and wealthy individuals who shift profits and hide their money in tax havens.

The Global Tax Treaty also known as the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation or UN Tax Convention is the first genuinely inclusive and democratic forum for rewriting global tax rules. Unlike the OECD, every country has an equal vote, and decisions are taken by majority, not consensus - limiting the ability of a small group of low-tax or blocking countries to derail progress.

With negotiations now moving into the fifth round (INC-5) governments can no longer continue with a system that treats tax policies as unrelated to ongoing climate and nature crises and allows polluters and billionaires to avoid their responsibilities. They must seize this opportunity to fix global tax rules and unlock new public finance at scale to invest in public services, renewable energy and climate change adaptation and build a level playing field for all actors within the economy.

INC-5 takes place in New York from 3-13 August 2026. Greenpeace campaigners can provide interested journalists with additional reflections on the political dynamics ahead of the session and at the negotiations in New York.

*Representatives from climate-impacted communities from the Philippines and Kenya are also available for interviews online and in New York. See **Stories from Climate-Impacted Communities** below for further background.*

Key dynamics to look out for at INC-5

Will the negotiations reflect and respond to external political and climate change developments? Since the last round of negotiations in February (INC-4), several major geopolitical events have happened which significantly strengthen the case for bold agreements under the Global Tax Treaty to increase taxes on the super-rich and on the profits of international oil and gas companies.

Relevant recent events include:

- the arrival of the world's first trillionaire;
- the war on Iran and extraordinary fossil fuel profit and price rises - increasing costs for consumers and households around the world;
- 141 countries voting in support of a landmark UN General Assembly resolution that endorses and advances implementation of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) Advisory Opinion on climate change and state responsibility;
- 57 countries reiterating their commitment to ending coal, oil and gas dependence through attending the world's first conference on transitioning away from fossil fuels in Colombia;
- devastating extreme weather, from record-breaking heatwaves in Europe that caused thousands of deaths, to soaring pre-monsoon temperatures that put hundreds of millions at risk across India and Pakistan.

Push-back on zero draft publication? A 'zero draft' has now been published, containing the first full set of legal articles for the UN Tax Convention. This follows earlier 'template' texts discussed at the last two rounds of negotiations, and it will enable much more substantive talks to take place. Greenpeace's assessment is that the 'zero draft' falls woefully short of seizing this once-in-a-generation opportunity to hold the wealthiest polluters to account.

Despite 24 countries having made verbal and written submissions aligned with strengthening the Sustainable Development article (Article 4) since the negotiations began in 2025, this article has not evolved since the very first 'template' text was published last October. Nor is the Polluter Pays Principle included anywhere else in the text.

Similarly, despite some countries' earlier proposals to strengthen the High-net-worth individuals article (Article 6), it has been watered down since the last 'template' text in January, weakening obligations on countries to deliver tangible action. Amongst other issues, the 'zero draft' also fails to include any provisions on minimum profit taxation of multinational companies, or on the taxation of extractive industries and natural resources.

As we approach INC-5, negotiators will have an opportunity to highlight and push back against the disconnect between this 'zero draft' and the realities of the climate and inequality crises faced by communities around the world. Whether they speak out and try to advance stronger Convention text is an ultimate test of whether governments are ready to address the challenges their people are facing - or if they will instead continue to protect the wealthiest polluters and bury their heads in the sand.

Will draft governance provisions establish solid foundations for ambitious implementation? Greenpeace understands that the procedural elements of the UN Tax Convention were a major topic discussed in the online intersessional meetings with Parties since INC-4. This relates to questions such as: the role and power of future Conferences of Parties (COPs) to agree, implement, monitor and enforce global tax rules once the Framework Convention is adopted; the establishment of subsidiary bodies; the role of the secretariat; financial resourcing arrangements for the Convention; and the relationship between the Convention and existing tax treaties. These issues may receive particular attention during the INC-5 negotiations. While some of these discussions may be fairly technical, they will make or break the final Convention's power to genuinely ensure global tax rules that deliver sustainable development in its three dimensions (economic, social and environmental).

What the Global Tax Treaty could deliver for climate and tax justice

A new global agreement on progressive environmental taxation

Secure a commitment that countries must deliver - at the national and international level - progressive environmental taxation in line with the polluter pays principle and Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC). This could create a legal mandate for the establishment of new global and national polluter taxes on corporations like fossil fuel companies and High-Net-Worth-Individuals (HNWIs), as well as for governments to redirect subsidies from polluting industries towards supporting investments in line with international climate and nature agreements. Together, these measures could mobilise hundreds of billions of US dollars in public finance for climate action, public services and sustainable development.

Effective taxation of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs)

A global minimum standard on taxing extreme wealth, including progressively higher tax rates for HNWIs and the support of redistributive mechanisms between countries could curb capital flight. Transparency measures - such as a global asset registry, beneficial ownership transparency and expanded Automatic Exchange of Information - are essential preconditions. As a result, effective global taxation of HNWIs would mobilise significant revenues for sustainable development, public services, and climate and nature investments.

A new polluter tax on the global profits of international fossil fuel companies.

A new global polluter tax of 20% on the consolidated profits of the biggest oil and gas corporations, applied fairly and equitably, with tax rates progressively increasing over time, could raise more than $100 billion every year in its first few years. The revenues should be directed to multilateral climate funds to support communities least responsible for - and most affected by - climate damage.

Fairer allocation of taxing rights between countries

Rebalance taxing rights so that countries, particularly in the Global South, can tax multinational corporations where real economic activity occurs. Currently, multinationals artificially shift profits to low or no-tax jurisdictions where they have little or no economic presence - eroding national tax bases and undermining governments' ability to mobilise domestic resources and invest in sustainable development. Clarifying which countries have the right to tax high-net-worth individuals in cross-border situations would help prevent tax avoidance, capital flight and gaps where HNWIs pay tax nowhere.

For further background, please refer to Greenpeace International's previous media briefing, which includes key facts and figures.

Stories from climate-impacted community representatives

Where indicated, the representatives are available for interviews online and/or in person in New York.

Mayor Melchor Mergal, current Municipal Mayor of Salcedo, Eastern Samar, Philippines, survivor of super-typhoon Haiyan and subsequent typhoons, former province chair in disaster risk reduction and management and member of province climate change adaptation committee (online & in person): is available to talk about his personal experience of super-typhoon Haiyan and the impacts it had on the Philippines and the municipality he represents - including the funding gaps faced by communities and the types of things money is needed for to rebuild. He is able to offer reflections on how bold new global rules on progressive environmental taxation would help further efforts in the Philippines and elsewhere to deliver on this agenda, and help boost international climate finance for Global South countries facing climate impacts.

Emmanuel Kiptoo Ngolepus, youth leader & co-founder of a women's rights organisation in West Pokot County, Kenya, and member of a marginalised pastoralist community facing drought, severe heatwaves and landslides (online): is available to talk about the economic challenges facing the people, particularly young people and rural communities, in Kenya - including the lack of government investment and growing climate impacts affecting livelihoods. He can share his experiences and motivation for joining the youth protests that took place in Kenya in 2024, in response to the government's proposals to roll out regressive levies that would increase costs for ordinary people and make daily life even harder to afford.

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