



Countries like Sudan and Uganda will benefit from the fund.  
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# COP28 opens with loss and damage deal

## Iranian delegation walks out in protest at Israel participation Support far too little, far too late: UN chief

### First day fund victory

A breakthrough was achieved on the inaugural day of the COP28 UN summit hosted by UAE, as countries banded together to establish a groundbreaking fund aimed at assisting the world's poorest and most vulnerable nations in coping with the impacts of climate disasters. The agreement garnered a standing ovation from delegates. The host country, UAE, and Germany committed \$100 million each to the loss and damage startup fund. The primary objective of this financial initiative is to address the escalating costs stemming from extreme weather events and gradual yet devastating disasters such as rising sea levels, ocean acidification, and melting glaciers.

Simon Stiell, executive secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, stated "Today's news on loss and damage gives this UN climate conference a running start. Governments and

their negotiators must seize this opportunity to deliver truly ambitious outcomes here in Dubai." Sultan Al Jaber, the president of COP28, added, "I am more confident than ever that we will deliver an unprecedented result." The onus now falls on other wealthy nations to announce their contributions, as world leaders prepare to take the stage on Friday and Saturday. With loss and damage costs in developing countries already estimated to exceed \$400 billion annually, and expected to rise, time is of the essence. The future trajectory of these expenses will be contingent upon the effectiveness of climate mitigation and adaptation efforts. The blueprint for this groundbreaking agreement entails the establishment of a fund under the auspices of the World Bank, initially capable of disbursing funds to developing nations. This fund will be financed by rich industrialized nations, emerging economies, and fossil fuel-producing countries, including China, Gulf States, and the United Arab Emirates, the host country of COP28.

### Iran for 'common but differentiated responsibility'

Iran's Minister of Energy, Ali Akbar Mehrabian, had prepared a speech to present on behalf of Iranian government at the 28th conference on combating climate change in the UAE. However, in protest against the presence of Israeli delegations, the Iranian delegation decided to leave the conference.

In the statement, it is argued that imposing compensation for climate change damages on developing countries would impede their development process, which is their inherent right. The document acknowledges that climate change is a major crisis in the world today, leading to an increase in extreme weather events globally, particularly in the Middle East. The statement recognizes the importance of concepts such as 'common but differentiated responsibility' in

global literature and their establishment as a collective commitment to the global community. It also emphasizes that the success of joint efforts to mitigate climate change, promote adaptation, and enhance resilience depends on developed countries implementing compensatory measures based on their historical responsibility and commitments. Furthermore, it suggests adopting an approach for developing countries that incorporates principles of justice, flexibility, and common but differentiated responsibility, encompassing financial, technical, and technological support. The statement highlights that poverty alleviation, healthcare improvement, and access to housing and energy are crucial priorities for a significant portion of the developing world. The lack of implementation mechanisms for climate measures, including financial resources and technology transfer, poses the greatest challenge for these nations. Therefore, the focus should be on emphasizing compensation for damages and losses by developed countries.



### Warning to world leaders

In a speech delivered at the opening of the World Climate Action Summit, UN Secretary-General highlighted the urgent need for global leaders to address the pressing climate crisis.

After expressing his gratitude to the UAE for their warm hospitality and commending COP28 President for the positive start to the conference, António Guterres drew attention to the melting ice of Antarctica and the disappearing glaciers of Nepal.

He emphasized the interconnectedness of these environmental crises, and stressed that polar ice and glaciers vanishing before our eyes have far-reaching consequences, from landslides and floods to rising sea levels. However, the Secretary-General made it clear that this is just one symptom of the larger sickness plaguing our climate.

"Earth's vital signs are failing: record emissions, ferocious fires, deadly droughts and the hottest year ever. We can guarantee it even when we're still in November," Guterres warned.

He also pointed out that we are far from meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and dangerously close to exceeding the 1.5-degree temperature limit. Despite the grim situation, he expressed optimism that it is not too late to prevent a planetary catastrophe.

# Social waste management could rescue Iran's Hyrcanian forests

### Social Desk

The head of Iran's Department of the Environment (DoE) has announced that the Social Waste Management (SWM) project is currently being piloted in the villages of Darabkala and Dalir in Mazandaran Province. As a result, these villages have seen a 70 percent reduction in waste.

"The implementation of SWM should be extended nationwide," said Ali Salajegheh, according to Tasnim News Agency. Ali Salajegheh emphasized the importance of people's involvement in waste management. He believes that waste should be seen as a valuable resource, and when people recognize its worth, they will be less likely to dispose of it. Education plays a crucial role in promoting this understanding.

Salajegheh outlined the SWM plan, which has been successfully implemented in Mazandaran Province with the support of the National Environment Fund. He stressed the need for a people-centered approach to waste management and called for the nationwide implementation of SWM, starting with the northern cities that face waste-related challenges.

The vice president highlighted the case of Amol city, which has struggled to find suitable waste disposal sites. He proposed implementing the SWM plan through zoning in Amol, aiming to tackle the city's waste issues effectively.

The head of the DoE shared the success of the SWM plan in Kiakala, where for every 10,000 tons of waste produced, eight people are employed directly.

"Household waste is purchased from those

who separate their waste, and through a cycle that avoids landfilling, the waste is transformed into organic fertilizer for local agricultural lands," he said.

He emphasized that the key to this approach lies in providing education and creating incentives for people to actively participate in waste management. Profitability is linked to people's involvement in the process.

Salajegheh stressed that waste management does not require complex formulas but can be achieved through SWM, which combines social innovations with technical solutions. The SWM project aims to prevent water and soil pollution caused by leachate, eliminating the need for compost factories, waste incinerators, and collection machines.

In the SWM project, community organizations provide training to villagers on proper waste separation. Large garbage bins are then collected from these villages, and each family is provided with two separate bins for dry and wet waste. With the knowledge gained from the training, people separate their waste accordingly, and it is collected from them.

Wet waste is transformed into compost in a farm located near the village, while dry waste is purchased from individuals who participate in waste collection.

"These individuals benefit from the material rewards of waste collection," Salajegheh said. Furthermore, designated SWM shops in these areas allow people to exchange their accumulated points for goods, incentivizing their active participation in waste management.



### An overview of waste disposal in northern Iran

The accumulation of garbage in the Hyrcanian forests in the north of Iran began around 50 years ago due to the challenges associated with proper waste disposal in the region. Over time, these mountains of garbage have reached a height of over 90 meters. It is important to note that this issue is not a recent phenomenon.

The unique topographic conditions of Iran's northern provinces, including their proximity to the sea and the presence of numerous rivers and underground aquifers, make it difficult to dispose of waste in the conventional manner used by other cities in the country. Consequently, we observe the accumulation of a massive waste mountain within the heart of the pristine forests of the north. This waste accumulation is increasing each year due to population growth and the rise in per capita waste production. The consequences of this problem are becoming increasingly serious, posing a threat not only to the health of the forests but also to the well-being of the surrounding communities.

The challenges arising from the waste accu-

mulation include the emission of unpleasant odors, the degradation of the forest landscape, the spread of respiratory and skin diseases, and the contamination of soil and underground water sources. Leachates from the waste flow down and harm even the most resilient trees, causing them to wither and die.

A whopping 64 percent of waste produced in these three provinces is buried in forests, 26 percent is dumped in rivers, and 10 percent is discarded in pastures. Burying 64 percent of waste in forests leads to the pollution of underground water and soil, thereby perpetuating urban and rural waste pollution. Given the unique circumstances of the northern provinces, it is imperative to significantly reduce waste production and transportation to burial centers. This can be achieved by changing consumption patterns, minimizing waste production, reusing devices, and fully implementing waste separation plans from the source.



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