

MAKE POLLUTERS PAY ACTION DAY



SATURDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

Contacting your local representative



Make Polluters Pay Action Day will see people across the UK call on the UK Prime Minister to urgently make polluting industries pay up for climate induced loss and damage.

This UK guide explains more about loss and damage and outlines how to contact your local representative.

What is loss and damage?

Rising global temperatures, caused by greenhouse gas emissions are driving the climate crisis. It's leading to more frequent and severe climate disasters. These climate disasters are happening on a scale so large that communities don't have the resources to adapt, causing them to experience loss and damage. Losses are things which can never be replaced like loss of lives, livelihoods and culture. While damage, such as to homes, roads and schools can be repaired, but it takes resources.

In 2022 more than 1,700 people died due to the floods in Pakistan. And in 2023 over half a million people were displaced in Malawi after their homes were damaged by Cyclone Freddy.

The climate crisis is impacting us all, but those most affected are communities in the global south, who have done the least to cause it.

When climate disasters strike it's affected communities who lead the response. They rebuild their homes, plant new crops and make up for lost income. They pay the bill for loss and damage.

Meanwhile those responsible for the climate crisis, like fossil fuel corporations, continue to make vast profits from their polluting industry, and turn their backs on the loss and damage they've caused.

In 2022 the combined total profits of BP, ExxonMobil, Shell and Total Energies was \$159.5 billion.

What is the solution?

As well as doing all we can to limit temperature rises to minimise future loss and damage, we must make those most responsible pay for loss and damage too.

Thanks to the powerful demands of countries and campaigners in the Global South, in 2022 governments agreed to create an international Loss and Damage Fund. But right now, the fund is empty.

Those most responsible need to pay into the fund now. In doing so it could allow affected communities to access money to support their recovery, and show that big polluters must take responsibility for their climate destroying actions. But the profit driven actions of big polluters show they won't do this willingly.

Join in this Make Polluters Pay Action Day and call on the UK Prime Minister to urgently make polluters pay.

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CONTACTING YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE



Adam Haggerty/ Christian Aid

Our local representatives have the power to influence decision making, pursue policies and pass laws. By building support with them you can help make polluters pay.

Who to contact?

From councilors to members of devolved governments to MPs we all have a variety of local representatives. When pursuing change it's good to pick the local representative in the best position to impact the policy you're trying to change. When it comes to making polluters pay into the Loss and Damage Fund agreed at COP27 your local MP is your best placed representative, through Parliament they can influence the UK Prime Minister who's involved in the discussions about the Fund.

Right now, only a small group of MPs are vocal in their support for making polluters pay in Parliament. To successfully pressure the UK Prime Minister it's important for lots of MPs from all nations and parties to show support. Many MPs aren't hearing about making polluters pay from their constituents, by contacting your MP you can help build the pressure.

Scottish loss and damage funding:

Since 2021 the Scottish Government have led the way on loss and damage funding, having created their own fund and committed £7 million to it over the next 3 years. But in reality this is a tiny amount compared to the scale of loss and damage. To meet this scale we need to make polluters pay their fair share on an international level, making the success of the international Loss and Damage Fund agreed at COP27 vital. That's why it's critical to build the UK Prime Minister's support for urgently making polluters pay by contacting your MP, in addition to calling on the Scottish Government to increase their funding.

For more information on making polluters pay and Scottish loss and damage funding contact Lucy le Roux at edinburgh@christian-aid.org

What to say to your MP?

However you want to connect with your MP, in person or writing, what you say to them is up to you, but below are some suggested points:

- **Introduction:** Start by briefly saying who you are as an individual or a group. With this include where you live so the MP knows you're in their constituency, otherwise they'll likely dismiss you.
- **What and why:** Share what loss and damage is and why you care about it.
- **Personalise:** Try to link making polluters pay on loss and damage to something your MP is already supportive of such as a local environmental project, or relevant to a position they hold, for instance being a member of the net zero committee. Later on there's information on how you can find out about your MP.
- **Ask:** It's important to have a clear ask for your MP, below are some you could pick from:
 - Sign the [Global Parliamentarians Pledge](#) calling for the urgent and fair

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operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund agreed at COP27- <https://tinyurl.com/gpplad>

- Attend the parliamentary event on loss and damage funding in early November organised by members of the Make Polluters Pay coalition.
- Write to the Minister for International Development and ask that the Government commit, ahead of COP28, to make UK-based fossil fuel companies pay in order to finance the UN's Loss and Damage Fund agreed at COP27.
- **Response:** Building a productive relationship with your MP means offering ways you can support them in their action e.g. answering questions or providing briefings. With questions it's ok to say you don't know but you'll find out, this has the benefit of continuing your communication.
- **Briefing:** Give them an MP briefing with additional information, but make sure you mention your main points as they may not read the briefing. Christian Aid have an MP briefing at- caid.org.uk/l&dmpbriefing
- **Thanks:** Thank them for acting as your representative, this can help their efforts on this issue feel valued, contributing to a more positive partnership.

Clear and succinct: Being clear and focused is more impactful. Plan your meeting well to keep it to the point. With a letter/email follow a clear structure and write around 400 - 500 words, and definitely don't write more than 800 words. The template letter in our comms pack offers some ideas for writing to your MP

caid.org.uk/mppadcomms

I don't know enough about loss and damage to contact my MP.

It's easy to assume that someone else knows more and will be better at contacting your MP than you, but you don't need to be an expert! You just need to be motivated by the injustice of loss and damage, but if you'd like more information you could:

- Watch Stamp Out Poverty's Loss and Damage- and Who Should Pay for It Video- <https://tinyurl.com/rhldvideo>
- Read Christian Aid's 1 pager to learn more about where the money for the Loss and Damage Fund should come from- caid.org.uk/mppmayreport

How to find out about your MP?

Before contacting your MP it's good to know a bit about them to help you find some common ground. By using theyworkforyou.com you can see their voting record and if they hold any particular positions relevant to the issue. Their social media, website and staff can also help you find out the issues they care about.

How to contact your MP?

Once you know more about your MP you can look to contact them by:

Meeting: The most effective way to lobby your MP is to meet them, giving you both a chance to build a partnership. You could ask to attend one of their regular constituent surgeries, or invite them to something you're organising. Christian Aid have a template letter to arrange a meeting at- caid.org.uk/mppininvite

Writing: You can also start your contact by writing a letter or email to your MP. As with a meeting you can do this alone, but it is more impactful if done as a group.

When to contact your MP?

Make Polluters Pay Action Day is on Saturday 23 September, so you might like to contact your MP around then to mention you're part of this wider movement. But if this doesn't work for your group or MP find a time and date that works for you.

How can I invite people?

Whether you're meeting or writing to your MP, you'll have more impact as a group of constituents than acting alone. There are lots of simple ways to invite people to get involved, the key is to share why this is important and the impact they can make. Here's some ways to invite others:

- **Email lists:** Invite via email using existing lists such as members of worship communities, or draw up one yourself from friends and local networks.
- **Websites:** Share on community group websites, and add to [ours](#) directly or contact us via campaigns@christian-aid.org
- **Social media:** Create a group chat to plan your MP meeting and then share the link to join on your own profile.
- **Announcements:** Share that you're contacting your MP in the notice section of a community meeting, and invite others to join you.
- **Speak to people:** talk to friends, family and your wider community about it and ask them to pass it on.

After contacting your MP

Thanks and follow up: How you follow up with your MP depends on how you initially contacted them, but it's important to keep the conversation going:

- **Meeting:** Write and thank them for meeting you, remind them of any actions they agreed to and provide them with any information they requested. If you don't hear back in a few weeks look for an opportunity to get in touch (e.g. another action you're taking) and check in on their actions. Remember some actions take time.
- **Written:** MPs receive many letters/emails so give them time to respond. After a couple of weeks you can

phone their office to check if they've received it. Check their reply to see if they've responded to your asks and write your own response. Christian Aid have some 'what to say next' suggestions to some common MP replies-

caid.org.uk/mppmpnext

- **Updates:** If you're working as a group, make sure you keep everyone in the loop about replies and next steps and thank them for taking part.

Wider impact: Public communications can hold your MP to account on their pledges, and celebrate supportive action:

- **Share on social media:** Thank everyone for taking part and share an update on your current outcomes from contact with your MP. If you met your MP include a photo from your meeting.
- **Local media:** Send a short update and photo to your local paper about your MP meeting. If it's been positive you could do a joint release with them, if they're a sceptic, focus on why loss and damage is important rather than your MP's resistance. You'll find a template press release in our comms pack at- caid.org.uk/mppadcomms
- **Let Make Polluters Pay know:** We'd love to know what you did, how many were involved, your MP's response and any follow up plans. We'll add it to our online gallery to celebrate your action, inspire others and show politicians just how many of us believe it's time to make polluters pay. Add #MPPAD to your social posts and you'll be added automatically or email us at campaigns@christian-aid.org

Finally, if you've already contacted your local MP you can use Make Polluters Pay Action Day to update them on your current activity and follow up with them about their promised actions/ make new asks.

Made by Make Polluters Pay, Christian Aid and Faith for the Climate in partnership with others.



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