



COP 29 MEDIA KIT 2024

I. COP 29 PRESS RELEASE

An official statement detailing Taproot Earth's goals, key messages, and call to action for COP 29. This release highlights the urgency of climate justice and climate finance solutions, advocating for frontline and Global South communities. It will set the stage for Taproot Earth's presence, alliances, and specific demands from global leaders.

2. TAPROOT EARTH ONE-PAGER

An essential introduction to Taproot Earth, outlining our mission, key programs, and core values. This document serves as a foundational overview for media outlets to understand Taproot Earth's role in global climate justice advocacy.

3. TAPROOT NOIRE ONE-PAGER

An overview of Taproot Noire, a dedicated formation rooted in Taproot Earth, focusing on amplifying Black voices and liberation in climate justice. This one-pager provides insight into Taproot Noire's goals, programs, and initiatives, reinforcing the central role of Black communities in building equitable climate solutions.

4. GULF SOUTH TO APPALACHIA ONE-PAGER

A profile of Gulf South to Appalachia, a U.S. formation, rooted by Taproot Earth. This document covers initiatives addressing climate resistance, local partnerships, and sustainable development tailored to the unique environmental and cultural landscapes of the Gulf South and Appalachian regions.



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Taproot Earth Calls for Just and Ambitious Climate Finance Goal at COP29

Baku, Azerbaijan – November 12, 2024 – At COP29, Taproot Earth, a climate justice organization rooted in Black Liberation and Indigenous Sovereignty, joins the urgent call for a new, ambitious climate finance goal that centers justice, reparations, and accountability to frontline communities. As climate disasters intensify and lives are lost daily, it is crucial for Global North nations to address their historic responsibility with a commitment to reparative finance that is grant-based, public, and accountable. **#WeChooseNow to follow the frontlines.** We stand with global movements demanding a climate finance goal that centers those most impacted by the crisis. Without reparative action, climate justice risks becoming a meaningless promise.

This August, Taproot Earth and Taproot Noire, a rooted formation of Taproot Earth, successfully hosted the first-ever Global Climate Reparations Governance Assembly from August 3-9 in Nairobi, Kenya. This groundbreaking gathering brought together more than 200 frontline leaders, representing 27 countries across the Black Diaspora, to create and advance collective solutions around climate reparations. For the first time in history, leaders from the Global South convened to collectively create a conceptual framework around the crucial idea of “global climate reparations.” After days of intense synthesization, conversation disagreements and agreements, participants agreed on a statement that provides a starting definition of climate reparations, and it reads as:

“Climate Reparations is the restoration of healthy and balanced relationships with all that comprise a shared global ecosystem. Reparative action begins with those who benefit most from historic and current systems of oppression. It requires the abolition of debt, restitution for injustice and the establishment of accountable systems rooted in Black and Indigenous Liberation for all oppressed people and future generations.”

The Climate Debt Crisis: Rooted in Exploitation, Fueled by Inaction

The current climate finance system and its inequities condemn billions to a harsh reality. Centuries of exploitation, from the colonial extraction of land and labor to the modern, profit-driven climate policies of Global North nations, have built the very foundation of the climate crisis. Those responsible—including European monarchies, the Catholic Church, and global corporations—must atone for their role in creating and sustaining this crisis.

As the Catholic Church prepares to mark a year of Jubilee in 2025, we urge it to deepen its commitment to reparation by advocating for debt abolition, land return, and climate action in solidarity with impacted communities. Global North countries, especially the United States, the United Kingdom, and Europe, must also confront their immense climate debt to the Global South, acknowledging and addressing the harm their colonial legacies and emissions continue to cause.

Urgent Action Is Needed Now

The world is at a critical moment in this decisive decade for climate action, and yet major emitters are expanding fossil fuels and carbon-intensive industries. From the Gulf South to the Global South, communities are grappling with the expansion of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) terminals and Carbon Capture and Sequestration (CCS) projects. These so-called “solutions” perpetuate harm while failing to address the real needs of frontline communities. Climate justice without reparations is merely green colonialism. To address climate impacts, we need meaningful and just funding grounded in the priorities of frontline communities.

The Call for Reparative Climate Finance

Global movements are now calling for a new climate finance goal of \$5 trillion per year to honor the climate debt owed to the Global South. Beyond debt abolition, Taproot Earth demands a finance goal that is grant-based, non-debt creating, and governed by local communities. Community-controlled funds, such as the Gulf South for a Green New Deal and Southern Power Fund, demonstrate that sustainable outcomes arise when frontline communities are empowered to make decisions about their futures.

Taproot Earth's Vision for Justice

Taproot Earth envisions a world where frontline communities can live, rest, and thrive in the places they call home. We advocate for human rights, the rights of nature, and reparative justice as foundational to a sustainable and equitable future for all. At COP29, we stand with global movements in urging governments to establish an ambitious climate finance goal that reflects the true scale of the crisis. This goal must prioritize frontline communities, ensuring funds are accessible, non-exploitative, and rooted in justice.

The time for reparations is now. Together, we can build a future where all communities have the resources they need to survive and flourish in the face of climate change.



TAPROOT EARTH OVERVIEW

Taproot Earth builds power and cultivates solutions among frontline communities across the U.S., Gulf South, Appalachia, and the global Black Diaspora, advancing climate justice through Black Liberation and Indigenous Sovereignty. We acknowledge and repair the harms of extraction and racialized capitalism; use facilitative leadership to build democracy, power, and frontline alignment; and advance community stewardship and governance of resources.

We deeply invest in the frontline communities of the Gulf South, Appalachia, and Black Diaspora to be self-governed and sustained networks of change beyond 2030, setting forth a pathway of liberation, joy and possibility. We are an intentional sunset organization, with a focus on making big and bold actions for solutions to address the growing climate crisis and threat of authoritarianism. We know our role is to be a catalyst, convenor, and experimenter with frontline leaders to build a world rooted in Black Liberation and Indigenous Land Sovereignty so we can all live in a world where we can live, rest, and thrive.

Our Vision

Taproot Earth envisions a world where we can live, rest, and thrive in the places we love.

Our Mission

Taproot Earth's mission is to build power and cultivate solutions with frontline communities advancing climate justice through Black Liberation and democracy.

Our Guiding Star

Our work is guided by and rooted in frontline leadership. We focus not only on dismantling systems of extraction but also on facilitating liberating practices of collective governance and stewardship of water, energy and land resources. We build models of community resource mobilization to strengthen networks and enhance communities' ability to advance solutions for both the planet and society. We believe that everyone has the right to remain on their land, return to their homes and to choose to migrate with dignity and justice. However, this right is continually attacked as we face more intense climate disasters (both immediate and long-term) and the rise of authoritarianism supported by an extractive financial and energy industry. This is why we prioritize and focus our work in the Gulf South, Appalachia, and the Global Black diaspora.

The Gulf South and Appalachia are the heart of the extractive energy corridor in the United States. Gulf South communities, specifically Black and Indigenous people, face land loss and climate gentrification at increasing rates. The pathway towards a more climate safe community often lies within the hills and rivers of Appalachia, yet these same communities are facing historic flooding, deep land extraction and pollution and continued displacement by land speculation from tech, oil, and gas. Globally, the Black Diaspora from Louisiana to Haiti, the Democratic Republic of Congo to Brazil face loss of farm lands and are placed under oppressive financial systems that put their communities in debt and at risk of climate disasters.

To take this on we facilitate formations of self-governance to build practices, models, and solutions of climate justice, that challenge political borders and rethinks ecological boundaries for governance together, the infrastructure that we build with these formations, centers the person's right to migrate, remain, or return, and reimagine global climate financial systems to be one of reparations and repair, rooted in frontline leadership and decision making.

Our Work is Guided by Six Pillars of Climate Justice, Not Carbon

The climate crisis is not simply a story of carbon. Rather it is about who has control of resources and how those resources are used and/or abused for personal and extractive gain rather than one of community and collective stewardship. We know this because the water we drink, the energy we use, and the land on which we call home and grow our food, is vital to our ability to live, let alone rest and thrive. Yet, communities continue to face dispossession, displacement, and erasure due to rising seas, speculation and debt, and extractive practices like mining, land enclosure, and pipeline development. Therefore, we believe that water, energy, and land cannot be privatized for one's own gain at the expense of another. Advancing a new way of stewardship, requires that we reimagine our labor, rethink our economy, and practice a deep democracy - three systems that require accountability and commitment to Black liberation and Indigenous land sovereignty.

Our Partners

We invest in the leadership of our [Gulf South to Appalachia \(GS2A\) formation](#), [Taproot Noire](#), and [Just Transition Lawyering Network](#) to be self-determined, collectively governed, and anchors for climate justice. Within these formations, we build programs to invest in community accountable leaders, including the Building a Movement Training (BAM), the Global Climate Reparations (GCR) Fellows, and the Gulf South to Appalachia Fellows (GS2A) Programs.

- The Gulf South to Appalachia Regional Formation (GS2A) reaches over 4,000 frontline community members and has over 250 member leaders representing over 200 frontline formations, including community organizations, churches groups, tribal communities, and youth groups, across the Gulf South and Appalachia regional (17 states). This formation brought together 600 frontline leaders and community members to the GS2A We Choose Now Community Assembly in Birmingham in July.
- Taproot Noire is an international network of 2,500 Black leaders from across the African Diaspora connecting to share climate solutions from the global climate frontlines.
- Our Just Transition Lawyer Network is comprised of 165 members, and includes:
 - 15 Lawyers with expertise in "Energy Democracy" such as Energy Contract Negotiation, Utility Regulations, etc.
 - 17 Lawyers with expertise in "Land" such as Land Banks, Land Trusts, Real Estate, and Land Acquisition
 - 23 Lawyers with expertise in "Civil Rights" such as Title VI Law, Fair Housing Law, etc.
 - 30 Lawyers with expertise in "Tribal Law" and Indigenous Sovereignty

Taproot Earth is a member and participant in various networks and efforts. Examples include:

Climate Justice Alliance, US Climate Action Network, Climate Action Network-International, Green New Deal Network, Ubuntu Collective, New Environmental Network, Project South, and Water Equity Climate Resilient Caucus. Taproot Earth is also an anchor organization for the Southern Movement Assembly's (SMA).



What is Taproot Noire?

[Taproot Noire](#) is an international network of Black leaders from across the African Diaspora, connecting to share climate solutions from the global climate frontlines. These climate solutions include models of community governance, collective stewardship, and replicable solutions that protect water justice, energy democracy, and land and food sovereignty. As a global network, Taproot Noire designs and convenes



participants to advance global climate reparations, equitable disaster recovery, and indigenous land sovereignty. Convening several times a year to repair our relationship to the land and repair connection as Black people to reignite our historic and ongoing role as innovators and leaders. If you identify as Black, African American, of African Descent or African, and you work on issues connected to Water, Energy, Land, Labor, Economy or Democracy, we invite you to join our network to share, learn and practice liberation together.

History of Taproot Noire and the Black Climate Leadership Summit

Taproot Noire, a rooted formation of Taproot Earth, was developed as a space dedicated to addressing the intersections of Black liberation and climate justice. It emerged from Taproot Earth's commitment to uplifting frontline communities across the Black Diaspora, Gulf South, and Appalachia, recognizing the unique environmental and social challenges these communities face due to systemic injustices. With a focus on building accountable systems and advancing community governance Taproot Noire mobilizes resources, partnerships, spaces and conversations that center Black voices. The initial vision for Taproot Noire was to create a platform that not only addressed environmental issues but also integrated the cultural and historical experiences of Black communities globally. In recognizing that climate justice is deeply interconnected with racial, economic, and political justice, Taproot Noire seeks to create space for Black frontline climate leaders advocating for solutions to environmental injustices that our communities face.

Taproot Noire's Black Climate Leadership Summit is held annually during Climate Week NYC. The summit is an all Black identified space designed to bring together intergenerational Black climate leaders to share movement wisdom. This year's theme was *Land + Liberation*, and it served as an intentional dialogue surrounding the importance and impact our climate has on land, sovereignty and migration. Anyone who is Black identified and/or of Black African descent was invited to apply to attend the Black Climate Leadership Summit, a space for Black healing, learning and joy.

2021

COP26

- Hosted the first Global Black Climate Leaders Social, providing a safe and empowering space for Black-identified individuals to come together and express their identities freely.

2022

BLACK CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT & COP27

- Launched the inaugural *Black Climate Leadership Summit*, inspired by discussions with U.S. Climate Action Network members.
- Initiated a global conversation on *climate reparations*, asking the pivotal question, "What does climate reparations look like in your community?"

2023

CAPE VERDE BLACK HEALING RESTORATION CONVENING & 2ND BLACK CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

- Gathered in Cape Verde to create space for Black climate leaders to rest, build relationships, and exchange insights on climate challenges and solutions.
- Held the second summit, this time with an international delegation, connecting pressing issues between the Gulf South and the Global South.

2024

3RD BLACK CLIMATE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

- Explored the intersections of land and Black liberation by addressing *climate migration*, further strengthening the bond between Gulf South and Global South leaders.

Timeline of Taproot Noire and the Global Black Climate Leadership Summit



What is Gulf South to Appalachia?

Gulf South to Appalachia (GS2A) is a rooted formation of Taproot Earth, made up of frontline organizations fighting for climate justice in their communities. GS2A emerged from the convergence of decades of organizing against extraction in Appalachia and the Gulf South. [The Gulf South for a Green New Deal](#) formed alignment with Appalachia in 2023 and evolved into the Gulf South to Appalachia formation. The Gulf South and Appalachia (OH, NY, PA, MD, WV, VA, TN, NC, SC, TX, LA, MS, AL, GA, FL, and PR) bear the heaviest cost from extractive economies and are directly impeded from advancing climate justice in their states due to the economic and political control extractive industries wield in these two regions.



What is #WeChooseNow Climate Action Strategy?

The [#We Choose Now Climate Action Strategy](#) comes out of decades of organizing on the frontlines of climate disaster and fossil fuel extraction across our region - but was catalyzed by Hurricane Ida in 2021. For the first time, a storm impacted communities from Southern Louisiana across the Appalachian Mountains and flooded parts of Philadelphia and NYC. Several things became evident in this moment: 1) Climate crisis has no borders. 2) Our communities need to be prepared to respond to Climate Disasters when they come 3) Solutions that are advanced need to be grounded in the vision and needs of communities on the frontlines of climate disaster and the extractive economy

Responding to this moment, Taproot Earth convened over 150 frontline and allied leaders into a deconstructed [People's Movement Assembly Process](#). Drawing on the tradition of the Southern Movement Assembly, we brought together frontlines in key states (Texas, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Pennsylvania) with a focus on one of the Six Pillars of Climate Justice (Water, Energy, Land, Labor, Economy, and Democracy).

Our purpose was to build relationships across communities deeply impacted by extractive economies and cultivate regional solutions that move us towards collective healing and climate justice. Virtual and in-person gatherings held over the course of a year relied on transparent dialogue and exercises to strengthen collective analysis and decision making. The [#WeChooseNow Climate Action Strategy](#) is a culmination of this work, providing a framework to align frontline organizers and regional efforts to advance Climate Justice across the Gulf South and Appalachia.