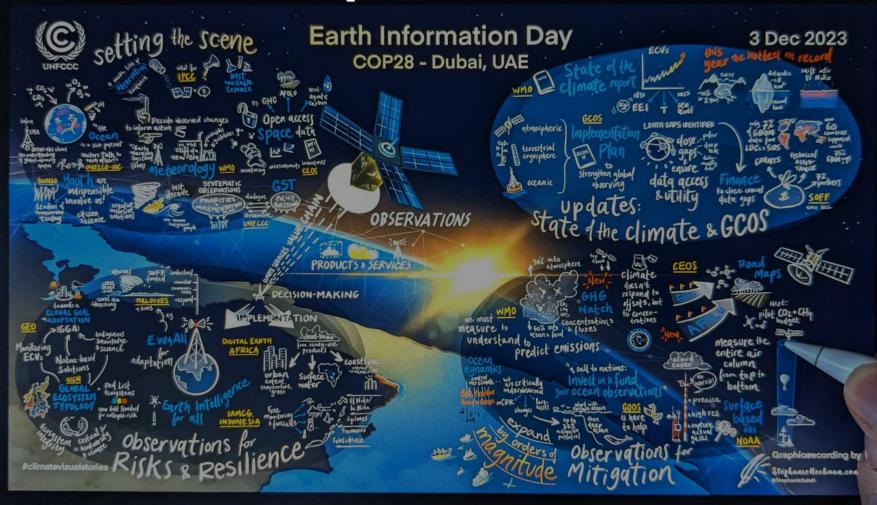
Visual Report of COP28



by Stéphanie Heckman

Foreword

Before you lies the third edition of my COP Visual Report series. I have made this report in my role as an independent visual practitioner. I'll say a bit first about what that is.

A visual practitioner does more than draw pictures live at events. It is our job to help people collectively make sense of their own thoughts, conversations and processes. We do this anywhere people talk and think together, and therefore work with an incredibly diverse range of people, organisations, and topics. We are never the experts in the room, but our attentive listening and our witness as outsiders can help bring clarity to what are often complex conversations. Visual practice can be done as a performative social art in the form of graphic recordings (live-drawn visual summaries of events, mainly conferences) or co-creatively with participants in visual facilitation. In both cases, it is a tool for surfacing, processing and organising information in a visual way more aligned with how our associative, sensory brains work. It can help overcome language, learning and physical barriers to access. It can also help surface underlying dynamics which may have become normalised to the point of going unnoticed to veterans in the space but which have an indelible influence on the content and outcomes of the conversations. And in bringing imagery, colour and beauty into the collective conversation, it helps us connect to the subject matter in a different way, back into the spirit of the work - which in the context of the globally coordinated response to the climate crisis is vital.

The link between visual practice and international climate action came alive for me in January 2020 when I discovered that COP26, the 26th annual UN climate conference, was to be held in Glasgow just across the Irish Sea from where I live in Belfast, Northern Ireland. Ever since, I have worked to establish visual practice as a recognised and valued art form that can support the UN climate negotiations. I have brought fellow visual practitioners to work with me, both remotely and in-person, at UN climate events for three years and counting. In this time I have collaborated with various NGOs and businesses working in this space. I have fostered an ongoing partnership with the UN Climate Change Secretariat themselves – the organisers of the annual COPs – for whom alone I have coordinated the production of some fifty graphic recordings. I have written about the synergy between visual practice and the multilateral climate process in my own publications and one academic article, and I have spoken about it on podcasts, radio, tv and film.

But establishing visual practice within the UN climate process is only one aim of mine. The other, and the aim of these COP Visual Reports, is to demystify this process that concerns all of us alive on the planet, but which is incredibly complex, exclusive and opaque. My iournev in aradually decipherina this never-ending, multi-dimensional jigsaw puzzle is ongoing, but by now I have learnt enough to help democratise these vital conversations and decisions to a much wider audience through the power of visuals.



And committing what you hear and see to paper is an act of power, since distilling the 'essence' and chronicling it for posterity is inevitably a subjective process. As a visual practitioner I endeavour to be an impartial witness to what goes on around as well as inside me. I try to be fair and truthful in the words and images I choose to record from the views and experiences of others. But please bear in mind that my subjectivity will shine through. What you'll see on the following pages is a combination of commissioned work as well as my own impressions in the form of 'COP visual summaries'. All my views expressed in this Visual Report are my own.



@stephaniesaloli
#climatevisualstories

www.stephanieheckman.com www.climatevisualstories.com

This year - visual storytelling for COP

COP28 - the 28th annual climate summit where representatives from the 197 member countries (Parties) to the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) gather to progress collective action to address anthropogenic climate change.

COPs are co-organised by the UN Climate Change Secretariat (the institutional home of the UNFCCC) and a host country (known as the COP Presidency) which rotates every year throughout the five UN regions. This is a Party-driven process, meaning the sovereign signatory countries collectively decide what action they will take. The UN Climate Secretariat in its turn fulfils a facilitative role with its expertise, experience and capacity, provided by around 450 staff.

At this largest annual climate conference decisions are negotiated following a year's hard work on myriad work streams, such as mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions), adaptation (minimising the impacts of climate change), climate finance (public, private and alternative financing to support developing countries) and a vast host of other topics. Around the core negotiations, there are thousands upon thousands of workshops, panels, presentations, installations, demonstrations, you name it... provided by tens of thousands of delegates representing governments, civil society, special interest groups, industry and press.

This year, COP28 is set to take place in Dubai from 30th November until 12th December 2023, with a staggering, record-shattering 85,000 in-person delegates.

In 2021 and 2022 I attended the COPs in Glasgow and Sharm el-Sheikh. This year I won't be in Dubai but instead will be following events from afar. I've blocked out the two weeks for COP work only. While I don't have the experiences and direct perception of the mood on the ground this time, I am digesting what I can on the progress of negotiations, the 'mood music' as reported by news sources, commentators and friends of mine who are attending in person.

Like in previous years, I have collaborations lined up in my capacity as graphic recorder with a number of organisations.

<u>UN Climate Change</u>

My collaboration with the UN Climate Change Secretariat continues. During COP28 I will be remotely graphic recording their Earth Information Day. I provided graphic recording for the same event last year at COP27, which is organised by the same team I worked with throughout the I8-month period of the first Global Stocktake, which is scheduled to culminate in a political decision at COP28. I will also be working the UNFCCC Gender team on a mandated high-level workshop they are co-hosting with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), another UN body. These will both be technical, dense and content-heavy graphic recordings.

Resilience Hub

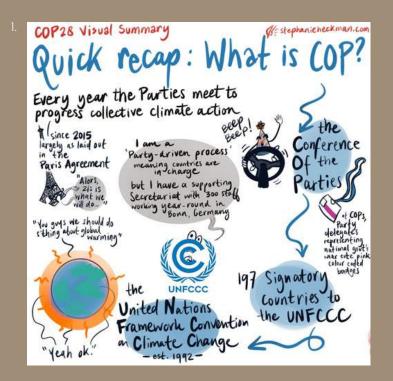
Every COP provides space for around a hundred 'pavilions', where countries, civil society, industry can represent themselves. The Resilience Hub is one of the largest, most prolific civil society pavilions, hosting 80+ events and hundreds of speakers across the two weeks. They commission a wide range of artists to make the content at their events come alive, and of them, I was commissioned for the second year to provide the graphic recording for some of their events. I engaged and coordinated five other graphic recorders from my networks to support me in covering 8 Resilience Hub events.

International Institute for Environment & Development

In a new partnership, I will provide graphic recording for a side event hosted by the International Institute for Environment & Development (IIED) on Locally Led Action.

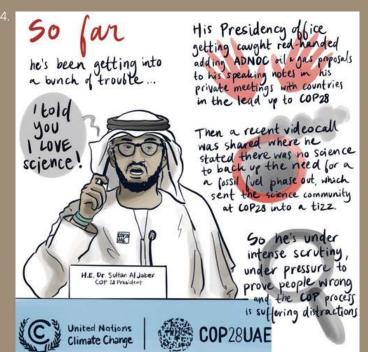
In addition to these commissioned pieces of work, I will be making my own visual summaries as I have done in the previous two years, to document my impressions and learnings throughout these two weeks which the multilateral climate process revolves around.

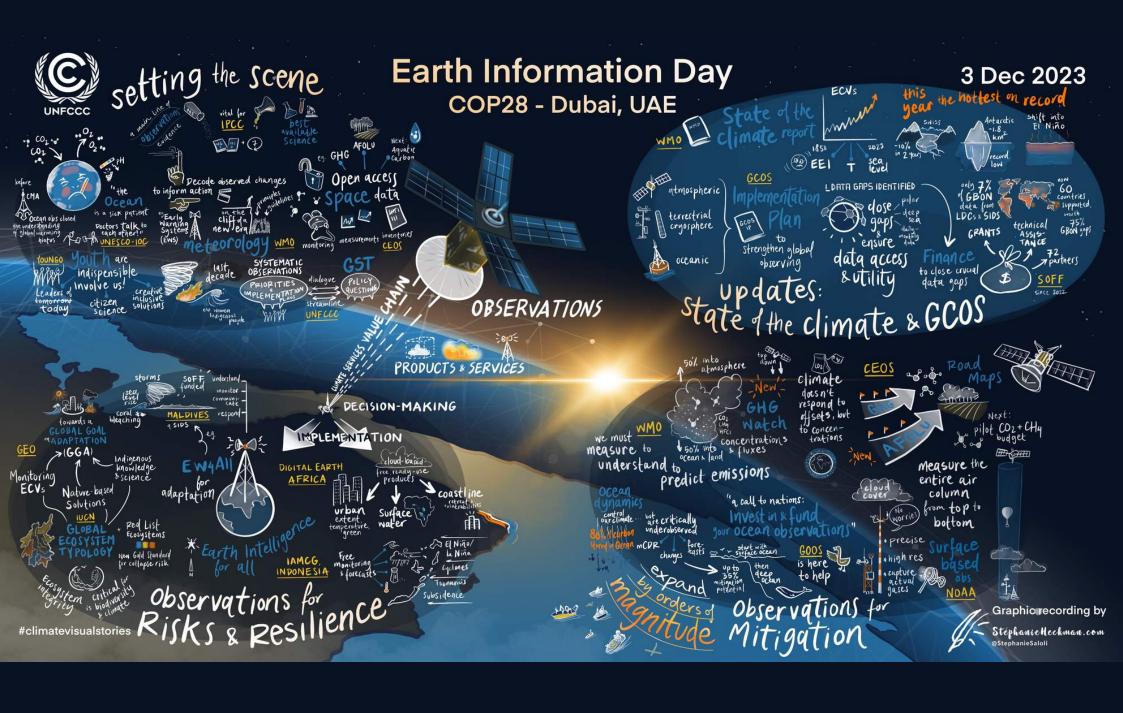
So, to start this independent 'visual reporting' at the start, let's first set the scene with a quick COP recap and a bit of background context around the prominently featured controversy surrounding this year's COP Presidency.











Earth Information Day

for UNFCCC

Graphic recording for COP28 started off with a big one: the UNFCCC mandated Earth Information Day hosted by the UN Climate Change Secretariat.

Have you ever thought about where we get all the data that leads to knowledge of global warming and a changing climate (knowledge we've had since the 80s but has endured much suppression) and which has propelled the world into climate action?

I hadn't properly anyway, until I was asked to provide the graphic recording for Earth Information Day last year live in-person in one of the big plenary halls of COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh. This year again, albeit remotely, I followed the 3 hour mandated dialogue with fascination.

The answer to the question is the global 'systematic observations' community scientists working together to gather, assess, analyse and aggregate data from MANY satellites, weather stations, weather balloons, research ships, weather buoys, drilled ice cores, etc. They research observed trends, model patterns and use these to make forecasts and predictions. Big initiatives like the Global Climate Observations System then paint the bigger picture of what is happening to our climate on a planetary scale, as well as point out the gaps in our observations network.

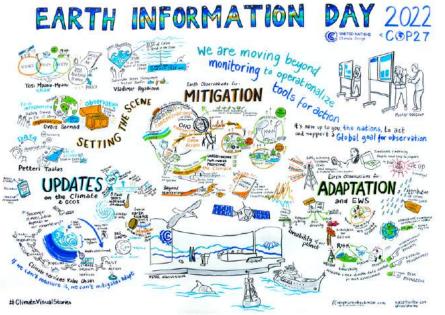
These observations and research feed into the reports that the IPCC curates from the world's best available science to provide the authoritative scientific voice that informs climate policy and action. This, for example, is where we got the 1.5 degree global warming limit target from that now underpins all mitigation efforts.

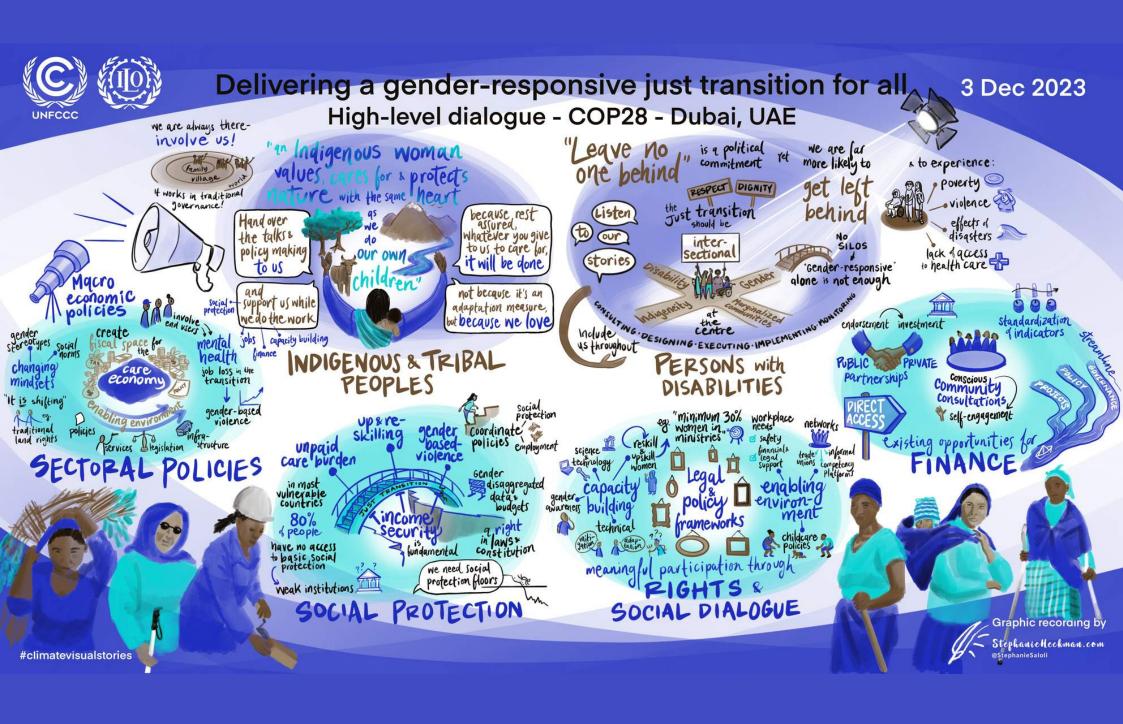
All this together they call the 'climate services value chain'.

Some of the key players in this community are the World Meteorological Organisation, space agencies like ESA and the EU Copernicus programme, the UN Oceanographic Commission and others.

It was totally awesome to learn about all this and try to visualise it, and if it interests you I encourage you to have a look at some of the detail - crammed full of insights and aha moments for me







Gender-responsive Just Transition for UNFCCC / ILO

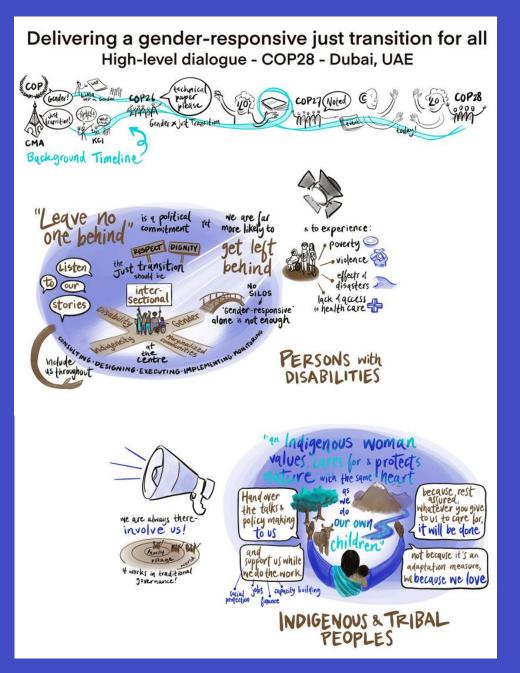
Later that same day followed another collaboration with UN Climate Change, the UN body that organises the annual COP climate summits.

This event was a technical dialogue mandated (i.e. 'commissioned') by countries as a topical deep dive. It discussed the intersection between gender (women & non-binary, particularly Indigenous women, women with disabilities and other vulnerable groups) and the just transition (shifting our global economy to low carbon whilst bringing along the countless people whose livelihoods currently still depend on fossil fuel).

Their Gender team (yes, climate change disproportionally affects women and UN Climate Change have a team dedicated to provide policy & technical support to countries and stakeholders working in this focus area) hired me for this event. They co-hosted the session with the International Labour Organization (ILO) who represents workers and trade unions in all countries and is one of the oldest specialised agencies, founded in 1919 within the UN when it was still the League of Nations.

While I was working remotely, the graphic recording in progress was live streamed onto the big screen in the room in Dubai where the Technical Dialogue took place. Afterwards I finalised the graphic recording through two rounds of small edit requests from the ILO and UNFCCC Gender teams.





Halfway through COP

As became clear at the start of the second week, there was a huge pile of work to get through and a deadlock on many key issues, that finishing on time wasn't in the cards (as is usual with COPs).

In this second week negotiations have gone largely 'underground'. Ministers, who are the heads of their delegations, left after the 'High Level Summit' in the first few days of COP28. The first week of technical negotiations was left to their negotiation delegations. Now the ministers have returned for week 2, and they have to be brought up to speed before going in to try and break the impasse within a political game of give-and-take, 'room to work with' and red lines.

Even from afar the vibe is tense, with the phase out of fossil fuels and hollow ringing of empty, undelivered climate finance promises the most sensitive topics - not helped by the clearly unwelcome scrutiny on the Presidency's integrity as 'oil guy/climate guy'.

As the negotiators work on in Dubai under mounting pressure, let's review where we've got to so far. This visual recap is a summary of the traditional Halfway Point seminar by IISD/ENB. It paints a picture of the lay of the land that ministers came back to at the start of week 2. It should set us up for interpreting the results when they come out.

With thanks to the ever-excellent coverage and analysis of the International Institute for Sustainable Development/ENB, in particular Dr. Jennifer Allan. Listen to it yourself here:

https://soundcloud.com/user-165800906/cop-28-halfway-point-webinar

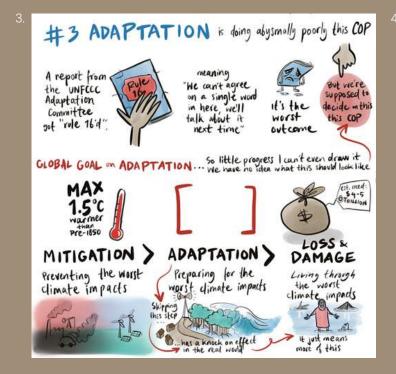




Photo by UN Climate Change | Kiara Worth









We Don't Have Time broadcast

Pear Wongtitirote, who graphic recorded one of my COP28 Resilience Hub events, invited me to speak on the COP28 broadcast of We Don't Have Time, the world's largest climate solutions reviewing platform, with 3,5 million listeners tuning in.

On 11th December, I shared the panel with Louise König, whose company The New Division developed the groundbreaking visual language of the Sustainable Development Goals and the new Inner Development Goals, as well as Erik Bengtson, an Uppsala University researcher of rhetoric.

We spoke about the role of emotion in driving climate action. And I spoke about the deeper purpose of graphic recording for the climate: not only to bring excitement and a 'feeling heard' into the room, but to make visible the places on Earth and lived experience we discuss in climate negotiations in order to reconnect to our emotions around these big topics in these formal spaces. Emotion does not get in our way, it is what is missing. By feeling the state of the planet and metabolising the grief and fear that that brings, we connect back into caring – and that is what drives the political will to change that we desperately need.

Our 35 min panel discussion can be watched back - it starts from 2:40 (hrs:min) into the broadcast:

https://www.youtube.com/live/f_socvO5DWU?si=IXM2Pk-2LBw63tpz







Photos by Pear Wongtitirote

Coordinating graphic recordings for the COP28 Resilience Hub

For the second year I was contracted to provide the graphic recording for events scheduled at the Resilience Hub – a physical pavilion at COP28 in Dubai with a virtual livestreaming platform. I recruited the help of five other colleagues (my ongoing collaboration with Tofu Creatives and four members from our brand new Blue Marble Collective, formerly my Visual Practice Apprentices). From our corners of the world we covered eight sessions. The results are shown below.

Feast your eyes on our collective outpouring of creativity in service of global climate action for resilience!

REGIONAL HUBS

NEED ASSISTANCE?

%¥**₽?**•

Landing page of at the virtual Resilience Hub

LIVE EVENT

Deutsche Bank Deloitte.

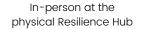
SPONSORS



record from North

remote graphic recorders, tuning in from Mexico, Northern Ireland, Sweden, Germany and Italy

Backstage for the





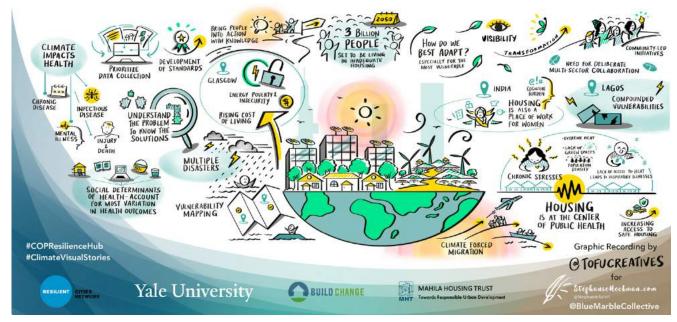


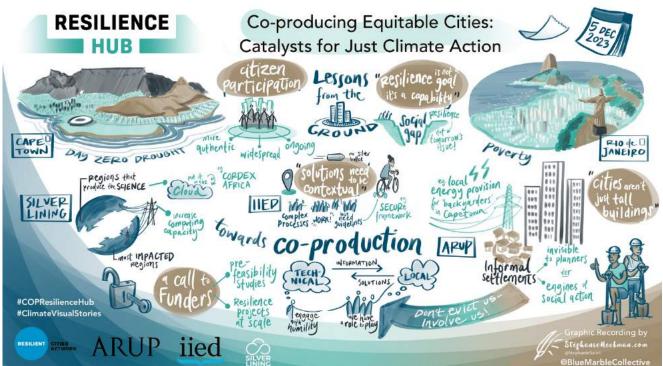




Climate, Housing and Health: How to Build Inclusive and Equitable Urban Resilience

6 Dec 2023





Made by Tofu Creatives Based in Philippines/USA tofucreatives.com





Desiree Llanos Dee

Nityalila Saulo

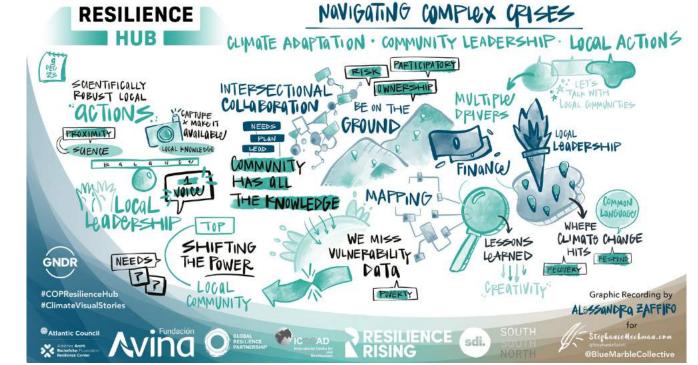
Made by Stéphanie Heckman Based in Northern Ireland stephanieheckman.com

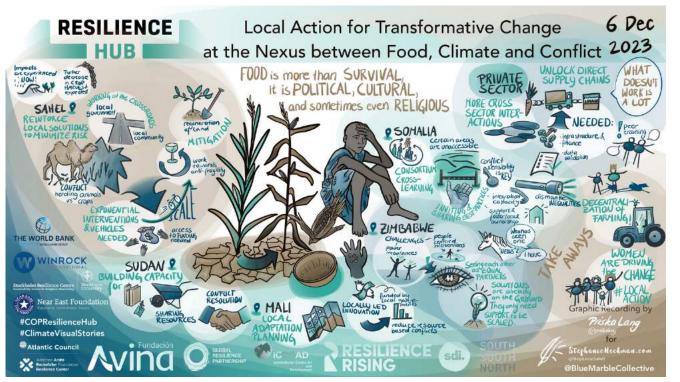


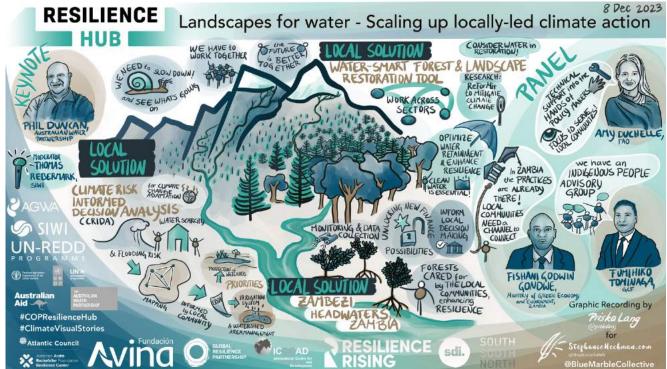
Made by Alessandra Zaffiro Based in Italy











Made by Priska Lang Based in Germany



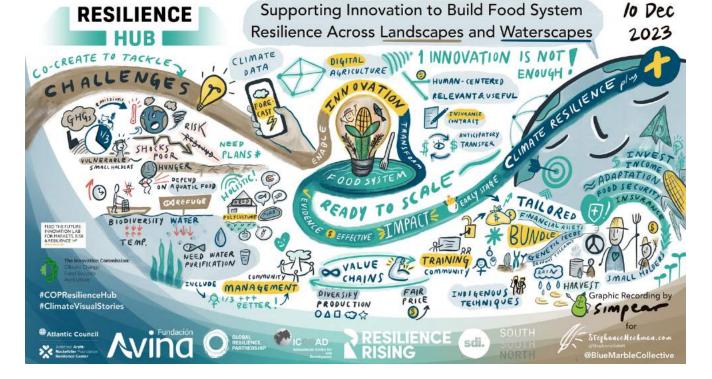
Made by Valentina Abalzati Based in Mexico

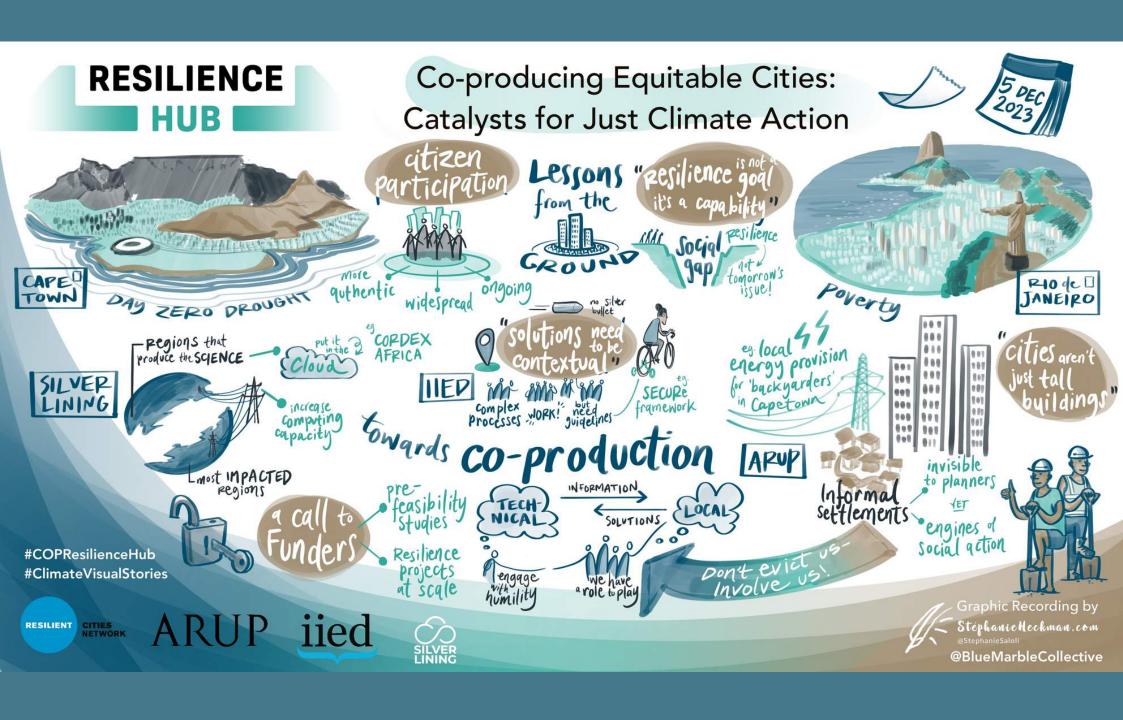


Made by Pear Wongtitirote Based in Sweden/Thailand









Co-producing Equitable Cities

for Global Resilience Partnership / Resilient Cities Network

The event for the Resilience Hub that I did the graphic recording for myself was an urban development session, co-hosted by the Resilient Cities Network, International Institute for Environment and Development (development policy researchers), ARUP (a global built environment consultancy/planning/design group) and Silver Lining (climate researchers), as well as 2 local government reps from the cities of Cape Town (South Africa) and Rio de Janeiro (Brazil).

Lots of expertise on the panel, and on a critical climate topic. Here are some city facts for you ... (source: Worldbank)

55% of the global population lives in cities today, and the number of urbandwellers is projected to double by 2050.

Climate problems: cities account for >70% of GHG emissions, and of the flood-exposed people in the world 90% live in urban areas.

<u>m</u> Climate solutions: Cities are hotbeds for research, innovation and economic activity.

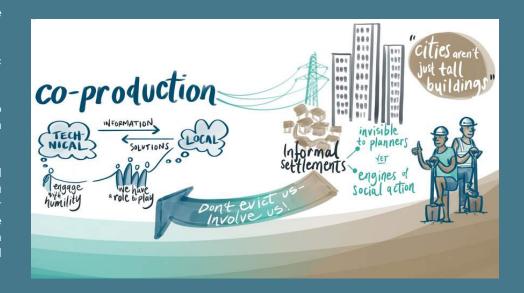
However, of all the brilliant work done by these experts and all their top knowledge, there was one insight that really struck me, and it didn't come from the expert panel.

Two audience members chimed in, both of them were from the informal settlements of Cape Town. One said: "Slums are invisible to urban planners, you won't find us in their plans for future cities. We are evicted to make room for new development, green spaces, '15 minute neighbourhoods', etc. But we are the local community, we know this land and climate better than the foreign experts and we have solutions!" then the other added: "Cities aren't just tall buildings. Don't evict us, involve us!"

That last remark really landed with me, and I felt personally addressed. Because as a graphic recorder, who needs to keep up with conversations in real-time while visually translating them, I have a go-to set of icons in my brain I can readily draw on to represent key concepts. And what do I draw when people talk about cities? You got it, tall buildings.

The reality is, I've never been to slums and they are not my reference when I think of cities. And yet for I BILLION people informal settlements are their home, their on-the-ground reality and reference for urban living.

What an aha moment for me to remember to step outside my own perspective to represent people from theirs.





Locally Led Action & LLA Principles

for International Institute for Environment & Development

The final event I graphic recorded during COP28 was a discussion hosted by the IIED, the International Institute for Environment and Development. In 2021, IIED had been involved in developing a vision and strategy for promoting Locally Led Action (LLA) in development. LLA which stresses the importance of foregrounding the voices and knowledge of local communities in developing and implementing climate action, including climate adaptation.

Since then 115 organisations have endorsed the strategy and the 8 LLA Principles. During this event IIED wanted to start the process of revisiting and strengthening the LLA vision.

The session included a panel of three invited 'LLA Champions', local stakeholders representing their communities. There was **Theresa Makwara**, who has played a central role in mobilising mothers of children with disabilities across Zimbabwe. In a link to the UNFCCC Gender event I had graphic recorded, she too highlighted the caregiving roles that grassroots women play in protecting community and household wellbeing during crises.

There was Christine Ogola, a YOUNGO member (the UNFCCC youth consituency) and passionate advocate for climate justice and youth participation in her home country Kenya. And, following the theme of my previous graphic recording for the Resilient Cities Network, the third panel member George Gleh was there representing the Liberia federation of Slum Dwellers International.

There was also an interactive part of the session where participants brainstormed ideas around each of the 8 LLA Principles posted around the room in their Dubai venue. I could watch them milling about from my Zoom vantage point. I based my graphic recording on the plenary feedback after these break out discussions. The IIED team while facilitating the session on-site also supported me, sending summary notes and pictures of the brainstormed sticky notes, so I could ensure I'd captured all the main points.

And the participants, to their delight, could see the graphic recording unfold live on a big screen, bringing me into the room with them in Dubai.

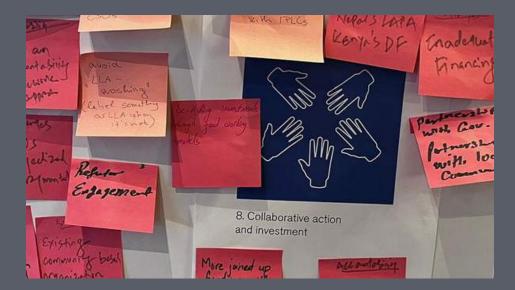




Photo by Ebony Holland

Outcomes of COP28

They were two long, hard weeks for the negotiators in Dubai. Some described COP28 as the toughest since COP21 which gave us the Paris Agreement.

Almost singular focus was on the most prominent process this COP: the 'political phase' of the first-ever Global Stocktake (GST), the 5-yearly assessment cycle on progress towards the Paris goals that me and Hazel graphic recorded throughout its 18-month 'technical phase'. The GST political outcome is intended to inform countries' new climate pledges due in two years.

The linchpin of the COP was the GST decision on fossil fuels. Controversy around this UN climate summit being chaired by an oil executive, the evolved certainty of science and passage of time all led to greater pressure than ever to unambiguously, irrevocably say goodbye to fossil fuels. It wasn't to be. The UNFCCC could never agree on its voting procedures, drafted 30 years ago, so decisions are made not by majority rule but by consensus. With oil, coal and gas still lining the pockets of many nations, others using them to industrialise, and helped by 2,400 fossil fuel lobbyists present, no consensus could be reached.

The world did decide at COP28 that fossil fuels are not the future and agreed to "transition away" from them.

That's a momentous decision, but it lacks the fast pace and firm resolve needed to save the most vulnerable. During the standing ovation that greeted the adoption of the 'UAE Consensus', the coalition of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) entered the plenary hall – they had missed the moment to raise final concerns as the President hadn't allowed it. Realising what had happened and that it sealed the fate of her islands to be swallowed by rising sea level within 30 years, a delegate from Marshall Islands burst into tears. Thus rules consensus

And silently sat Palestine. In the past weeks the same global community has failed them too, shying away from calling out injustice to halt the loss of far too many innocent lives. Recently the UN Security Council voted 13 out of 15 in favour of ceasefire in Gaza. The other two votes? It's the tyranny of the few, the moral cowardice of the UK's abstention and the moral callousness of the USA's veto, that we see at COP too.

We must carry on, despite the heartbreak of unnecessary loss of life in past, present and future, until the clarion call to act on solidarity and scientific reason prevails.





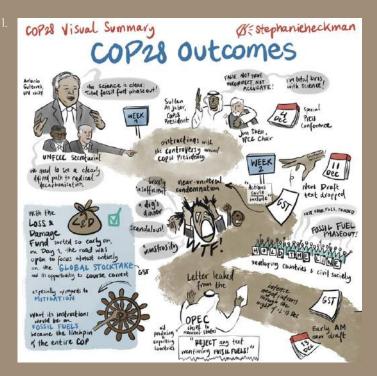




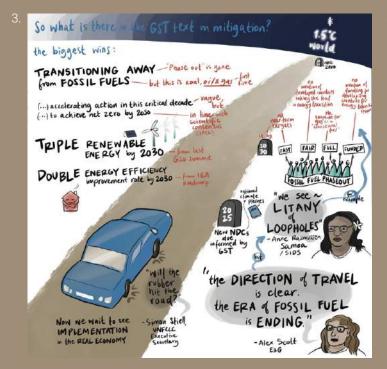


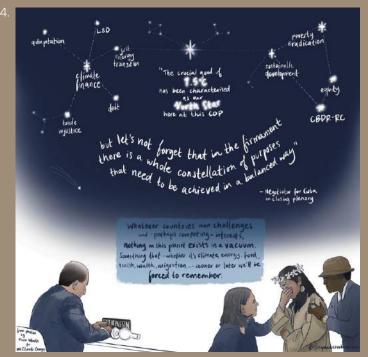


The incredible photojournalism of Kiara Worth, the UN Climate Secretariat's photographer for COP28. Her daily impressions in photos and words were instrumental to me for getting a sense for the mood on the ground from afar.









The first Global Stocktake

In 2015 countries achieved the monumental consensus of the Paris Agreement, a new policy regime for internationally coordinated climate action. A central tenet of the Paris Agreement was that signatory countries were autonomously responsible for developing action plans to address climate change in their own jurisdictions, called Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). These NDCs must be renewed with increased ambition every five years. In between, the Global Stocktake (or GST) is the core mechanism to track the implementation of these plans. In other words, the GST keeps the pressure up on progress towards the goals of the Paris Agreement.

The first ever Global Stocktake took place between 2022 and 2023 and consisted of two phases. The first was a Technical Dialogue between both countries and civil society, spread out over three meetings. The second, political phase of the Global Stocktake would take place during COP28. Here, countries and civil society would consider the outcomes of the technical phase and negotiate political decisions that would influence the course and ambition of the next round of NDCs due in 2025. The political decisions of this first Global Stocktake were had been anticipated by many as the key outcome of COP28.

Throughout the 18 month technical phase of the Global Stocktake, I worked together with the UN Climate Secretariat's team in charge, to provide graphic recording during each of the three Technical Dialogue (TD) events they organised. I engaged multiple visual practice colleagues to support me in the delivery of these big assignments. My Irish colleague Hazel Hurley not only worked with me on this remotely in June 2022, but also accompanied me to Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt for the second TD during COP27 in 2022 and to Bonn, Germany for the third TD in June 2023.

To consider the political outcomes of the first ever Global Stocktake at the end of COP28 in its context, below follows an overview of all the graphic recording work we produced for the GST TDs throughout 2022 and 2023. Together they paint a comprehensive picture of everything the delegates, representing both countries and civil society, wished to be considered for this global climate action course-correcting opportunity.

If you'd like to learn more about the theory behind how these graphic recordings were made, and the added value they brought as shared by conference delegates,, I wrote an academic article on my visual practice collaboration with the UN Climate Secretariat during the Global Stocktake.

Published in November 2023 in the University of Massachusetts Boston-affiliated New England Journal of Public Policy, edited by Professor Padraig O'Malley:

https://scholarworks.umb.edu/nejpp/vol35/iss2/6/

This video was made during GST TD1.3 about our visual practice collaboration with the UNFCCC on the Global Stocktake:

https://youtu.be/NPsKwlQpVQA?si=YthHCQ3wQBsYTZ0p



GST Technical Dialogue 1.1

Remotely for SB56 in Bonn, Germany

In June 2022 I was supported by three other colleagues to work remotely on graphic recordings for three parallel 'Roundtable' discussions at the first Technical Dialogue taking place in Bonn, Germany.

The Roundtables addressed issues relating Mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions), Adaptation (building resilience against climate change impacts) and Means of Implementation (finance, technology transfer and capacity building).

The graphic recorders that worked with me on GST TD1.1:





Carlotta Cataldi carlottacat.com Based in Spain



Tofu Creatives tofucreatives.com Based in Philippines/USA

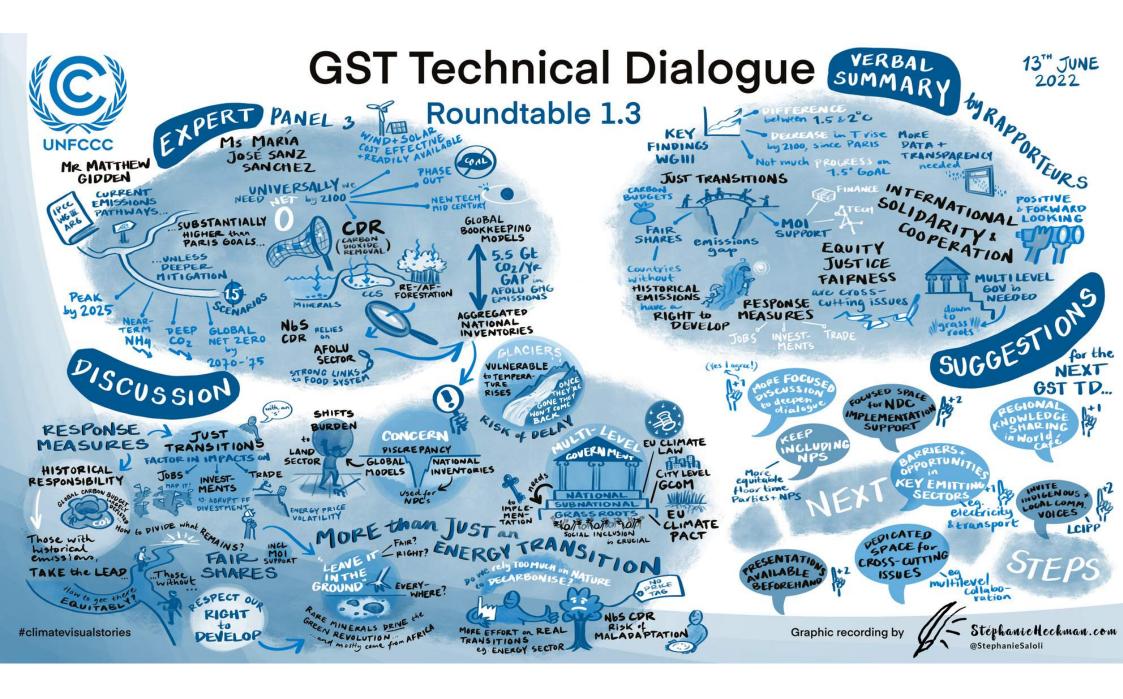


Hazel Hurley hazelhurley.com Based in Ireland



Photo by Noora Al Amer





GST Technical Dialogue

11TH JUNE 2022

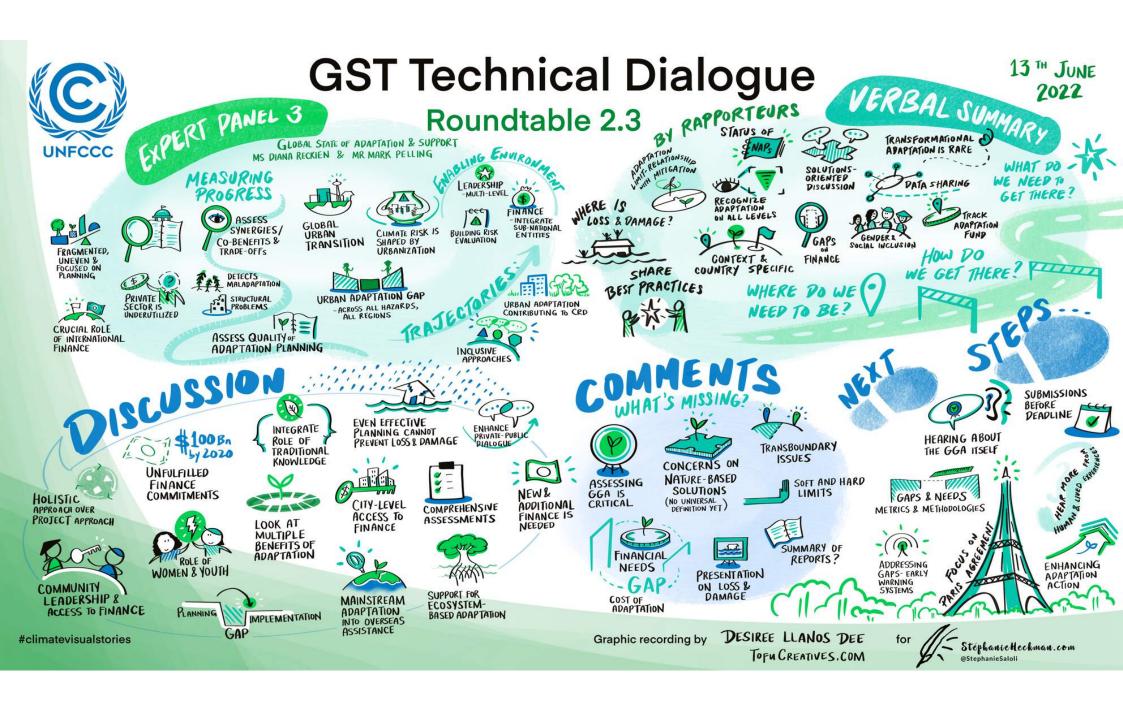


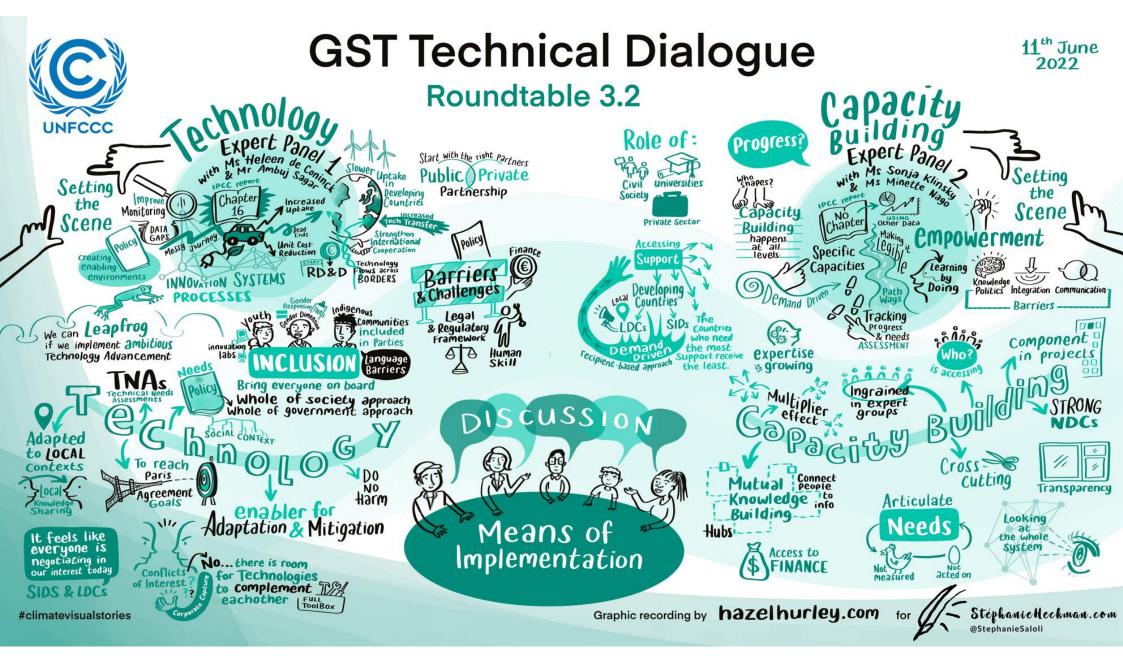
#climatevisualstories

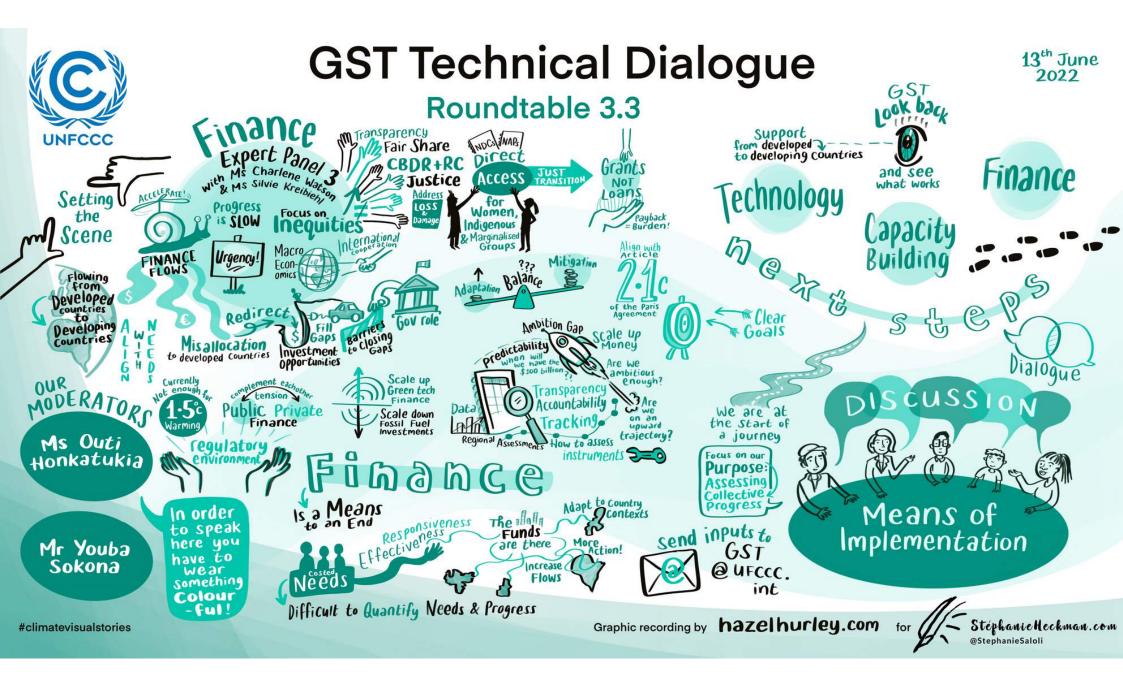
Graphic recording by

DESIREE LLANOS DEE TOFU CREATIVES. COM









GST Technical Dialogue 1.2

In-person at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt

In November 2022 Hazel and I traveled to Sharm el-Sheikh on the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula to attend COP27. Our main job there was to support the UNFCCC GST team with graphic recordings for the second Technical Dialogue.

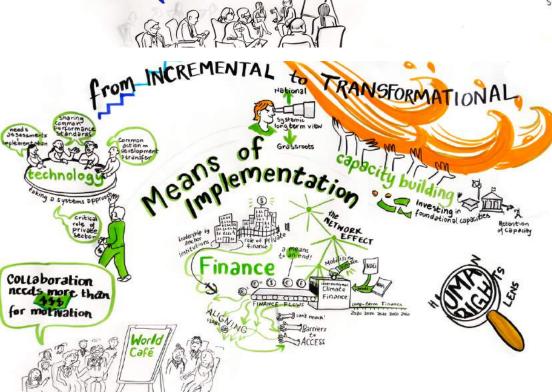
We summarised a full World Café (three rounds of four parallel break out discussions), as well as two plenary 'Focused Exchange' deep dive sessions on selected topics. The original Mitigation, Adaptation and Means of Implementation themes for TD1.1 were there as discussion topics, with the addition of a fourth theme, 'Systems Transformations', looking at needs of specific sectors.

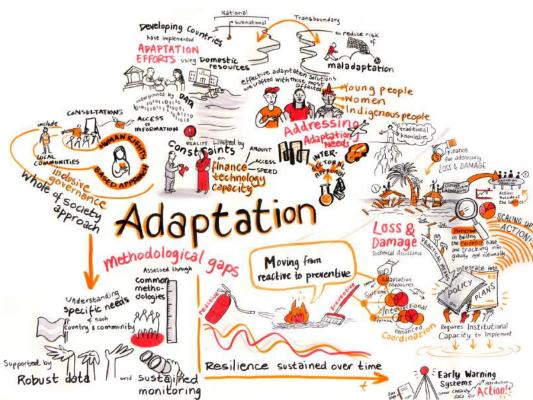


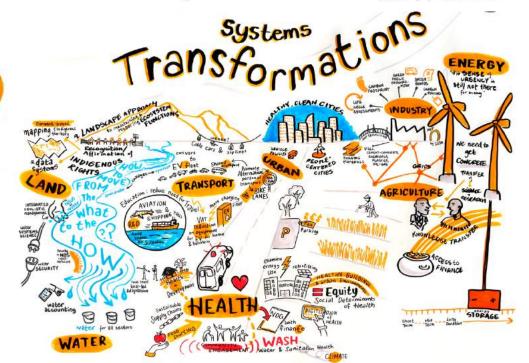
















GST Technical Dialogue 1.3

In-person at SB58 in Bonn, Germany

In June 2023 Hazel and I traveled to Bonn in Germany to visually support the UNFCCC GST team during the third and final GST Technical Dialogue. We had a videographer, Felix Bruns, with us who produced a post-event video which discussed the process of creating the Global Stocktake graphic recordings.

We somewhat overzealously summarised an enormous World Café (five rounds of thirteen parallel break out discussions where delegates 'role played' actors with specific interests, such as industry representative, young people or Indigenous Peoples), as well as four Roundtable discussions in the cavernous Chamber Hall.

We set up a graphic display in the main conference lobby which, as it grew over the two weeks of the conference, garnered a lot of enthusiastic engagement from delegates.











Photo by Felix Bruns



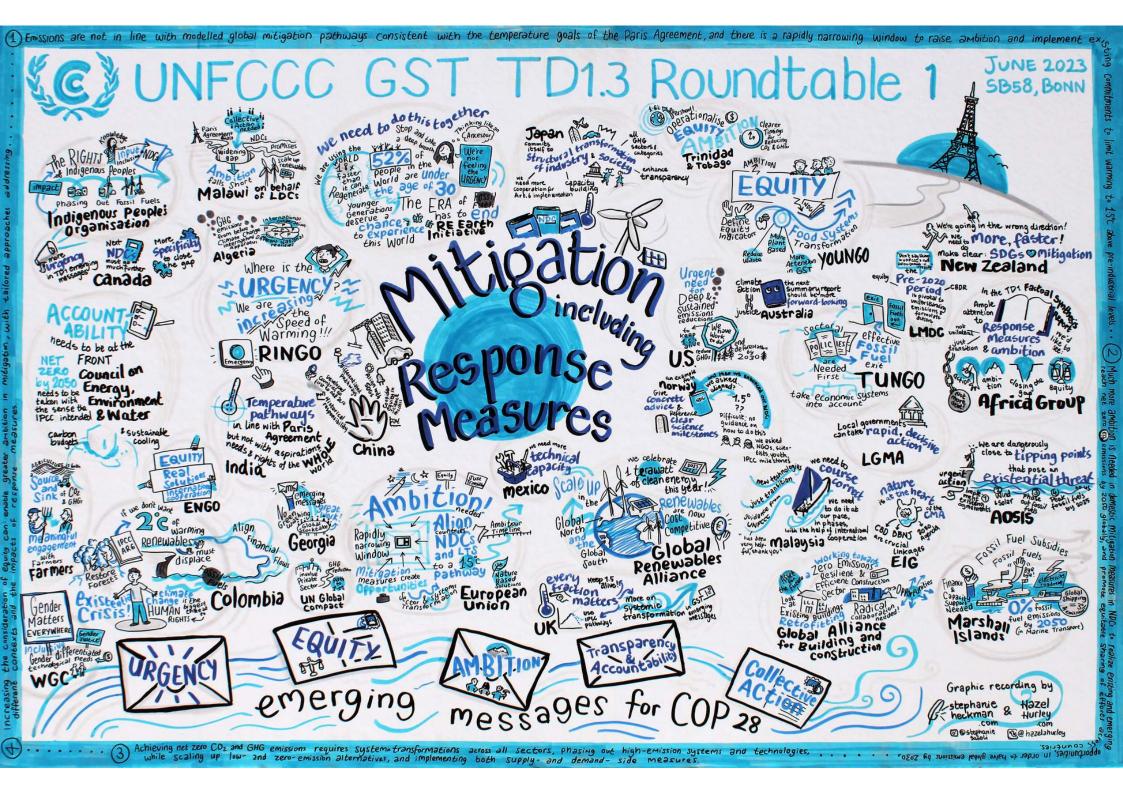


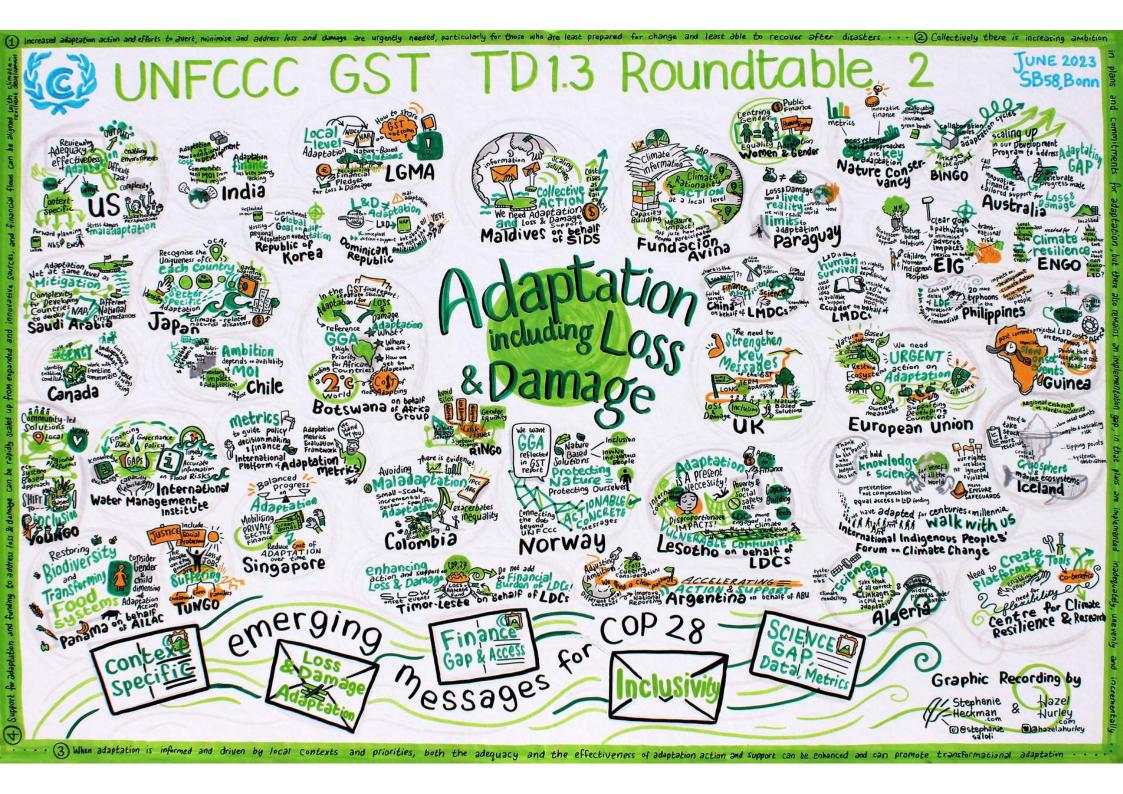


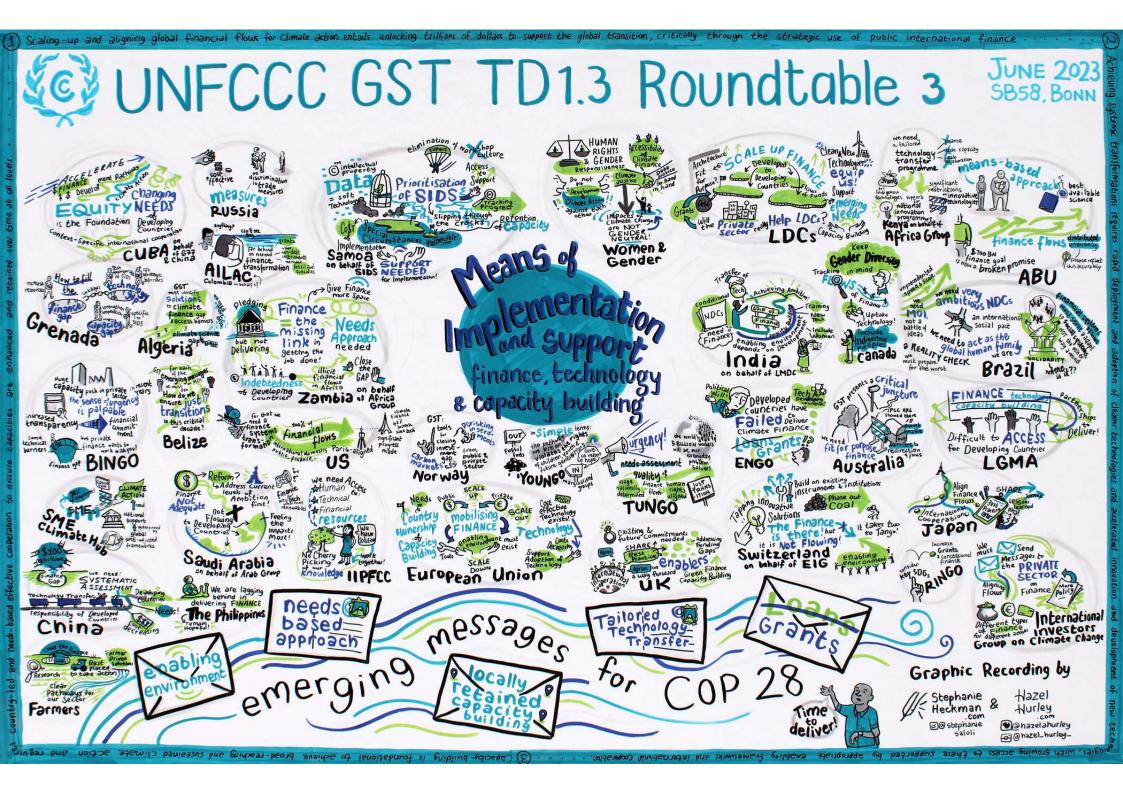


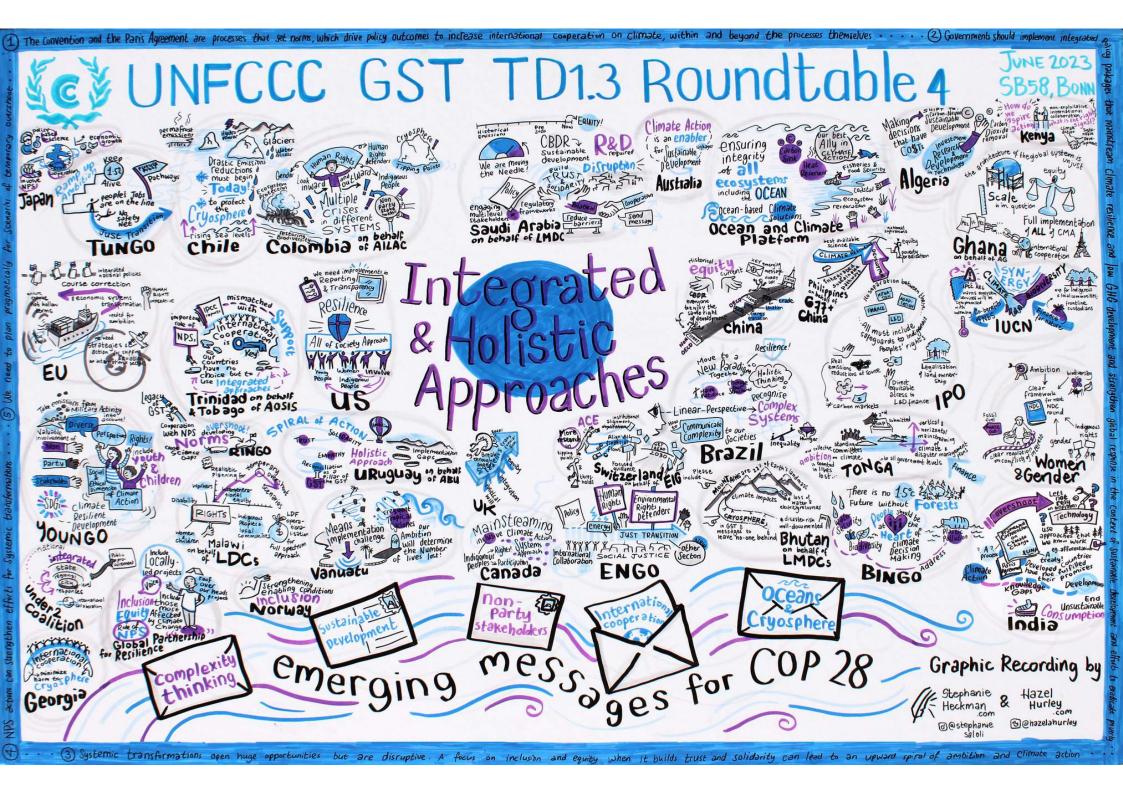












Acknowledgements

My many thanks go to the people who have partnered with me, repeatedly or for the first time at COP28: Tracy Tollmann and Caitlin MacDonald from the UNFCCC Collective Progress team, Annette Hertwig at the Global Resilience Partnership, Gabriela Pimentel and her colleagues at UNFCCC Gender and ILO, and Nicola Sorsby and her colleagues at the International Institute for the Environment and Development. It's been a pleasure and a joy to visually support their events, while feeling myself so supported and appreciated for the good work we've done together.

And many thanks to the fellow graphic recorders who have collaborated with me to provide graphic recording for the COP28 Resilience Hub, Desiree and Nityalila from Tofu Creatives, and Priska Lang, Alessandra Zaffiro, Valentina Abalzati and Pear Wongtitirote from our shared, new Blue Marble Collective.

And finally a heartfelt thank you to all those who followed my visual summaries of COP28 and who were so engaged and supportive for the third year counting.

All photos by Stéphanie Heckman unless otherwise stated

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License



