

# New Eco-Social Contracts

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Redefining eco-social contracts for the green transition



The largest  
movement  
for green fair  
economies



The GEC is funded in part by the European Union

# What is a social contract? It can be vertical and horizontal

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- **Vertical** - the contract between citizens and the state, to claim and define roles such as security and agency,
  - For example, the primary function of the state is to keep people safe and for that service people agree to obey the state's laws and pay its taxes. This is important as it defines the relationship expectations that underpin societal stability.
- It can also be **horizontal**, defining relationship norms between and within communities -
  - For example, the licence to operate given to businesses or the consumption behaviours. This is important as they define cultural and behavioural norms.
- Social contracts emerge from claims for recognition, rights, freedoms, and security, and govern the relations between the many and varied groups that make up society
- They are often implicit (norms) but sometimes explicit – such as written constitutions.

# But the social contract is breaking or for some already broken

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Inequality rising  
Poverty spreading  
Billionaires in space  
Working people  
at food banks  
Women excluded  
Fridays for Future



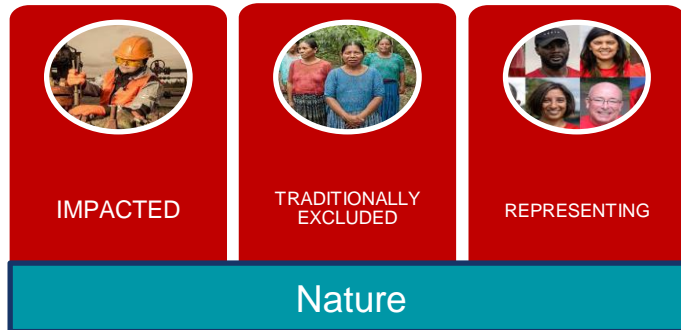
Broken climate agreements,  
Failing Sustainable development  
goals  
Nature in mass extinction  
Future in peril  
Black Lives Matter

**Who does this work for?**

**RELEVANCE - Without a robust social contract there will  
be insufficient trust to transition**

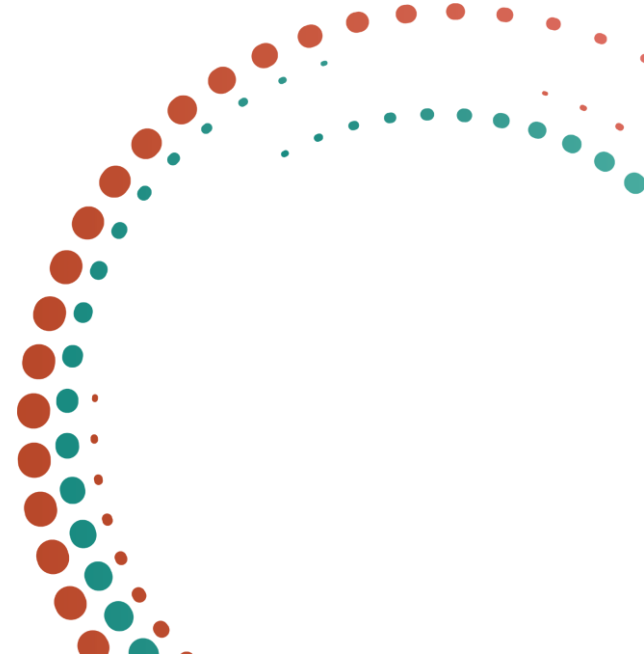
# What is a new eco- social contract?

- We define it as “**the negotiated societal agreement for transformation to green and fair economic and societies**”
- It specifically attempts to be a representative negotiation **process and outcome** for all stakeholder groups
- We define four main stakeholder categories:
  1. **Impacted communities** – such as fossil fuel workers,
  2. **Traditionally excluded communities** – women, youth, indigenous, small bus.
  3. **Representative** – all main stakeholder groups – gov, business, communities
  4. **Nature**



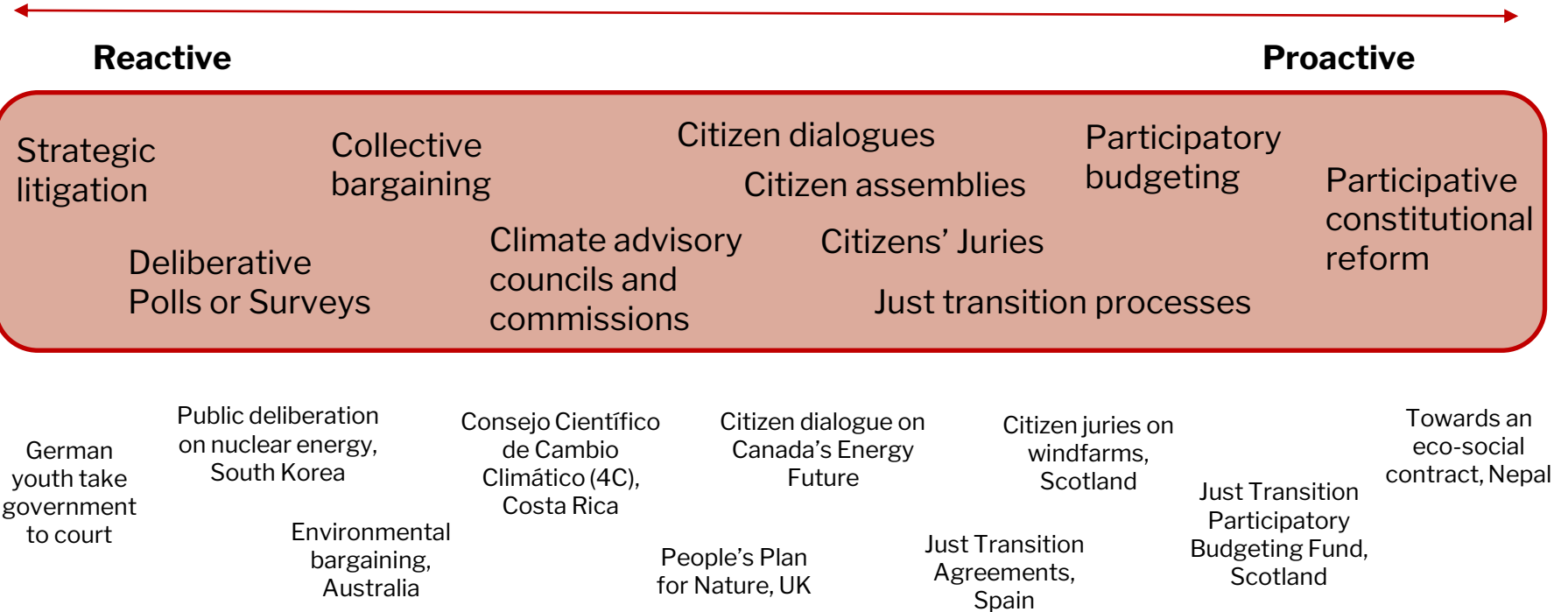
# We believe new eco-social contracts are needed:

- To accelerate transitions to avoid ecological collapse
- Because for many, social contracts are broken or they were never included in them (e.g. women)
- To counteract the decline in trust and growth of inequality, and to address historic injustices
- To negotiate transition costs, responsibilities and define roles and behaviours
- To offer a structured mechanisms sensitive to cultural context that can deliver a **Just** (and fast) **Transition**
- Because effective transitions rely primarily on behaviour change so they benefit from societal debate



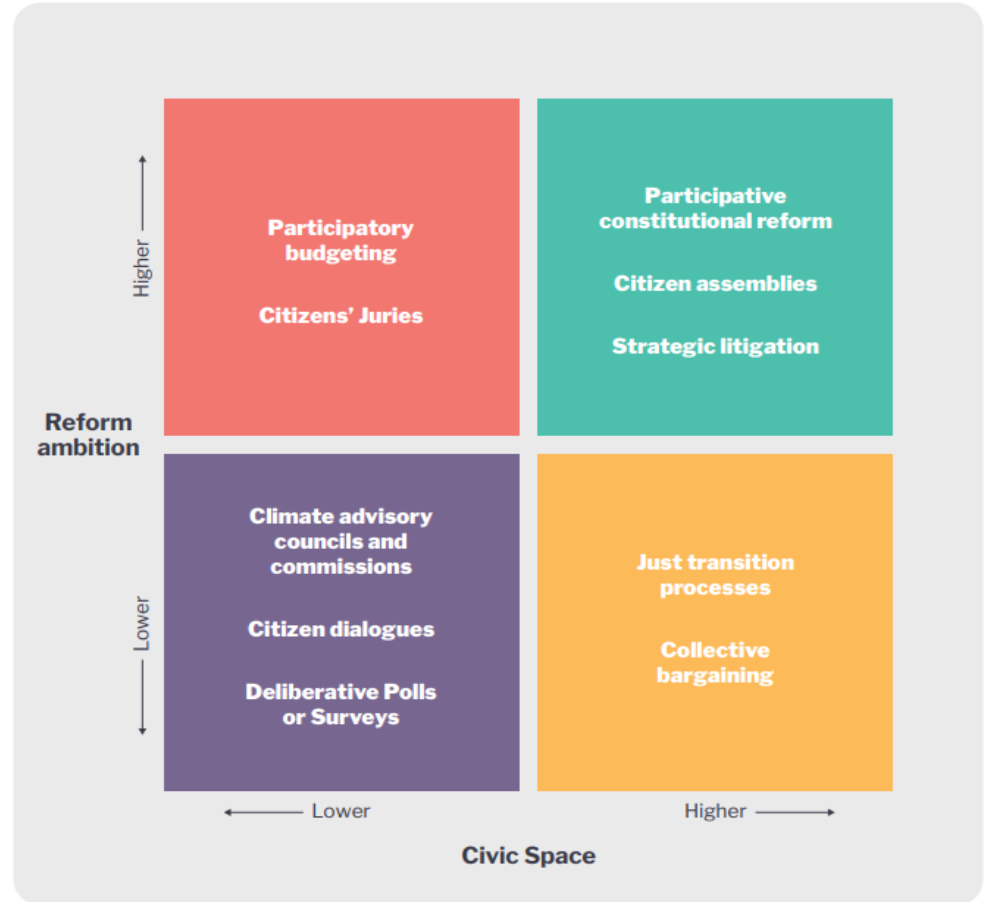
# 10 different Eco-Social contract mechanisms

## AN ECO-SOCIAL CONTRACT SPECTRUM

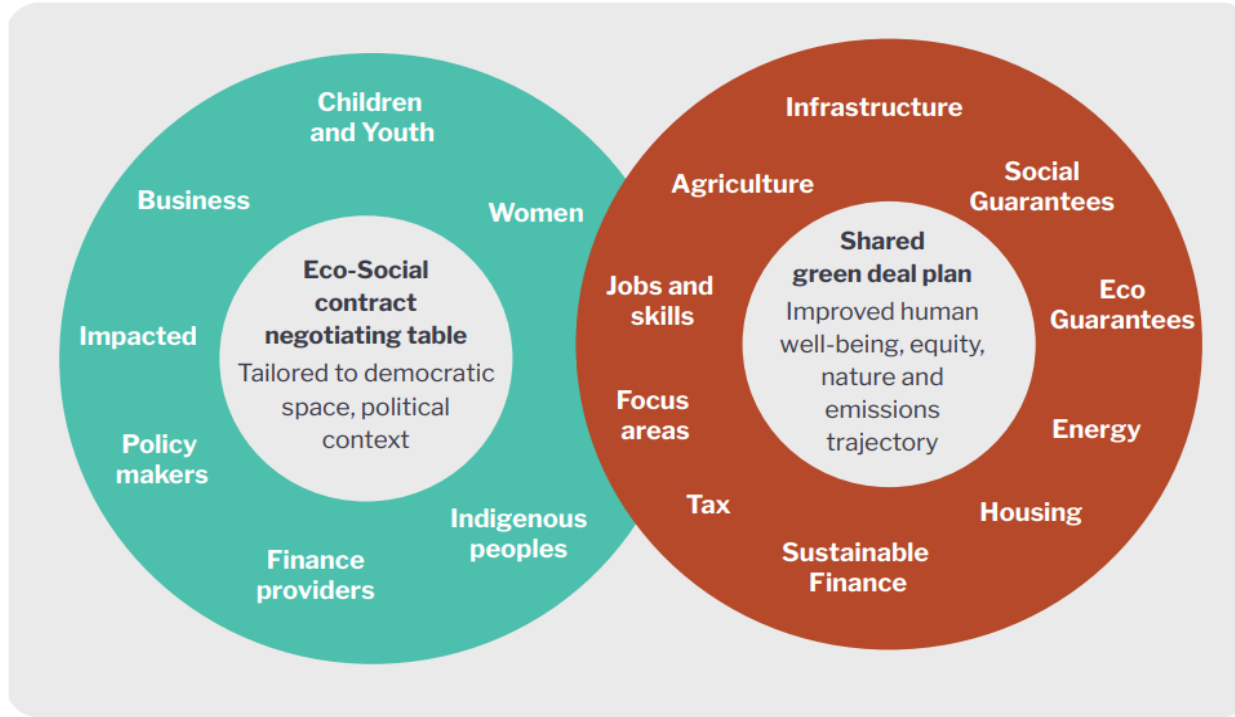


# Which mechanism?

- The mechanism choice depends on the available civic space and the reform ambition
- Generally, the eco-social contract mechanism needs to be commensurate to the scale of the crisis **and** the transformation



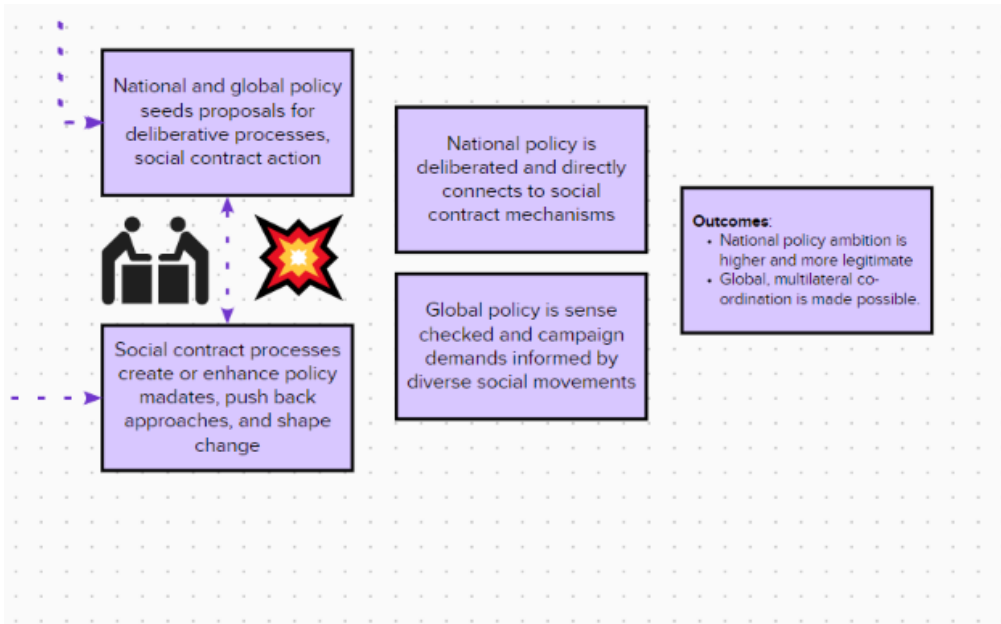
# GEC's vision - Eco-social contracts for shared green deals



A transformation negotiation process that accepts the full spectrum of transition choices is what we call - **Eco-social contract for a shared green deal**



# Eco-social contracts for a global shared green deal



**Rebuilding trust** within nations and between nations

**Local and national** eco-social contracts must pay attention and negotiate the global deal policy architecture

# What does success look like?

1. Societal solidarity for transition action
2. National green economic transitions go faster and deliver better, fairer, stickier results.
3. Improved ambition for inclusive national green economic reform, and multilateral green economic architecture.
4. Policy process are more inclusive – with new mechanisms that focus attention on the social, cultural and economic rights *and* perspectives of marginalised groups – especially race, gender, youth
5. Improved trust in institutions, alignment between movements, and connection with people and grassroots.
6. Global green deals are more likely and become more effectively implemented

# What is Green Economy Coalition doing?

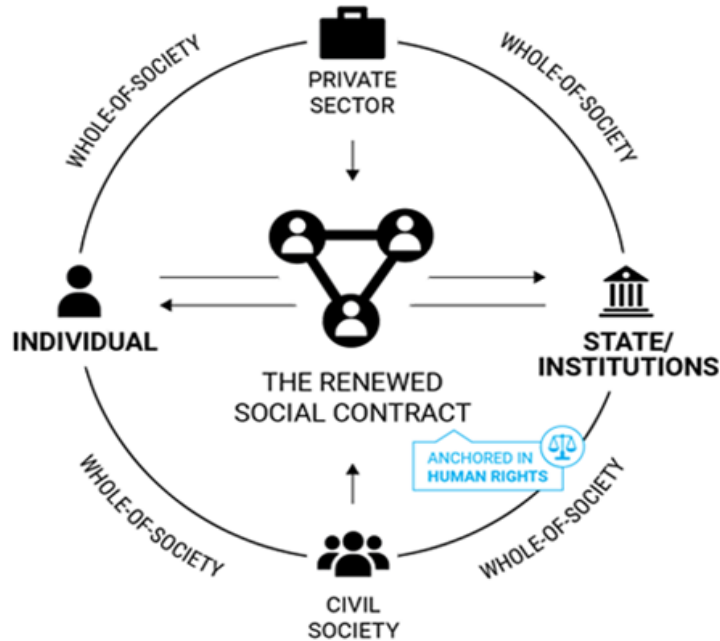
## **Piloting national eco-social contracts:**

1. South Africa – SME's, energy
2. Uganda -River systems management conservation, agro-ecology
3. Senegal: Agro-ecological economy
4. India – SMEs
5. Mongolia - SMEs (W&Y), also air pollution, land degradation possibilities
6. Peru: SMEs regional platforms, enterprise and policies
7. Brazil/ Amazon: Bio-economy, head water management (W&Y), forests
8. Caribbean SIDs - resilience

## **Influencing global green architecture knowledge and policy:**

- UNRISD and GEC Global research action network
- Leading our partners to UN Summit of the Future
- Influencing policy on both eco-social contract and global green deal policy
  - G20 Processes
  - UN processes
  - Global institutions

# The Concept is spreading and starting to mobilise



UN Summit of the Future 2024 will put social contract thinking at the heart of global renewal

*“Implementing a New **Social Contract** would make sure that that rights are respected, jobs are decent with minimum living wages and collective bargaining, social protection is universal, due diligence and accountability are driving business operations, and that social dialogue ensures just transition measures for climate and technology.”*

**Sharon Burrow**  
General Secretary  
ITUC



*“To achieve a better outcome, the world must act jointly and swiftly to revamp all aspects of our societies and economies, from education to **social contracts** and working conditions. Every country, from the United States to China, must participate, and every industry, from oil and gas to tech, must be transformed.”*

**Klaus Schwab**  
Executive Chairman  
of the World  
Economic Forum



*“The new **social contract**, between governments, people, civil society, business and more, must integrate employment, sustainable development and social protection, based on equal rights and opportunities for all.”*

**Antonio Guterres**  
United Nations  
Secretary-General



*“We must find a way to give more weight to the voices and interests of younger and future generations. Otherwise the **social contract** that shapes the future will be designed exclusively by those who will not live to see it, without the input of those who will.”*

**Minouche Shafik**  
Director of the  
London School  
of Economics

