



# THE CLIMATE TROIKA AND THEIR CARBON BOMBS

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The governments of the United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan and Brazil, the 2023, 2024 and 2025 hosts of the UN Climate Summit launched the COP Presidencies Troika initiative to “drive ambitious collective climate action” in 2023.<sup>1</sup> However, recent reports show that they are not only failing to reduce fossil fuel extraction, with their fossil fuel expansion plans they are undermining their own ambitions to be even close to a 1.5° aligned trajectory. A recent report found that the UAE and Brazil are among the top three countries with the biggest approved oil and gas expansions since COP28.<sup>2</sup>

All three countries are major fossil fuel exporting countries, and all have carbon bombs. Carbon bombs are fossil fuel projects with over a gigaton of potential CO<sub>2</sub> emissions when extracted and burnt.<sup>3</sup> 7 of the Troika’s 17 carbon bombs are new projects where extraction has not yet begun. (see table 1) The extraction of carbon bombs is putting the world on a trajectory way exceeding the 1.5° climate goals: not setting off new ones and putting existing projects in harvest mode should be a priority for any nation.

The UAE’s 6, Azerbaijan’s 1 and Brazil’s 10 carbon bombs represent 23, 1.7 and 25.9 Gigatons of potential CO<sub>2</sub> emissions respectively, which together could cause over 11 million premature deaths and more than 21 trillion USD in damages worldwide.<sup>4</sup>

1 <https://www.cop28.com/en/news/2024/02/COP28-launches-The-COP-Presidencies-Troika>

2 <https://www.oilchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/The-COP-Troika-Fossil-Fuel-Champions-or-Guardians-of-1.5C.pdf>

3 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0301421522001756?via%3Dihub>

4 Calculations based on Bresser (2021) and Ricke et al. (2018), see [here](#).

## THE TROIKA'S CARBON BOMBS

Carbon Bomb Project	Country	Potential emissions (Gt CO <sub>2</sub> )	Mortality Cost (deaths)	Social cost (billion USD)
<i>ACG (Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli Deep Water)</i>	Azerbaijan	1.66	374,440	692.33
<b>Total Azerbaijan</b>		<b>1.66</b>	<b>374,440</b>	<b>692.33</b>
<i>*Santos Offshore</i>	Brazil	4.34	978,764	1,809.71
<i>*Llandoverly Shale</i>	Brazil	4.27	963,795	1,782.03
<i>Buzios (x-Franco)</i>	Brazil	3.64	820,531	1,517.14
<i>*Irati Shale</i>	Brazil	2.70	607,866	1,123.93
<i>Lula (X-Tupi)</i>	Brazil	2.55	574,149	1,061.59
<i>*Parnaiba Onshore</i>	Brazil	2.00	450,738	833.40
<i>*Libra</i>	Brazil	1.89	426,642	788.85
<i>*Candeias Shale</i>	Brazil	1.64	370,275	684.63
<i>*Campos Offshore</i>	Brazil	1.56	352,041	650.92
<i>Mero (Libra NW)</i>	Brazil	1.29	290,263	536.69
<b>Total Brazil</b>		<b>25.87</b>	<b>5,835,063</b>	<b>10,788.90</b>
<i>Upper Zakum</i>	UAE	6.44	1,452,499	2,685.64
<i>Bu Hasa</i>	UAE	4.92	1,108,656	2,049.88
<i>Bab</i>	UAE	5.87	1,324,182	2,448.38
<i>Lower Zakum</i>	UAE	2.43	549,035	1,015.15
<i>Umm Shaif/Nasr</i>	UAE	1.94	437,360	808.67
<i>Asab</i>	UAE	1.37	309,705	572.64
<b>Total UAE</b>		<b>22.97</b>	<b>5,181,436</b>	<b>9,580.36</b>
<b>Total Troika</b>		<b>50.51</b>	<b>11,390,939</b>	<b>21,061.60</b>

Table 1. The Troika Carbon Bombs. \* denotes new projects as of 2020. Source: Kühne et al. (2022), own calculation.

The Troika carbon bombs hold an overall 50.5 Gt CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. This is one-fourth of the carbon budget left in 2023.<sup>5</sup> 18.4 Gt CO<sub>2</sub> is in projects that have not yet started (see Table 1) and could be cancelled by governments that take their climate leadership role seriously.

The UAE has 6 carbon bombs<sup>6</sup> with 23 Gt CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. All of these projects are active oil and gas extraction projects. ADNOC, the national oil company of the UAE is operating all of these projects and owns the majority of the shares. Foreign companies, among others the Italian Eni, the American ExxonMobil, the French TotalEnergies, and the Indian ONGC, also hold shares in these projects.<sup>7</sup>

The Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli Deep Water carbon bomb project in Azerbaijan represents 1.66 Gt CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. It is being extracted by the country's national oil company, SOCAR and international fossil fuel companies like the British BP, the Hungarian Mol Group and the Japanese INPEX.<sup>8</sup> The offshore oil project has been active since 1997.<sup>9</sup>

Brazil has 10 carbon bombs, 7 of which are new projects. The new ones represent 18.4 Gt CO<sub>2</sub> emissions while the active projects still have 7.5 Gt of potential CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in them. Petrobras, Brazil's national oil company owns the majority of the active projects. Other companies, like the French TotalEnergies and the UK-based Shell, also own shares.

## THE WAY FORWARD

Being a climate leader includes transitioning away from fossil fuels, as agreed at COP28 in Dubai. ADNOC, SOCAR and Petrobras, the Troika's national oil companies should be examples for other national oil companies on how to align with the Paris Agreement and move beyond their dependence on fossil fuels. This naturally has to include slowing down the extraction of carbon bombs and not setting off new ones. Two steps are key on that path: no new projects and entering harvest mode.

Harvest mode, which means no new investment while generating cash flow with continuing extraction from existing wells, is one of the easiest and most profitable ways to attend to the climate imperative. This practice is known and applied in the oil and gas industry when prices are low. In a post-Covid high-price environment, international oil companies are already showing an increasing tendency towards buying back shares and paying dividends, rather than investing in new extraction projects, showing first signs of moving towards harvest mode. Harvest mode can be a key tool for national oil companies to generate cash that can be invested in renewable energy infrastructure, thus continuing to play an important role in securing countries' energy security. To be aligned with a 1.5°C pathway, all three Troika NOCs would need to decrease their emissions intensity by >4% annually. Using harvest mode would help achieve this.

5 Forster, P. M. et al (2024). [Indicators of Global Climate Change 2023: annual update of key indicators of the state of the climate system and human influence](#). Earth System Science Data, 16(6), 2625–2658. The budget in this study assumes a 50% chance of limiting global temperature rise to within 1.5 degrees.

6 UAE's Bab and Bab (Gasco) carbon bombs were merged in this calculation. In a [previous analysis](#) they were listed separately.

7 Global Oil and Gas Extraction Tracker, Global Energy Monitor, March 2024 Release, <https://globalenergymonitor.org/projects/global-oil-gas-extraction-tracker/>

8 See footnote 7.

9 [https://www.bp.com/en\\_az/azerbaijan/home/who-we-are/operationsprojects/acg2/acg-30th-anniversary-in-facts.html](https://www.bp.com/en_az/azerbaijan/home/who-we-are/operationsprojects/acg2/acg-30th-anniversary-in-facts.html)





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