

FROM BAKU TO BELÉM: COP30 AGENDA

November 2025

The 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference will take place from 10 to 21 November in Belém (Brazil). From the first day of the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC (**COP30**), the presidency will be held by André Corrêa do Lago, Brazil's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for Climate, Energy, and Environment.

The meeting will be convened in the context of the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement and the beginning of its new implementation cycle. Ahead of the session, countries are expected to submit enhanced climate targets for 2035.

At the same time, attention is increasing to the legal foundations of climate policy, particularly in connection with the Advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on climate change, delivered in July 2025.¹ The Court confirmed that under international law, States are obligated to prevent significant harm to the climate system, base their climate policies on the best available science, and ensure the highest possible ambition.

While the ICJ's conclusions are not legally binding, they are expected to influence both the rhetoric and substance of negotiations at COP30. The Court's position has already been referenced in public discourse: at the UN Climate Summit during the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, representatives of vulnerable and small island developing States emphasised that the advisory opinion should be taken into account in the multilateral process. Vanuatu's Minister for Climate Change, Ralph Regenvanu, announced the country's plans to build a coalition of States to promote a new UNGA resolution grounded in the Court's findings.² Brazilian President Lula da Silva, referencing the advisory opinion, stated that submission of nationally determined contributions is "not an option, but an obligation."³

One possible way to reflect the Court's legal framing in the negotiations could be through a "cover decision" capturing the key outcomes of the session.⁴ However, not every COP session results in such a document, as its preparation depends both on the initiative of the presidency and on the extent of consensus among Parties across a broad range of issues.

Below is a detailed overview of the official agenda and main themes of the negotiation process at COP30.

National mitigation ambitions and the new NDC cycle

The upcoming summit in Belém will mark the beginning of the third generation of nationally determined contributions – **NDC 3.0**. Under the Paris Agreement, each successive NDC should

¹ For an overview of States' positions in the advisory proceedings before the International Court of Justice, see: *Positions of States Within the Advisory Proceedings of the International Court of Justice on Obligations of States in Respect of Climate Change*. (2025, May 12). International and Comparative Law Research Center. [URL](#)

² Vanuatu working toward UN vote aimed at fighting fossil-fuel industry influence. The Guardian. [URL](#)

³ Climate Summit 2025. UN WebTV. [URL](#)

⁴ Cover decision – the overarching "first" decision adopted by the Conference of the Parties, summarizing the key issues discussed during the session. Unlike decisions taken under specific workstreams or mandates (e.g. the Global Goal on Adaptation or the New Collective Quantified Goal), a cover decision addresses a wide array of topics and reflects the political messages and consensus reached at the session. Such decisions play an important role in shaping the overall direction of the UNFCCC climate regime. Examples include the Glasgow Climate Pact (COP26) and the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan (COP27).

represent a progression and reflect the highest possible ambition. Countries are also expected to take into account the findings of the first Global Stocktake,⁵ concluded at COP28 in Dubai in 2023.

NDCs for the period of up to 2035 were due nine months ahead of COP30.⁶ However, by February 2025, only 13 countries had submitted their updated contributions, prompting the UNFCCC Secretariat to extend the deadline to September. Despite broad commitments from Parties to submit new plans,⁷ by early November only around one-third had submitted their NDCs.⁸

Due to the limited dataset available at the time of preparing the synthesis report, the Secretariat was unable to assess the overall impact of the new submissions, unlike in previous rounds.⁹ The low rate of timely submissions could heighten tensions in discussions on mitigation ambition and the adequacy of collective efforts under the Paris Agreement. This is already evidenced by the request of the Alliance of Small Island States (**AOSIS**) to add a new agenda item to COP30, highlighting systemic shortcomings in mitigation actions and the quality of NDCs.¹⁰

Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Program, launched at COP27 in 2022, remains one of the most contested elements of the mitigation track. The programme was designed with the objective of narrowing the gap between current national commitments and the goals of the Paris Agreement through the urgent scaling-up of ambition and practical mitigation action by 2030. While the programme does not set new targets, its effectiveness will largely depend on the extent, to which countries translate the outcomes of these discussions into concrete implementation measures.

A key challenge lies in the absence of a shared understanding of the nature of the programme. Parties interpret its mandate differently: some view it as a tool to exert pressure on countries with low levels of ambition and advocate for substantive outcomes to be reflected in COP decisions, while others see it as a voluntary platform for the exchange of experiences. These divergences have resulted in limited progress over the two years of the programme's existence and growing scepticism regarding its overall effectiveness.

COP30 is expected to continue discussions on the future of the programme, including the proposed launch of a digital platform to support mitigation action¹¹—an initiative that has raised questions regarding its distinct added value and practical relevance.

Adaptation

Adaptation will be a central focus at COP30, with a key agenda item being the finalisation of indicators to assess progress toward the **Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA)**.¹²

Outlined in Article 7 of the Paris Agreement, the GGA aims to strengthen adaptive capacity, resilience, and reduce vulnerability to climate change. Unlike the temperature goal, the GGA is framed in broad terms and has only recently begun to receive operational content.

⁵ Decision 1/CMA.5. [URL](#)

⁶ Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 25. [URL](#)

⁷ Message on the release of the Chair's summary of the UN Climate Summit. [URL](#)

⁸ As of 6 November 2025, there are 75 NDCs registered. NDC Registry. [URL](#)

⁹ The NDCs submitted by the end of September covered 30% of global emissions, as active submission of NDCs began on the eve of the conference. Thus, the Secretariat's analysis does not cover the NDCs of China and the EU, which were submitted in early November. 2025 NDC Synthesis Report, paragraph 208. [URL](#)

¹⁰ Submission by Palau on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States. [URL](#)

¹¹ The platform was presented by Brazil at the SB62 in Bonn in 2024.

¹² Adaptation will be a central theme of COP30, said André Corrêa do Lago. COP30 website. [URL](#)

Since 2021, the **Glasgow–Sharm El-Sheikh work programme**¹³ has aimed to operationalize the GGA. This resulted in the adoption of a framework at COP28 in Dubai, outlining common objectives for adaptation by 2030.¹⁴ The framework identifies focus areas such as water systems, food security, health, ecosystems, infrastructure, poverty, and cultural heritage.

Two complementary initiatives were launched to support further progress:

- **The UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience**¹⁵, offering strategic guidance for achieving the GGA¹⁶
- **The UAE–Belém Work Programme**¹⁷, tasked with developing a global set of indicators to track progress

COP29 decided that the list should not exceed 100 indicators and should be globally applicable.¹⁸ However, preparatory discussions for COP30 revealed substantial divergences. At the Bonn session (June 2025), countries expressed differing views on the purpose and legal weight of indicators, as well as whether indicators on means of implementation (such as finance and technology) should be included.

Finance

The finance agenda remains one of the most contentious and cross-cutting issues in the negotiation process. Questions related to the mobilisation and provision of resources are directly linked to the ability to raise climate ambition, particularly in developing countries. At the same time, there is still no internationally agreed definition of climate finance, no common methodologies for assessing countries' needs, and no transparent mechanisms for resource mobilization.

In addition, particular attention continues to be paid to the implementation of Article 2.1(c) of the Paris Agreement, which calls for making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development. This objective extends beyond direct obligations to provide climate finance and touches upon broader issues of global economic transformation.¹⁹

A significant part of the discussions at COP30 will focus on the implementation of the decisions adopted at COP29 in Baku, particularly in relation to the **new collective quantified goal** (NCQG) on climate finance for the post-2025 period.²⁰ The new goal foresees an increase in climate finance for developing countries to USD 300 billion per year by 2035, as well as a broader target of mobilizing USD 1.3 trillion annually from a wide range of sources. To support the latter target, the COP29 and COP30 Presidencies developed the **Baku–Belém Roadmap to 1.3T**, presented ahead of COP30.²¹

¹³ Decision 7/CMA.3 paragraph 2. [URL](#)

¹⁴ Workshops under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation. Report by the secretariat. UNFCCC. [URL](#)

¹⁵ Decision 2/CMA.5 paragraph 6. [URL](#)

¹⁶ Decision 2/CMA.5 paragraph 7. [URL](#)

¹⁷ Decision 2/CMA.5 paragraph 39. [URL](#)

¹⁸ Decision 3/CMA.6 paragraph 20. [URL](#)

¹⁹ For more information on the financial aspects of the UNFCCC negotiation process, see the ICLRC material: Климатическое финансирование: понятие, архитектура, повестка РКК ООН [Climate finance: concept, architecture, UNFCCC agenda]. (2025, 9 October). Центр международных и сравнительно-правовых исследований [International and Comparative Law Research Center]. [URL](#)

²⁰ Decision 1/CMA.6. [URL](#)

²¹ Report on the Baku to Belém Roadmap to 1.3T. [URL](#)

The quantitative framing and structure of the NCQG prompted criticism from developing countries at the time of its adoption at COP29. In their view, the new formulation shifts emphasis away from the legally binding obligations of developed countries under Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, placing greater responsibility on the private sector and other sources of finance.

In response, a group of developing countries has proposed amending the COP30 agenda to include the development of a legally binding action plan on climate finance under Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement. The proposed plan would define the volume and timeline of public finance provision, as well as procedures for reporting and review of commitments.²² This initiative effectively questions the compromise reached in Baku and reflects increasing tensions between Parties. It is expected that discussions on the inclusion of this new item in the formal agenda, as well as the subsequent format for addressing financial commitments, may become one of the most sensitive issues at COP30, shaping the overall dynamics of the negotiations in Belém.

Global Stocktake

The Global Stocktake (**GST**) is a mechanism under the Paris Agreement designed to assess the collective progress in achieving its long-term goals. The process takes place every five years and serves as the main tool for aligning individual national efforts with the collective objectives set out in Article 2.1 of the Paris Agreement.

The outcomes of the first GST, concluded at COP28, showed that to keep the temperature limit of 1.5°C within reach, global greenhouse gas emissions should decline by 43% by 2030 and by 60% by 2035 compared to 2019 levels, with net zero to be achieved by 2050.²³ The final decision included a call on Parties to triple global renewable energy capacity and to double the rate of energy efficiency improvement by 2030, as well as to accelerate the transition away from fossil fuels towards emission-free energy sources.²⁴

The COP30 Presidency referred to the GST as a “Global NDC” or “globally determined contribution” emphasizing that the findings of the first GST should serve as guidance for Parties as they update their NDCs in 2025.²⁵

COP30 in Belém is expected to mark the beginning of the practical implementation of the GST outcomes,²⁶ particularly through the **UAE Dialogue on Implementing the GST Outcomes**.²⁷ The conclusions of COP30 will form the basis for launching the second Global Stocktake process, which will begin at COP31 in 2026 and conclude at COP33 in 2028.

Other agenda items and Presidency priorities

Discussions on just transition are expected to continue in Belém and are listed among the priorities of the COP30 Presidency.²⁸ The **Just Transition Work Programme**, established at COP27, is aimed at

²² Joint Submission of the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC) and Arab Group. [URL](#)

²³ Decision 1/CMA.5 paragraph 27. [URL](#)

²⁴ Decision 1/CMA.5 paragraph 28. [URL](#)

²⁵ Fourth Letter from the Presidency. COP30 website. [URL](#). “the GST as a “Global NDC”, or rather a “GDC” – the world’s “globally determined contribution”

²⁶ Letters from the Presidency. COP30 website. [URL](#)

²⁷ At COP28, it was decided to launch a Dialogue, the conditions for which should have been agreed upon at COP29, however, no final decision was made at COP29 and the dialogue was not launched.

²⁸ Letters from the Presidency. COP30 website. [URL](#)

addressing the socio-economic dimensions of decarbonisation.²⁹ Despite the adoption of a workplan through 2026, Parties were unable to reach consensus on an outcome at COP29 due to persistent divergences in views on the programme's scope. Developed countries support a focus on the energy sector and mitigation measures, whereas developing countries advocate for a broader agenda encompassing capacity-building, technology cooperation, and access to finance for the Global South.

Following the establishment of the **Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage** at COP28, attention has shifted to operationalisation and resource mobilisation. As of September 2025, total confirmed pledges to the Fund amounted to approximately USD 789 million, with less than half currently available for disbursement.³⁰ This figure remains significantly below estimated needs: various sources project that developing countries may require between USD 290–580 billion annually by 2030, rising to USD 1.6 trillion per year in the longer term.³¹ The question of long-term funding sources remains unresolved and may emerge in Belém in light of the increasing frequency and severity of climate-related extreme events.³²

Following the adoption of the **Article 6** rulebook at COP29 in Baku, the focus is shifting toward the implementation phase. Article 6 of the Paris Agreement provides a framework for voluntary cooperation among Parties, including market-based mechanisms (Articles 6.2 and 6.4) and non-market approaches (Article 6.8). A formal review of the rules is expected in 2028. At COP30, discussions will likely concentrate on the initial steps in operationalising the mechanisms, including review of progress reports and approaches to ensuring transparency and environmental integrity. In addition, the question of phasing out the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol, which remained unresolved at COP28 and COP29, may re-emerge in Belém.

²⁹ Decision 1/CMA.4, paragraph 52. [URL](#)

³⁰ Status of resources report of the FRLD Trustee. UNFCCC. [URL](#)

³¹ Shawoo, Z., Ghosh, E., & Nazareth, A. (2025). Implementing innovative finance instruments for loss and damage. Stockholm Environment Institute. [URL](#)

³² Letters from the Presidency. COP30 website. [URL](#)