



COP30 - Highlights of the Global Climate Negotiations 2025

Editorial

Dear members of the Climate, DRR and Environment network,

Almost a month ago, the Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC / Paris Agreement, the major multilateral climate meeting of 2025, ended in Belém, Brazil. Rather than providing a milestone to mark the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement, the outcomes of this year's COP are rather sobering (again) – but the global, multilateral process that includes most countries (with one big absentee) is more needed than ever, as the "[alarming streak of exceptional temperatures continues](#)" (WMO, 2025), causing impacts worldwide. While GHG emissions are still increasing, [hitting an all-time high in 2024](#), while one big country decided that climate change is a hoax and thus has indirectly negatively influenced many big companies to rethink their original climate strategies, and while climate action is by far too slow, there is also a silver lining on the horizon: change is happening. Slowly, but steadily. And probably unstoppable (for some modest examples, see [here](#)). Why? Because there are smart and engaged people who actually understand and do care. If they – and we – stick together and take one step after another, we can make the difference that is needed to change from a still very dangerous pathway to a better future.

This last CDE spotlight (formerly known as CDE newsletter) of 2025 is dedicated to a retrospective look at the achievements of COP30.

Enjoy the reading!

*André Wehrli, Focal Point CDE Network
& Muriel Gschwend, SDC member of the COP30 Swiss delegation*

What is the COP30 about?

The 30th UN Climate Change Conference took place from 10–21 November 2025 in Belém, Brazil, bringing together thousands of delegates, government and political decision-makers, scientists, business representatives, and civil society to advance global climate action.

Although not part of the formal negotiations, Parties were expected to update the latest round of **Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**, the pledges that outline how each country intends to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate impacts. Countries were anticipated to present more ambitious emission reduction targets for 2035, backed by concrete implementation pathways, in order to close the gap between current pledges and the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C objective.

Another key expectation for COP30 was to reach agreement on indicators for measuring progress towards the **Global Goal on Adaptation** that was established under the Paris Agreement.

In addition, participants arrived at COP30 expecting deeper discussions on adaptation finance linked to the **New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG)** of USD 300 billion annually until 2035, agreed at COP29 in 2024. Building on the constructive discussions held in June, countries were also expected to continue negotiations on the transition of the **Adaptation Fund** from the Kyoto Protocol to the Paris Agreement to realize the share of proceeds (Art. 6.4) and continue working on the guidance for the various financial mechanisms, including the newly established **Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage**.

Other key items for deliberations in Belém included the development of a **new gender action plan** and the **just transition work** programme. As with every COP, numerous side events and pavilions facilitated global networking and collaboration on climate challenges and innovations.



COP30 in numbers
(Infographic by Zoë Environment Network)

Swiss engagement at the COP30

Switzerland was present at COP30 with a delegation of 19 members, a relatively small team compared to many other countries. The delegation was led by Ambassador Felix Werthli from the Federal Department of the Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications (DETEC) and included representatives from DETEC, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs (SDC, STS AWN), the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (SECO) and more, as well as representatives from civil society.



Members of the Swiss delegation to COP30 engaged in informal discussions
(Photo by SDC)

Switzerland pushed for ambitious 2035 **climate targets** aligned with the 1.5°C goal, urging all parties, especially major emitters, to strengthen their NDCs. It also called for robust implementation and transparency, supporting initiatives to address the ambition gap and proposing a work programme on phasing out fossil fuels, in line with COP28 commitments to triple renewables and double energy efficiency by 2030.

On **adaptation**, Switzerland promoted the adoption of measurable indicators to monitor progress, building on existing work and without imposing new reporting

obligations. In the area of **loss and damage**, it advocated for coherence and complementarity among climate instruments, including the broader DRR and humanitarian system.

On **climate finance**, Switzerland supported positions redirecting financial flows toward low-emission, climate-resilient investments through economic incentives, phasing out fossil fuel subsidies and mobilizing private capital. In terms of adaptation finance, the goal was to avoid new targets and to connect any decision text to the NCQG.

Furthermore, Switzerland highlighted in the negotiations the importance of **sustainable forest management** and adaptation to climate change, beyond combating tropical deforestation, and supported improved monitoring and reporting.

Main results from COP30

Mitigation

COP30 was expected to deliver ambitious new **NDCs** to close the 1.5°C gap, but only 122 countries submitted updates, and most lacked ambition. Major emitters such as Saudi Arabia and India did not submit updated NDCs at all. In response, the “[Global Mutirão](#)” decision reaffirmed the temperature goal and launched the **Global Implementation Accelerator** and the **Belém Mission** to 1.5°C to support NDC and adaptation plan implementation through finance, technology, and capacity-building. However, proposals for a clear NDC roadmap and stronger measures to close the mitigation gap were dropped.

Despite strong expectations, COP30 also failed to agree on a global fossil fuel phase-out strategy. While 83 countries (including Switzerland) pushed for clear language on phasing out fossil fuels, a small but influential group of oil-producing states blocked any reference in the final decision. To address the deadlock, the Brazilian Presidency announced **two voluntary roadmaps** - one for a just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels and another for halting and reversing deforestation - with outcomes to be presented at COP31.

Adaptation

While COP30 was a summit of limited progress on mitigation, some decisions were reached on adaptation. A **call for tripling of adaptation finance** until 2035 was decided in Belém. The new goal is part of the broader USD 300 billion per year in climate finance under the NCQG agreed at COP29.

Negotiators also made an important — if imperfect — step forward in operationalizing the **Global Goal on Adaptation** by agreeing on a set of adaptation metrics. The adopted list of [59 Belém Adaptation Indicators](#) includes key elements to assess global adaptation progress, including indicators for tracking means of implementation (finance, technology transfer, and capacity building), one indicator on gender-responsive adaptation policies, and suggestions for disaggregation (e.g., by gender, age, geography, and ecosystem).

However, several countries criticized the adopted indicators, noting that the last-minute changes undermined their credibility and will make them more difficult to operationalize. Amid confusion and objections to the text during the closing plenary, the next steps for the technical work on indicators remain unclear, with indications that the set may undergo further revisions.

The GGA process explained

The Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) was established in 2015 under the Paris Agreement to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, and reduce vulnerability worldwide. However, its operational details remained unclear for years. To address this, Parties launched the **Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh Work Programme (GlaSS)** at **COP26 in 2021**, initiating a two-year process to define a framework for assessing global progress on adaptation. Throughout **2022** and

2023, countries held technical dialogues and workshops to identify priority themes, such as water, food, health, ecosystems, infrastructure, and disaster risk reduction, and to explore possible metrics and indicators. At **COP28 in 2023**, Parties adopted the first **UAE Framework for the GGA**, marking a major step forward but leaving the negotiation of indicators to the following year. Work continued through 2024, culminating in intense discussions at **COP29 and COP30** aimed at agreeing on the indicators, methodologies, and reporting approaches that countries will use to track progress. Over the past two years, experts worked to turn a list of 10,000 potential indicators for tracking adaptation into just 100. In Belém, a [list of 59 indicators](#) was adopted.

COP30 failed to agree on moving the **Adaptation Fund** fully under the Paris Agreement. This means the Fund will not automatically receive a share of revenues from carbon market transactions under Art. 6.4 and must continue to rely on voluntary contributions instead of the more predictable revenue.

Loss and damage

At COP30, governments took a major step toward operationalizing support for loss and damage. The [Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage](#) was formally confirmed as the third operating entity under the UNFCCC Financial Mechanism and moved from concept to implementation in Belém. Its operationalization advanced through the adoption of the Barbados Implementation Modalities (BIM), which set out streamlined processes for financial access and disbursement. Parties welcomed the launch of the first call for funding requests under these modalities, signaling readiness to deliver support on the ground. The Fund remains critically underfunded. Current pledges amount to only a fraction of the estimated annual needs.

COP30 also concluded the [review](#) of the two loss and damage instruments: the **Santiago Network** and the **Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism (ExCom)**. The review calls on the Santiago Network to speed up technical assistance by providing faster support for vulnerable countries and establishing regional presences. It asks the ExCom to strengthen work on non-economic losses and produce knowledge products to help countries prepare funding and assistance requests. The decision also emphasizes better coordination among the instruments through joint meetings, shared knowledge products, and outreach to national focal points.

Climate finance

Furthermore, a new [Climate Finance Work Programme](#) was created, which will be a space for developing countries to continue pressing for public finance from developed countries, contributing toward the USD 300 billion mobilization goal under the NCQG. Furthermore, discussions on redirecting financial flows toward low-emission, climate-resilient investments, as key issue for Switzerland, will continue under the Veredas Dialogue and the annual high-level Xingu Finance Talks.

Just transition

During COP30, it was decided to develop a new institutional mechanism: the [Just Transition Mechanism](#), under the broader **Just Transition Work Programme**. The mechanism is designed to support equitable, inclusive transitions worldwide — through enhanced international cooperation, technical assistance, capacity-building, knowledge-sharing, and support for workers, communities, and other vulnerable groups. There was no specific funding allocated for this transition, nor any mention of the exploitation linked to the critical minerals being used in the green transition.

Gender

The [Belém Gender Action Plan](#) (which builds on a previous plan) is another achievement of COP30. It takes steps towards full, meaningful and equal

participation and leadership of women. Activities will focus on eliminating barriers for women in decision-making processes, enhancing the safety and protection mechanisms for women environment defenders, and strengthening support to national gender and climate change focal points. Countries also agreed to enhance collaboration on the collection and use of gender- and age-disaggregated data.

However, the Belém Gender Action Plan fell short of agreeing on coordinated efforts to increase knowledge on issues, such as sexual reproductive health and rights, gender-based violence, and unpaid care work in the context of gender and climate. In addition, though the plan calls for the gender-responsiveness of climate finance to be improved, financing to support this work remains largely unavailable.

Side Events at COP30

Mountain areas: Interlinkages between the biodiversity and climate change agendas

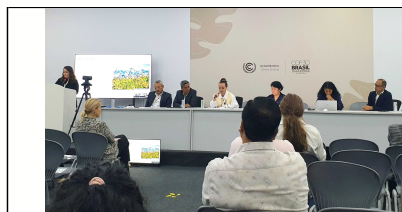
Organizers: Zoï Environment Network, CONDESAN, ICIMOD, UNEP, Government of Bhutan and Government of Nepal

This [official COP30 side event](#), organized as part of the [Adaptation at Altitude Programme](#), explored the ne

eds of mountain areas and highlighted how countries can advance their climate agendas in these ecosystems, which often receive less attention in global negotiations despite their high vulnerability and exposure.

Participants emphasized the importance of strengthening science–policy engagement to ensure that mountain knowledge informs strategies, legislation, and planning. Key priorities included nature-based adaptation, transformational approaches, flexible finance, adaptive management, and regional cooperation.

The discussions were informed by the launch of a [policy brief on pathways under the CBD and UNFCCC](#), which highlights mountains as strategic entry points to align biodiversity and climate agendas, presents key messages for ecosystem conservation and resilience, and offers actionable recommendations to promote cross-regional collaboration and transformative, nature-based solutions.



Representatives from Bhutan, Armenia, Peru, Nepal, and Kyrgyzstan speaking at the side event (Photo by Zoï Environment Network)



Dialogue on how to foster climate action, forest conservation and a resilient economy in the Amazon (Photo by Embassy of Switzerland in Brazil)

Territories for Resilience: Connecting Climate, Forests, Risks, and Economies in the Amazon

Organizers: SDC regional Hub Lima, IDB, Wyss Academy for Nature

Diverse stakeholders shared experiences and discussed how the Amazon can serve as a living laboratory for climate action, forest

conservation, and building a resilient economy.

Key takeaways include:

- Linking climate action, disaster risk reduction, and inclusive economic development (bioeconomy) through territorial approaches
- Ensuring meaningful participation of Indigenous peoples, Afro-descendant communities, local communities, and youth in sustainable solutions
- Connecting local experiences to global commitments, including the Paris Agreement and the SDGs
- Locally developed solutions can serve as models for scaling up sustainable finance, good governance, and nature conservation. Regional cooperation — particularly with the Organization of the Amazon

Cooperation Treaty (OTCA) — was highlighted as crucial for strengthening resilience and enabling systemic change. Real-life stories and practical recommendations underscored that local actions are key to achieving global climate goals.

Bridging climate and biodiversity action in the Amazon through investments in agroecology and locally owned nature-based solutions

Organizers: SDC regional Hub Lima, CIFOR-ICRAF

The event focused on connecting climate and biodiversity action in the Amazon through investments in agroecology and locally owned nature-based solutions. Building on global biodiversity and climate frameworks from COP16 in Cali and by uniting Indigenous peoples, farmers, scientists, policymakers, and investors, this interactive event aimed to promote inclusive, sustainable Amazon-based solutions.



Panel discussion with Indigenous representatives (Photo by CIFOR-ICRAF)



Dialogue on bridging mountains and lowlands for water security, biodiversity, and climate adaptation (Photo by Embassy of Switzerland in Brazil)

From the Andes to the Amazon: Jointly Developing Innovative Actions for Climate Adaptation

Organizers: SDC regional Hub Lima, CONDESAN

The Andes and the Amazon are connected through water and resilience — a link increasingly highlighted by IPCC findings on glacier retreat, shifting water cycles, and ecosystem risks. As climate change accelerates, these regions face shared challenges, yet their combined importance is often underrepresented in global policy.

Building on Switzerland's expertise in mountain and watershed management, and scientific insights on Andes-Amazon interdependencies prepared in the [Adaptation at Altitude Programme](#) by CONDESAN, this dialogue showcased science-based cooperation and innovative solutions that bridge mountains and forests to enhance water security, biodiversity, and climate adaptation.

Key takeaways included:

- The Andes are the sources of water runoff and nutrients and the Amazon's climate refuge and biological engine. Protecting Andean connectivity is a non-negotiable insurance policy for Amazonian resilience and regional water security.
- The Transition Zone (500-2,000 m) is a critical, underfunded precipitation and biodiversity hotspot. Policy must immediately prioritize and finance this ecological bottleneck to secure the entire system's function.
- Continental sustainability requires bridging the governance gap between CAN and OTCA. It is essential that connectivity be integrated into regional planning promptly, ensuring Andean communities are recognized as key partners

Discover the Andes-Amazon connection on a [virtual journey](#), or explore [solutions](#) for climate adaptation in the mountains.

Catalysing Adaptation Finance and Nature-Based Solutions Through Innovation, Partnerships and Blended Capital

Organizers: SDG Impact Finance



Initiative (SIFI), UBS Optimus Foundation, the Government of Switzerland and Luxembourg

Q&A session at the event (Photo by EcoCitizen)

This session brought together leaders from government, philanthropy and finance to explore how innovation, catalytic capital and blended structures can unlock private investment into adaptation and nature-based solutions. Participants discussed practical insights from SIFI's portfolio, emerging financing mechanisms, and the role of partnerships in strengthening adaptation finance ecosystems. The session concluded with the launch of SIFI's Call for Proposals: Financial Innovation for Climate Adaptation and Resilience Solutions.



Panel discussion among representatives from ICIMOD, Wetlands International, and CONDESAN (Photo by Zoï Environment Network)

Adapting to a changing cryosphere: Lessons from the Andes on securing water and reducing risks – Side event at Cryosphere Pavilion

Organizers: Zoï Environment Network, CONDESAN, ICIMOD, University of Geneva

Building on findings from a recent evaluation of a community-led

wetland restoration project in Argentina, the [side event at the Cryosphere Pavilion](#), organized as part of the [Adaptation at Altitude Programme](#), provided a platform to discuss key factors for successful adaptation actions and solutions worldwide, and how local lessons can inform global adaptation policies and funding mechanisms.

Key insights from the discussion among representatives from CONDESAN, ICIMOD and Wetlands International included:

- Collaboration across scales, sectors and institutions strengthens impact: Linking local actions with national and regional policies, fostering dialogue among stakeholders, and establishing transparent agreements with local authorities is key.
- Regional cooperation is essential. Shared cryosphere monitoring in the Hindu Kush – Himalaya region and integrated data efforts in the Andes are examples that demonstrate how collaboration helps countries respond to common challenges and promotes knowledge exchange.
- Inter-regional collaboration: By facilitating knowledge exchange and ensuring that local lessons inform global negotiations, inter-regional cooperation helps advance mountain adaptation priorities at the international level.

For further information, watch the event's [video recording](#).

Next steps for Swiss climate engagement

Next steps for the Swiss delegation will include a thorough debrief on COP30 and an assessment of its implications for Switzerland. A priority is ensuring the ambitious implementation of Switzerland's updated NDC submitted in January 2025 under the Paris Agreement. At the same time, given current budgetary constraints and the global commitment to triple climate finance, the question of how to secure new financial resources remains pressing. The Federal Council recently discussed existing and potential new sources for climate financing which will now be analysed in more detail.

Further references on COP30

- Find here the [official decisions](#) taken at the COP30.
- Check the [summary report of the Earth Negotiations Bulletin](#) for more detail on COP30 achievements.
- Read the [information](#) by the Swiss Federal Department of the

CONTACT

Visit our webpage: SDC's Network on [Climate, DRR & Environment](#)

For further questions, contact the CDE Focal Point:

André Wehrli, andre.wehrli@eda.admin.ch

This newsletter was written by André Wehrli (SDC), Muriel Gschwend (SDC) and Johanna Zwahlen (Zoï Environment Network), with input from Marylaure Crettaz and Jocelyn Ostolaza (SDC). Teaser photo (Belém do Pará) by Fernando Stankuns.

[Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#) | [Edit Profile](#)

Copyright © 2025 FDFA. All rights reserved.