

October 23rd, 2025



In further advancing our Global Mutirão against climate change, the Brazilian incoming Presidency of the 30th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 30) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) presents its eighth letter to the international community, this time dedicated to the vital theme of climate **adaptation**.

In this letter, I invite Parties and stakeholders to consider adaptation through new lenses: as the **next step in human evolution**.

As the age of warnings gives way to the age of consequences, humanity confronts a profound truth: climate adaptation is no longer a choice that follows mitigation; it is the first half of our survival. At each turning point in our evolution, our species has earned its place on this planet by adapting – learning, innovating and transforming the conditions of life itself. Adaptation has demanded the courage to let go of what no longer serves us while preserving what defines us.

Today, this evolutionary truth returns with renewed urgency. Evolutionary biology confirms what wisdom has long known: survival has never belonged merely to the strongest, but to the most cooperative – those capable of nurturing symbiotic relationships that sustain life in balance. Cooperation has been the essence of our humanity in natural selection.

As President Lula says, COP30 will be the COP of truth, where we are tested on our capacity to set differences aside and confront the climate crisis as the existential threat it is. Cooperation must again emerge as the organizing principle of the global response. Our ability to implement the adaptation provisions of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement through enhanced **international cooperation** will determine whether we evolve not only to survive, but to become the best version of humanity – grounded in dignity, justice and solidarity.

From the Convention's ultimate objective to the Paris Agreement's long-term resilience goal, from the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) to National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), COP30 must be the COP of adaptation. Adaptation ambition and action will be key to advancing in Belém our three priorities: (i) strengthening **multilateralism**; (ii) connecting the climate regime to **people's** daily lives; and (iii) accelerating climate **implementation**.

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A Dangerous Precedent in Human Evolution

In my first letter, I mentioned we are entering a perilous era in which the wealthy – in both developed and developing nations – insulate themselves behind climate-resilient walls while the poor are left exposed. Such a future must be rejected outright. It is unethical, immoral, and ultimately self-destructive, for it corrodes the very cooperation that has made human evolution possible. Still, we see signs of this dystopian scenario emerging as a trend.

Unprecedented data from the 2025 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index, published by the United Nations Development Programme on 17 October, show that 1.1 billion of 6.3 billion people in 109 countries live in acute multidimensional poverty – over half of them children. Of those 1.1 billion, 887 million live in regions already facing at least one major climate hazard, and 309 million face three or more hazards simultaneously. Empathy compels us to see the human faces behind these figures – families displaced by floods, farmers watching fields wither, children walking miles for water, small and micro entrepreneurs losing their business and dreams.

Without adaptation, climate change becomes a poverty multiplier, dismantling livelihoods, displacing workers and deepening hunger. As impacts intensify, failure to act is not technical negligence; it is a political choice about who lives and who dies. African philosopher Achille Mbembe denounced this logic as “necropolitics” – the use of power to decide whose lives are protected and whose are expendable. As policymakers and political actors we are all no less responsible for acts of omission.

Adaptation is as essential to safeguarding economies as it is to protecting lives. Climate-related disasters already cost Africa between 2 and 5% of GDP each year. Across Small Island Developing States (SIDS), a single hurricane can erase years of progress, as shown by the devastation caused by Cyclone Freddy in parts of the Indian Ocean and Africa. In Least Developed Countries (LDCs), recurrent droughts and floods – from the Sahel to the Horn of Africa and Southeast Asia – undermine food security, strain public finances, and reverse hard-won development gains. In Latin American countries too, climate impacts have been exacerbating inequalities and increasing vulnerabilities.

These are not only environmental crises; they are fiscal warnings, social fractures, and systemic risks to global stability. Inaction on adaptation cascades into instability with global repercussions over the medium and long term. At the same time, domestic resources that could be directed to low-carbon, climate-resilient transitions are increasingly consumed by emergency responses. As adaptation gaps widen, the growing burden of loss and damage further erodes fiscal space for long-term investment, especially in developing countries.

Adaptation Underfunded and Undervalued

In recent months, I have listened to voices from all walks of life – Indigenous communities, scientists, economists, civil society, mayors, small farmers, entrepreneurs, insurers, youth, and public servants. This learning process has included inspiring dialogues under the Global Ethical Stocktake, led by Minister Marina Silva. From Latin America and Africa to the Pacific and Southeast Asia, momentum is growing: renewable energy, policy reforms, nature-based solutions, and grass-roots adaptation are multiplying.

A single message echoes everywhere: a call for urgency and tangible outcomes on adaptation at COP30. People do not speak in acronyms; they speak of flooded homes and failed harvests, local economies collapsing after storms, schools and hospitals destroyed, women leading community responses. Behind each story is the same reality: climate impacts are eroding development gains, widening inequality, and pushing millions back into poverty.

We must break this vicious cycle. Adaptation is not an alternative to development – it is the essence of sustainable development in a climate-changing world. It strengthens fiscal stability, reduces investment risk, and enhances productivity. Every resilient road, every climate-proofed school, every early-warning system pays back in avoided losses. The World Bank estimates that robust adaptation measures can yield up to four times their cost in economic benefits. Adaptation finance, therefore, must not be seen as assistance alone.

Despite successive commitments, adaptation finance still represents less than one-third of total climate finance, far below needs. Chronic underinvestment leaves countries exposed, forcing scarce resources away from health, education, and infrastructure toward emergency response and recovery. The imbalance between mitigation and adaptation weakens collective resilience and perpetuates structural inequalities. Many communities already undertake local, experimental adaptation, but efforts are too often under-recognized, under-financed, and poorly connected to national planning.

Elevating Adaptation – At All Levels

Sustainable development and combating poverty, hunger, and inequalities are indispensable to adaptation, because social cohesion and strong institutions are the greatest drivers of resilience. While many countries and communities are already undertaking the transition towards low-carbon and sustainable economies, the rise of an adaptation economy that shapes new pathways for climate-positive growth and development is still to be seen. Further efforts are needed to fully mainstream adaptation into the wider economic transition we are all facing, ensuring that preventive behaviors and resilience remain at the heart of economic policies, procurement practices and new financial incentive mechanisms. Nature-based solutions and climate-biodiversity synergies can accelerate this shift: investing in forests, wetlands, mangroves, and other ecosystems protects nature and builds resilient, climate-smart economies.

Elevating adaptation also requires a strategic mix of financial instruments and stronger international cooperation. In my travels, I repeatedly heard that accelerating adaptation finance is essential to protect communities and secure development gains – and that finance must be scaled up beyond doubling, potentially tripling, to meet urgent needs. Grants and concessional loans remain essential for all countries, especially those with limited fiscal space, including for developing and implementing NAPs.

I urge countries and institutions to increase the quantity and quality of adaptation finance, ensuring it reaches the most vulnerable. For developed countries, adaptation finance is a smart investment that yields global stability and domestic benefits. For developing countries, adaptation brings results that can attract investment and avoids far larger costs tomorrow: it saves lives, safeguards jobs, protects infrastructure, and reduces inequality. It further prepares these countries for sound mitigation efforts.

I also heard concerns about an expanding role for the private sector in adaptation finance. These concerns must be addressed while exploring innovative approaches – such as guarantees

and blended finance to de-risk investments and crowd in capital for resilient infrastructure, food systems and water security.

Sovereign and subnational resilience bonds are channeling domestic savings to priorities; debt-for-resilience swaps and loss-and-damage insurance ease fiscal pressures and speed up recovery; results-based finance and revolving funds improve accountability and ensure sustained impact. Country platforms and Climate Prosperity Plans help align investments with national strategies. Multilateral development banks, national development institutions and climate funds – including the Green Climate Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund, the Climate Investment Funds, and the Adaptation Fund – play central roles in deploying these instruments and aligning them with national priorities.

Effective adaptation similarly depends on strong multilevel governance that bridges global commitments and local realities. Municipalities and state governments are on the front lines and often the first responders. They feel the daily pressure when food is scarce, water unavailable or heat waves strain health services. Their leadership is essential to translate frameworks into concrete protection for communities, small business, infrastructure, and livelihoods. Integrating adaptation into local development plans, and ensuring capacity and finance for subnational authorities, makes action more effective, participatory, and people-centred.

A Turning Point on Adaptation at COP30

As noted in my first letter, a major inflection on adaptation at COP30 is essential to align the climate regime with daily realities while reinforcing multilateralism and accelerating the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

COP30 marks the first COP with the Paris Agreement policy cycle fully in motion. I welcome the secretariat's 21 October report on *Progress in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans*, which shows a decisive shift from conceptualization and planning to consolidation and implementation. This picture can help move the climate regime from negotiation to implementation, acknowledge both progress and gaps, and build on the first Global Stocktake as we prepare for the second, to be concluded in 2028. As of 30 September 2025, 144 developing countries had initiated and launched the NAP process, and 67 developing countries – including 23 LDCs and 14 SIDS – had submitted their NAPs to the UNFCCC, along with 11 developed countries. I commend these countries and invite others to join this emerging chain of collective resilience, for our international community is only as strong as its most vulnerable link.

With the NAP synthesis as background, several adaptation issues will be central at COP30: (i) finalizing the assessment of NAP progress, evaluating findings, and agreeing on follow-up steps; (ii) advancing the Baku Adaptation Roadmap (BAR) to accelerate GGA delivery through concrete steps; (iii) clarifying how we will collectively close the adaptation-finance gap; and (iv) delivering on the GGA and its operationalization through the UAE–Belém Work Programme, with concrete, measurable indicators to track enhanced adaptive capacity, strengthened resilience, and reduced vulnerability.

The GGA is not merely a negotiation item – it is an economic and moral compass. It guides us to act together, scale up local successes globally and integrate adaptation into national policies

and fiscal planning. Finance ministers and development banks must treat adaptation as a core policy instrument, not as charity.

Beyond negotiations, the COP30 Climate Action Agenda must showcase real solutions so that Belém is also remembered as the COP of adaptation implementation. We invite all initiatives to bring their best solutions and highest ambition to close gaps in policies and practice – for example, in health, food security, water management, adaptation finance, cities and regions, infrastructure, small and micro business, among others.

COP30 takes place at the epicentre of the climate crisis. Yet from rising waters and changing skies, a deeper strength is emerging – the determination of people to protect what they love. In Belém, let us honour that determination and transform it into a global agenda guided by care, not indifference; by interdependence, not individualism; by courage, not resignation. In Belém, where the rivers meet the sea, let us renew the alliance between humanity and nature – turning vulnerability into solidarity, cooperation into resilience, and adaptation into evolution. **Changing by choice, together.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected strokes. The signature is centered within a thin black rectangular border.

André Aranha Corrêa do Lago
COP30 President Designate