

27 January 2026



As the few weeks into 2026 have already shown, we are at a crossroads in humanity's history, while changes in the global climate system increasingly supervene those in human systems. On the follow-up to the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Belém (COP30), held in November 2025, we must reflect on what COP30 represented for climate multilateralism and for broader global governance at a historical moment of phase transitions – in geopolitics, societies, economies, finance, cultures, technology, and information systems.

Climate urgency will not wait until political and socioeconomic conditions are ideal. Yet COP30 showed that a new model of global response is emerging – one fully entangled with its context, rendering climate implementation increasingly ubiquitous, much as the effects of global warming already are. No longer waiting for solutions by decree, climate action has irreversibly moved beyond international law, negotiation rooms, and technical reports. From niche to mainstream, conditions have been laid for a global structural transition toward low-carbon and climate-resilient development.

COP30 also shed light on the limitations of climate multilateralism and of formal consensus decision-making. As we advance our work in 2026, let us view such limits not as immovable boundaries, but as precious signals that teach us that climate multilateralism has matured and is ready to evolve.

To keep pace with global warming, multilateralism must learn to operate at more than one institutional speed – to become a two-tier multilateralism. As African Brazilian tradition and Yoruba wisdom evoke through the figure of *Ogum*, the blacksmith, moments of transition are not when iron breaks, but when it is placed in the forge. Climate multilateralism has reached such a moment.

What COP30 achieved: strengthened multilateralism, connected to people, in accelerated implementation

Against a background of mounting and compounding geopolitical and socioeconomic challenges, COP30 resolved to decisively transition our climate regime from a three-decade negotiation phase to a new era focused on implementation – going further and faster. Together, we elevated the **Global Mutirão from a call to a movement** – now enshrined in international law, to formally unite humanity in a global mobilization against climate change.

Please refer to the Portuguese version available at <https://cop30.br/pt-br/presidencia-da-cop30/cartas-da-presidencia/decima-segunda-carta-da-presidencia-brasileira>

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At Brazil's initiative, under the direct call by President Lula, COP30 – as the “**COP of Truth**” – fostered an unprecedented and necessary debate around our dependency on fossil fuels. Although our multilateral system was not yet ready to formally embrace this discussion, I take under my Presidency's responsibility – as I announced at COP30 – the task to develop roadmaps to transition away from fossil fuels and to halt and reverse deforestation. Future global stability depends on our capacity to begin planning now for a gradual transition toward new structures.

Putting science at center stage, and building on the 2023 Belém Amazon Summit and Brazil's Presidency of the G20 throughout 2024, the COP30 Presidency sought to avoid the temptation of focusing on a single issue, instead contributing to the integration of the broader climate agenda into other structural priority areas, such as financial and macroeconomic stability, security, migration, development, new industrial policy, trade, investment, energy, technology, affordability, social protection and inclusion, and the fight against hunger, poverty, and inequalities. Guided by its threefold objective of **strengthening multilateralism, connecting it to people, and accelerating implementation**, COP30 advanced climate action across four fronts of action: (i) global mobilization, (ii) Action Agenda, (iii) Leaders' Summit, and (iv) formal negotiations.

The unprecedented global mobilization sought to bring the UNFCCC closer to people's everyday lives, with inclusion as a structural pillar. COP30 inspired a global *mutirão* that united governments, institutions, social movements, and citizens – making it one of the most participatory processes in the history of COPs. In the months leading up to Belém, thematic *mutirões* were organized across all continents, involving environmental clean-ups, awareness campaigns, tree planting, and civic engagement initiatives. Regional and self-organized Global Ethical Stocktake sessions brought together thousands of participants across six continents around issues such as justice, equity, and the protection of Indigenous Peoples. Throughout Brazil, meetings called “Biome COPs” and hundreds of civil society activities expanded participation, mobilizing traditional communities, students, movements, and research centers. As one community organization led to another, the *mutirão* movement effectively resulted in a virtuous “chain of action”. Online, it reached almost 200 million people.

The global mobilization also involved major preparatory events, including the Local Leaders Forum, in Rio de Janeiro, and, in São Paulo, the COP30 Business & Finance Forum, Sustainable Innovation Forum, and investor summits. In Belém, the Green Zone became an ecosystem of social innovation, welcoming almost 300,000 visitors through cultural, educational, and climate solutions programming. The People's Summit, the Indigenous COP30 Village, dozens of Thematic Houses, and the Global March for the Climate – with approximately 70,000 participants – showed that the power of climate action arises when peoples, knowledge systems, and territories come together.

COP30 consolidated itself as a **COP of Implementation**, while reinforcing the central role of subnational governments and other non-state stakeholders. The Action Agenda mobilized more than 480 initiatives involving 190 countries and tens of thousands of non-state actors. Organized around six thematic axes and thirty key objectives, it transformed the Global Stock take (GST) into a compass for multisectoral action, including a “Granary of Solutions”, around 120 Plans to Accelerate Solutions, and 190 initiatives reporting concrete results – more than six times those of 2024. Among many breakthroughs on nature and oceans, the **Tropical Forest Forever Facility** (TFFF) exceeded USD 6.6 billion in initial capitalization.

Preceded by the Belém Climate Summit (6-7 November), in which President Lula issued the Call of Belém for the Climate, COP30 formal negotiations adopted 56 decisions by consensus. United in celebration of the 10-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement, 194 countries sent a clear message to the world: **the global climate transition is irreversible and the trend of the future.**

By the end of the conference, more than 120 countries had submitted new nationally determined contributions (NDCs), with improved quality and ambition – a decisive step toward shaping a new climate agenda focused on delivery. COP30 urged Parties that have not communicated new NDCs to do so, inviting countries to develop implementation and investment plans to align NDCs with broader economic development strategies and plans.

Taken together, formal decisions adopted at COP30 consolidated the institutional legacy of the Paris Rulebook and advanced concrete measures to respond to climate urgency through accelerated implementation, solidarity, and international cooperation – including the launch of the new **Global Implementation Accelerator**. COP30 represented the **COP of adaptation**, with the adoption of indicators for the Global Goal on Adaptation, the call to triple adaptation finance by 2035, and conclusion of the assessment of progress on **National Adaptation Plans**. As the **COP of People**, formal decisions expanded the rights and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Afro-descendant communities. Other major achievements included the **just transition mechanism**; the Belém **Gender Action Plan**; the UAE Dialogue on the Global Stocktake (GST); the Belém **Technology Implementation Programme**; new dialogues on international **trade** and climate; the new work programme on **climate finance**; the Veredas Dialogue and the Xingu Finance Talks; strengthened **synergies** with sustainable development, biodiversity, and land and ocean degradation agendas.

As COP30 President, I am both humbled by and deeply grateful for the extraordinary efforts of delegates, observers, and the UNFCCC secretariat, many of whom dedicated sleepless nights in the true spirit of the *mutirão*. Our High-Level Climate Champion, Dan Ioschpe, played a key role in mobilizing the private sector, while the Youth Climate Champion, Marcele Oliveira, was central to enhancing the participation of children, youth, and territorial networks, ensuring that the perspectives of marginalized communities were reflected.

I am equally grateful to all partners who supported the work of the COP30 Presidency. Among them, our Special Envoys – seven international and twenty-two national – expanded dialogue across regions and sectors. Our Leadership Circles deepened political and social mobilization, including the Circle of COP Presidents, chaired by COP21 President Laurent Fabius; the Circle of Peoples, chaired by Brazil's Minister of Indigenous Peoples, Sonia Guajajara; the Circle of Finance Ministers, chaired by Brazil's Minister of Finance, Fernando Haddad; and the Global Ethical Stocktake Circle, chaired by Brazil's Minister of Environment and Climate Change, Marina Silva. In a solutions-oriented approach, world-renowned scientists and experts who advised the COP30 Presidency through its Science, Economy, Technology, and Adaptation Councils helped expand the role of science and expertise beyond alerts alone, fostering creativity and helping to restore trust and hope through bridge-building.

Choosing the future over an irretrievable past: walking the gates of inevitable crossroads

Going forward in 2026, the COP30 Presidency remains engaged in supporting accelerated implementation. The Presidency is committed to supporting the incoming COP31 Presidency and to continuing to work with partners to consolidate the movement around a systemic approach to adaptation and to further elevate the Action Agenda, together with the Climate High-Level Champions, as a multistakeholder platform for accelerating the implementation of the Paris Agreement and COP decisions. I will detail additional plans in my future letters.

Ideally, our collective system should assume the responsibility for developing roadmaps to transition away from fossil fuels and to halt and reverse deforestation. I nonetheless reaffirm my strong commitment to advancing this dual mission, alongside continuing the work on the USD 1.3 trillion roadmap, with the COP29 Presidency.

Under my responsibility, those roadmaps are conceived as political and technical platforms to mobilize countries and non-state stakeholders in advancing national and international planning to implement paragraphs 28, 33 and 34 of the GST. I invite all stakeholders – experts, producers, state-owned and private companies, consumers, insurers, financial institutions, and governments – to contribute to this effort from their respective perspectives.

In doing so, energy and land-use transitions should not be approached in isolation. They must be embedded in broader systemic transformations beyond the climate agenda, reflecting related legal, transition, and physical risks and opportunities for financial stability, macroeconomics, business models, and for combating poverty, hunger, and inequality, creating jobs and income, and ensuring energy access, security, and affordability, including with respect to critical minerals and large-scale AI-related investments in digital infrastructure.

Far from climate morality, these roadmaps are first and foremost about planning and stability. They are instruments for navigating inevitable energy, land-use, and financial transitions in ways that are just, orderly, and equitable. They are about predictability, sequencing, credible signaling, and the timely reallocation of land, labor, and capital – so that markets, institutions, and societies can adjust without disruption. Managed well, such planning can reduce systemic risk, protect balance sheets, and strengthen trust. Managed poorly, the same transitions risk disorder, social fracture, volatility, and abrupt collapse in asset values.

In this effort ahead, I remain inspired by President Lula and Minister Marina Silva, who continue to demonstrate that leading by example is the most credible form of leadership. On 5 December 2025, President Lula issued an instruction to the Brazilian government to prepare, in 60 days, guidelines for a just and planned energy transition, aimed at the gradual reduction of fossil-fuel dependence while proposing appropriate financing mechanisms for its implementation.

Responding to urgency in climate, responding to evolutionary pressure in institutions

On the eve of COP30, I invited the international community to view the objective of keeping 1.5 °C within reach – and minimize overshoot – not as a political choice, but as a scientific and humanitarian imperative to prevent dangerous climate-induced tipping points. As noted in my ninth letter, the Paris Agreement temperature goal remains achievable if ambition is redefined

through accelerated implementation and strengthened international cooperation capable of catalyzing virtuous cascades of positive change.

Data released on 14 January 2026 by the Copernicus Climate Change Service confirmed that the period from 2023 to 2025 marked the first three-year average exceeding the 1.5 °C threshold. The data further indicated that the Paris Agreement’s limit of 1.5 °C for long-term global warming could be reached by the end of this decade – more than a decade earlier than predicted at the time the Agreement was adopted.

At COP30, countries reiterated their resolve around the **1.5 °C** and to limit both the magnitude and the duration of temperature **overshoot** whilst closing adaptation gaps. They also launched the “**Belém Mission to 1.5**”.

Like previous COPs, COP30 achieved diplomatic progress – especially given the difficult geopolitical context. But once again it fell short of what climate scientists and communities already experiencing climate impacts had hoped for.

For three decades, political, policy, and business cycles operated under the illusion that the pace of global warming might adjust to that of diplomacy, even as climate change itself continued to outpace our international response. COP30 did reveal, however, something essential: our climate regime has evolved from a machine into a living system. And living systems do not survive through harmony alone, but through adaptation shaped by tension and feedback.

Responding to this evolutionary pressure does not mean abandoning multilateralism; it means allowing it to mature.

Climate cooperation can become a form of “working multilateralism” – one that demonstrates how multilateral governance can deliver under conditions of urgency and complexity, integrating a global mission with local realities and grounded in science. To achieve this, multilateralism must gain the velocity required to keep pace with global warming, without jeopardizing consensus-based decision-making as the source of legitimacy, universality, and international law. COPs’ traditional roles in formal decision-making, universal coordination, and momentum-building remain real, effective, and continuously necessary. They must not be forfeited.

Consensus is deliberative and slow by design. Yet, it has been the golden key in the construction of the climate regime over three decades. Through consensus, we adopted the 1992 Convention, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, and the 2015 Paris Agreement, taking international climate law and governance to new heights in sophistication. The Paris Rulebook is now complete, its policy cycle fully operational. National plans increasingly function as whole-of-government, whole-of-society, and whole-of-economy instruments, as we came to operate across various time horizons – short (2030), medium (2035), and long (2050) – to provide signals to stakeholders beyond the UNFCCC. International and domestic courts, including the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the International Court of Justice, are now clarifying legal responsibilities. In short, the regime’s normative architecture is largely in place.

By decision 1/CMA7, the CMA formally “resolves to decisively transition to a focus on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and decisions adopted since its first session”. As we

shift away from an emphasis on negotiation, implementation cannot wait for unanimity on every operational step.

This is why climate multilateralism could now be upgraded to operate at two complementary speeds. It should evolve towards a new **two-tier multilateralism**.

A **first institutional speed** should remain anchored in **consensus**. It ensures legitimacy, universality, legal clarity, and collective direction – remaining indispensable and irreplaceable, as was the rule-making process for the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, the Paris Agreement and its Rulebook.

A **second institutional speed** should focus on **implementation**. It should enable open coalitions and capable actors to mobilize resources, deploy solutions, generate learning at scale – without reopening questions of direction already settled by consensus in the first tier, as were the processes with the TFFF, the Belém Commitment on Sustainable Fuels, the Open Coalition of Regulated Carbon Markets, and the Integrated Forum on Trade and Climate Change.

In this second tier, emphasis should shift toward the rapid, large-scale mobilization, diffusion and deployment of resources, actors and mechanisms worldwide – still highly fragmented. Aligned and coordinated, actors can promote strategic integration of finance, technology and capacity-building with policy-making, allowing exponential change and cascading effects across sectors – the so-called “positive tipping points” – as well as the sequencing of global efforts to prioritize areas of high and compounding impact – such as non-CO₂ gases, ecosystem restoration, early warning, digital public infrastructure (DPI), and stronger institutional capacities.

In unlocking speed, scale, and strategic sequencing, the new Global Implementation Accelerator, which the Presidency is honored to guide alongside the incoming COP31 Presidency, can serve as a prototype for adding a new institutional speed to climate multilateralism. Its success will be the litmus test of our regime’s ability to effectively shift gears to accelerated implementation. In going faster and further, the new just transition mechanism will be key in ensuring no one is left behind.

In my second letter of May 2025, I invited the international community to advance the debate launched by President Lula at the 2024 G20 on how the General Assembly could better equip climate cooperation to accelerate the implementation of UNFCCC decisions. In his Call to Action at COP30 Leaders’ Summit, President Lula once again urged countries to accelerate implementation, including by “creating a UN Climate Change Council, to aggregate means of implementation, processes, actors, and climate-related mechanisms, with a view to accelerating the implementation of decisions adopted under the Climate Convention and the Paris Agreement.”

Firmly grounded in COP decisions, such a route could establish a permanent structural platform for connecting actors with solutions, expanding access to finance, accelerating diffusion of technology, moving transparency from mere accountability to iterative learning, and aligning networks of trust, data, and shared standards. Against climate urgency, this would both strengthen global climate governance and open a new fast lane in international cooperation.

Though the COP30 Presidency anticipated the evolution of multilateralism as a priority, I never imagined that geopolitical and socioeconomic challenges would render it so urgent, so soon.

As we cross gates and walk deeper into the age of phase transitions – an age of unavoidable uncertainty – let agency prevail over fear, so that we may build on both our achievements and shortcomings in Belém. Let us be reminded that the response to climate change no longer depends on formal authorization, nor is it confined to a single country, actor, or sector. It is now an unstoppable movement capable of uniting humanity around a common purpose: **to change by choice, together.**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a series of fluid, connected loops and strokes, enclosed within a thin black rectangular border.

André Aranha Corrêa do Lago
COP30 President