

Belem declaration on Fighting Environmental Racism

Adopted on November 7, 2025, during the Belém Climate Summit, the Belém Declaration on Fighting Environmental Racism seeks to foster international dialogue on the intersection between racial equality, climate and the environmental, reinforcing the human rights dimension, in particular of social justice, in international environmental and climate policies. The text recognizes that the global ecological crisis is also a crisis of racial justice. It proposes the construction of a cooperative agenda in support of greater equity and solidarity among nations and the overcoming of historical inequalities that affect access to environmental resources, opportunities, and benefits.

The document is part of Brazil's strategy to broaden the scope of equality and sustainable development agendas, reflected in the launch, during Brazil's presidency of the G20, of the 18th Sustainable Development Goal, of a voluntary nature, on the Promotion of Ethnic-Racial Equality, in line with Agenda 2030. The text, which will be open for endorsements during COP, has already gathered support from countries in Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Oceania.

Text in English

Recalling the commitments under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement adopted thereunder, to respect, promote and consider human rights, the rights of Indigenous Peoples, gender equality, intergenerational equity, and the needs of people in vulnerable situations in climate action,

Recognizing that historic and ongoing patterns of discrimination, unequal access to domestic and global decision-making, and legacies of colonialism contribute to differential exposure to pollution, climate hazards and nature loss, and to unequal access to technology and services,

Recognizing that environmental racism—manifested frequently through policies and practices that result in the disproportionate exposure of persons and communities, including peoples of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities to environmental harms and climate risks—contravenes the principles of equality and non-discrimination under international human rights law, while also acknowledging the commitment and progress made by States for addressing this issue,

Highlighting that the global ecological crisis is simultaneously a racial justice crisis,

Noting with concern that many frontline communities bear a disproportionate burden of climate-related loss and damage to culture, heritage, health, livelihoods and ecosystems,

We urge all Nations to cooperate in the essential task of fighting environmental racism, recognizing that sustainable development will only be achieved when the inequalities that disproportionately affect peoples of African descent, Indigenous Peoples, and local communities, as well as other vulnerable groups and minorities, across all regions of the world are eliminated.

We underline that the eradication of poverty in all its dimensions, the promotion of racial and ethnic equality, and the protection of the environment are interconnected and indispensable for sustainable development and must guide its implementation, in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

We call upon all States to strengthen the collective efforts ensure just and inclusive societies by fighting environmental racism, fully encompassing peoples of African descent, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, while progressively enhancing collective ambition, in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world.

Endorsements until 7 Nov.: Brazil, Colombia, Uruguay, Ecuador, China, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Guinea, Liberia, Gabon, Mozambique, South Sudan, Morocco, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mexico, South Africa, Venezuela, Bolivia, Suriname