



COP30: PITFALLS AND OPPORTUNITIES 10 YEARS AFTER THE PARIS AGREEMENT



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COP30 in Brasil: pitfalls and opportunities 10 years after the Paris Agreement

From the 10th to the 21st of November, the 30th United Nations Climate Change Conference will take place in Belem, Brasil. A team from the Debt Observatory in Globalisation will travel to Brasil to monitor it.

In an increasingly warming world, the 30th edition of the Conference of the Parties (COP30) returns to Brasil since the Earth Summit that took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, when the United Nations Framework Convention was adopted. Ten years after the Paris Agreement, countries will meet in Brazil to, according to the presidency, put forward its the implementation.

Governed by Lula Da Silva, the country wants to stand out from the presidencies of previous COPs and demonstrate its climate ambition, while not giving up on promoting new oil extraction projects in Brazilian territory. The government is going for a capitalist green transition, following the dynamics promoted by the Global North but also China, which see decarbonization as a business opportunity.

This time the city designated to host the summit has been Belem, located in the state of Pará in the Amazon. The decision has spurred much criticism, due to the lack of infrastructure to host an event of this size and the high prices of accommodation. The controversies are multiple. Celebrating COP30 in the middle of the Amazon gives visibility to the importance of forests as carbon sinks and to the populations that defend them. At the same time, the COP has been used to justify the construction of infrastructure such as roads and buildings, which have generated environmental destruction and forced the relocation of people who lived near the affected areas. Furthermore, in a city where [60% of the population lives in favelas](#), hotels have been built at inaccessible prices to accommodate the delegations participating in the summit.

This COP is also marked by increased geopolitical tensions, war escalation, trade disputes between countries and the erosion of multilateralism. The absence of the United States¹ will also be noticeable: on the one hand, it can facilitate reaching agreements between countries and, on the other, it places more responsibility on other historical emitters such as the EU and China.

1 The US government has announced that it will not send any delegation even though its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement takes effect only in January 2026.

What can go forward?

The Brazilian presidency has been very proactive in leading the negotiations and has taken several initiatives. Apart from eccentricities such as the constant publication of [letters](#) addressed to the other parties with various messages calling for cooperation between countries and the urgency of adopting climate ambition, the creation of thematic circles (of presidencies, of finance ministers, of indigenous peoples, etc.) and the openness to facilitating the debate on the need to reform the functioning of the negotiations on climate change stand out. The presidency has acknowledged the [demands of influential voices and civil society](#) to review a process that has brought little progress in recent decades and that has been losing legitimacy in parallel with the erosion of multilateralism.

The **Just Transition** Work Programme has been identified as one of the priorities of the presidency and has been included as an item on the negotiating agenda. It was established at COP27 in Egypt to ensure a [socially balanced transition](#): beyond reducing the impacts of the transition on jobs that will become obsolete, it should ensure that it does not generate new inequalities, on a global scale. It could even include a mention of the supply chains of minerals critical to the transition. In Belem, it is expected to reach an agreement on what mechanisms are established to guide and support its implementation.

One of the key demands of civil society is to agree on the **Belem Action Mechanism** for a Global Just Transition, which would consist of a [coherent](#) framework that coordinates efforts, ensures rights and participation and guarantees support for the implementation of the just transition. One of the issues that this mechanism should address is how [external debt is an obstacle to the implementation](#) of the transition.

Another issue on the agenda is **adaptation**. The Paris Agreement defined a Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), to adapt to climate change, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to its impacts. However, [it lacked concreteness](#). At COP26 in Glasgow, work began to define adaptation targets and in Dubai (COP28) the framework was approved, although it overlooked contentious issues on financing and common but differentiated responsibilities. This year, indicators to measure progress must be agreed upon, from a proposed expert list of 100.

Stranded topics at COP30

Since the historic milestone of the Paris Agreement, progress has been insufficient and many of the central issues remain stuck: transformation is slow, national commitments are not being met, financing and progress on adaptation are lacking. At the same time, the growth of the green economy has not served to reduce the use of fossil fuels and has generated new inequalities.

At COP28 in Dubai, the **first global stocktake** (GST) was done since the Paris Agreement. The final text explicitly included for the first time the willingness to “transition away from **fossil fuels**”. Since then, there has been no progress. In Belem, there should be a discussion on how to implement it and how to organize the next global stocktake that should start by the end of next year. Although it is an

item on the agenda of this COP30, it will be very difficult to reach any agreement. One of the contentious issues is whether to adjust the schedule of the next global stocktake with the publication of the next report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), so that the conclusions of the stocktake are based on the results of the IPCC. There are countries that are strongly opposed to this, especially those whose economies depend on the extraction of fossil fuels.

One of the related issues that is not on the agenda but that will certainly fuel the debate is the ambition of the **NDCs – the nationally determined contributions** – that many countries have not submitted. These are the non-binding emission reduction targets that countries must establish every 5 years to comply with the Paris Agreement. This year they had to submit their NDC for 2035. This round of NDCs has been a failure, as [less than half of the countries have submitted them before COP30](#) and most do not align with the objectives of the Paris Agreement. In addition, the [Emissions Gap](#) report of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), published on November 4, warns that even if these NDCs are met, global warming would exceed 2 degrees Celsius – much higher than the 1.5 degrees agreed in Paris. In fact, [only a third](#) of the NDCs presented consider the phase out or down of fossil fuels.

Just days before the start of the summit, the EU has reached an [agreement](#) deemed insufficient by civil society, which lowers the ambition previously established for 2040 and opens the door to the inclusion of carbon credits in the calculation of emission reductions. By 2035, the bloc commits to reducing emissions by “between 66.25% and 72.5%” compared to 1990. This ambiguity reflects the different positions of the countries.

Regarding **finance**, the way to reach the figure of 1.3 trillion dollars per year agreed in Baku was pending since COP29. Climate finance consist of the economic resources that impoverished countries need for mitigation, adaptation to climate change and reconstruction after an extreme climate event. On November 5, the [Baku to Belem Roadmap \(B2B\)](#) was finally published, prepared by Azerbaijan and Brazil (presidencies of the 29th and 30th editions), which includes consultations with all parties and also with other actors (businesses, civil society, research centers, etc.). The different views of the countries are reflected. Among the complexity, the recognition of external debt as a barrier to financing climate action and the potential of taxes to increase finance stand out; at the same time, it contains problematic points such as the inclusion of the private sector to achieve the goal and dysfunctional mechanisms such as debt swaps². Although this document should not be part of the official negotiations, it will be launched during this COP.

The inclusion of the private sector to provide climate finance concerns civil society. [They demand that money for impoverished countries come from the states](#) historically responsible for the climate crisis and not from private investors, to avoid deepening the financialization of the climate and nature and achieving real reparations for the damage caused.

2 These are agreements in which part of a country's external debt is cancelled or restructured in exchange for commitments to climate or nature protection objectives. See full description [here](#).

Once again, lobbyists from the fossil fuel industry will be able to access the negotiation venue despite the enormous conflict of interest that this supposes. For two years now, thanks to pressure from civil society through the [Kick Big Polluters Out](#) campaign, people with a badge to the COP had to declare which industry they represent. This has allowed the number of lobbyists to be counted more accurately, which reached a record of more than 2,400 at COP28 in Dubai. Civil society has been [calling for years](#) for the ban of actors who hinder the progress of the negotiations. If at this COP parties are truly to rethink the United Nations governance system on climate change, the explicit exclusion of actors from the fossil fuel industry and other sectors with clear conflicts of interest, as well as the establishment of an accountability framework, are necessary to enable a minimum of legitimacy in future negotiations.

More false solutions

One of the proposals led by Brazil, along with 12 other countries, is the creation of a fund for the protection of tropical forests. Known as the **Tropical Forest Forever Facility** (TFFF), it would consist of the disbursement of 125 billion dollars (25 bn initial contributions from countries and the rest from private investments) that would be distributed among the countries that have tropical forests and guarantee their protection. Management would be in the hands of the World Bank and investors would obtain returns. Therefore, it is a "cost-free" financing mechanism that generates profits for those who make the contributions. It follows the logic of climate as a business opportunity and implies further financialization of forests. Its ability to effectively stop deforestation has already been [questioned](#).

The deployment of **carbon markets** is one of the mechanisms promoted by the presidency and the countries with the most historical responsibility, such as the EU. In fact, the emissions reduction target agreed in extremis by the EU on November 5, five days before the start of COP30, includes the buying and selling of emissions as a mechanism to achieve the set objectives: of the 90% reduction in emissions established for 2040, 5% does not have to be actual emissions but can include off-sets in carbon markets. On the one hand, it allows those who can pay to continue polluting, and at the same time, it is a source of financing for those who pollute less. However, [it does not effectively reduce emissions](#) and generates socio-environmental [conflicts](#) in the territories.

A countersummit again

After three years of the conference taking place in countries with authoritarian and very restrictive governments, the COP in Belem is expected to see broad participation from civil society. The Federal University of Pará will host the People's Summit ([Cupula dos Povos](#)) from 12 to 16 November, which is expected to attract more than 10,000 activists from around the world. A large demonstration has also been called for Saturday 15. In addition, different social movements and collectives have organized meetings in parallel to COP30 – the Movement of People Affected by Dams (MAB), ecosocialist movements,

anti-extractivist movements... A civil society effervescence around the COP that has not occurred since Glasgow (2021).

There is also a COP30 Palestine Coalition, which represents organizations and movements that point out that there will be no climate justice without the liberation of Palestine, and call for a just decolonial global transition. One of the actions they are leading is a collection of signatures to demand the exclusion of Israel from the COP30 negotiations. This would not be unprecedented, since in 2022 Russia was temporarily suspended due to the invasion of Ukraine. On that matter, Israel has announced that [it does not intend](#) to send a delegation to the summit.

ODG at COP30

From the Debt Observatory on Globalization, once again³, we will be monitoring COP30 and the People's Summit in person from Brazil. Anna Celma and Clàudia Custodio will be monitoring the COP30 negotiations (from the 11th to the 22nd), and Júlia Martí will participate in the People's Summit (from the 12th to the 16th). In addition, we will be joined by Dina Mandroso Niaina, a Malagasy activist representing the Youth Network for Sustainable Development (RJDD, for its French acronym) from Madagascar.

For interviews, statements and to connect with other activists, you can contact us.

Contacts:

Clàudia Custodio Martínez

Climate justice researcher
(In Belem, 12-24 november)

claudia.custodio@odg.cat
+34 640 745 025

Júlia Martí Comas

Ecofeminisms and defence of the
commons researcher
(in Belem, 12-16 november)

julia.marti@odg.cat
+34 620 124 494

Anna Celma Melero

Communications responsible
(in Belem, 11-23 november)

anna.celma@odg.cat
+34 650 867 435

Marta Pérez Fargas

Press responsible
(press contact in Barcelona)

marta.perez@odg.cat
+34 659 158 789

Related articles and publications by ODG

[Ecofeminist proposals for climate action. The Case of Madagascar.](#)

Brazil's green transition beyond COP30 (available in English soon)

3 See <https://odg.cat/en/blog/odg-at-cop28/> and <https://odg.cat/en/blog/cop29-climate-finance-cop/>



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