

COP30 - Catholic Actors' Recommendations

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Introduction

The below briefing, written by Catholic organisations from around the world, sets out the actions we urge global governments to take at the upcoming COP30 summit in Brazil. This COP - coming on the ten year anniversary of the Paris Agreement and *Laudato Si'*, and in a Jubilee Year - is a crucial opportunity for real progress in these key areas:

1. NDCs ambition gap

COP30 will be a defining moment for humanity and our common home. The Paris Agreement has guided the global community away from the most catastrophic warming pathways of 3 to 4°C towards approximately 2.1 to 2.6°C. This progress should be acknowledged. However, the new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted this year remain dangerously inadequate. For millions, especially the poor and vulnerable, a projection of 2.1 to 2.6°C of global warming still means profound suffering, displacement, and loss.

This is not just a policy gap, it's also a moral failure. The recent [advisory opinion](#) of the International Court of Justice has underscored that limiting global temperature rise to 1.5°C is both a legal obligation and a moral imperative. To delay any further is to deepen injustice.

Key asks

- Aligning with the UN Secretary General's call, COP30 must deliver a **credible global response plan** to the inadequate collective NDCs, a plan that unites ambition with implementation, founded on the principles of the common good, care for creation, and the preferential option for the poor.
- This plan must be comprehensive. It should acknowledge progress and gaps and lead to action in all the relevant dimensions. Concretely, the plan must include:



- **Enhanced NDCs:** The action plan must lead to enhanced NDCs. All nations, particularly rich countries and major emitters, must submit strengthened NDCs before COP31 that reflect their fair share of responsibility and capacity.
- **Global Stocktake in NDCs:** All countries must integrate the agreements from the first Global Stocktake into the enhanced NDCs, including how to advance renewable energy, phase out fossil fuels, end deforestation by 2030, and ensure equitable, grants-based support for developing countries.
- **Fossil Fuel Transition:** There must be an aligned process that addresses key weaknesses in the Paris Agreement, which omitted language around fossil fuels, and results in a timeline for a transparent and equitable phase-out of fossil fuels (respecting differentiated responsibilities).
- **Climate Finance:** A clear pathway should be established to scale up accessible and predictable quality climate finance to enable all nations to act with urgency.
- **Strengthen Implementation:** Rich and G20 nations are called on to strengthen their national climate laws and policies in line with equity, shared responsibility, and human rights. They should act swiftly, moving beyond current pledges, to serve the care of our common home.
- **Process:** COP30 must provide the necessary process for the global response plan to be agreed upon. This includes the leaders' summit.
- **Peoples' Determined Contributions (PDCs):** Nations should consider the potential of supporting a global citizen-led complimentary process to strengthen and make visible the global public demand for urgent climate action by 2030.

2. Climate finance

The Global North owes the South an enormous ecological debt. Because they grew their economies by burning coal, oil and gas, the poorest countries in the world have been left vulnerable to climate catastrophe. It is therefore not a matter of charity but of justice that they provide sufficient grant-based, new and additional finance, which they promised in both the Paris Agreement and New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance.

What is more, many countries are still spending huge sums of public money on fossil fuel projects, and are taking very limited action in regulating private financial flows to environmentally harmful business activities; fossil fuel companies are being allowed to benefit from the climate crisis.

Without the money they're owed, developing countries simply will not have the resources for their mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage needs. They will instead be forced into inaction, or taking on more and more debt - especially unjust in this Jubilee Year.

Key asks

- Developed countries must provide their fair share of grant-based, new and additional, and accessible climate finance to the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (**NCQG**), including through reversing Official Development Assistance cuts.
- Within the Baku to Belém Roadmap to \$1.3T and Article 2.1(c) agenda items, developed countries should commit to stopping harmful private investments and overcoming systemic barriers to public finance for climate action, including:
 - **A lack of polluter-pays taxes:** from fossil fuel profits levies to wealth and aviation taxes, those who are disproportionately causing the climate crisis must be made to pay their fair share towards its solutions. Additionally, global tax governance must be made fairer - countries should support the proposed UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation.
 - **Unbalanced international financial systems:** multilateral development banks must unlock more grant-based climate finance through measures like proportionately reducing their capital buffers, and countries should redirect more of their IMF-allocated Special Drawing Rights assets to developing countries.
 - **Unfair debt architecture:** developing countries in debt distress will only be able to finance climate action if they are supported with debt cancellation, and new national and international legislative frameworks at the UN level.
 - **Continuing fossil fuel subsidies and unregulated private finance:** developed nations (and other rich Parties) must take the lead in phasing out fossil fuel and other climate harmful subsidies from government budgets, and take market-shaping regulatory approaches to private finance by prohibiting lending and investments in new fossil fuel projects and the companies developing them.
- Both the Baku to Belém and Article 2.1(c) spaces have been overly private sector-focused, leaving no significant negotiation tracks to discuss provision of public finance from developed to developing countries (Article 9.1). We therefore call on countries to engage constructively in **creating agenda space** to address this, which will enable proper accountability.

3. Loss and Damage

Loss and Damage (L&D) refers to the impacts of climate change that cannot or have not been avoided through mitigation or adaptation. Because the world has failed to meet targets on both, we are now living in an era of Loss and Damage, where communities are already suffering irreversible climate harms. Furthermore, discussion of Non-Economic Loss and Damage offers a space in the UNFCCC negotiations to recognise the true value in all of God's creation.

Progress to date on the historic Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), finalised at COP28, has been limited: no funds have been disbursed yet, only around \$768 million has been pledged by just 27 countries, and implementation concerns persist.



Key Asks

- **Adequate and predictable funding:** All nations, especially high emitters, should substantially increase contributions to the FRLD on a grant basis, to meet the scale of real-world losses and damages.
- **'Bottom-up' formulation of country proposals** to Barbados Implementation Modalities: All developing nations must ensure that the most vulnerable communities, frontliners, and other subnational actors are meaningfully involved in accessing the \$250 million pilot initiative of the FRLD.
- **Community access window:** The Fund must rapidly and directly support affected communities and local organisations, reduce bureaucracy, empower those on the frontlines, and build a rapid response mechanism that truly works for those in need.
- **Support for the Warsaw Implementation Mechanism Executive Committee and Santiago Network for Loss and Damage:** These bodies need to receive sufficient political backing, staffing, and resources so they can deliver demand-driven, context-specific technical assistance with urgency.

4. Food and agriculture

Agriculture and food systems are the world's second biggest driver of global warming, yet have historically been sidelined at COPs. Even if all other sectors reached net-zero emissions, those from the global food system alone could still drive global warming beyond 1.5°C.

With the ICJ clarifying states' duties on climate and human rights, food-system reform is a rights issue. Today's model is dependent on fossil fuels. Agricultural petrochemicals are projected to drive most new oil demand, and 99% of synthetic fertilisers and many pesticides are derived from fossil fuels. Just a few corporations control these inputs, locking farmers into costly, high-risk practices that deepen inequality without delivering food security.

At the same time, climate shocks are reshaping food systems. Droughts, floods, heat and storms now cause immediate losses and can shift damage into the next season. Price spikes magnify local shocks into national crises. Structural inequalities - including unequal access to land, water, seeds, credit and information - ultimately decide who eats and who goes hungry. And it's female small-scale producers who face the greatest risk.

Key asks

- **Redirect subsidies** toward agroecology, soil health, diversified crops and locally led adaptation, with direct access for community and women-led organisations.
- Agree a **Just Transition Pathway for food systems**, including time-bound plans to phase down fossil-fuel inputs, expand climate services, and protect farm incomes and decent work during the shift.



- Make **climate finance gender-responsive**. Set clear targets and report results using indicators like women's income, assets and decision-making power.
- Increase **grant-based adaptation finance**, protect food security in trade, and align early-warning, seasonal advisories and shock-responsive safety nets to the critical moments in crop calendars so support arrives before losses hit.

5. The Global Stocktake

COP30 is a crucial moment for the Global Stocktake (GST). The first GST was decided in 2023, and Parties are still working on its implementation. This includes the very important decision on how to follow up on how countries intend to transition away from fossil fuels, as well as how to enhance international cooperation on climate action. We need a strong follow-up of the first GST decision to maintain the credibility of the Paris Ambition Cycle.

Key asks

- The **modalities of the UAE Dialogue** must be ambitious: a dialogue happening only once, with no report and no possibility to be considered as a decision, will not be acceptable. The modalities must be **inclusive** and ensure the safe, meaningful and systematic **participation** of the rightsholders most affected by the climate crisis.
- Parties must **improve the GST process**. Firstly, the second GST needs to be informed by the **best available science**, meaning allowing for inputs from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). Secondly, it must serve as a **megaphone for the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor**. It needs to be inclusive, just, and cover all the aspects of the climate crises we are facing.
- The next Global Stocktake must find an adequate mechanism to include inputs coming from the wider public - such as the report from the 2025 **Global Ethical Stocktake**, instituted by the COP30 Presidency - in the political process of the Global Stocktake.
- The next GST must also allow for meaningful and systematic participation by affected communities around the globe, and bring citizen-led processes into future Global Stocktakes. Such mechanisms could include, for example, the proposed **Peoples' Determined Contributions**.

6. Fossil fuel phaseout

We need to phase out fossil fuels urgently if we are to keep the world in a livable and stable state. The fossil fuel industry is actively lobbying against it, and socially just phasing out pathways, in an attempt to preserve its business model (despite clear progress in recent years in expanding renewables, for instance). The Brazilian Presidency, in contrast, is clearly advocating for a global, planned, and just transition away from fossil fuels.



The phaseout is gaining new momentum through the Just Transition Work Programme. How the shift away from the extraction and use of fossil energy sources takes place, while opening up new opportunities and support for low-income households, will be a steep learning curve that will need to be carefully considered in both the Global North and South.

Key asks

- A **commitment from historically high-emission countries** to urgently progress their own fossil phase-out pathways (i.e. their Just Transition Plans, within NDCs and long-term strategies), and to **support countries of the Global South** in their transition.
- A **global action plan** (as part of the global response plan) with proposals for effective and just legislation, enabling every country to advance the global phaseout and compound positive impacts.
- **Strengthen and expand energy partnerships** that enable a rapid and just transition to 100% renewable energy systems, with a focus on decentralized energy access, high-quality jobs, local population participation, and respect for land use rights.
- **Curtail the role of fossil fuel companies** to lobby at COPs and exercise undue influence on negotiations via a cap on industry passes and exclusion of the industry from official COP pavilions.
- Support the international conference for a **UNFCCC-aligned treaty mechanism (the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty)** on ending fossil fuels in 2026. This complementary mechanism addresses the historic weakness of absence of fossil fuels in the Paris Agreement, while enabling the existing COP processes to proceed.

7. Education

While this year's Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) workstream is focused on policy coherence and coordinated action, ecological education remains underfunded worldwide. There is a real lack of attention to and resources allocated for strengthening the integration of ecological principles into education systems, especially those directly related to climate action. This risks making the implementation of national climate strategies unsustainable, hampering the formation of ecological citizenship, and preventing intergenerational justice.

Key asks

- **Integration of ecological education in national climate plans:** Programs and activities for enhancing learning systems and methodologies with a climate and ecological justice lens must be included by all countries in their updated NDCs, National Adaptation Plans and national ACE strategies.



- **Needs-based approach to engagements with children and youth:** All nations must proactively develop and implement strategies to meaningfully engage children and youth as active partners in strengthening ecological education systems.
- **Inclusive, multi-stakeholder monitoring and evaluation:** Networks and platforms for sharing best practices and other key information on promoting ecological education must be developed or improved, in aid of strengthening multilateral and multisectoral coordination and accelerating current and future climate action.
- **Faith-based actors** should be recognised for their unparalleled reach in the area of education and supported to mobilise their networks and platforms to advance ecological education globally.

8. Just transition

The failure to plan for managing the social and ecological transition beyond fossil-fuel dependency is undoubtedly one of the barriers to rising climate ambition and correcting unresolved historic injustices - and perhaps preventing new ones from emerging.

Since the establishment of the Work Programme on Just Transition Pathways (WPJTP) at COP27, the global community has made steady progress towards embedding social justice and equity at the core of climate ambition. So far, about 72 out of 193 countries explicitly make references to just transition in their NDCs, but much more still needs to be done.

Key asks

- Countries should advocate for a **holistic just transition** approach that contributes to an integral human development, guided by just and equitable principles that prioritize the common good.
- The transition to renewable energy must not create **new forms of historic injustice** or exploitation, nor perpetuate old ones.
- Just transition plans should be **incorporated into new NDCs** to ensure social protection and safeguarding of the rights of workers and local and Indigenous Peoples.
- Nations should support the civil society and Global South position to urge wealthy countries to fulfil financial commitments and support transparent, inclusive implementation mechanisms like the proposed **Belém Action Mechanism (BAM)**.
- There must be **fair financing**, transparent and equitable value chains, and equitable access to renewable energy technology, resources, and capacity building.
- The **UN SG Panel's transition minerals' roadmap** and its next steps should be endorsed, including policies that prioritise sufficiency, circular economies, and wellbeing to avoid green extractivism.



9. Adaptation

Despite global commitments under the Paris Agreement, adaptation finance remains severely inadequate, currently accounting for only 5% of total tracked climate finance. This leaves a needs gap of approximately \$359.5 billion per year up to 2030.

The UNFCCC's publication of the proposed 100 indicators under the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and the UAE-Belém Work Programme marks an important milestone in advancing global adaptation efforts. However, the indicators present significant challenges in effectively measuring global progress. Many lack clarity on how to assess the Means of Implementation (MoI) such as finance, capacity building, and technology transfer and are not adaptation-specific or practical across different contexts.

The inclusion of MoI indicators in the GGA is another important step forward, but greater clarity is needed on their application to ensure accountability and effective delivery. Strengthening the integration of targets within the GGA framework is essential to avoid siloed implementation, and to recognise interdependencies across sectors - such as between water, food, and infrastructure - so that actions in one area support, rather than hinder, progress in another.

Key asks

- The final COP decision must produce **adaptation-specific indicators** that balance ambition and practicality, incorporating both process and outcome metrics to allow for iterative learning and adjustment. COP30 must deliver decisions that **finalise these indicators** and strengthen their integration.
- Robust **Means of Implementation indicators** should assess the quality, adequacy, and accessibility of adaptation finance, capacity building, and technology transfer.
- **GGA targets should be integrated across sectors**, recognizing interdependencies between areas to promote coherent and synergistic action.
- **The GGA must align with other frameworks**, including the SDGs and the Baku-Belém Roadmap, to ensure consistency in measuring progress and mobilising resources.
- COP should produce a **clear global adaptation finance goal** that supports GGA implementation through accessible, equitable, and grant-based funding mechanisms for developing countries. Parties should support much of the Global South and civil society's call for a goal of **tripling adaptation finance** by 2030.

10. Gender

The consequences of climate change do not affect everyone equally. Globally, and particularly in the Global South, women and girls are more strongly affected because they often have limited mobility, and fewer resources, rights, and decision-making opportunities. We also see men and boys more affected by the effects of climate change in some contexts, so looking at



gender-specific effects also allows us to consider these. It is a moral duty that disadvantaged people are empowered and their voices heard.

A strong, internationally agreed Gender Action Plan would be an important outcome of COP. Historically, and in the Paris Agreement, Parties have already negotiated their understanding of the 'gender' term within the UNFCCC. There is therefore no need for any slowing down of progress on this important topic, as key instruments like the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and the Lima Work Program on Gender already incorporate more traditional Parties' diplomatic stances.

Key asks

- Parties should support a **strong Gender Action Plan** that incorporates core Church teachings, such as women's equality, justice, synodality, and care for creation.
- **Alliances should be avoided** with states that strategically misuse the Gender Action Plan to delay decision-making at the COP and divert attention from human rights and the urgent needs of those suffering the consequences of human-induced climate change.