



COP 30 in Belém

An analysis (December 2025)

Assessing the success or failure of a COP is never easy, and COP30 in Brazil proved particularly difficult. One reason for this is that no major decisions were on the table. The Paris Agreement has been largely negotiated in recent years, and further financial commitments were not to be expected, partly due to the current global economic situation.

That is why this COP's motto of Global *Mutirão*¹ referred to cooperation on and the implementation of previous agreements. In this respect, the happenings surrounding this year's COP, outside of the negotiations, were very much in the spotlight.

The historical and political perspective

This COP took the climate process back to the country where it all began, 30 years later. The historic Rio Conference in 1992 marked the start of important international processes for global environmental and climate protection. Belém therefore also hosted a meeting of the chairs of three international processes that are still active today: the climate process, the biodiversity process, and the process to combat desertification.

For Brazil's incumbent president, Luis Inácio da Silva, COP30 was a prestigious project in terms of both domestic and foreign policy. Brazil had already invited the COP to Brazil in 2019 but his successor, right-wing President Bolsonaro, currently in prison for supporting a coup attempt against Lula, disinvited the world community after taking office. The COP was then held in Spain as a substitute.

Lula clearly wanted to make his mark in foreign policy with this climate conference. It was important to him to hold the COP at the "gateway" to the Amazon region to direct the world's attention to what is at stake there. For him, the motto of *mutirão* was also a strong signal for the strengthening of multilateralism, which is being transformed into an individualised trade policy, especially by the current US government.

The Brazilian government also used the attention generated by the climate conference to launch a new fund for forest conservation. The Tropical Forest

¹ A Tupi-Guarani word that stands for cooperation and collective effort.



Forever Facility (TFFF) pools government funds with private investments. These funds are to be invested in financial markets, with any profits going to countries that are taking steps to protect their forests.

- 20% of revenues are to be made available directly to indigenous territories and communities.
- 125 billion US dollars are needed – 25 billion from national governments and the rest from the private sector.
- Just under 7 billion US dollars has been pledged so far, including 1 billion from Germany.

Indigenous peoples and civil society

With over 3,000 indigenous participants from various countries, this COP had the largest indigenous participation to date – both in the negotiating rooms of the so-called Blue Zone and outside at various demonstrations during the two weeks of the climate conference.

Their concerns regarding the demarcation of their territories seemed to be heard, at least in Brazil, with Indigenous Minister Sônia Guajajara announcing the demarcation of a total of ten indigenous territories. Despite this success, however, indigenous organisations worldwide continue to criticize the massive destruction of their livelihoods by government infrastructure projects, illegal logging, gold mining, and the increasing activities of drug cartels in rainforest areas, who murder indigenous representatives and threaten their families.

Whereas the last climate conferences, taking place in autocratic states, saw reduced participation by civil society organisations, this time many civil society actors from Brazil and beyond were strongly represented. Parallel to the COP, a wide variety of events were held. At the *Cúpula dos Povos*, hundreds of groups discussed a wide range of topics related to climate justice, sustainability, and (equal) participation. This event also produced a **final declaration**, which was handed over to the official COP presidency.

Climate Alliance in Belém

For Climate Alliance, COP30 was very successful indeed. A small delegation onsite was supported by Climate Alliance President Andreas Wolter in the first week and by board member Marc Serra Solé from the Province of Barcelona in the second week.

With the support of Climate Alliance Austria, Climate Alliance Italy, and ASTM/Climate Alliance Luxembourg, two side events were held with various other partners. The focus here was on the role of indigenous territories and the opportunities and risks of renewable energies in Amazonia. Another event on the



implementation of fair and inclusive climate protection and adaptation at the local level was held in the German and featured Andreas Wolter. Climate Alliance was also involved in discussions with EU representatives and numerous talks with indigenous representatives, including Climate Alliance Austria's long-standing partner organisation, FOIRN.

Once again this year, the handover of the Green Footprints campaign results was at the forefront of activities onsite. The network was able to organise the presentation of the campaign to the Climate Secretariat and the Austrian Minister of the Environment together with youth delegations from Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands, as well as numerous indigenous representatives.

The final declaration

Usually, the world's attention is focused on the final declaration. This was also the case year, although doing so provides a very limited view of the dynamics of the overall process. In this respect, there was strong criticism that the final declaration did not include the statements from the conference in Dubai, which mentioned a phase-out of fossil fuels. Nevertheless, some countries such as Colombia and the Netherlands, have announced their own measures and a joint conference on this topic for April 2026.

This important announcement was accompanied by the publication of the “Belém Declaration on a Just Transition away from Fossil Fuels,” supported by 24 countries. A direct contribution to Lula's call for the development of a global roadmap, this declaration sets out the minimum level of ambition relevant for any just and balanced transition plan at the international level.

The Brazilian presidency also announced a roadmap. These announcements, made out of necessity, are also seen by some as a possible alternative to the complicated United Nations negotiations for the future, which are based on the principle of consensus and thus give individual states the opportunity to block processes. Now, more ambitious states will push ahead with the process of phasing out fossil fuels. It is hoped that the process will gain momentum, attracting further interested countries. By the next COP in Turkey, we'll know more.

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