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ROAD TO BELÉM

KEY TAKEAWAYS AND MAIN OUTCOMES OF COP29 AND THE ROAD TO COP30

An Organ of the African Union

Economic Social & Cultural Council 8658 Kudu Road, Kabulonga, Lusaka, Zambia

ecosocc.au.int

Authors:

Yousra Abourabi: Yousra Abourabi holds a PhD in political science and is an expert in gender, migration, and climate change.

Kyetetwie Osei: Program Officer at ECOSOCC African Union and an expert in migration and climate governance.

Najwa Wahbi: Holder of a political science degree and consultant for numerous organizations on issues related to climate governance.

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ROADMAP TO BÉLEM

I. Introduction

- Purpose of the paper, its scope and the context of COP29
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While Africa remains one of the most vulnerable continents to the effects of climate change, despite its historically marginal responsibility in global emissions, the results of COP29 in Baku highlight the need for African institutions to collectively mobilize ahead of COP30, which will be held in November 2025 in Bélem, Brazil, in the heart of the Amazon. Presented as the Finance COP, COP29 was characterized by the adoption of a new framework of climate finance negotiation post-2025 (NCQG), a partial operationalization of the Loss and damage fund, as well as methodological progress on the Global Goal of Adaptation (GGA).

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties (COP) is an annual gathering of representatives from over 190 countries to discuss and negotiate international climate policies and agreements. Notable milestones were achieved during COP29, widely referred to as the "Finance COP", in Baku, Azerbaijan. For example, the UNFCCC revised observer badge allocations, increasing representation from non-governmental organizations and civil society from developing countries to address historical imbalances[1]. The launch of the Baku Global Climate Transparency Platform is a positive development for transparency concerns, aiming to support developing countries in preparing Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs), facilitate knowledge-sharing on the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) and mobilize capacity-building resources[2]. COP29 also established a support program for the Least Developed Countries (LDC) to implement their National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), with all nations expected to submit their plans by 2025[3].

[1] UNFCCC, "COP29 Handbook issued to help all boservers make the most of their time at COP; UN Climate Change boosts diversity and regional representation among conference participants", 4 October 2024, URL: https://unfccc.int/news/cop29-handbook-issued-to-help-all-observers-make-the-most-of-their-time-at-cop-un-climate-change

[2] COP29, "Baku Global Climate Transparency Platform", Baku, Azerbaijan, URL: https://cop29.az/en/pages/baku-global-climate-transparency-platform-concept

[3] UNFCCC, "National Adaptation Plans: key to unleashing the transformative power of resilience and protecting communities and economies", 18 November 2024, URL: https://unfccc.int/news/national-adaptation-plans-key-to-unleashing-the-transformative-power-of-resilience-and-protecting

However, COP29 left Africa facing challenges in achieving climate resilience, notably due to the inadequacy of pledged funds. Securing finance was the top priority for the continent, making the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) a major point of discussion at the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) pre-COP meeting. While developed nations pledged to provide $300 billion annually, this amount falls short of the $1.3 trillion needed by developing countries, including African nations, for adaptation and mitigation efforts[4]. According to the Climate Policy Initiative, annual climate finance must increase at least sixfold to $8.5 trillion by 2030 and exceed $10 trillion annually from 2031 to 2050 to meet global climate goals. At the 12th Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa (CCDA), held on August 30 2024 in Abidjan, Dr. Jihane El Gaouzi from the African Union emphasized that African nations will need approximately $3 trillion by 2030 to implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)[5].

The "Baku to Belém Roadmap" was launched, acknowledging that more efforts are needed to meet the needs of developing countries, and aiming to streamline financial reporting and align efforts across COP presidencies[6]. Geopolitical tensions played a role in undermining COP29's outcomes, with the expectation of declining US finance commitments, creating a considerable gap in funding for developing nations. Budget cuts in some European countries and right-wing electoral victories threaten to weaken financial and political support for international climate action. While African nations already grapple with debt burdens and unjust trade and financial systems, this leaves them with additional struggle to finance the needed transformations and address escalating climate impacts.

COP30, which will be held in Bélem, Brazil, is dubbed the "Nature COP", with an emphasis on synergies between climate and biodiversity. It is expected to play a decisive role in ramping up international efforts to slash emissions and support adaptation, resilience-building and loss

[4] UNFCCC, « COP29 UN Climate Conference agrees to triple finance to developing countries, protecting lives and livelihoods », Announcement, 24 November 2024, URL: https://unfccc.int/news/cop29-un-climate-conference-agrees-to-triple-finance-to-developing-countries-protecting-lives-and

[5] PACJA, « Climate Finance for Africa : the unsolved puzzle at the heart of CCDA-12 discussions", Panafrican Climate Justice Alliance, 2024, URL: https://pacja.org/climate-finance-for-africa-the-unsolved-puzzle-at-the-heart-of-ccda-12-discussions/

[6] UNFCCC, « Matters relating to finance – New collective quantified goal on climate finance », Sixth session, Baku, 11-22 November 2024, Agenda item 11(a), FCCC/PA/CMA/2024/L.22, URL: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2024_L22_adv.pdf

and damage action. African leaders are expected to press for reforms to the global economic and financial infrastructure, so they better reflect Africa's green wealth and sustainability contributions[7]. Priorities also include maintaining adaptation and resilience-building at the center of climate negotiations, pressing for accessible, predictable and scaled-up adaptation finance, and making sure Africa's just transition is context-specific, nationally determined and aligned with development aspirations. In this context, COP30 represents both a symbolic step and a strategic opportunity. Symbolic, because it will be held in the heart of the Amazon, replacing ecosystems, indigenous knowledge and climate sovereignty and justice at the center of the debate. Strategic, because it coincides with the deadline for the submission of the new cycle of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as part of the post-Global Stocktake ambition cycle. As such, it represents an important opportunity window to reposition Africa as a normative actor and political force of a more just climate agenda, more adapted to African realities and articulated with its development trajectories.

The present roadmap is a tool for strategic orientation, advocacy and mobilization. It's part of a larger dynamic of strengthening African leadership in international climate negociations, while ensuring coherence between continental priorities and global engagements. It pursues many interdependent goals. First, to critically analyze the COP29 results, by identifying their concrete implications for African member states and regional institutions. It aims to identify systemic gaps, notably in finance access, adaptation, governance and African representation. Additionally, this roadmap will formulate operational and hierarchical recommendations, differentiated by action level (continental, regional, national) and topic (finance, just transition, adaptation, etc…). One of the objectives is to prepare Africa for COP30, by putting forward concrete strategies to structure a strong continental positioning, which is coherent and bears climate justice. Finally, it seeks to equip African stakeholders, including civil society organizations, multi-stakeholder platforms, the private sector, the youth and women, to strengthen their influence on climate negotiations and their capacity to contribute to results implementation.

[7] AfDB, « Ahead of COP30, Africa champions new approach to measuring green wealth of countries and incentivizing climate action », African Development Bank Group, 27 April 2025, URL: https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/press-releases/ahead-cop30-africa-champions-new-approach-measuring-green-wealth-countries-and-incentivizing-climate-action-83247

The roadmap thus covers the main takeaways and outcomes of COP29, in particular climate finance with the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), loss and damage, adaptation and the political dynamics around the energetic transition. Our analyses include structural constraints which African states face, both in terms of negotiation (technical capacities, position fragmentation) and implementation (financing, data, local expertise). Moreover, the roadmap provides lessons to learn from African best practices, mechanisms to adapt or strengthen, as well as concrete action suggestion.

The methodology for this roadmap is grounded on an analytical approach, which combines:

- An exhaustive documentary analysis and literature review, based on official documents from the UNFCCCC, COP29 reports, African declarations, think-tanks reports and climate databases.
- An institutional and strategic mapping, aiming to identify the actors, networks, regional platforms and leverage points for Bélem
- An action-oriented approach, where each statement is put in perspective with concrete recommendations, adapted to different levels of governance.
- Policy recommendations developed based on the major themes that emerge from data analysis and the literature review.

The literature review and document analysis is based on the following existing sources:

- A systematic review of peer-reviewed academic literature
- A review of policy documents, reports and official publications from international organizations, governments and non-governmental organizations. This includes documents and reports from the African Union, the Pan-African Climate Justice Alliance, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the UNFCCC, etc..
- Sources such as reports and working papers from think tanks, research institutions (the African Climate Policy Centre, the International Development Research Centre, etc..), international organizations (UNEP, the IPCC, the World Resources Institute, the Institute for Security Studies, …) and civil society organizations, in order to capture diverse perspectives and insights on the subject.

- Regional and international donor documents and statements from international donor organizations (the Green Climate Fund, the Climate Investment Funds, the European Union, the World Bank, …) and relevant institutions correlated to climate finance.

II. Executive Summary

III. Africa in the global climate landscape

- Overview of the impacts of climate change in Africa 2024-2025
- From COP28 to COP29: between continuity and shifts in global climate governance
- Overview of the African agenda at COP29
- Stakeholder ecosystem mapping

1. Overview of the impacts of climate change in Africa 2024-2025

An analysis, based on data from the Emergency Events Database (EM-DAT) international disaster database, states that 221,6 million people were impacted by climate disasters between 2021 and 2025 in Africa, a historically high number, along with 28.759 deaths, three times the recorded number from the period 2016-2020[8]. This marks the deadliest period in 15 years.

According to the IMO (International Meteorological Organization) report on the state of climate in Africa in 2024, extreme meteorological phenomena and climate change have consequences in all socio-economical development fields in Africa, where they worsen hunger, insecurity and population displacement. The year 2024 was the hottest year observed, while the last decade was the hottest decade ever registered[9]. Around African coasts, sea temperatures have climbed to record numbers, climbing particularly fast in the Atlantic Ocean

[8] Kiran Pandey, "Africa's climate crisis: 2021-2025 marks the deadliest period in 15 years", Down to Earth, 10 July 2025, URL: https://www.downtoearth.org.in/climate-change/africas-climate-crisis-2021-2025-marks-the-deadliest-period-in-15-years

[9] World Meteorological Organization, "State of the Climate in Africa 2024", WMO – No. 1370, Report, 2025, URL: https://library.wmo.int/records/item/69495-state-of-the-climate-in-africa-2024

and the Mediterranean Sea. The area impacted by marine heat waves in 2024 is the biggest area since registration started in 1993.

In Africa's tropical belt, 27 countries were hit by catastrophic flooding that displaced over 4 million people and took more than 2,500 lives, with healthcare facilities destroyed and the sharp rising of cholera and malaria cases[10]. Moreover, over 10 million children lost access to education due to infrastructural damage[11]. Nigeria declared food emergency due to water sources drying out, impacting 31 million people[12]. In October 2024, Senegal has seen an unprecedented crisis, with 16 000 ha of its farmlands submerged, affecting food security for over 250.000 Senegalese people dependent on agriculture[13].

Many challenges are impacting agriculture and environment, food, water and energetic security, as well as health and education. While artificial intelligence, communication tools and progress in modelling are bringing better precision and enlarging the scope of meteorological services in Africa, there is a need to invest more in infrastructures, strengthen the structures of data sharing and provide more inclusive services.

A. Temperatures

The average temperature in Africa in 2024 was 0,86° higher than the average long-term temperature from 1991 to 2020[14]. North Africa registered the highest anomaly, with an average that was 1,28°C higher. It is also the African sub-region which is warming at the fastest rate.

[10] Africa Center for Strategic Studies, « Record levels of flooding in Africa compounds stress on fragile countries", Report, December 2024, URL: https://africacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Flooding-in-Africa.pdf

[11] Farai Mutsaka, « Fresh from a deadly cholera outbreak, Zambia declares drought national emergency », AP News, February 29th, 2024, URL: https://apnews.com/article/drought-national-disaster-emergency-electricity-4cc6a2105f4641efe17e10a5b75f78a5

[12] Dyepkazah Shibayan, "Nigeria has a food security problem as water for crops is hard to find", AP News, May 13th 2025, URL: https://apnews.com/article/nigeria-climate-rivers-farming-agriculture-drought-0985473d47de9b752cd4b07f6df99c22

[13] Abbas Asamaan, « In eastern Senegal, 'unprecedented' floods devastate harvests", Le Monde, November 5th 2024, URL: https://www.lemonde.fr/en/le-monde-africa/article/2024/11/05/in-eastern-senegal-unprecedented-floods-devastate-harvests_6731695_124.htmlm

[14] World Meteorological Organization, "State of the Climate in Africa 2024", WMO – No. 1370, Report, 2025, URL: https://library.wmo.int/records/item/69495-state-of-the-climate-in-africa-2024

Extreme heat hit many areas of the continent in 2024, disturbing agriculture, education and productivity. In 2024, sea surface temperatures were higher than in 2023, which were the highest ever registered. Moreover, almost the entire oceanic zone around the African continent was impacted by marine heatwaves of strong intensity, severe or extreme, particularly in the tropical Atlantic. From January to April, almost 30 million km2 were affected, high ocean temperatures disturb marine ecosystems and can intensify rainstorms. Combined with the rising sea level, they constitute additional threats for the coastal populations. These thermal anomalies reinforce the power of cyclones and disrupt fisheries resources and coastal ecosystems.

B. Precipitations

In Africa's tropical zone, 27 countries experienced unusually heavy rainfall in 2024 compared to their historical norms. Flooding caused by this extensive rainfall is estimated to have impacted around 11 million people, resulting in around 2,500 deaths, 4 million people displaced, millions of hectares of croplands inundated, hundreds of thousands of livestock lost and hundreds of healthcare facilities damaged or destroyed[15].

One El Nino episode and a positive phase of the Indian ocean dipole, which lasted from 2023 to early 2024, have played a major role in precipitations. Southern Africa has been hit by severe drought conditions, in particular Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe, which had their worst drought since at least two decades. In general, cereal yields in Southern Africa were 16% lower than the quinquennial average. In Zambia and Zimbabwe, they were 43% and 50% lower. Low water levels and weak hydroelectric energy production of the Kariba Lake, the biggest artificial reservoir in Africa, led to prolonged energy outages and economic disturbances.

[15] Africa Center for Strategic Studies, "Record levels of flooding in Africa compounds stress on fragile countries", Infographic, 2024, URL: https://africacenter.org/spotlight/record-levels-of-flooding-in-africa-compounds-stress-on-fragile-countries/#:~:text=Almost%204%20million%20people%20across,impacts%20in%20the%20region%2C%20however.

In East Africa, rainfall from March to May were of a rare strength and duration, leading to severe floods in Kenya, Tanzania and Burundi, with hundreds of deaths and over 700.000 disaster-stricken people. According to findings from the World Weather Attribution, these heavy rains were more likely caused by climate change than the effects of El Nino[16]. However, rainfall from October to December was lower than average, which led to a worrying food security situation.

Rainfall degradation in the South and excess water in the East and the Sahel will result in a worsening of acute food insecurity in several hotspots in 2025. The FAO-WFP "Hunger Hotspots" report anticipates an increase in the severity and scale of food insecurity in 18 areas, including Sudan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, DRC, Mali and Mozambique, due to the combined effect of conflicts, climate and economic shocks[17]. They call for anticipatory interventions (cash, seeds, fodder, WASH) in these contexts where the climate exacerbates structural vulnerabilities.

In West Africa and central Africa, Nigeria, Niger, Tchad, Cameroon and Centrafrican Republic are among the countries most hit.

North Africa has registered for the third consecutive time cereal yields that are lower to the average because of weak rainfall and extremely high temperatures. Food production in Morocco was 42% lower than the quinquennial average after six consecutive years of drought.

C. Cyclones and tropical rainstorms

For the first time in the satellite era, two tropical cyclones, Hidaya and Ialy, formed in May and moved in the extreme north-west of the basin, near Tanzania and Kenya, in a zone where mature tropical systems are rare. The Chido tropical cyclone affected Mozambique and

[16] World Weather Attribution, "Urban planning at theart of increasingly severe East African flood impacts in a warming world", Report, 2024, URL: https://www.worldweatherattribution.org/urban-planning-at-the-heart-of-increasingly-severe-east-african-flood-impacts-in-a-warming-world/

[17] FAO-WFP, "Hunger Hotspots: FAO-WFP early warnings on acute food insecurity, June to October 2025 outlook", Report, 2025, URL: https://www.wfp.org/publications/hunger-hotspots-fao-wfp-early-warnings-acute-food-insecurity?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Malawi, making tens of thousands of victims, many of which found themselves homeless and without access to clean water.

D. Health, security and conflicts

Extreme climates exacerbate multidimensional crises. According to the Africa CDC (Centres for Disease Control and Prevention), 56% of health events recorded between 2001 and 2021 were linked to climate change (floods, droughts, waterborne diseases), calling for a resilient health infrastructure[18]. Furthermore, the Climate Risk Index 2025 highlights that, in areas already vulnerable to conflict such as East Africa, climate impacts intensify tensions over resources, particularly water and land[19]. Recent modeling on pastoral conflicts in four Central African countries identifies climate as a significant risk multiplier, confirming the structural and prospective nature of the problem[20].

E. Economic losses, infrastructures and essential services

The economic cost of climate hazards is rising sharply. The GAR 2025 (UNDRR) estimates losses due to drought at around USD 307 billion per year globally (about 15% of disaster losses), with 85.8% of livestock losses attributed to drought, which is a particularly critical signal for pastoral and agropastoral economies in Africa[21]. At the continental level, the WMO and leading press analyses highlight that 2 to 5% of annual GDP can be reduced by extreme events (heat, floods, cyclones, drought), while up to 9% of national budgets must be mobilized to manage these shocks[22]. Water and electricity infrastructure (e.g., Kariba in Zambia/Zimbabwe) have been under severe strain, affecting energy and economic activity, for example in Kariba in Z

[18] Africa CDC, "Climate change and health: strategic framework", African Union, July 2025, URL: https://africacdc.org/download/climate-change-and-health-strategic-framework-2025
[19] Climate Risk Index 2025, URL: https://www.germanwatch.org/en/cri
[20] Lirika Solaa et al., "Quantifying the risk of pastoral conflict in 4 central African countries", Computers and Society, V1, 2024, https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2412.18799
[21] UNDRR, "Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: GAR 2025 Hazard explorations", Global Assessment Report, 2025, URL: https://www.undrr.org/gar/gar2025/hazard-exploration/droughts
[22] World Meteorological Organization, "State of the Climate in Africa 2024", WMO – No. 1370, Report, 2025, URL: https://library.wmo.int/records/item/69495-state-of-the-climate-in-africa-2024

2. From COP28 to COP29: between continuity and shifts in global climate governance

COP28 marked the start of the first global stocktake (GST) of the Paris Accord, a collective review of the progress made towards the 1.5°C goal, followed by historical decisions in terms of energetic transition, including the language used on giving up fossil fuels for the first time[23]. This dynamic was carried into COP29 through two main points. First, the consolidation of the global finance effort, with the launching of the NCQG, renewing the former 100 billion USD per year goal, now elevated to 300 billion USD per year by 2035. Second, continuing the implementation of the Loss and damage fund, initiated during COP27 and further detailed during COP28. The modalities of access, however, remain complex and are broadly seen as insufficient by African negotiators[24].

The transition from COP28 in Dubai to COP29 in Baku marked a phase of political and geopolitical reconfiguration of the global climate governance system. While the Paris Accord framework remains the dominating juridical reference, these COPs highlighted the system's limits: persisting inequalities between countries of the North and the South, power asymmetries in the negotiation processes, and a growing fragmentation of multilateral alliances. The UNFCCC's mechanism is gradually weakened by a few elements: the growing influence of transnational economic powers, such as fossil industries, carbon markets, digital platforms…); the resurgence of North-South divides on historical responsibility, climate justice and differentiated pathways of transition; and the difficulty to make COPs evolve from negotiation spaces towards spaces of implementation and accountability. During COP29, we saw an overwhelming presence of fossil fuel lobbyists, with over 1770 people defending the interests of coal, gas or oil firms being accredited for COP29, according to the NGO Kick Big Polluters Out. There were more lobbyists than the effectives of each national delegation, except for Azerbaïdjan, Brazil and Turkey. The number of lobbysists also exceeds the total of

[23] UNFCCC, "COP28 Agreement signals "beginning of the end' of the fossil fuel era", 13 December 2023, URL: https://unfccc.int/news/cop28-agreement-signals-beginning-of-the-end-of-the-fossil-fuel-era?utm_source=chatgpt.com

[24] Inès Bakhtaoui, Nusrat Naushin et. Al, "Operationalizing the loss and damage fund: learning from the intended beneficiaries", Stockholm Environment Institution, Report, July 2023, URL: https://www.sei.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/operationalizing-the-loss-and-damage-fund-learning-from-the-intended-beneficiaries.pdf

representatives from the countries most vulnerable to climate change, including Tchad, Sudan and Mali[25].

According to a 2025 policy brief by the OECD, the four world's largest providers of official development assistance (ODA) (USA, UK, Germany and France) cut their ODA in 2024 for the first time in three decades, with additional cuts slated for 2025[26]. This is a major point of concern as this would result in least developed countries and countries in sub-Saharan Africa experiencing a drop in support by about 13 to 28%. This would drastically weaken Africa's adaptation capacity.

Between COP28 and COP29, we can observe a rise in power of informal coalitions (sectorial coalitions, technological partnerships, alliances for the elimination of coal, initiatives on hydrogen…), often led by G7 countries, by the European Union or industrial conglomerates. These mechanisms are constructed outside of the official processes of the UNFCCC, but they are increasingly influencing how norms, monitoring standards and finance circuits are defined[27]. This evolution represents a shift of climate governance towards techno-liberal forms, based on market solutions and quantification such as carbon credits or offsetting, at the detriment of structural transformation logics.

More concerningly, COP29's organization illustrated the lack of robust anti-corruption measures. A report by Transparency International and the Anti-Corruption Data Collective highlighted how the Azerbaijani regime, along with oil and gas companies and lobbyists, worked hand-in-hand in the run-up to COP29 to exert undue corporate influence. This shows how the COP process currently lacks guardrails to effectively reduce corporate influence and

[25] https://www.lemonde.fr/planete/article/2024/11/15/cop29-a-bakou-une-presence-massive-des-lobbyistes-des-energies-fossiles_6394794_3244.html

[26] OECD, "Cuts in official development assistance: OECD projections for 2025 and the near term", Policy Brief, June 2025, URL: https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/cuts-in-official-development-assistance_8c530629-en/full-report.htm

[27] Axel Mixhaelowa, Katharina Michaelowa and Chandreyee Namhata, "Informal governance of international climate policy", In: Informal Governance in World Politics, Cambridge University Press, 2024

prevent corrupt and kleptocratic actors from using the Conference to strike business deals and pursue personal enrichment[28].

COP29 was held in a context of growing polarization within the G77+ and an erosion of trust between parties, due to multiple reasons[29]. First, the choice of Azerbaijan as the conference host, an oil-producing country with an authoritarian governance. Second, a negotiation space saturated by industrial lobbying while being restrained for the independent civil society[30]. Finally, growing divergence between Global South countries, in particular emerging powers such as China, India and Brazil, and low-income countries around priorities in terms of transition, finance and differentiated responsibilities. In this context, despite the efforts of the African Group of Negotiators and the African Union to carry a unified agenda, the continent often remains in a reactive and defensive position, depending on finance and constrained by procedure rules that are less than favorable.

Thus, there is an imperative for Africa to reinvest global climate governance as a political space. The passage from COP28 to COP29 confirms that climate governance is no longer a purely environmental or technical field, but a highly competitive political space, where major power relations, dominating narratives and structural arbitrations are at play. For Africa, this implies the need to strengthen its normative power, notably through the production of narratives, of transition visions, and innovative models of resilient development. It also highlights the need for the continent to clarify and consolidate its institutional spaces (AGN, RECs, AU, civil society platforms) as a way to avoid fragmentation.

3. Overview of the African agenda at COP29

[28] Transparency International, "COP Co-opted? How corruption and undue influence threaten multilateral climate action", Report, 2024, URL: https://www.transparency.org/en/publications/cop-co-opted-how-corruption-and-undue-influence-threaten-multilateral-climate-action

[29] Ole Adophsen and Jule Könneke, "A new balance of power at the 29th World Climate Conference: International Climate Politics after the US election", Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, 2024, URL: https://www.swp-berlin.org/10.18449/2024C57

[30] Alic C. Hill and Priyanka Mahat, "Was COP29 in Azerbaijan a failure?", Council on Foreign Relations, 25th November 2024, URL: https://www.cfr.org/expert-brief/was-cop29-azerbaijan-failure

The African Group of Negotiators (AGN) came to COP29, making a bold call for just climate finance, stronger global partnerships and urgent action. The agenda follows months of work by the AGN, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Union Commission, the African Development Bank and AUDA-NEPAD, all collaborating to make sure Africa arrives at COP29 with a unified strategy[31].

The main priorities of Africa during COP29 were articulated by the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) and included:

- Climate finance: Africa calls for an ambitious NCQG on climate finance, with at least a 1.3 trillion dollars pledge annually, mainly provided as subventions and regularly revised to reflect the evolution of needs and vulnerabilities. These funds should be accessible and adapted to the needs and realities specific to African countries, supporting adaptation, mitigation and resilience without leading to debt or dependence. Loans were denounced as paralyzing for African states.
- Loss and damage: the AGN asks for an urgent rise in finance for the loss and damage fund, beyond the 700 million dollars already pledged. This fund must prioritize African communities which disproportionately bears the weights of climate catastrophes, and make Nairobi the place for the Santiago network on loss and damage instead of Bonn, which would help Africa in better accessing support
- Just transition: the transition of Africa to a sustainable economy must be graceful, just and centered on people, addressing energetic scarcity, green industrialization and natural resource use at the sectorial level. Developed countries must put an end to commercial barriers and make sure that adjustment measures at the borders which were formulated without Africa's participation do not unjustly penalize African economies.
- Adaptation: while adaptation finance in Africa is estimated at 387 billion dollars per year, Africans called on COP29 to provide needs-based adaptation finance, which answers to the real needs on the ground and the vulnerabilities of populations, societies and economies. It must give priority to essential sectors, mainly

[31] UNECA, « Africa's agenda at COP29 », Economic Commission for Africa, November 20th 2024, URL: https://www.uneca.org/stories/africa's-agenda-at-cop2

agriculture, water, health and energy. Adaptation finance must be accessible through simple mechanisms that support the communities which need it the most

- Transparency and accountability: the need for clear and honest reports on climate finance contributions and progress made in terms of reducing emissions by developed countries. Developed countries must respect their engagements in a transparent manner, while African civil society plays a central role in the monitoring of these processes to guarantee resources reach communities first.
- Mitigation: to reach the Paris Accords objectives, decisive emission reductions are needed. Developed countries must set ambitious goals to progressively eliminate fossil fuels and reflect these goals in their NDCs. Africa has contributed the less to this crisis and cannot be left fending for itself in bearing the cost of others' emissions. To this end, African negotiators called for priority actions on carbon markets to be readjusted to get better results in terms of mitigation, not to contribute to African countries' climate finance
- Recognizing the specific needs and circumstances of Africa: African negotiators called on COP29 to start working on the recognition of African needs and circumstances in the Paris Accord, conforming to relevant and anterior decisions adopted by the COPs.

4. Overview of the African climate governance stakeholder ecosystem

Climate governance is based on a complex institutional, technical and social ecosystem, mobilizing multiple actors with differentiated but interconnected roles, unequal capacities and agendas that can be conflictual. It is essential to map these stakeholders, to identify strategic action levers, possible synergies, tension zones and which canals to strengthen before COP30. As opposed to a linear or sectorial approach of climate policies, this mapping highlights the polycentric reality of African climate governance, a space where political, technical, community, financial and diplomatic logics interact. It reveals a few elements.

First, the persistence of imbalances between strategic formulation capacities and execution capacities, in particular at the State level and regional platforms, often constrained by short

funding cycles, limited human resources, or an excessive dependency to external technical assistance.

Second, the under-exploited role of civil society, researchers, territorial collectivities and marginzalized groups, despite their local anchoring, their empirical expertise and their capacity to ensure accountability of climate policies. While these actors are consulted, they are rarely equipped with real power of co-construction of strategic priorities.

Panafrican institutions of political and strategic coordination	The African Union - The African Union Commission: ensures the coordination of African positions - Desk of the Special envoy for climate change: diplomatic role and high-level political mobilization - ECOSOCC: consultative organ of the civil society, entry point for inclusivity, transparency and community anchoring - Technical committee specialized on the environment (CTS): technical coordination platforms of member states
	Technical implementation institutions - AUDA-NEPAD: structuring programs such as the Great Green Belt, or the Mechanism of adaptation finance - African Centre for climate policy (ACPC - UNECA): analytic support, scenario-building and prospective modelling - African Bank of Development (Afdb): drives climate finance via the African Fund and the Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program (AAAP)
Member states and diplomatic platforms	Ministries of the environment, climate, finance and development: they determine the NDCs and national priorities. They also carry climate engagements in international forums.
	African Group of Negotiators (AGN): an interstate entity of representation in UNFCCC climate negotations, organized in thematic subgroups (adaptation, finance, technology...) and supported by technical regional poles, but sometimes suffering from a lack of clear mandates and harmonization with AU priorities.

Regional Economic Communities (RECs)	RECs intervene as gateways between national policies and continental agenda, notably through regional climate strategies and technical coordination mechanisms
	The COmmon Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA): the markets of Eastern and Southern Africa are implementing programs aimed at adapting to and mitigating the effects of cliamte change. The COMESA Climate Change Initiative aligns with the African Continental Framework on climate change. Initiatives expanded to include Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) as a priority to enhance adaptation strategies.
	the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD): The CEN-SAD network focuses on enhancing agricultural production and providing support to farmers, highlighting the importance of adopting culturally sensitive approaches to ensure sustainable development in the region. However, significant barriers remain, including technical limitations and critical informational and financial constraints.
	The East African Community (EAC): the EAC has developed the EAC Climate Change Policy (EACCP), to promote strategic and collaborative actions to address climate change while maximing the potential benefits of both current and emerging opportunities. This approach is informed by global environmental law standards, including the principles of sustainable development
	The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS): it works in partnership with member states to harmonize climate policies and create comprehensive regional strategies. This involves the formulation of adaptation and mitigation plans that focus on key sectoral priorities. With initiatives like the Regional Climate Action Transparency Hub (ReCATH), it enhances the technical capacities of member states
	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS): the ECOWAS Climate Finance Mobilization and Access Strategy for 2022-2031 outlines key initiatives aimed at facilitating access to and leveragin climate finance to satisfy the needs of ECOWAS member states. It serves as a regional action plan.
	The Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD): it established the IGAD CEWARN Mechanism, the IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) and the IGAD Centre for Livestock and Animal Husbandry Development (ICPALD°, which are instrumental in evaluating and mitigating threats to peace and security, including weather risks. CEWARN delivers early warning regarding potential conflicts, conducts analyses and facilitates informed responses.
	The Southern African Development Community (SADC): the SADC region has pledged to develop mechanisms for implementing key environmental agreements. The Environment and Climate Change Programme aims to achieve the Regional Integrated Sustainable Development Goals, align with the African . The SADC Protocol on Forestry emphasizes environmental protection by integrating sustainable forest management practices. It introduced the Southern African Development Community Programme to Support the Reduction of Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD).
	The Arab Maghreb Union (AMU): over the years, the focus on global development and domestic air quality has overshadowed the essential roal of regional collaboration in supporting individual countries. The AMU is also not known to engage in collaborative efforts on climate change with any regional climate change organizations or initiatives.

Civil society actors and networks	Continental platforms - The Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA): a network of over 1000 CSOs, mobilizes on climate equity, loss and damage and local knowledge - The African Coalition for Sustainable Energy & Access (ACSEA): promotes just energetic transitions and approaches outside of centralized carbon - YOUNGO: the youth constituent of the official youth engagement mechanism at the UNFCCC
	Specialized networks - Women-climate networks such as Women in Global Climate CHange (WiGCC) or GenderCC Africa - Indigenous and pastoral groups such as the Indigenous People of Africa Coordinating Committee and local forestery networks - Local community platforms which are often excluded from formal processes, but central in the implementation and legitimation of projects
Private sector and green finance	Regional banks and climate funds - AfDB, Afreximbank, Ecobank: they fund climate projects linked to the development of African green obligations - Emerging African carbon markets: Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Morocco or Gabon with legal frameworks in development
	Green firms and consortias - Actors in the field of green hydrogen, reforestation, solar energy or sustainable agriculture - Ambivalent role: while they drive innovation, they are also pressure agents on land and fiscal policies
Technical and multilateral partners	United Nations and donors UNDP, UNEP, FAO, IOM, WB, AFD, GIZ, GFC, etc..: technical support, funding, and support on national strategies
	Research institutions and thinks tanks: - ACPC (UNECA), IDRC, African Climate Foundation, WRI Africa, Climate Analytics, etc.. - They provide data, modelling, scenarios, analyses and impact evaluations

While Africa enjoys a dynamic civil society and a rich climate governance ecosystem, multi-actor governance often remains partitioned, and the gateways between decision levels (continental, regional, local..) remain underexploited.

IV. Analysis of the main outcomes and takeaways of COP29

Presentation of the main outcomes and takeaways, African positioning, negotiation dynamics, gaps and opportunities

- Adoption of the NCQG, an unambitious climate finance goal (finance gap for Africa, implications for NDC implementation, debt concerns…)
- Adaptation and Loss and Damage: between progress and limits (African vulnerability frameworks, equity, metrics…)
- Energy and Jut Transition
- Nature-based solutions and natural capital accounting (carbon sinks, ecosystem valuation, territorial justice…)
- Negotiation dynamics: resistance encountered by the African Group during the COP29 negotiations

Africa started preparing for Baku engagement in the beginning of 2024, with the multipartite meeting to examine the results of COP28 and elaborate a strategy for COP29. That meeting was then strengthened by the regional African Forum on sustainable development and talks on climate in Africa, which highlighted the need to make adaptation central in the next cycle of NDCs (NDC 3.0)[32].

The 12th Conference on climate change and development in Africa (CCDA-12) prepared the ground for the African position at COP29, a position which was approved during the 10th extraordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference (AMCEN)[33]. Both of these processes took place in September 2024 in Abidjan. These conferences emphasized the need

[32] UNECA, "Eleventh Session of the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development", 9 April 2025, URL: https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/arfsd2025

[33] UNECA, "Twelfth Conference on Climate Change and Development in Africa; financing climate adaptation and resilience in Africa, 30 August 2024, URL: https://www.uneca.org/eca-events/CCDA-XII

to strengthen the fundamental principle of the Paris Accord: common but differentiated responsibilities according to the respective capabilities in engaging with COP29.

The UN Environment Program's Emissions Gap Report 2024 set the stage for the conference, revealing that global greenhouse gas emissions have reached 57.1 gigatons, with the world heading towards a catastrophic 3.1°C of warming by the end of the century[34]. Geopolitical paralysis characterized the COP29 negotiations, with developed and developing countries debating who should act first and pay more. During COP29, the gap between ambition and climate action has never been bigger, contributing to a growing disillusionment.

1. Climate finance: adoption of the NCQG, an unambitious climate finance goal

African countries, through the AGN, articulated from the start a strong and coherent demand: a global climate finance of 1.3 trillion USD per year by 2035, with at least 400 to 900 billions in non-refundable public finance. This reflects a logic of climate justice and the need for a massive support for just transitions, adaptation and structural resilience of the continent. African negotiators insisted on principles such as the primacy of subventions over loans, an attribution based on real vulnerability, and transparency in the mobilization and distribution of resources. The AGN position also included the following elements:

- The NCQG must address the global economic challenges facing developing countries (high investment costs and debt sustainability) and underscore the commitment of developed countries to meet their financing obligations under the United Nations Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement
- It must reflect the scale and urgency of the response to climate change and provide sufficient resources to implement adaptation, mitigation, loss and damage, and just climate transition interventions
- The climate finance to be secured under the NCQG must contribute to climate justice and not increase Africa's debt portfolio.

[34] UNEP, "Emissions Gap Report 2024: no more hot air… please!", Report, 2024, URL: https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2024

Parties during COP29 decided to set a target, led by developed countries, of at least USD 300 billion per year by 2035 for developing countries for climate action, from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources. It was decided to recognize the challenges facing developing countries, such as the rising costs of adaptation, limited fiscal space, and the critical need for public resources and grants and highly concessional finance, particularly for adaptation and responding to loss and damage. The decision recognizes the need to scale up adaptation finance, taking into account the objectives of the Global Climate Agreement. It was also decided to increase and prioritize direct access, in support of local approaches and institutions, particularly for adaptation measures; and to establish a periodic review of progress made under the global stocktake, as well as a review of this decision and the way forward in 2030.

The $300 billion pledge is far below the estimated need of $1.3 trillion for Africa and other developing countries to fill the gap between adaptation needs and climate finance[35]. It is obvious that the Baku pledge lacks ambition and fails to demonstrate real engagement from developed countries to resolutely lead the global action against climate change. This pledge would be financed through a variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources. This means developed countries are not only failing their responsibilities, but also that it would be almost impossible to make them accountable regarding their engagement. UNFCCC and Paris Accord principles call for public finance by developed countries, a spirit that seems to have lost its meaning, with developing countries about to step deeper into debt. The framing of sources makes it absolutely impossible to hold any party accountable, which could spell the end of the Paris Agreement.

Moreover, the "recognition of the voluntary intention of Parties to account for all climate-related outflows and climate-related finance mobilized by multilateral development banks towards the achievement of the target"[36] is yet another bold authorization given to developed

[35] Amar Bhattach arya, Vera Songwe and Nicholas Stern, “Raising ambition and accelerating delivery of climate finance”, High-Level Expert Group on Climate Finance, 2024, URL: https://www.lse.ac.uk/granthaminstitute/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Raising-ambition-and-accelerating-delivery-of-climate-finance_Third-IHLEG-report.pdf

[36] UNFCCC, “New collective quantified goal on climate finance”, Draft decision -/CMA.6, Agenda item 11(a), Baku, 11-22 November 2024, URL: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2024_L22_adv.pdf

countries to count loans to developing countries as their contribution to climate finance, and opens the door wide to double-counting Official Development Assistance (ODA) as climate finance. The decision incentivizes highly polluting countries and companies to continue their development trajectories while Africa and other developing countries compete for real or imagined future "windfalls" in carbon markets. Through "high-integrity carbon markets," there is a direct invitation to accept polluters and be kind by celebrating uncertain and conditional carbon credits whose value chains are least understood by African nations, distributing power in developed countries. The envisaged sub-targets on adaptation and loss and damage were never guaranteed, nor was a strong text linking the NOCQ and the OMA/WATER targets. Finally, there was an attempt to balkanize and fragment developing countries into Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and others to weaken their bargaining power.

African countries, Least Developed Countries (LDCs), insular states and many civil society actors denounced a “shameful” decision, a “travesty of justice” and even a betrayal of the justice climate principles. The negotiation process was in itself criticized for its opacity: last minute texts presented late and the lack of possibility to formally disagree. However, the Baku to Belém Roadmap to 1.3 trillion, as included in the NCQG decision, can be seen as an appportunity to scale up climate finance and will be prepared by the CMA6 and CMA7 Presidencies (Azerbaijan and Brazil).

2. Adaptation: between progress and limits

The AGN affirmed clear positions:

- The call for increasing climate finance in the NCQG for needs-based adaptation, so Africa can seize the opportunities of job creation, green growth in the context of sustainable development and the elimination of poverty. Key sectors such as health, agriculture, water and other sub-sectors should receive an important funding allocation.
- The call for establishing an ambitious sub-goal for adaptation finance which focuses on supplying public funding, based on subventions, to answer the needs of developing countries, as developed in NDCs, NAPs and other national programs

- The affirmation that adaptation finance should circulate partly through open and accessible mechanisms and canals for all developing countries. These mechanisms should be able of directly supplying funding, and countries should be represented equally in decision-making organs and able to set agendas and orient institutions.
- Developed countries should accept to supply the means of implementation necessary to support the formulation and implementation of NAPs.
- The engagement to guarantee that adaptation finance takes into account the gender dimension and that the climate finance mechanisms take into account human rights, and the rights of indigenous people, local communities, migrants, refugees, workers, young people, children, handicapped people and vulnerable communities, as well as the right to development and to intergenerational equity

COP29 progressed on a number of elements. The language on means of implementation was expanded to include implementation factors, including finance, technology transfer, capacity building, and factors such as leadership, institutional arrangements, policies, data and knowledge, skills and education, public participation, and strengthened and inclusive governance. We also saw the launch of the Baku Adaptation Roadmap, a space for ongoing discussion on knowledge sharing, the timeline for the revision of the UAE Framework, linkages with the World Bank, transformational adaptation, calls for the IPCC, among other elements[37]. Moreover, a Baku High-Level Dialogue on Adaptation was established, to be convened by the Presidency, which aims to identify ways to enhance the implementation of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience.

The decision on the final outcome of the UAE-Belém work programme should include: indicators that capture information related to, inter alia, social inclusion, indigenous peoples, participatory process, human rights, gender equality, migrants, children and youth, and persons with disabilities; indicators that reflect the particular vulnerabilities of children to the impacts of climate change in thematic targets and, possibly, cross-cutting indicators related to education and health of children and youth; and quantitative and qualitative indicators of

[37] UNFCCC, "Matters relating to the global goal on adaptation", Presidency Text, CMA 6 Agenda Item 9(a), Baku, 22 November 2024, URL: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/GGA_4.pdf

factors enabling the implementation of adaptation measures, including means of implementation.

Finally, if was affirmed that the agenda item on matters relating to the GGA is a standing agenda item, and will continue to be included on the agenda of the 64th session (June 2026) and subsequent sessions of the subsidiary bodies and the eight session (November 2026) and subsequent sessions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement.

However, the 300 billion USD pledge does not provide an indicative minimum allocation for adaptation measures. Moreover, there was no tangible sub-goal on adaptation and therefore a lack of specific allocations in the NCQG for the implementation of the GGA. COP29 ended without a commitment to align adaptation finance with real needs on the ground and improve responsiveness to community vulnerabilities. Finally, while the expanded language on means of implementation is a welcome addition, the added parameters fall largely within the purview of developing countries. Developed countries must be reminded of the primacy of climate finance in the expanded means of implementation matrix.

3. Loss and Damage Fund operationalization

Regarding the issue of loss and damage, the position of the AGN was as follows:

- The reiteration of the rejection of the proposal for a voluntary contribution to the loss and damage fund as proposed by developed countries. The AGN insisted on raising essential new and additional funding in the form of grants, not loans, to address loss and damage, and strengthen legislation to enshrine the polluter pays principle in law while promoting emissions reductions
- The call for the full operationalization of the Loss and Damage Response Fund with sufficient resources, beyond the USD 700 million, and the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage (SNLD) to address the needs of developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change.
- A sub-target on loss and damage financing in the NOCQ to address its specific challenges while guarding against the dilution of the adaptation sub-target.

- The call for the reversal of the recent decision to host the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage in Geneva rather than Nairobi by the Advisory Board at its inaugural meeting.

COP 29 concluded with pathetically low and uninspiring pledged to the Loss and Damage Fund. The call to reverse the decision to host the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage in Geneva has gone unanswered, a clear indication of disregard for sound decisions that accelerate climate action on the front lines. Finally, the contributions to the fund have remained voluntary in the absence of a sub-target under the NCQG anchoring loss and damage financing. This maintains a lack of clarity. Several briefings note that dedicated discussions have been postponed to later work.

Regarding texts, COP29 made progress on the "system" coherence between the three pillars of the Warsaw Mechanism (WIM), the Santiago Network, and the Fund, clarifying their functions. The WIM is for the strategic framework and knowledge part, the Santiago Network for assistance engineering, and the Fund for targeted financing of damage already suffered. Independent observers welcome real progress, while highlighting the absence of specific quantified objectives for L&D and chronic underfunding[38].

The choice of the World Bank as host/trustee was fiercely debated. The final compromise paves the way for operations, but with conditions: independence of the Board, separate legal personality, hosting agreements under a FIF (Financial Intermediary Fund) with review at COP33. In short, "operationalize quickly" without capturing the Fund in the logic of the MDBs. The core risk is known: if financial intermediation takes precedence, subsidies may become scarce in favor of quasi-budgetary instruments or loans, which is incompatible with the spirit of reparation. The official decisions and notes frame this safeguard, but their implementation will have to be monitored quarterly[39].

[38] Aruna Chandrasekhar et al., "COP29; Key outcomes agreed at the UN Climate talks in Baku", Carbon Brief, 24 November 2024, URL: https://www.carbonbrief.org/cop29-key-outcomes-agreed-at-the-un-climate-talks-in-baku

[39] Chelsea Johnson, "Adaptation, loss & damage at COP29: some progress made, much remains", Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, 8 January 2025, URL: https://www.c2es.org/2025/01/adaptation-loss-damage-at-cop29-some-progress-made-much-remains

Another point of concern is the political volatility of promises. Between COP28 and mid-2025, we have seen the fluctuation of announcements, such as the US withdrawing its pledge[40]. This highlights the fact that resource predictability is an Achilles' heel for countries facing repeated shocks. This is a major focus for Belém; locking in multi-year, legally anchored trajectories on the donor side.

In Belém, Africa must push for an integrity and access package (majority donations, direct access, regional windows, target deadlines) backed by an African monitoring observatory and a pipeline ready to fund reconstruction and climate social safety nets. The fund's operationalization must be used as a lever to secure predictable, equitable and rapid resources, and to make loss and damage an autonomous pillar of climate justice, beyond incantations, in budgetary materiality.

4. Just transition

Regarding the issue of a just transition, the AGN position was as follows:

- The focus just transition must be comprehensive enough to include: just and equitable mitigation, just adaptation and resilience, financing for just transitions, and fair trade, including increased access to finance and technology. This must be done within the context of equity and common rights, shared responsibilities, and shared accountability.
- The just transition work program must reflect Africa's priorities, particularly green industrialization, sustainable use and value addition of natural resources, addressing energy poverty, and addressing clean cooking needs, within the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty.
- The just transition work program must promote equity and justice in the policy space for the sustainable development of developing countries, taking into account the need

[40] Associated Press, "In another climate and money withdrawal, US pulls out of climate damage compensation fund", AP News, 10 March 2025, URL: https://apnews.com/article/trump-climate-compensation-fund-withdrawal-0a74bfb4c2b82ed2748f890bb5b604e5

for a just transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient economies, based on different development needs and social, economic, and environmental implications

- The call for the adoption of an ambitious decision under the work programme on just transition pathways that operationalizes equity in mitigation, adaptation and finance pathways under the Paris Agreement and is cognizant of the continent's unique needs and circumstances. This should ensure a just and equitable transition to low-carbon and climate-resilient development.

Despite the parties resuming negotiations on the UAE Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) and several iterations of the texts being released during the second week of COP29, consensus on the JTWP was ultimately not reached, with parties unable to adopt a decision, thus preventing the adoption of a workable work plan for the JTWP[41]. The failure to finalize the PTTJ represents a significant setback for the just transition movement, which seeks to ensure that climate policies are inclusive and equitable, particularly for workers in vulnerable sectors. The lack of a clear framework leaves many communities and workers unprotected as economies shift toward greener models, exacerbating existing inequalities and undermining the promise of a just transition.

The focus at COP29 was on how to follow up on the GST through the UAE Dialogue, but the COP29 Presidency failed to get consensus on the draft decision. It was rejected by several Parties in the closing plenary for lack of ambition.

This failure reflects broader problems at COP29, where commitments to phase out fossil fuels and accelerate renewable energy initiatives have also been stalled. This delay poses risks not only to the achievement of climate goals, but also to the fair and equitable management of transitions. Developed countries have continued to pay lip service to demands for equity. Financing a just transition remains a buzzword. Vulnerable countries are left with ambitious targets but insufficient resources to achieve them, leaving them dependent on polluting energy sources like coal and gas.

[41] Haseeb Bakhtary and Jean-Pierre Sfeir, "COP29 Brief: some hits and many misses in Baku", Climate Focus, Report, 2024, URL: https://climatefocus.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/20241213-COP29-Client-Brief.pdf

5. Carbon markets

The African position is based on several principles. First, having control of carbon credit issuance frameworks, with socio-environmental safeguards, to prevent land and natural resource grabbing. A price floor must also be adopted to ensure that credits truly represent climate value, and not simply a low-cost speculative instrument. Then, there has to be a guarantee that the value generated is not diluted in opaque mechanisms, and that the profits are returned to local and equitable initiatives. Finally, climate tools have to be diversified, while avoiding reducing the African response to exclusively market logic (integration of cooperative models, non-market approaches and ecological regeneration dynamics).

COP29 marked a major step forward for carbon mechanisms under the Paris Agreement. Several key decisions were adopted[42]:

- The validation of the operational rules of Article 6, including the frameworks for cooperative approaches (6.2), the Paris Carbon Credit Mechanism (6.4), and non-market approaches (6.8).
- The establishment of a Supervisory Body to validate methodologies, manage registries, and oversee the integrity of the mechanism.
- The adoption of technical standards to ensure the environmental integrity of credits (standardized methods, post)credit monitoring, leakage and reversal risk management).
- An improved interoperability between registries, enabling traceability of credits (ITMOs) between regimes 6.2 and 6.4.
- The inclusion of a Share of Proceeds mechanism for the Adaptation Fund or Global Emission Reduction (GERM), to prevent credits from being used simply to fuel emissions.

[42] Climate and Company, "COP29 Comprehensive Article 6 Debrief", Report, 20 December 2024, URL: https://climateandcompany.org/publications/cop29-comprehensive-article-6-debrief-operationalizing-the-full-set-of-article-6-of-the-paris-agreement-a-balancing-act-between-bottom-up-flexibility-and-top-down-governance/; UNFCCC, "Key outcomes from CO29: Article 6 of the Paris Agreement", Report, 11 Deeember 2024, URL: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/COP29%20outcomes_A6.2_6.4_6.8.pdf ; The Nature Conservancy, "COP29 Article 6 Key outcomes", Report, 10 December 2024, URL: https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/COP29-Article-6-Key-Outcomes.pdf

- The recognition of a global framework for transparent carbon markets, aimed at generating faster and less costly financing to achieve climate goals.

The operationalization of Article 6 was hailed as the "Baku breakthrough". Although this presents a number of opportunities, it also carries many risks. The complexity and cost of market access means that raising standards may exclude small local projects, due to a lack of technical capacity or funding for methodological development. Furthermore, the framework proposed by Article 6.2 remains voluntary, which weakens accountability and transparency, particularly regarding inconsistencies in credit trading. It should also be noted that without explicit protection of local and indigenous rights, carbon mechanisms can generate land conflicts or land concessions for extractive uses.

A broad consensus among climate justice movements, and increasingly among African delegations, considers carbon markets to be an illusory and potentially dangerous solution, for a number of reasons. First, carbon markets allow large emitters to offset rather than reduce their own emissions, delaying the necessary structural transition. This circumvention of real emission reductions perpetuates a carbon economy by shifting responsibility to the Global South. Africa often sells its credits at prices that are significantly lower than those generated in other regions, which reduces potential profits and fuels a two-tiered global market, where African projects serve as "cheap credits" for polluters in the Global North. Moreover, the increased demand for credits based on carbon sequestration is leading to massive pressure on land. Millions of hectares of agricultural or forest land are converted to meet market needs, often at the expense of food security and local rights.

The African position must therefore go beyond passive market participation. Non-market approaches focused on technological cooperation, know-how transfer, and direct financing, must be strengthened. Regional floor prices must be set to prevent African credits from being sold at a loss. Local benefits should be prioritized, and at least 70% of the revenues generated should go directly to communities and projects.

V. Strategic leverage: Best Practices and African models for action

Examples of best practices and models from member-states that can be replicated and adapted to other member states

- Transformative national examples: leveraging these examples to inform continental readiness, with a focus on what can be scaled or adapted
- Leveraging regional mechanisms and instruments for coordination: what existing regional initiatives and platforms can be used to consolidate African positions and accelerate implementation? (AAAP, AUDA-NEPAD, RECs as coordination hubs…)
- Models for stakeholder-led action (youth, gendered approaches, south-south learning etc.): identifying replicable multi-stakeholder models that can inform the facilitation of civil society engagement

1. Leveraging transformative national examples to inform continental readiness

Africa has several exemplary national experiences in adaptation, climate governance and resilience, which combine institutional innovation, community ownership, strategic vision and systemic integration.

Rwanda has implemented integrated climate governance through the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN), which leads a Climate Finance Unit (CFU). This unit ensures direct integration of climate change into the national budget process, involving the Ministry of the Environment in all sectoral discussions, thus ensuring that each budget allocation incorporates an appropriate climate dimension. This approach strengthens coherence between strategies (Vision 2050, Green Growth and Climate Resilience Strategy) and the implementation of NDCs.

The Green Gicumbi project, launched in 2019, illustrates an integrated approach to community resilience: more than 1,100 hectares of degraded forests restored, 19,900 improved cookstoves distributed, and a model village of climate-resilient housing, combining the rehousing of vulnerable populations with sustainable agriculture and resilient

infrastructure. This project demonstrates the convergence between landscape adaptation, food security, and local community continuity[43]

These Rwandan models (budgetary integration at the highest level and multi-sectoral territorial project) constitute levers that can be replicated at the regional level to strengthen public capacities, the links between adaptation and development, and local community participation.

The Kenya Climate Change Act (2016) institutionalized a robust governance framework with the creation of a Climate Change Authority, the implementation of the National Climate Change Action Plan (2018–2022) and sectoral programs[44]. The country is also a pioneer in climate risk profiling, identifying vulnerable sectors (agriculture, water, health, infrastructure) and developing targeted policies to strengthen resilience.

On the ground, the Green Belt Movement, founded in 1977 by Wangari Maathai, embodies a community-based and gender-responsible approach: 51 million trees have already been planted and more than 30,000 women have been trained, with a focus on access to land, ecological restoration, and environmental justice[45]. This grassroots model has direct impacts on biodiversity, the living conditions of rural households, and the economic empowerment of women. The combination of this strong institutional level (sectoral laws, action plans) and an inclusive community movement is particularly relevant for thinking about the dissemination of a decentralized, citizen-based resilience model based on climate justice.

Tanzania, as early as 2007, developed a National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA), targeting the most vulnerable sectors such as agriculture, water, health, and energy. Although faced with intersectoral coordination challenges, it gradually integrated these actions into broader national strategies (national climate strategy since 2012) and mobilized accessible technologies (conservation irrigation, access to solar energy, Water-Food-Energy Nexus). This

[43] Green Gicumbi Project, Ministry of Environment (Rwanda), URL: https://greenfund.rw/greengicumbi/home
[44] The Republic of Kenya, "The Climate Change Act: Chapter 387A", Laws of Kenya, 2016, URL: http://kenyalaw.org:8181/exist/rest/db/kenyalex/Kenya/Legislation/English/Acts%20and%20Regulations/C/Climate%20Change%20Act%20-%20No.%2011%20of%202016/docs/ClimateChangeAct11of2016.pdf
[45] The Green Belt Movement, URL: http://www.greenbeltmovement.org

example demonstrates the value of long-term deployment, where adaptation policies are incorporated into national development plans, even in contexts with limited administrative capacity. It provides a framework for less developed countries to transform their NAPAs into concrete sectoral initiatives.

These examples share a few critical factors of success: the institutional integration of climate in budgetary and planification processes; partnerships between state governance and civil society with a strong emphasis on women and youth inclusion; a multi-actor support from the local scale up to the national scale, allowing for an inclusive appropriation of initiatives; and a strategic vision coupled to tangible projects, with measurable results in terms of resilience, food security, ecological restauration and social cohesion.

2. Leveraging regional mechanisms and instruments for coordination

Africa has a rich regional institutional framework, structured around coordinated mechanisms, technical and diplomatic platforms and innovative continental initiatives which constitute powerful levers for converging priorities, mobilizing resources and establishing coherent climate governance.

The Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program (AAAP), co-led by the African Development Bank (AfDB) and the Global Center on Adaptation (GCA), has so far mobilized up to USD 25 billion in commitments by 2025 to support large-scale strategic adaptation projects: resilient agriculture, climate-smart infrastructure, youth entrepreneurship, and innovative financing tools[46]. The program has already provided more than USD 15 billion to over 60 million people in 40 countries, generating nearly one million jobs as a result of the green economy. Among its pillars is the YouthADAPT Challenge, a competition supporting young African entrepreneurs proposing innovative adaptation solutions (USD 100,000 per project, more than 41 winners to date). The AAAP embodies an alignment between African priorities, climate diplomacy, and structural finance. It represents a basis for uniting states around regional climate investment pipelines.

[46] AfDB, "Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program", URL: https://www.afdb.org/en/topics-and-sectors/initiatives-partnerships/africa-adaptation-acceleration-program

The African Union Development Agency - NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD) coordinates continental initiatives and ensures alignment with Agenda 2063. Since May 2024, UNECA has stipulated bi-monthly technical meetings between the AUC, AfDB, AUDA-NEPAD and UNECA to technically support the AGN and ensure coordinated strategic support at the continent level. The agency acts as a hub between the political decisions of the African Union Commission, regional dynamics driven by Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and technical initiatives of Member States and development partners. Its role in articulating strategies, financing, research and implementation infrastructure is essential to ensure continental coherence of climate action. Its presence at COP29 included:

- The launch of a Specialty Center for Climate Resilience
- A foresight report on African carbon markets and country preparedness for the environmental impacts of carbon trading
- A strategy to align climate, agricultural, trade, and infrastructure policies across several RECs via transregional corridors

Regional Economic Communities (RECs) are the natural link between continental strategies and national priorities. They have gradually strengthened their climate commitment through regional adaptation and mitigation policies. ECOWAS, for example, is implementing an agricultural adaptation and food security program, integrating the climate dimension into agrifood value chains. SADC is developing climate policies around transboundary water resource management and the integration of adaptation into infrastructure corridors. The East African Community (EAC), through IGAD, is working on the climate-migration-natural resources nexus, particularly in the Nile Basin and the Horn of Africa region. These dynamics make it possible to develop regional project pipelines, pool technical knowledge, and strengthen the collective voice of regions in international climate negotiations.

The complementarity between these three levels (continental with the AU and AAAP, regional with the RECs, and technical with AUDA-NEPAD) forms the foundation of an African multilevel climate governance architecture. These mechanisms must be fully mobilized not only to harmonize African positions in preparation for COP30, but also to structure a coordinated and inclusive implementation of the priorities identified in Baku. For example, collaboration

between AUDA-NEPAD, the AfDB, and the RECs has made it possible to produce cross-border investment scenarios for food system adaptation and to develop frameworks for integrating climate change into regional agricultural and trade policies. These synergies make it possible to move from an advocacy approach to one of structural transformation.

Finally, these mechanisms cannot be fully effective without monitoring, learning, and shared accountability tools. The African Climate Observatory, supported by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), plays a central role in monitoring commitments, consolidating data, and aligning national reports with continental objectives. The same is true for platforms such as the African NDC Hub and regional climate centers (AGRHYMET, ICPAC), which produce reliable, contextualized, and usable data for strategic management. These mechanisms are expected to play an increasing role in the technical preparation of African positions for COP30 and in ensuring accountability for their implementation.

In short, Africa already has a dense and coherent institutional architecture to coordinate its climate actions at different scales. However, this potential can only be fully realized if it is politically supported, provided with sufficient resources, and embedded in a logic of effective integration between diplomacy, financing, and implementation. The roadmap to COP30 must capitalize on these existing mechanisms to structure a proactive, inclusive, and impact-oriented continental approach.

3. Models for stakeholder-led action

Africa is brimming with concrete examples where multi-stakeholder models successfully integrate youth, women, civil society, and local knowledge into climate action. These practices, often co-developed with the public sector, offer powerful inspiration to facilitate African citizen engagement in a credible, structured, and sustainable manner.

In Ghana, the Green Africa Youth Organization (GAYO) represents a unique model of youth leadership at the national level[47]. Founded in 2014, it spearheaded the continent's first Youth

[47] The Green Africa Youth Organization (GAYO), URL: https://greenafricayouth.com

Climate Council, bringing together young activists around a program of awareness-raising, training, and advocacy on climate issues, notably through university eco-clubs, zero-waste initiatives, and community waste management projects. GAYO breaks down the barrier between informal expertise and active political participation, while building coalitions between young activists, CSOs, public institutions, and the media. Its operation exemplifies a multi-stakeholder mechanism that places young people at the heart of climate processes.

Beyond national initiatives, the Pan African Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA) constitutes a key continental multi-stakeholder platform. A network of more than 1,000 CSOs in 48 countries, PACJA embodies the intersectional approach between climate justice, gender, indigenous peoples' rights, and environmental policies[48]. It has played a major role in amplifying African priorities at the COPs and promoting strategies based on equity, transparency, and accountability. The PACJA model demonstrates how a structured civil platform can combine non-state knowledge, national presence, and international influence to advance the African agenda.

Gender inclusion is exemplified, among other things, by the initiatives led by Mariama Sonko in Senegal. As an observer and trainer of more than 115,000 rural women through the "We Are the Solution" movement, she has enabled these women, mostly farmers, to access land rights, local agroforestry knowledge, and practical training in resilient agriculture[49]. These sessions strengthen autonomy, stimulate sustainable agriculture, and negate imposed carbon offset programs. This community model perfectly illustrates a method of territorial empowerment based on rights, gender, and climate justice.

On a South-South level enriched by entrepreneurial innovation, the Tony Elumelu Foundation in Nigeria stands out as a structured example of support for young, green leadership. With 20,000 young entrepreneurs funded in 54 countries and more than 500 climate-focused

[48] The Panafrican Climate Justice Alliance (PACJA), URL: https://pacja.org/brief-on-pan-africa-climate-justice-alliance/

[49] Jack Thompson, "'Women farmers are invisible': a West African project helps them claim their rights – and land", Agroecology Fund, 3 April 2024, URL: https://agroecologyfund.org/women-farmers-are-invisible-a-west-african-project-helps-them-claim-their-rights-and-land/#:~:text=Her%20movement%20is%20training%20women,are%20not%20related%20by%20blood.

startups, the foundation works to integrate visionary young leaders into the continental climate effort. It combines mentoring, financing, training, and networking, promoting a model of inclusive, sustainable, and youth-led growth.

These models together demonstrate that functional multi-stakeholder systems rely on a few key elements: effective inclusion of youth and women, recognition of local knowledge, training tailored to green issues, crowdfunding or cooperative financing, and interface with public authorities. They also demonstrate that horizontal coalitions (NGOs, young entrepreneurs, journalists, academic and community networks) can generate robust and politically legitimate climate policies, renewing the way Africa participates in international negotiations. These prototypes advocate for the institutionalization of youth and women's climate councils, their association with national delegations, regular pre-COP consultation formats, and the integration of co-constructed field projects. They inspire the concept of an African Observatory of Citizen Climate Action, capable of documenting, promoting and linking these initiatives to the formal discourse delivered by the Union and African negotiators. They also indicate that a strengthened South-South partnership between African countries engaged in these themes (Kenya-Ghana-Nigeria-Senegal, etc.) would make it possible to pool know-how, tools, curricula and funding, thus laying the foundations for a robust and inclusive continental network for COP30.

VI. The road to Bélem (COP30)

This section will develop on the previous recommendations by elaborating on specific actions that need to be taken in preparation of the COP30 which will be held in Brazil

- A tactical roadmap to COP30: a timeline of the key milestones before COP30, including AU processes and regional coordination
- Translating COP29 outcomes in a set of concrete recommendations, actions and strategies ahead of the COP30 negotiations (climate finance, adaptation, loss and damage, energy and just transition, climate justice…)
- Strategic messaging and framing: the narrative for Belém (restoration, development rights, reparations…)

1. A timeline of the key milestones ahead of COP30

African preparations for COP30 (Belém, 10–21 November 2025) must be based on a clear, multi-sectoral tactical roadmap, anchored in the institutional political processes of the African Union and existing regional platforms. This timeline organizes the stages of coordination, normative production, and multi-stakeholder engagement up to the conference itself. During the first semester of 2025, Member states were called to submit their NDCs to the UNFCCC. The presidencies of COP29 and the upcoming COP30 held an initial round of consultations on February 27 to identify priorities and implementation modalities for the UNFCCC's "Baku-Belém" cycle.

In June, the 62nd sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB62) of the UNFCCC took place in Bonn, focusing on technical discussions to prepare for COP30. Among the main topics discussed were adaptation (which is a priority area for the Brazilian presidenc of COP30), financing and mitigation[50]. Negotiations on climate finance delivered few certainties and discussions were limited to informal consultations, failing to address core issues (quality, sources and access), and even a shared definition of what constitutes climate finance, a lack of definition which opens the door to false solutions. On adaptation, discussions focused on the need to reduce the number of proposed indicators while considering the means of implementation. The adopted text mentions means of implementation indicators and emphasizes that there is no single approach to adaptation, reflecting the diversity of countries' realities and needs. Adaptation is expected to be one of the main pillars of the negotiations at COP30.

In mid-July, some 35 environmental ministers and representatives from 53 African countries, including representatives from UN agencies and the AU, met in Nairobi for the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN) 20th ordinary session[51]. Leaders used this meeting as a platform for an urgent call to unify. This year's theme was "fFour decades of environmental action in Africa: reflecting on the past and imagining the future". African

[50] UNFCCC, "June Climate Meetings (SB62)", 16 June – 26 June 2025, URL: https://unfccc.int/sb62
[51] African Climate Insights, "Africa ministers demand equitable climate finance ahead of COP30", 25 July 2025, URL: https://africaclimateinsights.org/amcen-declaration-africa-ministers-demand-equitable-climate-finance-ahead-of-cop30/

ministers reiterated calls for equitable climate finance and a renewed call for an overhaul of international financial institutions.

Throughout the year, the COP30 Circle of Finance Ministers initiative holds regular consultations to scale up climate finance for developing nations, culminating in a report to the COP30 Presidency. This initiative serves as a key contribution to the Baku to Belém Roadmap to USD 1.3 trillion. The report will serve as an input to the final Baku to Belém Roadmap[52]. Various other events and initiatives are also contributing to the road to COP30, such as the Issue-Based Coalition for Climate Change and Resilience Strategy.

From September 8th to September 10th, the Africa Climate Summit 2025 will be held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia[53]. It will provide an important platform to unify Africa's voice in global climate action, while promoting African-led solutions and securing bold financial and political commitments. The event will be focused on climate adaptation, mitigation and green growth, and calling for reforms to global financing systems.

The pre-COP will be held on October 13-14 in Brasilia, in the Federal District. This meeting gathers climate-negotiating ministers and seeks to promote agreements on key issues for COP30.

The results of COP29 in Baku marked a decisive turning point in climate negotiations, but failed to meet the structural expectations of the African continent. While some progress has been made (notably the adoption of the New Collective Quantified Target on Climate Finance (NCQG)), the results remain below actual financial needs, particularly in the areas of adaptation and loss and damage. In this perspective, these results must be translated into coordinated action priorities, structured around five strategic pillars.

[52] COP30 Brazil Amazonia, « Brasil launches COP30 Circle of Finance Ministers to support the Baku to Belém Roadmap to USD 1.3 trillion", 15th April 2025, URL: https://cop30.br/en/news-about-cop30/brasil-launches-cop30-circle-of-finance-ministers-to-support-the-baku-to-belem-roadmap-to-usd-1-3-trillion#:~:text=Led%20by%20Minister%20Fernando%20Haddad,regulatory%20frameworks%20for%20climate%20finance.

[53] Africa Climate Summit 2025, URL : https://africaclimatesummit2.et

2. The road to Belém: recommendations

A. Climate finance

The agreement on the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) (USD 300 billion per year by 2035, with an overall target of USD 1.3 trillion) remains largely insufficient compared to real needs and disproportionately low compared to African demands. African countries, through the AGN, are demanding that the majority of financing be in the form of public subsidies, directed towards adaptation and loss and damage, and not in the form of loans that increase sovereign debt.

It is urgent to reintroduce a clear reference to the USD 100 billion exceeded in 2022 and to demand rigorous monitoring of their compensation. At COP30, Africa must propose a pan-continental financial monitoring mechanism (an observatory under the aegis of the AU), led by the AfDB, to ensure transparency, track the gaps between pledges and disbursements, and ensure that financing actually reaches vulnerable populations.

B. Adaptation

Despite commitments on adaptation, only USD 32.4 billion has been mobilized in 2022, which barely covers 5% of the real needs estimated between USD 187 and 359 billion per year according to the Adaptation Gap Report 2024[54]. In Belém, adaptation must represent at least 50% of the NCQG, with a minimum of USD 215 billion per year. Africa must also defend a binding quantified adaptation target (GGA) with disciplined sub-targets to ensure real synergy between national adaptation (NDC/NAP) and international commitment.

Access mechanisms must be reformed to integrate regional windows managed by accredited African institutions, such as AUDA-NEPAD, regional development banks, and coordination platforms like AAAP. The Global Goal on Adaptation must be translated into measurable regional and national targets, co-developed with communities, and aligned with the

[54] UNEP, « Adaptation Gap Report 2024 : Come hell and high water », Report, 2024, URL: https://www.unep.org/resources/adaptation-gap-report-2024

continent's strategic priorities. South-South cooperation, particularly through the sharing of successful experiences in water management, climate-smart agriculture, and early warning systems, must become a pillar of scaling up. Finally, adaptation must be integrated into all development policies to avoid siloed approaches and maximize socioeconomic and environmental co-benefits.

C. Loss and damage fund

The Loss and Damage Fund is now operational, but the pledges (less than USD 700 million) are insignificant compared to African needs (estimated at USD 150 billion per year). It is imperative to demand an ambitious disbursement schedule, with a direct regional allocation mechanism, without the exclusive institutional domination of the World Bank. The appointment of an African director (Ibrahima Cheikh Diong) offers a strategic window to demand inclusive governance co-constructed with civil society, guaranteeing rapid and equitable access to funds. Africa must propose pilot cases (vulnerable coastal areas, agriculture, urbanization) to present as strong evidence of liquidable impact.

For Belém, African recommendations must be structured around firm and pragmatic demands. First, ensure that the Loss and Damage Fund is funded by predictable, legally binding public contributions, with a quantified target aligned with real needs. Second, refuse the use of loans and debt-generating financial instruments to cover loss and damage, maintaining exclusively grant-based financing. Third, establish a rapid access mechanism, inspired by emergency humanitarian aid, with the capacity to disburse funds within weeks for affected countries. Fourth, integrate a territorial and community-based approach into response plans so that funding reaches affected populations directly. Finally, strengthen national institutional capacities to document, assess, and account for loss and damage, in order to optimize access to resources and strengthen the African position in negotiations.

D. Just energetic transition and climate justice

COP29 provided guidelines on carbon markets through Article 6 of the Paris Treaty, but without a clear framework on land protection and social justice. Africa must propose a

definition of a just transition, based on universal access to energy, the creation of local green jobs, and technological sovereignty. Mechanisms for selling carbon credits at ridiculously low prices with land lock-ins, which are particularly dangerous for community agroecosystems, must be rejected. In Belém, Africa should launch a continental charter for just transition incorporating clauses on land equity, transparency, and preference for community sequestration initiatives (agroforestry, mangroves).

For Belém, the African strategy must articulate several levers. First, demand that any just transition trajectory be backed by predictable financial and technological support commensurate with needs, with dedicated mechanisms for low-income countries with high fossil fuel dependence. Second, promote a transition model that prioritizes decentralized renewable energies, adapted to local needs, and that strengthens regional energy sovereignty through the integration of electricity networks and markets. Third, integrate retraining and vocational training plans for workers and communities affected by the transition, in order to avoid net job and income losses. Fourth, strengthen social and environmental standards in energy projects, systematically including gender, youth, and community participation dimensions in planning. Finally, develop a coherent African narrative that links the energy transition to climate justice, emphasizing the right to development, the reduction of inequalities, and sovereignty over natural resources.

E. Carbon markets

A major criticism voiced by many African stakeholders is that carbon markets, as they stand, represent a false solution. They allow large emitters, primarily from the Global North, to offset their emissions rather than reduce them at source, thus prolonging dependence on fossil fuels. In the African context, these mechanisms can also lead to extractive practices: land grabbing for carbon sequestration projects, marginalization of local communities, and shifting the burden of reducing emissions to countries that have historically contributed little to the problem. Moreover, dependence on uncertain revenues from carbon markets exposes African countries to price volatility and unstable economic cycles.

For Belém, the African position should be structured around the principles of sovereignty, equity, and environmental integrity. First, demand that any participation in carbon markets

be conditional on price floors guaranteeing a fair and predictable income for host countries and communities. Second, strengthen national and regional regulatory frameworks to secure land ownership and use rights, preventing the long-term sale or concession of strategic land to foreign actors. Third, prioritize carbon credit projects integrated into national low-carbon development strategies, with measurable co-benefits for biodiversity, food security, and local livelihoods. Fourth, advocate for a profound reform of voluntary markets to establish binding international standards for transparency, traceability, and benefit sharing. Finally, maintain strategic vigilance to ensure that carbon markets remain a complementary tool, and not a substitute, for public financing and emission reduction commitments in industrialized countries.

F. Governance and climate justice

The Baku results demonstrate a persistent asymmetry in the negotiations. Africa must demand institutional reform of multilateral climate bodies, including increased representation of African countries on the Board of Directors of the Green Climate Fund, the FRLD, and the governance arrangements of the GGA. At the same time, it must activate bottom-up citizen monitoring mechanisms, via national and continental observatories (ECOSOCC, PACJA, youth/women's networks), to document implementation and raise awareness of gaps between promises and results. In Belém, defending a formal space for these non-state coalitions in official sessions is a priority to counteract ascendant technocracy.

There is a real risk that climate justice will be confined to political discourse without operational translation, or that it will be diluted into market mechanisms and voluntary partnerships that do not address structural imbalances. Moreover, the financial commitments announced are often not new, but repackaged from existing funds, which limits their additional impact. The issue of reparations also includes the dimension of climate debt. Many African countries spend more on debt servicing than on adaptation investments, making any path to resilience illusory without reforming international financial systems.

For Belém, the African position should be structured around three pillars. First, anchor climate justice in international law, drawing on existing principles of environmental law, human rights,

and common but differentiated responsibilities. This involves explicitly reclaiming the term "reparations" in negotiating texts and advocating for quantified, additional, and binding commitments. Second, establish innovative and equitable financial mechanisms, including debt cancellation or exchange for climate investments, taxation of international financial transactions, and mandatory contributions from high-emitting sectors (aviation, maritime, hydrocarbons). Third, strengthen pan-African and South-South advocacy to articulate climate justice and the right to development, by building a narrative that links reparation, resilience and structural transformation, in order to avoid climate measures being at the expense of inclusive growth and the sovereignty of African peoples.

3. Strategic framing and political messages for COP30: towards a structuring African narrative based on rights and justice

As COP30 takes place in November 2025 in Belém, in the heart of the Brazilian Amazon, which represents one of the most crucial biomes on the planet and a living symbol of global ecological struggles, Africa must seize this exceptional geopolitical opportunity to deliver a transformative narrative, consistent with its history, vulnerabilities, aspirations, and inalienable right to development. This framing cannot be purely technical or sectoral: it must embody a political vision deeply rooted in the continent's reality, while being part of a global architecture for structural rebalancing of the climate regime.

The foundation of the African claim for Belém rests on a cardinal principle of the multilateral climate regime: common but differentiated responsibility (CBDR). However, this principle is increasingly diluted in the negotiations, even though Africa is responsible for less than 4% of cumulative historical emissions, yet disproportionately absorbs the impacts of climate change, particularly in terms of health, food insecurity, forced displacement, and economic losses. It is therefore time to reactivate the language of ecological debt: not as a slogan, but as a solid political basis for demanding climate reparations, through:

- The establishment of corrective financial mechanisms based on intergenerational equity.
- The integration of an explicit reparations pillar into the Loss and Damage Fund.

- Legal recognition of unintentional transboundary environmental damage affecting African sovereignty.

Faced with the proliferation of restoration projects (REDD+, voluntary sequestration, nature-based solutions), the African continent has become a territory for passive compensation for the emissions of the North, instead of a subject of active regeneration. In Belém, Africa must embrace a vision of restoration which is rooted in the land rights of local and indigenous communities, oriented toward the restoration of living ecosystems and food sovereignty, and protected against the logic of the financialization of nature (unregulated carbon markets, land grabs). This restoration is not a service offered to the world, but an imperative of ecological sovereignty, based on a non-extractive relationship between humans, living things, and the territory. It is about restoring the forests, waters, knowledge, social ties, and resilient ecosystems that enable Africa to respond to the climate while remaining in control of its own destiny.

The carbon market is presented as a miracle solution, but it also fosters new power relations:

- Carbon pricing by buyers in the North
- A lack of continental regulation
- Projects managed by external private actors
- The transformation of nature into a "tradable asset."

The challenge in Belém is therefore to politicize these mechanisms, demanding continental regulatory sovereignty, carbon price floors, and a ban on transactions that involve land transfers or restrictions on use to the detriment of local populations.

African messages in Belém cannot be conveyed solely in the negotiating rooms. They must be the subject of a multi-channel communication strategy, coordinated between the AGN, the RECs, ECOSOCC, Member States, the diaspora, the media, and social movements. This involves:

- Semantic and lexical harmonization of public statements (briefs, speeches, publications) around key terms: climate justice, reparations, the right to development, and regeneration.
- Strategic occupation of parallel COP spaces: side events, pavilions, press conferences, as well as social media and digital platforms.
- Planned popular mobilization before and during COP30, with awareness-raising, influence, and citizen diplomacy campaigns.

VII. Conclusion

5. Key messages
6. Final word on Africa's global climate leadership
7. Call to action

As COP30 approaches in Belém, Brazil, Africa finds itself at a critical juncture in its climate commitment. The lessons learned from COP29 are both a source of inspiration and a wake-up call. They serve as a reminder that, despite some progress, particularly on financing loss and damage and increased recognition of the continent's specific needs, the responses provided by the multilateral system remain too slow, too fragmented, and too disconnected from the reality of African territories. In a global context marked by the rise of informal coalitions, the polarization of negotiating blocs, the saturation of UN arenas by lobbies, and persistent tensions within the G77+, Africa's ability to defend its priorities requires a shared vision, targeted alliances, and a strategically calibrated discourse.

Three key messages emerge from this roadmap. First, the urgent need to place climate justice and the right to development back at the heart of the negotiations, not as a rhetorical extra, but as a sine qua non of any just global transition. This implies demanding fair reparations, additional and predictable financing, and a reform of international financial systems to free African countries from the burden of debt that compromises their resilience. Second, the need to reject window-dressing solutions, such as certain current carbon market schemes, which outsource climate responsibility to the South while undermining land sovereignty and minimizing the real value of African resources. The continent must assert its capacity to develop its own financing and transition mechanisms, anchored in its national and regional priorities. Third, the importance of mobilizing all stakeholders (governments, civil society, the private sector, youth, local communities…) around models of co-construction and regional coordination, capitalizing on existing instruments such as the AAAP, AUDA-NEPAD, and the Regional Economic Communities.

This strategy can only succeed if it is based on a clear tactical roadmap, marked by specific milestones, and on optimal use of political and diplomatic space before Belém. It also

requires narrative discipline: speaking with one voice, articulating a coherent pan-African message, and transforming each negotiation into an opportunity to strengthen the collective position. Success will depend on our ability to combine firmness on principles (justice, equity, environmental integrity…) with tactical flexibility to build dynamic coalitions and influence final compromises.

The choices made during COP30 will determine whether Africa remains confined to the role of a spectator in a climate governance shaped elsewhere, or whether it fully assumes the role of a central actor in a just and transformative global transition. This is why it is imperative that every member state, every regional institution, and every non-state actor on the continent engage now in active preparations for Belém.

VIII. References and Annexes

- List of sources cited
- Actor mapping infographic
- Infographics, maps, graphs

Annex – Positioning sheets for COP30

Climate Finance

What's at stake?

In Belém, Africa is aiming for a credible landing of the new collective quantified climate finance target (NCQG) that meets the real needs of developing countries, while ensuring equity of access and the quality of flows. The objective is not only to obtain an ambitious overall amount; it is about obtaining predictable, additional, and accessible resources, aligned with African priorities, with parity of attention between adaptation and mitigation and a separate envelope for loss and damage.

Where are we?

Confidence remains fragile after years of underdelivery compared to promises and a high share of loans at the expense of grants. Donors will push in Belém to include more private capital and market instruments in the NCQG, while African countries will continue to face a contraction of fiscal space (debt, climate and macroeconomic shocks) and slow access procedures via large funds. The central risk is twofold: a high overall target but weak in its composition (too many private loans/accounts), and no guarantee of sufficient shares for adaptation and loss and damage.

African red lines

Climate finance must neither increase debt nor replace the obligations of historically emitting countries. Africa advocates: (1) a minimum share for adaptation set at a substantial level (at least half of public flows), (2) a dedicated envelope of grants for losses and damages, (3) the primacy of subsidies and highly concessional instruments for adaptation and L&D, (4) additionality compared to existing ODA, and (5) the maintenance of governance under the UNFCCC, with strong African representation and transparent accounting criteria.

Recommendations

The NCQG decision should:

- *Set a share of at least 50% for adaptation, with sectoral targets (water, agriculture, health, coastal areas, cities) and a sub-target dedicated to L&D exclusively in grants*
- *Establish a quality rule for flows, with a majority of grants for highly vulnerable countries and a legally anchored multi-year trajectory*
- *Enshrine direct access through expanded accreditiation of African entities and proporitionate procedures for local projects*
- *Reform multilateral intermediation (role of development banks) to increase concessionality, disbursement speed, and leverage without transferring risk to states*
- *Open additional channels (debt-for-climate swaps, regional first-loss guarantees…) to rapidly free up budgetary margins*
- *Establish a public monitoring framework (open data) breaking down promises vs payments, gratns vs loans, countries/sectors, approval and execution time*

Adaptation

What's at stake?

In Belém, Africa aims to elevate adaptation to the same level as mitigation in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, with dedicated, predictable, and accessible financing and concrete resilience indicators. The objective is to translate the Baku Roadmap and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) into measurable targets that meet African needs: early warning systems, resilient infrastructure, climate-smart agriculture, water management, public health, sustainable cities, and protected coastlines.

Where are we?

Despite COP29 declarations on strengthening the GGA, adaptation remains underfunded (around 30% of climate flows, mostly in the form of loans) and without a binding operational framework. African NAPs (National Adaptation Plans) are progressing but are struggling to secure funding and deployment. The economic and human losses linked to droughts, floods, and storms now exceed the budgetary absorption capacity of many countries. The proliferation of simultaneous crises (droughts in the south, floods in the center and east, health crises amplified by the climate) makes integrated, multi-sectoral, and localized adaptation urgent.

African red lines

Adaptation must have its own targets and budgets, distinct from mitigation and loss and damage. All financing must be consistent with national and local strategies, not imposed by external priorities. Funds must flow through accredited African entities, avoiding the excessive delays of multilateral intermediaries. All commitments must be accompanied by clear indicators (population covered by an early warning system, km of protected coastline, percentage of climate-smart agiruclture land…)

Recommendations

The decision on adaptation should:

- Set a minimum share of 50% of public climate finance for adaptation, with priority given to grants for low-income countries with high vulnerability
- Operationalize the GGA with measurable indicators by 2030 on universal coverage of early warning systems, critical infrastructure resilient to hazards, water and food security, protection of coastal and inland ecosystems.
- Strenghten the NAPs through direct, multi-year financing, with a specific fund for their implementation
- Grant direct access to African national/regional entities (national climate funds, AU/AUDA-NEPAD mechanisms)
- Integrate health into adaptation

Loss and damage

What's at stake?

In Belém, Africa must advocate for the full operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund established at COP27 and launched at COP28, consolidating the progress made at Baku (COP29) on its governance and financing. The objective is to ensure rapid, accessible, and additional financing to cover the irreversible damage caused by climate impacts, beyond possible adaptation.

Where are we?

The fund is operational since 2024 with the World Bank as interim administrator, but initial allocation is largely insufficient compared to annual needs estimated at tens of billions. There remains access problems with complex procedures, unclear criteria, and a lack of a fastr-track window for post-disaster emergencies. The withdrawal of certain major donors, including the US withdrawal announced in 2025, undermines the credibility and sustainability of the mechanism. Moreover, there is still a lack of a binding legal framework iblighing historical polluters to contribute.

African red lines

L&D funding must be new and additional, disting from adaptation and the existing ODA. Contributions should be proportional to countries' historical responsibility and capacity. There has to be direct access and speed, with emergency window releases funds. Moreover, governance must be inclusive, with an equitable representation of African countries and affected communities on the management board.

Recommendations

The decision on L&D should:

- Set a quantified L&D funding target in the NCQG, in addition to the adaptation/mitigation components
- Establish a multi-year capitalization schedule with mandatory contributions from developed countries, based on a transparent scale
- Create an emergency window for rapid post-disaster disbursements (less than two weeks), with simplified procedures
- Grant direct access to African countries and their accredited national entities, bypassing costly intermediaries
- Guarantee recognition and compensation for non-economic losses (sacred sites, languages, endemic biodiversity)
- Include funding for the planned relocation of communities threatened by rising sea levels and coastal erosion

Just transition

What's at stake?

For Africa, the just transition is not just a shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy: it is an inclusive socio-economic transformation project that must reconcile development, employment, social justice, and climate

equity. The African objective at COP30 is twofold: to ensure operational recognition of the just transition is endorsed in implementation decisions (mitigation, adaptation, finance), and to link this recognition to new and monitored resources (indicators and accountability), rather than to general promises. On a procedural level, the outgoing and incoming presidencies have already framed "the road to Belém" as a process of continuity, where the issues that remained open in Baku must be consolidated in 2025.

Where are we?

Since the "just transition" entered the UN corpus (work scheduled in Sharm el-Sheikh and expanded dialogues in Dubai), COP29 in Baku has confirmed its status as a cross-cutting pillar—but without locking in either a dedicated financial window or monitoring parameters. Concretely, Baku has made progress on procedural projects (continuation of the Mitigation Work Programme with sectoral focuses, launch of a digital knowledge exchange project, calendar of contributions for 2025), while leaving much substance to negotiate in Belém: articulation between the social and economic dimensions of the transition, the place of workers and communities, and above all financial anchoring (in the NCQG) for measures of reconversion, social protection and economic diversification.

African red lines

The African position must remain clear and firm, with no “just transition” without dedicated resources. A generic mention in the decisions is valueable only if it is linked to predictable public funding within the NCQG. It must refuse the substitution by market mechanisms, and neither Article 6 nor voluntary markets should serve as an alibi for social reductions in scope. Moreover, workers, communities and authorities in planning must be included.

Recommendations

- Call for a clause recognizing the just transition as a funded category with social targets (green jobs created, workers retained, households newly connected to clean energy…).
- A minimum allocation of public resources (share of grants) should go to the social aspects of the transition such as training, retraining, social protection and local development.
- Integrating the just transition plans into the Mitigation Work Programme 2025, with an exchange platform that documents African models.
- On Article 6, defend safeguards (corresponding adjustment, traceability, profit share) to prevent carbon financing from replacing the social financing that COP29 did not secure and that COP30 must deliver

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