
COP30: A turning point for climate justice

Key messages from Dutch civil society

COP30 will be a decisive moment for global climate action. Countries are submitting their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which will determine if the world can still limit warming to 1.5°C. Meanwhile, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) has issued a historic Advisory Opinion: governments are legally obliged to act on climate change. States must phase out fossil fuels and subsidies, regulate industries, and cooperate internationally to support those most affected. Inaction could bring legal liability and financial compensation for the harm caused to vulnerable countries and communities. In the following sections, the *Internationale Klimaatcoalitie* - an informal network of Dutch Civil Society - shares key recommendations for how the Netherlands and the EU can help secure ambitious and equitable outcomes at COP30 in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025.

The Netherlands and the EU must raise ambition

The Netherlands and the EU should align their own plans with a 1.5°C pathway: a 2035 net reduction target of 94% and binding fossil fuel phase-out dates, without diluting ambition with carbon credits or other flexible mechanisms. It is also important to advocate internationally for greater ambition, including a fair transition away from fossil fuels. We call upon the Netherlands to contribute to a strong response to the ambition gap at COP30 and support a formal COP decision that addresses this gap and urges rich and historic polluters to accelerate mitigation and enhance means of implementation for vulnerable countries.

Towards a just and inclusive transition

A global shift to a low-carbon economy is inevitable, but to be effective it must be just and sustainable. This means protecting workers, safeguarding communities, upholding human and labour rights, and supporting countries with limited ability to implement effective and equitable just transition plans. COP30 is the moment to move beyond fragmented efforts and accelerate a Just Transition based on common principles. Therefore, the Netherlands should support the establishment of a Belém Action Mechanism for coordination, knowledge sharing and helping countries to overcome barriers in implementation. It should include formal representation of trade union and civil society actors and ensure that women, youth, Indigenous Peoples, workers and marginalized groups are not only protected but empowered as key actors in shaping the transition. Besides strong principles and an action mechanism, dedicated public climate finance is needed to implement Just Transition measures including creation of green jobs, social protection and participatory decision making.

Advancing adaptation action and finance

Adaptation must be elevated. For millions of people already facing rising seas, droughts, floods, and heatwaves, adaptation is not optional; it is a lifeline. At COP30, the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) must move from promises into measurable progress. Moreover, countries should urgently develop and implement National Adaptation Plans that reflect local realities and integrate traditional and Indigenous knowledge. The ICJ ruling is clear: wealthy states have a legal duty to support vulnerable countries in meeting the costs of adaptation. With the Glasgow goal to double adaptation finance ending this year, the Netherlands - a longstanding champion on

adaptation - should support a new, clearly defined and measurable commitment on adaptation finance to support vulnerable populations against climate harm, grounded in justice, inclusion, and long-term resilience.

Finance as a matter of justice

Climate finance is essential to achieve mitigation, just transitions, adaptation, and addressing Loss and Damage, and is a matter of justice: developed countries have a legal and moral duty to support vulnerable nations. Public, grant-based, and non-debt-creating finance must be scaled up urgently, as private finance is limited, risky, and often excludes marginalized groups. At COP30, the Netherlands should prioritize public climate finance and advocate for clear and transparent NCQG follow-up processes. Carbon credits should not count toward these commitments. To align financial flows with, 1.5°C, the Netherlands should advocate for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, applying progressive taxation, reforming financial flows, implementing fair taxation, and applying the polluter-pays principle, which will also expand the fiscal space needed for climate action.

Gender equality and inclusion at the core of climate action

Women and girls in all their diversity are disproportionately affected by the climate crisis. At the same time, they are at the forefront of leading climate solutions, driving community-based adaptation and resilience building. Therefore, gender equality and women's rights are prerequisites for effective climate action. These principles must be central to the COP30 outcomes. A new and ambitious Gender Action Plan (GAP) should strengthen women's rights, ensure their meaningful participation in decision-making processes, and provide resources for feminist and women-led organizations. Beyond the GAP, we call upon the Netherlands to advocate for gender equality and women's rights to be mainstreamed across all negotiation tracks, while the COP process itself must be accessible to, safe for, and inclusive for civil society and marginalized voices.

From legal duty to action

The ICJ has reminded the world that climate action is both a legal duty and a moral responsibility. At COP30 governments must act accordingly by raising their NDC ambition, phasing out fossil fuels, scaling up finance, embedding just transition principles, and ensure inclusive-decision making. The Netherlands and EU must lead in shaping outcomes that protect people and ecosystems, empower those most affected, and set the world firmly on the path to 1.5°C.



Our full COP30 priorities can be found in our [position paper](#). For more information, contact Barbara Rosen Jacobson at bjacobson@mercycorps.org or Hilde Stroot at hilde.stroot@oxfamnovib.nl.