



**For Indigenous peoples,
for nature,
for all humanity**

COP30, Belém, Brazil, November 10-21, 2025

Key points of interest and concern

13 October 2025
Simon Counsell

1. Background

The next meeting of the UNFCCC/Conference of Parties (and signatories of the Paris Agreement on climate), taking in place in Belém at the mouth of the Amazon river has been dubbed (inevitably) as the ‘forest COP’. Conservation organizations are pushing for COP30 to place the Amazon at the center of the global climate agenda; they argue that defending the Amazon is essential to avoiding large-scale climate tipping points¹. So-called ‘nature-based solutions’ are likely to be pushed hard by such organizations, and probably by the host country and others alike.

This all helps to distract attention away from the fact that Brazil has become a major oil producer, with large new oil fields opening in and off the mouth of the Amazon, almost within sight of Belém. As the government under Lula has stepped up its rhetoric on protecting the Amazon, Brazil has climbed to become one of the world’s top 10 oil producers. It could be on course to become the 4th largest by 2030². Its daily production of fossil fuels currently represents about 2.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions *per day*³.

2. Key overall issues

Key items on the formal COP30 agenda include:

- **New Nationally Determined Contributions** (“NDCs 3.0”) due in 2025 with an end-date of 2035. These are the formal (though voluntary) commitments governments make to mitigate their carbon emissions. Requested by COP28 two years ago, many are late; as of 22 September, only 36 countries (out of 195 parties to the Agreement) are reported to have submitted their new NDCs⁴.
- **The Global Goal on Adaptation** (GGA): A key focus will be on implementing the UAE–Belém work program, which aims to develop a framework of indicators to track progress toward the Global Goal on Adaptation. Negotiations are expected to center on 1) which indicators

¹ See for example, Conservation International, COP30: Increasing funding for the Amazon is Brazil’s historic opportunity to prevent global climate collapse, July 4, 2025 <https://bit.ly/4mmIHye>

² See for example, RystadEnergy, Brazil’s well services market poised for significant growth, 7 February 2024. <https://bit.ly/3ImHDV5>

³ Calculated on the basis of current production of around 5 million barrels of oil equivalent per day, each of which represents around 500 kilograms of CO2 emitted.

⁴ See <https://ampr.gs/46uAwn5>

make it into the official COP30 decision text and 2) how these indicators are applied in planning processes and finance.

- **Climate finance** after the “Finance COP” (COP29) set a new collective quantified finance goal (NCQG), COP30 will discuss how it’s delivered (grants vs loans, tracking, access...). This is likely to be very controversial.
- **Article 6 (carbon markets & non-market cooperation)** – Parties agreed at/after COP29 to keep a dialogue on Art. 6.2 (bilateral carbon trading) going; questions about how to operationalize Art. 6.4 (a global carbon market) are still open, and include issues around environmental integrity, human-rights safeguards and use of credits toward NDCs.
- **Presidency priorities:** especially the launch of the **Tropical Forests Forever Facility** (TFFF), a Brazilian proposal for a \$125 billion fund that would invest money in global markets and use the profits for forest protection. The fact that this has been dismissed as “the worst conservation fund ever” will no doubt not prevent it being launched.

3. Key concerns about Indigenous peoples’ rights

1. **Presence or absence of Indigenous rights considerations in the new NDCs:** The Paris Agreement has only weak requirements concerning Indigenous rights, specifically that the preamble urges that governments, when taking action to address climate change, “respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights, the right to health, the rights of indigenous peoples...”. As the main tool for implementation of the agreement, the NDCs are a gauge of the extent to which they are fulfilling this. Specifically, for example, what measures are being taken to include and report on Indigenous tenure security, land titling, Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) protocols, and targets for funding Indigenous-led climate action as explicit NDC components and indicators? Historically, only a small minority of NDCs have mentioned Indigenous Peoples, and almost none in the context of enforceable rights.
2. **Inclusion of Indigenous rights and knowledge in the Global Goal on Adaptation indicators:** The Paris Agreement’s only other mention of Indigenous people is in Article 7 concerning adaptation. This states that adaptation measures should take “into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems”. There should therefore be indicators on this in the GGA indicators under the **UAE–Belém work program**.
3. **Clarification of Indigenous rights, complaints, safeguard mechanisms and procedures for the Article 6.4 carbon trading mechanism:** The ‘Sustainable Development Tool’ adopted in October 2024 by the Art 6.4 Supervisory Body includes important safeguarding language concerning Indigenous peoples, including their right to free prior and informed consent in the development of any Art. 6.4 carbon trading activities impacting their land, culture and spiritual values. However, it is not clear how these requirements will be enforced. Similarly, the modus operandi of the grievance and appeals mechanism included in the Sustainable Development Tool is still unclear. These need to be clarified as a matter of urgency, as offsetting projects could start being approved under the Art 6.4 mechanism (also informally called the ‘Paris Agreement Carbon Mechanism’ – PACM) within just months.

4. **Safeguards on “nature/forest economy” programs and narratives:** the Brazilian government COP30 presidency will bring a spotlight on the Amazon and ‘bioeconomy’. This will include announcement of new programs, national and international alliances and financial mechanisms such as the TFFF, particular around avoided deforestation (REDD+), afforestation and ‘restoration’. Indigenous peoples in Brazil and elsewhere will closely scrutinize the extent to which these involve their territories and culture, ensure Free, Prior and Informed Consent, promote equitable distribution of benefits and direct funding through Indigenous Peoples’ organizations, prioritize territorial protection, and advance community forest management. Specific demands of Brazilian Indigenous people included that the COP30 Action Document should “declare Indigenous territories as exclusion zones from extractive activities... in particular the Amazon, Congo, and Borneo-Mekong-Southeast Asia basins”⁵.
-

⁵ See the Political declaration of the Indigenous Peoples of the Amazon Basin and all biomes of Brazil for COP30.
<https://bit.ly/42k6FLw>