

Loss and damage



The UN Climate Change Conference (COP30) will take place in Belém, Brazil, from November 10-21. Key expectations include the presentation of new national climate action plans (NDCs), progress on finance from COP29, and discussions on scaling innovative climate finance mechanisms. The conference will also feature the COP30 Action Agenda, a program to engage businesses, civil society, and various levels of government in practical climate solutions.

Background

Loss and damage refer to the negative effects of climate change that occur despite mitigation and adaptation efforts. It encompasses both economic losses and non-economic losses (e.g., loss of life, biodiversity, and culture).

The UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2025 indicates that on current emissions trends and with today's policies, the world would be on course for a global temperature rise of 2.8°C over the course of the century. 2024 was the first calendar year where average global temperatures exceeded 1.5C above pre-industrial levels, resulting in increasing loss and damage.

Recognising residual risks is essential because even the best adaptation efforts cannot fully prevent climate-related harms due to cost and feasibility. This will always result in some degree of loss and damage.

In 2014, COP19 established the [Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage \(WIM\)](#), which serves as the main catalyser for action to address loss and damage. In 2019, the WIM established the [Santiago Network on Loss and Damage](#) to facilitate technical assistance for vulnerable developing countries.

In a historic decision at COP27, an agreement was reached by 198 countries to establish a Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD).

Key messages

Climate adaptation and mitigation remain the most effective strategies for reducing loss and damage.

Combining adaptation and mitigation solutions in a win-win strategy is highly cost-effective, especially in terms of the world's food systems and agricultural sectors.

A just transition will require a mosaic of financing solutions.

Directing domestic budget flows and adaptation finance towards resilience building is still a challenge, for which National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are critical.

Early warning systems, insurance schemes, and anticipatory early action are essential methods to reduce loss and damage on lives and livelihoods from climate disasters. The relocation of assets and people may be needed in cases where adaptation will be too expensive (or where there is little left to repair or protect).

The new FRLD must have a high degree of expediency, where countries can easily access the fund with a high level of predictability.

Key data

Between 1970 and 2021, weather, climate, and water-related disasters caused **US\$4.3 trillion in economic losses** and over 2 million deaths, with 90 per cent in developing countries (WMO 2023).

Across Europe, weather- and climate-related disasters have caused almost EUR 740 billion in asset losses between 1980 and 2023. If current warming trends continue, the total value of such **losses is expected to roughly double** by 2050 (EEA 2025)

If greenhouse-gas emissions continue on their current trajectory, **annual global losses** linked to climate change could reach as much as US\$38 trillion by 2050 (PIK 2025).

Studies indicate that **every billion invested in adaptation** against coastal flooding leads to a US\$14 billion reduction in economic damages (UNEP 2024).

Acting on climate now could help **avert an estimated 14.5 million deaths** and US\$12.5 trillion in economic losses predicted by 2050 (WEF 2024).

What happened at COP29?

At COP29 in Baku, Parties agreed that developed countries will **aim to mobilise at least US\$300 billion annually** by 2035 to support developing nations' climate action on mitigation and adaptation, as part of a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on Climate Finance (Decision -/CMA.6).

COP29 **saw more pledges to the FRLD**, which as of June 2025, currently stand at a total of US\$788.8 million.

The first report of the FRLD (Decision 5/CP.29) gave an update on the selection of the Fund's Executive Director and confirmed the **selection of the Philippines to host** the Board.

The third **review of the WIM for Loss and Damage** was initiated, but Parties could not agree on key issues, which included the voluntary guidelines on incorporating loss and damage in countries' NDCs.

At COP29 and at the June 2025 Climate Meetings there were calls for the creation of a regular **loss and damage report on gaps and needs**, mirroring UNEP's Emission Gap and Adaptation Gap Reports.

What to expect at COP30

With the FRLD now operationalized, the international community will be working to **finalize its operational guidance**. Key guidance points are likely to revolve around the need to ensure grant-based financing as the primary finance source, the provision of budget support and a rapid response mechanism.

Further reading

Adaptation Gap Report 2025

About Loss and Damage

Integrating Displaced Populations into National Climate Change Policy and Planning

Regional Perspectives on Loss and Damage

At COP30, the advisory board of the FRLD and the Secretariat will launch the first call for funding requests under the **Barbados Implementation Modalities**, which is the operational framework guiding how the FRLD will receive and disburse financial support.

Parties will be invited to consider the **annual report of the Board of the FRLD** and take necessary action.

The **low rate of conversion of pledges to contributions** is likely to be a topic of discussion. Additional commitments to the FRLD will be critical to building momentum.

The **finalization of the third five-year review of the WIM** was due in 2024 but deferred to COP30. A focus will be on the question of COP's authority over the WIM.

What is UNEP doing?

Science and Research: The Adaptation Gap Reports estimate the costs of adaptation in developing countries, while the Emissions Gap Reports examine the extent to which greenhouse gas emissions will need to fall to achieve the Paris Agreement goals. UNEP's research advances sector-specific best practice indicators, covering health, ecosystems, and adaptation limits. In collaboration with the United Nations University (UNU) and the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), UNEP is also developing **an innovative framework** to assess losses of biodiversity and ecosystem services resulting from climate- and disaster-related impacts.

Climate Adaptation & Mitigation: UNEP underscores the importance of averting and minimizing loss and damage through scaled-up, expedient and accelerated climate adaptation and mitigation strategies. Prioritizing ecosystem-based approaches, the implementation of NAPs, and expanding Early Warning Systems and Climate Services, UNEP has grown a climate adaptation portfolio of over 90 projects in over 54 countries, while aiding countries in accessing much needed adaptation finance.

Technical Support: UNEP supports work on loss and damage under the UNFCCC by providing practical guidance, standardized reporting tools, and capacity-building for countries to integrate loss and damage into national plans. Several technical consultation events have been convened by UNEP with over 50 countries including key negotiators, the COP29 Presidency, UNFCCC members, and the Warsaw International Mechanism.

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