

# Global Goal on Adaptation



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

In 2015, the Paris Agreement's Article 7 established the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), but it was not measurable. It was articulated as a goal to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change.

The Cancun Agreement, decided by Parties in 2010 at COP16, agreed that adaptation must be addressed with the same priority as mitigation and requires appropriate institutional arrangements to enhance adaptation action and support.

The GGA is important for providing a system for tracking countries' adaptation progress. The goal can be seen as the adaptation equivalent of the global mitigation goal to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C. However, unlike mitigation, adaptation progress cannot be measured by a single metric.

The UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience, adopted at COP28, sets out a framework for implementing the Global Goal on Adaptation. It defines global targets in 7 thematic areas, from water to cultural heritage, and 4 adaptation planning areas, from implementation to monitoring, evaluation and learning.

## Key messages

**The GGA is crucial for providing a system for countries to track their adaptation progress** and spur greater action in managing climate change risks. Countries can select the indicators that are most relevant to them.

**Environmental concerns are integral to the GGA targets**, as significant numbers of vulnerable people depend directly on healthy soils and ecosystems for their livelihoods and wellbeing.

**Investing in climate adaptation often yields high returns** by generating multiple 'co-benefits', including improved water security, better public health outcomes, and enhanced ecosystem services, therefore helping to advance many of the Sustainable Development Goals.

**National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are essential for making progress** on the thematic targets and directing domestic budget flows to resilience building.

## Key data

The **adaptation finance gap** in developing countries is estimated at US\$284-339 billion per year (UNEP 2025).

Between 1970 and 2021, extreme weather, climate- and water-related events caused estimated **economic losses of US\$ 4.3 trillion**, or US\$ 84.3 billion annually, with several losses equivalent to up to nearly 30 per cent of least developed countries' GDP (WMO 2023).

Healthy **ecosystems are essential to water security**: for example, more than 75 % of global freshwater resources are supplied by well-functioning ecosystems, including wetlands which play a key role in water purification (WMO 2025).

Up to 95% of **global food production depends on soil**, but experts claim that soil erosion could result in a 10% loss of crop production by 2050 (FAO 2022).

**Adaptation strategies for extreme heat** (cool roofs, urban green spaces, early warning systems) can reduce illnesses and mortalities, potentially lowering city temperatures by 2-3°C and preventing over 250,000 deaths annually from 2030 to 2050 (WHO 2021).

## What happened at COP29?

COP29 marked the mid-point of the two-year **UAE–Belém work programme** to establish the GGA indicators. The Decision 3/CMA.6 emphasized that the indicators need to be measurable, use existing or easily available data, and be adaptable to national contexts, while avoiding additional reporting burdens.

The technical experts working on the indicators were requested to further refine and consolidate the list of 490 indicators to no more than **100 globally applicable indicators** by COP30.

COP29 launched the **Baku Adaptation Roadmap** to guide progress under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement and established the **Baku High-level Dialogue on Adaptation**, with the aim of enhancing implementation of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience.

Contentious topics included the discussion of **Means of Implementation (MOI)** in the GGA targets and transformational adaptation in the indicators.

## What to expect at COP30

The two-year UAE–Belém work programme on the indicators for the GGA will conclude at COP30. Under the work programme, a team of experts have developed and refined a list of 100 indicators to help countries track and measure their adaptation progress. Parties are expected to consider adoption of the framework at COP30.

At the June Climate Meetings (SB 62), the GGA process was described as a “key milestone” on the road to COP30, with hope that Belém will “operationalize” what until now has been largely framing and intention.

The Brazilian Presidency is positioning **adaptation as one of six axes** in its COP30 Action Agenda.

Discussions will include how the GGA can be **aligned with national-level adaptation goals**, ensuring that national plans and international targets are cohesive and actionable.

## What is UNEP doing?

**Science and Research:** UNEP’s Adaptation Gap Report is a flagship initiative that estimates the costs of adaptation in developing countries. UNEP generates a wide range of adaptation science, including through policy briefs and specific programmes like the [Adaptation At Altitude](#) initiative, and in turn, it uses this science to help countries identify practical adaptation solutions.

**Partnership with UNFCCC:** UNEP partners with the UNFCCC Secretariat to prepare the ground for negotiations on the GGA, including through the Nairobi Work Programme. This includes the [Lima Adaptation Knowledge Initiative](#), which helps close knowledge gaps identified by countries and regional institutions.

**Access to Adaptation Finance:** In partnership with major funds like the Global Environment Facility, the Green Climate Fund, and the Adaptation Fund, UNEP helps countries access finance for adaptation through almost 90 projects around the world. This includes over 50 ecosystem-based adaptation projects, which combined, are aiming to restore 271,000 hectares to benefit 4.6 million people. [Learn more here.](#)

**National Adaptation Plans:** UNEP plays a key role in supporting the implementation of the GGA, helping countries integrate adaptation into their NDCs and NAPs. UNEP also provides technical assistance to help countries define clear indicators and metrics for adaptation progress, in alignment with the GGA.

**Advocacy:** Raising awareness to mobilize action, including through the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, the Global Adaptation Network, and UNEP’s regional adaptation networks known as EBAFOSA, the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network and Climate Action LAC.

### Further reading

[Adaptation Gap Report 2025](#)

[About the Global Goal on Adaptation](#)

[Understanding the Paris Agreement’s ‘Global Goal on Adaptation’](#)

[A Decade of Ecosystem-based Adaptation: Lessons from UNEP](#)

**UNEP Contact:**

[UNEP-Climate-Adaptation@un.org](mailto:UNEP-Climate-Adaptation@un.org)