Key COP30 political negotiations impacting youth and energy

The just energy transition and the launch of new financing and cooperation initiatives for vulnerable countries were central topics at COP30. Let us take a closer look at the negotiations on the just energy transition: what was decided at COP and where uncertainty remains.

To limit global warming to 1,5 degrees, more ambitious NDCs are needed

In the run-up to COP, our team worked on an analysis of the NDCs. We concluded that many countries had missed the deadline for NDC 3.0 updates, which would jeopardise ambitious negotiations. We also advocated for a number of more progressive targets, which were discussed during COP and incorporated into global agreements.

One of the key outcomes of the conference is a clear direction for the global energy system over the coming decades. Several countries renewed the goal, agreed at COP28, of tripling global renewable energy capacity by 2030, alongside doubling the pace of annual energy-efficiency improvements. Together, these measures are intended to accelerate emission reductions across all sectors. Nonetheless, with 2030 now only five years away - and given the lengthy timelines required to plan, develop, and build renewable energy projects - establishing additional shared goals for the years beyond could be highly beneficial.

Petrostates assert their power

One of the most anticipated elements of COP30 was the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels (TAFF), which many hoped would provide a clear roadmap for phasing out coal, oil, and gas. Despite a transition roadmap supported by more than 80 countries, the final agreement was very disappointing. Although early drafts included explicit references to reducing reliance on fossil fuels, the final deal made no direct mention of fossil fuels, largely due to objections from petrostates. As a result, no binding global agreement was reached to phase out coal, oil or gas definitively. Nonetheless, the COP30 presidency promised it will bring forward a roadmap on transitioning away from fossil fuel. This will lie outside the formal COP process

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and will be guided by the upcoming *First International Conference on the Just Transition Away from Fossil Fuels*, co-hosted in Santa Marta (Colombia) by Colombia and the Netherlands in April 2026.

This characterises the climate negotiations, in which lobby groups continue to prioritise their own interests, while the pace of ambitious targets needs to be accelerated. EYEN emphasizes the urgent need to decarbonise energy systems, linking social and technological measures to rapid emission reductions. Without a clear TAFF roadmap, aligning national and corporate plans with these broader decarbonisation goals becomes more challenging. The COP30 outcome thus underscores the gap between ambition and enforceable action in transitioning away from fossil fuels, leaving much of the implementation responsibility at the national and voluntary levels.

Just Transition: Leaving No Worker Behind

The concept of a Just Transition received broad support, aiming to ensure that workers and communities dependent on fossil fuels are not left behind as the green economy expands. Despite this consensus, negotiators produced an informal note only after the first week, reflecting ongoing challenges in translating political support into binding commitments.

A key outcome was the approval of the Belem Action Mechanism (BAM), a new international platform designed to coordinate assistance, share best practices, mobilise resources, and track progress on just transition efforts. BAM provides a framework for countries and organisations to collaborate on green jobs, workforce reskilling, and equitable economic shifts, linking closely with initiatives of EYEN. We emphasise international coordination for job creation in the clean energy transition.

This mechanism marks a step forward in establishing an international structure for a just transition. EYEN advocates for concrete, enforceable commitments at the national or global level on this issue in the future.