GCE's COP30 Report

Generation Climate Europe

2026

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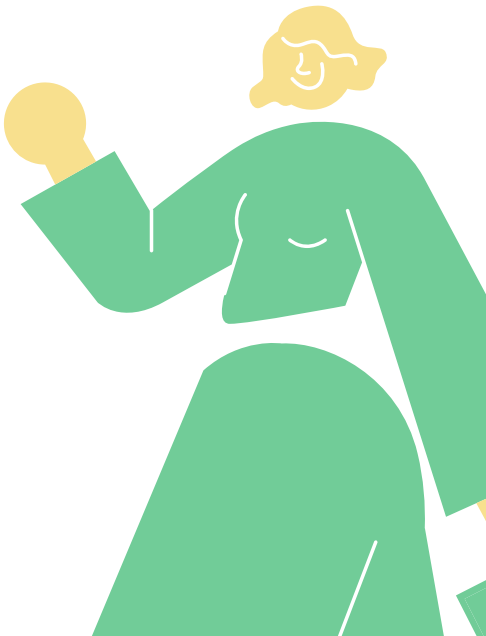

COP30 GCE's Annual Activities and Results

Executive summary

Through its COP team and annual youth delegation, Generation Climate Europe (GCE) actively engages in the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) negotiations to advance youth priorities within global climate policymaking. Each year, GCE's COP team contributes to and shapes the UN climate conference by organising events and capacity-building activities, holding bilateral meetings with policymakers, and coordinating joint advocacy efforts with civil society partners.

This report provides an overview of the GCE COP30 team's activities before, during, and after COP30, held in Belém do Pará, Brazil, from 10 to 23 November 2025. It outlines the delegation's key engagements, strategic interventions, and advocacy efforts to ensure that youth perspectives were meaningfully reflected in COP30 discussions and outcomes.

COP30 carried particular symbolic weight. Hosted in Brazil at the gateway to the Amazon rainforest, it took place just over a decade after the adoption of the Paris Agreement and in the country where the Rio Declaration laid the foundations of modern environmental governance. Against this backdrop, the report highlights GCE's key achievements in 2025 and reaffirms its role as a strategic partner in international climate negotiations.

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1. Background on UNFCCC COPs

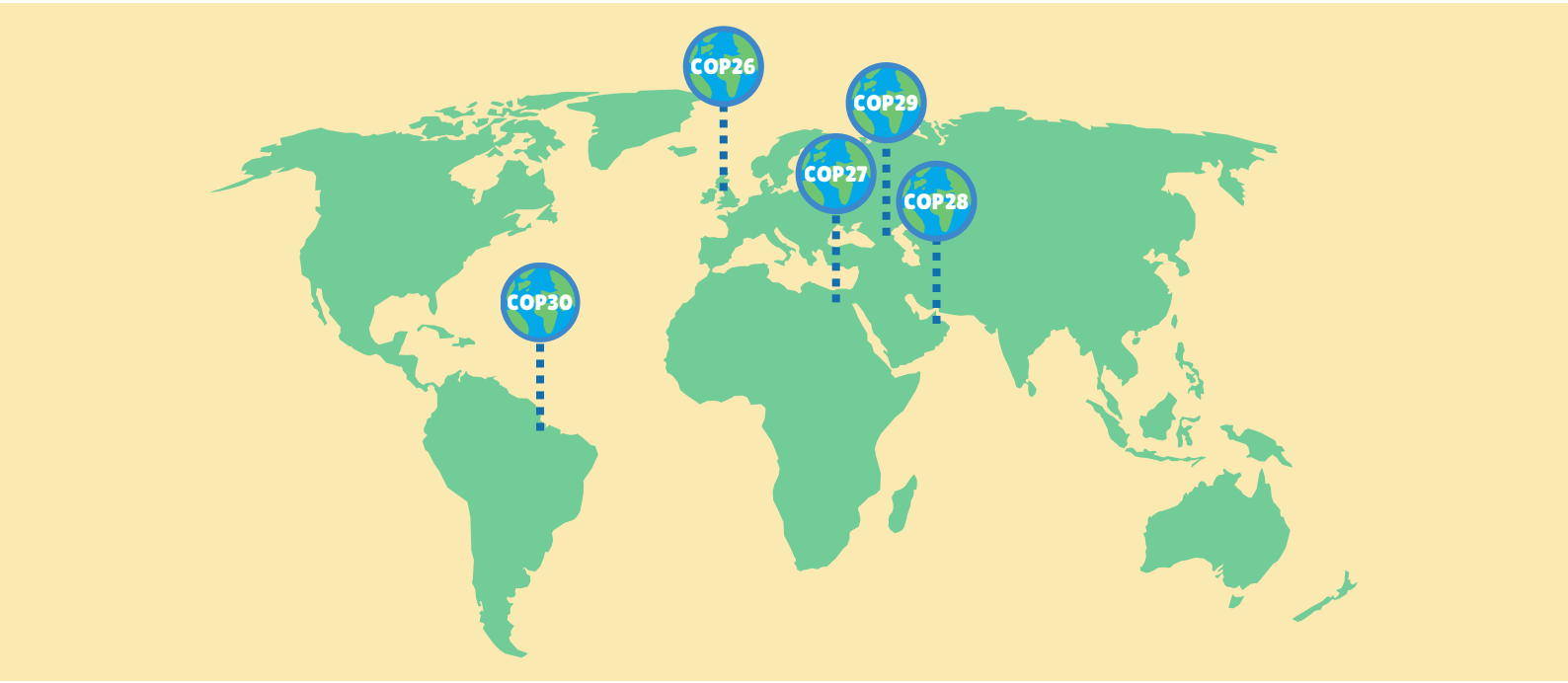
The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which entered into force in 1994, is the main international agreement on climate action. With 198 parties, it is nearly universal in scope, making it the primary global framework through which countries coordinate their response to climate change. Since 1995, its annual Conference of the Parties (COPs) have served as a central platform for international climate negotiations. These conferences shape global climate action through the pledges and commitments undertaken by governments, and they have historically produced landmark agreements such as the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement.

At the same time, COPs have drawn scrutiny due to the complexity and controversy of international negotiations, where ambition often clashes with national interests, lobbying pressures, political constraints, geopolitical tensions, uneven capacity amongst countries and competing economic priorities. These dynamics can slow progress, dilute commitments, or shift attention away from the most urgent climate needs. For civil society, and particularly for youth, influencing decision-makers within this arena has always been as challenging as it is crucial, offering one of the most direct opportunities to shape global climate decisions.

COPs bring together all Parties, or States that take part in the UNFCCC, to review the implementation of the Convention, negotiate on new policy and legal instruments to implement climate action and enhance multilateral collaboration to face the climate crisis. COPs also provide a platform for civil society organisations, youth representatives, local governments, scientists, and the private sector to participate, advocate, and influence policy. More broadly, their outcome affects the global population, as the agreements made at COPs guide international responses to the climate crisis.

For civil society and especially for youth, the COP arena remains one of the most vital yet challenging spaces to push for meaningful global climate action.

2. GCE's presence at COPs



Generation Climate Europe (GCE) recognises the critical importance of COPs as key moments where collective advocacy can influence global climate governance. After beginning the accreditation process in 2022 and receiving official recognition in 2024, GCE has steadily expanded its presence and impact within the COP space. GCE members first participated in COPs at COP26, and the establishment of a dedicated COP project team has since strengthened partnerships, amplified youth voices, and contributed directly to influencing the EU's positions in negotiations.

GCE's engagement grew significantly at COP28, where the organisation participated with a delegation of seven members. During the conference, GCE organised workshops, hosted multiple side events, and held meetings with approximately 12 decision-makers from various EU institutions. This momentum continued at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, where GCE increased its delegation to 11 participants. Delegates engaged in meetings with decision-makers and spoke at several events. Key preparatory activities ahead of COP29 included a dedicated podcast series and a two-day Crash Course on climate negotiations. At COP29, GCE also organised an event examining the impact of EU climate policy on youth in developing countries, supported by improved coordination between in-person and online delegates.

Today, GCE's engagement at COPs forms part of a continuous cycle of youth-led advocacy for stronger international climate policies. COPs represent the culmination of year-round efforts to connect young people with decision-makers, build alliances with civil society organisations, and ensure that youth perspectives shape both European and global climate policy. These efforts are rooted in collaboration, with GCE working closely alongside youth constituencies and civil society networks to amplify voices that might otherwise go unheard. At COPs, GCE's mission is to unite European youth, amplify their voices, and ensure that the next generation has a decisive role in the fight against climate change.

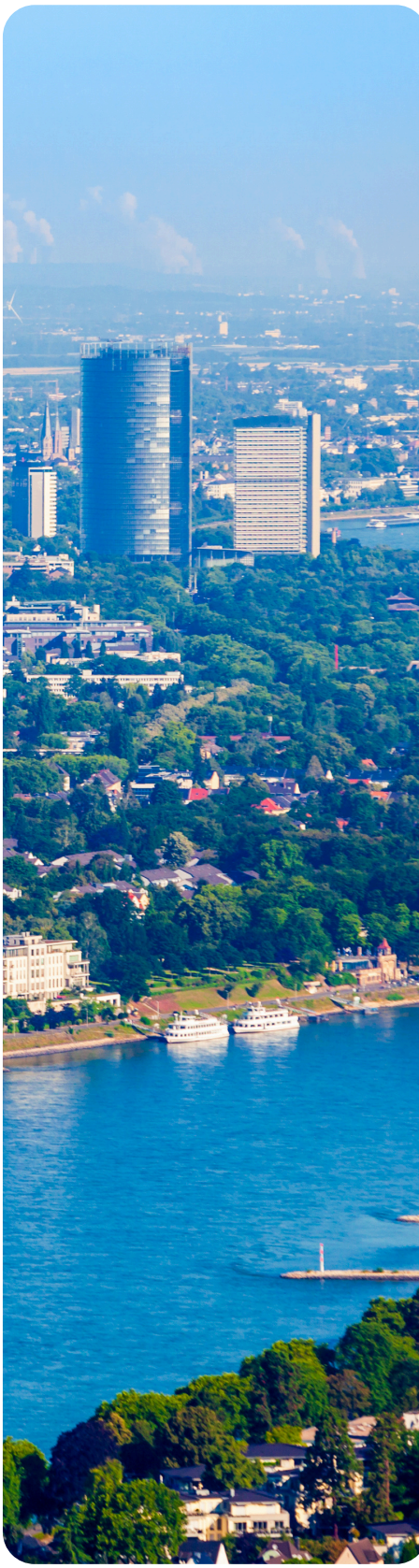
At COP30, GCE attended with more than 15 delegates in person, and a similar amount of attendees online, spread across the two weeks of the conference. Delegates from GCE attended the main conference, engaged with partners and spoke at events representing the policy priorities of the organisation in bilaterals with policymakers and informal discussions, see Annex. Preparation for COP30 included preparatory meetings and trainings, as well as the creation of a Buddy System and a common repository for minute taking and intelligence sharing.

GCE's COP30 Delegation for Week 1!

GCE's COP30 Delegation for Week 2!

3. The build-up to COP30

3.1 SB62: The 2025 Bonn Conference



The Bonn Climate Change Conference (SB62) was the pivotal event in the UNFCCC process, as it set the stage for the COP30 negotiations. On this occasion, Parties gather in Bonn, Germany, to lay down the ground for the COP with discussions on the documents to be adopted at the conference.

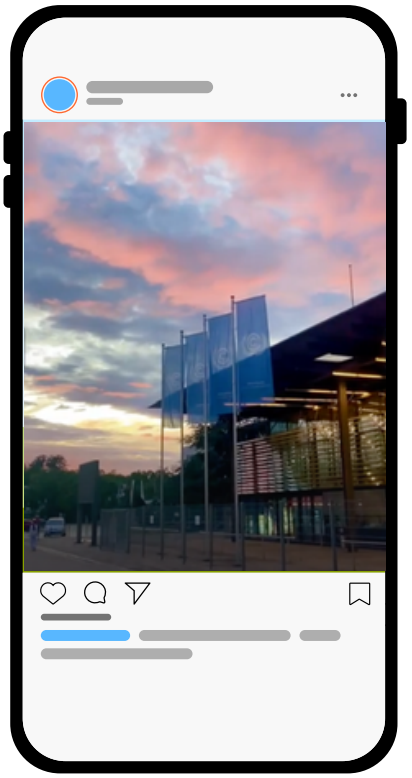
Held from 16 to 26 June 2025 at the World Conference Center Bonn (WCCB) in Bonn, Germany, SB62 marked the 62nd sessions of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies, the main intersessional climate meetings that advance technical and political negotiations between Conferences of the Parties (COPs). SB62 was a crucial stepping stone on the road to COP30 in Belém, Brazil, as parties worked to bridge gaps in implementation of the Paris Agreement ahead of the next major climate summit.

With over 9,400 registered participants, including government delegates, observers and media representatives, the conference convened negotiators and stakeholders from around the world to advance work on mitigation, adaptation, climate finance, transparency and other key thematic tracks under the UNFCCC.

Like SB60 before it, SB62 underscored persistent divisions between parties on core issues, from finance and the Global Goal on Adaptation to carbon markets and support for developing countries, reflecting broader political and practical challenges in aligning ambition with implementation. The meeting incorporated not just formal negotiation sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), but also a rich programme of side events, workshops and collaborative discussions, including sessions on aligning NDCs with finance strategies, connecting mitigation action partnerships, and exploring local, cultural and sectoral dimensions of climate action.

Although SB62 did not deliver headline-breaking decisions typical of COP-level summits, it played an essential role in refining technical texts, identifying areas of convergence and divergence across issues, and setting the groundwork for negotiations at COP30 later in 2025.

Two representatives of the GCE team attended the SB62 in person and seven online. Youth engagement and grassroots advocacy were particularly visible at SB62 through the Bonn Climate Camp, a volunteer-run space held alongside the UN climate negotiations. The camp brought together young people and climate justice movements from around the world to organise, connect, learn and rest, operating independently from the UNFCCC process. Through workshops, assemblies and creative actions, participants articulated demands for greater ambition, equity and accountability in the negotiations. This mobilisation highlighted the growing role of youth as key advocates within the climate process and underscored the connection between formal negotiations and wider civil society pressure in the build-up to COP30.



3.2 Pre-COP30 Youth Strategy Workshop in Brussels

Ahead of COP30, the pre-COP30 Youth Strategy Workshop brought together representatives from more than 25 youth organisations across Europe for a one-day, in-person gathering to collectively strategise on how to best represent and advocate for youth demands at COP30.

The events took place on October 27, 2025 and was organised by GCE in collaboration with the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) and Samira Ben Ali, EESC Youth Delegate to COP. Designed by and for European youth engaged in international climate negotiations, the event created an essential space for collaboration, solidarity and strategic reflection among youth organisations, at a time when civic space is shrinking, polarisation is increasing, and democracy faces new challenges.

The workshop began with introductory words by GCE's Co-President, Michaela Karamperi and EESC Youth Delegate to COP, Samira Ben Ali. During the morning's strategy session, participants came together and discussed youth demands and perspectives on 4 main thematic areas: Climate Adaptation, Climate Finance, NDCs & EU Climate Targets and Youth Participation. Each participant was able to provide input to all topics, and facilitators summarised the main discussion points. The recommendations and key messages were then summarised and used by some participants at the Youth Policy Dialogue with Wopke Hoekstra, Commissioner responsible for climate, net zero and clean growth.

Youth Policy Dialogue on COP with Commissioner Hoekstra (in the middle) and GCE Co-Coordinator Mathilda Rouze (on the right).

The afternoon conversation centred around capacity building and a dialogue with Rishi Kumar, member of the European Commission COP30 delegation. The training session on youth advocacy in climate negotiations, led by Kira Kluge, GCE COP30 Events Lead, focused on how to develop an elevator pitch when approaching negotiators and potential allies in conference settings, which participants had the opportunity to practice.

The second training session, given by GCE's founding president Agata Meysner, delved into the issue of Climate Tipping Points. Participants learned about the risk of reaching and crossing the threshold of one or several of them, while recognising that where negative tipping points exist, there is also the potential for positive ones. Towards the end of the session participants were able to also develop ideas for potential positive tipping points and ended the session with a realistic outlook on climate tipping points.

Before concluding the day with a networking gathering, participants joined a dialogue with Rishi Kumar, policy officer in DG CLIMA and member of the European Commission COP30 delegation to share youth perspectives and discuss priorities for the EU's engagement in Belém. Mr. Kumar provided an overview of EU COP priorities, and main negotiations tracks at COP30. GCE was able to share the strategic priorities which participants had developed in the morning session with him, and he answered a number of questions on specific EU policies and more generally the upcoming COP negotiations.

In conclusion, the Pre-COP30 Youth Strategy Workshop was an opportunity to bring together youth in Europe active in climate negotiations to exchange insights, align their strategies, and prepare to bring a strong, coordinated European youth perspective to global climate negotiations. Overall, the event allowed to strengthen youth representation and defend democratic participation in international climate processes.

3.3 Virtual Event

Beyond Fear: Youth Climate Champions' Path to COP30

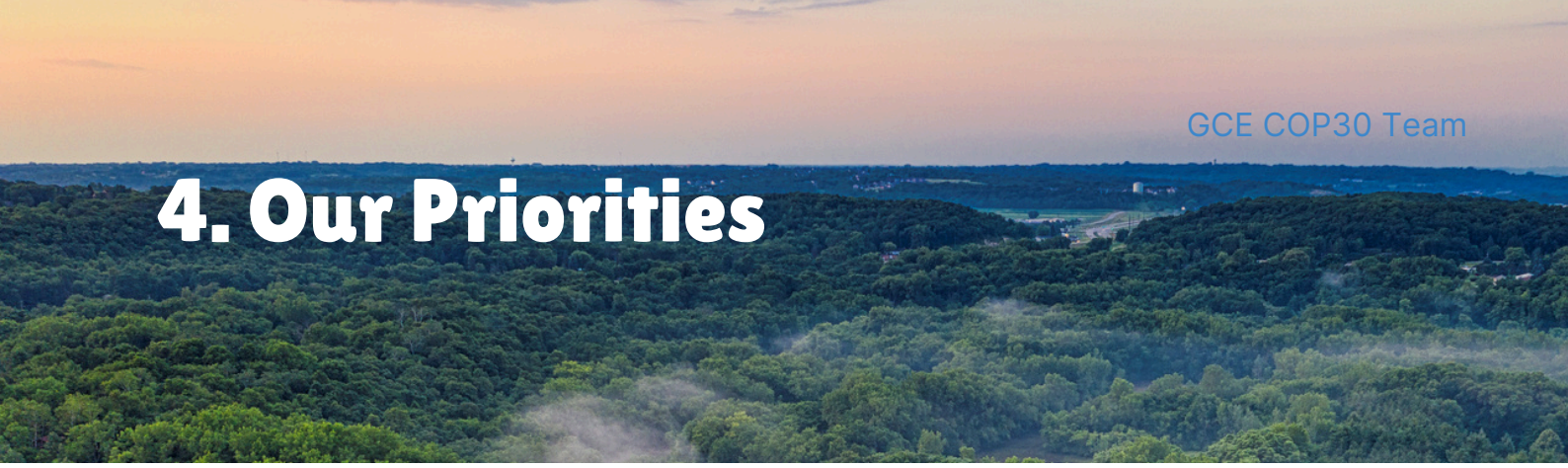
Date: 16 October 2025
Time: 6-7pm CET

Speakers:

- Axel Eriksson, Member of the UN Secretary-General's Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change and Training Manager of the Climate Youth Negotiator Programme
- Emma Heiling, Founder of ClimaTalk
- Mathilda Rouze, GCE COP30 Coordinator & European Climate Pact Ambassador
- Namir R. Chowdhury, GCE COP29 Coordinator, Sustainable Finance Consultant & International Diplomat

This panel discussion aimed to amplify youth voices, highlight journeys of resilience, and share practical tools to empower young changemakers driving climate action and justice within the UNFCCC sphere. The speakers discussed the complexity of working in climate advocacy and diplomacy and the different paths they took to get involved in COPs. The panel highlighted not only the paths towards joining COP as a young person but also delved into the difficulties that being within this space can hold. By addressing mental health challenges such as eco-anxiety and fears of not contributing enough or making mistakes the speakers showed that climate advocacy, especially as a young person, can also be overwhelming. They shared tips to improving mental health, including taking time off, talking to friends from back home, discussing their challenges with others in similar positions, and scheduling in proper breaks to recharge.

This event highlighted the different ways in which young people can engage in the climate space, and the positive experiences the speakers have had during their time in advocacy. But, it also emphasised the importance of asking for support and taking breaks when needed to avoid burnout, a topic often not discussed in climate spaces.



4. Our Priorities

A decade after the adoption of the Paris Agreement, COP30 took place at a moment when the gap between global climate commitments and real-world action was impossible to ignore. Coming off the Global Stocktake, this COP was widely understood as a test of whether Parties would translate identified ambition and finance gaps into concrete, 1.5 °C-aligned pathways. The 2025 Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, which reaffirmed states' obligations to limit warming to 1.5 °C and uphold intergenerational equity, further elevated expectations for meaningful progress. Against this backdrop, COP30 presented a critical opportunity to assess whether international climate governance could move beyond reaffirming goals and toward implementing the commitments already agreed under international law.

4.1 Strategic Thematic Priorities for COP30

This year, GCE focused on the following three thematic priorities :

1	2	3
Just Phase-out of Fossil Fuels	Scale up Climate Finance for Adaptation, Loss and Damage, and Biodiversity	Defend Civic Space and Strengthen Inclusive Climate Governance

These priorities served as a guiding framework to align our vision, advocacy and strategic direction. They were used as a tool for our organisation and as a coordination instrument to ensure coherent messaging and joint action. GCE's COP30 thematic priorities are briefly touched upon below.

Priority 1 - Just Phase-out of Fossil Fuels

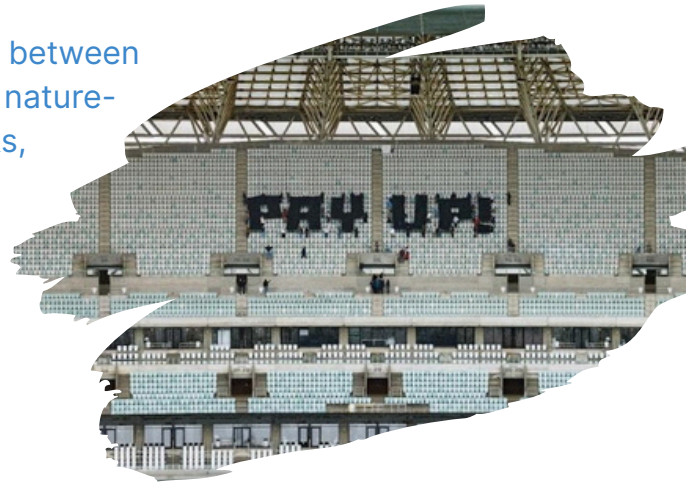
At COP30, GCE's engagement was guided by the need to confront the continued expansion of coal, oil, and gas production and the persistence of fossil fuel subsidies, which remain fundamentally misaligned with a 1.5 °C pathway. The organisation prioritised advancing a global, time-bound phase-out of fossil fuels and subsidies, grounded in climate science and just transition principles.

A particular emphasis was placed on European leadership, with a focus on accelerating coal phase-out, setting a clear trajectory for oil and gas phase-down before 2030, ending fossil fuel subsidies and international public finance for fossil fuels, and raising renewable energy and energy efficiency targets. This priority also extended to strengthening institutional arrangements for a just transition, including social protection, inclusive governance, and safeguards across transition-mineral supply chains through the Belém Action Mechanism for a Global Just Transition, known as BAM.

Priority 2 - Scale up Climate Finance for Adaptation, Loss and Damage, and Biodiversity

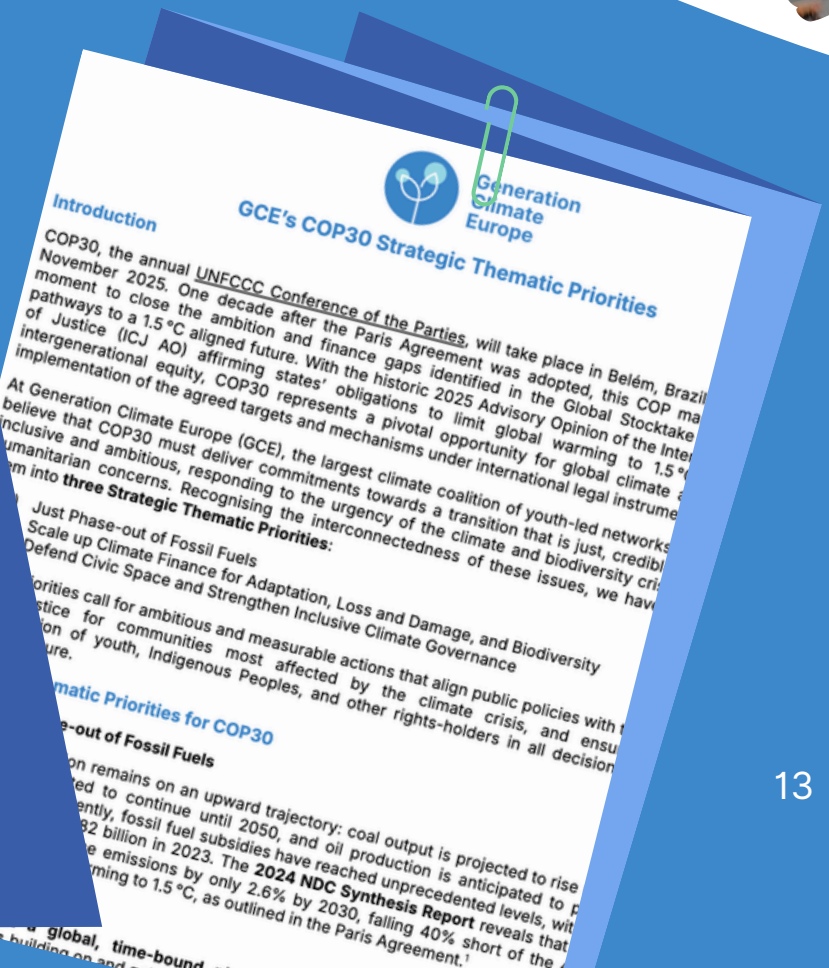
Our second strategic priority addressed the growing gap between escalating climate impacts and the resources available to communities already facing loss, damage, and environmental degradation. GCE's engagement focused on the chronic underfunding of adaptation, loss and damage, and biodiversity, particularly affecting vulnerable and underserved populations. We advocated for equitable, grant-based, and public climate finance in line with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, including concrete allocations to the Loss and Damage Fund. Efforts concentrated on securing new and additional finance through the NCQG, ensuring fulfilment of existing pledges to key climate funds, and promoting public fiscal mechanisms over increased reliance on private finance or multilateral development banks.

This priority also sought to strengthen coherence between climate and biodiversity action, including through nature-based solutions, protection of natural carbon sinks, and aligned indicators under the Global Goal on Adaptation and a Joint Work Programme on climate and biodiversity



Priority 3 - Defend Civic Space and Strengthen Inclusive Climate Governance

The third thematic priority responded to the shrinking of civic space and the continued marginalisation of affected communities within climate decision-making processes. So, our strategy sought to emphasise that the protection of civic space is a precondition for credible climate action, promoting inclusive, transparent, and rights-based governance. Engagements focused on strengthening safeguards for environmental defenders, advancing intergenerational equity as a legal obligation, and enabling meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples, youth, women, and marginalised groups through adequate institutional and practical support. This priority also underscored the importance of upholding Free, Prior and Informed Consent, reinforcing the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan, and limiting undue influence from fossil fuel lobbyists within COP processes to protect the integrity of climate negotiations.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GCE's COP30 Strategic Thematic Priorities

Introduction

COP30, the annual UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, will take place in Belém, Brazil, November 2025. One decade after the Paris Agreement was adopted, this COP ma moment to close the ambition and finance gaps identified in the Global Stocktake pathways to a 1.5 °C aligned future. With the historic 2025 Advisory Opinion of the Inte of Justice (ICJ AO) affirming states' obligations to limit global warming to 1.5 intergenerational equity, COP30 represents a pivotal opportunity for global climate implementation of the agreed targets and mechanisms under international legal instrume

At Generation Climate Europe (GCE), the largest climate coalition of youth-led networks believe that COP30 must deliver commitments towards a transition that is just, credibl inclusive and ambitious, responding to the urgency of the climate and biodiversity cri umanitarian concerns. Recognising the interconnectedness of these issues, we hav m into **three Strategic Thematic Priorities**:

Just Phase-out of Fossil Fuels
Scale up Climate Finance for Adaptation, Loss and Damage, and Biodiversity
Defend Civic Space and Strengthen Inclusive Climate Governance

iorities call for ambitious and measurable actions that align public policies with stice for communities most affected by the climate crisis, and ensu ion of youth, Indigenous Peoples, and other rights-holders in all decision ure.

matic Priorities for COP30

e-out of Fossil Fuels

on remains on an upward trajectory: coal output is projected to rise ed to continue until 2050, and oil production is anticipated to p ently, fossil fuel subsidies have reached unprecedented levels, wit 32 billion in 2023. The **2024 NDC Synthesis Report** reveals that e emissions by only 2.6% by 2030, falling 40% short of the ming to 1.5 °C, as outlined in the Paris Agreement.[1]

global, time-bound

Read Generation Climate Europe's COP30 thematic priorities in full here!

5. GCE's Engagement at COP30

5.1 Side Events

Youth-led Nature Restoration – Nature-Based Solutions for Mitigation, Adaptation and Resilience

Co-organisation with YEE
Date: 20 November 2025
Time: 16:10-16:55 BRT
Location: Children and Youth Pavilion, Blue Zone, COP30

Speakers included:

- Vivek Venkatram, Master of Public Administration Fellow at Columbia University, UNFCCC Youth Delegate & UNESCO Youth Representative
- Connah Snape, Youth and Environment Europe
- Ashik Iqbal, Global Ambassador, Youth4Nature
- Marie-Claire Graff, UNESCO Youth Climate Action Network Steering Committee, Youth Negotiators Academy Founder

Moderated by: Zvezdana Bozovic, Generation Climate Europe

The roundtable discussion aimed to showcase the different realities and challenges faced by global youth engaged in Nature-based Solutions (NBS). The discussion covered their lived experiences working at the intersection of climate adaptation, mitigation and ecosystem restoration in their communities, lessons learned and perspectives on the future of NBS within the context of the ongoing climate crisis. The speakers shared best practices and ideas for strengthening the role of youth in the planning, implementing and monitoring stages of NBS projects, underlining the transformative potential and replicability of these solutions. The purpose of the roundtable was to spotlight concrete nature restoration projects and through them provide inspiration for broader actions (particularly in fieldwork and local advocacy) that can shape decision-making and identify different entry points for further youth engagement within NBS. The event sadly did not happen, as it was cancelled due to the fire in the venue.

Financing the Future: Youth Voices in the Nordic Leadership Climate Finance

Date: 14 November 2025
Time: 15:30-16:15 BRT
Location: Nordic Pavilion, Blue Zone, COP30

Speakers:

- Sigurd Krabbe, Youth Delegate of Denmark, Danish delegation to COP30
- Bianca Garvin, Finance & Markets Working Group Co-Coordinator (YOUNGO)
- Alicia Amancio, Founder Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship & Co-Founder of ISLA

The event highlighted the importance and value of youth voices in the context of climate finance, with youth not only being the future leaders needing to address these issues in the future but also agents of change already today. By providing a platform for Nordic youth. Delegates alongside a Global South representative, the event provided them with the opportunity to express their views and share their ideas and potential solutions to one of the most pressing challenges of climate change action: climate finance. This inclusive approach ensured that the discussion reflected the lived experiences of those already facing the consequences of climate change and brought those together with insights from Nordic youth advocating from a region with significant impact on negotiations.

Bringing together youth from the Nordics, but also adding in the perspective of the Global South, provided for a rounded discussion and strengthened the connection between the Global South and the Nordics. Collaboration between the Global North and Global South is vital to tackling climate finance,and this panel not only highlighted this importance but also served as an active forum for discussion and reflection. By bringing together youth voices, policymakers, and other COP30 participants, the event aimed to bridge the gap between youth advocacy and policymaking. It provided policymakers with insights into how young people are addressing these challenges, while also giving youth the opportunity to make their voices heard and showcase their ideas and solutions.

Youth at the Table: How Young Voices Can Shape Climate Decisions

Date: 18 November 2025
Time: 10:00 - 11:30 BRT
Location: Free Zone, COP30

Speakers included:

- Lena Schilling, Member of the European Parliament
- Aldrin Barros, Advocacy coordinator, COJOVEM
- Juhie Radia, COP30 Strategy Co-Lead, GCE
- Nouha Salhi, Climate negotiator and manager at ICON-INSTITUTE and GCE project officer

This event discussed how young voices can move forward and shape climate action. It was held in the free zone, a space for those without a badge to engage with climate action and discuss civil society perspectives on climate justice. The panel reflected various world regions and invited speakers and participants to share their perspectives on youth inclusion in climate policy. It was held in English and Portuguese with translation on site to allow for local participation.

We were lucky to have Lena Schilling, a member of the European Parliament for the Green Party, join us for the beginning of the event. This not only helped attract more participants but also gave everyone a chance to share their wishes and perspectives with a policymaker, who can bring these into the negotiating rooms and help make young people's voices heard. The panel discussed questions like: "Why is it essential for youth to be at the decision-making table?" and "What climate challenges do youth in your region face specifically?"

5.2 Bilateral meetings

GCE attended bilateral meetings either organised by youth or CAN Europe to advocate for our policy priorities, including a just phase out of fossil fuels.

Person/Organisation	Organiser	GCE Participant	Date
Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra	CAN Europe	Mathilda Rouze	27/10/2025
EESC Delegation	CAN Europe	Erica Martinelli	17/11/2025
Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra	CAN Europe	Fidelis Stehle	18/11/2025
Commissioner Wopke Hoekstra	European Youth	Mathilda Rouze	18/11/2025
Head of the EU Delegation at the UNFCCC: Dimitrios Zevgolis	European Climate Pact Ambassadors	Mathilda Rouze	18/11/2025
MEP Lena Schilling	Youth	Vivek Venkatram	19/11/2025
European Parliament Delegation	CAN Europe	Erica Martinelli	19/11/2025
EESC Delegation	Youth	Fernanda Izidio Camara	20/11/2025
MEP Annalisa Corrado	Italian youth	Erica Martinelli	20/11/2025
Austria Delegate	Youth	Erica Martinelli	20/11/2025
European Parliament Delegation	Youth	Juhie Radia	21/11/2025

5.3 Speaking engagements

GCE delegates were invited as speakers in different side-events organised by Parties and other organisations in the Blue Zone at COP30.

Title	Host	Date	Participant and Role
AI and Climate	Youth Climate Collaborative	19/11/2025	Juhie Radia- speaker
Future Leaders Lab: Setting the Standard for Youth in Climate Action roundtable	International Standards Organisation x Interpeace	18/11/2025	Juhie Radia - speaker
Global Digital Multirao	Spanish Pavilion	20/11/2025	Mathilda Rouze - speaker
Financing the Future: Youth Voices in the Nordic Leadership Climate Finance	Nordic Pavilion	14/11/2025	Zvezdana Bozovic - moderator

5.4 Actions

GCE delegates attended the civil society actions organised during COP30 both in the Blue Zone and outside, in the streets of Belem.

Action title	Date	Partners involved	Outcome
Cúpula dos Povos Opening event “Barqueda”	12/11/2025	CAN Europe	Symbolic opening of the Cúpula dos Povos with the participation of +200 boats involved in the protest to draw attention to civil society participation at COP30 and outside of it.
Global FridaysForFuture protest in the city center	14/11/2025	Fridays For Future	Global action organised by FridaysForFuture around the world to demand global leaders to invest in the Loss and Damage Fund and develop a Just Transition Mechanism.
Cúpula dos Povos protest “Da Amazônia Para o Mundo”	15/11/2025	CAN Europe YEE	+30,000 people march throughout Belém organised by the Cupula dos Povos, to demand more attention to discussions around the protection of workers, Indigenous people and Global South communities’ rights in the COP30 negotiations.

5.5 Partnerships

Prior to and throughout the COP30 cycle, GCE worked closely with a range of European youth and environmental organisations to amplify young peoples' voices in climate and social policy, notably through capacity building and joint initiatives.

Some of our key partners with whom we collaborated during COP30 include:

1. **European youth:** GCE strengthened its collaboration with European youth organisations and networks - the European Youth Forum (YFJ)Youth and Environment Europe (YEE), the European youth delegates to COP and the European Economic and Social Committee Youth Delegate to COP and FIMCAP. Together with these organisations, GCE organised and attended bilateral meetings with policymakers, participated in side-events, organised exchanges, coordination, and mutual support on shared priorities in the run-up to COP30 and during the COP. GCE also co-signed the week 1 and final COP30 statement by European youth.

2. **Global Youth Civil Society:** As a member of the Children and Youth Pavillion (C&YP), GCE attended the YOUNGO daily briefings during COP, as well as volunteering at the pavilion, assisting the implementation of in-person and virtual events, meetings, discussions, workshops, high-level dialogues. This allowed GCE to meet both local and international interested youth to inform them about the work of YOUNGO and the importance of children and youth meaningful participation in UNFCCC negotiations.

3. **CAN EUROPE:** GCE is a member of CAN Europe. The GCE delegation actively participated in CAN's weekly strategy meetings, joined thematic small group discussions, and observed bilateral meetings organised by the network. Through this engagement, GCE shared its own youth priorities, supported CAN-led actions when aligned with its work, and strengthened cooperation with wider civil society.

GCE built a new partnership with a local Brazilian organisation: **Institute COJOVEM (Cooperação da Juventude Amazônida para o Desenvolvimento Sustentável)**. During COP30, it was responsible for the Free Zone programme, held in Flag Square, an open space for the general public featuring thematic lectures and cultural presentations. Within this context, we organized the event "Youth at the Table: How Young Voices Can Shape Climate Decisions," which was curated by the institute and hosted at the square.

6. COP30 Outcome

COP30 in Belém can be seen as a conference focused on justice, but it was cautious in its approach. Our thematic priorities were clearly visible in Belém's agenda (just transition, youth and rights language, adaptation and loss and damage finance), but our most ambitious demands, especially time-bound phase-out and grant-based finance at scale, were diluted in the final compromise. This leaves a significant gap in both action and ambition.

6.1 Just Phase-out of Fossil Fuels

COP30 did not produce an official, binding, global time-bound commitment to phase out fossil fuels in its adopted UNFCCC decision text. The Global Mutirão decision urges parties to work together toward phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies and reaffirms the UAE language of "transitioning away from fossil fuels". Yet, it did not include an explicit, time-bound commitment to phase out fossil fuels in the final COP30 decision - despite Brazil's proposal backed by more than 80 countries. The 80 countries that backed the inclusion of the roadmap had opposition from major producers and consumers, including Saudi Arabia and Russia.

The Presidency also announced political "roadmaps" on fossil fuel transition and deforestation for future consideration, but this remains outside a concrete, time-bound phase-out obligation agreed by the parties, despite many parties (including EU member states, AOSIS, and AILAC) advocated that the final text include the mentioned roadmap. The above shows how COP30 falls short of GCE's strategy for a treaty-level commitment and for EU leadership beyond the Green Deal.

Moreover, the formal outcomes from this year's COP did not establish a new binding global target of 50% share of renewables in the global energy mix by 2030 or 20% energy savings by 2030, to align with a 1.5 °C pathway. The tripling of renewables and doubling of energy efficiency progress by 2030, agreed at COP28 and reinforced at COP30, signals strong collective intent, but current global trends remain below that pace and require faster policy action.

Ahead of COP30, there were concerns that EU Member States might struggle to agree on an updated nationally determined contribution (NDC). In the end, the EU submitted an updated NDC extending its pathway to 2035. It reaffirms the 2030 target of at least 55% net emission reductions and introduces an indicative 66.25–72.5% net reduction range for 2035, alongside political agreement on a 90% net reduction target by 2040. BThe 2035 figure is presented as a range rather than a fixed commitment, and the 2040 target remains part of the EU's ongoing legislative process. Moreover, as a net, territorially based target, it does not capture consumption-based emissions, meaning reported reductions may not fully reflect the EU's wider carbon footprint. Taken together, this represents a step forward in transparency and longer-term planning. At the same time, the submission signals continuity and procedural compliance, while leaving open questions about the scale of additional ambition.

Moreover, COP30 advanced follow-up mechanisms to the Global Stocktake, including enhanced implementation dialogues and expectations that future NDC updates be explicitly informed by GST findings. While these mechanisms remain largely procedural, they partially reflect GCE's call for science-based accountability and more transparent alignment between global assessments and national action.

Furthermore, we celebrate Colombia's leadership in uniting a coalition that includes 9 European countries to develop a clear, just, and equitable science-based global roadmap toward a fossil fuel-free future.Building on this momentum, Colombia and the Netherlands will co-host the First International Conference on the Phase-Out of Fossil Fuels, to be held in Santa Marta on 28–29 April 2026, bringing together governments, experts, civil society, and other stakeholders to advance cooperation on a just and sustainable transition away from oil, gas, and coal production and consumption. Additionally, COP30 did endorse the Belém Mechanism for a Just Global Transition and associated just transition initiatives, which strengthen the global infrastructure for decent work, social protection and equity in the transition and broadly echo GCE's call to institutionalise just transition and prioritise vulnerable groups.

6.2 Scale up Climate Finance for Adaptation, Loss and Damage, and Biodiversity

Parties at COP30 agreed on a headline package to "mobilise" approximately 1.3 trillion USD annually by 2035 for climate action, including commitments to double adaptation finance by 2025, triple adaptation finance by 2035 and to operationalise and regularly replenish the loss and damage fund. The outcome confirms replenishment cycles and recognises the urgency of scaling finance, but maintains broad language without clear guarantees that the bulk will be new, public, grant-based finance from developed countries, a key concern for civil society organisations.

Adaptation and loss and damage finance increases remain below the scale of developing country needs and short of the levels advocated by networks such as ours and CAN, and there is still limited explicit anchoring of polluter-pays mechanisms or strong, binding transparency provisions to prevent offloading responsibility onto private finance and MDBs.

The tripling of adaptation finance and operationalisation of the loss and damage fund respond directly to GCE's push to rebalance mitigation and adaptation and to secure predictable loss and damage support, and they reinforce our message that climate justice requires scaled public finance. Yet, the absence of clear, quantitative commitments to new and additional, grant-based public finance, the weak guarantees on EU delivery, and the limited integration of biodiversity-climate finance, unfortunately, fall short of our call for at least 300 billion USD in grant-equivalent terms and a strong joint climate-biodiversity work programme. Although fragmented, references to ecosystems, forests, and nature-based solutions across several decisions were made which indicates a growing recognition of the climate-biodiversity nexus, even if this was not consolidated into a coherent work programme.

COP30 did also make incremental progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation, including further development of adaptation indicators and monitoring frameworks. While insufficiently resourced, these measurable outcomes now reflect lived resilience, not just investment volumes.

6.3 Defend Civic Space and Strengthen Inclusive Climate Governance

COP30 stood out for its unprecedented inclusivity, issuing over 80,000 badges to civil society observers, NGOs, indigenous leaders, and frontline activists, far surpassing prior conferences. Observer access expanded dramatically, with dedicated pavilions for indigenous groups and youth, enabling direct input on adaptation, loss/damage, and NDC guidelines. The fact that Brazil's Amazon was hosting amplified these traditionally marginalised perspectives. However, while access expanded significantly, participation largely remained consultative. Civil society input had limited influence over final negotiating texts, highlighting the persistent gap between inclusion and decision-making power. Several decisions and high-level statements referenced intergenerational equity and the 2025 ICJ Advisory Opinion, signalling growing normative recognition of states' responsibilities to future generations, although this recognition has yet to translate into binding legal or procedural obligations.

More positively, this year's conference did place stronger emphasis on human rights, just transition, and participation, with explicit references to just and inclusive governance and social protection within the Belém just transition mechanism, which youth constituencies recognised as a rare area of progress. We also applaud that the conference recognised the importance of fighting climate disinformation and supporting truthful information, aligning with the goal of transparent, rights-based governance, but concrete, enforceable safeguards for civic space and human rights defenders are still limited and scattered across decisions and the wider UN system.

Despite our organisation's call to ban fossil-fuel lobbyists and affiliated representatives from COP participation to safeguard negotiations from vested interests, COP30 saw over 1.600 such lobbyists, one in 25 attendees, outnumbering all but Brazil's delegation and gaining two-thirds more passes than the 10 most climate-vulnerable nations combined. Multiple countries included fossil fuel reps officially, e.g., France (22, including TotalEnergies CEO), Norway (17 from Equinor), Japan (33). By the same token, there was no move from the UNFCCC related to adopting a ban on fossil fuel lobbyists, affiliated reps, or industry from COP30 or future events. NGO coalitions like Kick Big Polluters Out highlighted the issue but achieved no policy change on the ground.

Lastly, gender and youth participation featured throughout the action agenda, but COP30 did not produce the kind of robust, enforceable Gender Action Plan renewal and youth participation guarantees that our Strategy set out.

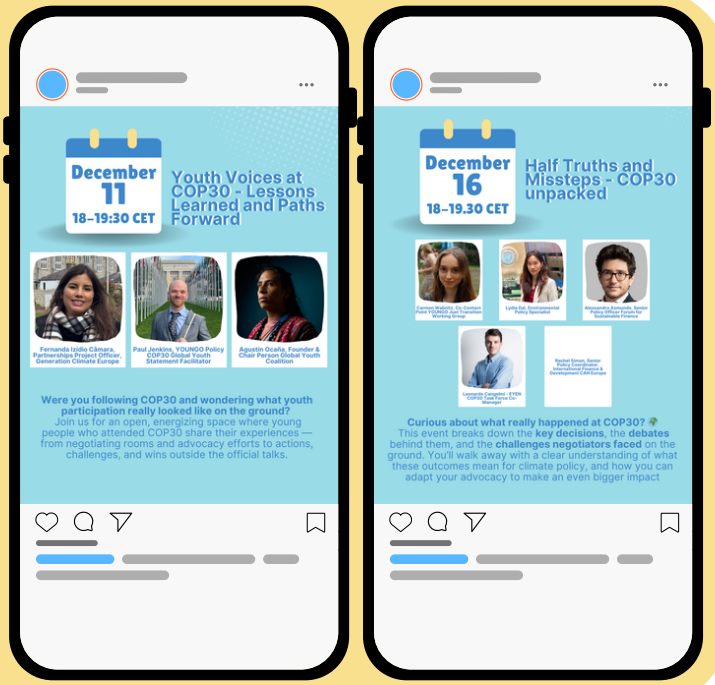
7. Post COP events

The GCE Events Team developed a two-part post COP webinar series to discuss the negotiation outcomes from COP30, titled:

Inside COP30 - Youth Voices and Thematic Outcomes from Belém

The two-parts webinar was divided into 2 sessions:

1. **Youth Voices at COP30 - Lessons Learned and Paths Forward, 11 December 2025, 18:00-19:30 CET.**
2. **Half Truths and Missteps - COP30 Unpacked, 16 December 2025, 18:00-19:30 CET.**



The two events aimed to create a space for young people who attended COP30, as well as those who didn't, to share their experiences. From negotiating rooms and advocacy efforts to actions, challenges, and wins outside the official talks, the events highlighted the different lived experiences of especially youth participants at COP30. Together with several expert speakers, the COP30 events team broke down key decisions, the debates behind them, and the challenges negotiators faced on the ground.

The first session, Youth Voices at COP30 - Lessons Learned and Paths Forward, focused on the role of youth participation at COP30. For this, three speakers joined for a panel discussion, providing their personal experiences. Paul Jenkins, who is the YOUNGO Policy COP30 Global Youth Statement Facilitator, discussed his work on the youth statement and his experiences at previous COPs compared to this years', highlighting the importance of youth collaboration and the logistical difficulties of this during such high-level and fast-paced conferences.

Fernanda Izídio Câmara, a Project Officer on GCE's COP30 Partnerships Team, provided insights into her experience of attending COP for the first time. She discussed the mixed emotions of being in such an important space and having to navigate so many new experiences while also trying to make an impact and representing youth. Her personal background as a Brazilian native brought important insights into the context of COP and the Indigenous People's views on the conference and the results. Fernanda highlighted that COPs can be stressful and overwhelming but also highly enriching experiences and the importance of understanding local realities.

The third speaker, Agustín Ocaña, founder and chairperson of the Global Youth Coalition, discussed his vast experience with COPs. He emphasised the importance of moving beyond the COP blue zone and engaging with other communities. His struggles with not seeing enough progress in the COP space resonated with many and sparked a lively discussion on how to best move forward within and outside of the COP space, highlighting that there is more to do than attend climate conferences and that local and regional projects can have a large impact on communities, even if they are not explicitly negotiated at COPs.
The three speakers answered questions by participants and offered advice on how to stay engaged while also taking care of oneself.

The second session focused on the main thematic outcomes of COP30. It brought together five expert speakers:

- Alessandro Asmundo: Senior Policy Officer Forum for Sustainable Finance
- Carmen Wabnitz: Co-Contact YOUNGO Just Transition Working Group
- Lydia Dai: Swiss Youth for Climate
- Leonardo Cangelmi: European Youth Energy Network COP30 Task Force Co-Manager
- Rachel Simon: Senior Policy Coordinator, International Finance & Development CAN Europe

The following main topics were discussed in detail by the expert speakers:

- Climate Finance,
- Just Transition,
- Adaptation,
- Fossil Fuel Phase Out,
- EU Negotiation Positions.

The slide deck with more detailed information can be found here.

In addition to the major outcomes, during the event the GCE Events team provided a summary of decisions on gender, NDCs, youth, Indigenous peoples, health, technology, mitigation, nature-based solutions, and forests.

Speakers highlighted the win for civil society that the BAM decision brought, but also discussed the lack of substantial outcomes in many other areas, including adaptation finance and fossil fuel phase out. The role of the EU especially on adaptation finance was criticised, but advancements in just transition were also recognised. While this COP was titled the "COP of Implementation" and "COP of Truth," speakers emphasised that its mixed outcomes and the lack of agreement right before the final plenary show the insufficiency of COP in addressing pressing issues and the continued delaying and weakening of negotiation outcomes by some parties.

These two events provided participants with summaries or the main outcomes while also putting them into the context of previous decisions and future hopes and potential for further action. They also highlighted the importance of youth participation, while recognising the systematic barriers that exist for youth, especially non-European youth. Additionally, participants were able to ask specific questions on issues like AI and climate change.

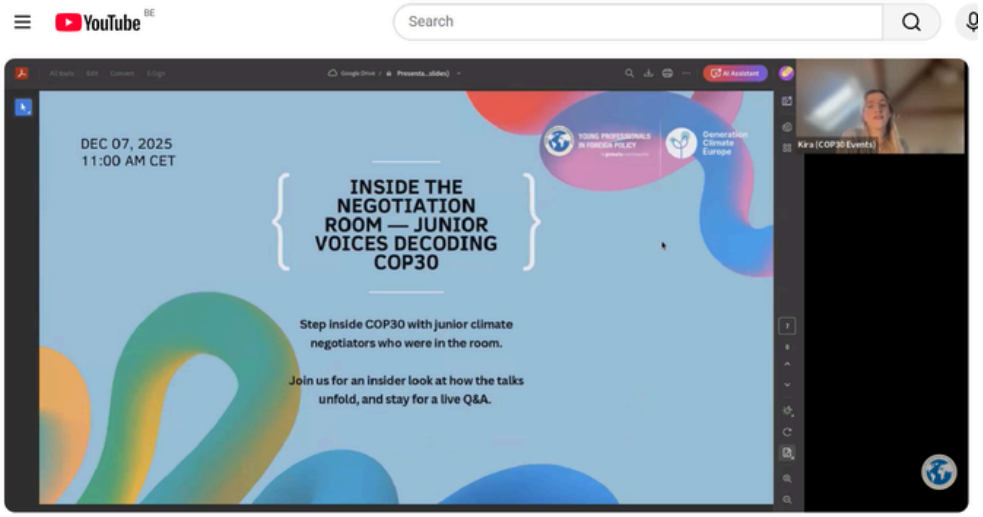
Inside the Negotiation Room — Junior Voices Decoding COP30

In addition to the two events organised by the Events Team, GCE was invited to collaborate on a post-COP event by Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YPFP). The event aimed to demystify the COP negotiation process for young professionals interested in international affairs, environmental policy, or diplomacy, providing practical insights into the skills, challenges, and opportunities of working in global climate negotiations. The Partnerships and Events teams provided support in terms of finding speakers, helping develop the concept note, and appointing one of the co-moderators. The detailed script can be found here.

The event included a panel with 4 speakers, with the participation of:

- Chen-Yen Chang, who specializes in Science, Technology, and Society (STS)
- Tasneem Sied Ahmed, a Sudanese environmental researcher, plastic engineer, and climate advocate, and negotiator for the LDS Group
- Ahmed Elhadj Taieb,Tunisian Youth Negotiator, environmental advocate and climate and water specialist
- Malek Romdhane, Tunisian Youth Climate Negotiator and Senior Sustainability Consultant

Panelists discussed their paths into climate negotiations, the different roles they held at COP as negotiators and researchers, and the lack of opportunities and funding for youth, especially from the Global South, to attend climate conferences. A recording of the session can be found here.



8. Conclusions

COP30 in Belém highlighted the continued importance of youth engagement in global climate governance. Through its COP team, Generation Climate Europe (GCE) actively contributed to shaping discussions, advocating for ambitious climate action, and ensuring that youth perspectives were visible and represented throughout negotiations. From pre-COP preparations and capacity-building workshops to side events, bilateral meetings, and post-COP webinars, GCE maintained a consistent presence, providing evidence of youth leadership, expertise, and commitment to climate justice.

The conference demonstrated progress in several areas aligned with GCE's strategic priorities. References to just transition, human rights, intergenerational equity, and inclusion of marginalised communities marked a step forward. The establishment of the Belém Action Mechanism (BAM) and the upcoming Santa Marta Phase-Out Conference reflect growing global recognition of the need for equitable, science-based pathways away GCE's engagement demonstrates that youth participation is not only valuable but essential in holding Parties accountable, advocating for equity, and shaping inclusive climate policy. Moving forward, sustaining partnerships, building capacities, and leveraging post-COP opportunities will be critical to translate lessons from COP30 into tangible impact. This includes continued coordination with European and global youth networks, strategic advocacy on NDC ambition, adaptation finance, and fossil fuel phase-out, and ensuring that marginalised voices remain central to climate decision-making.

Staying in touch

Please contact cop@gceurope.org with any questions that you may have about our activities and opportunities for engagement

9. Annex

Title	Type	Engagement
5 things you should know about COP30	Instagram post	Likes: 136 Comments: 4 Reshare: 9 Sent: 58 Views: 14k
Beyond fear: Youth Climate Champions Speak Before COP30	Instagram post	Likes: 54 Comments: 1 Reshare: Sent: 19 Views: 4652
GCE's Delegation to COP30	Instagram post	Likes: 115 Comments: 3 Reshare: 1 Sent: 9 View: 4748
GCE COP30 Strategic Thematic Priorities	Instagram post	Likes: 44 Comments: 0 Reshare: 2 Sent: 4 Views: 2056
GCE Pre-COP30 Youth Strategy Workshop	Instagram post	Likes: 85 Comments: 4 Reshare: 2 Sent: 18 Views: 5975
GCE Upcoming events at COP30	Instagram post	Likes: 33 Comments: 0 Reshare: 1 Sent: 3 Views: 2353
How young voices can shape climate decisions	Instagram post	Likes: 55 Comments: 0 Reshare: 1 Sent: 9 Views: 5174
GCE's COP30 Recap Week 1	Instagram post	Likes: 28 Comments: 0 Reshare: 1 Sent: 1 Views: 1832
Youth-led Nature Restoration Nature Based Solutions for Mitigation, Adaptation and Resilience	Instagram post	Likes: 32 Comments: 2 Reshare: 1 Sent: 6 Views: 4244

A day in the life of a delegate	Instagram Reel	Likes: 41 Comments: 2 Reshare:0	Sent: 4 Views: 946
Q & A Time	Instagram Reel	Likes: 41 Comments: 0 Reshare: 0	Sent: 2 Views: 1035
GCE's COP30 Recap Week 2	Instagram Post	Likes: 35 Comments: 0 Reshare: 0	Sent: 4 Views: 2898
Reflecting on COP30	Instagram Post	Likes: 67 Comments: 6 Reshare: 6	Sent: 24 Views: 6459

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