

Position Paper: The Climate Reality Project Japan OUR ASKS FOR COP 30 Belém

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It has been ten years since adoption of the Paris Agreement, and the deadline to drastically reduce Greenhouse Gases emissions by 2030, which is essential for achieving the 1.5°C target, is rapidly approaching. Although this should be a pivotal moment for the international community to strengthen climate action, current efforts by countries remain far from sufficient to meet the goals.

At COP30, to be held this year in Brazil, we at Climate Reality Project Japan call on the world and Japan to advance concrete measures toward fulfilling their commitments. This position paper presents our demands.

The impacts of the climate crisis are already being felt in Japan. Record-breaking heatwaves across the country are severely affecting daily life, ecosystems, and agriculture, and these damages are expected to worsen in the coming years. To mitigate the harm caused by the climate crisis, it is crucial that Japan, as one of the world's largest greenhouse gas emitters, a major funder of the fossil fuel industry, and a country highly vulnerable to climate impacts, fulfills its historical responsibility and demonstrates leadership through decisive action. We urge immediate and concrete measures without delay.

Climate Reality's Positions for COP30: Global and Japan-specific Perspectives

Goal 1: Schedule for Transition Away from Fossil Fuels

Global

Countries agreed as part of the Global Stocktake outcomes to contribute to, among other things, “transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science.”¹ Recognition and implementation of this commitment has so far been short of supply in NDCs. COP 30 should provide further guidance on collective effort towards this goal.

Brazil's NDC states that it would welcome “the launching of international work for the definition of schedules for transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems,” with several additional qualifiers.²

The time to implement the transition away from fossil fuels is now. By adopting a timeline and starting a roadmap, countries at COP 30 can begin to define the end of fossil fuels in energy systems, build political will, and send the strongest political and market signals. It would be a show of solidarity with countries who have already begun the transition, and urgently direct investment to zero carbon energy sources.

Brazilian Environment Minister Marina Silva has suggested that COP30 could initiate such a roadmap.³ Despite being a Global South country, Brazil would show tremendous leadership if they step forward and take the lead on presenting their own transition strategy with a clear end date. This would set an example for developed and developing countries alike, spur action domestically, and define trade relationships – not to mention creating buy-in for a global roadmap. Brazil's national transition strategy should also establish a first step in the transition, for example a near-term schedule for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies.

Global North countries should move first and fastest, given their vast resources and that only four Global North countries are responsible for over two-thirds of planned oil and gas expansion to 2035.⁴

¹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_16a01E.pdf

² https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2024-11/Brazil_Second%20Nationally%20Determined%20Contribution%20%28NDC%29_November2024.pdf

³ <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2025/06/26/brazils-environment-minister-suggests-roadmap-to-end-fossil-fuels-at-cop30/>

⁴ <https://oilchange.org/blogs/planet-wreckers-top-global-north-countries-responsible-for-nearly-70-of-projected-new-oil-and-gas-expansion-to-2035/>

Japan

- It is essential not only to phase out inefficient coal-fired power plants but also to establish a clear roadmap for the complete elimination of all coal power. Across all sectors, including industry, it is necessary to promote thorough energy efficiency measures and electrification, aiming to reduce final energy consumption by 66 percent by 2040 compared to 2013 levels.⁵ Renewable energy must be steadily deployed in a manner that aligns with regional characteristics. Numerous studies⁶ indicate that it is feasible to supply 80 percent of electricity from renewable sources by 2035 and 100 percent by 2040. Implementing energy transition policies is critical in achieving this goal.
- The energy transition should also address regional challenges, such as population decline, while providing economic and technological support. This approach can contribute to regional revitalization and ensure a just transition. To this end, mechanisms that leverage public funds to attract private investment are crucial.
- It is necessary to provide sufficient support to those affected by economic and social changes resulting from the energy transition, preventing isolation and ensuring a fair transition across all industries. Moreover, incorporating opportunities for citizen participation in policymaking and improving access to information are vital to enhancing policy credibility and effectiveness. Since environmental and energy policies are closely linked with employment, the economy, and social security, collaboration among the government, local authorities, businesses, NGOs, and citizens is essential.
- In deploying renewable energy, it is imperative to institutionalize biodiversity conservation. Legal frameworks should require the involvement of ecologists and natural science experts at every stage, including site selection, design, operation, and decommissioning, and they should mandate consultation and consensus-building with and within local communities. As numerous studies have shown, promoting renewable energy must be carried out in a way that coexists with nature.⁷

Goal 2 : Revisiting NDCs to Close the Ambition Gap

Global

Countries' NDCs have been largely turned in late and insufficient in addressing the demands the current emergency imposes. Simply submitting updated targets will not be enough to close the significant gap that remains between current national commitments and the emission reductions required by the science. To bridge this ambition gap, it is essential that countries not only achieve their existing targets as early as possible, but also deliver emission reductions that go above and beyond those targets. Each country must comprehensively strengthen its policies, enact just energy transition plans, stop relying on actions by non-state actors, and mobilize national financial engines, all-the-while reassessing these implementation pathways before the next Global Stocktake (GST). In addition, countries should actively participate in international cooperation frameworks such as the Coalition on Phasing Out Fossil Fuel Incentives Including Subsidies (COFFIS), which can support earlier and deeper reductions. COP30 must forcefully respond to the ambition gap, urgently requesting that countries revisit and revise their NDCs to reflect their highest possible ambition.

The COP 30 outcomes package should be presented in such a way as to support and leverage ambition into revised NDCs. That means clarity on supporting implementation of the Global Stocktake outcomes via an outcome in the GST dialogue, a strong just transition mechanism, and clarity and substantial progress on the Baku to Belém roadmap for increased finance.

It also requires a strong, transparent and accountable Action Agenda, which recognizes commitments from all actors including non-state actors, to catalyze and coordinate action happening across the world. The Action Agenda should focus on implementing existing initiatives and linking non-party action to negotiations through the Marrakech Partnership.

⁵ <https://green-recovery-japan.org/pdf/greentransition2035.pdf>

⁶ <https://green-recovery-japan.org/pdf/greentransition2035.pdf>, https://www.renewable-ei.org/pdfdownload/activities/REI_2035_Study_JP.pdf

⁷ <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0959652623041161>, <https://doi.org/10.1787/357ac474-en>

Japan

- Japan has already submitted its NDC in February 2025⁸; however, the previously stated 46 percent reduction target for 2030 remains unchanged. New targets have been set at a 60 percent reduction by 2035 and a 73 percent reduction by 2040, alongside a commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050. Nevertheless, the projected reduction pathway is linear and does not align with the 1.5°C target. Considering the carbon budget required to achieve the 1.5°C goal, greenhouse gas emissions in 2035 should be reduced by 79 percent compared to 2013 levels, and the targets for 2030 and 2040 must also be revised accordingly.
- Given that Japan is currently struggling to achieve even the 46% reduction target for FY2030 compared to FY2013 levels⁹, the first priority should be to ensure the full realization of this goal. Building on that foundation, Japan should aim for a more ambitious target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by approximately 79% from 2013 levels by 2035. To achieve this, Japan must reconsider the life extension of existing thermal and nuclear power plants and, as mentioned above, accelerate the deployment of renewable energy.¹⁰ Through these measures, Japan should realize a substantial reduction in domestic greenhouse gas emissions.
- It is essential to advance efforts in climate action and biodiversity conservation simultaneously. The NDC should include clear targets for ecosystem protection and restoration, along with effective mechanisms to ensure implementation. These measures should reflect a just transition grounded in biome conservation and strengthened environmental governance. By doing so, Japan can achieve a balance between climate change mitigations and biodiversity protection, thereby accelerating the transition toward a sustainable society.

Goal 3 : A Clear, Ambitious, and Fair Baku to Belém Roadmap to 1.3T

Global

Countries recognized the scale of finance required to address climate change at COP29 when they decided to build the Baku to Belém Roadmap to \$1.3 trillion by 2035.¹¹ Now that declaration needs to be turned into a plan. Such a plan should make clear that its intention is to include grants, concessional and non-debt-creating instruments, and avenues for mobilizing private finance that do not further deepen the existing debt crisis for Global South countries. It must incorporate a wide variety of sources, including new and innovative sources such as solidarity levies that adhere to the polluter pays principle, enhance the transparency and traceability of funding from all sources, and contain interim goals on which to measure progress on leveraging and delivering finance.

The roadmap should reflect ongoing reforms at multilateral development banks, present guidance and engagement guidelines for both public and private sources, investigate avenues for lowering the cost of capital for Global South countries, and contain vehicles for debt reform. It should enhance coordination between the COP and key climate finance vehicles, thereby increasing availability of funds and streamlining their delivery.

Japan

- Japan must ensure that its funds are used for genuine solutions and immediately halt its financing of overseas projects that prolong the use of fossil fuels. In its international funding, Japan continues to support technologies that extend our reliance on fossil fuels, including fossil fuel projects¹², carbon capture and storage (CCS)¹³ projects, and the production of low-carbon ammonia using CCS¹⁴ for applications such as ammonia co-firing. These have the potential to severely impact local communities and biodiversity, and opposition movements have already emerged in affected areas.¹⁵

⁸ <https://www.env.go.jp/content/000291804.pdf>

⁹ https://www.meti.go.jp/shingikai/sankoshin/sangyo_gijutsu/chikyu_kankyo/ondanka_follow_up/pdf/003_03_00.pdf

¹⁰ https://www.enecho.meti.go.jp/category/others/basic_plan/pdf/20250218_01.pdf

¹¹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2024_17a01E.pdf

¹² https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/pressit_000001_01942.html, https://www.jbic.go.jp/ja/information/press/press-2025/press_00067.html

¹³ <https://www.meti.go.jp/press/2025/09/20250911003/20250911003.html>

¹⁴ https://www.jbic.go.jp/en/information/press/press-2025/press_00043.html,

https://www.jbic.go.jp/en/business-areas/environment/projects/page_00481.html

¹⁵ <https://foejapan.org/issue/20250812/25350/>, <https://foejapan.org/issue/20240508/17462/>

- Japan should further mobilize private capital through the expansion of carbon pricing mechanisms and actively use domestic funds to support international climate action. Currently, revenue from Japan's carbon pricing system, including the Global Warming Countermeasure Tax, is primarily allocated to domestic decarbonization measures, and a clear mechanism for using these funds in international cooperation based on the polluter-pays principle has yet to be established.¹⁶
- Japan should also prioritize biodiversity conservation in climate finance investments and promote a just and renewable bioeconomy in the Global South. It is essential to support the establishment of economic models that protect forests while respecting the rights and interests of local communities, maintain the diversity of native species, and generate sustainable employment and income.

Goal 4 : Ensure the COP31 Presidency Has a Roadmap to Ambitious Leadership

Global

The Brazilian COP 30 Presidency has introduced a number of new initiatives, including an Action Agenda retooled for implementation, the Circle of Presidencies giving wide-ranging advice, and the Global Ethical Stocktake to incorporate a wider set of voices. But the work is not done – Brazil must double down on its leadership efforts by sidelining conflicts of interest, limiting the influence of fossil fuel lobbyists, enabling deep and meaningful engagement with civil society, and walking the talk with domestic policy.

It is not enough to show ambition. Actions must represent a paradigm shift and floor of ambition for future COP Presidents. A key step towards accomplishing this is organizing these reforms and commitments into a package that can both be passed onto the next COP President and serve as an accountability tool for civil society.

The Brazilian COP 30 Presidency should package their efforts to strengthen COP as a pledge with associated annex of actions. The pledge would enhance trust in the Presidency and reinvigorate the COP process with a declaration of ambition. It would set the expectation that the COP 31 Presidency would adopt and improve upon the pledge.

In tandem with the pledge, Brazil can show paradigm-shifting leadership by beginning consultations with country parties on potential pathways to adopting permanent rules of procedure under the UNFCCC that establish majority voting instead of consensus. Change will not happen overnight, but for too long has the process been held hostage by the ability of the few to dictate the whole. The climate crisis does not pick favorites – it's time to elevate the most ambitious and equitable actors.

Japan

- The selection process for Japan's COP delegation and the management of the Japan Pavilion must be conducted with full transparency and openness, and the delegation should be composed in a manner consistent with achieving the 1.5°C target. Reports from COP29 indicated that delegations from several countries included lobbyists from the fossil fuel industry and proponents of carbon capture and storage, and similar concerns have been raised about members of Japan's delegation with ties to coal-related projects.¹⁷ Moreover, at the Japan Pavilion, corporate presentations frequently showcased technologies or initiatives that are scientifically misleading regarding climate action, while opportunities for NGOs and civil society to share their perspectives were extremely limited. Consequently, the information presented to the international community was biased.¹⁸ Such practices undermine ambitious climate goals and significantly compromise the fairness and credibility of policymaking by prioritizing national interests and short-term economic gains.

¹⁶ <https://www.env.go.jp/content/000209895.pdf>

¹⁷ <https://globalwitness.org/en/press-releases/fossil-fuel-lobbyists-eclipse-delegations-from-most-climate-vulnerable-nations-at-cop29-climate-talks/>

¹⁸ <https://www.env.go.jp/earth/cop/cop29/pavilion/>



- In climate policymaking, it is essential to incorporate the voices of citizens. Japan must establish and strengthen mechanisms to ensure input from the public is reflected in policy, as well as collaborate with civil society and the media to provide accurate information and foster informed public debate. Currently, the domestic public comment system has limited effectiveness.¹⁹ Moreover, media coverage does not match the high level of public concern about the climate crisis²⁰, making it difficult for citizens to acquire concrete knowledge or take action. Transparent decision-making that considers long-term national and global interests, rather than focusing solely on short-term economic or industry priorities, is crucial.

Contact

The Climate Reality Project is a global initiative tackling the climate crisis through training and mobilizing people worldwide to accelerate climate action to reach true net zero by 2050.
Global website: <https://www.climaterealityproject.org/>



The Climate Reality Project Japan

<https://climaterealityjapan.org/>

Community Advocacy Officer | Rina Toyoshi

Branch Manager | Yuiko Mitani

japan@climatereality.com

The “Global” section of this position paper presents the views of CRP Global, while the “Japan” section reflects the perspectives of Climate Reality Leaders from diverse backgrounds and has been compiled as CRP Japan’s overall stance. In preparing the “Japan” section, proposals from CRP Japan’s volunteer members, as well as the Energy and Biodiversity Action Groups, were incorporated, and the content was organized based on CRP’s core positions.

For more detailed recommendations from each group, please refer to the following documents:

- Energy Group:
<https://climaterealityjapan.org/01/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/EN-COP30-Energy-Group-Input.pdf>
- Biodiversity Group:
<https://climaterealityjapan.org/01/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/EN-COP30-Biodiversity-Group-Input.pdf>

¹⁹ https://watashinomirai.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Shiminsanka_seimei_0513.pdf

²⁰ <https://survey.gov-online.go.jp/r05/r05-kikohendo/2.html>