Call for inputs: climate financing and human rights

This submission draws on and reflects findings from several recent publications by the Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (GI-ESCR), which may be consulted for further detail and analysis; as well as empirical and analytical evidence generated by the Climate Finance Group for Latin America and the Caribbean (GFLAC).

Both organisations submit this input on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean Network for a Sustainable Financial System (REDFIS), a group of regional civil society organisations specialised in climate finance.

Mobilising climate finance in line with human rights: reflections following COP30

In the lead-up to COP30, GI-ESCR consistently highlighted a growing credibility gap in the climate finance agenda. Commitments remained far below what is required for States—particularly in the Global South—to meet climate objectives while fulfilling their obligations under international human rights law, including economic, social and cultural rights and encompassing both domestic and extraterritorial dimensions.[1] At that stage, GI-ESCR emphasised the need for climate finance that is predictable, accessible, and primarily grant-based, grounded in principles of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities, and the polluter-pays principle.[2]

This credibility gap has been empirically documented in regional contexts such as Latin America and the Caribbean through analytical work produced by GFLAC, which examines the structural alignment between public revenues, budgetary allocations and States' climate and human rights commitments.[3] The outcomes of COP30 confirmed both the relevance of these

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[1] For a detailed analysis of the implications of extraterritorial obligations on economic, social and cultural rights in defining the quantum and modalities of climate finance, see GI-ESCR, 'Boosting Ambition Through International Obligations: The Added Value of Integrating Human Rights to the Climate Financing Discussion'.

[2] See GI-ESCR's position paper at COP 30 and GFLAC's report on COP30's results on climate finance.

[3] See GFLAC's 'Sustainable Finance Index 2025: Sustainable finance and just transitions. Progress and setbacks toward low-carbon and climate-resilient economies in Latin America and the Caribbean' (Executive summary).

concerns and the structural limitations of the current approach. While decisions adopted in Belém reflected increased political recognition of climate finance—as evidenced by the establishment of a two-year work programme to analyse Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, including Article 9.1, which refers to developed countries' obligation to provide public finance to developing countries; the call to triple adaptation finance by 2035: and the recognition of the Baku to Belém Roadmap to 1.3 Trillion, among others—the level of ambition remained insufficient. Key decisions lacked clarity on scale, timelines, and delivery mechanisms, and did not meaningfully shift the continued reliance on debt-creating instruments or improve access for countries facing acute fiscal and debt pressures.[4] On this last point, evidence from Latin America and the Caribbean highlights how continued reliance on loans and other debt-creating instruments risks neutralising the potential impact of climate finance and further exacerbating unsustainable debt dynamics that undermine the progressive realisation of economic, social and cultural rights.[5]

In this context, the current period directly following COP30 has become a decisive phase to shape the outcomes of future negotiations, bearing particular attention to the upcoming COP31 set to take place in Turkey during late 2026. As technical work begins across central negotiation tracks, there remains scope to translate high-level political recognition into concrete, rights-aligned policy choices. This includes integrating evidence on normative compliance, fiscal coherence, revenue dependence and budgetary prioritisation into climate finance negotiations, to address not only the volume of finance, but its effectiveness, modalities and concrete distributive impacts.

Recent developments in international fiscal governance further underscore the unprecedented nature of this rare opportunity. Parallel negotiations unfolding under the UN

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[4] See GI-ESCR, 'COP30: Gaps, Gains and the Road Ahead'

[5] See GFLAC's 'Sustainable Finance Index 2025: Sustainable finance and just transitions. Progress and setbacks toward low-carbon and climate-resilient economies in Latin America and the Caribbean' (Executive summary).

Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation are addressing long-standing weaknesses in transparency, cooperation and enforcement that continue to undermine States' fiscal capacity. Structural gaps in the international tax system are estimated to result in the loss of hundreds of billions of dollars in public revenue each year—resources that, if effectively mobilised, could significantly expand the fiscal space available for States to mobilise non-debt-creating climate finance, which reduce their dependence on instruments that exacerbate structural vulnerabilities and allow them to materialise transformational adaptation and mitigation policies.[6]

Comparative regional analysis shows that countries with lower dependence on carbon-intensive revenues and greater access to non-repayable international climate finance tend to exhibit higher levels of financial alignment with climate objectives, underscoring the importance of tax justice and international cooperation for rights-consistent climate action. Taken together, these experiences point to actionable pathways that do not depend on creating new institutions, but on how existing processes are effectively used. They highlight the importance of integrating human rights standards holistically and promptly throughout climate finance negotiations, strengthening coherence between international climate and fiscal governance, and prioritising financing modalities that support predictability, accessibility and accountability for those most affected by climate change. They also demonstrate the value of institutionalising analytical and monitoring tools—such as fiscal alignment indices, budget tagging systems and climate finance taxonomies, including those developed by civil society organisations—that enable States and stakeholders to identify structural incoherencies, assess fiscal risks and strengthen accountability in line with their human rights obligations.

[6] See GI-ESCR, 'From The Hague to Belém: Synergies Between Recent Normative Developments on Climate Finance and the Path Towards 1.3 Trillion and Beyond'

<u>Recommendations for inclusion in the Secretary-General's synthesis report</u>

In light of the above, GI-ESCR and GFLAC, on behalf of REDFIS, respectfully recommend that the Secretary-General's synthesis report:

1. **Explicitly recognise climate finance as an integral element of States' human rights obligations on economic, social and cultural rights,** emphasising that the adequacy, quality and delivery of climate finance directly affect States' ability to realise those rights amid the climate emergency, including through their interaction with domestic fiscal structures, revenue composition and budgetary priorities.
2. **Call for the systematic integration of human rights standards into ongoing technical negotiations on climate finance**, particularly within the Two-Year Work Programme on Article 9, including 9.1, of the Paris Agreement, adaptation finance discussions, and the follow-up process of the New Collective Quantified Goal -including through the ministerial dialogue on its implementation established at COP30-, through the consideration of benchmarks related to sufficiency, equity, predictability, accessibility and non-discrimination, as well as indicators capturing fiscal coherence and distributive impacts, such as those identified and proposed by civil society
3. **Affirm the need to prioritise highly concessional, grant-based and non-debt-creating climate finance**, especially for countries facing high debt burdens, and caution against continued reliance on loans and other instruments that risk undermining fiscal sustainability and short, medium and long-term human rights realisation.
4. **Encourage stronger coherence between climate finance discussions and international fiscal cooperation efforts**, including those under the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, recognising that closing gaps in tax transparency, cooperation and enforcement is essential to expand the domestic resource mobilisation and international assistance and cooperation needed to finance rights-consistent climate action, and to reduce States' dependence on carbon-intensive fiscal revenue sources that generate long-term climate and human rights risks.

5. **Promote greater clarity and transparency regarding what qualifies as climate finance**, including criteria that reflects human rights considerations, to improve accountability, monitoring and assessment of human rights impacts, while avoiding double-counting, and supporting the institutionalisation of classification, tracking and monitoring systems—such as those analysed by GFLAC—that enable meaningful participation, oversight and evidence-based decision-making.