



Discussion on

Global Climate Outcomes and Strategic Pathways for India

Wednesday, 25 February 2026 | Time: 12:00-13:30 Hrs (90 mins)

Venue: Jehangir 2, Taj Palace, New Delhi

Introduction

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change's (UNFCCC) 30th Conference of Parties (COP30), held in Belém, Brazil, marked a critical moment in global climate negotiations. Convening a decade after the adoption of the Paris Agreement, COP30 took place at a time of unprecedented strain on multilateralism and when the world is fast approaching the 1.5°C threshold. Expectations from countries at COP30 were high, both to raise ambition and to demonstrate that the UNFCCC process can deliver implementable outcomes in an increasingly fraught geopolitical context.

Against the reality of climate crisis and absolute priorities of climate resilience and just transition, in substantive terms, COP30 delivered a mixed but consequential set of outcomes. On climate finance, negotiations built on the New Collective Quantified Goal agreed at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan. Countries agreed to advance the 'Baku to Belém Roadmap', signalling an intent to mobilise climate finance at the scale of trillions by 2035. However, concerns related to adequacy, concessionality, access, and the dilution of developed country obligations under Article 9 persisted, which reinforces climate finance as a major political fault line during climate negotiations. On adaptation, COP30 marked a significant step forward through the adoption of the 'Belém Adaptation Indicators' under the 'Global Goal on Adaptation' (GGA). This moves GGA into a more operational phase while explicitly safeguarding equity, national circumstances, and avoiding additional reporting burdens. COP30 also kept the important agenda of the Just Transition Work Programme alive, further embedding social and development considerations into the Paris Agreement implementation cycle.

COP30 provided an important political signal at a time of deepening stress on multilateralism and the proliferation of plurilateral initiatives and trade-related climate measures. The Brazilian Presidency's emphasis on *Mutirão*—a term derived from the indigenous Tupi-Guarani language and representing "collective mobilization"—was an approach towards collective responsibility and cooperation, while advancing an emerging vision of a two-tiered climate multilateralism, with consensus-based rulemaking under the UNFCCC complemented by accelerated implementation through coalitions and platforms. It reflected both the limits of consensus-based negotiations and the need for faster delivery.

For India, COP30 carried particular significance as it relates to the centrality of the UNFCCC, while placing climate finance and adaptation at the heart of the political debate. India reaffirmed the principles of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities as the central tenet of climate action. The constructive engagement by India towards creating a platform for dialogue on issues related to unilateral trade-measures underlined India's commitment to protect and strengthen multilateral processes.

However, in the first few weeks of 2026, even as the outcomes of COP30 were being unpacked and contextualized, the United States gave a massive jolt by withdrawing not only from the Paris Agreement but from its parent treaty – the UNFCCC – as well as numerous other international organizations. Unlike the first U.S. withdrawal in 2016, other countries did not step forward to backstop the UNFCCC architecture; instead, attention has shifted toward trade deals and plurilateral arrangements, raising the risks of fragmentation and the weaponization of climate standards in trade. The threat to multilateralism, suddenly, has become real. This turbulence has strategic implications for India. India's role in shaping the future of multilateral cooperation on climate is critical, be it as a probable host of COP 33 in 2028 or a leader of a development first, Global South aligned pathway for the next phase of global climate governance.

Flow of Session

The convening will be organised as a 90-minute moderated discussion featuring one journalist moderator and five leading thought leaders. The flow of proceedings is outlined below.

TIME	AGENDA ITEM
12:00 – 12:10 HRS	Welcome Remarks Ms. Dipa Bagai , Country Director, NRDC India Mr. R.R. Rashmi , Distinguished Fellow, TERI
12:10 – 12:15 HRS	Keynote address Ambassador Shyam Saran , President, India International Centre (IIC) (tbc)
12:15 – 12:20 HRS	Launch of Post-COP30 Issue Brief
12:20 – 13:25 HRS	Panel Discussion: <i>What Will Shape the Next Decade of Climate Action?</i> Moderator: Dr. Ajay Mathur , Professor of Practice, School of Public Policy, IIT Delhi and former Director General, International Solar Alliance Panelists: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dr. Acquino Vimal, Joint Secretary, UNES, Ministry of External Affairs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Leena Nandan, Distinguished Fellow, TERI and Former Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change • Mr. Shishir Priyadarshi, President, Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) • Ms. Divya Sharma (Ph.D), Executive Director – India, The Climate Group • Mr. Ramesh Subramaniam, Global Director – Programmes & Strategy, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) • Ms. Mansi Shah, Senior Coordinator, Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) <p>Followed by Q&A</p>
13:25 – 13:30 HRS	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>Mr. Sameer Kwart, Senior Director, India-International, NRDC</p>

Panel Discussion: What Will Shape the Next Decade of Climate Action?

COP30, held in Belém, Brazil, marked a decisive shift in the global climate process from prolonged rule-making toward accelerated implementation. Under the Brazilian Presidency, Parties adopted 56 decisions by consensus, reaffirming the integrity of the Paris Agreement while signalling that climate action must move faster to keep 1.5°C within reach. Central to this approach was the Presidency's emphasis on Mutirão, a framework of collective mobilisation that sought to reconnect multilateral climate governance with people, sub-national actors, and on-ground delivery. COP30 positioned itself as a COP of implementation, consolidating the Paris Rulebook while recognising the limits of consensus-based negotiations in a rapidly warming world. The geopolitical developments of 2026 has increased the risk of a more fragmented and fractured global climate architecture. This session will explore the following questions:

1. What was the most consequential outcome of COP30 on climate finance, adaptation, and multilateral cooperation, and what is a critical gap to address over the next couple of years?
2. How did Belem reshape expectations around scale, sources, and responsibility for climate finance for developing countries?
3. How significant are the adoption of voluntary adaptation indicators, and how can India use this mechanism for strengthening domestic climate action on adaptation and resilience?
4. How can India's BRICS Presidency work for the overall benefit global south climate ecosystem in terms of finance, technology and energy security?
5. What strategic choices does COP30 offer for India's future climate diplomacy, especially in the context of a potential COP33 Presidency and the second Global Stocktake cycle?
6. How can India strengthen domestic delivery, finance readiness, and institutional capacity to convert international negotiations into on-ground climate action?