

2026 UNFCCC CLIMATE WEEK 4 | BAKU, AZERBAIJAN | 7-11 SEPTEMBER 2026  
IMPLEMENTATION FORUM

## IMPLEMENTATION LAB - THE FAIR TON / TONELADA JUSTA: MAKING WASTE PICKERS' CLIMATE CONTRIBUTION MEASURABLE, INVESTABLE AND SCALABLE

Date: Thursday, 10 September 2026 | Time: 14.00-15.30 | Room: A1

Version: 10 July 2026

### Background and Objective

The waste sector is responsible for roughly 20% of global anthropogenic methane emissions, while only 9% of plastics are recycled worldwide, 4% in Latin America and the Caribbean. More than 50% of the global recovery effort is sustained by over 2 million grassroots waste pickers, mostly women and Indigenous and Afro-descendant workers, whose labour already avoids emissions that are critical to keeping 1.5°C within reach: on average, 1.45 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e are avoided for every tonne of plastic they recover, compared with virgin production. Yet this contribution is not measured, not recognized and does not access climate finance — “no data, no sector.”

Fair Ton / Tonelada Justa — a climate initiative registered with the UNFCCC and governed by the International Alliance of Waste Pickers (IAWP), in collaboration with the Avina Foundation, the Global Methane Hub, the World Bank (WB), and Brazil's Ministry of the Environment — closes this gap through three interlocking building blocks: (i) a scientific MRV methodology, aligned with the IPCC Guidelines and the GHG Protocol, that quantifies and certifies avoided emissions (CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O) and informs real cost-effectiveness per tonne avoided through MACC curves, now being extended with social and economic indicators into a triple-impact index (environmental, economic, and social); (ii) the Data Maturity Ladder, a four-level capacity-building pathway that takes cooperatives from informal notebooks to standardized, auditable datasets, scaled through waste-picker “data champions” and a Train-the-Trainers model; and (iii) the Fair Ton traceability platform ([www.fair-ton.org](http://www.fair-ton.org)), with a GHG/methane calculator and open API architecture, designed for interoperability and expansion from Brazil, Chile and Ecuador to at least 100 organizations — and, through IAWP networks, to Asia and Africa — by 2028. The 1x100 Campaign turns this system into public momentum: 100,000 organized waste pickers recovering and verifying 1 million tonnes of recyclable materials across Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Lab will advance concrete Plans to Accelerate Solutions (PASes) under the Global Climate Action Agenda's Waste and Circular Economy axis, with direct links to the Just Transition and Finance axes. Objectives: (1) validate the Fair Ton MRV approach with governments, carbon-market standards bodies and climate-finance actors; (2) agree on a pathway to integrate waste pickers' verified avoided emissions into NDCs, Biennial Transparency Reports, the Global Methane Pledge and the Global Plastics Treaty (emissions under Article 7; binding finance under Article 11); (3) mobilize catalytic finance commitments to scale the platform and the Data Maturity Ladder — one of the most cost-effective and socially just mitigation opportunities in the waste sector; and (4) launch international commitments to the 1x100 Campaign, so that the “fair ton” becomes the unit through which inclusive recycling is recognized, financed and scaled, and waste pickers move from objects of policy to subjects of climate rights.

## Preliminary Agenda

| Time            | Segment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| 14:00<br>–14:15 | <b>1. Opening — The Invisible Mitigation of the Global South</b><br><br><b>WE EXIST.</b> Welcome and framing: separation at source by waste pickers as the binding constraint on organic-waste diversion and methane reduction. First-person testimony by a waste-picker leader. Possible live demonstration of the traceability platform.<br><br><b>COMMUNITIES MATTER.</b> Regional perspective on how territorial approaches, local networks and data can extend climate action to communities and local economies where large-scale infrastructure does not always reach.<br><br><i>Speakers: Severino Moderator, Fundación Avina, waste picker leader, International Alliance of Waste Pickers.</i>                                                                                                                                       |
| 14:15<br>–14:30 | <b>2. Opening Remarks</b><br><br><b>WE MEASURE.</b> One cooperative looks like charity. Thousands of cooperatives are infrastructure. The Fair Ton MRV methodology: boundaries, gases (CO <sub>2</sub> , CH <sub>4</sub> , N <sub>2</sub> O; IPCC Guidelines / GHG Protocol), the Data Maturity Ladder, what an auditor sees, and the organisations' verified figures. One-minute transition.<br><br><b>NO DATA, NO SECTOR.</b> Why it is important to be recognised by the NAZCA Platform. How they are working to make it possible for grassroots organisations to register. How grassroots efforts can make a huge difference. How traceability can create value and unlock finance.<br><br><i>Speakers: Romina Malagamba Otegui, Fair Ton Director, researcher, UNSAM; Todd Edwards, Team Lead, Tracking and Recognition Unit, UNFCCC.</i> |
| 14:30<br>–14:55 | <b>3. Discussion</b><br><br><b>WE CREATE VALUE. WE CLAIM THE VALUE.</b> From one cooperative to an ecosystem: measured avoided-to-generated emissions ratio, cost per verified tonne versus the abatement cost curve, demand-side reactions, and a completed purchase of verified tonnes with direct payment to cooperatives. Data ownership and climbing the data maturity ladder.<br><br><b>NETWORKING.</b> How building a community of practice can help us identify opportunities, grow, and pursue finance.<br><br><i>Speakers: Soledad Mella and Indumathi, Waste Pickers Leaders (video); Maditlhare Koena, Treasurer of IAWP.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 14:55<br>–15:10 | <b>4. Breakout Discussions</b><br><br><b>WE FINANCE</b> — Interactive roundtable on scaling pathways.<br><br><i>Table facilitator: Alejandro Mejía, Advocacy Coordinator, IAWP.</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 15:10<br>–15:30 | <b>5. Closing and Next Steps</b><br><br><b>WE SCALE</b> — Conversation with the High-Level Champion Nigar Arpadarai and Secretary Rolph Payet on the route from Baku COP29 to Antalya COP31. Launch of the 1x100 Campaign.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

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*Speakers: Nigar Arpadarai, UN Climate Change High-Level Champion for COP29; Rolph Payet, Executive Secretary of the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Convention Secretariat; Romina Malagamba Otegui, Fair Ton Director.*

*Chair: Severino Lima Jr., waste-picker leader (IAWP).*

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