



Advancing adaptation as a regional priority for Latin America and the Caribbean under the Belém Mission to 1.5

This submission is prepared in the framework of the Task Force “Adaptation as a Priority for Latin America and the Caribbean”, hosted in Climate Action Network (CANLA) and representing more than 30 organisations from the region. It responds to the Call for Inputs for the Belém Mission to 1.5 by highlighting adaptation as a regional priority and by identifying implementation priorities for nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs) across Latin America and the Caribbean.

Latin America and the Caribbean is among the regions most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, facing a combination of environmental, social, and economic risks that deepen existing vulnerabilities and inequalities (IPCC, 2022). The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme events, including prolonged droughts, floods, hurricanes, and sea-level rise, are already directly affecting populations, ecosystems, livelihoods, and local economies across the region (WWF, 2023; Nagy et al., 2019). In this context, strengthening adaptation ambition and implementation is not only an environmental priority, but also a development, equity and security imperative for the region.

In a region facing intensifying climate impacts, structural inequalities, uneven institutional capacities, and growing concern over the intensity of El Niño arrival over the next months, strengthening adaptation is an urgent priority. El Niño is expected to further intensify existing climate risks and deepen social inequalities, particularly in territories already affected by insufficient adaptation measures, limited access to public services, and high exposure to extreme events. Responding to this context requires stronger institutional capacities, more systematic mainstreaming of adaptation across development planning, and the meaningful integration of the knowledge, practices, and perspectives of Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendant peoples, and local communities into the design and implementation of inclusive, effective, and equitable adaptation responses.

This submission therefore focuses on high-impact action areas, enabling conditions, regional experiences and international cooperation needs to advance adaptation ambition and delivery across the region.

1. Adaptation implementation priorities for LAC

Latin America and the Caribbean have made important progress in climate planning, but implementation remains uneven and under-resourced. By January 2026, 23 out of 33 countries of the region had submitted their NDC 3.0, 22 had submitted their Biennial Transparency Report, and 17¹ had submitted their National Adaptation Plan to the UNFCCC, while other 6 have their NAPs in progress (NDC-LAC, 2026). While these numbers show

¹Argentina, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Brasil, Chile, Colômbia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Granada, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguai, Peru, Santa Lúcia, Suriname, San Vicente y las Granadinas, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.



growing engagement with climate planning, they also reveal a persistent gap in adaptation ambition and implementation across the region.

A principal challenge is the persistent gap between planning and implementation.

Developing countries continue to face severe hurdles in translating NAPs and NDCs into concrete, locally grounded action, including a significant finance shortfall, multi-year delays in accessing climate funds, limited availability of downscaled climate and vulnerability data, and insufficient technical and institutional capacities. These constraints are compounded by fragmented governance, siloed coordination across ministries and levels of government, and weak integration of adaptation into local development planning, budgeting, and public investment systems.

In practice, adaptation priorities in Latin America and the Caribbean cluster around a consistent set of sectors and themes across NDCs, NAPs and funded projects. Amongst priorities settled in these documents and projects, we highlight climate-resilient food systems and agriculture, water resources, biodiversity and ecosystems, human health, cities, infrastructure and coastal zones, framed by cross-cutting concerns such as gender equality, climate justice and the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendant people and local communities.

Recent studies also point to critical adaptation gaps in the region, including the absence of robust health adaptation policies (The Lancet Countdown, 2023) and high exposure to compound climate risks, particularly in coastal areas and in sectors such as agriculture and food security (IPCC, 2022; Nagy et al., 2019; IDB, 2024). These findings reinforce the need to treat adaptation as a central pillar of climate ambition in Latin America and the Caribbean, ensuring that NAPs and NDCs are supported by sector-specific strategies, adequate finance, and implementation mechanisms capable of responding to the differentiated risks faced by communities, ecosystems, and local economies.

2. Regional case studies and best practices

Several countries in the region have moved beyond general commitments by integrating adaptation into sectoral planning, territorial governance, monitoring frameworks, and climate finance strategies. **These experiences offer important lessons for the Belém Mission to 1.5, while also showing that current levels of finance and implementation support remain insufficient to match regional needs.**

One important lesson from the region is the value of sectoral and territorial approaches to adaptation planning. Many countries in the region, such as Brazil, Chile, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica and Uruguay have adopted a sectoral NAP model, with specific plans for cities and infrastructure, agriculture, coastal zones and energy, each identifying risks, priorities, measures and financing strategies.

Another important best practice is the integration of equity and civil society participation into adaptation planning. Argentina's National Adaptation and Mitigation Plan is structured



around cross-cutting approaches including gender and diversity, comprehensive risk management, health and just labour transition. Brazil's ongoing *Plano Clima Adaptação* is also relevant for its interministerial and citizen participation process, its National Adaptation Strategy and 16 sectoral plans, including one specific for combatting racism. Guatemala's National Adaptation and Mitigation plan has included the participation of local communities and indigenous peoples in land-use planning.

Several countries explicitly connect adaptation with climate justice, gender equality, intergenerational equity, Indigenous Peoples, and vulnerable communities, although implementation remains uneven.

Regional experiences also show the importance of connecting NAPs and adaptation priorities with climate finance. Argentina's NAP stands out for calling for reforms to the global financial architecture, including improved access to adaptation finance for middle-income countries. Costa Rica includes adaptation in financing instruments and has accessed Adaptation Fund and Green Climate Fund resources for nature-based adaptation, vulnerable communities, agriculture, water and coastal resilience. Honduras, Peru, Argentina and Uruguay have also received Adaptation Fund support for projects linked to rural resilience, coastal adaptation, water resources, ecosystem-based adaptation and vulnerable communities. Guatemala draws on resources from the Adaptation Fund (AF) and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), with a primary focus on projects that strengthen community resilience, improve water management, and restore ecosystems. Panama's NAP process is being developed with support from the Green Climate Fund, while Venezuela has pursued GCF readiness support for adaptation planning in agriculture, fisheries and water resources.

At the same time, these case studies reveal **persistent implementation gaps**. Several countries have NAPs that are outdated, still under development, not yet officially submitted, or insufficiently connected to clear quantitative targets and long-term finance. Chile's NAP, developed earlier and submitted in 2017, illustrates the need for regular updating. Colombia's PNACC is also due for renewal. Honduras has developed a NAP and reported progress through its Adaptation Communication, but the plan is not yet registered on the UNFCCC NAP platform. Mexico, despite having a robust adaptation chapter in its NDC, does not yet have a NAP. Bolivia committed to developing a NAP before 2023, but this has not yet materialized.

The Amazon Forest, for instance, is both a strategic and highly challenging territory for climate adaptation. Around 48 million people live in the region, including Indigenous Peoples, traditional communities, riverine populations, quilombola (afro-des communities, extractivist groups, and urban and rural populations who depend on the forest's ecological balance. The intensification of severe droughts, floods, forest fires, and changes in rainfall patterns has directly affected the health, mobility, production systems, access to water, food security, and ways of life of these populations.

Climate adaptation in the Amazon must begin with qualified listening to communities and the recognition of traditional knowledge, in dialogue with climate science, appropriate



technologies, and public policies. This process makes it possible to identify real impacts, losses and damages already experienced, as well as solutions suited to the specific characteristics of each territory.

Through this listening process, priorities emerge such as water security, resilient production, income generation adapted to climate change, community infrastructure, territorial protection, environmental monitoring, climate education, and cultural strengthening. The Amazon experience shows that effective adaptation solutions must combine community leadership, territorial governance, accessible financing, and ecosystem protection, contributing to climate justice and transformational adaptation.

A full report written by Adaptation Committee, convened by the Presidency of COP30, entitled [Climate Adaptation of the Amazon Forest: a focus on the guardians of the rainforest](#) in 2025 explored some of these practices in the Amazon and the contribution of a community based adaptation to strengthening resilience and advancing more effective, locally grounded adaptation processes.

3. International cooperation needs

International cooperation is essential to move adaptation from planning to implementation. Latin American and Caribbean countries face high levels of debt, limited institutional capacity and weak data infrastructure and cannot be expected to suddenly implement adaptation plans without adequate and sustained support. In line with the Paris Agreement and its foundation of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, developed countries must play a central role in providing the means of implementation, including finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building needed to ensure that NAPs are not only submitted and enhanced, but also implementable, equitable, and responsive to the realities of communities facing escalating climate risks.

International cooperation should also strengthen institutional and technical capacities for implementation, including support for vulnerability and risk assessments, downscaled climate information, monitoring and evaluation systems, and integration of adaptation into public investment, budgeting and sectoral planning. Regional cooperation can play a key role by enabling exchange of lessons across countries on sectoral NAPs, territorial adaptation plans, nature-based solutions, climate-resilient infrastructure, health adaptation, and inclusive governance. Particular attention should be given to mechanisms that ensure the meaningful participation of Indigenous Peoples, Afrodescendant peoples, local communities, women and youth, so that adaptation finance and technical support reach the territories and populations most exposed to climate risks.

Available evidence on NAP financing suggests that multilateral finance, especially from the Green Climate Fund, has so far supported only a limited share of NAP processes and often through small-scale readiness grants, technical assistance or project-based implementation rather than predictable, long-term finance for full NAP delivery. This is particularly concerning given UNEP's estimate that adaptation finance needs in developing countries will reach USD



310–365 billion per year by 2035, while international public adaptation finance flows stood at only USD 26 billion in 2023.

In this context, existing multilateral support for NAPs in Latin America and the Caribbean should be seen as important but clearly insufficient: it helps countries prepare plans and pilot implementation, but it does not yet match the urgency, territorial scale or sustained financing required to turn NAPs into actionable resilience for communities facing escalating climate risks. The Belém Mission to 1.5 should therefore emphasize the growing need for predictable, grant-based and highly concessional finance, delivered through a long-term perspective, with simplified access procedures and targeted support for countries developing, updating or operationalizing their NAPs.

4. Final considerations

Overall, the experience of Latin America and the Caribbean shows that high-impact adaptation action depends on moving from planning to implementation through stronger institutions, sectoral and territorial integration, locally relevant data, monitoring systems, inclusive governance and predictable finance. The region provides valuable examples of innovation in NDCs, Adaptation Communications, sectoral NAPs, vulnerability indicators, nature-based solutions, territorial planning and participatory processes. However, these practices remain fragmented and underfunded. International cooperation under the Belém Mission to 1.5 should therefore support the scaling of these experiences through accessible, grant-based and long-term adaptation finance, technical cooperation, institutional strengthening, and regional mechanisms for knowledge exchange, especially for countries that are still developing, updating or operationalizing their NAPs.

5. References

Adaptation Committee. (2025). *Climate Adaptation of the Amazon Forest: a focus on the guardians of the rainforest*. Available at: [Report-Climate-Adaptation-v8_compressed-1.pdf](#)

Inter-American Development Bank. (2024). *Food insecurity and climate vulnerability: Empirical evidence for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean*. IDB.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2022). *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press.

Nagy, G. J., Gutiérrez, O., Brugnoli, E., Verocai, J. E., Gómez-Erache, M., Villamizar, A., Olivares, I., Azeiteiro, U. M., Leal Filho, W., & Amaro, N. (2019). *Climate vulnerability, impacts and adaptation in Central and South America coastal areas*. *Regional Studies in Marine Science*, 29, 100683.

NDC-LAC. (2026). *Follow-up of Nationally Determined Contributions in Latin America and the Caribbean*. NDC-LAC.



The Lancet Countdown. (2023). *The 2023 Latin America report of The Lancet Countdown on health and climate change: The imperative for health-centred climate-resilient development*. The Lancet Regional Health – Americas.

United Nations. (2015). *Paris Agreement*. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

United Nations Environment Programme. (2025). *Adaptation Gap Report 2025: Running on Empty*. UNEP.