Leaders' Roundtable

Zero Waste, Circularity and Methane

11 November 2026, 16:00 – 17:30, Leaders' Roundtable Room 2 (Ayder)

1. Overview and Context

How the world produces, consumes and manages materials has major implications for the climate, natural resources, public health and sustainable development. Rising municipal waste and continued reliance on linear production and disposal models intensify pressure on resources. Waste is also a significant source of methane emissions, making improved waste management an important opportunity for rapid climate action.

Zero waste and circular economy approaches can turn this challenge into an opportunity for climate action, resource security and economic resilience. Preventing waste, keeping products and materials in use for longer, expanding reuse and recycling, and improving organic-waste management can reduce emissions, create value and improve local environments. Achieving this transition at scale requires stronger policies, infrastructure, finance, technology and international cooperation.

Zero waste, circularity and methane reduction are therefore key themes of the COP 31 Action Agenda and a focus of the COP 31 High-Level Climate Champion. Convened during the Leaders' Summit, the event will elevate these interconnected priorities and encourage practical commitments towards the shared goals of halving the projected increase in global municipal solid waste generation by 2035 and increasing the global circular material use rate in production and manufacturing to at least 15% by 2035.

2. Purpose and Objectives

Under the auspices of H.E. Emine Erdoğan, First Lady of Türkiye, the Leaders' Roundtable will provide a high-level platform to strengthen political commitment and advance coordinated action on zero waste, circularity and waste-related methane emissions.

Its objectives are to:

- Advance the global Zero Waste agenda by mobilising support for the shared ambition to at least halve the projected increase in global municipal solid waste generation by 2035, alongside prospective commitments and implementation action.
- Strengthen international cooperation and delivery by encouraging national action and mobilising support for policy development, finance, technology, capacity-building and practical implementation.
- Accelerate the transition to a circular economy by mobilising support for increasing the global circular material use rate to at least 15%, integrating circularity into national climate and development planning, and scaling implementable solutions in priority sectors.

3. Participation Level

The Roundtable will be attended by Heads of State and Government, First Ladies and leaders of international organizations and CEOs.

4. Session Overview and Format

The Roundtable will bring together high-level perspectives on zero waste, circularity and methane mitigation, and facilitate an exchange of views on priorities and opportunities for international cooperation.

- **Opening:** Introductory remarks will be delivered by H.E. Emine Erdoğan, First Lady of Türkiye; H.E. Murat Kurum, COP 31 President; Mr. Samed Ağırbaş, COP 31 High-Level Climate Champion; and H.E. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.
- **Leaders' Segment:** Heads of State or Government will be invited to express support for the shared ambition to halve the projected increase in global municipal solid waste generation by 2035, announce related national commitments, share their national experiences, and highlight opportunities for cooperation to accelerate the transition to a zero-waste, circular economy and reduce methane emissions.
- **Closing**

5. Guiding Question

Participants are invited to structure their interventions around the following guiding question:

- What role can international cooperation, finance, technology and private sector engagement play in accelerating concrete action to halve the projected increase in global municipal solid waste generation by 2035, scale up zero-waste practices, promote the circular economy and reduce methane emissions from the waste sector?

6. Logistical Details

Hosts / Organizers:	COP 31 Presidency of Türkiye
Date and time:	11 November 2026, 16:00–17:30
Venue:	Leaders' Roundtable Room 2 (Ayder), COP 31 Antalya
Presided by:	H.E. Emine Erdoğan, First Lady of the Republic of Türkiye and Chair of the United Nations Secretary-General's Advisory Board of Eminent Persons on Zero Waste
Format:	Leaders' Roundtable (90 minutes)