COP 31

2026 annual high-level ministerial roundtable on pre-2030 ambition

Mandated Event

17 November 2026 | 15:00 – 18:00 (UTC+3)
MR 19 / Zone D3

Concept Note

1. Background and context

The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), at its third session, decided to convene an annual high-level ministerial round table (HLMRT) on pre-2030 ambition, beginning at its fourth session (decision 1/CMA.3, para. 31).

The 2026 annual high-level ministerial round table on pre-2030 ambition will provide a space for Ministers and other high-level representatives to exchange views on the COP31 mitigation outcomes to strengthen political momentum, international cooperation and the enabling conditions needed to accelerate implementation.

Global climate action has significantly accelerated since the adoption of the Paris Agreement – emissions growth has slowed, clean energy deployment and investment has surged and the synergies between climate action, sustainable development, energy security and access, and health and wellbeing are increasingly evident. Countries are undertaking significant and ongoing work to strengthen climate action to reduce emissions, drive economic growth, resilience and development.

International discussions on mitigation this year, including at the Pre-COP Ministerial meeting in Fiji (7-8 October), have demonstrated a strong focus on implementation and advancing practical climate solutions, while recognising different national circumstances and decarbonisation pathways. Many Parties have called for COP31 to respond to the science on 1.5 overshoot, as well as to major global challenges and opportunities, and the devastating climate impacts experienced in 2026.

Across the year, Parties have raised a number of mitigation opportunities, for example electrification, renewable energy, grids and energy storage, methane reductions in industry and waste, and carbon management, among others. Barriers to implementation, particularly means of implementation for developing countries, have also been highlighted as an important consideration. The Belem Mission to 1.5 report, developed by the COP29, COP30 and COP31 Presidencies, draws on Parties experiences and insights, as well as latest science, to outline key barriers and opportunities to keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

The discussion will invite participants to reflect on how mitigation outcomes at COP31 can facilitate implementation and accelerate high-impact climate solutions, including in the context of the latest science around 1.5 overshoot. Participants may wish to offer their experiences on key opportunities, drawing on national and regional experiences, and could also reflect on the Belem Mission to 1.5 report to be released ahead of COP31.The round table will also take place at an important juncture for the mitigation discussions under the intergovernmental process. CMA 8 is expected to consider the progress of the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme (MWP) with a view to adopting a decision on its continuation.

Discussions on the MWP this year have demonstrated broad support for continuing the MWP. Many Parties have also suggested specific improvements, for example multi-year thematic planning, follow-through from investment-focus events, stronger linkages to the Paris Agreement's cycle, and institutional arrangements. However, there are varying levels of support and different views on the scale and priority of these changes.

The discussion will invite participants to consider how the MWP could more effectively contribute to urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade in a manner that complements the global stocktake while maintaining its facilitative, non-prescriptive and non-punitive character respecting national sovereignty and circumstances and the nationally determined nature of NDCs.

As mandated by Decision 4/CMA.4, paragraph 17, participants will also hear from the co-chairs of the MWP on the annual report of the work programme to set the scene of the discussions.

2. Guiding Questions

1. Drawing on national experiences, what are the trends, opportunities and challenges impacting the development and implementation of climate policies?
2. What are the key mitigation outcomes that Parties want to achieve at COP 31?
3. What specific improvements are Parties seeking for the MWP, including on the future timeframe for the MWP?

3. Agenda/Programme

2026 High-level Ministerial on pre-2030 Ambition | Tuesday, 17 November | 15:00 – 18:00

Time	Session
15:00 – 15:15 (*15 minutes*)	**Opening by Ministerial Co-Chairs:** **Hon. Carsten Schneider,** Minister for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany and **Hon. Bhupender Yadav**, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India **Welcome address by COP31 Presidency** o **His Excellency Murat Kurum**, COP31 President o **The Hon Chris Bowen MP,** COP31 President of Negotiations **Welcome remarks by Simon Stiell, Executive Secretary, UNFCCC secretariat**
15:15 – 15:45 (*30 minutes*)	**Scene-setting session:** - **Special interventions from representatives of previous Presidencies** - **The 2026 and 2025 annual report of the Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme** o **Angela Churie Kallhauge** and **Gao Xiang**, co-chairs of the Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme present on the 2026 and 2025 Annual Report of the work programme

Time	Session
15:45 – 17:55 (*130 minutes*)	**Round table discussion – Guiding Questions** 1. Drawing on national experiences, what are the trends, opportunities and challenges impacting the development and implementation of climate policies? 2. What are the key mitigation outcomes that Parties want to achieve at COP 31? 3. What specific improvements are Parties seeking for the MWP, including on the future timeframe for the MWP? **Format:** 1. The dialogue will be held in a round table setting, to be facilitated by Hon. Carsten Schneider, Minister for the Environment, Climate Action, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Germany and Hon. Bhupender Yadav, Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, India 2. Once the round table discussion opens, Ministerial Co-Chairs will open the floor for interventions and invite Ministers with raised flags to speak, with priority given to Ministers speaking on behalf of groups of Parties, then to Ministers speaking on behalf of Parties, by representatives speaking on behalf of groups of Parties, and by representatives speaking on behalf of individual Parties, in that protocol order. 3. Interventions shall be limited to three minutes and will be timed. Parties should note that otherwise it may not be possible to accommodate all speakers in the allocated time. Reactions to previous interventions are encouraged, as to allow for a meaningful exchange among high-level representatives of parties.
17:55 – 18:00 (*5 minutes*)	**Summary of discussion and closing remarks** Ministerial Co-Chairs