HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG
İSTANBUL

COP31
ANTALYA

COP31 Antalya Facts, Debates and What to Expect on the Ground

A practical guide to the 2026 climate conference in Antalya, Turkey

Emily Rice Johnson and Diego Cupolo

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Prologue

A UN Climate Conference in Turkey. What a challenge. What an opportunity.

Until a few years ago, the Turkish government had not exactly distinguished itself through active climate action. It signed the Paris Agreement – the most recent and comprehensive legally binding international climate protection agreement we have – in 2016, but did not ratify it until 2021. Turkey's economy and population are growing, and with them its industrial and military ambitions, and consequently its energy demand, which is still predominantly met by oil and natural gas, mostly of Russian origin.

However, there have been some developments in Turkish climate policy in recent years: renewable energy is being expanded; Turkey adopted its first national climate law in 2025, set a net-zero target for 2053 and raised its emission reduction targets for 2035; it introduced an emissions trading scheme; and the pilot phase for the Turkish ETS is now beginning. COP President Murat Kurum keeps reiterating what his predecessors at COP 30 in Brazil said: international climate policy must now focus on implementation. And right he is: We have enough agreements; what is missing is the corresponding action.

Expectations for COP 31 therefore fly high. This booklet is intended, above all, to provide you – visitors to the COP from abroad – with a little guidance on climate developments in Turkey and during the COP. What is at stake, who are the key figures, where is what happening – you will find answers to these and other questions on the following pages. Climate policy is complex and Antalya is a big city. We would like to guide you a little.

For the Heinrich Böll Stiftung, climate policy has been a key focus of our work from the very beginning. And we share those expectations. Because in all areas – adaptation, emissions reduction and climate finance – there are shortcomings. And this also has to do with the elephant in the COP room: fossil fuels, namely oil, gas and coal. Saying 'fossil' – let alone writing it into a final declaration – has, at COPs to date, been like wishing the devil a happy birthday in a place of worship. We welcome the so-called Santa Marta Process: the first international conference on the Transition away from Fossil Fuels (TAFF) took place in the Colombian city in April 2026. Turkey seems to be realising now that it is not particularly strategic to be dependent on imported fossil fuels. Just how far it will go to reduce the use of oil or coal is one of the key questions at this COP.

For us at hbs, the TAFF process is particularly important. Unless we forcefully push the elephant in the room towards the exit, limiting global warming will remain an unattainable goal. That said, greater electrification – a stated priority for Turkey at COP 31 – can contribute indirectly to this, but only if we stop sourcing electricity from oil- and coal-fired power stations.

COP 30 in Belém showed that the cautious manoeuvring during negotiations requires pressure from an active civil society that repeatedly reminds the diplomats what is at stake. There will also be lively civil society activities in Antalya – not only on the official conference grounds but also in the city and at the Peoples' Summit, which we support.

See you around in Antalya!

Dr Dawid Danilo Bartelt

Director, Heinrich Böll Stiftung Istanbul Office

1 Turkey & The Road to Antalya

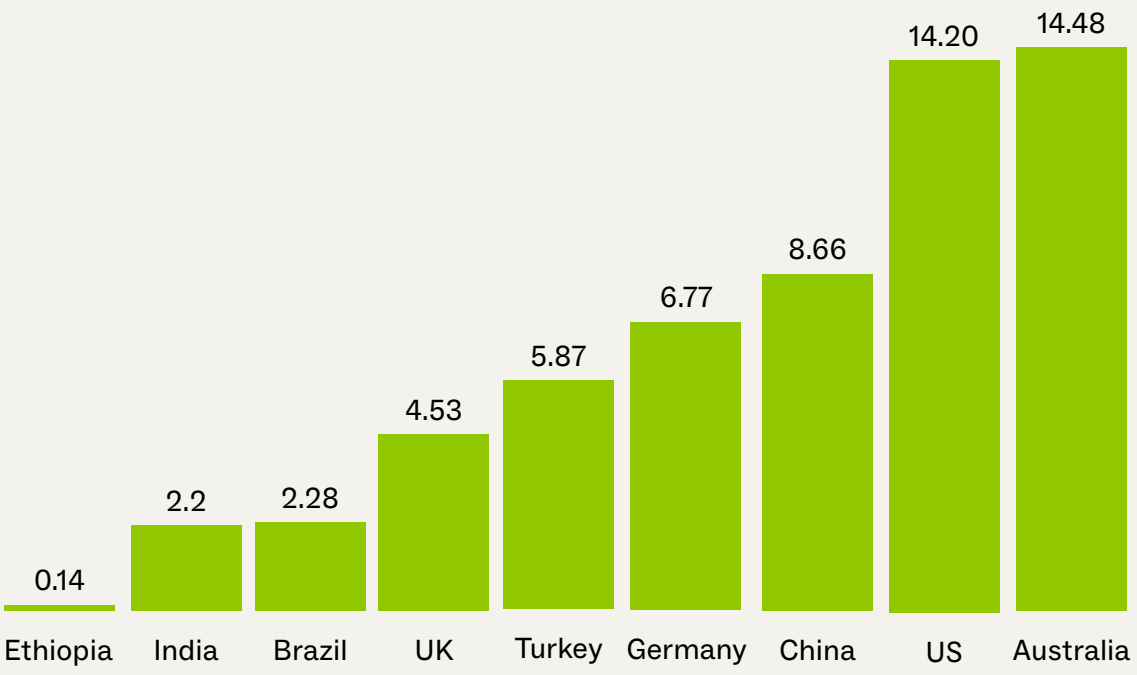
1.1 Introduction to the Host Nation

Table 1 Turkey by the numbers

Population (2025)	86 million (18th globally)
GDP (2025)	$1.60 trillion (17th globally)
Installed renewable energy capacity	79.4 GW (11th globally)
Annual municipal solid waste per capita	380 kg (32nd out of 38 OECD)

Sources: TurkStat (2026), The Results of Address Based Population Registration System, 2025; World Bank (2026), Türkiye country data; Anadolu Agency (2026), Renewables dominate Türkiye's power capacity with 62.8% share; Sensoneo (2025), Global Waste Index 2025.

Figure 1 CO_2 emissions per capita, 2024 (tonnes per person)



Nobody can define Turkey. No single body of water, continent or person can encapsulate this nation between two land masses and three seas.

Like its geography, Turkey is a convergence of diverse peoples, political ideologies and social norms that can at times seem to be in contradiction until each sub-group is examined individually.

Demographics and norms

Turks, Kurds, Arabs and Circassians are some of the roughly 50 ethnic groups in this country, which is home to even more languages. There are no exact figures, but about 70–75 per cent of citizens identify as ethnic Turks and 20 per cent as ethnic Kurds, with many minorities in between.

As for religion, more than 88 per cent of citizens identify as Muslim – mostly Sunni, though the largest minority is Alevi (not to be confused with Alawites in Syria). While the Republic and its constitution are secular, atheism remains uncommon, with 5 per cent to 9 per cent of the population identifying as having no religious affiliation – though this cohort is growing, especially among Gen Z.

Visitors will notice Turkey is a young country. In 2025, the median age was 34.9, placing Turkey as one of the youngest OECD nations. Following decades of mass rural-to-urban migration, Turkey's young urbanites are exposed to more diversity than previous generations, making them the driving force reshaping the nation today.

From the Republic's inception in 1923, Turkish societal constructs have been in transition. So, instead of trying to lock Turkey and its people into rigid definitions, visitors might be best informed by examining their own vantage points:

When viewed from the East, Turkey appears European. When viewed from the West, Turkey appears Asian. The same is true for comparisons from the Global North and South.

That said, here are three social dynamics to know:

- Official interactions are warm but formal. Use professional titles.
- Respect for age and hierarchy is paramount in business and social settings.
- Hospitality is a matter of national pride. Expect to be offered tea in meetings.

Political snapshot

Recep Tayyip Erdoğan has led the nation since 2003 – first as prime minister and, since 2014, as president. Prior to national politics, he served as Istanbul Mayor from 1994 to 1998, and was briefly jailed in 1999 for reading a poem with Islamist intonations.

Turkey has transformed under Erdoğan's leadership. The nation is now more wealthy and less democratic as it increasingly makes use of its geopolitical sway as an emerging middle power.

To start, the nominal GDP per capita has grown from $4,650 in 2003 to $18,599 in 2025. More recent years have been marked by double-digit inflation and a rising cost of living, but many quality-of-life metrics have improved significantly, especially public health care and transportation.

Citizens who lived through the far deeper crises of the 1990s often express gratitude to Erdoğan for the advancements he has delivered.

At the same time, Turkey has fallen in democratic metrics. While the nation was classified as "partly free" early in Erdoğan's tenure, it is now firmly "not free", according to the Freedom in the World Index by Freedom House. Likewise, Reporters Without Borders ranked Turkey 163 out of 180 countries in its 2026 World Press Freedom Index.

The most consequential changes followed a coup attempt in July 2016 that spurred mass purges of public officials and mass arrests of government opponents. Amid a subsequent two-year-long state of emergency, Erdoğan centralised governing powers under the presidency through a controversial public referendum.

Since then, there have been few checks on Erdoğan's mandate. The judiciary is deeply politicised, and a 600-seat parliament serves to approve the government's agenda, as the majority vote has long been secured by the ruling coalition between Erdoğan's conservative Justice and Development Party (AK Party) and the far-right Nationalist Movement Party (MHP).

Recent developments

Erdoğan's strongest political challenger, Istanbul Mayor Ekrem İmamoğlu, has been in prison since March 2025. İmamoğlu faces multiple corruption probes that may disqualify him from upcoming presidential elections – expected in late 2027 or early 2028.

This comes as dozens of political officials are currently facing trial, imprisoned or removed from elected office amid a targeted judicial pressure campaign on opposition parties.

Turkey is facing its most serious democratic crisis since the 2016 coup attempt, though this time with muted response from the international community. Threats from the Ukraine war and the widening Middle East conflict have prompted European capitals to strengthen ties with Ankara – a critical NATO ally with a growing defence sector.

Amid ambivalence from Washington on security guarantees, Europe and Canada view Turkey as one of the most integrated and best prepared security partners in unstable times. For this reason, public criticism of democratic backsliding in Turkey is unlikely in the near term.

Erdoğan has leveraged this position to further consolidate governing powers through a controversial peace process with the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), which is expected to pave the way for constitutional amendments on presidential term limits ahead of the next elections.

Meanwhile, on the global stage, Erdoğan remains a vocal critic of Israel's war in Gaza and the United Nations' inability to intervene in the conflict. He does so while offering

to mediate the Russia-Ukraine war as one of the few politicians who can meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin and US President Donald Trump under amicable conditions.

Whether or not Turkish citizens support his agenda, Erdoğan has indisputably raised his nation's profile and relevance as a regional power.

1.2 The Road from Belém (COP30) to Antalya (COP31)

What Belém Promised ▶ What Antalya Must Deliver

Ten years after the Paris Agreement, COP30 in Belém, Brazil, was framed as the 'Implementation COP'. The term echoed Egypt's COP27 – and signalled a push to deliver the Paris Agreement across mitigation, adaptation and finance. Results were mixed.

On mitigation, ambition failed to meet the moment. Only 121 of 198 Parties submitted the third round of updated climate plans (NDCs) – countries representing over one-quarter of global emissions were silent. For the first time, negotiators were in agreement that overshooting 1.5°C this century is probable, making progress going forward more crucial than ever. Regardless, no fossil-fuel phase-out language survived the final text, despite more than 80 countries pushing for it – making it the biggest disappointment in Belém.

Since its establishment at the Paris 2015 summit, the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) has lacked a tracking mechanism. Belém was supposed to fix that. Negotiators further narrowed the 100 indicators (previously cut over two years from thousands) down to 59 – now known as the Belém Adaptation Indicators (BAIs).

Compromises were made to get there. Though many civil society observers and nations argued the framework was watered down, it narrowly passed. The GGA finally has measurable indicators, yet they are not fully usable and the greatest challenge is implementation.

Caveats: Reporting against the indicators remains voluntary and provides a snapshot of the situation, but fails to track forward-looking progress. To bridge this gap, negotiators launched the Belém to Addis vision (B2A) for Adaptation, a new two-year process running through COP32 aimed at making these indicators actionable.

The Belém Political Package/Global Mutirão Decision:

After marathon negotiations, COP30 delivered a set of consensus decisions that established the financial and operational agenda for the next decade. The core decisions included:

Finance: At COP29 in Baku, all nations agreed to a $300 billion annual base to be reached by 2035 with developed countries taking the lead – the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) – alongside a non-binding call for all public and private actors to reach $1.3 trillion. Belém was tasked with advancing the Presidencies-led Baku-to-Belém Roadmap to close that funding gap. However, civil society groups warn the roadmap is toothless, lacking both clear follow up and enforcement measures and frameworks to track financial commitments. Belém also adopted a two-year Climate Finance Work Programme (CFWP) with a focus on Article 9 of the Paris Agreement on developed countries' obligation to support developing countries with climate finance. The text also confirmed operationalisation and replenishment cycles for the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), as well as gave guidance to other crucial UNFCCC funds, including the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Adaptation Finance: A political signal to triple adaptation finance by 2035 (building on the COP26 commitment from Glasgow to double adaptation finance from 2019 to 2025, which is likely not going to be reached). This is the funding side of adaptation, not the 59 measurable indicators agreed to under the negotiations on the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).

Trade: For the first time, a COP outcome text explicitly addressed climate-related unilateral trade measures (UTMs), after several failed attempts at previous COPs to get the issue onto the agenda. The push, led by Bolivia on behalf of the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs), including China and India, targeted developed countries' regulatory measures such as the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). Many in the Global South see CBAM as protectionist and as shifting the costs of climate action onto developing countries. The EU rejected that framing and called CBAM part of its climate toolbox. Instead of the standing agenda item the LMDCs had sought, the Mutirão decision restates Article 3.5 of the UNFCCC: climate measures, including unilateral ones, must not be a means of arbitrary or unjustifiable discrimination or a disguised restriction on international trade.

Information Integrity: For the first time, a decision acknowledged the need to tackle climate disinformation and pledged to promote information integrity and counter disinformation undermining science-based action.

New initiatives: Launch of the Belém Mission to 1.5 and the Global Implementation Accelerator (GIA)

The Belém Mission to 1.5 (BM1.5) – Established under the "Global Mutirão Decision", this is a formal UNFCCC-mandated process. Its mandate to "enable ambition and implementation" of the new NDCs and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) asks: Now that we know the targets, what's the blockage, and how do we finance them?

Stewarded by a multi-year presidency coalition – Azerbaijan (COP29), Brazil (COP30) and Turkey and Australia (COP31) – the BM1.5 breaks from the UN's typical one-year

hand-off model. Throughout 2026, the initiative will drive research and collaboration among Parties, financial actors, civil society, academia and other vested stakeholders. The findings, set for release ahead of Antalya, will guide COP31 in accelerating NDC and NAP implementation, strengthening international cooperation and mobilising investment.

The GIA, launched at COP30 under the joint guidance of the COP30 and incoming COP31 Presidencies, is a cooperative, facilitative and voluntary initiative to accelerate implementation across all actors, to keep 1.5°C within reach and support countries in implementing their NDCs and NAPs. While the BM1.5 asks what is blocking implementation, the GIA is meant to act on the answers. It is designed as a lean support structure that each year selects a small number of solutions from the Global Climate Action Agenda with the potential to trigger "positive tipping points" across sectors and countries. The solutions are chosen by an independent expert group and a Board that could include the COP Presidencies, multilateral development banks and vertical funds. The GIA then bundles them with existing finance, technology and capacity-building tools, and brings public and private actors together to scale them up. Critics note that, as a voluntary, Presidency-led initiative outside the negotiated process, the GIA lacks accountability anchors. They also note that its reliance on development banks and private investors echoes the mobilisation-focused approach of the Baku-to-Belém Roadmap rather than public finance provision under Article 9.1. A linked "Climate Implementation Bridge" is being developed under the COP31 Action Agenda to connect on-the-ground action with finance. The Presidencies will report back on the GIA at COP31.

Non-UN Roadmaps

Presidency-led Roadmaps: After many fossil fuel-reliant economies blocked a binding, negotiated roadmap to phase out fossil fuels, COP30 President André Corrêa do Lago announced he would create two roadmaps of his own:

- A roadmap halting and reversing deforestation by 2030. This effort is accompanied by the COP30 Presidency launch of the Tropical Forest Forever Facility (TFFF) in Belém.
- The Transition Away From Fossil Fuel (TAFF) Roadmap.

From pledges to implementation

Where Belém prioritised nature-based solutions, tropical deforestation, biodiversity and Global South solidarity, COP31 is shifting focus. The Turkish-Australian Presidency has built its Action Agenda around electrification, zero waste and resilient cities and buildings – while keeping the transition away from fossil fuels out of the spotlight. Yet the hardest questions will not go away: finance remains at the heart of the negotiations, and electrification only cuts emissions if the power comes from clean sources rather than coal and gas.

Carbon markets and how green industrialisation will be tackled are also being closely watched by invested stakeholders. With COP31 now framed as the shift towards implementation, Antalya will test whether these pathways can translate into actionable, binding policy and measurable emission cuts. No pressure at all.

1.3 The COP31 Presidency Arrangement: Turkey, Australia & the Pacific

For the first time, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) has broken from tradition, dividing core summit responsibilities between two countries: Turkey and Australia.

Why split the roles?

Following months of heated debate, the two countries reached a diplomatic compromise in November 2025: Turkey would hold the COP Presidency, while Australia would lead the negotiations. It's an unprecedented experiment in UN climate diplomacy, so let's see how it goes.

Legally, who holds the final gavel?

Turkey is the official COP31 President, led by Murat Kurum, the Minister of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change.

However, through a bilateral arrangement, Turkey has formally delegated exclusive authority over the negotiation process to Australia's Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Chris Bowen, naming him the "President of Negotiations" – officially holding the UN title of Vice President.

But in the end, Turkey signs the host-country agreement and retains ultimate authority over the summit.

How is the labour divided between Ankara and Canberra?

Ankara Official COP31 President	Hosts COP31 in Antalya from 9–20 November Manages venue logistics and operations. Directs the Action Agenda and communications. Appoints the UN High-Level Climate Champion and the Youth Champion.
Canberra President of Negotiations	Leads and manages the negotiation agenda. Drafts and refines all core summit texts. Serves as the focal point for UNFCCC engagements and proposes the Youth Champion. Advocates for the strategic interests of Pacific Island nations.

Source: Türkiye–Australia COP31 Partnership Modalities (2025).

How will disputes between the co-presidents be resolved?

According to the official Turkey-Australia Partnership Modalities, Australia cannot unilaterally force a decision. The rules state that if there is a difference of opinion, discussions must take place between Ankara and Canberra until it is resolved to mutual satisfaction. In short, nothing progresses unless both countries agree and sign off on it.

Why are the pre-COP events scattered across the Pacific?

While pre-COPs are normally held in the host country or a single partner country, this COP is also rewriting that tradition. This year's pre-COP was held in Fiji, Tuvalu and Palau.

As part of the compromise reached between Ankara and Canberra, the pre-COP locations promise to keep issues faced by Pacific Island nations – among the most climate-vulnerable states – front and centre.

The roadmap includes a special climate event at the Pacific Islands Forum in Palau in late August, followed by two October events: the main pre-COP meeting in Fiji and a leaders' component in Tuvalu.

Does this set a precedent for future COPs?

That entirely depends on the success of COP31. As the COPs are incredibly expensive and logistically nightmarish, splitting responsibilities and costs might make sense. If the Turkey-Australia arrangement succeeds, it could pave the way for future summits. That said, COP32 is already set to be held in one country: Ethiopia.

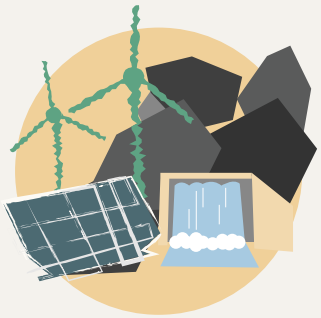
The biggest test might be COP33 in 2028, when the Second Global Stocktake (GST2) – the UN's five-year assessment on collective climate progress – is due to conclude. Its host is still undecided after India withdrew its bid in April.

2 Climate Policies in the World and in Turkey

2.1 Turkish Climate Policy Overview

Figure 2 Turkey's climate performance at a glance

Turkey ranked **52nd** in the Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2026, placing it among the "very low" overall performers. It was rated low on GHG emissions and energy use, very low on climate policy and medium on renewable energy.



Turkey emitted **513 Mt** of CO_2 in 2024 (5.87 t per person), according to Our World in Data. Counting all greenhouse gases, the national inventory puts 2024 emissions at **584.5 $MtCO_2e$**, up **5.3 per cent** on 2023.

Sources: Germanwatch, NewClimate Institute and CAN (2025), Climate Change Performance Index 2026; Our World in Data (2025); TurkStat (2026), Greenhouse Gas Emission Statistics, 1990–2024.

Figure 3 Milestones in Turkey's climate policy, 2004–2026

2004

Turkey becomes a Party to the UNFCCC.

2009

Turkey accedes to the Kyoto Protocol.

2015

Turkey submits its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC).

2016

Turkey signs the Paris Agreement.

2021

Turkey ratifies the Paris Agreement and announces its 2053 net-zero target.

2023

Turkey submits its updated first NDC to the UNFCCC.

2024

Turkey submits its 2053 Long-Term Climate Strategy.

2025

Climate Law No. 7552 enters into force; Turkey submits its second NDC (NDC 3.0).

2026

Turkey adopts the regulation for its national Emissions Trading System (ETS).

Sources: UNFCCC; Climate Change Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye; Official Gazette of the Republic of Türkiye.

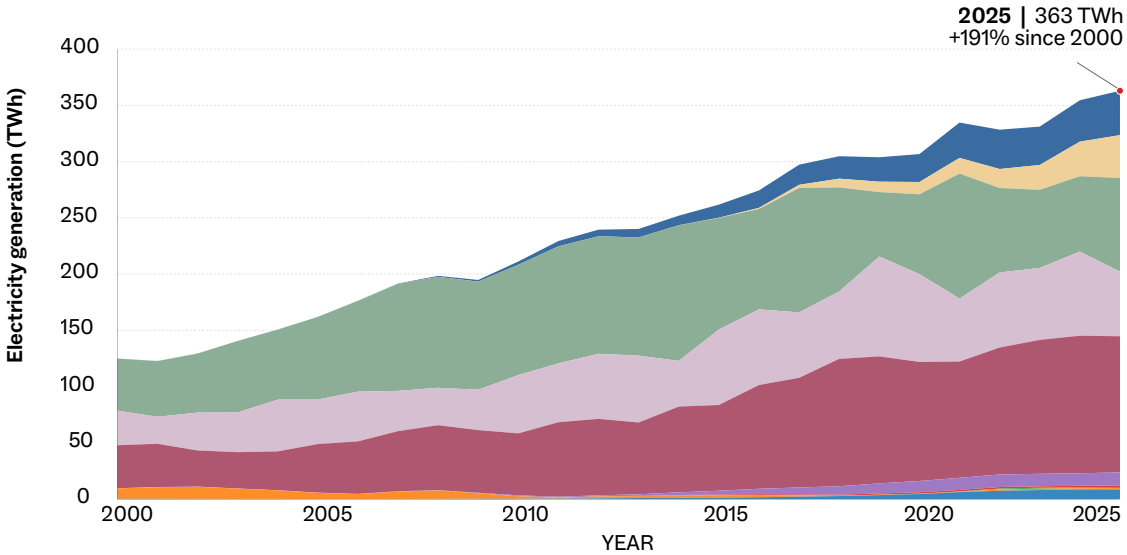
Electricity Generation by Source

Figure 4 Electricity generation in Turkey by source, 2000–2025
2000–2025 / A 25-year shift in the electricity mix

2025 | TOTAL GENERATION

363 TWh

+191% since 2000



Coal	Hydropower	Solar PV	Biofuels	Oil
121.1 TWh · 33.4%	57.4 TWh · 15.8%	38.1 TWh · 10.5%	8.6 TWh · 2.4%	1.2 TWh · 0.3%

Natural gas	Wind	Geothermal	Other sources	Waste
83.3 TWh · 23.0%	39.4 TWh · 10.9%	11.7 TWh · 3.2%	1.3 TWh · 0.4%	0.9 TWh · 0.2%

Source: Ember (2026), Türkiye Electricity Review 2026.

In a nod to the 1453 Conquest of Istanbul, Turkey aims to conquer carbon emissions by 2053 – just in time for the 600th commemoration of the Ottoman victory (firework show TBD).

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced the nation's 2053 net-zero emissions target as Turkey ratified the Paris Agreement in October 2021, alongside a roughly $3.2 billion package of climate-related loans from the World Bank, France and Germany. The goal highlights both Ankara's high ambitions on climate policy and the steep challenges of implementing environmental reforms.

The crux of the matter lies in Turkey's classification. Because the UN climate framework categorised Turkey as an OECD member state in the 1990s, the country is locked out of some global financial and technical support for its energy transition. So, after signing the Paris Agreement in 2016, Ankara unsuccessfully pushed to be reclassified as a "developing nation" to access climate funds – a diplomatic dispute that delayed ratification by five years.

Today, Turkey faces significant constraints in self-financing its climate goals. Nearly a decade of double-digit inflation and a chronic currency devaluation have severely limited the government's fiscal capacity.

The result is a climate policy of contrasts. As a G20 nation with strong market ties to the European Union, Turkey has proven its ability to pursue an effective energy transition, as evidenced by rapid renewables and EV adoption. At the same time, however, Ankara has delayed absolute emissions caps and postponed a coal phase-out to protect domestic markets and consumers.

Actions to date: To overcome the funding gap, Turkey secured $3.2 billion in loans from the World Bank, Germany and France as part of a climate financing package announced in 2021. Coupled with financing from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and Climate Investment Funds, Ankara has successfully attracted international capital to help achieve its climate goals.

In 2023, Turkey submitted an updated first NDC target to reduce emissions 41 per cent below a business-as-usual scenario by 2030 – translating to an absolute emissions cap of 695 $MtCO_2e$. Climate Action Tracker (CAT) rates the target "critically insufficient", noting that it is measured against an inflated baseline and still allows emissions to grow, while Turkey's long-term strategy lets them keep rising until 2038 – far too late, according to CAT, to keep net zero by 2053 within reach.

In November 2025, Turkey submitted its second NDC (NDC 3.0), capping emissions at 643 $MtCO_2e$ by 2035 – 466 Mt below a business-as-usual scenario, but still around 40 per cent above 2018 levels. CAT, which continues to rate Turkey's climate action "critically insufficient", says the target is far from compatible with 1.5°C.

To institutionalise its net-zero timeline, Turkey adopted its 2053 Long-Term Climate Strategy in 2024. The centrepiece of this roadmap is Climate Law No. 7552, which

entered into force in July 2025. The legislation restructured the government entities responsible for environmental policy, anchored the net-zero goal and the NDC process in law – though without binding interim targets – and provided the legal framework for a national carbon market.

Building on the Climate Law, the government adopted the regulation for its Emissions Trading System (ETS) in August 2026, with a pilot phase to follow. This established a complex carbon trading system based on sectoral intensity benchmarks (which limit emissions per unit of production rather than capping total industrial output) – while continuing to delay a coal phase-out.

Points of progress: For Ankara, the ETS not only mirrors Europe's system, but it also protects the export economy amid changes in global trade. The EU, Turkey's largest export market, introduced a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) this year.

This means Turkish companies – especially cement, iron, steel and fertiliser producers – must pay billions in EU carbon taxes. So, Turkey's ETS can be viewed as a defensive manoeuvre to keep that same carbon tax revenue within Turkey.

Other major leaps in Turkish climate policy can be seen in the proliferation of solar and wind energy farms throughout the country, best viewed from the domestically produced EVs under the Togg brand. From market entry in early 2023 to June 2026, Turkey has sold more than 105,000 Togg EVs.

In 2025, clean sources generated 43 per cent of Turkey's electricity – led by hydropower (16 per cent), wind (11 per cent) and solar (10.5 per cent). The Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources aims to quadruple solar and wind capacity to 120 GW by 2035, increasing the share of renewable energy to 69.1 per cent by 2053.

It's also worth noting Turkey's first nuclear power plant is currently under construction by Russia's Rosatom and is expected to meet around 10 per cent of Turkey's electricity needs once all four units are running. Turkey is also negotiating two additional nuclear plant projects with potential bids from suppliers in Canada, China, France, South Korea or the United States.

Areas for improvement: Waste management remains one of the most visible shortcomings in local environmental policy. While high-profile campaigns like First Lady Emine Erdoğan's UN-backed Zero Waste initiative have pushed the municipal recycling rate from just 13 per cent in 2017 to around 35 per cent, according to official figures. Measured by the EU's stricter method, however, Turkey recycled only 12 per cent of its municipal waste in 2021, and systemic enforcement still lags.

Single-use plastics are widely used despite a planned phase-out announced in March 2026. Likewise, widespread illegal dumping and an ongoing reliance on landfills continue to contradict the government's much-publicised sustainability agenda. Imports make the problem worse: since China closed its market in 2018, Turkey has been the top destination for European plastic waste. EU shipments reached a record 503,000

tonnes in 2025, and much of it has been documented as dumped or burned rather than recycled.

Along with a more detailed energy transition timeline, the darkest mark in Turkey's climate policy is coal. In 2024, Turkey overtook Germany to become Europe's largest producer of coal-fired electricity. In 2025, coal still generated 34 per cent of Turkey's electricity and accounted for roughly 80 per cent of power-sector emissions.

With state subsidies incentivising coal use and without a near-term phase-out plan, this highly polluting fossil fuel remains Turkey's largest emissions challenge moving forward. Critics of Turkish policies have also pushed back on plans to expand coal-fired power plants in recent years.

Meanwhile, experts warn that building a carbon market while simultaneously expanding coal power exposes Turkey to massive "stranded asset" risks in the near future. With vast ambitions and limited financing, Turkish policymakers will continue to face fossil fuel dilemmas as electricity demand keeps rising rapidly. Measured against the COP28 global stocktake's call to double energy efficiency improvements by 2030, roughly 4 per cent a year, Turkey's record is mixed: it cut energy intensity by a record 6.2 per cent in 2022, but its long-term average was 1.7 per cent, and its national efficiency action plan targets only 2.3 per cent a year to 2030.

Civil Society Voice: Peoples' Climate Summit

Parallel to COP31 is the Peoples' Climate Summit (Halkların İklim Zirvesi – HİZ), a grassroots initiative launched in late 2025 by the Climate Justice Coalition, the Ecology Union and the Environmental Platform of Turkey. It takes place from 14 to 18 November at the Mimar Sinan Congress Centre in Antalya's Kepez district. On 14 November, a climate march runs from Aydın Kanza Park to Cumhuriyet Square, followed by four days of forums and assemblies.

The alternative summit argues that the COP process, too susceptible to fossil fuel and corporate interests, has yet to agree on phasing out fossil fuels, the root cause of the climate crisis, and, rather than producing more decisive steps, leaves the door open to false solutions.

"COP has been unable to change the mechanism behind the climate crisis because it has been too vulnerable to the economic interests of the fossil fuel industry and corporations. We see the COP process as a failure … that has been taking us to a worse place than we have been in for 30 years," said Tuğçe Oklay, an academic and volunteer for the Peoples' Climate Summit.

"Turkish civil society wants to highlight this failure and propose alternatives by organising the summit as a permanent common ground," she continued. "Instead of ecological destruction, we want states and communities to recognise the rights of nature, so we want a paradigm change. We don't want nature to be seen as a resource in an economic sense but as an entity to be protected. We want societies to change their perspectives and actions. Instead of fossil fuel extraction, we want a planned energy programme which assures a just transition for workers and which does not fall into false solutions by promoting 'green mining'."

Notably, COP31 comes as civic space in Turkey is narrowing. The political opposition has faced nearly two years of judicial investigations, while more recently, LGBT individuals and rights groups have been targeted by state authorities on "obscenity" charges. That said, in this increasingly restrictive climate, COP31 is seen by many local activists as a venue to challenge state policies on an international stage.

Oklay argues the Energy Ministry's decarbonisation roadmap depends on the expansion of solar, wind, hydrogen and nuclear power, energy efficiency, electrification and carbon markets. Yet, emission reductions require a planned and just fossil fuel phase-out, reduced energy demand, energy democracy as well as public and participatory planning.

"A true just transition puts people, workers and communities – not energy expansion or corporate interests – at the centre," she said. "It guarantees workers' rights and decent new jobs, tackles energy poverty, strengthens cooperatives and local governments for energy generation and distribution and gives communities a meaningful say in energy decisions. Renewable energy must respect ecological limits and community rights."

"The emissions trading system, by its very nature, carries the risk of delaying rather than accelerating the transition. So, it is considered as a false solution by civil society," Oklay added.

2.2 The Fossil Fuel Phase-Out Dilemma ("TAFF Agenda")

The phrase "transitioning away from fossil fuels" entered the UN lexicon at COP28 in Dubai. At COP30, efforts to anchor a roadmap for that transition in the negotiated outcome failed. In response, Brazil's COP President André Corrêa do Lago announced that the Presidency would develop one outside the formal negotiations. That's how the

TAFF Roadmap was born: a voluntary, non-negotiated process carried by a coalition of willing countries, with results to be reported at COP31.

Then came the Santa Marta Conference, hosted by Colombia and the Netherlands in April 2026. Designed to feed directly into the TAFF roadmap, with the COP30 Presidency planning to report back to COP31 on progress made, the conference convened 57 countries to hash out practical phase-out strategies; a second follow up conference, co-hosted by Ireland and Tuvalu, is supposed to be convened in Tuvalu in July 2027. However, the TAFF global roadmap remains hotly contested and its future beyond COP31 is uncertain.

What is the TAFF Agenda, and what is Turkey's stance on the global roadmap?

TAFF's main goal is to translate the global effort to accelerate a phase out of fossil fuels into concrete, achievable state-level policy. Officially, Ankara's diplomatic stance supports this transition.

Addressing the Petersberg Climate Dialogue in April, COP31 President and Turkish Minister of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change Murat Kurum warned that recent global energy volatility demonstrates fossil fuels cannot guarantee supply security.

"We know relying solely on fossil fuels means walking towards volatility, insecurity and climate collapse," he stated.

To propel this transition, the COP31 Presidency is championing an "electrification first" Action Agenda. This includes a global target to increase electricity's share of final energy consumption from just over 20 per cent to 35 per cent by 2035 – the hope is that this leads to a massive push to replace direct fossil fuel use with grid power by rapidly scaling up EVs, electric heat pumps and electrified heavy industry, although it does not include guarantees that increased electricity generation needed will not come from fossil fuels. For consumption, China is near 30 per cent with targets set for 35 per cent by 2030.

Where does Turkey actually stand on coal and domestic fossil fuel realities?

Despite its progressive posturing, Turkey's domestic energy grid remains heavily carbon-intensive and highly dependent on imported oil, coal and natural gas.

According to Ember's latest data, Turkey is the "largest coal power generator in Europe", with coal retaining a 34 per cent share of generation and 57 per cent of its

electricity coming from fossil fuels. And per the International Energy Agency (IEA), Turkey is 93 per cent import-dependent on oil, and almost completely import-dependent on gas. This complicates electrification as a climate strategy on its own. Electricity demand grew by almost 5 per cent a year between 2005 and 2024, the fastest rate among IEA members, and fossil fuels still cover much of the new demand from EVs, air conditioning and industry. Ember notes that gas imports are filling the gap left by drought-hit hydropower, and that a purchase guarantee for domestic coal plants from 2026 could push coal generation to a new record.

This creates a stark contradiction for foreign observers, as Turkey hosts the world's most important climate summit, where strategies to accelerate a fossil fuel phase-out should be central. Climate analysts admit that Turkey's ambitious "35-by-35" electrification push is impressive; however, they argue it is only a solution if the grid itself is decarbonised.

Civil Society Voice: The Coal Fight

Civil society actors fight hard and rigorously against the fossil fuel industry in Turkey. Just this past July, they landed a monumental win after a decade-long battle against the Afşin-Elbistan A 688 MW coal rehabilitation and expansion project.

Thanks to local municipalities, Greenpeace Turkey, TEMA Foundation and the Turkish Medical Association, Turkey's coal-cancellation rate reached 97 per cent – meaning nearly all planned new coal projects in the country have now been legally or financially defeated.

However, that same month, the government approved an even bigger project – the 1,050 MW expansion of the Cenal coal plant in Çanakkale, run by Cengiz Holding. Local residents, the İda Solidarity Association, the Coal-Free Çanakkale Forum and others immediately jumped to action, hoping for the same results: shutting down the project and ending the decades-long fight ahead of Antalya.

Why is there friction between the Ministry of Energy and the Directorate of Climate Change?

The contradiction between Turkey's COP31 rhetoric and reality on the ground stems from an inter-ministerial divergence in mandates. What's creating the tension?

The Directorate of Climate Change (under the Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change): Responsible for executing Turkey's climate diplomacy, the Directorate seeks to align domestic agendas with UN frameworks, advance decarbonisation efforts and integrate global TAFF roadmap efforts to ensure a successful summit in Antalya.

The Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources (MENR): Tasked with ensuring supply security and curbing the massive energy import bill that drives the country's current account deficit, MENR prioritises cost and energy security. Domestic coal is a cheaper alternative to importing expensive natural gas.

The test is whether the two agendas coincide. Ember Turkey's Ufuk Alparslan expects the Energy Ministry to take a "pro-active role" in Antalya, offering up a new energy plan. Whether the new plan confronts coal, which still supplies about a third of electricity to Turkey and has a state purchase guarantee through 2029, will prove how closely the energy and climate agendas align.

2.3 The Pillars for Implementation: Finance, Metrics & Just Transition

Advancing implementation of core commitments, there are basically three pillars where COP31 will focus – Climate Finance (NCQG and CFWP), Adaptation Metrics (59 indicators) and the Just Transition Belém-Antalya Mechanism (BAM).

The Belém-Antalya Mechanism (BAM) on Just Transition

One of the most consequential social mandates arriving at COP31 is the Belém-Antalya Mechanism (previously referred to as the Belém Action Mechanism). Born out of the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) at COP30, at COP31 a decision is expected to fully operationalise the mechanism. Once implemented, BAM could be the UN's first formal coordination body for a "Just Transition" away from fossil fuels to a net-zero future – and a team favourite of the Climate Action Network (CAN) as well as global trade unions.

The Mandate: BAM is intended to ensure the transition to low-emission and climate-resilient development is broader than just a sectoral focus on energy, but also includes adaptation, development mandates and socioeconomic safety nets for frontline workers and communities. It is supposed to operate as a coordination and mobilisation "help desk", connecting vulnerable communities with needed funding, technical capacity and technology transfer. At the Bonn climate talks, significant progress was made towards operationalising BAM, with a full decision expected at COP31. And despite disagreements remaining on finance, it remains one of the greatest wins for the talks. As CAN's James Trinder explained:

"This is not another fund, but will make sure finance reaches the right places to deliver national Just Transition initiatives. If done well, this could become one of the defining legacies of the summit."

Turkish Context: If a decision on the BAM is reached at COP31, for just transition in Turkey, domestic coordination will prove essential. Because Turkey has a highly concentrated, politically active coal workforce, it'll be up to the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Directorate of Climate Change to patch up inter-ministerial differences and ensure decarbonisation doesn't result in mass unemployment. Turkey will serve as a high-stakes test case to see if BAM's framework can protect workers during industrial restructuring.

The Finance (NCQG and Article 9): Tracking the $1.3 Trillion Goal and the Push for Public Support

Climate finance is the backbone of the Paris Agreement, yet implementation will continue to stall if nations cannot address the financial constraints plaguing climate investment.

One tool for addressing this problem is the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) established in Baku, which mandates a $300 billion annual base to be mobilised from developed countries by 2035, with a broader goal of reaching $1.3 trillion through involvement of all actors and sources annually within the same timeframe for developing countries' climate action. Belém was tasked with advancing the Baku-to-Belém Roadmap to close the gap between those figures, with the COP30 Presidency expected to report back to Parties in Antalya on progress in moving its implementation forward. Article 9 mandates that developed nations provide and mobilise finance to support developing countries and establishes reporting obligations both ex ante and ex post, while Article 13 enforces verifiable reporting on the money they deploy.

The most contentious finance discussions in Antalya will be around the Climate Finance Work Programme on Article 9 of the Paris Agreement set up in Belém. The Global South wants it focused exclusively on provision (Article 9.1.) and is demanding proof that this promised $300 billion consists of high-quality grants and concessional loans providing direct support that will not exacerbate debt crises – and is not just used to mobilise market-rate commercial capital.

The Adaptation Deadlock: The "Rule 16" Crisis

The UN drafted 59 indicators on the GGA to measure how effectively countries are adapting to the climate crisis. Think of them like a global report card tracking tangible metrics, such as how many citizens are covered by early warning systems or how much infrastructure is flood-proof.

Tracking 59 complex indicators requires substantial administrative and financial resources, particularly to standardise them across developing and developed countries.

Compounding this is the lack of a formal link between the GGA and the finance needed to implement it, which the Global South wants and developed countries oppose. At Bonn, the GGA negotiations collapsed entirely over these divides, forcing the application of Rule 16.

A standard administrative procedure under the UNFCCC, Rule 16 kicks in automatically when talks deadlock, discarding the working text and deferring the unresolved agenda to the next ordinary session – in this case, COP31.

While the rule itself is routine, its application to a mandate as massive as the GGA signals a severe diplomatic breakdown, setting the stage for highly contentious adaptation talks in Antalya.

Added to this is a continued standoff about the future of the Adaptation Fund, which was set up under the Kyoto Protocol to help developing countries finance urgent adaptation measures, but needs to fully transition to the Paris Agreement, not least so that it can receive promised financing under the Paris Agreement's Article 6.4 carbon market mechanism. Disagreements centred on the governance of the fund after its transition.

3 Official Agenda & the Action Agenda

3.1 Official Negotiation Tracks: Status Tracker

With the official Action Agenda focusing on voluntary initiatives, the core of COP31 remains in its binding UN negotiation tracks. Following the stall of Bonn's technical talks, here's a breakdown of the diplomatic state of play heading into Antalya – spoiler, it's a heavy load.

Carbon Markets & Infrastructure (Article 6)

The goal: Solidify the rules and infrastructure for a trustworthy and highly functioning global carbon trading system, but analysis of current Article 6 rule development and implementation as well as past experience with carbon markets reveal fundamental flaws and contradictions.

Current status: Moving ahead, but remains controversial. Article 6 governs global carbon markets through three specific tracks: 6.2 (direct country-to-country trades), 6.4 (a centralised market – or PACM, the Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism) and 6.8 (non-market approaches). While the foundational rules were agreed upon at COP26,

COP29 ironed out operational details for Article 6.4. However, financing and the support for adaptation with carbon market proceeds remain stalled.

At Bonn, negotiations failed to close an $8–9 million budget shortfall for Article 6.2's infrastructure budget. Additional hiccups arose with Article 6.4's carbon-credit sales – supposed to bring a new revenue stream to the Adaptation Fund – but the capital can only be received once governments agree on outstanding issues to be resolved for the fund to transition fully to exclusively serve the Paris Agreement, which Bonn failed to deliver.

Antalya outlook: Developing nations are pushing to ensure newly-created digital carbon registries do not create technological dependency on wealthier countries. Meanwhile, watchdogs warn that opaque digital governance risks enabling systemic greenwashing and reinforcing global power dynamics. Institutionalisation is moving faster than implementation and financing, while concerns about environmental integrity, land rights and social justice risk slipping from view.

Trade and Climate: Unilateral Trade Measures

For background ▶ see 1.2

The goal: Keep trade on the UNFCCC agenda. Under the Belém decision, trade is not a negotiating track but a mandated dialogue: three annual sessions at the June Bonn meetings (2026–2028), with the WTO, UNCTAD and the International Trade Centre. Separately, the COP30 Presidency launched the Integrated Forum on Climate Change and Trade (IFCCT). It is a voluntary platform outside both the UNFCCC and the WTO, and it will not negotiate binding outcomes or evaluate national measures.

Current status: The flashpoint remains the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), which charges a fee on carbon-intensive imports to prevent "carbon leakage" and became a financial obligation on 1 January 2026. Critics see it as protectionist and possibly incompatible with WTO rules; India's Finance Minister called it "a repeat of colonialism". At the first dialogue in Bonn in June, developing countries pushed back against climate-linked trade measures, while the EU defended them. India argued that the dialogue's framing treated these measures as solutions before examining the problems they create.

Antalya outlook: No trade dialogue is scheduled at COP31; the next is in June 2027. But unilateral trade measures are likely to resurface in other tracks, such as just transition and response measures, as they did in Belém. With CBAM now affecting exporters from Turkey to India, the gap between a three-year dialogue and developing countries' demands is unlikely to close in Antalya.

Climate Finance (NCQG & Article 9)

For background ▶ see 2.3

The goal: At the end of the day, it all boils down to this – money. The goal of COP31 is to get clarity on how the NCQG headline numbers are composed and can be reached, in particular by refocusing on the role of public climate finance provided by developed countries in meeting financing targets. The Global South pushes for a decision on the Climate Finance Work Programme, which is on the preliminary agenda, but could be challenged. A repeat of the Belém agenda fight is possible.

Current status: We face a massive global climate finance gap, especially for adaptation.

- **NCQG composition and contributor base:** Deadlocked. The core fight is over which countries count as "developed" and must deliver climate finance and how much of it is provided versus mobilised; distribution between mitigation and adaptation, what to do with loss and damage, and how to improve not just quantity but also quality (access, concessionality) of finance is also unclear. In Antalya, Parties will also receive two reports on progress in climate finance flows, which look backward (2023–2024) but do not account for more recent drastic reductions in public climate finance support.
- **Linking the mandate to triple adaptation finance to the GGA:** The GGA was left unfinished – again, stuck on a missing link to adaptation finance. Least Developed Countries (LDCs) originally pushed to "triple the doubling": at COP26 in Glasgow, developed countries pledged to double their adaptation finance from 2019 levels (roughly $20 billion) by 2025, and the LDCs called for tripling that doubled amount to $120 billion a year by 2030. Belém's final text kept the word "triple" but pushed the target date to 2035, leaving the actual dollar figure blank. That question came up at Bonn, but got nowhere. Now, developing countries and civil society groups are urging for a clear commitment to the original $120 billion target (especially since the 2025 goal is likely to be missed).

Global South and civil society criticisms of the $300 billion/$1.3 trillion goal have been pervasive since it was adopted in Baku – India's negotiator dismissed it as "a paltry sum" and "an optical illusion", while Nigeria's called it "an insult and a joke".

Antalya outlook: The "Climate Implementation Bridge" (BRIDGE) is a flagship of the COP31 Presidency. Kurum first announced it at the Bonn climate talks in June 2026, and his August letter to Parties made it one of the Action Agenda's ten priorities. In September, the first five pilot countries were named: Ethiopia, Fiji, Indonesia, Pakistan and Uzbekistan. As an initiative by the COP31 Presidency, it sits outside of the negotiated UNFCCC climate finance agenda. This is not a new fund, but another mechanism to help countries turn NDCs and National Adaptation Plans into investable projects through matchmaking, coordination and technical assistance with the help of UNDP. However, civil society groups have already voiced concern – warning that stacking

initiatives outside the negotiations on top of an already messy finance negotiations agenda and a fragmented climate finance architecture risks it becoming only more entangled.

Adaptation Architecture (The GGA)

For background ▶ see 2.3

Goal: Get the Belém Adaptation Indicators up and running, agree on the mechanics of the guiding task force, decide if the financing comes before or along with this work, and work out a compromise to create a formal link between the GGA and the Belém promise to triple adaptation finance by 2035, needed to implement the GGA.

Current status: At the Bonn preparatory meetings in June, negotiations completely collapsed and were pushed to Antalya under "Rule 16" (meaning no agreement was reached). There are two major points of contention:

1. Developing countries are pushing for the indicators to have guaranteed financing up front, as well as a clear established link between the GGA and the financing needed to implement it, while developed countries argue that any discourse on financing should be kept on a separate track.
2. Whether to launch the task force – part of the B2A (Belém-Addis Vision on Adaptation), which was deferred in Bonn. Time is running out.

Antalya outlook: Whoever actually ends up on the task force has a lot of unresolved questions to solve: how the indicators get measured, verified and how the technical work to operationalise them gets funded. This is all meant to feed into the Global Stocktake (GST2), which formally begins at COP31.

After the Rule 16 crisis in Bonn, there is strong incentive to work out an agreement. However, developing countries have signalled they will halt technical advancements until financing is dealt with. Deadlock is entirely plausible, and debate will definitely remain heated.

Just Transition (BAM)

For background ▶ see 2.3

Goal: Iron out operational, including governance details of the Belém-Antalya Mechanism (BAM), defining the mechanism's scope and shape – basically, what kind of coordination body it should be, who pays for its operations and how it can support mobilising finance needed for just transition action. COP31 must also review the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) under which BAM was created and decide whether it continues. That makes the relationship between the two a live question, whether BAM becomes the operational arm of a political JTWP, or a separate body.

Status: Negotiations at Bonn advanced a working text of the BAM, getting us closer to operationalise a coordination body to support a just transition to a low-carbon economy. However, crucial questions remained unanswered: governance structure, how it's funded, how it can support mobilising funding support and the principles that should govern just transition finance – yup, it always boils down to the finance. At Bonn, Parties agreed the terms of the JTWP review, but split over how far it should address BAM. Developed countries want to avoid duplication between the two, while the African Group insists the mechanism "will not sit under the JTWP".

Bonn also received a deluge of competing proposals on how countries believed the mechanism should work. Developing countries agreed BAM needs to be a real, structured mechanism, not merely another dialogue platform. However, blocs split on how much authority it should carry – from the African Group's push for a fully empowered body to AOSIS's desire for a leaner, technical-focused one. Developed countries remained cautious to avoid another heavily institutionalised body and are not ready to make any concrete commitments on finance.

Antalya outlook: Funding and governance need to get resolved. With developing countries proposing multi-year roll-out timelines, all eyes are on Antalya to see if negotiations can usher in a consensus, taking BAM from a structural concept to a fully operational mechanism everyone can agree on.

Mitigation Work Programme (MWP)

Goal: Decide if the MWP continues past 2026 and, if it does, fix what's broken.

Status: Another negotiating track fraught with stalemate vibes post-Bonn. The Sharm el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme (MWP), established at COP26 to scale up mitigation ambition and implementation and complement the Global Stocktake (GST), was formalised at COP27 and is due to conclude at COP31, with a possibility of extension.

Bonn was supposed to get a decision ready in the lead-up to COP31, but talks collapsed. Scope and focus were the main issues of disagreement. Some Parties want the MWP to actively drive deeper emission cuts, while others want to keep it a mere "space for communication". Parties are also split on whether the MWP should tie to the Global Stocktake (EU, AOSIS and AILAC in favour; the Arab Group and LMDCs opposed) and whether it should even continue at all. Developing countries add that they need finance to reach the mitigation goals in their third-round NDCs, many of which are conditional on international support.

Antalya outlook: Parties are expected to begin discussions on the effectiveness of the work programme and possibilities for its continuation. A broad coalition, including Brazil, the LDCs, the EU, AILAC and even the Umbrella Group, wants the MWP to continue, while India and the Arab Group appear to believe its time has come to an end.

If the programme is to live another day, Parties need to establish real efficacy, show stronger political relevance and a stronger connection with other UNFCCC processes. Considering the MWP is one of the only formal tracks meant to close the gap between current NDCs and the mitigation ambition necessary to limit our 1.5°C overshoot, it is worth preserving – even though this remains a major point of disagreement between Parties.

UNFCCC funds, especially the Fund for responding to Loss & Damage (FRLD)

Goal: Turn the spotlight back on the role and importance of UNFCCC funds, all of which are seeing severe resource constraints and need to see new developed country commitments at COP31 to deliver urgently needed funds to the communities who need it most. This includes the FRLD which after nearly four years of institution-building has yet to deliver money to people – including in light of devastating recent loss and damage events, such as the glacier flood in August in Nepal.

Status: Recent pledge efforts for several of the UNFCCC funds have underdelivered, including for the Adaptation Fund and the GEF. As illustrated in the case of the FRLD, according to the Board's most recent report to COP31/CMA8, only $485.77 million of the pledged $822.71 million has even been received, with contribution agreements signed by just 25 of the pledging countries. Additionally, the pilot grant-based funding programme established by the FRLD, the Barbados Implementation Modalities (BIM), received 176 funding requests totalling $2.8 billion from 119 countries.

Thus, the FRLD Board expanded the funds it can commit from $250 million to $342 million at its July meeting in Manila – however, zero fund requests were actually approved. In fact, a "starter package" isn't even on the agenda until the Board's next meeting in December – after COP31 concludes.

The Board held four separate meetings with the World Bank in June–July 2026 specifically to resolve disagreements over how the hosting and trustee arrangements actually work in practice. This is a tension to keep an eye on.

Antalya outlook: As a matter of building trust between developed and developing countries, new pledges to several of the UNFCCC funds at COP31 would go a long way. For example, the FRLD is coming to Antalya without having distributed a dime and there are concerns the fund could even run out of money by next year if contributions aren't increased. New pledges by developed countries have slowed to a trickle over the past two years. The "long-term" model to replace the pilot phase will still be in limbo during COP31. Developing countries will push for more resources, especially after August's devastating glacier flood in Nepal. They will also want proof that the FRLD can get money to the communities that need it most, and fast.

3.2 Turkey's Action Agenda & Strategic Partnerships

Action Agenda: Institutionalised under the Paris outcome, the Action Agenda recognises governments alone cannot tackle the climate crisis. Thus, the Global Climate Action Agenda brings together non-negotiating actors into the process. It functions as the Convention's pillar, mobilising civil society, businesses, cities, investors, NGOs and all levels of government for coordinated climate action.

This year's COP31 Action Agenda, first presented by the COP31 Presidency in June and set out in full in its August letter to Parties, focuses on 10 key priorities.

Zero Waste

- Reduce food loss and waste from production to consumption.
- Scale circular economy policies that turn waste into resources.
- Integrate waste-related methane reduction opportunities into updated NDCs.

Oceans & Seas

- Integrate blue carbon ecosystems (seagrass meadows, salt marshes and mangroves) into national climate strategies and nationally determined contributions.
- Develop shared resilience frameworks to protect and restore coastal and marine ecosystems.
- Advance ocean observation systems and open data-sharing partnerships.
- Support resilience for coastal communities facing sea-level rise and coastal erosion.

Food Security

- Promote integrated approaches to the food-water-climate nexus, improving resource efficiency and strengthening cross-sectoral resilience to climate shocks.
- Champion targeted financing instruments that lower barriers impacting women farmers, strengthening their resilience on the front lines of climate change.
- Support green jobs, skills development and youth leadership across the agricultural value chain.
- Prioritise building resilient agricultural systems that protect producers against drought, flooding and shifting climate conditions.

Climate Resilient Cities

- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions across the entire life cycle of buildings.
- Promote green building certification systems to mainstream sustainable buildings and settlements.
- Support sustainable and scalable financing mechanisms.

- Promote resilient infrastructure and building standards to withstand climate impacts.

Climate Implementation Bridge (CIB)

- Tailor support to each country's national circumstances, capacity and development goals.
- Strengthen data, modelling and institutional coordination capacity to reinforce the architecture countries need to implement.
- Translate the priorities set out in NDCs and NAPs into concrete, investment-ready and scalable project portfolios.
- Support the development of bankable, standardised and replicable project pipelines.

Youth & Education

- Move youth participation beyond symbolic representation towards genuine influence across formal climate processes.
- Support the development of national and international education frameworks, strengthening climate literacy.
- Deepen cross-border collaboration between youth networks and institutions.
- Support capacity-building programmes, equipping youth with green economy skills.

Green Industrialisation

- Establish international cooperation platforms among countries, industry stakeholders and financial actors to accelerate competitive green industrial transformation.
- Promote the development of country-led industrial decarbonisation hubs.
- Support market creation and demand growth for low-carbon industrial products to make the transition economically sustainable.
- Scale near-zero emission technologies in hard-to-abate sectors (steel, cement, chemicals, aluminium and fertilisers) from pilot to commercial scale through stronger collaboration and financing.
- Strengthen sustainable value chains.

Clean Energy Transition

- Prioritise the scale-up of clean cooking technologies to reach the roughly 2 billion people still dependent on polluting cooking methods.
- Support investment in grid infrastructure, energy storage and flexibility mechanisms to integrate renewable power reliably.
- Advance energy efficiency and sustainable cooling solutions.

- Support just and accelerated electrification pathways for the roughly 730 million people lacking access to electricity.
- Promote transition pathways that respect each country's distinct level of development, resource base and priorities.

Rio Synergy

- Develop integrated field pilots that address wildfire management and ecosystem restoration.
- Integrate the protection of carbon sinks (forests, rangelands and wetlands) with sustainable land management.
- Position biodiversity conservation as an integral component of climate adaptation planning.
- Develop shared implementation and reporting models across the climate, biodiversity and desertification conventions.
- Turn integrated approaches piloted in the Mediterranean into models that can be transferred to other hotspots such as Africa and the Pacific.

Resilient & Dynamic Health Systems

- Support the development of climate-resilient, low-carbon health infrastructure.
- Promote the integration of climate risk assessments into national health planning and strengthen integrated surveillance systems.
- Support the establishment of multi-hazard early warning and response systems for climate-sensitive diseases.
- Encourage the use of AI and digital health solutions to strengthen forecasting and evidence-based decision-making.
- Support building a climate-competent health workforce through targeted training and green-transition employment.
- Promote stronger intersectoral coordination and the adoption of the One Health approach.
- Strengthen international cooperation, sustainable financing and knowledge-sharing for equitable, adaptive health systems.

Major Partner Agencies

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP): Formally named design-and-delivery partner for the Climate Implementation Bridge (CIB), UNDP will run the initiative through its "Climate Promise: Forward" project. The role was announced alongside the Istanbul Climate Finance Summit in September.

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD): The EBRD has a leadership role in the Turkey Industrial Decarbonisation Investment Platform (TIDIP) – the

largest decarbonisation programme to date – in partnership with the World Bank and IFC. Launched in 2024, TIDIP targets €5 billion in investments by 2030, reducing more than 20 million tonnes of carbon emissions annually across Turkey's steel, aluminium, cement and fertiliser sectors – the exact export sectors most vulnerable to the EU's CBAM. Turkey is the EBRD's largest economy of operation, and EBRD Vice President Matteo Patrone has called TIDIP central to COP31 itself.

ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability: ICLEI's partnership with COP31 stems from its role as Local Governments and Municipal Authorities (LGMA) Constituency focal point. Through this role, ICLEI acts as a bridge between grassroots local communities and high-level international climate policymakers. This runs through: Town Hall COPs, community-led climate dialogues that feed directly into the UNFCCC negotiations; and Daring Cities 2026, ICLEI's own multi-level governance summit, held in Bonn alongside June's climate talks. It's specifically structured to progress implementation pathways leading to Antalya.

United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG): Often referred to as the "World Union of Municipalities", the UCLG is the largest global network of local and regional governments, advocating for decentralised governance across 140 countries. In June 2026, the UCLG elected the Mayor of Konya, Turkey, Uğur İbrahim Altay, as president for the 2026–2029 term. He also serves as COP31 Special Envoy for Local and Regional Governments. UCLG's regional section for the Middle East and West Asia, UCLG-MEWA, is separately coordinating decentralised climate cooperation ahead of COP31.

Agence Française de Développement (AFD): Following a meeting in Paris this September with COP31 President Murat Kurum, Kurum praised France's development agency (AFD) as a strategic partner. The partnership was announced with a new financing package totalling roughly €600 million to help combat Turkey's marine mucilage (aka 'sea snot'), which has plagued the Sea of Marmara. The Climate Implementation Bridge was also discussed between the partners.

International Energy Agency (IEA): COP31 President Murat Kurum announced a "strategic" partnership with the IEA at an IEA-hosted summit in Paris in April 2026. It was the first in a series of high-level energy dialogues ahead of Antalya. The partnership backs the Presidency's 35-by-35 electrification goal and green industrialisation agenda. Kurum called access to clean cooking in developing countries one of its most important pillars. The IEA is also researching how waste recycling affects emissions, to inform COP31's Zero Waste priority, and the two are working on a mechanism to match projects with financing. Details of how the partnership will work in practice remain limited.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD): Kurum announced a strategic partnership with the OECD at its Paris headquarters in September 2026. The OECD will provide economic analysis, data, policy guidance and high-level dialogues across several Action Agenda priorities: turning NDCs into concrete policies, unlocking clean-energy and grid finance in emerging and developing economies, green industrialisation, zero waste and circular economy, and linking climate action with

biodiversity, oceans and resilience. “Speeding up the green energy transition and climate adaptation will be key for future growth and living standards,” said OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP): Through the Global Alliance for Buildings and Construction (GlobalABC), a UNEP-hosted network of more than 420 governments, companies and other organisations, UNEP supports the Presidency’s priority on decarbonising buildings. GlobalABC and the Cool Coalition will co-host the Buildings and Cooling Pavilion at COP31.

Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO): FAO and the COP31 Presidency presented the Turquoise Nexus Initiative at the Bonn climate talks in June 2026. The initiative will be led by Turkey’s Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and draws on the country’s experience with water-centred agriculture. It aims to link food systems, water management and climate adaptation, and to help countries build them into their NDCs and National Adaptation Plans. Agriculture accounts for 70 per cent of global freshwater withdrawals, yet the food-water-climate nexus is rarely reflected in national climate plans. The initiative rests on three pillars: policy support, knowledge exchange and a pipeline of bankable projects.

Civil Society Voice: The Plastic/Zero Waste Tension

The Zero Waste initiative, spearheaded by First Lady Emine Erdoğan in 2017, is Turkey’s crowning climate brand – not to mention COP31’s top Action Agenda priority. Regardless, Turkey is drowning in plastic waste, primarily imported from Europe – with 503 million kg/yr recorded in 2025.

After China closed its doors to Europe’s waste in 2018, the continent turned to Turkey as its dumping ground of choice. WWF estimated in 2019 that marine plastic pollution costs Turkey’s economy around $93 million a year. And by the EU’s measure, Turkey recycled just 12 per cent of its municipal waste in 2021, sending 81 per cent to landfill. The EU Commission published a report in September, documenting “shortcomings” in how Turkey deals with waste, but lawmakers went ahead and approved continued exports anyway.

Greenpeace Turkey’s “Real Zero Waste” campaign Gerçek Sıfır Atık is demanding a permanent import ban on plastic and textile waste before Antalya, pointing to the 435-fold increase in EU plastic imports since 2004. Berk Butan, Greenpeace Turkey’s Social and Economic Systems Campaign Manager stated, “[The] gap between rhetoric and the reality on the ground presents itself as a policy choice and a structural framing problem. [With Turkey hosting COP31] we have a significant opportunity for policy change.”

3.3 The Electrification Agenda in General and in Turkey

Enter the "Age of Electricity"

At its core, "electrification" aims to reduce gas, coal and oil dependence by shifting to non-carbon-based energy sources. This can be achieved by decarbonising daily life essentials like heating and transportation through heat pumps and electric vehicles, while shifting heavy industry to electric arc furnaces.

The International Energy Agency (IEA) has officially called this the "Age of Electricity", positioning grid expansion as the backbone of global climate mitigation. At the same time, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) estimates this transition requires roughly $35 trillion in global renewable and grid investments by 2030 to keep the 1.5°C climate target within reach.

In lockstep, the COP31 Presidency has designated the "Clean Energy Transition" as a central pillar of the Antalya Action Agenda with the global "35-by-35" goal. Formally introduced by Turkish Environment Minister and COP31 President Murat Kurum during the June 2026 UN Climate Meetings in Bonn, this voluntary initiative seeks broad multilateral backing to raise electricity's share of global final energy consumption to 35 per cent by 2035.

Speaking at the same event, Australian Minister for Climate Change and Energy and COP31 President of Negotiations Chris Bowen also framed the electrification agenda in terms of greater energy security amid rising geopolitical risks.

"We're in the middle of the worst energy crisis in our history, and this increases the task for all of us," Bowen said in Bonn. "The good news is that the answer to improved energy reliability and energy sovereignty is also the answer for emissions reduction – that is more electrification, more renewable energy, sovereign form of energy, reliable, which is also cheap and is also the best for the climate."

Turkey's 2035 Renewable Energy Roadmap

In October 2024, Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources, Alparslan Bayraktar, unveiled an ambitious 2035 Renewable Energy Roadmap, aimed at quadrupling the nation's solar and wind capacity to 120 GW by 2035.

More recently, at the Istanbul Climate Finance Summit on 4 September 2026, Bayraktar outlined three critical goals for Turkey's energy transition:

- Ensuring national energy supply security.
- Reducing Turkey's dependence on imported energy.
- Fulfilling the country's climate commitments.

To achieve this decarbonisation agenda, Ankara plans to inject massive capacities of renewable energy into the national grid via annual Renewable Energy Zone (YEKA) tenders. The physical infrastructure alone requires an estimated $108 billion of public and private investment.

By 2035, the government plans to expand the national transmission line network to 90,500 kilometres. This will be complemented with a new 40 GW high-voltage direct current (HVDC) green corridor stretching across the country to transport energy from high-production zones to high-consumption industrial hubs.

Bayraktar is expected to unveil Turkey's updated national electrification and renewables targets during the summit at COP31.

Strategic Partnerships: IEA and IRENA

To establish international credibility and attract foreign direct investment, Turkey has heavily leveraged global partnerships. The IEA, serving as a formal strategic partner for COP31, recently published its Turkey 2026 Energy Policy Review. The report highlights Turkey's rapid integration of distributed renewable resources while pushing for stronger regulatory frameworks to modernise its grid – which currently presents a bottleneck to national electrification targets.

Meanwhile, IRENA tracks Turkey's installed renewable capacity, which currently ranks 11th globally, as the country harbours aims to break into the global top 10 clean energy producers.

The Business Perspective

TOBB, the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, is the COP31 Presidency's designated "Business Envoy". It coordinates private-sector input through the COP31 Business Forum, which brings together more than 1,000 chambers and business organisations in working groups ranging from green industrialisation and climate finance to grids and SMEs, and culminates in a Business and Investment Summit in Antalya on 12–13 November. Its president, Rifat Hisarcıklıoğlu, frames the green transition as a race for industrial competitiveness rather than a cost. He also calls energy efficiency and renewables a macroeconomic necessity for a country that imports around 70 per cent of its energy. That is a shift for an organisation that warned about the costs of the Kyoto Protocol in 2005, and only came out for Paris ratification in 2021 under the pressure of EU border carbon charges.

From a market standpoint, Turkish industries are eager to electrify, driven heavily by the looming financial penalties of the EU's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM). The SHURA Energy Transition Center, an independent Turkish energy think tank, projects that EVs and heat pumps alone will add 6.6 TWh of new domestic electricity demand by 2030.

However, SHURA warns that without "smart" response mechanisms, this surge in electricity consumption could strain the existing grid. The business sector's core demand is regulatory certainty and private-sector investment in grid modernisation to ensure the transition remains economically sustainable and internationally competitive.

Civil Society Voice: The Coal-Grid Contradiction

While the 2035 targets are ambitious on paper, civil society groups are quick to point out the elephant in the room: coal.

Organisations like Ember and Greenpeace Turkey repeatedly emphasise that an "electrification first" agenda is only a climate solution if the grid itself is decarbonised. Because Turkey continues to generate roughly 34 per cent of its electricity from coal, plugging millions of new EVs and heat pumps into a coal-heavy grid simply shifts emissions from consumers to the power plants.

Turkey's Climate Network (İklim Ağı), a coalition of 15 civil society groups, calls for a clear plan to phase coal out of power generation, which the country still lacks.

As Bill Hare, CEO of Climate Analytics, noted following the release of the Climate Action Tracker's assessment of Turkey:

"Turkey's climate plans state fossil fuels will remain central to its energy mix until cheaper alternatives emerge. So, by its own logic, it should be making the shift away from fossil fuels, given solar power is the country's lowest-cost source of electricity and substantially undercuts domestic coal," Hare said.

"While it has made good strides in setting up the right policy framework for renewables, it is still very much focused on fossil fuels as being central to its energy future," he added.

4 Stakeholder Guide: "Who's Who" in Turkey & COP31

4.1 The Core COP31 Presidency & UN Leadership

Murat Kurum | COP31 President

Background: Turkey's Minister of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change and an AK Party member, Kurum is an engineer-turned-politician who has held the environment and urbanisation portfolio since 2018 (with a brief break to run for Istanbul mayor in 2023–2024). He is responsible for drafting Turkey's Climate Law and framing COP31 around "delivery and promises".

Website: https://csb.gov.tr/en

Chris Bowen | COP31 President of Negotiations

Background: Australia's Minister for Climate Change and Energy and a Labor MP since 2004, Bowen led Australia's original bid to single-handedly host COP31 before negotiating the current power-sharing arrangement with Turkey.

Website: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/

Simon Stiell | UNFCCC Executive Secretary

Background: A Grenadian engineer and former climate minister, Stiell has led the UN's Climate Secretariat since 2022.

COP31 Mandate: As the top UN civil servant for climate diplomacy, Stiell's role is to ensure institutional continuity and see that the multilateral process delivers ambitious results to meet the Paris Agreement objectives.

Website: https://unfccc.int/about-us/executive-secretary

André Corrêa do Lago | COP30 President & Brazilian Diplomat

Background: A diplomat since 1982 and Secretary for Climate, Energy and Environment at Brazil's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, do Lago represents institutional continuity between Belém and Antalya and personally announced and spearheaded the TAFF and deforestation Roadmaps at COP30.

Website: https://www.gov.br/mre/en

Samed Ağırbaş | Climate High-Level Champion & Zero Waste Foundation President

Background: Appointed by Murat Kurum as Climate High-Level Champion in January 2026, Ağırbaş, who chairs the Zero Waste Foundation's Board of Trustees and Board of Directors, has been a leading voice on waste reduction, sustainable cities and youth entrepreneurship.

COP31 Mandate: Ağırbaş's role is to bridge formal negotiations with the voluntary Action Agenda – mobilising businesses, cities and investors around COP31's goals, along with running high-level roundtables with the UNDP and World Bank.

Website: https://unfccc.int/climate-champions

Sally Higgins | COP31 Presidency Youth Climate Champion

Background: A farmer from Allora, a small town in Queensland's Darling Downs, Higgins is a Nuffield Farming Scholar exploring how Australian agriculture can adapt to a net-zero future.

COP31 Mandate: As Youth Climate Champion, Higgins works with youth across the globe to help shape climate action and integrate their perspectives into the decision-making process of COP31.

Website: https://www.dcceew.gov.au/about/news/meet-sally-higgins-youth-climate-champion-cop31

4.2 The Host Nation: Key Turkish Decision-Makers

Emine Erdoğan | First Lady & Zero Waste Initiative Lead

Background: Having launched Turkey's Zero Waste Initiative in 2017, Erdoğan now chairs the UN's High-Level Advisory Board on Zero Waste – an unelected position with diplomatic reach.

COP31 Mandate: Erdoğan is the architect of COP31's sustainability operating framework, though she holds no formal negotiating role.

Website: https://zerowaste.gov.tr/

Alparslan Bayraktar | Minister of Energy and Natural Resources

Background: An engineer and former energy regulator, Bayraktar has served as Turkey's Minister of Energy and Natural Resources since 2023.

COP31 Mandate: Bayraktar is expected to unveil Turkey's updated national electrification and renewables targets during the summit.

Website: https://enerji.gov.tr/

Fatma Varank | Deputy Minister, COP31 CEO & Chief Negotiator

Background: An architect by training, Varank has been Deputy Minister since 2018 and now holds the dual role of COP31 CEO and Turkey's chief climate negotiator.

COP31 Mandate: Varank holds the conference's top executive role. She oversees Action Agenda coordination and serves as Turkey's chief climate negotiator in substantive talks – sitting above fellow Deputy Ministers Bulut, Demiralp and Suver in the formal COP31 command structure.

Website: https://iklim.gov.tr/en/deputy-minister---climate-change-chief-negotiator-i-72

Halil Hasar | COP31 Chief Climate Diplomacy Officer & Director, the Directorate of Climate Change

Background: As Turkey's President of Climate Change at the Ministry of Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change, Hasar leads national climate development, overseeing implementation of the Climate Law and the rollout of the country's new Emissions Trading System.

COP31 Mandate: As one of five executive leads in Kurum's presidency, Hasar represents Turkey in international climate-diplomacy forums.

Website: https://iklim.gov.tr/en

Tuğba Dinçbaş | Deputy Head, the Directorate of Climate Change

Background: An environmental engineer, Dinçbaş has been Deputy Head of the Directorate since 2022 and has served on Turkey's UNFCCC negotiating team since 2011.

COP31 Mandate: As Turkey's UNFCCC National Focal Point, Dinçbaş is the government's official point of contact with the UN climate secretariat.

Website: https://iklim.gov.tr/teskilat-semasi/baskan-yardimcisi-2

Ayşin Turpancı | Head of Department, Climate Negotiations and International Policies, the Directorate of Climate Change

Background: A lawyer by training, Turpancı has spent 20 years in the Ministry and has served as the Rapporteur of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Implementation from 2018 to 2025.

COP31 Mandate: Under the COP31 Presidency structure, Turpancı leads Turkey's negotiation team.

Website: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Bio_Aysin_Turpanci_0.pdf

Ömer Bulut, Burak Demiralp & Hasan Suver | Deputy Ministers, Environment, Urbanisation and Climate Change

Background: Operating under the executive guidance of Fatma Varank, these three deputies manage the host nation's domestic execution. Bulut oversees construction and infrastructure, including the COP31 venue logistics, while Demiralp and Suver coordinate municipal operations and broader conference facilitation.

Website: https://csb.gov.tr/en

4.3 Global Institutions & Strategic Partners

Fatih Birol | Executive Director, International Energy Agency (IEA)

Background: A Turkish economist who joined the IEA in 1995, Birol took office in 2015 and oversees the agency's push towards what they call the "Age of Electricity".

COP31 Mandate: With the IEA formally named a "strategic partner" of the COP31 Presidency, the IEA-COP partnership will focus heavily on the 35-by-35 electrification target, access to clean cooking and zero waste strategies.

Website: https://www.iea.org/about

4.4 Civil Society, Activists & Media Contacts

Çiğdem Özbaş | İklim Adaleti Koalisyonu (Climate Justice Coalition) / Halkların İklim Zirvesi (Peoples' Climate Summit)

Background: A longtime climate justice organiser, Özbaş is leading the coordination of COP31's parallel "Peoples' Climate Summit" – a joint initiative between the Climate Justice Coalition, the Ecology Union and the Environmental Platform of Turkey – established in November 2025.

Arguing that true climate justice comes from grassroots, people-led organisations rather than state-level COP negotiations, the coalition has grown into a broad solidarity network. It incorporates labour unions, women's and LGBTQ organisations, ecology platforms and local groups rallying against COP31's perceived "greenwashing".

Website: Climate Justice Coalition / The Peoples' Summit

Kıvanç Eliaçık | Author, trade unionist and activist of the Climate Justice Coalition (İAK) and the Peoples' Climate Summit 2026 (PCS26 Antalya)

Background: Eliaçık is coordinating the preparations for the international trade union meetings to be held in Antalya during COP31. His work focuses on the impacts of the

climate crisis on working conditions, energy democracy, just transition and migrant workers.

Website: Climate Justice Coalition / The Peoples' Summit

Süheyla Doğan | Co-spokesperson, Women's Assembly of the Ecology Union (Ekoloji Birliği)

Background: A longtime eco-feminist activist, Doğan is in charge of the coordination of axis meetings of the Peoples' Climate Summit 2026 Antalya. She also chairs the board of the Kazdağı Association for the Protection of Natural and Cultural Entities and volunteers for EŞİK (Platform for Gender Equality).

Website: The Peoples' Summit

Tuğçe Oklay | International relations coordinator for the Peoples' Climate Summit 2026 in Antalya

Background: Oklay has been actively involved in grassroots organisations and civil society initiatives for many years, advocating for migrants' rights through community-based organisations in Paris and volunteering for Climate Justice Coalition since Glasgow 2021.

Website: The Peoples' Summit

Berkan Özyer | Director, Greenpeace Turkey (Greenpeace Mediterranean)

Background: Serving as Executive Director of Greenpeace Turkey since 2025, Özyer has been a highly visible advocate pushing for binding fossil fuel phase-outs ahead of the Antalya summit.

Website: https://www.greenpeace.org/turkey/

Efe Baysal | Turkey Director, İklim İçin 350 Derneği (350.org Turkey)

Background: Baysal is spokesperson for 350's October 2026 "Partners in Coal" report on Turkey's and Australia's coal trade. 350 is the co-publisher of the report, which criticises COP31 Presidency's silence on fossil fuels.

Website: https://350turkiye.org/

Duygu Kutluay | Campaigner at Beyond Fossil Fuels/ Europe Beyond Coal

Background: Kutluay is BFF's Turkey voice on COP31. She co-signed a June 2026 letter from 94 groups urging Turkey and Australia to act on fossil fuels at home. BFF is a Berlin-based coalition of over 60 civil society groups working for a fossil-free European power sector. Turkish members include: Ekosfer, Yuva Association and the Center for Spatial Justice.

Website: https://beyondfossilfuels.org/

Elif Cansu İlhan | Türkiye Climate and Energy Policies Coordinator, Climate Action Network (CAN) Europe

Background: İlhan coordinates Turkish policy for CAN Europe, the European branch of the Climate Action Network – a global network of more than 2,500 civil society organisations in over 130 countries that tracks negotiations and coordinates NGO positions across the Belém-to-Antalya process.

Website: https://climatenetwork.org/

Ümit Şahin | Head of Climate Change Programme at Istanbul Policy Center, Sabancı University

Background: Şahin is a Senior Scholar and head of the Climate Change Programme at the Istanbul Policy Center. He teaches courses on global environmental challenges, climate change and environmental politics at Sabancı University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences and serves as a Climate Change Juror for the Mercator–IPC Fellowship Program.

Website: https://ipc.sabanciuniv.edu

Bahadır Sercan Gümüş | Senior Energy Analyst, Ember Turkey

Background: An energy systems engineer, Gümüş spent over eight years at Turkey's Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources before joining the energy think tank, Ember in 2023. He is Ember's Turkey analyst and a source on the country's electricity mix, coal and new emissions trading system.

Website: https://ember-energy.org/people/bahadir-sercan-gumus/

Semra Cerit Mazlum | Professor at the Department of Political Science and International Relations in Marmara University

Background: Specialist in global climate politics and Turkey's climate policy.

Website: https://avesis.marmara.edu.tr/scmazlum

Özgür Gürbüz | Journalist and Energy Analyst (Ekosfer)

Background: Began his journalism career in 1994, writing on the environment, economy and energy for various media outlets and producing and hosting radio programmes. A columnist for BirGün, later worked with civil society organisations and co-founded the Ekosfer Association. Currently works as an independent consultant, energy analyst and is the author of Energy and Cows.

Website: https://ekosfer.org/

Bengisu Özenç | Director, Sustainable Economics and Finance Association (SEFiA)

Background: An economist who worked at TEPAV 2005 to 2017, Özenç has focused on climate, energy and economics since 2012. She co-authored a study on the regional economics of coal phase-out in Muğla and is a frequent commentator on climate finance and just transition.

Website: https://sefia.org/en/our-team/

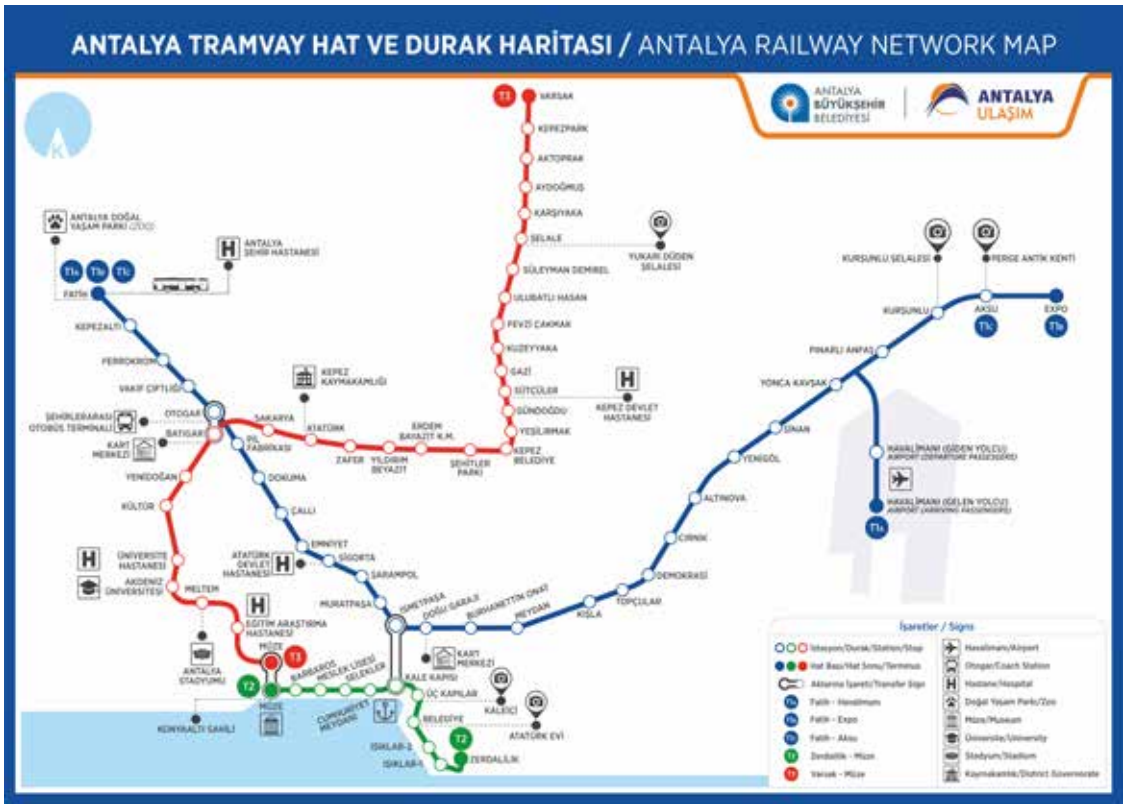
Dawid Danilo Bartelt | Heinrich Böll Stiftung Istanbul Director

Background: Bartelt leads the Heinrich Böll Stiftung's Istanbul office and directs its COP31 activities. The Heinrich Böll Stiftung is a German political foundation with close ties to the Green Party (Alliance 90/The Greens) that operates independently of the party. Active in Turkey since 1994, the office works on ecology, climate change, democratisation, human rights, foreign policy and migration.

Website: https://tr.boell.org/en

5 On the Ground in Antalya: A Practical Guide

5.1 Antalya Logistics & Local Insights



Source: Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, Antalya Ulaşım (2026), Antray network map.

Welcome to Antalya

You are standing on sacred ground. Some of history's greatest figures have trodden these lands, including Alexander the Great, the Apostles Paul and Barnabas, explorers Ibn Battuta and Evliya Çelebi, plus Roman Emperor Hadrian, whose namesake triple-arch gateway still stands in the old city.

Antalya is not just Turkey's second-largest tourism destination; it's been a cosmopolitan hub for centuries, from the Greeks to the Ottomans – along with the medley of Russian and European residents who mingle with Turkish locals in the city today.

In case you want to venture beyond the conference, here is a practical guide to help you make the most of your stay in Antalya.

Things to do (Distances measured from the COP31 venue)

1. Lara Beach (16 km) and Konyaaltı Beach (28 km): The closest public beaches to the venue, these are both within Antalya city limits, widely accessible and often sunny.

2. Perge Ancient City (5 km): A short taxi ride away, Perge is an expansive ancient city that was initially inhabited in 4000 BC – and water still runs through its restored fountain today.

3. Kaleiçi Old Town (22 km): Antalya's old town is wrapped in fortress walls that host some of the city's most picturesque and colourful architecture. It's also a great nightlife hotspot.

4. Aspendos Theatre (30 km): One of the best-preserved ancient theatres of the Roman world, Aspendos was converted into a Seljuk palace in the 13th century before it was restored.

5. Day trip for mountain lovers – Termessos (53 km): This mountaintop fortress just outside the city thwarted a siege by Alexander the Great, but you can conquer it with a brief hike.

6. Day trip for beach lovers – Phaselis (80 km): An ancient Greco-Roman port city combined with a pristine beach surrounded by a fluorescent green pine forest. Need we say more?

Visitor information:

Venue: Antalya EXPO Fairgrounds, Solak Mahallesi, 07119 Aksu, Antalya

Transportation: Complimentary shuttle services will run throughout Antalya during the conference, according to the UNFCCC's official participant guidance page.

Public transport and taxis are also widely available to move between the airport, city centre and the conference area, which are all connected by Antalya's light rail system (see map).

Restaurants: Good food is easy to find throughout Antalya. From local kebabs to foreign staples like pizza and sushi, the city hosts a wide variety of restaurants that will satisfy any preference.

For city-specific dishes, try the seafood (of course) or Şiş Köfte with a side of Antalya Piyazı – grilled meatballs with a fresh, creamy white bean salad. Also, keep an eye out for Patlıcan reçeli, a hyper-local sweet jam made with baby aubergines.

Weather: Antalya has a Mediterranean climate. Attendees can expect comfortable daytime highs around 20°C to 21°C (68°F–70°F) and crisp evening lows near 10°C to 11°C (50°F–52°F). Expect plenty of sunshine and occasional rain.

5.2 Local Governance Context

Southern Turkey is projected to have similar climates to Cairo, Egypt, and Basra, Iraq, by 2100. This trend will be felt acutely in Antalya, which might be widely known as a tourism destination, but is much less known as a frontline city facing significant climate change vulnerabilities.

With about 2.7 million residents across the province – some 1.5 million of them in the central city – and a record 17 million visitors in 2025, Antalya's infrastructure and ecology are already facing severe environmental strains, including water scarcity, microplastics and wildfires.

Key Local Environmental Issues:

1. Water Scarcity & Agricultural Stress

The Issue: Antalya is a major agricultural hub in a region facing severe droughts and declining groundwater levels. The issue is exacerbated by unlicensed agricultural boreholes and the proliferation of water-intensive tourist attractions like golf courses and water parks.

Municipal response: To combat this, local officials aim to present drought adaptation strategies as part of an "Antalya Water Action Plan" at COP31. One core initiative involves recovering some of the roughly 750,000 cubic metres of treated wastewater that currently flows into the sea each day and redirecting it for agricultural use.

2. Marine Pollution & Microplastics

The Issue: After China stopped accepting foreign waste, Europe began exporting more refuse to Turkey, where much of it is illegally dumped or improperly discarded. The result is that tons of microplastics are leaking into the Mediterranean Sea, threatening Turkey's ecology and tourism sector.

Municipal response: The "Blue Flag" status of Antalya's beaches is crucial for the local economy. The problem is that the majority of microplastics entering the sea originate from poorly managed coastal waste facilities and are carried by currents across the Eastern Mediterranean, requiring greater regional and international cooperation.

3. Wildfires and Ecosystem Degradation

The Issue: The surrounding Taurus Mountains are heavily forested with highly flammable pine trees. Coupled with long, dry summers, the region is at high wildfire risk much of the year and regularly faces large, devastating blazes such as the 2021 Manavgat fires.

Municipal response: The municipality is focused on increasing fire response capacity. Yet, urban sprawl and tourism developments continue to push deeper into

undeveloped wildlands, creating a growing challenge for already overstretched emergency response personnel and resources.

Municipal Action and COP31 Alignment

The cornerstone of Antalya's localised climate strategy is its Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP). Despite budget constraints, the municipality aims to reduce per capita greenhouse gas emissions by 40 per cent by 2030 (against a 2019 baseline). Because heavy industry makes up a small fraction of the local economy, SECAP targets core urban infrastructure:

Decarbonising Mobility: Expanding the Antray light rail network, deploying smart traffic intersections to reduce idling and transitioning to an electric, zero-emission public bus fleet.

Drought Adaptation: Overhauling municipal landscaping through "xeriscaping", which replaces water-intensive ornamental plants with millions of drought-resistant native varieties.

Heat Adaptation: The metropolitan municipality is preparing an Urban Heat Island and Extreme Heat Action Plan, to be presented at COP31. Built on heat-risk mapping across the province's 19 districts under the EU-supported CLIMAAX-MUHIR project, it identifies priority risk areas and vulnerable groups, and promotes measures such as passive cooling. The UN's Chief Heat Officer, Eleni Myrivili, is advising on the plan, which Antalya hopes will become a model for other Mediterranean cities. Antalya has also joined UNEP's "Cities of 50°C" initiative and the Beating the Heat partnership.

A Live Case Study: As delegates arrive, Antalya's ongoing push to transition its transit grid, reclaim wastewater and execute its SECAP mandate will serve as a real-world example of the implementation challenges COP31 aims to solve globally.

Antalya's Muratpaşa district is also active on the green agenda. The municipality operates a "neighbour card" programme incentivising recycling and waste separation. In June, Muratpaşa co-hosted a "COP Women Antalya" gathering with the Social Climate Association (Sosyal İklim Derneği) to address the gender dimension of the climate crisis, its impacts on women, local needs and potential solutions.

Local political context:

Like many opposition mayors in Turkey, the elected mayor of Antalya, Muhittin Böcek, was arrested and removed from office in a sprawling corruption investigation.

After the sweeping electoral victories in the 2024 municipal elections, the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) has faced rolling judicial probes by state prosecutors that have severely limited the party's capacity to govern.

Böcek's arrest in July 2025 was part of this larger crackdown on the CHP. Today, he remains in jail and his lawyers regularly publish his hand-written letters from his prison cell on social media.

Böcek applied for "active remorse" and became a confessor, serving as a witness in the investigations of other CHP officials, including senior leadership. His cooperation, however, has not shielded him from further investigations as Böcek and his son were named suspects in a prostitution-linked probe launched on 29 September.

The acting Antalya Mayor is currently Büşra Dirgen Özdemir of the CHP.

COP31 Acronym Guide

Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS): An intergovernmental organisation advocating for the interests of low-lying coastal and small island nations highly vulnerable to climate change.

Barbados Implementation Modalities (BIM): Designates the start-up financing phase under the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD), which is restricted at $342 million due to funding shortfalls of the new fund against funding requests received by developing countries for loss and damage project support of $2.8 billion.

Belém Action Mechanism / Belém-Antalya Mechanism (BAM): The just transition mechanism approved under the Just Transition Work Programme in Belém to be fully operationalised at COP31. It is supposed to function as a coordination, technical assistance and knowledge providing mechanism for helping countries with their efforts to a just transition for low-emission and climate-resilient development.

Belém Adaptation Indicators (BAIs): The set of 59 measurable indicators adopted at COP30 to track progress towards the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA). Reporting is voluntary, and the indicators are still being made operational under the Belém-Addis Vision (B2A).

Belém-Addis Vision on Adaptation (B2A): Two-year process (COP30–COP32) making the 59 Belém Adaptation Indicators usable.

Belém Mission to 1.5 (BM1.5): The UNFCCC-mandated multi-year initiative driving research and collaboration to accelerate NDC and NAP implementation ahead of COP31.

Bonn Climate Change Conference (SB64): The mid-year UNFCCC subsidiary-body negotiations held in Germany in June 2026 to prepare technical texts for COP31.

Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM): A carbon tariff implemented by the European Union on carbon-intensive products imported from countries with less stringent climate policies.

Climate Finance Work Programme (CFWP): Two-year work programme adopted at COP30 in Belém on climate finance under Article 9 of the Paris Agreement, including developed countries' obligation to provide finance to developing countries.

Climate Implementation Bridge (CIB): A cooperative framework designed to translate pledged climate targets into actionable, funded policies.

Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP): The supreme decision-making body of the UNFCCC, composed of all states that are a Party to the Convention.

Emerging Markets and Developing Economies (EMDEs): Nations in the process of rapid industrialisation and economic growth, central to debates surrounding climate finance and energy transition support.

Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD): The dedicated financial mechanism established to rescue and rebuild vulnerable countries severely impacted by climate-related disasters.

Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA): The Paris Agreement's collective commitment to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce climate vulnerability. Progress is to be tracked through the 59 Belém Adaptation Indicators, but how they are applied and financed remains unresolved after talks in Bonn stalled under Rule 16.

Global Implementation Accelerator (GIA): A voluntary initiative launched to support governments and stakeholders in successfully deploying their NDCs and NAPs.

Global Stocktake (GST): The UN's official assessment of global climate progress, evaluating whether the world is on track to meet Paris Agreement goals.

Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC): A negotiating group of eight Latin American countries, among them Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica and Peru, that typically pushes for high climate ambition.

Integrated Forum on Climate Change and Trade (IFCCT): Non-negotiating dialogue platform, launched at Belém, addressing trade measures like CBAM.

Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP): UNFCCC work programme on just transition pathways, set up at COP27 and launched at COP28. The Belém-Antalya Mechanism (BAM) was created under it, and COP31 is due to review it.

Least Developed Countries (LDCs): The countries the UN classifies as least developed. In UNFCCC talks they negotiate as a bloc, with a focus on adaptation and climate finance.

Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDCs): A negotiating bloc of developing countries, including China, India and Saudi Arabia, that stresses developed countries' historical responsibility and resists commitments it sees as shifting the burden onto the Global South.

Mitigation Work Programme (MWP): UNFCCC track to scale up mitigation ambition this decade.

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs): Strategic frameworks countries develop to identify, address and manage their medium- and long-term vulnerabilities to climate change impacts.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs): Sovereign climate action plans outlining emission reduction targets, submitted by countries under the Paris Agreement.

New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG): The post-2025 global climate finance target, establishing a $300 billion annual goal to be reached by 2035 to be led by contributions from developed nations, to be complemented by the implementation of a Baku-to-Belém Roadmap to $1.3 trillion annually by 2035 detailing mobilisation of finance for developing countries from all actors and sources.

Paris Agreement Crediting Mechanism (PACM): The UN-governed carbon market established under Article 6.4, allowing countries to trade emission reductions.

Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP): The formal meeting of states bound by the Kyoto Protocol to review and implement its legacy emission targets.

Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA): The formal meeting of states bound by the Paris Agreement to oversee its implementation and make decisions to promote its effective operation.

Transition Away From Fossil Fuels (TAFF): COP30 Presidency-led roadmap working outside of the formal negotiations and turning the "transition away from fossil fuels" pledge into country-level policy.

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