

WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

MODEL UNITED NATIONS



GLOBAL YOUTH FORUM

CLIMATE CHANGE

OCTOBER 16, 2025

Focus:

Students will participate as delegates to a global youth forum that will deal with the issues of Climate Change. The forum will present recommendations to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP 30) scheduled for November 10-21, 2025 in Belem, Brazil.

Background:

Belem, Brazil is set to host the United Nations 30th Climate Change Conference (COP 30) from November 10-21, 2025. Past Climate Change conferences have been held in Kyoto, Japan; Montreal, Canada and Paris, France among other places. Some of the key agreements from these conferences have included:

- Recognizing the need for international cooperation in combatting climate change
- Limiting average temperature increases to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial averages.
- Reducing emissions to pre-1990 levels
- Reducing use of carbon based fuels and seeking alternative renewable fuel resources
- Reducing the percentage of transportation fuel use from the current 21%
- Committing \$300 billion a year through a New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) to developing countries by 2035

The key goal for the 30th Climate Change Conference is to meet the targets outlined in key Sustainable Development Goals, specifically:

Goal 5 – Gender Equality

Goal 6 – Clean Water & Sanitation

Goal 7 - Affordable & Clean Energy

Goal 8 - Decent Work & Economic Growth

Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation & Infrastructure

Goal 11 - Sustainable Cities & Communities

Goal 12 - Responsible Consumption & Production

Goal 13 - Climate Action

Goal 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

<https://sdg.iisd.org/events/2025-un-climate-change-conference-unfccc-cop-30/>

With this in mind, the specific agenda for COP 30 is: to focus on the following 6 areas:

- Transitioning Energy, Industry, and Transport
- Stewarding Forests, Oceans, and Biodiversity
- Transforming Agriculture and Food Systems
- Building Resilience for Cities, Infrastructure, and Water
- Fostering Human and Social Development
- Cross-cutting Enablers and Accelerators

IIGCC. COP30 in Belem: A simple guide to most used UN climate terms

<https://www.iigcc.org/insights/cop30-in-bel%C3%A9m-a-simple-guide-to-most-used-un-climate-terms>

From a practical perspective, what each COP attempts to achieve in consensus is the following

- Mitigation which means recognizing the need to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases that cause climate change.
- Transitioning economies to use fewer fossil fuels.
- Adapting to the consequences and effects of climate change.
- Financing through investments, subsidies and loans, particularly from rich countries to poorer countries which do not have the resources to combat the effects of climate change
- And recognizing the impact of climate change on the most vulnerable of populations which, in particular, impacts women more than men.
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SIMAVI. **COP30 in Belém, Brazil: What is it and what will happen?**

<https://simavi.nl/en/news-and-stories/cop30-in-belem-brazil-what-is-it-and-what-will->

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[fH9OxpKcawd&gclid=CjwKCAjwIOrFBhBaEiwAw4bYDZQgr1d4C7BLtSTEc_0U8Ko3KNOAh1ovSVyFy-0k6K4bNovjlbvKxRoCsH0QAvD_BwE](https://simavi.nl/en/news-and-stories/cop30-in-belem-brazil-what-is-it-and-what-will-happen?gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=21846297808&gbraid=0AAAAADoG0mIPKPpDL118s-fH9OxpKcawd&gclid=CjwKCAjwIOrFBhBaEiwAw4bYDZQgr1d4C7BLtSTEc_0U8Ko3KNOAh1ovSVyFy-0k6K4bNovjlbvKxRoCsH0QAvD_BwE)

On going issues:

Despite the intentions of the signatories to the COP Climate Change conferences, the most significant targets have not been met.

The world community has not been able to reach a maximum of an increase of 1.5 degree above pre-industrial average temperatures. And while the target is meant to refer to a 20 year average, 2024 exceeded the yearly average of a 1.5 degree limit for the first time.

Global emissions continue to exceed 1990 limits. In fact, emissions continue to increase significantly, even though progress is being made.

However, there has been an encouraging move away from fossil fuels to renewable fuel sources including solar and wind energy. But there has been backlash in the United States where there is a renewed emphasis on coal and oil production.

Countries are facing the consequences of devastating drought, increasing effects of wildfires and the melting of icecaps. Many of these countries do not have the resources to combat these effects.

Challenges:

The conference does face two significant challenges to any meaningful successes in the fight against the devastation of climate change:

- a. Smaller, less developed countries are now experiencing industrial growth and are contributing to increased emissions of CO₂. These increased emissions are off-setting some of the achievements made by countries, in Europe in particular, which have taken major steps in emission reduction.
- b. The United States, under the leadership of President Trump, has pulled itself out of any international climate change obligations and for the first time in its history, will not participate in the COP Climate Change conference. Its renewed commitment to fossil fuels threatens any advancements in clean energy in the United States and by default, any close trading partners, including Canada.

Key Issues for Debate:

From a youth perspective, any decisions made at COP30 will have long lasting effects that will likely be felt by the world's youth and not necessarily by the delegates attending the conference. While many countries will include a youth delegation, the reality is that decision-making is in the hands of the bureaucrats from each participating country. The Global Youth Forum will provide a youth driven voice that can be shared with the official delegations to COP30. The key issue will be:

What major recommendations should be made by the Global Youth Forum on Climate Change for COP30, Belem, Brazil, 2025?

Key Topics for Debate:Discussion:

1. Purpose

- a. Why is climate change of significant importance to global youth?
- b. Why should COP30 listen to the recommendations from the Global Youth Forum?
- c. How can youth engagement in the climate change discussion be improved and taken seriously?

2. Mitigation

- a. What key elements in the climate change debate need to be re-emphasized and prioritized?
- b. What key elements which so far have been ignored in the climate change debate need to be recognized?

3. Transitioning

- a. What key strategies need to be re-emphasized in the move to a cleaner/greener environment?
- b. What new key strategies need to be emphasized in the move to a cleaner/greener environment?

4. Adaptation

- a. What key strategies need to be re-emphasized as the world adapts to the effects of climate change?
 - b. What new key strategies need to be emphasized as the world adapts to the effects of climate change?
- 5. Financing**
 - a. What mechanisms need to be put in place in order to ensure richer countries help poorer countries adapt to the effects of climate change?
- 6. Vulnerable Populations**
 - a. What changes/additions to the Sustainable Development Goals need to be made in order to recognize the devastating effects of climate change on global youth: environmentally, financially, healthwise.

Points to consider:

1. Most delegations to COP30 in Belem, Brazil, have youth representation but these delegations are representatives each country's government. The Global Youth Forum on Climate Change includes youth representatives from each country who represent, not the government, but the best interests of their countries.
2. While the United States will not be sending representation to COP30, there will be youth representation representing the United States to the Global Youth Forum.
3. Economic uncertainty in 2025 and 2026 will have an impact on climate change initiatives. While the European Union has remained committed to transitioning to clean energy, including EVs (electric vehicles), the United States has removed all EV mandates and even Canada has put a temporary hold on EV mandates.
4. There is continued skepticism that climate change is a real threat to the world. This skepticism is led by political/ideological forces and industrial forces (mostly the oil industry) which stand to be hurt economically.
5. 2025 is on track to becoming one of the hottest years on record, only behind 2024 which holds that distinction.
6. The world continues to experience wildfires, water shortages and melting of polar ice at increasing levels.

Specific Items For Your Country to Consider:

Delegates are expected to consider each of the following:

1. The effect of climate change on their country. This would include:
 - a. The physical impact: average temperatures, heat waves, wild fires, water shortages, crop insecurity, major weather events, damage to coastlines
 - b. The economic impact: loss of business, job loss and insecurity, cost of servicing the impact of climate change (wild fires, major weather events, loss of trade)

- c. The impact on health: deaths due to major weather events, risks to cardio-vascular well being, risks to most vulnerable of populations (the elderly, the young, the infirm, the homeless)
- 2. Their country's response to combat climate change. This would include:
 - a. Mitigation strategies
 - b. Transitioning strategies
 - c. Adaptation strategies
 - d. Financial strategies.
 - e. Health care strategies.

Resources:

Decision – COP 28

United Nations Climate Change. UN Climate Change Conference - United Arab Emirates <https://unfccc.int/cop28>

Decisions – COP 27

United Nations Climate Change. Sharm el-Sheikh Climate Change Conference - November 2022 <https://unfccc.int/cop27>

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IISD. SDG Knowledge Hub. 2025 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30)

<https://sdg.iisd.org/events/2025-un-climate-change-conference-unfccc-cop-30/>

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United Nations Climate Change. Conference of the Parties (COP).

<https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/supreme-bodies/conference-of-the-parties-cop>

United Nations Climate Change. UN Climate Change Conference Baku - November 2024 <https://unfccc.int/cop29>