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How to really make COP30 the “implementation COP”? Drawing lessons from national contexts

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The COP30 Presidency has announced that implementation will be the central focus of its 2025 summit in Belém. If COP30 intends to achieve major breakthroughs in this regard, relying on country-level lessons will be essential to ensure a comprehensive understanding of all dimensions of transformational needs. Ten years after the adoption of the Paris Climate Agreement, the Deep Decarbonization pathways Initiative provides an extensive bottom-up appraisal of the state and pace of national transitions, showcasing both concrete gains and gaps to be addressed.

Beyond NDCs

National commitments to GHG mitigation efforts in the form of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are the most visible part of what Paris-compatible transitions entail at the national level. NDCs remain a critically important mechanism for setting national objectives, providing a clear roadmap for short-term emission reductions. Beyond this 5-year perspective, however, there is a broader and more complex picture of transitional needs to be described in detail. A fully-fledged implementation of climate goals of the Paris Agreement will require a comprehensive representation of the underlying transition drivers and structural transformations that will make net-zero possible at the national level.

Therefore, the Deep Decarbonization Pathways initiative (DDP), relying on its strong international partnerships, has attempted to provide this broader vision of the long-term transformations ([DDP-IDDRI, 2025](#)). Detailed national assessments were produced by in-country climate scientists and policy experts from 21 countries and economic unions,¹ accounting for roughly 70% of global cumulative emissions. Dimensions that have shaped national transitions over the past decade include: the evolution of national climate governance frameworks, the science-policy linkages, the ownership of climate goals by national stakeholders, the underlying drivers of transformative change, the development of transitional sectoral policymaking, the climate policy and industrial policy linkages, the social impacts of the transition and just transition needs, among others. The report also highlights areas where efforts should now be focused: both within national governance and policy frameworks, and through innovative approaches to be reflected in existing streams of international cooperation.

National climate governance

At the national level, the Paris Agreement has spurred the emergence and broad adoption of new approaches to climate governance. Climate-focused mandates, bodies, and processes have largely become the norm. The last decade has seen the appearance of a wide array of dedicated governmental institutions in several countries, including climate ministries, sub-national focal points, expert agencies and technical bodies to monitor the evolution of climate policies. Involvement of civil society, business sector and local communities has helped shape climate policies in many countries, including through dedicated consultation platforms.

Approaches grounded in science, framed by a long-term perspective, and involving diverse stakeholders have become much more widespread, helping to raise climate priorities in decision-making. National technical capacity for analysis and projection of climate scenarios has been enhanced. National net-zero targets (some of which have been enshrined in national climate laws) have increased significantly, with long-term low-emission strategies (LT-LEDS) increasingly used as a reference for the design of sectoral policies.

Continued progress will depend on improving the effectiveness of these new forms of governance. This will require overcoming coordination challenges and establishing robust governance structures capable of managing political trade-offs, ensuring policy coherence and long-term direction, and building broad alignment in the face of change. Countries must establish or strengthen national processes that bring together government, businesses, civil society, and local actors to shape climate action. These processes need to ensure diverse perspectives are represented—particularly economic and finance actors—while keeping a long-term vision at the heart of decision-making. This is one of the key legal features that the Paris Agreement introduces into national policy contexts.

Given the scale and specificity of the transformations required by the Agreement, the establishment of cutting-edge governance structures specifically designed for these objectives is essential. Carefully designed structures are more

likely to respond to coordination needs and address trade offs and inevitable political negotiation in a context of transformational change. Overlaps between different national governance structures are probably unavoidable. They are also likely necessary in order to address complex, systemic issues such as climate change. Nevertheless, a clear definition of roles, mandates and responsibilities, as well as practical cooperation between the national institutions, should be a priority to ensure effective governance.

When competing priorities arise, such structures can help governments resolve tensions and support policies that prioritize climate goals. Science must play a central role in these processes. It should help design effective policies, compare different options and pathways and assess and monitor their implementation. Building local ownership of data, models and scenarios in the national context is critical, so that national strategies are guided by country-driven evidence and grounded in the national context.

National transition policies

Over the last decade, national policies have effectively supported the global trend on low-carbon technologies, enabling the acceleration of their development and practical implementation at country level. This is true for a number of sectors. On the other hand, few pro-active measures have been taken to prepare for the longer-term evolution of infrastructure and behaviours needed to reach carbon neutrality. In parallel, there has been a growing recognition of the close links between climate and social priorities, and the need to articulate climate policies with industrial, trade and other socio-economic policies.

There are numerous key concerns related to the transition at the national level. Security issues, competitiveness and employment, as well the management of the social impacts of climate action, particularly the risk of increasing inequalities and poverty. Such concerns have triggered resistance and, in some cases, slowed or reduced climate ambition.

The acceleration of national transitions in the next decade requires comprehensive policy packages that address multiple issues and policy coordination. Such packages must cover a variety of policy actions, including national development and investment plans. In areas where technical solutions are already available, national policies must build enabling conditions for immediate emission reductions. They should also encourage the longer-term structural changes needed by providing targeted support for infrastructure development, accelerating the market readiness of new technical options, and encouraging behavioural change. National policies for energy distribution infrastructure, which have not triggered change at the scale and pace necessary to build robust and flexible electricity grids capable of integrating high shares of intermittent power sources, are a telling example of these challenges in several countries.

In addition, public policies should play a critical role in accompanying structural economic and industrial shifts and strengthening synergies between climate and industrial and economic agendas. At a time when many countries are developing or revising their industrial policies, a benchmarking against long-term transformation goals required for the economy as a whole, such as those implied by decarbonization, would be of great relevance. In trade-exposed economies, for example, industrial adjustments are often driven by changes in international competition. As value chains and goods gradually decarbonize, countries are incentivized to adopt proactive domestic measures to reduce the carbon content of light manufacturing industries, in order to maintain or gain international market share. In many countries, however, integration of climate and industrial agendas has not translated into concrete climate and industrial strategies, despite emerging convergence in political discourse.

By integrating climate ambition into industrial development, countries can accelerate decarbonization while fostering sustainable economic growth and resilience. Public policies also need to manage the socio-economic impacts of the transition. There are many available examples of well-designed political processes that meet these objectives. To meet all these requirements consistently, the design of national policy packages should be grounded in a clear national strategic perspective.

Innovative avenues for international cooperation

Enabling conditions for national transitions are also largely determined beyond national borders. Hence, strengthening international cooperation is critical to support greater national climate ambition. To this goal, the international community may now rely on a fully-operational Paris Agreement rulebook. Existing international processes such as the Global Stocktake can be the right scene for these efforts. New approaches must be adopted that better place the needs and priorities of countries at the centre. The DDP Report identifies three areas where specific improvements in international cooperation would be needed to enable greater national ambition over the next decade.

First, international finance mechanisms should ensure that financial flows effectively support investment needs for technological innovation and infrastructure development, particularly in developing countries. This approach could be seamlessly integrated into the renewed discussions on country platforms.

Second, international processes must enable greater knowledge of existing technologies and connect relevant countries together to support effective diffusion. This is particularly important as broad deployment of the most advanced, best available technologies across countries is a necessity to support country transitions.

Third, a new approach to trade policy is needed to ensure alignment with net-zero objectives. Trade policies must evolve from a model based on competition to one that fosters collaboration. This approach to the twin industrial and climate transitions would provide an opportunity to rethink the terms of partnerships and value sharing in existing value chains. An innovative approach to trade policy could help unlock the shared benefits of industrial transitions and remove some of the structural barriers to national ambition in critical sectors.

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20 countries plus the European Union.