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BLOG POST November 5th 2026

Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels: what is the COP30 Presidency Roadmap and how can it support countries in implementing this goal?

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Reading time: 7 min



On 3 November, 2026, the Brazilian Presidency of COP30, which took place in Belém last year, published the Global Roadmap for Transitioning Away From Fossil Fuels (TAFF). Against the backdrop of the largest energy crisis in history, triggered by the war in Iran, this issue is set to be at the heart of discussions at COP31 in Antalya, which opens in just a few days. This blog post explores what this Roadmap is about, what is at stake in Antalya, how it relates to other ongoing initiatives such as the First International Conference on TAFF, which took place in April in Santa Marta (the so-called "Santa Marta process"), and how it can help countries chart their own trajectories away from fossil fuels while addressing their domestic priorities, such as development needs, energy security or economic

competitiveness.

The COP30 Presidency Global Roadmap: a quantitative framework to understand countries' capacities and exposure

Countries agreed at COP28 (Dubai, 2023) to implement a set of interconnected global efforts, including "transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner" and "tripling renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030". A few years later, it became apparent that progress to implement this goal had been uneven. Despite renewable energy setting new records for deployment, oil, gas and coal consumption is also at record highs.1 At COP31, and given the tense geopolitical context, it will be difficult for countries to achieve consensus and agree more ambitious TAFF targets, beyond the language agreed in 2023 (IDDRI, 2026a). Implementation efforts are however urgently needed. The COP30 Global TAFF Roadmap and the Santa Marta process are two examples of what can be done in international climate governance to move these efforts forward.

At the opening of COP30, President Lula of Brazil called on countries to discuss a roadmap to implement TAFF, "without imposing anything on anyone, without setting deadlines".2 However, the proposal did not achieve consensus among countries. As a compromise, it was instead taken forward as a voluntary initiative of the Presidency, to be published before COP31. Based on numerous consultations with governments and non-state actors, with 268 official submissions during the open call for inputs, the Roadmap is built on the identification of domestic and international barriers that countries are facing to transition away from fossil fuels, and levers that can help accelerate action. First, it looks at the different dimensions of this challenge: i) how to address the demand for fossil fuels across end-uses from power systems, to transport and buildings, and through various policies, including energy efficiency, scaling-up renewable energies and electrification; ii) how to address the production (supply) of fossil fuels, depending on availability of low-carbon alternatives and competitiveness of fossil fuels producing sectors; iii) how to implement economic transitions, including by accessing affordable finance for economic diversification and addressing fiscal exposure for fossil fuels producer countries.

And, second, it provides countries with the Belém Readiness Approach, allowing them to position themselves vis-a-vis others on their readiness to implement TAFF transitions, based on capacities to manage the transition, and exposure to fossil fuels, along the three dimensions identified in the roadmap. For example, a country that has low capacities to manage the transition and is highly exposed to demand-side transformation (because it is heavily dependent on fossil fuels) will face more barriers and challenges to transition. The index helps build different categories of countries and prioritize which levers can have the most impact to implement TAFF. Pinpointing specific levers according to country-defined levels of exposure and capacity is the Presidency's approach to making the roadmap a practical tool for supporting implementation and catalyzing action.

The Santa Marta process: a "Coalition of the Willing" to host international discussions

The difficulties to discuss TAFF as part of the official agenda of COPs also led a group of countries, which describe themselves as a “Coalition of the Willing” to create a new international space. Colombia and the Netherlands, supported by many civil society organizations, organized the first International Conference on TAFF in April 2026 in Santa Marta (now often referred to as the “Santa Marta process”), and invited countries that had publicly supported further discussions on this issue, for example by signing a declaration or joining a coalition. This means that not all countries were invited, and some large emerging economies, such as China and India, were not despite their impressive progress in renewable energy deployment (IDDRI, 2026b).

Participants to the Santa Marta Conference described it as a constructive space that allowed in-depth discussions around barriers, solutions and knowledge gaps. Three work streams were launched to organize efforts going forward: i) collaboration to build national and regional roadmaps away from fossil fuels; ii) changing the financial systems to facilitate TAFF; iii) advancing progress towards a fossil fuel-free trade system. Ireland and Tuvalu were announced as co-hosts of the Second Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels in 2027, with the conference taking place in Tuvalu in the summer, and preparatory meetings held in Dublin.

Triggering national pathways to transitioning away from fossil fuels

The Global Roadmap and the Santa Marta process are two examples of what can be done at the international level to accelerate implementation efforts towards TAFF. The Global Roadmap, under the leadership of a COP presidency, seeks to provide an inclusive framework that all countries, including major fossil fuels producers and consumers, can draw upon in their domestic processes. Its main output is a report that does not require negotiation or formal endorsement by countries, but is instead intended as a practical tool to support and promote implementation. Its uptake and follow-up will therefore depend largely on how countries choose to engage with and use its recommendations and there remains a risk that the Roadmap's impact will be limited in the absence of a follow-up process agreed at COP31.

The Santa Marta process, on the other hand, is structured around a series of meetings, providing a platform for dialogue, peer-to-peer exchanges and political commitments, and supported by technical analysis developed in the workstreams. However, as it targets a “Coalition of the Willing”, it risks not having the key players at the table and implementation efforts will remain limited to countries comprising a smaller share of fossil fuels production and consumption.

The Santa Marta process has also encouraged countries to develop their own national pathways for TAFF and is building an ecosystem of international partners to support these efforts. France, the Netherlands and Germany have now published national TAFF roadmaps and a few others (Brazil, Pacific countries) have begun preparations to develop their own. These documents can serve as valuable tools for stimulating domestic discussions on the direction of a country's transition, assessing progress and identifying where course corrections may be needed.

The development of Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) over the past decade offers important lessons3 in this regard, although their scope is broader and economy-wide, also encompassing emissions from land use. The expertise built by LT-LEDS processes, such as scenarios, macroeconomic

analysis, institutional arrangements and stakeholder relationships, aiming at taking a longer-term perspective to inform short-term action, as well as integrating the structure of the national economy to capture the economic considerations of the transition, not just emissions, is extremely relevant when planning for TAFF. Countries should therefore build on existing knowledge, expertise and processes rather than start from scratch when developing their national TAFF roadmaps, including when applying the Transitioning Away Readiness Index proposed by the Global Roadmap. It is also important to clarify that national TAFF roadmaps are intended to support implementation, not to replace the formal submission of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).4

IDDRI's Deep Decarbonization Pathways network, which gathers in-country experts, and whose objective is to help governments identify realistic, bottom-up pathways to deep decarbonization, has shown that national pathways to net zero involve a relentless decrease in the direct use of fossil fuels by 2050 and beyond, while remaining compatible with domestic socio-economic priorities.5

To conclude, the COP30 Presidency Global Roadmap complements the Santa Marta process and is a useful contribution to international discussions on transitioning away from fossil fuels. Its significance will ultimately depend on the extent to which it can catalyze national implementation and foster needs-based international cooperation. To do so, the Roadmap calls for a TAFF Mutirão, a collective agenda to accelerate coordinated action in this critical decade, through 2033. The electrification target, achieving 35% of global final energy consumption from electricity by 2035, that has been proposed by the COP31 Presidency, is another example of international efforts to accelerate TAFF. It is now up to countries to chart their own pathways away from fossil fuels, at a time when dependence on fossil fuels has cost importing countries billions of dollars.

1

IEA, World Energy Outlook 2025: https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2025/executive-summary

2

https://earthjournalism.net/stories/brazils-president-lula-calls-for-a-climate-transition-without-setting-deadlines-at-cop30

3

2050 Pathways Platform: https://2050pathways.org/resource-hub/beyond-targets-demystifying-long-term-climate-strategies/

4

Under the Paris Agreement, Parties are required to submit successive NDCs every five years, setting out their national climate commitments.

5

DDP Annual Report 2024: https://ddpinitiative.org/ddp-annual-report-2024/

CLIMATE COP 31