

Achieve the **BAM!**: Belém-Antalya Mechanism for Global Just Transitions

Policy Briefing - May 2026

While multilateral politics and climate governance are on the ropes, the climate justice movement has a unique opportunity to intervene in the design of an important new body for climate governance - the Belém-Antalya Mechanism for Global Just Transitions (BAM).¹ With the COP30 Presidency stating that defining and designing the functions of the mechanism is a priority for the upcoming Bonn climate talks, happening between the 8-18 June, this is a key moment for governments to show that international cooperation is not dead while pushing for climate justice.

What is a just transition?

The world is getting unbearably hotter, with all familiar weather patterns being destabilised.² Connected to this, the world is unbearably unequal, with billionaires capturing vast global wealth and in turn political processes, condemning the rest of us to suffer the consequences.³

In the face of this, a just transition would address these connected crises of climate breakdown and rampant inequality via both a *rapid*, *just* and *equitable* phase out of fossil fuels and transition of the economic and political systems which undermine efforts at care and repair, in ways that allow all beings to *thrive*.⁴

Rapid – to meet the urgent need to get global average temperatures below 1.5°C. This must be fair: the burden of responsibility lies with those most responsible and most able to act.

Just – not only for those most impacted, but also all those who could benefit from the phase in of economies and societies based on care and repair.

Equitable – addressing the global inequality that traps billions in the poverty of undignified lives. Building people's power and control over the decisions made about them, to ensure the transition meets their needs, and closing the door to false and authoritarian 'solutions'.

Thrive - climate breakdown is not the only socio-ecological crisis we face – it feeds into and is impacted by ecosystems collapse. Solutions must support the capacity of all beings to thrive in harmony with the Earth within ecological limits.

Workers and communities are rightly sceptical of the current version of the transition which risks being a 'carbon shock doctrine'.⁵ This version of the transition would leave workers and firms at the mercy of market forces and inflationary energy prices in a disorderly fashion which mirrors the brutal 1990s shock therapy imposed on post-Soviet economies. That is why having a coordinated just transition mechanism at the level of the UN is so important.

We won the BAM: now let's make it fit for purpose

At COP30, following unprecedented and sustained pressure from a coalition of trade unionists, climate justice campaigners, Indigenous peoples, youth groups, feminists and others, we secured an important victory in the fight for a just transition with the agreement to develop the Belém-Anatalya Mechanism for Global Just Transitions (BAM).⁶

The BAM will create a new process for countries to coordinate their work on just transitions and support the communities most impacted by the climate crisis whether in the Global South or here in Britain. If done right, the BAM could help to ensure workers' rights, Indigenous rights and gender equality are at the heart of climate action as every country transitions its economy away from fossil fuels. The BAM would provide UK unions and campaigners with a formal international platform to demand that transition-related actions like the closure of Grangemouth or the shift away from North Sea oil come with guaranteed retraining, decent jobs, and community investment, not just

redundancy notices, backed by globally agreed standards that governments can't easily ignore.

As part of the COP30 just transition decision, a set of 22 'key messages' were agreed. These could act as guardrails and principles about what a just transition entails. Importantly, they included: the need to ensure the broad, meaningful participation of all affected groups, including workers, informal workers, Indigenous peoples, marginalised communities, women, youth, and disabled people, in just transition processes. There was also the acknowledgement of the role of care work, the importance of social protection, and the necessity for social dialogue.

The BAM could provide the global institutional hook for domestic organising around truly just transitions.

Backsliding at Bonn?

As countries gather between 8-18 June to decide what the BAM should look like, there are growing signs that many Global North countries want to weaken the landmark COP30 decision.

The major disagreement seems to be around what form any new mechanism takes. Despite the ambitious COP30 decision clearly mandating a new body under the UNFCCC, the EU have resurrected the corpse of their workplan which had already been rejected in Belém.⁷ They want a BAM with no teeth. This is antithetical to the spirit of the COP30 agreement and is clearly out of line with the governments representing the majority of the world's peoples across the Global South in the G77.

Call to Action

In the lead-up to and during COP30, a broad coalition of grassroots activists, trade unions, feminist organisers and youth groups worked tirelessly to shift the UK's position away from blocking the BAM. This collective effort mobilised over 50,000 people through social media actions, online petitions and letters to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, Ed Miliband.

If we are to stand a chance of resisting the rise of the far-right and addressing the cost-of-greed crisis,⁸ while also phasing in publicly owned renewable energy, it's crucial the UK government supports ambitious just transition action globally as well as domestically. This means they must support a BAM:

- which has meaningful inclusion, involvement, and participation of workers and other communities in its design and governance. Unless and until workers and communities can effectively shape climate policy, we are likely to be at the mercy of forces beyond our control – forces which are too often hostile
- with teeth, not a rehashed work plan, to drive just transitions globally: connecting countries with finance and support, filling gaps in existing programmes and catalysing the new work that's still missing
- which ensures the principles enshrined in the COP30 decision are not only upheld but extended to include other key areas such as critical minerals.

References

¹ <https://climatenetwork.org/resource/discussion-paper-belem-action-mechanism-october-2025/>

² <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/may/15/weather-tracker-furnace-creek-siberia-snow-siberia-week-extremes>

³ <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/get-involved/campaign-with-oxfam/fight-inequality/oxfams-global-inequality-report/>;

<https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/resisting-rule-rich>

⁴ <https://waronwant.org/sites/default/files/2026-05/GGND%20briefing%202026.pdf>

⁵ <https://www.phenomenalworld.org/analysis/against-carbon-shock-therapy/>

⁶ https://www.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/UAE_ITWP_cop30_1.pdf

⁷ <https://submissions.unfccc.int/api/files/download?serverRelativeFilePath=/submissions/Archive/202603250744---CY-2026-03-24%20EU%20submission%20on%20views%20on%20process%20for%20ITM%20development.pdf>

⁸ <https://waronwant.org/resources/cost-living-crisis-how-corporate-greed-turned-ecological-crisis-profits-few>