Caring for Climate

14th Annual High-Level Meeting of Caring for Climate

Thursday, 12 November 2026 | 9:30 - 11:00
Special Room 2: Likya, Blue Zone at COP31, Antalya

CONCEPT NOTE

Background

COP31 comes at a critical moment. While we are witnessing the growing impacts of climate change and uncertainty surrounding the global economy and energy security, the polarisation between continued fossil fuel expansion and the need to limit the magnitude and duration of a 1.5°C overshoot has never been more evident. At the same time, leaders have made significant progress in setting climate ambitions and mobilizing investment. Ahead of us lies the opportunity to shape a just, clean energy transition and a more secure, competitive economy.

The 14th Annual High-Level Meeting of Caring for Climate, convened by the UN Global Compact, the UN Environment Programme and UN Climate Change, will bring together leaders and senior executives from business, government, finance, civil society and the United Nations to address a central question: how can climate ambition be sustained and translated into credible implementation amid growing political, economic and energy-related pressures? The high-level meeting will examine how science-based ambition, business leadership and collective action can continue to drive delivery through a period of political and institutional change.

The United Nations Environment Programme's Overshoot Report underscores the urgency of limiting the magnitude and duration of a 1.5°C overshoot. In his response to the report, the UN Secretary-General stressed that the science remains clear and that solutions are within reach. The private sector has a critical role to play in this transition. Accelerated emissions reductions, alongside stronger adaptation and resilience, also present opportunities for businesses to strengthen long-term sustainability, competitiveness and cost efficiency. Businesses and investors are increasingly operating in an economy being reshaped by the clean energy transition, physical climate risks and impacts, and the growing need for resilience. At the same time, credible corporate climate action increasingly requires more than targets and commitments alone. Implementation also depends on conditions that extend beyond the control of individual companies. Clear and credible policy signals, access to investment, sustained leadership and a long-term vision are all essential to enable companies to translate transition plans into action. Many of these barriers cannot be addressed by companies acting alone and require coordinated action across business, government, finance and the United Nations.

Transparency, accountability and credible evidence are essential to this effort. They can make progress and implementation gaps visible, strengthen confidence in climate action, and help demonstrate where policy, finance and market solutions are needed to accelerate

delivery. Better evidence can also help identify where company-level action is insufficient and where collective action and intervention can have the greatest impact.

Meeting Objectives

The high-level meeting will build on the Secretary-General's sustained calls for higher ambition, accelerated implementation and a just transition away from fossil fuels, while recognizing the growing importance of adaptation and resilience as climate impacts intensify.

The meeting will provide an opportunity for leaders from business, government, finance, civil society and the United Nations to reaffirm that 1.5°C-aligned climate action remains a long-term priority and to identify what is required to sustain credible climate action by non-state actors.

The meeting will seek to:

- **Reinforce the shift from climate commitments to credible implementation**, including stronger alignment between climate targets, transition plans, business strategy, capital allocation and operational decisions;
- **Identify the enabling conditions and systemic barriers that influence implementation**, and determine where coordinated action across business, government and finance can accelerate progress; and
- **Identify priority areas for continued collective action beyond COP31**, supporting credible business solutions, implementation, accountability and delivery.

Expected Outcome

The discussion will identify a focused set of priorities for strengthening credible corporate climate implementation, including key enabling conditions, systemic barriers and areas where collective action can close gaps and accelerate delivery towards limiting global warming and protecting people and livelihoods.

The insights from the meeting will inform continued engagement and leadership on collective action beyond COP31, including work on credible transition planning, accountability and policy advocacy, in line with a credible net-zero pathway that supports a just transition, nature-positive outcomes and climate resilience.

Participation

The meeting is by invitation only and will bring together CEOs and C-Suite executives from companies and financial institutions actively engaged in climate action, alongside representatives from governments, the United Nations and civil society, to strengthen dialogue on public-private partnerships and identify priorities for future action.

The meeting will feature a facilitated roundtable discussion, with a small group of lead discussants helping to initiate an interactive exchange among participants. Further details

on the discussion format and guiding questions are provided in the accompanying (Annex: *Draft* Facilitated Discussion Guidance).

The event will not be livestreamed but a recording will be posted on the UN Global Compact's YouTube page in the days following the event.

About Caring for Climate

Launched in 2007, Caring for Climate is a partnership of the UN Global Compact, the UN Environment Programme (UNEP) and UN Climate Change (UNFCCC) to advance the role of business in addressing climate change. It provides a framework for business leaders to implement practical climate change solutions and help shape public policy. It has evolved from a corporate commitment initiative into a platform for dialogue at the UN Climate Change Conferences, leveraging CEOs' voices in support of the UN Secretary-General's priorities.

Annex: *Draft* Facilitated Discussion Guidance

Purpose of the Facilitated Discussion

The facilitated discussion will bring together senior leaders from business, government, finance, civil society and the United Nations to examine how credible 1.5°C-aligned climate ambition can be sustained and translated into measurable implementation amid growing political, economic and institutional pressures.

Building on the objectives of the 14th Annual High-Level Meeting of Caring for Climate, the discussion will focus on three interconnected priorities:sustaining credible ambition and implementation; enabling conditions and accountability; and collective action and delivery.

Discussion Format

The meeting will feature a facilitated roundtable discussion among senior representatives from business, government, finance, civil society and the United Nations.

A small group of designated lead discussants will help initiate the conversation by sharing brief perspectives and practical experiences related to the discussion themes. Other participants at the table will be invited to contribute their insights, respond to issues raised and engage in an interactive exchange.

Participants are encouraged to draw on concrete implementation experiences, including challenges encountered, lessons learned and enabling conditions that could accelerate progress.

The guiding questions are intended to frame the discussion rather than serve as a fixed sequence. Participants are welcome to reflect on those most relevant to their experience and expertise.

Discussion Themes and Guiding Questions

- **Sustaining credible ambition and implementation:**
    - How can governments, businesses, financial institutions and the United Nations sustain 1.5°C-aligned climate action and accelerate implementation through periods of political, economic and institutional change? What is helping companies maintain the strategic and economic case for climate action in the current operating environment?
    - How can companies better align climate targets with transition plans, business strategy, capital allocation and operational decisions?

- **Enabling conditions and accountability**:

- Which conditions are most critical to translating climate commitments and transition plans into measurable implementation?
- What policy, finance, infrastructure, market and leadership conditions most influence business investment and delivery?
- How can data, transparency and accountability demonstrate progress, identify implementation gaps and strengthen confidence in credible climate action?

- **Collective action, solutions and delivery:**
  - Which implementation barriers cannot be addressed by individual actors alone, and where can collective action make the greatest difference?
  - How can business, government, finance, the United Nations and partners work together to address systemic barriers and strengthen enabling conditions?
  - What priorities should be carried forward beyond COP31 to sustain implementation, accountability and progress?

Expected Discussion Outcome

The intended outcome is to identify a focused set of priorities for continued engagement beyond COP31, particularly in areas where credible transition planning, accountability, policy engagement and collective action can help overcome systemic barriers.