



# Just Transition

## United Arab Emirates Just Transition Work Programme

### Background

A just transition is generally understood as an equitable transition to low-carbon and zero carbon economies that protects the interests of vulnerable and marginalized groups. At COP27, Parties established the Just Transition Work Programme (JTWP) to support countries in pursuing such transitions through inclusive social dialogue. In essence, this requires that the green transformation does not deepen existing inequalities, but instead protects workers, minorities, and other at-risk groups. The JTWP provides a forum for Parties to explore how these protections can be integrated into national climate strategies while still meeting their Paris Agreement commitments.

### Starting Point - Outcomes from COP29 and SB62

COP29 ended without a formal decision, but at SB62 in Bonn, Parties finally completed an informal note to send to COP30. Although this was a victory for a topic that has faced historic gridlock and indecision, there was still plenty to resolve. Although this victory broke years of gridlock, major questions remained. Parties still have to determine how to translate principles of equity, fairness, and inclusion into concrete climate policy. During the past years, Parties and observers exchanged and will continue to exchange on best practices, lessons learnt and actionable outcomes in dedicated dialogues to clarify their policy priorities.

In the draft conclusion from SB62, Parties left themselves three options: revise existing UNFCCC mandates to incorporate Just Transition policies, create a new mandate requiring Parties to implement just transition policies, or delay the decision until 2026. Throughout 2025, Parties continued meeting in dedicated dialogues to refine their policy priorities.

### Party Positions

	<b>Issue 1: Just Transition Mechanism</b>	<b>Issue 2: Trade Measures</b>	<b>Issue 3: Inclusion of 1.5°C goal</b>
<b>Arab Group</b>	No position stated	Condemn the use of Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanisms (CBAMs) or unilateral trade measures	No reference
<b>G77 + China</b>	Develop a new Just Transition mechanism	Create a thematic working group to resolve the issue of unilateral trade measures, condemn CBAMs	Include references to the 1.5-2°C temperature goal range
<b>EU</b>	Integrate just transition into existing UNFCCC mechanisms for efficiency	Leave out unilateral trade as they are irrelevant to this topic and a waste of time	Explicitly reference the temperature goal and the transition away from fossil fuels
<b>Final Outcome</b>	<b>Create a new mechanism for Just Transition, but</b>	<b>No references to trade measures in final decision,</b>	<b>In line with Art. 2 of the Paris Agreement, the</b>

	invite UNFCCC bodies to integrate Just Transition into existing workplans	no working group established	final text “emphasises connection” between just transition and pursuing efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C
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### COP30 Outcomes

The outcome exceeded the expectations after SB62. Parties, encouraged by civil society organizations, were eager to come to a final decision after failing to do so at COP29 in Baku. In Belém, Parties finally reached an agreement: they adopted a decision to create a new Just Transition mechanism - the most proactive of the three options on the table. The negotiations ended on a high for all involved, particularly the groups who had lobbied all COP for a Belém Action Mechanism, and the final decision was gavelled to massive applause.

### COP30 Critical Reflection

Negotiations on Just Transition were unusually productive at this particular COP, which was derided for its disappointing vagueness on so many important topics. The Presidency, and all negotiators, ought to be celebrated for holding firm on key issues that had delayed negotiations for so long. Refusal to condemn unilateral trade measures, although so many Parties pushed hard for its inclusion in the final text, was very important. It may have slowed things down, but it protects key channels to potentially pressure petrostates into reducing their emissions in the future. It might be disappointing not to see a reference to transitioning away from fossil fuels in the final decision text, but the inclusion of two references to 1.5°C is a relief after hours of deadlock in negotiations. The key takeaway is that Parties agreeing to create a new mechanism can be considered a win.

### The Road Ahead

At SB64 in June 2026, Parties are expected to recommend a draft decision on the new mechanism for adoption at COP31. In the lead-up to this, both Parties and non-Party stakeholders (observer organizations) will need to submit their official views on the mechanism by mid-March 2026. This timeline means that Parties can use the spring to determine exactly what they want the mechanism to include, while civil society groups resume lobbying efforts to secure the strongest possible mandate. At COP31, Parties will face two decisions: not only will they need to adopt the formal decision establishing the mechanism, but they must also decide whether to continue the work programme itself.

### Sources

UNFCCC Decision Text (Advance unedited version): [UAE Just transition work programme](#)

Secondary Sources:

- [Just Transition Work Programme in 2025: Unpacking the progress made in Bonn - IISD](#)
- [UAE Just transition work programme: Informal note submitted 14/11/25](#)
- [UAE Just transition work programme: Informal note submitted 25/6/25](#)
- [UNEP Executive Director statement on the closing of COP30](#)