



GLOBE

The Global Legislators Organisation

FROM BAKU TO BELÉM:

Enhancing Parliamentary Engagement for Climate Action at the UNFCCC



A 10-point roadmap for enhanced parliamentary engagement and formalisation of the parliamentary constituency at the UNFCCC

Briefing Note
August 2024

Contents

Foreword	4
1. Overview of Parliamentary Engagement within the UNFCCC	6
a. Historical background	6
b. Why it is important to engage parliamentarians	7
c. Practical implications of recognising Parliamentarians as a Formal Constituency	8
2. Proposals to elevate parliamentary engagement on the road to COP30	9
a. Introducing a COP30 Presidency Parliamentary Champion	9
b. Establishing Parliamentary Engagement as a formal Action Agenda item, in addition to mainstreaming parliamentary participation across all Action Agenda items	10
c. Formalising a Parliamentary Constituency within the UNFCCC	11
3. 10-point Roadmap for Parliamentary Engagement Leading up to COP30	13
4. Upcoming Opportunities for the COP30 Presidency	15



FROM BAKU TO BELÉM: Enhancing Parliamentary Engagement for Climate Action at the UNFCCC

A 10-point roadmap for enhanced parliamentary engagement
and formalisation of the parliamentary constituency at the UNFCCC

Foreword

As the world prepares for COP29 and with the appointment of the first-ever member of parliament, Nigar Arpadarai, as the COP29 High-Level Champion (HLC), we are optimistic about the prospect of greater parliamentary visibility, engagement and impact in the UNFCCC process.

We look forward to supporting Ms Arpadarai in her role as HLC COP29 and engaging her as a leading member of parliament in our efforts to enhance parliamentary engagement at COP29 and the Parliamentary Pavilion planned for COP29 in Baku.

At COP28, [GLOBE Legislators](#) organised the [first ever Parliamentary Pavilion](#) at a COP with the support of the UK Government. Over a packed two-week programme of activities, we hosted members of parliament from every global region, who demonstrated knowledge, passion and commitment to climate action and showcased how they were making a difference domestically and internationally in collaboration with other MPs from around the world.

Parliaments Make COPS Count

We coined the phrase '*Parliaments Make COPS Count*' to make clear the vital, yet all too often overlooked and under-leveraged, role that parliamentarians can play in implementation of COP decisions if they are fully engaged in the process.

As we now look ahead to COP30 and the Brazilian presidency, we are working with Brazilian NGO and parliamentary partners, Plataforma CIPO and Clima de Elecao, to think ahead to how Brazil can take leadership on this agenda.

The Brazil COP is a significant one for GLOBE, as the organisation was founded ahead of that other landmark event hosted by Brazil, the era-defining Rio Earth Summit in 1992, which gave birth to the UN climate and biodiversity conventions, as well as Agenda 21. The success of parliamentary engagement at COP30 therefore will mark a full circle for GLOBE.

In this Briefing Note, we draw on GLOBE's experience as the oldest parliamentary organisation devoted to legislative leadership on climate change, to chart a proposed 10-point Roadmap for enhanced parliamentary engagement and formalisation of the parliamentary constituency at the UNFCCC.

Formalising a Parliamentary Constituency within the UNFCCC

We believe that COP30 in Belém has the potential to establish a new standard for parliamentary engagement in the UNFCCC climate change process and COPs. This could strengthen cross-party action, consensus building and drive pro-climate

action legislation in domestic parliaments, including in Brazil. The Presidency can do this independently of UNFCCC approval, as it has the discretion to identify its own key stakeholders for engagement and consultations.

To achieve these goals, we propose that Brazil recognise parliamentarians as a key constituency by integrating them into the COP30 Presidency's engagement processes alongside the established nine existing UNFCCC Constituencies.

In this Briefing Note, we make the case for the following 10-point Roadmap.

10-point Roadmap for Parliamentary engagement Leading up to COP30:

- 1. Appoint a COP30 Presidency Parliamentary Champion** to lead parliamentary engagement efforts
- 2. Establish Parliamentary Engagement as a formal Action Agenda item**, and integrate parliamentary participation across all Action Agenda items
- 3. Formalise a Parliamentary Constituency within UNFCCC**
- 4. Invite parliamentarians to key pre-COP30 meetings and consultations**
- 5. Encourage all Parties to include parliamentarians in national delegations** for UNFCCC meetings and COP30 on a cross-party basis
- 6. Include parliamentarians in the High-Level Segment at COP30**
- 7. Support a cross-party Resolution from the Brazilian Congress that endorses formal engagement of parliamentarians in the UNFCCC and related climate processes**
- 8. Provide space for an enlarged COP30 Parliamentary Pavilion at COP30**, hosted by GLOBE as the [UNFCCC Focal Point](#) for the Parliamentary Group (as in previous years), in collaboration with Brazilian organisations
- 9. Launch a Parliamentary Partnership Agenda for COP30 to be delivered by the Parliamentary Champion** (GLOBE and the IPU could help facilitate this effort)
- 10. Formally recognize the vital role of parliamentarians in the oversight and implementation of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement in the final negotiated outcomes of COP30.**

Over the course of the coming months, we will be working with our Brazilian partners and the wider parliamentary constituency at COP29 and beyond, to widen discussion and deepen engagement on this agenda.

We hope this Briefing proves helpful and adds to the efforts of others on this vital agenda. We look forward to working with all interested to ensure that the powerful potential of parliamentary leadership is deployed to accelerate climate action at all levels.

Malini Mehra

Chief Executive, GLOBE Legislators

August 2024

1. Overview of Parliamentary Engagement within the UNFCCC

a. Historical background

The history of parliamentary engagement on climate change precedes the UNFCCC and goes back to the Rio Earth Summit (UN Conference on Environment and Development 1992) and the emergence of GLOBE International. At the time, the only parliamentary body present within the UN system was the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the international organisation of parliaments. Established in 1889, the IPU later gained permanent observer status at the UN. However, it was not active in addressing environmental and sustainable development issues.

In the absence of an entry point in the UN system for parliamentary champions, and involvement in the The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Senators Al Gore, John Kerry and their counterparts from Japan, Russia and the EU created GLOBE (Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment) International. GLOBE provided the first platform for parliamentary engagement on environment and sustainable development issues at UNCED (also known as Rio Earth Summit), and has since remained the principal organisation for parliamentary champions to engage in the international system on climate change.

Since COP26 in 2021, GLOBE has served as the Focal Point for the Informal Parliamentary Group at the UNFCCC, bringing together the world's parliamentary organisations and networks on climate change. Since COP28, GLOBE has also hosted the Parliamentary Pavilion in the Blue Zone at COPs. However, parliamentarians do not form a Major Group or formal constituency at the UNFCCC or the broader UN system.

The UN's Major Group framework, which includes nine key constituencies, was established by [Agenda 21 plan of action](#) at the Rio Earth Summit (UNCED) in 1992 in Brazil. The Major Groups, as defined by Agenda 21, are:

1. Women
2. Children and Youth
3. Farmers
4. Indigenous Peoples
5. NGOs
6. Trade Unions
7. Local Authorities
8. Science and Technology
9. Business and Industry

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, the UN has adopted the term "Major Groups and other Stakeholders (MGoS)". The additional stakeholders recognised for the purposes of the

implementation of the 2030 Agenda are: Persons with disabilities; Volunteers; Aging; Education and Academia.

The UNFCCC, however, has developed its own interpretation of the Major Groups, referred to as Constituencies. In the early days of the UNFCCC, the most engaged were Business & Industry NGOs (BINGOs) and Environmental NGOs (ENGOS). Over time, other Constituencies have been formed and recognised – which largely, but not entirely, mirror the Major Groups. Currently, the UNFCCC formally recognizes the following constituencies:

- Business & Industry NGOs (BINGOs) - 1992
- Environmental NGOs (ENGOS) - 1992
- Local government and municipal authorities (LGMA) - 1995;
- Indigenous peoples organisations (IPO) - 2001;
- Research and independent NGOs (RINGO) - 2003;
- The trade union NGOs (TUNGO) - 2008;
- Women and Gender - 2011
- Youth NGOs (YOUNGO) - 2011.

Most recently, Farmers have requested recognition as a Constituency and are currently operating on a provisional basis.

The nine Constituency focal points play an important role in facilitating the exchange of information between the UNFCCC secretariat and the admitted observer NGOs, within what the UNFCCC describes as “a flexible and manageable system” of NGO engagement.

Since 2021, the UNFCCC has introduced a new category of ‘Informal Groups’ of NGOs, which includes: Faith based groups (FBOs); Education and Capacity Building and Outreach NGOs (ECONGO); and Parliamentarians. GLOBE serves as the Focal Point for the new, so-called ‘Informal Group’ of Parliamentarians.

b. Why it is important to engage parliamentarians

Parliamentarians are crucial to the effectiveness of the intergovernmental process because, unlike any other major group, they are constitutionally mandated to ensure both accountability by the Executive and the domestic implementation of commitments made internationally.

However, national parliamentarians often have limited understanding of international processes such as the UNFCCC, and this lack of knowledge and exposure can frequently be disempowering. GLOBE's decades of experience in bringing parliamentarians to COPs is a testament of how transformative this exposure can be. For instance, many climate change laws and policies have directly emerged as a result of firsthand experience of attending COPs and engaging with the UNFCCC's climate process.

Our objective is to advocate for elevating this ‘Informal Group’ to formal Constituency status within the UNFCCC. There are three key precedences supporting the potential recognition of elected members of parliament as a new Constituency.

- Elected public officials, such as Mayors and Governors, are already members of the Local Government and Municipal Authorities (LGMA), which was admitted as a Constituency in 1995;
- The Research & Independent NGOs (RINGO) Constituency has been recognised by the UNFCCC, even though it differs from the Science & Technology Major Group established by Agenda 21 at the Rio Earth Summit. This recognition underscores the impact of effective advocacy on shaping the UNFCCC's stakeholder representation;
- Similarly, the Farmers' group has been granted Provisional Constituency status in response to the World Farmers Organisation's request for formal recognition. This provisional status enables their participation while the UNFCCC deliberates on a final decision regarding their official status.

c. Practical implications of recognising Parliamentarians as a Formal Constituency

For Parliamentarians, attaining official Constituency status within the UNFCCC would enable formal and structured engagement with the UNFCCC's Secretariat, Presidency and Parties on a range of issues relevant to the climate processes, including the formal negotiation agenda. Additionally, Parliamentarians could also play a direct role in national parliaments by ensuring that the Paris Agreement and other commitments are adhered to and effectively implemented through supportive legal frameworks and provisions at the national level.

Becoming a Constituency would also lead to an increased allocation of UNFCCC Blue Zone passes for the Parliamentary Group, allowing more Members of Parliament (MPs) to participate, as accreditation is still required for all non-state actors in the UNFCCC COP process. Additionally, we advocate for all Party delegations to include a cross-party group of MPs at COPs and other relevant governmental meetings.

2. Proposals to elevate parliamentary engagement on the road to COP30

a. Introducing a COP30 Presidency Parliamentary Champion

i. High-Level Champion

The High-Level Champion, established at COP21 in Paris, is a key figure appointed by the COP presidency to bridge the gap between national governments and collaborative actions of non-State actors, including cities, regions, businesses, investors, and civil society. The Champions' work is centred on two primary objectives:

- **Engagement and Alignment with the goals of the Paris Agreement:** Collaborating with interested Parties and non-Party stakeholders to connect initiatives and coalitions with national action plans, such as the nationally determined contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement.
- **Mobilisation and Coordination:** Contributing to efforts that drive climate action, including supporting the UNFCCC secretariat in organising technical expert meetings, fostering collaboration between current and incoming COP Presidencies, and coordinating annual high-level events to enhance climate ambition and action.

Previous COP High-Level Champions include:

- COP29 - Azerbaijan: Nigar Arpadarai (**Ms. Arpadarai is the first COP champion to be a Member of Parliament**);
- COP28 - United Arab Emirates: Razan Al Mubarak (President of the International Union for Conservation of Nature);
- COP27 - Egypt: Dr. Mahmoud Mohieldin (United Nations Special Envoy on Financing the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda);
- COP26: United Kingdom: Nigel Topping (CEO of We Mean Business).

ii. Thematic Champions: The Presidency Youth Climate Champion

The COP 27 Presidency appointed the first-ever Youth Envoy, Dr. Omnia El Omrani, to inspire and promote youth engagement in the lead up to and during COP 27. Following this legacy, the COP 28 Presidency appointed H.E. Shamma Al Mazrui to serve as the first Youth Climate Champion with a ministerial role to further amplify the work of youth-led and youth-focused organisations within the UNFCCC process.

Recognizing the opportunity for future COP Presidencies, Parties decided to formally establish the role of the Presidency Youth Climate Champion, between the ages of 18 and 35 to be appointed to act on behalf of the COP Presidency to facilitate the engagement of meaningful, inclusive

engagement of children and youth in climate action, including within the UNFCCC process.

Building on the precedent of the creation of the Presidency Youth Climate Champion, Brazil should appoint a Parliamentary Envoy or a COP Presidency Parliamentary Champion.

iii. Parliamentary Envoy or COP Presidency Parliamentary Champion

Potential attributions for this role include:

- Promoting alignment between Brazil's congressional agenda and objectives of COP30 presidency;
- Strengthening support for COP30 presidency's priorities by mobilising parliamentarians from other Parties, a task currently facilitated by GLOBE through its UNFCCC Focal Point role;
- Collaborating directly with the UNFCCC Informal Parliamentary Group and GLOBE, as the Focal Point, to elevate the group's profile to that of a formal constituency and to enhance broader parliamentary engagement within the UNFCCC and related processes.

b. Establishing Parliamentary Engagement as a formal Action Agenda item, in addition to mainstreaming parliamentary participation across all Action Agenda items

i. What is the COP29 Action Agenda

Each Presidency can define its Action Agenda, outlining thematic and policy priorities. The COP29 Presidency has announced a 14-point Action Agenda:

1. Climate Finance Action Fund - CFAF (from fossil fuel-producing countries & companies)
2. Baku Initiative for Climate Finance, Investment & Trade Dialogue
3. Just Transition Investment Partnership (JTIP) for Jobs and Skills
4. Green Energy Pledge
5. Green Energy Storage Pledge
6. Clean Hydrogen Initiative
7. COP Truce Appeal
8. Digital Action Path for Green World
9. Investing in Human Capital, Health and Jobs for Climate Resilient Future
10. HARMONIYA for Climate Resilience: Empowering Farmers, Villages & Rural Communities
11. Baku Dialogue on Water and Climate: Enhancing Action on Climate Change and Water Nexus

12. Multisectoral Actions Partnership (MAP) for Sustainable, Climate Resilient and Healthy Cities (*Includes parliamentary engagement)

13. Global Partnership for Enhanced Climate Action in Tourism (GPECAT)

14. Partnership 4 Reducing Organic Waste (ROW): Cutting Methane and Enriching Soil

ii. Why does the Action Agenda matter

The Action Agenda is set at the discretion of the Presidency, reflecting its own priorities.

For example, the COP29 Multisectoral Actions Partnership (MAP) for Sustainable, Climate Resilient and Healthy Cities builds on urban-focused initiatives launched by the COP27 and COP28 Presidencies. Importantly, it is the first initiative to formally include parliamentarians as stakeholders. GLOBE is collaborating with the COP29 Presidency to support the inclusion of parliamentarians across all 14 Action Agenda items, aiming to establish a 'new normal' for parliamentary engagement in COP Presidency initiatives.

iii. Opportunities for Brazil

Brazil has the opportunity to build on the milestones of the COP Presidencies Troika (United Arab Emirates, Azerbaijan and Brazil) with regards to Parliamentary engagement:

At COP28 in Dubai, GLOBE hosted the first ever Parliamentary Pavilion in UNFCCC history. The Pavilion served as a central hub for parliamentarians worldwide, including Brazilian parliamentarians on a cross-party basis. It hosted the launch and debate of numerous reports and activities, including the launch of the Planet Caucus by Congresswoman Celia Xakriabá.

At COP29 in Baku, Ms. Nigar Arpadarai, an independent member of parliament for Central Baku, became the first parliamentarian to be nominated as the High-Level Champion. COP29 also included parliamentary engagement in the Presidency's 14-point Action Agenda. The Blue Zone will also feature a Parliamentary Pavilion, hosted by GLOBE as the Focal Point for the informal Parliamentary Group.

Brazil should build on these achievements by hosting the third edition of the Parliamentary Pavilion and establishing Parliamentary Engagement as a formal Action Agenda item. Additionally, parliamentary participation should be integrated across all Action Agenda items for COP30.

c. Formalising a Parliamentary Constituency within the UNFCCC

COP30 in Belém has the potential to establish a new standard for parliamentary engagement in the UNFCCC climate change process and COPs. This could strengthen cross-party action, consensus building and drive pro-climate action legislation in domestic parliaments, including in Brazil. The Presidency can do this independently of UNFCCC approval, as it has the discretion to identify its own key stakeholders for engagement and consultations. To achieve these goals, Brazil should recognise parliamentarians as a key constituency by integrating them into the COP30 Presidency's engagement processes alongside the nine existing UNFCCC Constituencies (listed above).

3. 10-point Roadmap for Parliamentary Engagement Leading up to COP30

1. **Appoint a COP30 Presidency Parliamentary Champion** to lead parliamentary engagement efforts (see section 2 for role's description);
2. **Establish Parliamentary Engagement as a formal Action Agenda item**, and integrate parliamentary participation across all Action Agenda items; (see section 2 for more details);
3. **Formalise a Parliamentary Constituency within UNFCCC** (see section 2 for more details);
4. **Invite parliamentarians to key pre-COP30 meetings and consultations** (GLOBE, as the UNFCCC Parliamentary Group Focal Point, can facilitate this process);
5. **Encourage all Parties to include parliamentarians in national delegations** for UNFCCC meetings and COP30 on a cross-party basis;
6. **Include parliamentarians in the High-Level Segment at COP30;**
7. **Support a cross-party Resolution from the Brazilian Congress that endorses formal engagement of parliamentarians in the UNFCCC and related climate processes** (Plataforma CIPÓ and GLOBE can facilitate this process via the Congress' Environmentalist Front Climate Working Group and other relevant channels);
8. **Provide space for an enlarged COP30 Parliamentary Pavilion at COP30**, hosted by GLOBE as the UNFCCC Focal Point for the Parliamentary Group (as in previous years), in collaboration with Brazilian organisations;
9. **Launch a Parliamentary Partnership Agenda for COP30 to be delivered by the Parliamentary Champion** (GLOBE and the IPU could help facilitate this effort);
10. **Formally recognize the vital role of parliamentarians in the oversight and implementation of the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement in the final negotiated outcomes of COP30.**

By implementing these steps, Brazil will achieve a significant milestone in formally recognizing parliamentarians within the UNFCCC process, setting a precedent that could extend to the other two Rio Conventions on Biodiversity and Desertification. As the COP30 Presidency, Brazil has the authority and discretion to take these actions, which would establish a new standard for parliamentary engagement in global environmental governance.

Brazil can accomplish this not through the lengthy and politically costly *de jure* process of formal negotiations in the UN General Assembly or ECOSOC, but rather through a more efficient *de facto* approach. By simply changing engagement practices, appointing a Parliamentary Champion to signal the Presidency's intent, and initiating new processes and partnerships that build on the momentum from COP28 and COP29 Presidencies, Brazil can effectively establish this new norm without expending unnecessary political capital. In essence, the COP Presidencies Troika will have paved the way for an enhanced

role and engagement of parliamentarians in the UNFCCC COP processes, but it will be Brazil that solidifies this progress.

Fittingly, three decades after the Rio Earth Summit, when Brazil introduced the concept of Major Groups to the world, the nation now has the opportunity to elevate Parliamentarians as a crucial constituency for delivering on the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement.

4. Upcoming Opportunities for the COP30 Presidency

Brazil should leverage major international events to signal its commitment to enhancing the role of parliamentarians in international processes, particularly within the UNFCCC, as part of its COP30 agenda. To ensure this political intention gains traction, it would be important to include references to its desire to foster parliamentary engagement in key presidential statements and speeches leading up to COP30.

Opportunities to highlight the importance of parliamentary involvement in implementing international commitments, especially in the climate sphere, include:

- High-level General Debate of 79th session of the UN General Assembly in New York
- G20 Leaders Summit in Rio (including reference to the 1st Meeting of P20 Women Parliamentarians in July 2024 in Alagoas)
- BRICS Summit 2024, Kazan, Russia
- High-level segment of COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan





GLOBE

The Global Legislators Organisation

© **GLOBE Legislators 2024**

37-39 Arduinkaai, bte 16, B-1000 Brussels, Belgium

0445.593.551. RPM - Tribunal de Bruxelles - BE12 0689 0292 1392

Email: secretariat@globelegislators.org

www.globelegislators.org X [@GLOBE_jntl](https://twitter.com/GLOBE_jntl)

[in /in/globe-legislators/](https://www.linkedin.com/company/globe-legislators/)