

Preparation for COP 30:
*A Call for Ecological Conversion,
Transformation, and Resistance to False Climate Solutions*

Base document and subsidies for the Church's Political Advocacy at COP 30

The hosting of COP 30 in Brazil in November 2025 will take place at a highly critical moment for our planet and all living beings: environmental indicators show that we are rapidly approaching climate collapse. In 2024, we experienced a combined global average surface, land, and ocean warming of 1.55°C above the so-called pre-industrial period (1850-1900). This is an unprecedented warming in the history of human civilizations and likely in the last 125,000 years. In 2022, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) acknowledged: "The scale and magnitude of climate change impacts are greater than previously estimated in earlier assessments." The acceleration of warming is undeniable. It took almost a century (1920-2015) for warming to reach 1°C above the 1850-1900 period. But in just 10 years (2015-2024), we have reached 1.55°C, with a jump of 0.4°C in the last two years.

Despite the urgency for profound changes, recent COPs have demonstrated how government negotiations are falling far short of the solutions needed to address the root causes of warming. The decisions made lack mechanisms to ensure their implementation, and the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of countries, including Brazil, are far from the measures necessary to alter the dangerous trajectory we have been following.

This situation becomes even more severe with the super-rich, the "power elites," who openly adopt a stance of climate denialism, taking control of governments in key countries essential for a global agreement to tackle the causes of global warming. As Pope Francis pointed out in the *Laudate Deum* Exhortation, "we are not reacting adequately, because this world that welcomes us is being destroyed and perhaps reaching a point of no return" (*LD*, 2).

It is within this urgent context that the hosting of COP in Brazil represents a historic call for the Church to affirm a prophetic position, strengthening its commitment to socio-environmental justice and denouncing false climate solutions, as Pope Francis has emphatically called for.

This text aims to define principles and guidelines that contribute to the Church's pastoral and political engagement towards COP 30, highlighting the main causes and responsibilities of environmental and climate collapse, affirming the urgency of a structural transformation in the way of life that drives global warming, rejecting false solutions, and promoting joyful sobriety and ecological conversion as foundations for societies that respect and care for the "planet that welcomes us" (*LD*, 2).

Following Pope Francis' call since *Laudato Si'*, it is essential to denounce attempts to financialize nature, solutions based on the "technocratic paradigm" that exacerbate existing problems, and reaffirm that what is at stake is much more than a simple energy transition.

The ecological crisis requires us to think about the common good and promote dialogues based on patience and generosity, as highlighted in *Laudato Si'* (n. 143). Integral ecology calls for conversion and respect for nature, recognizing that "everything is interconnected." Caring for our Common Home is the commitment and challenge from which we must engage in COP 30.

1. Who Destroys the Earth and Who Offers False Solutions

Brazil, the eighth-largest oil producer in the world, has the responsibility to support the official COP decisions to eliminate the production and consumption of these fuels. In the context of the climate collapse we are experiencing, it is gravely contradictory to use profits from oil extraction to finance what is presented as an energy transition without an effective commitment to overcoming its use. It is therefore urgent to change the conceptions that link the ideas of “progress” and “development” with the intensive use of fossil fuels. We know that abandoning oil use entails sacrifices, but the pollution and planetary impacts it causes are incomparably greater.

Since the 2000s, the narrative of sustainable development has begun to be replaced by the idea of a “green economy,” promoted by some governments and multilateral agencies. The green economy, or the greening of the system, as many authors refer to it, is a technical-instrumental logic serving the ecological restructuring of capitalism. Politically, it attempts to solve the dilemma between economic growth and environmental care by proposing nature protection and environmental policy as sources of economic growth. This involves creating a legal framework that helps assign a price—i.e., commodify—all of nature, transforming it into an asset that can then be traded according to market rules. However, this approach reveals its limitations by reinforcing dependence on central economic paradigms, concentrating power in corporations and regulatory complexes, and neglecting structural inequalities between developed economies and disadvantaged regions. Thus, the green economy emerges not as a rupture but as an incremental modernization of capitalism, expanding its self-regulating capacity while perpetuating systemic contradictions.

Based on this historical, environmental, and contextually grounded understanding of the realities of Global South countries, we take a stand against so-called “green capitalism.” We recognize, as Pope Francis indicates, a shift in narrative that serves dominant interests but does not address the causes of the ongoing environmental collapse. As the Pope warns, “we must overcome the logic of presenting ourselves as sensitive to the problem while, at the same time, lacking the courage to make substantial changes. I consider it essential to insist on the fact that ‘seeking only a technical remedy for each environmental problem that arises is to isolate things that are, in reality, interconnected and to hide the true and deeper problems of the global system.’” (*LD*, 56-57).

In light of these concerns, within the context of COP, we must question proposals that resemble false solutions, including:

- **Financialization of nature:** The transformation of natural resources into tradeable commodities, such as the financialization of forests or carbon markets, which allow major polluters to continue emitting gases while purchasing “green credits.”
- **Predatory mining in the name of the energy transition:** The race for minerals like lithium, cobalt, and nickel, essential for so-called “clean” technologies like batteries and electric cars, devastates territories and sacrifices communities, especially in the Global South. As Pope Francis stated, “the natural resources needed for technology, such as lithium, silicon, and many others, are certainly not unlimited, but the greater problem is the ideology underlying an obsession: to increase human power beyond all imagination, reducing non-human reality to a mere resource at its service” (*LD*, 22).
- **Energy monoculture:** Large-scale solar and wind energy projects, often imposed without consulting local populations, concentrate economic power and destroy ecosystems.

These approaches perpetuate the system of exploitation while ignoring the need for structural change. The response to the climate crisis does not lie in transitioning to another form of capitalism while maintaining the "technocratic paradigm," as described by Pope Francis in *Laudate Deum*. We need to transform the economic and cultural model, replacing the logic of unlimited profit with solidarity, justice, and care for creation.

2. The Essentials We Defend on the Road to COP30

On the road to COP30, as people and organizations inspired by faith, we defend the following principles and values, which we consider essential and that cannot be sacrificed in the name of climate commitments that perpetuate injustices:

- **Protection of territories and sovereignty of Indigenous, traditional, and peasant peoples:** Indigenous, Quilombola, traditional, and peripheral communities' territories are sacred and cannot be exploited or expropriated in the name of supposed climate mitigation. Family farming ensures the production of most of the country's food; this work, carried out by millions of families, must be protected and promoted by implementing an effective Agrarian Reform process. Likewise, Pope Francis acknowledges in *Laudato Si'* that Indigenous peoples "when they remain in their territories, are the ones who best care for them" (*LS*, 146). Thus, it is crucial to strengthen partnerships with socio-environmental movements, academia, and governments, focusing on the leadership of these peoples. It is essential to promote territories free from predatory projects that violate their rights and destroy their ways of life and to continue the process of demarcation, titling, and removal of invaders from Indigenous, Quilombola, and other traditional communities' lands.

Climate impact adaptation financing and mechanisms must prioritize the rights of Indigenous, traditional, and peasant peoples, as well as the proposals and leadership of organized communities in urban peripheries, resulting in bold and consistent National Adaptation Plans (NAPs).

- **Promotion of equality with differentiated responsibilities:** Countries and populations historically responsible for emissions must take on the greatest mitigation efforts and finance the necessary adaptations in Global South countries. For this, it is essential to hold countries and corporations accountable for a model that has historically concentrated wealth and increased poverty. The financing commitment made at COP29 was unsatisfactory; it is essential to strengthen the "Roadmap from Baku to Belém" so that governments effectively commit to financing \$1.3 trillion per year until 2035. The Loss and Damage Fund must also be urgently operationalized, ensuring priority access for affected communities.
- **Rejection of the financialization of nature:** Ecosystems are not "environmental services" for sale, but rather a complex web of multiple interactions between living and non-living beings, human and non-human, as part of God's Creation, which must be cared for and respected.
- **Transformation of the economic system:** Talking about an energy transition is not enough. The concept of a "just energy transition" has been promoted as a solution to the severe environmental problems caused by human activity, but in practice, it is based on perpetuating the current system. This model benefits large corporations and Global North countries while imposing costs and impacts on communities and countries in the Global South. Current energy projects displace vulnerable populations and destroy ecosystems,

deepening social inequalities. A break is needed with an economic model that proposes infinite growth on a finite planet and that, to achieve this, exploits people and resources without limits.

- **Radical fight against deforestation:** We must strengthen networks to combat deforestation and wildfires in all biomes and reinforce the goal of "zero deforestation" by 2030 through articulation and participation from all of society.
- **Security and protection for cities,** which are increasingly vulnerable to extreme climate events. In addition to disaster prevention policies, it is essential to implement social programs that promote dignified and safe housing, basic sanitation, green infrastructure, and permeable soil, as well as urban planning projects focused on public transportation and emission reductions.
- **Centrality of human dignity and Earth's rights:** Climate policies must place life, human dignity, and the rights of nature at the center of all decisions. Human rights, achieved through social struggle, define fundamental commitments for states and the international community and establish an expanded concept of dignity, including non-human beings.

3. Paths to Ecological Conversion and Happy Sobriety

Pope Francis, in the *Laudato Si'* Encyclical, calls for ecological conversion and a new lifestyle based on happy sobriety. This change is not limited to political and economic structures. It also involves a personal, community, cultural, and spiritual transformation. As he states, "Sobriety, when lived freely and consciously, is liberating. It is not a lesser life or low intensity; quite the contrary. Happiness requires knowing how to limit some needs which only dull us, so we can remain available to the many possibilities' life offers" (*LS*, 223).

Pope Francis' proposal is deeply aligned with what Indigenous peoples call *Buen Vivir* (Good Living), which signifies their "communion with pilgrims and with nature as a whole, that is, a path of integration with the abundance of life, with history, and with the future" (*IL*, 18). It is about a productive and supportive life, in peace and harmony with brothers and sisters and with ecosystems. *Buen Vivir* proposes a new form of human society that recognizes and respects its interdependence with the web of life, promoting solidarity, mutual respect, and new alternatives for living, free from the logic of accumulation and prejudice.

Thus, in alignment with Pope Francis, we propose:

- **Sobriety as resistance to consumerism:** Reducing superfluous consumption and ensuring the essentials for a dignified life for all, while limiting the accumulation of wealth and military investments, are concrete steps to challenge the system that destroys our planet.
- **Education for ecological conversion:** Pastoral and educational initiatives must promote sustainable and supportive practices within communities, as well as encourage spiritual experiences of contemplation and love for all Creation, fostering universal fraternity with all creatures.
- **Strengthening local communities:** Encouraging projects that promote food, energy, and cultural sovereignty as alternatives to the capitalist model.

Happy sobriety is more than a lifestyle: it is an essential ethical and spiritual response to the climate crisis, pointing toward a future where the common good prevails.

4. Conclusion: A Call to Resistance and Hope

The preparation for COP 30 requires from us a prophetic stance, one that denounces false climate solutions and proclaims the hope of a new society—based on justice, universal fraternity with all creatures, and care for our Common Home, which is our planet. This is the moment to create and strengthen policies that promote agroecology and ensure the sovereignty and food security of Indigenous peoples, traditional communities, rural populations, and those in urban peripheries.

May COP 30 be a milestone of resistance and transformation, guided by the strength of communities and the vision of a Church that goes forth, committed to socio-environmental justice and the dignity of all beings.