

Beyond 2025: A New Climate Multilateralism?



Tuesday, November 11, 2025



16:45–18:15 BRT



Side Event Room 8, Blue Zone, Belém, Brazil



Event Summary

The State of Multilateralism and Emerging Challenges

- Multilateralism is currently experiencing both progress and setbacks across global negotiations, with advances in biodiversity discussions contrasted by persistent blockages in areas such as plastics and International Maritime Organization (IMO) processes.
- The withdrawal or reduced engagement of major actors has complicated cooperative approaches and created additional pressures on the current system.
- The present moment requires identifying which components of the multilateral system are effective, which need adjustment, and which may require structural redesign.

Translating Global Decisions into Tangible Outcomes

- Multilateralism must increasingly demonstrate visible improvements at national and community levels, such as enhanced energy access and better health outcomes.
- Climate governance needs to be firmly anchored in implementation so that global agreements are reflected in daily life.
- Integrity, ethics, and transparency form essential foundations for achieving effective national-level delivery of international commitments.

Integrity, Ethics, Transparency and Managing Undue Influence

- Privileged access to from high-polluting industries has become a significant concern in climate negotiations, illustrated by high numbers of lobbyists at recent COPs.
- Disclosure gaps remain evident, with numerous delegates lacking clear affiliation information, including those operating within government badges and accessing closed sessions.
- Strengthening the negotiation system requires conflict-of-interest rules, comprehensive affiliation disclosures, and the removal of privileged access for vested interests.

Role of COP Presidencies in Raising Ambition and Strengthening Processes

- COP Presidencies hold unique potential to accelerate ambition by placing scientific evidence at the centre of decision-making.
- Improved decision-making procedures, including exploring majority voting where consensus hinders progress, can create more effective negotiation outcomes.
- Transparent agendas, inclusive practices, and strong follow-through are essential for presidencies to enhance integrity and drive implementation.

Reforming Climate Multilateralism: Frameworks, Architecture and Institutions

- Reforming climate multilateralism can be guided by a structured framework built around scope, membership, decision-making, functions, and institutional adaptability.
- Representation of global commons, areas beyond national jurisdiction, and sub-national actors remains insufficient within current arrangements.
- Revitalising institutions such as the UN Trusteeship Council as a body for Future Generations, with explicit responsibility for global commons governance, offers one possible reform direction.

Re-anchoring Equity and CBDR-RC with New Metrics

- Traditional metrics such as GDP or aggregate emissions do not adequately reflect equity concerns in the climate context.
- Metrics grounded in human development and energy needs, including the “2000-Watt Society” benchmark, provide a more accurate measure of equitable development thresholds.
- Energy-development mapping shows that countries with low per capita energy use, such as India, fall within zones that justify developmental priorities within climate governance.

Strengthening Multi-Level Governance and Inclusive Participation

- Effective climate action requires the involvement of diverse groups including indigenous peoples, youth, cities, and sub-national entities.
- Multi-level governance is critical for ensuring that global decisions are translated into local benefits and practical outcomes.
- Cooperative approaches among stakeholders are essential to responding to the climate challenge, rather than competitive or adversarial dynamics.

Binding vs Voluntary Commitments and Compliance Pathways

- The bottom-up, non-binding structure of the Paris Agreement enabled widespread participation but has clear limitations in driving ambition at the pace required by science.
- The long-term evolution of the regime may require the introduction of calibrated binding elements tailored to national circumstances.
- Accountability can also be strengthened through enhanced monitoring, transparency measures, listings, and access-based incentives or restrictions, even in the absence of fully binding obligations.

Reforming the COP Format, Venue Models and Improving Access

- The increasing scale of COPs enhances visibility but can dilute the quality of negotiation and meaningful engagement.
- Alternative formats, including standing venues, regional COPs, or thematic COPs, provide possible pathways for improving efficiency while maintaining openness.
- Any redesign of COP formats must ensure transparency, civil society access, and inclusive participation for non-state actors and affected communities.

TERI publication, “Strengthening Multilateralism on the Road to COP33 and Beyond” was released at the end of the event. The publication can be accessed from [here](#).

Annexure 1: Participants

1. **Mr Huw Davies**, Managing Director, Centre for Multilateral Negotiations (CEMUNE)
2. **Ms Cecilia Kinuthia Njenga**, Director, Intergovernmental Support and Collective Progress Division, United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)
3. **Ms Máira Martini**, Chief Executive Officer, Transparency International
4. **Dr Shailly Kedia**, Senior Fellow and Director, Sustainable Development and Outreach Division, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
5. **Mr Ethan Spaner**, International Policy Senior Advisor, The Climate Reality Project, Washington DC

Annexure 2: Photos at the Event



Panel Discussion in Progress: Beyond 2025: A New Climate Multilateralism

Left to Right: Shailly Kedia (TERI), Maira Martini (Transparency International), Huw Davies (CEMUNE), Cecilia Kinuthia Njenga (UNFCCC), and Ethan Spaner (Climate Reality Project)



Release of TERI Publication: Strengthening Multilateralism on the Road to COP33 and Beyond

Left to Right: Shailly Kedia (TERI), Maira Martini (Transparency International), Huw Davies (CEMUNE), Ethan Spaner (Climate Reality Project)