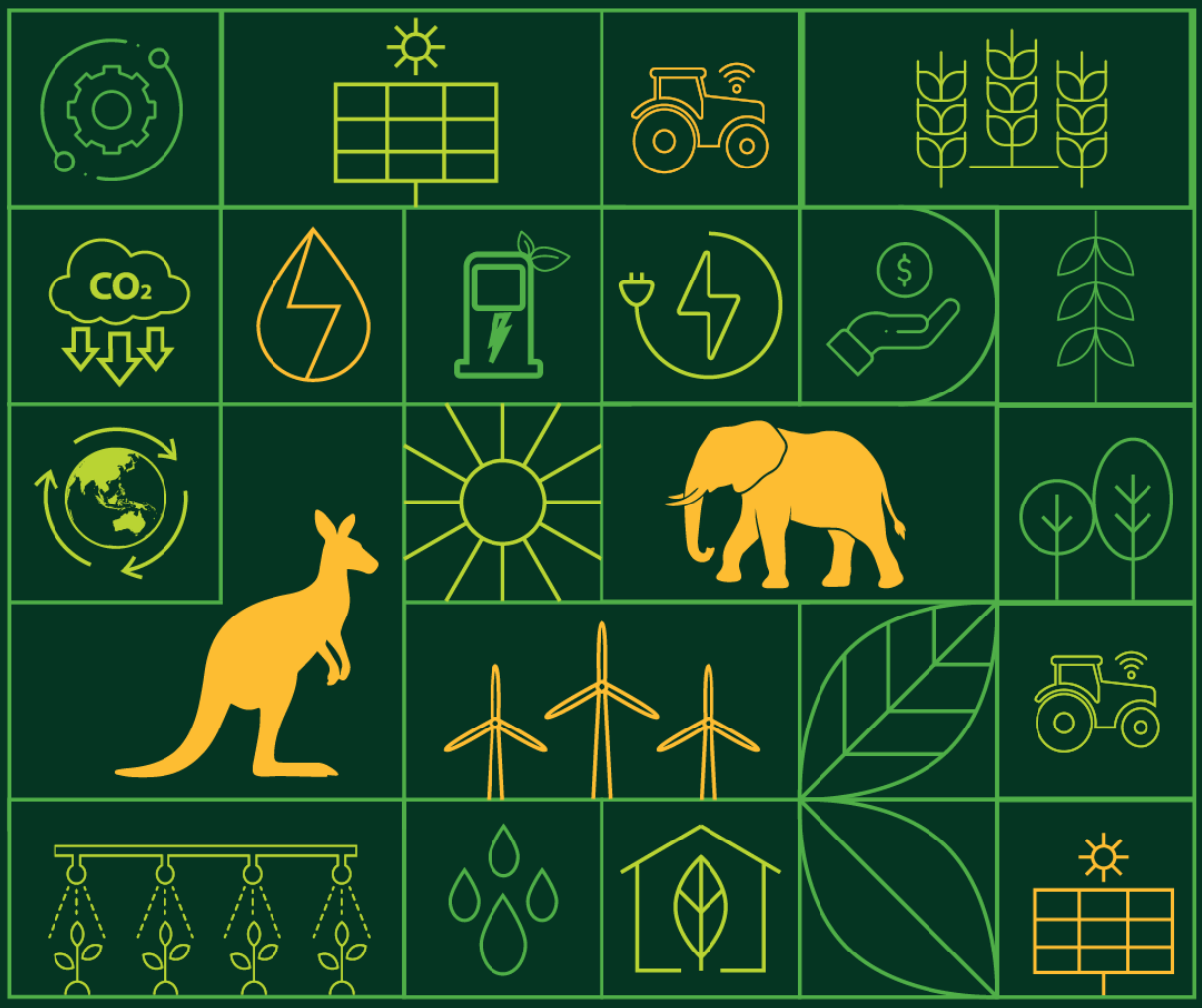
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PARTNERS IN GREEN TRANSITION

Ambition, Action, and Partnerships for COP31: The Road to Antalya



OCTOBER 2026

ABOUT CRF

Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) is an emerging independent think tank dedicated to shaping policy through rigorous research and thought leadership. With a strong focus on fostering collaboration between policymakers and industry, CRF integrates practical insights into its research and advocacy efforts. It conducts comprehensive research to support informed decision-making and engages with stakeholders through discussions, events, and publications. CRF's research is focused on three core areas – Climate Change & Energy Transition, Economy & Trade, and Geopolitics & Strategic Studies.

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Policy Paper

PARTNERS IN GREEN TRANSITION

Ambition, Action, and Partnerships for COP31: The Road to Antalya

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Abstract

The thirty-first Conference of the Parties (COP31) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to be held in Antalya, Türkiye, in November 2026, presents a pivotal opportunity to move climate commitments towards implementation. As countries strive to keep the 1.5˚C goal within reach, the focus is increasingly on translating ambition into action through accessible climate finance, resilient infrastructure, clean-energy deployment, and international cooperation. These priorities carry particular significance for the Global South and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), where climate vulnerability intersects with development needs, constrained fiscal space, limited institutional capacity, and unequal access to technology and investment.

Against this backdrop, Chintan Research Foundation (CRF), in partnership with the Australian High Commission, convened a Pre-COP Dialogue, which brought together perspectives on the practical challenges of delivering climate action across developing economies and explored how international partnerships can better support implementation. This policy brief synthesises the issues and proposals raised during the discussions and presents CRF's analysis and recommendations to inform consideration of the priorities and concerns of the Global South and SIDS in the lead-up to COP31.

The brief concludes with policy recommendations for each of the three agendas and a set of cross-cutting priorities for the road to Antalya. CRF's recommendations focus on improving implementation capacity, making climate finance more accessible and responsive to risk, strengthening project pipelines, supporting responsible and mutually beneficial clean-technology partnerships, and tracking delivery against intended outcomes. The central message is that COP31's implementation agenda will be strengthened when international cooperation finally moves beyond commitments and handshake diplomacy towards practical mechanisms that equip developing countries and SIDS to deliver climate action alongside resilient and inclusive development.

Keywords: *Climate Change, Small Island Developing States, Resilient Infrastructure, Climate Finance, Critical Minerals*

Background and Context

COP31 Priorities

COP31 is the thirty-first Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the annual multilateral forum through which governments review progress and negotiate collective responses to climate change. It will take place in Antalya, Türkiye, from 9 to 20 November 2026. Türkiye is hosting the conference and holds the COP Presidency, while Australia serving as President of Negotiations. COP follows the Paris Agreement's cycle of national climate plans and comes at a critical juncture: countries' updated 2035 targets will test whether national action can close the gap between existing commitments and the goal of keeping the 1.5°C temperature limit within reach. COP31 will bring governments together to advance mitigation, adaptation and resilience, climate finance for developing countries, and a just transition, while translating existing commitments into implementation.

The COP31 Presidency has framed its approach around dialogue, consensus, and action, with an emphasis on measurable delivery rather than new declarations alone. Its Climate Action Agenda identifies practical areas for accelerating implementation, including clean-energy transition and electrification; climate-resilient cities and infrastructure; green and low-carbon industrialisation; zero waste and circular economy; food security and sustainable agriculture; oceans and seas; and stronger financial and institutional mechanisms. The agenda also highlights youth participation and coordinated action on climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation. The voluntary '35 by 35' benchmark discussed in the COP31 process – raising electricity's share of global final energy consumption to 35% by 2035 – ties the energy transition to grids, storage, investment, industrial development, and affordability. These priorities make implementation capacity, accessible finance, and international cooperation especially crucial for developing countries across the Global South and SIDS.

How the Three Agendas Fit Together

The three agendas explored in this brief – infrastructure resilience, climate finance, and critical minerals and clean technologies – are not separate workstreams. They are mutually dependent conditions for translating climate ambition into development outcomes. Infrastructure determines whether electricity, transport, water, communications, and public services can withstand climate shocks and support new investment. Finance determines whether countries can prepare projects, meet upfront costs, manage risks, and maintain assets over time. Critical minerals and clean technologies underpin electrification, storage, low-carbon manufacturing, and the wider energy transition, but their benefits depend on reliable infrastructure, patient capital, technical capability, and value-driven supply-chain partnerships.

Together, these agendas reveal a practical implementation challenge for the Global South: countries may face substantial climate risks and development needs while contending with limited fiscal space, high borrowing costs, small or dispersed project pipelines, constrained technical capacity, and uneven access to technology and processing markets. SIDS face additional constraints linked to geographic isolation, small grids, exposure to multiple hazards, and limited economies of scale. A transition that focuses only on emissions or aggregate investment can miss these delivery barriers. Conversely, approaches that link resilient infrastructure, fit-for-purpose finance, and inclusive industrial cooperation can support energy security, adaptation, local jobs, and greater economic resilience. This is the lens through which the dialogue's findings and recommendations are presented.

Structure and Purpose of the Dialogue

To examine how these priorities can be advanced in practice, Chintan Research Foundation (CRF) organised 'Partners in Green Transition: Advancing Ambition, Action, and Partnerships for COP31' in New Delhi on 23 September 2026, in partnership with the Australian High Commission. The dialogue brought together representatives from government, diplomatic missions, industry, finance, and research to consider implementation challenges facing the Global South and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and to identify policy considerations for the road to COP31.

The dialogue was structured around an inaugural session, three thematic sessions, and a closing fireside chat. The inaugural session, **'Advancing Ambition, Action, and Partnerships for COP31'**, brought together ambassadors and representatives of the Indian government to discuss COP31 priorities, the implementation gap in climate action, climate finance, and international cooperation.

Session 1, 'From Vulnerability to Resilience: The Infrastructure Imperative', examined the institutional, financial, and technical conditions required to deliver infrastructure that can withstand climate-related disruption while supporting development and essential services. **Session 2, 'Financing for Climate Ambition and Green Transition'**, considered how public, development, and private finance can be structured to turn climate commitments into investable projects across mitigation, adaptation, and resilience. **Session 3, 'Building Cooperation towards Clean Technologies and Critical Minerals for Energy Security and Decarbonisation'**, examined how international cooperation could support more resilient and diversified critical-mineral supply chains, clean-technology deployment, and development outcomes across resource-rich and manufacturing economies. The dialogue concluded with a **fireside chat, 'Leading the Global South: India's Role and Capabilities on the Road to COP31'**, which explored India's potential contribution to global climate action through its experience in clean energy, adaptation, technology, and international partnerships. A detailed agenda of the dialogue is provided in the annexure.

In the inaugural session, country representatives highlighted the gap between climate commitments and delivery; the need for predictable, timely, and accessible finance; the urgency of technology transfer and capacity building; the importance of resilient infrastructure and early-warning systems; and the case for treating oceans as a central climate and development priority. They also stressed that SIDS and developing countries are not a homogeneous group: cooperation needs to reflect differing fiscal, institutional, and geographical circumstances.

Three remarks captured the emphasis on partnership and implementation:

'India is an indispensable voice in the future of climate and energy policy. It is showing the world that clean energy is not a brake on prosperity, but a pathway to it.'

– The Hon. Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Australia

'Ambition without execution leaves a dangerous void. History will not judge our generation by the elegance of our policy papers or the eloquence of our speeches. We will be judged by the state of the planet we pass on.'

– H.E. Ali Murat Ersoy, Ambassador of Türkiye to India

'Climate transition is simply too large, too complex, and too urgent for one country, institution, or group of countries to manage on their own.'

– Mr Shishir Priyadarshi, President, CRF

The discussion also highlighted the need to simplify access to climate finance, stronger project preparation, the distinct circumstances of SIDS and least developed countries (LDCs), ocean finance and governance, and deeper South–South and triangular cooperation. Views differed on the extent to which private capital can meet the needs of small and dispersed economies, while the continuing role of

grants, concessional finance, and risk-sharing was recognised where commercial returns are limited.

Further, the dialogue examined three interconnected agendas: resilient infrastructure, climate finance, and critical minerals and clean technologies. Across these areas, a common message emerged: implementation depends not only on the scale of ambition or the volume of finance committed, but also on whether countries can prepare viable projects, access appropriate financing, manage risks effectively, strengthen institutional and technical capacity, and ensure that partnerships respond to local development priorities.

On infrastructure resilience, the discussions underscored the need to integrate forward-looking climate risks into planning and investment decisions, translate risk information into practical action, and develop context-specific solutions for SIDS and other climate-vulnerable settings. Stronger early-warning systems, community participation, and local capacity are essential if infrastructure investments are to protect essential services and support long-term resilience. On climate finance, the emphasis was on improving access to existing and new funding, strengthening project preparation and investment pipelines, and deploying grants, concessional finance, and guarantees where they can mitigate specific risks and mobilise further investment. The discussions also highlighted the importance of embedding adaptation within development programmes rather than treating it as a separate financing challenge. On critical minerals and clean technologies, stakeholders and experts considered how mineral-specific and regional partnerships could diversify supply chains while ensuring they remain economically and commercially viable. Such cooperation must extend beyond resource access to include processing and manufacturing support, technology transfer agreements, research and skills-development mandates, and appropriate environmental and social safeguards.

Taken together, these findings point to the need for a more integrated approach to climate implementation – one that connects infrastructure planning, fit-for-purpose finance, and industrial cooperation. The dialogue also underscored the importance of ocean priorities, cooperation across regions, and effective delivery on existing commitments. For India and other Global South economies, climate action must be pursued alongside rising energy demand, affordability and energy access, industrial development, and energy security. These considerations reinforce the need for partnerships that recognise differing national circumstances while supporting shared climate objectives.

The closing fireside chat, 'Leading the Global South: India's Role and Capabilities on the Road to COP31', brought together the dialogue's discussions on infrastructure resilience, climate finance, and clean-technology supply chains to examine India's potential contribution to international climate action. ***The discussion emphasised the need to maintain the 1.5°C goal as the guiding ambition while accelerating mitigation and strengthening adaptation to confront escalating climate impacts.*** It highlighted opportunities for India to share its experience in resilient urban infrastructure, cooling, circularity, and action on short-lived climate pollutants. The conversation also underscored the importance of scaling successful state-level initiatives, integrating adaptation into existing development budgets, and strengthening local-government capacity to access finance and implement climate action. Looking towards COP31, key priorities included translating commitments into verifiable outcomes, addressing the needs of Pacific Island states, advancing electrification and ocean-related action, and mobilising private finance. India–Australia cooperation on critical-mineral supply chains and rooftop solar for instance, emerged as areas of potential collaboration, combining complementary resource, technical, and manufacturing capabilities to accelerate clean-energy deployment and support climate action across the Global South.


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TURNING DIALOGUE TO DELIVERY: SETTING THE ROAD AHEAD TO ANTALYA

The policy recommendations in this section emerge from the deliberations at the Pre-COP Dialogue, Partners in Green Transition: Ambition, Action, and Partnerships for COP31. This section presents CRF's assessment of the issues raised across the dialogue, drawing on the discussions in each session and relevant research undertaken by CRF. It moves from the principal takeaways and implementation challenges to policy recommendations that CRF considers important in the lead-up to COP31 in Antalya. Rather than reproducing the discussions as a record of proceedings, the brief identifies areas where policy design, institutional arrangements, and international cooperation could better support delivery. The aim is to chart a practical road ahead for Antalya, focusing on the measures needed to strengthen implementation, improve access to resources, and ensure that climate partnerships contribute to resilient and inclusive development.

ADVANCING AMBITION, ACTION, AND PARTNERSHIPS FOR COP31

Key Takeaways

- COP31 must demonstrate delivery. The credibility of the multilateral climate process depends on whether commitments translate into accessible finance, functioning infrastructure, and measurable outcomes on the ground.
- Climate finance must be available as well as accessible. Simplified procedures, direct access, project-preparation support, and appropriate concessional instruments are particularly important for SIDS and LDCs.
- The Global South and SIDS require differentiated approaches. Countries vary in their climate vulnerabilities, fiscal capacity, institutional readiness, and development priorities; cooperation should reflect these differences rather than assume a uniform set of needs.
- Oceans must be integrated into climate action. Ocean governance, blue-economy investment, and ocean-related adaptation need stronger links with existing climate finance and institutional frameworks.
- Electrification, energy security, and industrial development are interconnected. Progress requires investment in grids, storage, resilient infrastructure, and reliable critical-mineral supply chains, alongside attention to affordability and the cleanliness of electricity generation.
- International partnerships should focus on implementation. Bilateral, regional, South–South, and triangular cooperation can connect technical capabilities, project preparation, and financing with the priorities identified by partner countries.

Background and Context

The opening session took place against a backdrop of growing pressure on the international climate process to demonstrate progress beyond negotiated commitments. It brought together perspectives from the incoming COP31 host and negotiating leadership, as well as representatives of countries across the Pacific, Caribbean, Africa, and Latin America, alongside Indian policy and research institutions. Türkiye's COP31 Presidency and Australia's role as President of Negotiations provided an important context for considering how the conference could advance both negotiated outcomes and practical implementation. The discussion also underscored the importance of keeping the concerns of climate-vulnerable countries, particularly SIDS and LDCs, central to the process.

With COP31 approaching, the discussions highlighted the persistent gap between the climate goals announced at international summits and the resources, infrastructure, and institutional capacity required to implement them. Representatives from different nations raised fundamental questions about whether finance is reaching countries with the greatest needs, whether climate-resilient infrastructure is being delivered, and whether commitments are producing measurable development and climate outcomes.

Key Discussion Points

A. Moving from Climate Commitments to Implementation

Representatives from different countries highlighted the need to shift the focus of international climate action from commitments and targets towards implementation and measurable outcomes. Key challenges include limited project-preparation capacity, financing barriers, and institutional constraints. COP31 presents an opportunity to



strengthen accountability for existing commitments and connect negotiated outcomes with practical cooperation at national and regional levels.

B. Making Climate Finance Work for Vulnerable Countries

Climate finance must support not only project implementation but also the preparatory stages required to turn climate priorities into viable projects. Experts flagged the barriers faced by SIDS and LDCs, including complex procedures, lengthy approval processes, and limited technical and institutional capacity. COP31 should advance simplified and direct access to climate funds, dedicated support for pre-project development, feasibility assessments, and pre-planning processes, and capacity-building for national and local institutions to develop project proposals and manage execution. Grants, concessional finance, and risk-sharing mechanisms should be prioritised where commercial finance is insufficient, alongside transparent reporting of finance committed, disbursed, and translated into outcomes.

C. Recognising Diversity Across the Global South

The discussion highlighted the diversity of climate vulnerabilities, development priorities, and institutional capacities across the Global South, including among SIDS. Approaches to climate finance, infrastructure, and technology cooperation therefore need to reflect country-specific circumstances rather than rely on uniform solutions. International partnerships can draw on the technical expertise and implementation capabilities of larger developing economies, including India, while complementing these capabilities with the financial and institutional support required by more vulnerable countries.

D. Positioning Oceans at the Centre of Climate Action

Representatives of climate-vulnerable island countries emphasised the importance of placing oceans more centrally within international climate action. Oceans are closely linked to climate regulation, biodiversity, food security, livelihoods, and economic resilience. Key priorities included strengthening blue-economy project pipelines, improving access to appropriate financing instruments, and integrating ocean and water considerations into climate planning. Translating these priorities into action will require sustained finance, technical capacity, and effective institutional coordination.

E. Connecting Electrification, Energy Security, and Cooperation

Electrification was highlighted as a vital link between climate action, energy security, and economic

development. The voluntary '35 by 35' benchmark provides a focal point for advancing this agenda, but progress depends on reliable grids, energy storage, resilient infrastructure, and secure clean-technology supply chains. The discussion also stressed the need to consider both the extent of electrification and the emissions intensity of the electricity supplied. International cooperation can help mobilise investment and connect complementary national capabilities while respecting different development pathways.

Policy Recommendations

- Put implementation and accountability at the centre of COP31. Establish transparent indicators to track progress against existing climate commitments, distinguishing between announced pledges, finance delivered, projects implemented, and outcomes achieved. New initiatives should be supported by clear implementation pathways, defined responsibilities, and measurable targets.

- Improve direct access to climate finance for SIDS and LDCs. Simplify application and approval procedures for multilateral climate funds, strengthen direct-access arrangements for eligible national and regional institutions, and provide sustained support for project preparation. Financing requirements should be proportionate to project scale and institutional capacity while maintaining appropriate accountability standards.

- Strengthen transparency in climate-finance reporting. Develop a harmonised approach to defining and reporting climate finance to improve comparability across funding sources and recipients. Reporting should distinguish between announced commitments and disbursed finance, enabling clearer assessment of delivery and identification of financing gaps.

- Integrate ocean priorities into climate finance and governance. Strengthen ocean-related project pipelines, expand access to appropriate financing instruments – including blue bonds, blended finance, and climate-risk insurance – and integrate ocean and water considerations more systematically into climate adaptation and planning frameworks.

- Advance country-led partnerships for resilience, electrification, and capacity building. Strengthen South–South and triangular cooperation that connects the technical capabilities of larger developing economies with priorities identified by SIDS and other climate-vulnerable countries. Prioritise practical collaboration on climate-risk assessment, early-warning systems, resilient and distributed energy, project preparation, and technical capacity-building, supported by clear responsibilities and measurable implementation outcomes.

FROM VULNERABILITY TO RESILIENCE: THE INFRASTRUCTURE IMPERATIVE

Key Takeaways

- Climate-risk assessments must lead to prioritised, costed projects and inform planning, standards, and public investment.
- SIDS require context-specific approaches that reflect geography, small and isolated grids, limited fiscal space, land tenure, and exposure to multiple hazards.
- Distributed renewables, storage, and appropriately designed hybrid systems can strengthen energy security, but require maintenance capacity, suitable regulation, and grid planning.
- Financing gaps are compounded by small project sizes, uncertain revenue, high upfront costs, and limited project-preparation capacity.
- Climate intelligence, early-warning systems, community participation, and long-term local capacity are central to resilience.

Background and Context

Infrastructure resilience is a development requirement as well as a climate response. Roads, ports, electricity systems, water services, hospitals, and communications networks underpin livelihoods and economic activity, yet climate hazards can disrupt several systems at once. Risk assessments must therefore move beyond identifying where hazards may occur to inform decisions about which assets are most critical, how they should be designed and maintained, and where limited public resources can reduce the greatest risks. Tools such as the Global Infrastructure Risk Model and Resilience Index (GIRI) developed by the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) can help build the evidence base, but their value depends on translating risk information into standards, investment choices, contingency plans, and accountable implementation.

For SIDS and other climate-vulnerable contexts, the challenge is shaped by small and isolated grids, limited redundancy, constrained public budgets, exposure to cyclones, floods, and other hazards, and dependence on ports and imported equipment. Infrastructure that is technically viable in a larger market may not be suitable for a small island economy where demand is dispersed, purchasing power is limited, and maintenance or replacement parts are costly. Resilience therefore requires context-specific design, local capacity, and community involvement, alongside finance that reflects the public benefits and risks involved. The session considered how governments and partners can connect climate intelligence, infrastructure planning, and appropriate funding so that resilience investments sustain essential services and support wider development.

Key Discussion Points

A. From Risk Information to Implementation

Infrastructure risk models, geospatial information, remote sensing, and climate modelling can help identify vulnerabilities and prioritise investments. However, hazard identification alone falls short: assessments must clarify likely impacts on assets, communities, and essential services, and inform standards, contingency planning, and investment decisions. Historical data may not capture changing climate risks or exposure.

B. Differentiated Approaches for SIDS

Pacific island contexts can combine geographical isolation, limited redundancy, exposure to cyclones and earthquakes, dependence on imported fuels,



and constrained technical capacity. Licensing, tariff uncertainty, anticipated grid expansion, customary land-tenure arrangements, and limited purchasing power may further constrain investment. Solutions therefore must be designed around local circumstances rather than applied uniformly.

C. Energy, Finance, and Institutions

Distributed solar, battery storage, and modular systems may improve resilience and reduce fuel dependence, provided that maintenance, spare parts, grid compatibility, and local expertise are addressed. Public and concessional finance, grants, and guarantees may be needed where revenue profiles do not attract commercial capital. Such instruments cannot substitute for sound project design, governance, or implementation capacity.

D. Community Ownership and Capacity

The discussion emphasised embedding technical assistance throughout project design, delivery, and operation. Local and gender-responsive participation can help identify service needs, land and livelihood impacts, and arrangements for long-term maintenance. Electricity access must also connect to productive uses and essential services to support livelihoods.

Policy Recommendations

- Integrate forward-looking multi-hazard assessments into infrastructure plans and public investment decisions, translating risks into prioritised and costed projects.
- Support country-led, differentiated infrastructure solutions for SIDS, including resilient critical assets and distributed energy or storage where appropriate.
- Expand project-preparation support and technical assistance for feasibility studies, risk assessment, regulatory design, procurement, and long-term maintenance.
- Improve access to grants and concessional finance for resilience projects with limited commercial returns; use guarantees and blended finance to address clearly identified risks.
- Strengthen impact-based climate information and early-warning capabilities, combining geospatial tools and modelling with local knowledge and community participation.

FINANCING CLIMATE AMBITION FOR GREEN TRANSITIONS

Key Takeaways

- The challenge is not only the amount of finance available, but also access, project readiness, risk allocation, and financial intermediation.
- Concessional finance and guarantees are most useful when they address identifiable risks or market gaps and mobilise additional investment.
- Distributed and decentralised energy projects may require aggregation to reduce transaction costs and attract finance.
- Adaptation finance benefits from a development-plus approach linking climate risk with household, local-government, and sectoral programmes.
- Project preparation, viable long-term cash flows, and coordination across ministries and institutions are essential to implementation.

Background and Context

Climate finance is the bridge between climate commitments and implementation, but the challenge is not simply the total amount of capital available. Funds must be accessible to the institutions and countries that need them, and projects must be sufficiently prepared to attract appropriate finance. Complex application procedures, long approval timelines, limited project-development capacity, and the cost of structuring transactions can prevent available resources from reaching priority investments. These barriers are especially significant for SIDS, LDCs, and smaller subnational or community projects, where project sizes may be modest even when the development benefits are substantial.

The financing challenge also differs by activity. Mitigation projects with predictable revenue streams may attract commercial investment, while adaptation and resilience often generate dispersed public benefits that are difficult to monetise directly. Distributed renewable energy, battery storage, firm clean power, green hydrogen, and climate-resilient micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) can face different combinations of technology, payment, offtake, and execution risks. The session examined how grants, concessional finance, guarantees, development finance institutions, financial intermediaries, and private capital can be combined without using scarce public resources where commercial finance is already viable. It also considered how adaptation can be integrated into development planning so that climate resilience becomes part of investment decisions across households, districts, states, and national programmes.

Key Discussion Points

A. Access and Project Preparation

Complex applications, lengthy approval timelines, and limited technical capacity can prevent available finance from reaching projects. Plans must be developed into bankable and financially viable propositions, supported by feasibility work, structuring, and credible long-term cash flows. Simplifying access procedures and strengthening project preparation were identified as practical priorities, especially for developing countries and SIDS.

B. Concessional Finance, Guarantees, and Aggregation

Concessional resources can help mobilise commercial



capital for technologies and business models facing identifiable risks or not yet commercially mature. Their use should demonstrate financial additionality and avoid subsidising activities that are already commercially viable. Guarantees and blended-finance instruments should address clearly identified risks and market failures; they should not stand in for viable revenue models, sound governance, or adequate implementation capacity. Aggregating smaller distributed energy projects can combine demand, projects, and risks to make them more investable.

C. Adaptation as Part of Development

Adaptation benefits can be difficult to capture as direct financial returns. The discussion therefore stressed integrating resilience into existing household, district, state, and national development programmes rather than treating adaptation as an isolated category. Clean cooking was discussed as an example with mitigation and adaptation dimensions, while MSMEs were recognised both as recipients of resilience finance and as providers of locally relevant adaptation services.

D. Cooperation and Implementation

Climate finance requires coordination among climate and finance ministries, planning and infrastructure agencies, development finance institutions, domestic lenders, and private investors. The discussion identified opportunities for cooperation through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms, including project preparation, risk-sharing, energy distribution, adaptation, and climate-risk information.

Policy Recommendations

- Encourage simpler application and approval processes within major multilateral climate funds, including improved direct-access pathways and proportionate requirements for SIDS and LDCs.
- Strengthen project preparation and financial structuring so plans can become bankable, viable projects with credible long-term cash flows.
- Target concessional finance and guarantees to identifiable risks and market gaps, with transparent assessment of financial additionality.
- Aggregate smaller and distributed projects where appropriate to reduce transaction costs and attract commercial and institutional finance.
- Integrate adaptation into development planning and local services, including support for MSME resilience, while improving consistency and transparency in climate-finance reporting.

COOPERATION ON CRITICAL MINERALS AND CLEAN TECHNOLOGIES

Key Takeaways

- Critical-mineral value chains are uneven and non-linear; partnerships should reflect specific minerals and complementary stages of extraction, processing, manufacturing, and recycling.
- Diversification away from dominant processing hubs can involve material cost and operating challenges that vary by mineral, technology, and location.
- Capital must match project stage and risk, particularly in exploration and midstream processing.
- Government-level frameworks do not automatically translate into commercial projects; firms need clearer routes to identify partners and execute investments.
- Global South partnerships should extend beyond raw-material supply to value addition, technology transfer, research cooperation, jobs, and environmental and community safeguards.

Background and Context

The transition to clean energy depends on critical minerals, clean technologies, and the industrial capabilities required to extract, process, manufacture, deploy, and maintain them. These capabilities are unevenly distributed across countries: some hold substantial mineral resources, others have established processing or manufacturing capacity, and others represent major markets for clean-energy technologies. This uneven geography creates opportunities for cooperation, but also leaves countries exposed to concentrated supply chains, volatile prices, infrastructure gaps, and limited influence over where value is captured. The session considered how partnerships can be organised around mineral-specific needs and complementary capabilities rather than assuming that every country should build every stage of a supply chain.

For Global South partners, diversification is not only a question of securing reliable inputs for the energy transition. It is also about whether resource-rich countries can capture greater value through processing, manufacturing, skills, research, and technology transfer while protecting communities and ecosystems. Diversifying supply chains may involve additional upfront and operating costs, while private capital may be reluctant to enter higher-risk mining and midstream processing activities before markets and supporting infrastructure are established. Government-to-government agreements therefore need credible routes to business execution, risk-sharing, and project development. The discussion explored how regional corridors, public and development finance, private investment, and safeguards can help align supply-chain resilience with industrial development and a fairer distribution of transition benefits.

Key Discussion Points

A. Cooperation Built Around Value-Chain Complementarity

The discussion explored mineral-specific clusters and strategic corridors as ways to connect complementary resource endowments, processing capabilities, manufacturing demand, and recycling. These were discussed as potential or illustrative models, not as uniformly operational arrangements. Specialisation across value-chain stages may help avoid duplicated investments where countries pursue overlapping industrial ambitions.

B. Diversification and the Cost of Resilience

Stakeholders and experts noted that establishing processing capacity outside dominant refining hubs can involve material upfront and operating-cost



premiums, which vary by mineral, technology, and location. Diversification therefore requires a realistic, multi-year view of investment and operating costs, as well as efforts to improve competitiveness over time.

C. Risk-Matched Finance and Business Execution

Private capital may be reluctant to enter high-risk exploration or processing stages before technical, regulatory, and market risks are clearer. The discussion considered viability-linked incentives, licensing reform, targeted viability-gap support, and public-sector participation as possible tools. Such proposals require country-specific assessment and should not be read as agreed policy. India and Australia have established bilateral cooperation frameworks on critical minerals, although translating these frameworks into commercial projects remains at an early stage.

D. Development Outcomes and Safeguards

Resource-rich countries underlined the importance of value addition, technology transfer, and research cooperation rather than buyer–seller relationships alone. Environmental safeguards, water use, ecosystems, and local livelihoods must be considered from the outset. Defence and security-critical minerals may have different reliability and price considerations from high-volume clean-energy minerals, so their policy approaches may need to be distinguished.

Policy Recommendations

- Structure cooperation around mineral-specific value-chain nodes and complementary strengths across extraction, processing, manufacturing, and recycling.
- Assess the full costs of diversification and consider predictable, multi-year support where justified, alongside plans to improve competitiveness.
- Match finance to project stage and risk; CRF proposes that India consider targeted options for exploration and midstream processing, including a review of licensing and viability-gap support.
- Translate existing bilateral and plurilateral frameworks into business-executable pathways through clearer entry points, industry engagement, and links with relevant subnational actors.
- Move beyond raw-material trade to value addition, technology transfer, and research partnerships, embedding environmental, water, and community safeguards from the outset.

THE ROAD AHEAD TO ANTALYA: CORE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Takeaways

- Keep 1.5°C as the Guiding Ambition While Accelerating Mitigation and Adaptation
- Make Implementation, Verification, and Accountability Central to COP31
- Improve Climate-Finance Access and Match Financial Instruments to Need
- Apply CBDR-RC for Global South With Special Focus on SIDS
- Integrate Resilience and Adaptation into Development Planning and Public Expenditure
- Strengthen State and Local-Government Capacity to Deliver Climate Action
- Advance Circularity and Resource Efficiency Across Clean-Technology Value Chains
- Translate International Partnerships into Viable Projects and Shared Capabilities
- Elevate Oceans and the Resilience of Coastal Livelihoods

The inaugural session, the three thematic sessions, and the closing fireside chat point to a shared conclusion: ***the central challenge for COP31 is to translate climate ambition into measurable implementation while recognising the different circumstances and development priorities of participating countries. Resilient infrastructure, accessible climate finance, and secure, responsible clean-technology supply chains are mutually dependent.*** Their effectiveness rests on credible project preparation, appropriate risk-sharing, institutional capacity, technology cooperation, and accountability for delivery.

The dialogue further stressed that implementation must extend beyond international negotiations to national, state, and local institutions, where many climate-related decisions are made and investments delivered. India's experience offers potential lessons for other developing countries, particularly where successful approaches can be adapted to local conditions. The following recommendations bring together these cross-cutting priorities and the policy options emerging from the dialogue.

Keep 1.5°C as the Guiding Ambition While Accelerating Mitigation and Adaptation

- Maintain the 1.5°C objective as the guiding reference for climate action, while strengthening efforts to limit any temperature overshoot and reduce the duration of time spent above this threshold.
- Accelerate emissions reduction alongside adaptation measures that address unavoidable and potentially irreversible climate impacts.
- Prioritise practical interventions at the intersection of mitigation and adaptation, including resilient urban development, cooling, electrification, and action on short-lived climate pollutants. Carbon dioxide removal should remain complementary to, rather than a substitute for, rapid emissions reduction.

Make Implementation, Verification, and Accountability Central to COP31

- Institutionalise implementation tracking and independent verification of existing climate commitments before introducing new targets or mechanisms. COP31 should establish clear implementation pathways, time-bound milestones, and measurable indicators, supported by transparent and comparable reporting.
- Climate-finance reporting should distinguish between amounts pledged, committed, and disbursed, while implementation reporting should

track projects initiated, completed, and the outcomes achieved. Progress should be assessed through periodic reviews and independent verification, where appropriate, with findings used to identify delivery gaps and inform corrective action.

- Improve coordination across climate, finance, energy, and infrastructure institutions to connect national commitments with project preparation, funding decisions, and implementation on the ground. COP31's success should be assessed not only by negotiated outcomes, but by credible evidence of delivery and progress.

Improve Climate-Finance Access and Match Financial Instruments to Need

- Simplify access to multilateral climate funds, strengthen direct-access arrangements for eligible institutions, and provide sustained support for project preparation, particularly for SIDS, LDCs, and other climate-vulnerable countries.
- Match financing instruments to project characteristics: use grants and concessional finance where public benefits are high but commercial returns are limited, and deploy guarantees and blended finance to address clearly identified risks that constrain investment.
- Enhance the role of public and development finance in mobilising private capital, particularly for adaptation, resilience, and emerging technologies. Improve transparency around commitments, disbursements, and delivery timelines to build confidence in climate-finance arrangements.

Apply CBDR-RC for Global South With Special Focus on SIDS

- Climate finance and implementation frameworks should reflect the principle of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC), accounting for differences in historical responsibility, national circumstances, and institutional and financial capacity. This plays a key role for highlighting the respective capabilities of the Global South.
- As highlighted in the dialogue, SIDS should not be treated as a homogeneous group: some island states have extremely limited administrative, technical, and financial capabilities to access climate finance and implement projects.
- Support mechanisms should therefore be tailored to individual country needs, including through simplified funding procedures, targeted technical assistance, project-preparation support, and appropriately structured grants and concessional finance, while preserving national ownership and priorities. For instance, India's implementation experience and industrial capabilities, alongside Australia's regional engagement and technical and financing experience, may offer complementary contributions where these respond to partner-country priorities.
- Strengthen South–South and triangular cooperation while maintaining national ownership and clearly defined responsibilities.

Integrate Resilience and Adaptation into Development Planning and Public Expenditure

- Treat adaptation as a development investment rather than solely as an additional cost.
- Incorporate climate resilience into existing public expenditure, infrastructure programmes, and sectoral budgets, including affordable housing, urban planning, transport, water, and energy.
- Embed forward-looking climate and multi-hazard assessments across infrastructure design, procurement, operation, and maintenance, prioritising continuity of essential services.
- Adaptation measures should reflect local vulnerabilities and development needs, with differentiated approaches for SIDS and other highly exposed countries. Strengthen early-warning systems and climate-risk assessment while ensuring that technical capacity and long-term maintenance arrangements are built into projects from the outset.

Support State and Local-Government Capacity to Deliver Climate Action

- Support the translation and scaling of successful state-level approaches to climate finance, renewable energy, disaster-

risk reduction, and early- warning systems.

- Augment the technical, institutional, and financial capabilities of state agencies and local bodies so they can prepare projects, access available funding, integrate climate risks into public investment, and implement programmes effectively.
- Improve coordination between national, state, and local institutions, recognising that many decisions concerning infrastructure, service delivery, and adaptation fall within subnational jurisdictions.
- Use existing funding frameworks and intergovernmental financing arrangements more effectively to support locally identified climate priorities.

Advance Circularity and Resource Efficiency Across Clean-Technology Value Chains

- Extend climate action beyond emissions accounting to the materials and value chains that drive emissions, resource demand, and environmental impacts. Promote circularity through better product design, durability, repairability, reuse, remanufacturing, and recycling across sectors, including batteries, plastics, and textiles.
- Develop policies that address resource use throughout the value chain rather than treating recycling as the sole measure of circularity.
- Strengthen the implementation capacity of states and local bodies to apply instruments such as extended producer responsibility, distributing appropriate responsibilities across producers and other value-chain actors instead of placing the entire burden on municipal authorities. Integrate environmental, water, and community safeguards into resource-intensive industries and clean-technology deployment.

Translate International Partnerships into Viable Projects and Shared Capabilities

- Build practical cooperation around complementary capabilities, clearly identified investment opportunities, and partner-country priorities.
- Existing bilateral and regional frameworks should be connected to industry participation, project preparation, skills development, and appropriate financing arrangements. These partnerships should support value addition and technology transfer in participating countries, rather than relying exclusively on raw-material trade or equipment deployment. For example, India–Australia collaboration could be advanced through critical-mineral supply chains that connect Australian resource and processing capabilities with Indian downstream manufacturing, battery, and electric-vehicle ecosystems.
- Cooperation on rooftop solar can similarly combine Australian technical experience with India's deployment scale, manufacturing capabilities, and workforce-development needs.

Elevate Oceans and the Resilience of Coastal Livelihoods

- Integrate ocean priorities more systematically into climate governance, adaptation planning, and financing.
- Develop stronger pipelines of projects addressing coastal resilience, marine and coastal ecosystems, sustainable blue-economy activities, and the protection of livelihoods dependent on ocean resources.
- Improve access to appropriate financing instruments and connect ocean-related investments with broader development priorities, including water security, food systems, and infrastructure resilience. COP31 should help move ocean commitments towards implementable programmes with identifiable financing needs, delivery arrangements, and measurable outcomes. •

By Meheli Roy Choudhury and Shagun Mamgain

Annexure

Time	Session
09:00 onwards	**Chai aur Chintan – Registration and Networking**
10:00–12:00	**Inaugural Session** Advancing Ambition, Action, and Partnerships for COP31 Welcome Remarks Mr Shishir Priyadarshi, President, CRF **Special Addresses** H.E. Philip Green, Ambassador of Australia to India H.E. Ali Murat Ersoy, Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to India **Keynote Address** The Hon'ble Chris Bowen MP, Minister for Climate Change and Energy, Government of Australia **Panel Speakers:** H.E. Kenneth Felix Haczynski da Nóbrega, Ambassador of Brazil to India H.E. Nebiyu Tedla, Ambassador of Ethiopia to India H.E. Jagnnath Sami, Ambassador of Fiji to India H.E. Jason Hall, Ambassador of Jamaica to India Ms Rajasree Ray, Senior Economic Advisor, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India In conversation with: Ms Gaurie Dwivedi, Executive Editor, NDTV
12:00–12:30	**Chai aur Chintan – Session Break**
12:30–13:15	**Session I** From Vulnerability to Resilience: The Infrastructure Imperative Moderator: Dr Debajit Palit, Centre Head, Centre for Climate Change and Energy Transition (CCET), CRF **Speakers:** Mr Amit Prothi, Director General, Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure Ms Elizabeth Atwell, Head of Development & Green Growth, British High Commission in India Mr Amit Kumar, Retd. Senior Director, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Former Senior Fellow, Climate Program, WRI India Prof. P.K. Joshi, School of Environmental Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) Mr Siddartha Ramakanth, Director, Nangia & Co LLP, Papua New Guinea (online)
13:15–14:15	**Lunch**
14:15–15:30	**Session II** Financing Climate Ambition for Green Transition **Special Address** by Mr David Higgins, First Assistant Secretary, International Climate and Energy Division, Australian Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment **Moderator**: Ms Neha Kumar, Head – South Asia, Climate Bonds Initia-tive **Speakers:** Ms Namrata Mukherjee, Strategic Planning Specialist, International Solar Alliance

	Mr Julien Desmedt, First Secretary – Climate, Environment & Energy, European Union (EU) Delegation to India Mr Vivek Sen, India Director, Climate Policy Initiative Dr Manish Srivastava, Associate Director, Earth Science and Climate Change, TERI
15:30–16:30	**Session III** Enhancing Cooperation towards Critical Minerals and Clean Technologies for Energy Security and Decarbonisation **Special Address** by H.E. Ms Arlette Gabriela Bustamante Garcia, Counsellor, Embassy of the Plurinational State of Bolivia **Moderator**: Ms Nidhi Srivastava, Head – Research and Strategy, Dra-vya, India Speakers: Ms Akanksha Tyagi, Senior Programme Lead, Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) Mr Gaylor Montmasson-Clair, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Southern Transitions, South Africa (online) Mr Aditya Menon, Deputy Head (Public Policy & Government Affairs), Vedanta Ltd Ms Vanessa Lacayo, Co-founder & Chief Operating Officer (COO), Novasensa Ms Priti Shukla, Portfolio Manager, Energiva Ventures Ms Maria Yamasaki, Economic Counsellor, Embassy of Japan
16:30–17:00	**Fireside Chat** Leading the Global South: India's Role and Capabilities on the Road to COP31 H.E. Philip Green, Ambassador of Australia to India Ms Divya Datt, Deputy Country Head, United Nations Environ-ment Programme (UNEP) India In conversation with: Mr Shishir Priyadarshi, President, CRF
17:00–17:10	**Closing Reflections**
17:10 onwards	**High Tea and Networking**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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