



## **Global Policy Dialogue on Earth System Governance: Ensuring Human Flourishing in the Anthropocene**

**Breakout Group 1: Turbocharging the Climate COPs, the “Rio Trio,” and Establishing a Planetary Emergency Platform/Climate Change Council to Safeguard Economic Opportunities**

**Co-Convenors:** Climate Governance Commission, Global Green Growth Institute, Stimson Center

### **Overview**

#### **Format/Guiding Note:**

- This break-out workshop group is designed to be a brainstorming dialogue, integrating Earth system science, governance specialists and non-specialist policymakers/other stakeholders, focusing on critical risks to the Earth system and relevant governance proposals which could better manage these grave risks. The discussion (Part II in particular) is designed to be positively focused on the pathways and opportunities for implementing relevant proposals, aiming to spark innovative thinking and an open progress-focused environment for taking the next steps in addressing Earth system risks.

#### **The Challenge - Earth System Risks and the Need for Enhanced and Defragmented International Response to these Risks**

Earth system scientists have warned us that we have already crossed [seven of nine of the Planetary Boundaries](#), and currently run the risk of triggering critical [Earth system tipping points](#) (and started to map economic consequences of our current trajectory, see e.g., [this study](#)). These warnings underscore the need for an array of governance innovations/responses suitable, among others, to ensure full recognition of the urgency and scale of the planetary emergency that we are experiencing (see e.g. the [CGC’s policy brief](#)). The Conference of the Parties (COP) is the key decision-making body of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and provides a platform for countries to join forces for mitigation, adaptation, finance, and other related efforts to combat climate change. Although the welcome participation of an increasing number of non-State actors has created a dynamic layer around the COPs’ central technical and political agenda, the central and formal negotiations between States have also been slow to reach agreement, and have been heavily politicized and undermined by short-term and narrow perspectives of national self-interest. There has also been difficulty with coordinating the approach of the UNFCCC COP with that of other COPs such as the Convention on Biodiversity and the Convention on Desertification, leading to further fragmentation of the international response to climate change, biodiversity, and pollution.

#### **The Solution - Turbocharging the Climate COPs, the “Rio Trio,” and Establishing a Planetary Emergency Platform/Climate Change Council to Safeguard Economic Opportunities**

The [Open Letter on COP Reform](#) released in advance of COP29 by the Club of Rome and partners details the following proposals to enhance the COP process:

1. **Enhance COP Presidency Selection:** Impose eligibility criteria so that only countries with a high level of climate ambition are eligible to host COPs.
2. **Ensure a Focus on Action-Oriented Meetings:** Shift COPs from negotiation forums to frequent, solution-driven meetings focused on progress reporting and implementation.
3. **Improve Accountability:** Strengthen enforcement of climate targets through robust reporting, peer review, and scientific oversight.
4. **Ensure Robust Tracking of Climate Finance:** Standardize definitions and tracking of climate finance to ensure transparency and alleviate debt burdens.
5. **Establish a Permanent COP Scientific Advisory Body:** Establish a formal, permanent scientific advisory body within COP to better integrate latest climate science.
6. **Recognize the Climate-Poverty-Inequality Nexus:** Embed the interlinkages between climate, poverty, and inequality into COP negotiations and implementation via a dedicated envoy.
7. **Ensure and Enhance Fair Representation:** Limit fossil fuel lobby influence and ensure equitable representation for science, Indigenous peoples, and vulnerable nations.

Additionally, a fair and enhanced compliance/accountability mechanism—which could build off the existing Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee—is needed to support greater follow-through and action by States Parties. Such a mechanism could focus on (a) upholding existing procedural obligations of states to substantiate, on the basis of the best available science, both the fairness as well as the highest possible level of ambition of each individual country with regard to their NDCs and (b) setting strengthened common standards for this reporting and systematically assessing submissions.

The UN Secretary General has proposed the convening of an [Emergency Platform](#), when needed, to address future global shocks, including those due to climate change, as the existing, conventional crisis response mechanisms cannot coherently and effectively manage multidimensional threats at the global level. A specific Planetary Emergency Platform, elaborating on—and going beyond, where necessary—the UN Secretary-General’s proposal, should be convened to address the rapidly accelerating consequences of climate change and the crossing of Planetary Boundaries. Carefully synchronized with climate COPs and other relevant international processes, the Platform could bring together relevant national authorities, the UNFCCC and IPCC, other environmental convention secretariats, relevant international organizations, as well as the World Bank, Green Climate Fund (GCF), and other financing bodies, members of the private sector, and other appropriate stakeholders, involving already-established action-focused forums. The Platform would leverage existing mechanisms in its efforts to coordinate responses, serving as a central coordination platform to harmonize and accelerate action across the international system. The Platform could also feed into or blend elements from the proposal of the Brazil COP30 team to establish a [Climate Council](#). A Platform or Council of this kind would also be capable of developing a [Planetary Emergency Plan](#), which could outline and effect these desired outcomes, as well as assist with monitoring the implementation of the declaration.

### **Relevant Background Information Links**

Climate Governance Commission, [Governing Our Planetary Emergency](#)

UN Secretary General, [Our Common Agenda Policy Brief 2: Strengthening the International Response to Complex Global Shocks – An Emergency Platform](#)

Club of Rome, [Planetary Emergency Plan](#)