

EXPLORING ACTIONABLE PATHWAYS FOR A TAFF ROADMAP

Authors

Chetna Hareesh Kumar
Niklas Höhne
Rory Geary

Design

Polina Korneeva

Editing

Hyunju (Laeticia) Ock

Communications

Lena Stüdeli
Victoria Fischdick

Acknowledgements

This work was developed in the context of a joint project with Germanwatch e.V. The authors would like to acknowledge the valuable contributions of Christoph Bals, Kerstin Opfer, Paul Healy and Petter Lydén (Germanwatch e.V.).

Key messages:

- The international pursuit of a Transition Away from Fossil Fuels (TAFF) can take different forms, ranging from an official guidance document to a broad, implementation-focused and legally binding international treaty. Each option involves trade-offs between ambition (impact) and consensus (political feasibility).
- In the current political climate, the most effective and feasible way to maximise the impact of a Roadmap for TAFF is to build a coalition of countries committed to phasing out fossil fuels (the “Coalition Roadmap”).
- The COP30 Presidency should publish a high-ambition roadmap and invite first-mover countries to endorse it. This should include a recurring forum to develop the Coalition Roadmap further and coordinate action on shared targets, pathways and policies.
- First-mover countries should adopt credible national implementation plans to phase out fossil fuels and scale up clean energy, demonstrating the benefits of transition and encouraging broader uptake by other countries.

1 Context

The “Roadmap for Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels” (hereafter referred to as the TAFF Roadmap) was announced at COP30 in November 2025 as a flagship initiative of the Brazilian Presidency. COP30 had failed to deliver clear consensus on a TAFF Roadmap in its cover decision text due to alleged divisions among Parties. To maintain momentum on the topic, the Presidency proposed developing a science-based, inclusive TAFF Roadmap in the lead-up to COP31 in Antalya.

Five months later, the specific objectives, content and process for developing the TAFF Roadmap remain undefined. The COP30 Presidency has launched an official information-gathering process to collect perspectives from a wide set of stakeholders to inform its forthcoming Roadmap. The First International Conference on Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels, , taking place from April 24–29, 2026, in Santa Marta and co-hosted by Colombia and the Netherlands, is also expected to feed its outcomes directly into the Presidency’s Roadmap.

As a contribution to the ongoing TAFF Roadmap evolution, this discussion paper outlines illustrative options for how the TAFF Roadmap could be shaped at the level of international coordination and what each option could achieve.

2 Exploring four options

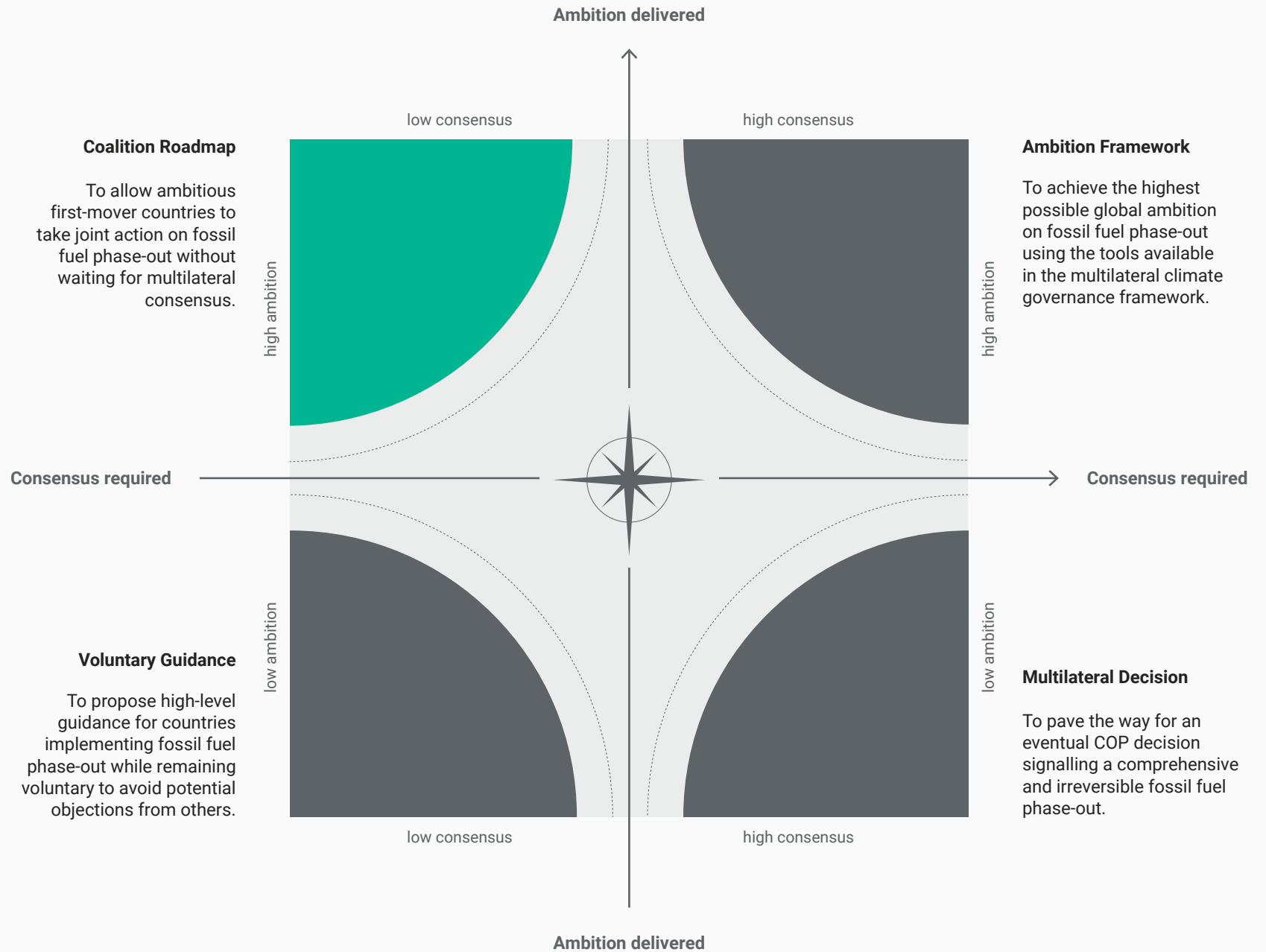
The TAFF Roadmap can take different approaches depending on its ultimate political objectives and constraints. → **Table 1** sets out four possible approaches, differentiated by their intended political outcomes.

The four TAFF Roadmap approaches differ in the degree of international consensus they would require and the level of ambition they could deliver for fossil fuel phase-out, with inevitable trade-offs between the two, as shown in → **Figure 1**.

Tab. 1
TAFF Roadmap options, their potential political objectives and closest comparable examples

Roadmap option	Potential political objective	Closest comparable examples
Voluntary Guidance	To propose high-level guidance for countries implementing fossil fuel phase-out while remaining voluntary to avoid potential objections from others.	Guidelines published by the UN, ILO, WWF or CAN
Multilateral Decision	To pave the way for an eventual COP decision signalling a comprehensive and irreversible fossil fuel phase-out.	COP28 UAE Declaration
Coalition Roadmap	To allow ambitious first-mover countries to take joint action on fossil fuel phase-out without waiting for multilateral consensus.	BOGA, PPCA, CETP, COFFIS
Ambition Framework	To achieve the highest possible global ambition on fossil fuel phase-out using the tools available in the multilateral climate governance framework.	NDC, LT-LEDS and GST processes

Fig. 1
Ambition versus consensus matrix



While the Voluntary Guidance approach would not rely on a high degree of consensus, it would also be limited in its ability to deliver ambitious action. On the other hand, the Multilateral Decision approach would be based heavily on consensus-building, which in turn could require watering down ambition to improve its acceptability. The Ambition Framework could deliver much more ambition, but only if it builds sufficient consensus to allow for its establishment in the first place. The Coalition Roadmap could deliver high ambition among a small group first without requiring broader consensus-building.

2.1 Voluntary Guidance

Description: A high-level document proposing shared principles, best practices and enabling frameworks to guide countries implementing a fossil fuel phase-out on a voluntary basis.

Theory of change: The internationally endorsed guidance document can promote harmonisation and alignment of phase-out plans with the best-available science and just transition principles.

Key content elements:

- Principles encouraging alignment of phase-out timelines and finance flows with the 1.5°C target.
- Best practice examples and caution against false solutions that prolong fossil fuel use.

- Strong emphasis on alignment with principles on just transition for workers and communities and equitable distribution of responsibility across Global North and Global South countries.

Potential process:

- The COP30 Presidency develops the Guidance based on input from multiple stakeholder groups.
- Successive COP Presidencies socialise and iterate on the Guidance to improve buy-in.
- Successive COP Presidencies promote uptake among national and subnational governments.

Added value over comparable examples: Several international organisations (e.g. United Nations, International Labour Organisation) and civil society organisations (e.g. World Wildlife Fund, Climate Action Network International) have published similar principles and guidance documents for a just transition away from fossil fuels. They have tended to focus on specific aspects of the transition, such as labour transitions or the phase-out of fossil fuel extraction and subsidies. The added value of the Voluntary Guidance approach to the TAFF approach lies in its comprehensive scope and potentially greater political backing due to COP Presidencies' involvement.

2.2 Multilateral Decision

Description: A high-level political document stating the shared phase-out intentions of signatories, eventually feeding into a COP decision text.

Theory of change: The multilateral consensus among all Parties to the Paris Agreement would signal a truly global transition and eventually coordinate action at a meaningful scale through existing multilateral channels.

Key content elements:

- High-level statements and long-term targets committing to fossil fuel phase-out.
- High-level commitments to financial and technical support for Global South countries.

Potential process:

- The COP30 Presidency initiates a process to collect and document country perspectives, priorities and concerns on TAFF.
- Successive COP Presidencies continue the iterative process to reflect the full range of country priorities and concerns while finding common ground on TAFF.
- The groundwork laid by successive Presidencies contributes to improved negotiations at future COPs and an eventual COP decision on TAFF, setting out shared intentions and scope.

Added value over comparable examples: The outcome of the First Global Stocktake (GST) at COP28, or the UAE Consensus, recognised the need to transition away from fossil fuels in a just, orderly manner. The added value of this Multilateral Decision approach to the TAFF Roadmap would lie in strengthening the language in the UAE Consensus, clarifying the temporal scope and addressing equity and finance.

2.3 Coalition Roadmap

Description: An implementation-oriented document jointly developed by ambitious first-mover countries to align on targets and pathways for fossil fuel phase-out.

Theory of change: Joint action by countries with similar interests or circumstances can demonstrate the feasibility and benefits of the transition and lead the way for others to follow.

Key content elements:

- Adoption of shared temporal targets and milestones for fossil fuel phase-out.
- Adoption of cross-border policy coordination mechanisms for fossil fuel phase-out and clean energy phase-in.
- Linking joint commitments to credible national implementations plans and policies.

Potential process:

- COP30 Presidency invites stakeholder input on science-aligned targets, pathways and policies and publishes a high-ambition Roadmap that first-mover countries are invited to endorse.
- First-mover countries establish a recurring forum to discuss and refine their Coalition Roadmap, and to coordinate action on joint targets, pathways and policies.
- The forum establishes and maintains strong links to the UNFCCC to ensure that it supports the Paris Agreement, rather than replacing it.

Added value over comparable examples: There are already coalitions and alliances that address several aspects of TAFF, such as Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA), Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA), Clean Energy Technology Partnership (CETP) and Coalition on Phasing Out Fossil Fuel Incentives Including Subsidies (COFFIS). The added value of a Coalition approach to the TAFF Roadmap lies in bringing together these different aspects under a broad umbrella to coordinate parallel efforts and avoid fragmentation. It would consolidate coalition efforts on TAFF by establishing concrete shared targets, as well as an accountability and ratcheting mechanism. It would also support implementation progress by providing a space to showcase best practice examples for phasing out fossil fuels at the national level.

2.4 Ambition Framework

Description: A high-level document establishing a shared, global 1.5°C-aligned fossil fuel phase-out target and a common governance framework within the UNFCCC umbrella, linked to a series of nationally determined implementation plans.

Theory of change: A framework agreed by all Parties to the Paris Agreement, explicitly aiming for higher ambition and accountability, can achieve fossil fuel phase-out at the pace required to align with the 1.5°C target.

Key content elements:

- A shared, long-term, global TAFF target with differentiated short- and medium-term targets for Global South and Global North countries.
- National-level implementation policies and plans contributing towards the global TAFF target.
- An international mechanism to channel finance and technical assistance to Global South countries to bridge the gap between what is required to align with the global TAFF target and what is possible given national circumstances.

Potential process:

- The COP30 Presidency invites stakeholder input on science-aligned targets, pathways and policies to start the development of a global TAFF Roadmap.

- Successive COP Presidencies work towards an eventual COP decision launching the TAFF Ambition Framework within the UNFCCC umbrella.
- National governments lead a bottom-up process to develop country-specific implementation plans contributing towards the global TAFF target.
- A dedicated forum is established within the UNFCCC structure to drive progress, ensure accountability and align TAFF efforts with the NDC and Global Stocktake processes.

Added value over comparable examples: The existing multilateral framework drives progress towards the 1.5°C temperature target of the Paris Agreement through NDCs, LT-LEDS and GST processes. This should drive action on transitioning away from fossil fuels due to its contribution to emissions reductions, although this is not happening at the pace required to be in line with the 1.5°C target. The added value of the Ambition Framework approach to the TAFF Roadmap lies in directly addressing fossil fuel production and use as the major driver of emissions, thus complementing NDCs and accelerating progress and prioritising absolute fossil fuel phase-out over net-zero emissions goals.

3 Comparing roadmap options

3.1 Pros and cons

Tab. 2
Pros and cons of the four TAFF Roadmap options

Promotes a degree of voluntary standard setting for a high-quality transition. +	Voluntary Guidance	- Cannot drive action at the pace needed to achieve 1.5°C due to voluntary nature.
Facilitates alignment of efforts among the willing. +		- Cannot include targets or pathways due to high level nature.
Could potentially be a starting point for ambition raising. +		- Limited ability to link to ramp up or implementation process.
Sends strong, collective political signal. +	Multilateral Decision	- High risk of watering down already agreed language in UAE Consensus.
Restores legitimacy and relevance of multilateral climate institutions. +		- Challenging to achieve COP consensus due to opposition.
Brings all parties along. +		- Weak in implementation detail and lacks enforceability.
Enables ambitious countries to make progress while avoiding multilateral paralysis. +	Coalition Roadmap	- High risk of watering down already agreed language in UAE Consensus.
Demonstrates economic viability and benefits of transition to other countries. +		- Challenging to achieve COP consensus due to opposition.
Send clear investor signal. +		
Enables high level of ambition. +	Ambition Framework	- Unlikely to get consensus in current context.
Linking national plans to global targets enables 1.5°C-alignment. +		- Top-down target-setting could raise sovereignty concerns.
Strong implementation focus. +		- International finance unlikely to be additional to New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG).

3.2 Assessment against benchmark

Existing literature suggests that any effective TAFF roadmap approach should be based on the following 11 pillars.

- **Scope:** Cover new and existing projects of all fossil fuels, across supply, demand, and trade.
- **Targets:** Include 1.5°C-aligned phase-out targets and pathways guided by best available science.
- **Phase-in:** Specify feasible, sustainable pathways for renewables phase-in corresponding to phase-out.
- **Equity:** Ensure differentiated targets and pathways for developing countries based on Common But Differentiated Responsibility and Respective Capability (CBDR-RC).
- **Economics:** Establish evidence of the economic benefits of the transition and clarify its key enablers.
- **Policy:** Be backed up by coherent and consistent policy packages across economic sectors.
- **Finance:** Specify mechanisms to raise public and private finance for phase-out and phase-in.
- **Justice:** Include just transition mechanisms for affected workers and communities

- **Participation:** Be based on a country-driven process with inclusive, multi-stakeholder dialogue.
- **Ownership:** Have strong, high-level political ownership across all relevant Ministries (beyond climate or environment Ministries)
- **Accountability:** Specify mechanisms to assess progress, address gaps and scale up ambition.













































→ **Figure 2** shows the results of an assessment of the four high-level TAFF Roadmap Options against these criteria. This high-level assessment demonstrates that the effectiveness of TAFF options increases from Voluntary Guidance through to Coalition Roadmap and broad-based Ambition Frameworks.

Both the Coalition Roadmap and Ambition Framework are effective options for a TAFF roadmap according to this assessment. How effective each option is in meeting the different pillars would ultimately rest on its design. The Ambition Framework is the best option when assessed against the theoretical best practice pillars of a TAFF Roadmap. However, as highlighted previously in → **Figure 1**, high levels of consensus required would likely critically limit its achievability, considering the high level of political resistance to efforts to transition away from fossil fuels in recent COPs, as well as diminishing space for international cooperation in the current geopolitical environment. The Coalition Roadmap seems most promising in its ability to deliver high ambition through a small group first without requiring broader consensus-building.

For the Voluntary Guidance option, clear weaknesses are apparent in relation to accountability, ownership and participation. The Multilateral Decision option creates stronger buy-in and provides a more powerful signal but remains general in nature, across several pillars, which likely limits its ability to galvanise country-level action. While both options could send investor signals, increase the political risk of new fossil fuel projects and provide practical guidelines for action, they clearly risk failing to create lasting change given the lack of legal commitment, accountability and enforceability. Whether these two options make a meaningful contribution to global climate mitigation in the long term would entirely depend on building sufficient political momentum to work towards more impactful future mechanisms with higher levels of accountability.

Fig. 2
Assessment of TAFF roadmap options

 Meets criteria
  Partially meets criteria
  Does not meet criteria

Pillar	Voluntary Guidance	Multilateral Decision	Coalition Roadmap	Ambition Framework
Scope	Can only promote 	Agrees on broad scope 	Defined by countries' contexts 	Comprehensive 
Targets	None due to voluntary basis 	General long-term targets 	Specific targets and pathways 	Specific targets and pathways 
Phase-in	Can only promote 	General phase-in intentions 	Specific phase-in pathways 	Specific phase-in pathways 
Equity	Can only promote 	Emphasises CBDR-RC 	Can be designed equitably 	Emphasises CBDR-RC 
Economics	Only general best practice 	General global evidence 	Context-relevant evidence 	Context-relevant evidence 
Policy	Only general best practice 	General intentions only 	Policy coordination 	Nationally determined 
Finance	Only general best practice 	General intentions only 	Finance coordination 	National and global mechanisms 
Justice	Only general best practice 	General intentions only 	Implementing best practices 	Nationally determined 
Participation	Not country-driven 	Not country-driven 	Partially country-driven 	Fully country-driven 
Ownership	None due to voluntary basis 	Requires broad political buy-in 	Requires broad political buy-in 	Requires broad political buy-in 
Accountability	None due to voluntary basis 	Linked to NDCs and GST2 	Can establish mechanisms 	Linked to NDCs & GST2 

4 Recommendation

The second energy price shock in five years emphasises the need for like-minded countries to commit to phasing out fossil fuel dependence, bolster energy security and demonstrate climate leadership. Given the current geopolitical context, we believe the Coalition Roadmap option is the best approach to maximise achievable impact. Although the Ambition Framework is the best option according to the ideal criteria, it is likely politically unachievable at present.

The COP30 Presidency should launch a high-ambition roadmap and invite first-mover countries to endorse it. This should include provisions for a recurring forum, linked to the UNFCCC, to develop the Coalition Roadmap further and coordinate action on shared targets, pathways and policies, with a high level of accountability and appropriate equity safeguards. First-mover countries should adopt credible national implementation plans for fossil fuel phase-out and clean energy scale-up.

The Coalition Roadmap would send a powerful signal to fossil fuel investors, demonstrate the benefits of reduced reliance on fossil fuels and enable broader uptake by other countries over time, thus accelerating global transition efforts.

BOGA	Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance
CAN	Climate Action Network
CBDR-RC	Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities
CETP	Clean Energy Technology Partnership
COFFIS	Coalition on Phasing Out Fossil Fuel Incentives Including Subsidies
COP	Conference of Parties
GST	Global Stocktake
ILO	International Labour Organisation
LT-LEDS	Long Term-Low Emissions Development Strategy
NDC	Nationally Determined Contributions
PPCA	Powering Past Coal Alliance
TAFF	Transitioning Away from Fossil Fuels
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UN	United Nations
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

Key references

A

Achakulwisut, P., Erickson, P., Guivarch, C., et al. (2023) 'Global fossil fuel reduction pathways under different climate mitigation strategies and ambitions', *Nature Communications*, 14(1), p. 5425. doi:10.1038/s41467-023-41105-z

C

Calverley, D. and Anderson, K. (2022) *Phaseout Pathways for Fossil Fuel Production Within Paris-compliant Carbon Budgets*. Manchester: University of Manchester. Available at: <https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/publications/phaseout-pathways-for-fossil-fuel-production-within-paris-complia/> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

Civil Society Equity Review, (2023) *An Equitable Phase Out of Fossil Fuel Extraction*. UAE: Civil Society Equity Review. Available at: <https://www.equityreview.org/extraction-equity-2023> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

I

IISD (2025) 'Advancing a Fair and Funded Transition Away from Fossil Fuels: Policy-makers' briefing to support negotiators at SB 62 and COP 30', June. Available at: <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2025-06/advancing-fair-funded-transition-fossil-fuels.pdf> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

IISD (2026) *Progressing the Transition Away From Fossil Fuels: A guide for policy-makers working on TAFF roadmaps and plans*. Manitoba: International Institute for Sustainable Development. Available at: <https://www.iisd.org/system/files/2026-03/progressing-transition-fossil-fuels-guide.pdf> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

J

Jone, N. and Parra, P.A.Y. (2024) *How the Transition Away From Fossil Fuel Production Can Be Included in New Climate Commitments and Plans*. Manitoba: International Institute for Sustainable Development. Available at: <https://www.iisd.org/publications/report/fossil-fuel-transition-new-climate-commitments> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

K

Könneke, J. and Adolphsen, O. (2026) 'The Limits of Multilateral Climate Policy. COP30 and the Conflict Between Petrostates and Electrostates', 5 February. Available at: https://www.swp-berlin.org/publications/products/comments/2026C05_COP30_Petrostates_Electrostates.pdf (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

M

Muttitt, G. and Kartha, S. (2020) 'Equity, climate justice and fossil fuel extraction: principles for a managed phase out', *Climate Policy*, 20(8), pp. 1024–1042. doi:10.1080/14693062.2020.1763900

N

Newell, P. (2026) 'Towards an orderly and just exit from fossil fuels', *International Affairs*, 102(2), pp. 599–616. doi:<https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iiaf272>

S

Strategic Perspective and Zero Carbon Analytics (2024) 'Principles for just and equitable oil and gas phase out'. Available at: <https://strategicperspectives.eu/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/Principles-for-a-just-and-equitable-phase-out.pdf> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

T

Teske, S. and Niklas, S. (2021) *Fossil Fuel Exit Strategy: An orderly wind down of coal, oil and gas to meet the Paris Agreement*, University of Technology, Sydney. Available at: <https://indd.adobe.com/view/e0092323-3e91-4e5c-95e0-098ee42f9dd1> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

W

Walker, B. and Pastukhova, M. (2024) *An orderly and equitable global transition away from fossil fuels*. Berlin: E3G. Available at: <https://www.e3g.org/publications/an-orderly-and-equitable-global-transition-away-from-fossil-fuels/> (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

Wertli, F. (2026) 'What we need to see in the roadmap to transition away from fossil fuels', *Climate Home News*, 17 February. Available at: <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2026/02/17/>

[what-we-need-to-see-in-the-roadmap-to-transition-away-from-fossil-fuels/](#) (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

WWF (2025) *Phasing Out Fossil Fuels through NDCs 3.0: Guidance for Policy-Makers*. World Wildlife Fund International. Available at: https://wwfint.awsassets.panda.org/downloads/use-this-design-1-word-guidance-on-phasing-out-fossil-fuels-designed-v3_1.pdf (Accessed: 20 April 2026)

**NewClimate – Institute for Climate
Policy and Global Sustainability
gGmbH**

Cologne Office
Waidmarkt 11a
50676 Cologne, Germany

Berlin Office
Schönhauser Allee 10-11
10119 Berlin, Germany

Phone: +49 221 999 83 300

Email: info@newclimate.org

Website: www.newclimate.org

**NEW
CLIMATE**
INSTITUTE

This work is licensed
under a [Creative Commons
Attribution-NonCommercial
4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/)
for non-commercial use.