

Dubai to Baku to Belém Action Plan for Culture at the UNFCCC (D-BAP)

Campaign Scoping Paper Summary

This Scoping Paper proposes a 20-month long advocacy campaign designed to complete the paradigm shift begun at COP28 in **Dubai, UAE** by securing the tabling and adoption of a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action decision (JWD) at COP30 in **Belém, Brazil** in November 2025. To do this, the Campaign will work in 2024 to secure inclusion in a decision taken at COP29 in **Baku, Azerbaijan** of a request that the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) and Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) hold one or more workshops to consider issues related to culture and heritage, including at its 62nd session (Bonn 2025), with the aim of exchanging views and the Conference of Parties adopting a decision on this matter at COP30 in Belém. These Culture Workshops held in 2025 could lead to a recommendation by the Subsidiary Bodies to COP30 for a JWD.

The JWD adopted at COP30 would launch in early 2026 a UNFCCC-led consultation on culture and climate. This could result in the tabling and adoption at COP31 of the first ever UNFCCC Work Plan on Culture.

This 20-month advocacy campaign to secure a JWD at COP30 is known as the “**Dubai to Baku to Belém Action Plan for Culture at the UNFCCC**” or **D-BAP**.

Discussions in 2024 surrounding the JWD idea and the SB Culture Workshops to be held earlier in 2025 will simultaneously create outputs that can help fill the GST Culture Cap (see below) and leverage culture-based climate action to support more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) due in late 2025.

Ultimately, adoption of the JWD at COP30 (as well as the preparation of NDCs) is a function of the national governments that are parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement, while the conduct of the resulting consultation and the drafting of the work plan is an intergovernmental process under the direction of UNFCCC subsidiary bodies. At the same time, non-state actors¹ are crucial to all aspects of the Plan as well to the ultimate impact of culture-based climate action. **The Scoping Paper conceives of D-BAP as a plan taken forward by national governments and non-State actors alike.**

D-BAP envisions (1) the Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action (“GFCBCA”) as the key platform for coordination among national governments and (2) the *Global Call to Put Cultural Heritage, Arts and Creative Industries at the Heart of Climate Action* campaign organised by the Climate Heritage Network Culture at COP Working Group (the “Global Call”) as the key platforms for coordination among non-state actors. This Scoping Paper outlines general aims and strategies but

¹ The term “non-state actor” is commonly used in the UNFCCC arena to refer to organisations and individuals that are not affiliated with or funded by the national government but may have significant political influence. This includes civil society, business and sub-national governments.

does not try to delineate functions and capabilities between national governments and non-state actors. Developing a working modality for day-to-day coordination between the Global Call and the GFCBCA and its co-chairs Brazil and UAE **is of paramount importance**.

Potential framing for D-BAP:

150 Word Version: To get on track to meeting Paris Agreement goals, we must urgently unlock the power of culture-based climate action to help people imagine and realise low-carbon, just, climate resilient futures. The Dubai to Baku to Belém Action Plan for Culture at the UNFCCC (D-BAP) aims to create a global policy framework for unlocking this power by securing the adoption at COP30 of a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action decision (JWD). This JWD would launch a one-year UNFCCC consultation on culture and climate action that would lay the foundation for building the missing cultural pillar of climate change response through the adoption at COP31 of the first-ever UNFCCC Work Plan on Culture. This would be preceded earlier in 2025 by culture workshops held by the UNFCCC subsidiary bodies which could inform the discussion of the JWD at COP30 while also providing immediate support for using culture-based strategies to enhance ambition in new national climate commitments (NDCs) due in 2025.

600 Word Version: COP28 in Dubai, UAE delivered the most significant outcome for culture in COP history. Successes included the launch of the national government advocacy block known as the **Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action** under the leadership of Brazil and UAE, and the robust inclusion of cultural heritage and traditional knowledge in the **Global Goal on Adaptation**.

The culture successes at COP28 were supported by an unprecedented mobilisation of non-state actors that saw over 1,500 organisations and leaders sign the [Global Call to Put Cultural Heritage, Arts and Creative Industries at the Heart of Climate Action](#). In the Global Call, artists and cultural voices from across the globe are uniting to call for climate negotiators at the COPs to enable culture to contribute fully to climate solutions. The Secretariat for the Global Call campaign is hosted by the Climate Heritage Network with the support of Europa Nostra, Julie's Bicycle and the Petra National Trust.

Unfortunately, this mobilisation came too late to influence COP28's premier decision, the Global Stocktake (GST). The GST's omission of any reference to the socio-cultural enablers of transformative climate action creates a "GST Culture Gap" that will undermine its effectiveness to guide more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) in 2025 -- if not urgently filled.

The GST Culture Gap is indicative of a systemic failure in climate planning and policy to engage with the historical and cultural systems that support the current fossil fuel economy and the values, cosmovisions and ancestral wisdom that are their counterpoints, as well as the socio-cultural enablers of and barriers to transformative climate action.

To flip this paradigm while building on the successes of COP28, advocates from across the world have launched the "Dubai to Baku to Belém Action Plan for Culture at the UNFCCC" (D-BAP) to secure the adoption of a **Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action Decision (JWD)** at COP30. A JWD would create a path to bolster global climate response by unlocking the power of culture-based climate action to help people imagine and realise low-carbon, just, climate resilient futures.

The D-BAP Campaign for a JWD will leverage the collective reach of the Group of Friends and the Global Call Campaign in order to secure a JWD at COP30 in Brazil. This JWD would in turn launch a consultation on culture and climate by the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies in 2026. That consultation

could lead to the adoption at COP31 of the first-ever UNFCCC Work Plan on Culture, at last firmly anchoring attention to the socio-cultural dimensions of the climate crisis in the work of the UNFCCC.

In order to see a JWD adopted at COP30, it is critical to secure inclusion in one of the final decisions taken at COP29 (being held in Baku, Azerbaijan in November 2024) of a request that the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI) hold one or more workshops in 2025 to consider issues related to culture and heritage, including at their 62nd session, with the aim of exchanging views.

These culture workshops could result in a recommendation that COP30 adopt a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action Decision. Critically, the timing of these workshops will also allow for the dissemination of information and ideas on culture-based strategies in time to enhance ambition in new national climate commitments (NDCs) due in 2025, thus helping to fill the GST Culture Gap.

D-BAP partners will work closely with the UNFCCC and its subsidiary bodies; the COP28, 29 and 30 Presidencies; climate scientists; national governments; and non-state actors, including artists; cultural institutions; civil society, local and regional governments; youth; universities and research organisations; and design businesses and creative industries.

The Path to Putting Culture at the Heart of Climate Action

A basic chronology of D-BAP is as follows:

- COP28 (December 2023): Launch of a new Group of Friends of Culture-Based Climate Action at the UNFCCC, an international coalition of UNFCCC Member States aimed at building political momentum for culture-based climate action.
- 2024: Work with the GFCBCA and other allies to build the case for a Joint Work on Culture and Climate Action decision (JWD).
- COP29 (11-22 Nov 2024, Baku): Hold Culture Ministerial/GFCBCA meeting. Secure inclusion in a decision already tabled at COP29 of a request that the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (SBSTA) hold one or more workshops to consider issues related to culture and heritage, including at its 62nd session (Bonn 2025). **Sample language can be found at the end of this document.**
- 2025: One or more SBSTA/SBI Workshops to exchange views on culture, heritage and climate change, resulting in a recommendation to COP30 (proposing a JWD), while also working in real time to leverage culture-based climate action to achieve more ambitious NDCs due by COP30.
- COP30 (Nov 2025, Belém): Tabling and adoption of a JWD. Submission by nations of new NDCs bolstered by culture-based climate action strategies. Hold Culture Ministerial/GFCBCA meeting.
- 2026: UNFCCC consultation on culture and climate action launched by the JWD, engaging national governments and non-state actors, supporting drafting of a UNFCCC Work Plan on Culture.
- COP31: Adoption of a historic, first-ever UNFCCC Work Plan on Culture.

Sample language for inclusion in a Decision at COP29 Requesting Culture Workshop(s) in 2025, laying the foundation for adoption of a JWD at COP30

16 June 2024

__. Requests the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice to consider issues related to culture and heritage at its sixty-second session, with the aim of exchanging views and The Conference of the Parties adopting a decision on this matter at its [COP30] session;

__. Invites Parties and admitted observer organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 5 march 2025, their views on the issues referred to in paragraph __ above;

__. Requests the secretariat to compile the submissions referred to in paragraph __ above by Parties into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at its sixty-first session.

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