

COP31

SUSTAINABILITY

POLICY



Dialogue, Consensus, Action

31st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations
Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP31)
| **Republic of Türkiye**



1. Purpose

This Sustainability Policy sets out the core sustainability principles and objectives that will guide the planning, delivery, post-event activities and lasting legacy of COP31, to be hosted by Türkiye. The Policy forms part of the COP31 Event Sustainability Management System, which will be established and implemented in alignment with ISO 20121.

COP31 aims to support the effective management of environmental and social impacts, risks and opportunities throughout the event lifecycle, reduce adverse environmental impacts and contribute to Türkiye's social and economic sustainability priorities.

This approach takes into account internationally recognized sustainability frameworks, including the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, and is guided by the principles of inclusivity, accessibility, transparency, accountability and continuous improvement.

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* Sustainable Development Goals



2. Scope

This Policy applies to COP31 activities carried out in Türkiye that fall within the direct or shared operational control of the host country, including pre-event preparations, the main conference, side events and post-conference activities.

Event venues, local transportation, logistics, accommodation, catering services and supply chain activities will be addressed in line with the host country's authority and operational control. International travel undertaken by participants, activities carried out independently by delegations and third-party activities outside the direct management of the COP31 organization do not fall within the host country's direct operational control. In these areas, COP31 aims to influence outcomes through information, guidance, collaboration and voluntary data sharing.

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Obligations applicable to suppliers, contractors, subcontractors and other third parties will be implemented where applicable, through relevant tender documents, technical specifications, contracts, accreditation conditions or other arrangements.

This Policy is an administrative policy document intended to guide the COP31 organization. It does not, by itself, create any new international, financial or private law commitment for the Republic of Türkiye or other relevant parties, nor should it be interpreted as modifying or expanding Türkiye's existing international obligations or Nationally Determined Contribution. Implementation of the Policy will be carried out in accordance with applicable legislation, applicable international obligations, decisions of competent authorities, allocated budgets and required permits.



3. Sustainability Commitments

3.1. Climate Action and Emissions Management

COP31 aims to measure greenhouse gas emissions associated with conference-related activities, prioritize emissions reductions at source and report results transparently.

A greenhouse gas inventory covering Scope 1, Scope 2 and relevant Scope 3 emissions will be developed, including major sources such as event venues, accommodation, local transportation, international travel, logistics, catering and waste. Inventory boundaries, data and methodologies used, and material data limitations will be clearly defined.

Measurable and feasible emissions reduction objectives for the operational scope of COP31 will be developed with reference to the Paris Agreement and Türkiye’s Nationally Determined Contribution. These objectives will apply only to the defined operational and reporting boundaries of COP31.

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Priority will be given to energy efficiency, renewable energy use where appropriate, lower-emission local transportation, efficient logistics, digital coordination, responsible procurement and waste prevention.

Carbon removal or offsetting mechanisms may only be considered for residual emissions remaining after technically and operationally feasible reduction measures have been assessed and subject to the approval of the competent authorities. Where carbon credits are used, environmental integrity criteria such as traceability, prevention of double counting and independent verification will be taken into account.

Claims such as “carbon neutral”, “zero emissions” or similar environmental claims may only be used where the relevant scope, calculation methodology, emissions reduction results, residual emissions and verification approach are clearly demonstrated.

3.2. Circular Economy and Resource Efficiency

COP31 aims to integrate circular economy principles throughout the event lifecycle by preventing waste generation, increasing reuse, supporting recycling and appropriate recovery practices, and improving resource efficiency.

In line with Türkiye’s Zero Waste approach and applicable legislation, waste will be separated at source and appropriately collected, transported, recovered or disposed of. Waste performance will be monitored through defined indicators, including the reduction of waste sent to landfill.

Subject to health, hygiene, safety, accessibility and technical requirements, COP31 will seek to prevent or reduce the use of unnecessary single-use plastics. Preference will be given to reusable, recycled and recyclable products, while digital documentation and ticketing will be supported to reduce paper use.

Within catering services, the provision of local, seasonal and plant-based options will be considered, and priority will be given to preventing food waste. The safe redistribution of edible surplus food and the recovery of unavoidable organic waste will be considered in line with available infrastructure and applicable legislation.

Event-related water consumption will be monitored where feasible, and water efficiency will be supported through water-saving equipment and efficient practices in cleaning, catering and landscaping.

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3.3. Sustainable Operations and Responsible Procurement

COP31 aims to integrate sustainability criteria into operational activities and procurement processes within the framework of applicable public procurement legislation.

Environmental, labour, human rights, occupational health and safety, and ethical conduct criteria for suppliers and contractors will be reflected in relevant tender and contractual documents, taking into account the nature and risk level of the procurement.

Risk-based sustainability screening may be applied to relevant suppliers, while additional documentation, verification or site checks may be requested for higher-risk suppliers where necessary. Identified non-compliances will be monitored through defined processes and appropriate corrective actions may be required.

Opportunities to support the participation of local businesses, small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and women-led enterprises in procurement processes will be considered within the instruments permitted under public procurement legislation and the principle of equal treatment.

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Where relevant to the nature of the product or service, environmental labels, sustainability certifications or equivalent evidence may be considered in the assessment of procurement criteria.

Participant services will support sustainability, where operationally feasible, through measures such as access to digital information, water refill points, reusable products, waste separation systems and information on sustainable transport options.



3.4. Accessibility, Inclusivity and Equitable Participation

COP31 aims to create an inclusive and accessible conference environment that does not result in discrimination.

Event venues, transportation and information services, and digital platforms within the host country's operational control will be planned with reference to applicable accessibility legislation, relevant standards and universal design principles.

Accessibility needs will be assessed before the event, reasonable accommodations will be planned to address identified gaps, and information on accessible services will be shared with participants.

Key event information and official communications will be provided in accessible formats and, where appropriate, supported through measures such as captioning, sign language support, alternative text, accessible document formats and physical wayfinding tools.

Meaningful participation by persons with disabilities, youth, women, local communities, delegates from Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States, and other underrepresented international participants will be encouraged. References to "Indigenous Peoples" relate solely to the terminology used within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the United Nations system.

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3.5. Health, Safety and Well-being

COP31's approach to health, safety and well-being will be implemented in accordance with applicable occupational health and safety, public health, disaster and emergency legislation and within the responsibilities of the competent authorities.

Necessary risk assessments, training, site controls and incident reporting processes will be applied to workers, contractors and volunteers during the set-up, event and dismantling phases.

Public health risks affecting participants and local communities will be assessed in coordination with relevant authorities, and appropriate preparedness and response arrangements will be established for medical, environmental, security-related or disaster-related emergencies.

Climate-sensitive health risks, including heat stress, extreme weather and air quality, will be considered as part of operational and health planning. Measures such as alerts and information provision, access to drinking water, rest areas and adjustments to activities may be implemented where necessary.

Working arrangements and appropriate support mechanisms that contribute to the physical and psychological well-being of staff, volunteers and participants will be considered in line with identified needs and available service capacity.

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3.6. Collaboration, Stakeholder Engagement and Capacity Building

COP31 aims to support collaboration among governments, businesses, financial institutions, academia, civil society organizations and local communities.

Relevant stakeholder groups will be identified, and engagement processes will be planned across the preparation, implementation and post-event phases. Stakeholder input will be appropriately recorded and considered as part of sustainability management and continuous improvement processes.

Conference communications, Green Zone programmes, exhibitions, workshops and other participant-facing activities will be used to support climate awareness and knowledge sharing.

COP31 may organize capacity-building activities for relevant stakeholders in areas such as sustainable event management, circular economy, climate action and inclusive participation, and may make selected guidance documents, checklists and tools developed through the event publicly available.

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Knowledge exchange and collaboration between institutions in Türkiye and international stakeholders will be encouraged, while the perspectives of youth, women, persons with disabilities, local communities and participants from developing countries will be supported in relevant programming.



3.7. Transparency, Accountability and Effective Governance

COP31 will be guided by the principles of transparency, accountability and integrity in sustainability management.

Subject to approval by the competent authorities and the existing organizational structure, the establishment of a Sustainability Working Group is envisaged to coordinate implementation of the Policy and monitor sustainability performance. The role of the Working Group will be limited to coordination, monitoring, review of data and performance, tracking risks and opportunities and developing improvement recommendations. Decision-making and approval powers assigned to other authorities by law or institutional arrangements will remain unchanged.

Progress against sustainability objectives will be monitored through defined indicators and methodologies and will be communicated publicly where appropriate. Areas in which targets are not achieved, material deviations and data limitations will also be considered in line with the principle of transparency.

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Appropriate records will be maintained to support the accuracy and traceability of publicly disclosed sustainability information, and selected indicators may be subject to independent review or assurance where appropriate.

COP31 will apply a zero-tolerance approach to bribery, corruption, fraud and conflicts of interest in conference-related activities. Existing or newly established mechanisms will be used to allow suspected ethical violations to be reported confidentially.



3.8. Positive Legacy and Long-Term Impact

COP31 aims to support environmental, social and economic benefits that extend beyond the conference itself.

Potential legacy initiatives that may continue after COP31 may be assessed against criteria including environmental and social impacts, feasibility, costs, financing needs, maintenance requirements, biodiversity risks and institutional ownership.

Potential initiatives may include urban greening and afforestation, restoration of natural habitats, clean energy applications, climate innovation and knowledge-sharing projects.

No legacy initiative will be presented as a confirmed COP31 commitment unless the relevant institutions, required permits, budget and financing sources, and implementation responsibilities have been clarified.

The performance of legacy initiatives will be assessed through project-specific indicators and monitoring arrangements.

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3.9. Personal Data Protection and Data Governance

Personal data processing activities carried out in connection with COP31 will be conducted in accordance with applicable data protection legislation, including Law No. 6698 on the Protection of Personal Data.

Personal data will be processed only for specific, explicit and legitimate purposes and only to the extent necessary and proportionate. Relevant data protection responsibilities, access rights, retention periods and transfer conditions will be defined in advance.

Health data, disability-related information and other special categories of personal data will only be processed where necessary and in accordance with the additional safeguards required under applicable legislation.

Public sustainability reporting will respect personal data protection requirements and will use anonymized or aggregated data wherever possible.

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4. Management of Targets and Indicators

A COP31 Sustainability Targets and Indicators Matrix will be developed to support implementation of the sustainability objectives set out in this Policy and to monitor performance.

Indicators will be defined together with relevant baselines, targets, data sources, calculation methodologies, responsible units, monitoring frequencies and verification approaches. Quantitative targets will be finalized based on assessments by the relevant technical and operational teams and the adequacy of available data.

Performance results will be monitored regularly, and material deviations will be assessed through sustainability management and reporting processes.

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5. Policy Review and Stakeholder Feedback

This Policy will be reviewed regularly to reflect operational needs, changes in the organizational structure, stakeholder feedback, developments in applicable legislation and evolving good practices in sustainable event management.

Participant feedback relating to transportation, digital tools, event venues, accessibility and sustainability measures will be collected through appropriate channels and considered as part of continuous improvement processes.

An accessible sustainability feedback mechanism will be established to enable stakeholders to submit views, recommendations, requests and concerns regarding implementation of the Policy.

Feedback will be assessed through appropriate processes, personal data and confidential information will be protected, and relevant findings will contribute to future reviews of the Policy.

Stakeholders may submit sustainability-related feedback through the following e-mail address:

sustainability@cop31.tr

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Contact

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