



## Making the TAFF choice

Submission to the UNFCCC COP30 Presidency Roadmap on the Transition Away from Fossil Fuels in a Just, Orderly, and Equitable Manner

30 March 2026

The 28<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) saw the agreement on calling on Parties to contribute to “transitioning away from fossil fuels [TAFF] in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science”. It was branded as a historic decision and the beginning of the end of the fossil fuel era.

However, there has been no significant follow-through with this decision since, as many nations continue to avoid initiating the necessary shift away from coal, oil, and gas. This ignores the assessment from the first Global Stocktake, which also concluded at COP28, that national mitigation pledges are insufficient to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures.

Their impacts are disproportionately inflicted on vulnerable countries like the Philippines; without scaling up TAFF actions, losses and damages are likely to increase across different sectors – agriculture, fisheries, public health, among others. Recent years exceeding the 1.5°C limit under the Paris Agreement reaffirms the urgency and necessity of commencing such a transition.

The current war in the Middle East has also caused much higher oil prices, inflation in market goods, and disruptions in transport and power systems worldwide, with fossil fuel giants profiteering from wars and conflicts<sup>1</sup> at the expense of lives and peace. This unfortunate situation provides a glimpse into a future that awaits the world if it continues to maintain a status quo dominated by fossil fuel interests.

With this context, the initiative of the COP30 Presidency to formulate a roadmap for TAFF is welcomed. Yet it cannot be just another political declaration or a mere motherhood statement; it must provide a clear timeline for phasing out fossil fuels, with accompanying strategic goals, quantitative and qualitative targets, actionable tasks, and guidance for roles of all actors and stakeholders, aligned with attaining the goals of the Paris Agreement. It must also be aligned with the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which recommends that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions must be lowered by 43% by 2030 and net-zero emissions must be achieved by 2050 for the world to achieve the 1.5°C limit.

As representatives of the most climate-vulnerable sectors and communities in the Philippines and based on our collective experiences and observations at the multilateral, national, and subnational levels, **Aksyon Klima Pilipinas**<sup>2</sup> respectfully submit the following inputs to the development of the COP30 Presidency TAFF Roadmap.

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<sup>1</sup> Ambrose (2026)

<sup>2</sup> **Aksyon Klima Pilipinas** is the Philippines’s leading civil society coordination network for climate action, aiming to build campaigning capacities and leadership among its partner communities, NGOs, and the academe on climate and environment-related policies and issues.

## ***Lessons from the Philippine context***

The Philippine government is among the many that have refused to endorse the TAFF Roadmap at COP30, viewing it as potentially restrictive to the country's pursuit of energy security and economic stability vis-à-vis its preferred path for JET and citing a lack of guaranteed funding for participating Parties. It also views mitigation as a function of adaptation, prioritizing the latter as its anchor strategy on addressing the climate crisis given its low contribution to global climate pollution.

On one hand, there are financial justifications for this refusal. The Philippines has received less than one percent of the USD72 billion required for implementing its 2021 NDC<sup>3</sup>. Most of the Official Development Assistance it received on climate change mitigation has also been through loans, which diverts resources towards debt-servicing instead of being used for implementing climate and development programs<sup>4</sup>.

Yet the Philippine government's approach to enacting energy transition at the domestic front is filled with signs of policy incoherence, fragmented coordination, and weak implementation, as seen through the following examples:

- In its proposed 2026 NDC, among the planned solutions for the energy sector is on "fossil fuel transition" from coal and oil, integrated into accelerated RE development, promoting gas as a "transition fuel", and nuclear energy generation. Despite such branding for gas, there is neither a defined timeline or a set of targets across timescales for its eventual phaseout, as of this writing.
- The Philippine government continues to employ a technology-neutral approach that provides efficient and reliable electricity that is also the least-cost option for consumers. However, not only does this not fully account for negative environmental and social externalities that unjustly make fossil fuels relatively cheaper; it has also allowed for non-RE alternatives such as nuclear and waste-to-energy (WTE) to be favored, framed towards a diversified and secure energy mix.
- Despite having a national law promoting the development of RE since 2008, the share of RE in the energy mix has actually decreased since then.
- The enforcement of environmental and social safeguards accompanying energy-related projects have also been poor at different phases of the project life cycle – from proposed WTE projects potentially displacing thousands of people<sup>5</sup> to extracting energy transition minerals causing environmental destruction<sup>6</sup> to proposed RE projects potentially harming protected areas<sup>7</sup>.
- The Philippines remains lacking in defined decarbonization pathways aligned with the 1.5°C target to guide the formulation or potential implementation of its NDC or any other TAFF-related or mitigation strategy. Coupled with the lack of sufficient provision of means of implementation, this would effectively prevent the country from achieving significant mitigation.
- The impacts of these policy gaps are also evident in other facets of development, such as public health. Air pollution remains a leading environmental risk factor in the country, contributing to premature deaths and increased costs on public health.

These examples from the Philippine context show why justice must be at the heart of any TAFF decision or action. Thus, we emphasize that **transitioning away from fossil fuels at any scale must be anchored on enabling just energy transition**. This is the framing with which we present our following asks.

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<sup>3</sup> Republic of the Philippines (2025)

<sup>4</sup> Department of Economy, Planning, and Development (2025)

<sup>5</sup> Baclig (2025)

<sup>6</sup> Climate Rights International (2025)

<sup>7</sup> Harme (2024)

## **Guiding principles**

In addition to being aligned with the intended goals of the Paris Agreement and evidence-based, most notably with the findings of the IPCC on pursuing decarbonization, the COP30 Presidency TAFF Roadmap must be guided by the following principles<sup>8</sup>:

- **Renewables-focused.** The transition must lead towards the growth and development of renewable energy (RE) resources, especially on indigenous sources. The expansion of pollutive energy sources and promotion of WTE, nuclear energy, and artificial carbon capture, use, and storage technologies as 'climate-friendly' solutions must be rejected to prevent hindering RE development.
- **Peoples-centered, rights-based.** The roadmap must account for the differing national and subnational contexts, including the needs of the most vulnerable populations (i.e., Indigenous Peoples, women, youth, economically- and culturally-marginalized, diverse gender identities). It must be formulated in such a manner that respects, protects, and upholds human rights, especially those related to affected Indigenous Peoples and local communities.
- **Ecologically-sound.** The roadmap must uphold as priorities the protection of ecosystems and biodiversity, respecting the rights of nature, and avoidance of the disruption of existing ecosystem services that benefit nearby local communities and Indigenous Peoples. All TAFF-related projects should avoid areas of critical biodiversity importance and/or lands owned by Indigenous Peoples, respecting the latter's right to Free, Prior, and Informed Consent.
- **Democratized and secure.** Energy is a common good, which means all stakeholders have the right to access, use, and manage energy resources sustainably. Duty-bearers must ensure that sufficient and appropriate spaces are allocated for the meaningful participation of stakeholders in all phases of TAFF-related projects, with the proper enforcement of the necessary safeguards to guarantee a safe and secure mode of participation in relevant decision-making processes.
- **Transparent and accountable.** Actors of strategies under the roadmap must act with the highest standards of transparency and accountability, while respecting applicable multilateral and national legal frameworks and policies. Strategies under the roadmap must also be coherent with existing decisions and processes under the UNFCCC, with these serving as the minimum from which the roadmap's implementation can be based
- **Equitable.** The roadmap must reflect the principle of common but differentiated responsibility and respective capabilities, with a recognition of historical responsibility and the nationally-determined nature of developing country-level approaches, and consideration for subnational needs and priorities. This must include guarantees from developed countries to provide predictable, accessible, and adequate finance that do not further burden developing nations with higher debt that takes away their capacity to pursue other development goals.
- **Co-beneficial.** Implementing mitigation solutions would not only impact the attainment of the 1.5°C limit goal, but also contribute to achieving the other goals related to enhanced adaptation and financial flows leading towards transformative sustainable development. Added with the pragmatic view of the current landscape of global climate finance, the roadmap's strategies must account for the co-benefits that TAFF would provide for other development goals, including on poverty eradication, food and water security, and significant public health gains such as reduced air pollution, lower disease burden, and decreased healthcare costs.

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<sup>8</sup> The following principles are based on the "[JET Manifesto](#)", a set of common calls and principles among participating Philippine civil society and people's organizations about just energy transition in the Philippine context.

## **Recommendations**

The COP30 Presidency TAFF Roadmap must cover the following thematic areas:

- **Addressing the full life cycle of fossil fuels.** The roadmap must directly tackle fossil fuel production and consumption to enable reductions of greenhouse gas emissions. It must also account for the upstream, midstream, and downstream phases of their life cycle as part of just transition strategies to be implemented at the multilateral and national scales. Emphasis on any phase or which fossil fuels will be phased out more urgently will depend on national contexts.
- **Transformation towards renewables, energy efficiency, and conservation.** Reducing dependence on coal, oil, and gas must be coupled with economy-wide decarbonization measures responding to supply and demand issues. These include building indigenous and decentralized RE power plants, upgrading energy grids, transmission, and storage systems, promoting energy efficiency and conservation measures, and promoting cleaner fuels as part of transition.
- **Ensuring accessible, secure, and affordable energy.** As a modern basic necessity that drives the pursuit of individual or collective development, energy must be accessible to all populations, in both supply and cost. This must remain as a primary consideration in all national interventions on transforming the energy sector.
- **Addressing energy transition minerals.** Recommended strategies and actions must include enhancing the circularity of said minerals to reduce demand for extraction, minimizing generated waste, avoiding pollution on nearby ecosystems and harm on communities, and implementing robust demand-side management strategies to reduce overall energy consumption.
- **Enhancing cleanup and circularity.** Interventions must cover safe decommissioning and removal of fossil fuel infrastructure and, in the long run, RE infrastructure. Emphasizing circularity in these actions would also reduce demand for raw materials and corresponding ecological footprints, while also promoting ecological health and protecting nearby communities.
- **Adequate, just, and predictable financing.** Developing countries must receive the necessary finance, technologies, and capacity-building from developed nations to fully implement decades-long JET-related strategies, prioritizing the provision of non-debt-creating public finance; these include support for developing relevant plans, such as NDCs, national Just Transition Frameworks, and Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies. Unlocking private sector financing may also come through investments and subsidies, including as part of blended finance strategies, depending on national circumstances and strategies.
- **Presenting the true cost of fossil fuels.** All fossil fuel subsidies must be eliminated and instead redirected towards promoting RE technologies and other national decarbonization strategies, especially within developing countries. The roadmap must support implementation of carbon pricing and other mechanisms that reflect environmental and social externalities caused by fossil fuels into their true cost to level the field and further promote JET.
- **Protecting human rights and safeguards.** Human rights must be upheld and protected throughout the implementation of JET-related strategies, especially those specific to Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Environmental and social safeguards must also be respected and enforced for the benefit of the marginalized sectors and communities, including measures related to economic diversification, social dialogues, workers' reskilling, preventing false solutions, and strict enforcement of transparency and accountability measures across all levels of governance.
- **Whole-of-society approach.** All stakeholders, especially the most climate-vulnerable groups and environmental defenders, must have safe and enabling spaces for participation in decision-making and implementation processes, from the multilateral to the subnational levels.

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