

Bringing urban health to the table at COP30: A guide for public health researchers and practitioners

How do “COPs” work?

What role does public health research play?

How can researchers translate health evidence to drive climate action?

What are COPs?

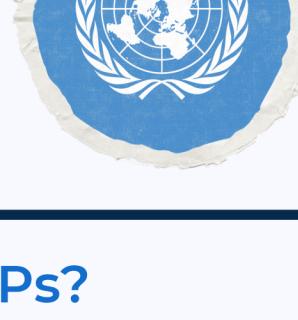
A “Conference of the Parties” (COP) refers to a meeting (“conference”) of the countries, or governments, (“parties”) who have signed an international agreement, convention, or treaty. “COPs” take place within the context of agreements surrounding many topics.

The **United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)** holds annual COPs to

negotiate global actions to address climate change.

The 30th annual Conference of the Parties (“COP30”)

will take place in November 2025, hosted by Brazil.



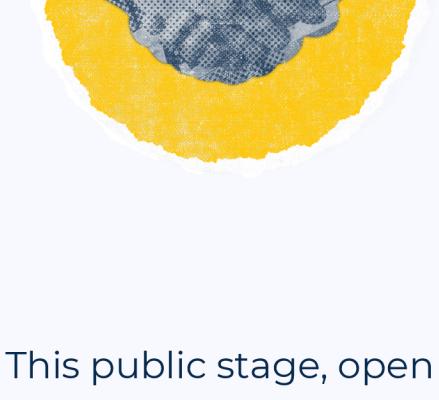
What Happens at UNFCCC COPs?



Preparatory sessions and “Pre-COPs”: COP agendas are developed during **preparatory meetings** hosted by the COP presidency (host country), and convene official country representatives, content experts, and other actors over the year or two prior to each Conference. **Pre-COPs** are informal meetings that traditionally take place in the month or so before each COP.

● Blue Zone

Core negotiation: Delegates of the Parties participate in official sessions of the governing bodies, and **in open and closed negotiating meetings**. Delegates can include government officials from relevant ministries; experts and scientists; and civil society organization representatives. Sometimes, this negotiation results in a binding agreement (e.g., Kyoto Protocol, Paris Agreement*), which must then be ratified by individual governments. More often, the Parties agree to some form of public declaration.



● Blue Zone
“High-level COP”: This public stage, open to delegates and observers, includes speeches by heads of state, announcements of coalitions, public denunciations, or calls to action. Observers can include intergovernmental & nongovernmental organizations, United Nations and related agencies, as well as media representatives.

● Green Zone

“Third COP”: Additional activities include side events, pavilions, panel talks, presentations, and protests, where participants can include scientists, NGOs, private sector representatives, and activists.



● “Blue zone” activities: Access restricted to accredited delegates only. Formal negotiations, country pavilions, and official side events take place and are managed by the UNFCCC.

● “Green zone” activities: Open to the public, managed by the host country, includes additional events, workshops, and exhibitions by private sector and NGO representatives.

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