



AE4RIA at COP30: Advancing Systems Innovation for a Just and Climate-Resilient Future

The **30th Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC** (COP30) convened from November 10 to 21, 2025, in **Belém**, Pará, marking the first-ever COP held in the Amazon region.

With tens of thousands of delegates from governments, science, civil society, Indigenous communities, youth, and the private sector, COP30 became one of the largest climate gatherings in history.

COP30 concluded with an agreement to triple funding for developing nations to protect vulnerable populations from escalating climate impacts and to enhance support for workers and communities in the transition to clean energy. "COP30 has delivered progress," UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated, while warning that "the gap between where we are and what science demands remains dangerously wide." He underscored that keeping global temperature rise below 1.5°C requires deep and rapid emissions cuts, anchored in clear and credible plans to move away from fossil fuels and accelerate the shift toward clean energy. The outcome documents—collectively referred to as the Belém Political Package—capture these commitments and the broader ambition to strengthen climate action across sectors.

AE4RIA & UNFCCC GLOBAL INNOVATION HUB: STRATEGIC CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE COP30 AGENDA

AE4RIA network—affiliated with the Athens University of Economics and Business, the Athena Research Center, and the SDSN Global Climate Hub (SDSN GCH)—played a central role in advancing systems innovation and science-based policymaking at COP30, in close collaboration with the UNFCCC Global Innovation Hub (UGIH).

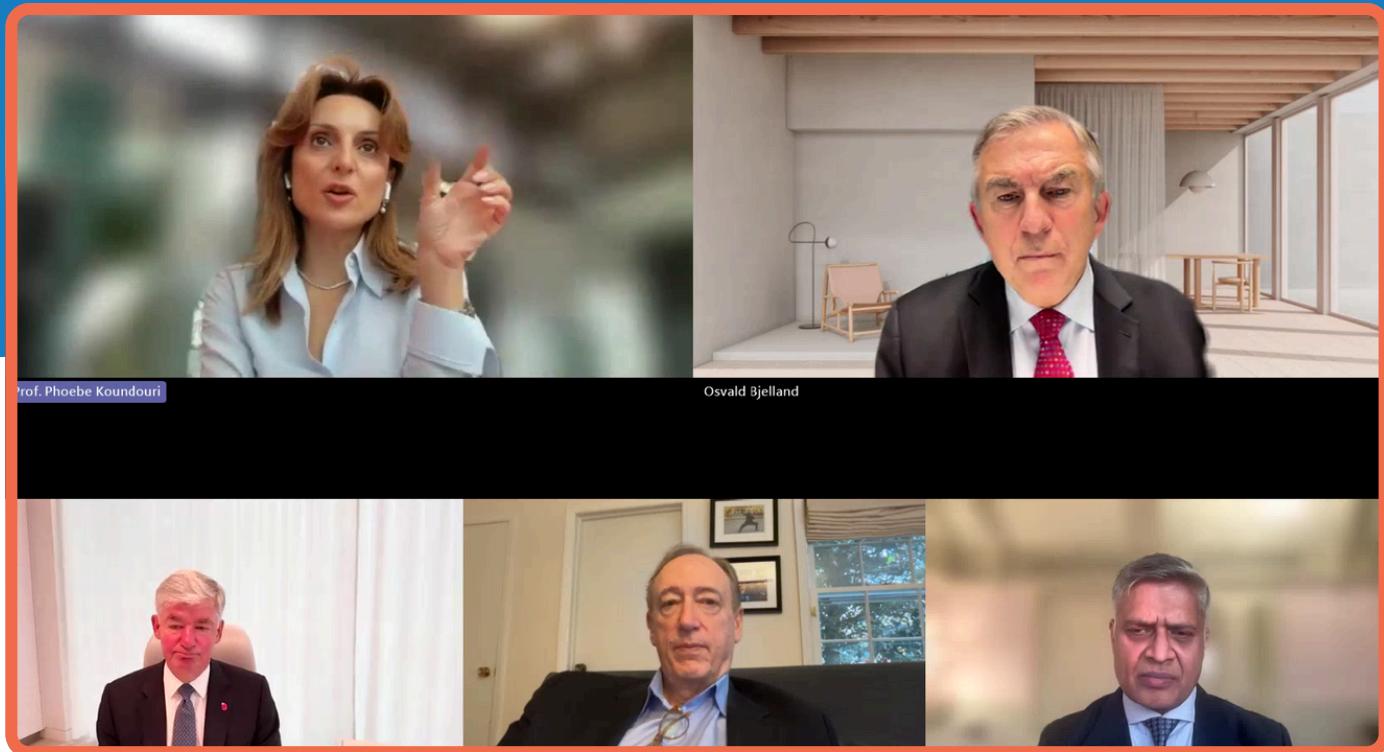
Earlier this year, AE4RIA and SDSN GCH formalized a milestone partnership with UNFCCC UGIGH to accelerate climate neutrality and resilience through systems-based, science-driven innovation. This partnership mobilizes global innovation ecosystems—across cities, rural regions, and international networks—to deliver integrated pathways for sustainable development and climate justice.

At COP30, UGIGH hosted its fifth global series of high-level dialogues on transformative climate and sustainability innovation. Key topics included systemic transformation, innovation governance, digital tools and AI, climate-health interlinkages, innovative finance, youth inclusion, and equitable climate solutions.



STRATEGIC GLOBAL MOBILISATION OF INVESTMENT FOR DEVELOPMENT & CLIMATE – LAUNCHING A WORLD INVESTMENT PLAN

UGIH COP30 DIALOGUES



**10 NOVEMBER 2025 | SPECIAL EVENTS ROOM TAPAJÓS, BLUE ZONE AREA,
UNFCCC PLATFORM (HYBRID)**

This session featured the launch of a World Investment Plan developed by Force for Good, which outlines an investment agenda that profitably addresses both development and climate change by turning needs into markets. It identifies US\$123 trillion in assets across ten priority investment areas. The plan identifies how to catalyze a “Big Bang” of sustainable growth through 2050 and beyond, turning needs into markets.

During her intervention, Prof. Koundouri underscored the need for a coherent global financial architecture, systemic investment alignment, and science-based strategies to ensure a just and inclusive transition.

[Watch the video recording](#)

Panelists

- Ketan Patel, Chairman, Force for Good Foundation (Moderator)
- Jon Symonds, Chairman, GSK; Former Chairman, HSBC Bank PLC
- Prof. Phoebe Koundouri, AUEB & University of Cambridge; Chair, AE4RIA; Chair, UN GSDR
- Osvald Bjelland, Founder & Chairman, Origination AS & The Performance Theatre
- Jon Miller, CEO, Integrated Media Co.; Former Chairman & CEO, AOL



USING SCIENCE TO INFORM POLICY: CLIMATE-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT OF THE SENEGAL RIVER BASIN

UGIH COP30 DIALOGUES



10 NOVEMBER 2025 | SPECIAL EVENTS ROOM TAPAJÓS, BLUE ZONE AREA, UNFCCC PLATFORM (HYBRID)

This session explored how science-based evidence and innovation can inform policy, planning, and investment decisions in the Senegal River Basin. The session also highlighted examples where data, models, and participatory science have improved outcomes, and discussed pathways to institutionalize science-policy interfaces for transboundary water governance and regional development.

Prof. Koundouri underscored how Digital Twin technologies can support science-based, collaborative planning for the Senegal River Basin. Building on the innovation workshops in [Athens](#) and [Dakar](#), this joint SDSN-AE4RIA-UNFCCC initiative is co-designing a Digital Twin to enable integrated, climate-resilient management of water, energy, food, and ecosystems

[Watch the video recording](#)

Panelists

- Mohamed Abdel Vetal, High Commissioner, OMVS
- Niokhor Ndour, Secretary General, OMVS
- Prof. Phoebe Koundouri, AUEB & University of Cambridge;Chair, AE4RIA; Chair, UN GSDR
- Ketan Patel, Chair, Force for Good
- Marieke Hood, Executive Director Impact, GESDA
- WarīN K. Flores, Founder & PI, KINRAY HUB
- Massamba Thiouye, Consultant, UNFCCC



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AS A DRIVER OF THE CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

UGIH COP30 DIALOGUES



12 NOVEMBER 2025 | SPECIAL EVENTS ROOM PARANÁ, BLUE ZONE AREA, UNFCCC PLATFORM (HYBRID)

This session examined how AI, data platforms, and digital public goods can unlock faster, fairer, and more accountable pathways to the Sustainable Development Goals. Through a structured debate, the session addressed openness, model governance, and data rights—including Indigenous data sovereignty and safeguards against surveillance harms—while exploring practical strategies for efficient, lower-carbon compute (green data centers, model distillation, hardware-aware design).

In her remarks, Prof. Koundouri highlighted how the SDSN Global Climate Hub is integrating computing and AI into climate modelling, improving model accuracy, speed, and emissions monitoring. She emphasized the need for sustainable computing, open data, strong governance, and interdisciplinary science.

[Watch the video recording](#)

Panelists

- Prof. Yannis Ioannidis, President ACM; Professor, University of Athens (Moderator)
- Prof. Phoebe Koundouri, AUEB & University of Cambridge; Chair, AE4RIA; Chair, UN GSDR
- Prof. Andrew Chien, University of Chicago
- Prof. Virginia Dignum, Umeå University
- Prof. Jayant Haritsa, Indian Institute of Science



DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AS A DRIVER OF THE CLIMATE & SUSTAINABILITY TRANSITION

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This panel introduced the Knowledge Economy Transition 2045 (KE2045), which integrates climate action with the broader structural transformation of the global economy, highlighting the roles of international finance, innovation, and the emerging AI and technology stack. Led by Prof. Dahlan, the session builds directly on his keynote announcement of the KE2045 Initiative at the Pre-COP Conference in Rio on 8 November, and explores how a shift from energy transition alone to a holistic knowledge economy transition can strengthen multilateralism, empower the Global South, and reinforce Brazil's leadership at COP30.

Prof. Koundouri emphasized that while the SDGs offer a robust science-based framework, implementation remains limited, underscoring the need for a global, open-access knowledge platform that combines data, modeling, technology, and finance to support actionable transition pathways.

[Watch the video recording](#)

Panelists

- Prof. Phoebe Koundouri, AUEB & University of Cambridge; Chair, AE4RIA; Chair, UN GSDR
- Prof. Malik Dahlan, Honorary Professor, University of St Andrews; Lead of the KE2045 Initiative
- Massamba Thioye, Consultant, UNFCCC
- Dr. Simona Marinescu, Senior Advisor UN; Economy Counsel, International Data Center Authority
- Mehdi Paryavi, Chairman & CEO, International Data Center Authority
- Prof. Jim Falk, University of Melbourne; Emeritus Professor, University of Wollongong

Looking Ahead

Through its deepening collaboration with the **UNFCCC Global Innovation Hub**, **AE4RIA** and the **SDSN Global Climate Hub** will continue driving system-level transformation, actionable climate pathways, and global innovation networks into 2026 and beyond. Upcoming collaborations will expand partnerships with foundations, private sector innovators, governments, and academic institutions worldwide.

AE4RIA remains committed to advancing systemic, holistic, and science-based climate solutions and to supporting global partners in accelerating the transition toward a climate-neutral and resilient future.

