

## CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT MINISTERIAL 2025

COP30 Side Event

### THE GOVERNMENT OF VANUATU AND THE CLIMATE AND DEVELOPMENT MINISTERIAL: OPERATIONALISING COUNTRY PLATFORMS FOR ADAPTATION FOR SIDS AND LDCs.

10th November 2025 | Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion, Blue Zone, Belem, Brazil |  
1200-1250 | Open event

#### SUMMARY

The Government of Vanuatu and the Climate and Development Ministerial convened a panel discussion on the first day of COP30 at the Moana Blue Pacific Pavilion to help sustain the momentum from the fifth Climate and Development Ministerial into COP30 in Belém. It comprised:

- Mr David Gibson, Director General, Ministry of Climate Change - opening remarks
- Ricardo Marshall, Director, R2R, Prime Minister's Office, Barbados
- Silvia Manzini, Lead Countries and Partnerships Unit, Adaptation Fund
- Anna, Walters, Deputy Director, Energy, Climate and Environment Strategy and Diplomacy, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Ministry, UK
- Moderator: Dr Christopher Bartlett, Special Climate Adviser, Government of Vanuatu

The discussion brought the most salient take-aways from the Climate and Development Ministerial meeting at Pre-COP to the wider climate community, particularly around operationalising country platforms for adaptation for LDCs and SIDS and the priorities for 2026. Five years in, the C&DM process is delivering an honest, solutions focused dialogue that LDCs and SIDS have been calling for, with the following themes standing out:

- 2025 is a decisive year: adaptation finance is emerging as a political litmus test for a successful COP in Belém.
- Country platforms are gaining real traction: countries are shaping their own investment pathways and using them to bring partners around a single coherent plan.
- Adaptation needs a step-change in scale: with warming trends heading towards 2.3–2.8°C, the limits to adaptation are rapidly approaching and there is a growing [need](#) for finance.
- Grant based finance remains essential: particularly for SIDS and LDCs facing compounding climate and fiscal pressures.
- System reform still matters: from MDBs to climate funds, alignment and coherence across multilateral climate funds, including with the Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage is needed. Equally alignment with resilience and low emissions pathways needs to accelerate.

For COP30, the priority is clear: turn these insights into actions that make climate finance more accessible, predictable and genuinely country led. The forthcoming C&DM Country Platforms Toolkit can serve as a practical enabler — capturing lessons, promoting South–South learning, and connecting countries to technical and financial partners.

2026 will be equally important and both collective and individual action will be crucial. The panellists pointed to their priorities for 2026 including: making adaptation investable and building the detailed evidence base and better understanding of risk to help facilitate; capacity building for national institutions to ensure effective adaptation finance; alignment and coherence across multilateral climate funds including the Adaptation Fund, the Green Climate Fund and Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage; collaboration between national finance institutions and institutional funds; and investment in priority domestic projects such as rainwater harvesting and scaling coral restoration efforts.

The C&DM is a valuable space where vulnerable countries and providers can meet face to face and move towards solution driven outcomes and it welcomes new members.

## **DETAILED DISCUSSION: KEY POINTS**

The panel discussion garnered reactions from participants of the fifth C&DM meeting centred on the three C&DM goals, whilst giving SIDS and LDCs a chance to share their lived experience of leading adaptation-focussed and country-owned programmes.

### **Opening Reflections:**

**David Gibson, Director General, Ministry of Climate Change, Vanuatu** described 2025 as a crucial year for the C&DM process, with a strong focus on LDCs and SIDS. These countries face unique vulnerabilities and depend on accessible climate finance for their survival. The Government of Vanuatu values C&DM as a space where vulnerable countries and providers can meet face to face and move towards solution driven outcomes. The ministerial meeting at Pre-COP highlighted the need for adaptation finance to be more accessible, transparent and integrated into national systems. Adaptation finance is a political litmus test for a successful COP in Belém. The adaptation finance gap is estimated at USD 365 billion per year by 2035. Many countries are proposing new approaches, including country platforms, but to succeed, these platforms must be locally created — not imposed. Donors and financial institutions need to align themselves behind these national systems, to trust our institutions, and to recognise that country leadership is the best form of risk management.

### **Panel discussion:**

The following points came up in discussion and Q&A:

**2025 is a decisive year: adaptation finance is emerging as a political litmus test for a successful COP in Belém:**

- There is a strict limit to adaptation. Beyond 2 degrees warming, some islands will simply disappear.
- This reality is fully acknowledged: adaptation only goes so far before countries face loss and damage. Loss and damage involves loss of life and critical infrastructure.
- SIDS are being asked to invest in global public goods without receiving sufficient grant finance.
- Mitigation must not fall off the agenda: without mitigation, adaptation costs explode. Climate impacts follow physical science, not compassion; adaptation is about responding to a system humans have destabilised. However in practice, climate resilience and low emissions pathways can conflict, especially for countries needing durable materials for infrastructure.

### **Country platforms are gaining real traction:**

- Countries are shaping their own investment pathways and using them to bring partners around a single coherent plan.
- Country platforms are central to building national level responses. National action is the driver of effective adaptation and resilience building. For example, adaptation underpins everything in Barbados' approach. The Bridgetown Initiative seeks to reshape the global financial architecture to mobilise finance for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage. Barbados is investing in rainwater harvesting, advancing a loan with the Caribbean Development Bank, and scaling coral restoration efforts.
- Partners and donor countries have a strong role to play, eg. the UK supported Jamaica's systemic risk assessment, producing heat maps to prioritise infrastructure investments and identify where grants are essential.
- The UK supports a tailored, country led approach that can catalyse long term outcomes.
- Making adaptation investable requires detailed evidence, risk understanding and strong partnerships.
- After COP, IIED will publish a country platform toolkit.
- Countries interested in country platform work are invited to join ongoing C&DM convenings.

### **Adaptation needs a step-change in scale of funding:**

- With warming likely headed towards 2.3 to 2.8 degrees, adaptation is becoming more expensive and less effective, and loss and damage is inevitable.
- The need for finance goes well beyond doubling or tripling adaptation finance called for at COP30.
- Fiscal space is essential for small developing states. If additional finance does not materialise, countries must secure the best possible terms for sourcing other finance.
- Some MDBs are trying to increase balance between mitigation and adaptation lending.
- Article 2.1c alignment is critical: financing must support resilience and low emissions development.

### **Grant based finance and improved access remains essential:**

- Grant based finance is particularly for SIDS and LDCs as they face compounding climate and fiscal pressures.
- The C&DM process has consistently focused on improving access to adaptation finance. As an institutional funder, the Adaptation Fund is fully grant based, with 50 percent of funds directed to SIDS and LDCs. Resource mobilisation is challenging amid global public finance scarcity.
- The Adaptation Fund's grant based model remains essential for LDCs and SIDS. Capacity building for national institutions is core to effective adaptation finance.
- Access to adaptation finance has been a central priority for the UK during its five years as co-chair.
- IIED launched a guide on adaptation finance two years ago and encourages stakeholders to use it.

### **System reform still matters:**

- From MDBs to climate funds, alignment and coherence across multilateral climate funds, including with the Adaptation Fund, Green Climate Fund and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage, is needed. Equally alignment between resilience and low emissions pathways needs to accelerate.
- The Adaptation Fund is exploring a range of sources including voluntary contributions and potential revenues from carbon market mechanisms (Article 6).
- Knowledge sharing and integration across climate finance mechanisms remain essential.
- A more cohesive climate finance system is needed, bringing together public, private and innovative instruments.
- The Adaptation Fund participates in the Multilateral Climate Funds group to support coherence.
- System reform is also a priority: simplifying procedures, lowering barriers and supporting country focused partnerships. Vanuatu's work on country platforms is seen as a strong example.

### **ON C&DM:**

- After five years, C&DM now has clear technical outcomes and defined goals.
- It functions as a trusted convening space outside formal negotiations, enabling honest and frank discussions between SIDS, LDCs and providers to face to face and move towards solution driven outcomes and welcomes more members.

### **The Climate and Development Ministerial Secretariat**