

BY DAVIS BUYONDO

# WHAT UGANDA GAINED AT COP30

In the heart of the Amazon, Belém, Brazil, played host to the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30), a gathering of global leaders and climate stakeholders. Among the attendees was environment state minister Beatrice Anywar, who led her delegation to push for climate support and solutions tailored to Uganda's pressing challenges.

For Uganda and many developing nations, COP30 was an opportunity to spotlight the devastating impacts of climate change; rising temperatures, crippling droughts and relentless floods that threaten livelihoods, agriculture, and local economies.

Anywar's message was clear: Uganda seeks stronger commitments on climate finance, particularly funds to mitigate climate disasters, recover from losses, and transition to cleaner energy without sacrificing development progress.

Over two weeks of intense negotiations, Uganda made its voice heard, advocating simpler access to the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF), adaptation support, and fair energy transition deals. While some progress was made, many promises from developed nations remained uncertain or deferred, leaving Uganda and other vulnerable countries to continue pushing for climate justice.

Key asks remain on the table: Streamlined LDF access, additional adaptation funding, protection of Uganda's natural resources and an equitable energy transition. As the dust settles on COP30, Uganda's focus shifts to the next steps such as sustained advocacy, partnerships, and action to

safeguard its people and future.

Dr Barirega Akankwasah, the executive director of the National Environment Management Authority, said Uganda made significant strides at COP30.

Adaptation finance is now a core pillar of the global climate system, with countries agreeing to triple funding to \$120b annually by 2035. Although short of Africa's expectations, this marks a crucial step forward. The Global Goal on Adaptation indicators were adopted, providing 59 metrics to track progress. These will guide Uganda and other nations in measuring adaptation efforts.

On climate finance, Akankwasah said funds are pooled globally, allowing Uganda to access support for adaptation and Loss-and-Damage.

Notably, Uganda co-chairs the Green Climate Fund (GCF) Country Platform Hub with Brazil and the V20, amplifying its voice in climate finance discussions.

While challenges persist, Uganda's delegation returns with tangible outcomes, paving the way for continued climate action and advocacy.

"This is designed to help developing countries turn national priorities into well-planned projects that can attract large-scale climate and nature finance," Akankwasah said.

The Funds for Responding to Loss and Damage Fund is now fully operational, with a call for proposals and Uganda is eligible to apply, but allocations will come



Akankwasah

## COP29 IN BAKU

Last year, a controversy over fossil fuel extraction also took centre stage at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, coupled with protests. Uganda was blamed for implementing two oil projects, namely Tilenga and the East African Crude Oil Pipeline projects. But President Yoweri Museveni said Uganda's oil exploration plan will be implemented according to schedule. He added that petroleum products are for the domestic and East African Community markets.

later through project/programme submissions.

### NDC, POLICY WORK

Akankwasah said the new adaptation indicators and enhanced focus on tracking resilience mean that Uganda will need to include clearer adaptation goals and ways to measure them in the next Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), National Adaptation Plan (NPA) updates and sector plans like agriculture, water, health and urban development.

He added that the Warsaw International Mechanism review outcome explicitly pushes parties to integrate loss and damage into national response plans, which Uganda will have to reflect in NDCs, NAP and disaster-risk frameworks.

At COP30, Uganda announced it will soon launch the National Black Carbon Action Plan. This plan will be integrated into the national climate strategies and directly connect efforts to reduce air pollution with the protection of people's health and climate mitigation.

On climate finance-driven planning, Akankwasah said the GCF Country Platform Hub, co-led by Uganda, encourages the country to move from funding one project at a time to prepare bigger and ready-to-fund programmes.

"This means making the national development strategies, climate action plans, local parish development model, and green-growth strategies work together,"

Akankwasah said.

### MISSED OPPORTUNITIES

Akankwasah said Africa is grappling with insufficient and delayed finance.

He said adaptation fund tripling was pushed to 2035, and Loss and Damage finance remains far below needs.

"There is no clear burden-sharing roadmap. For a highly vulnerable country like Uganda, this is a serious gap," Akankwasah said.

In addition, the Tropical Forest Forever Facility and related initiatives are promising, but still largely voluntary and not fully capitalised. "There is no dedicated, guaranteed stream for African biodiversity at the scale required," Akankwasah added.

While different civil society groups and climate activists got disappointed about the failure to include the phase-out of oil and gas production, Uganda and other emerging oil and gas developers were happy the negotiators did not look there.

At least 29 countries were pushing for a phase-out of fossil fuels, but the Global Climate Action Agenda at COP30 Outcomes Report does not mention a phase-out of fossil fuels.

Uganda was negotiating as part of the Least Developed Countries Group and the G77 and China was strategically demanding equity, transition support and transition policy flexibility that is country-determined and non-prescriptive.