

POLICY BRIEF



BRAZIL, THE DRIVING FORCE BEHIND LATIN AMERICA'S ENERGY TRANSITION? OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR CONSOLIDATING REGIONAL LEADERSHIP AND GLOBAL INFLUENCE

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Introduction

Since the beginning of Lula Da Silva's third term in Brazil in 2023, the national government has been determined to regain regional leadership as a platform for strengthening the South American power's international role. In his inaugural address to Congress, Lula stated: *“Nosso protagonismo se concretizará pela retomada da integração sul-americana, a partir do Mercosul, da revitalização da Unasul e demais instâncias de articulação soberana da região. Sobre esta base poderemos reconstruir o diálogo ativo e ativo com os Estados Unidos, a Comunidade Europeia, a China, os países do Oriente e outros atores globais; fortalecendo os BRICS (...) e rompendo o isolamento a que o país foi relegado”*¹ (Speech by Lula Da Silva to the National Congress, 2023). The Brazilian president not only highlighted the priority he placed on Latin American regional integration, but also emphasized the urgency of taking action on climate change at both the national and international levels. In doing so, he restored another bastion of Brazil's external identity as a climate leader, one that he had championed for during his first presidential term. In his own words: *“Nenhum outro país tem as condições do Brasil para se tornar uma grande potência ambiental (...). Vamos iniciar a transição energética e ecológica para uma agropecuária e uma mineração sustentáveis, uma agricultura familiar mais forte, uma indústria mais verde”*² (speech by Lula Da Silva to the National Congress, 2023).

Along the same lines, Foreign Minister Mauro Vieira summed up the foreign policy focus with the phrase *“Brasil está de volta”* (Brazil is back), setting a clear path for the country to resume its international activism, professing the values of democracy, environmental protection, peace, and security (Burgess, 2024: 44-45). This has been demonstrated by key actions such as the country's performance as host of the G20 in 2024 and the BRICS Forum in 2025, and its bid to host COP30 this year. These actions have demonstrated Itamaraty's ability to influence the international agenda and global debates at the world's main negotiating tables.

¹ Translation: "Our leading role will be achieved through the resumption of South American integration, starting with Mercosur, the revitalization of UNASUR, and other instances of sovereign coordination in the region. On this basis, we will be able to rebuild a proud and active dialogue with the United States, the European Community, China, the countries of the East, and other global actors, strengthening the BRICS (...) and breaking the isolation to which the country has been relegated".

² Translation: "No other country has the conditions that Brazil has to become a major environmental power (...). We are going to begin the energy and ecological transition towards sustainable livestock farming and mining, stronger family farming, and a more environmentally friendly industry".





However, within this framework, we examine Brazil's initiatives to involve the Latin American region in the energy transition. While it is true that its international narrative is aligned with a series of domestic policies³ committed to making Brazil a hub for clean energy development, this has not yet translated into clear proposals befitting its role as Latin America's most important power.

Following Burges (2024), we start from the assumption that Brazil remains an undisputed leader in the energy sector in its immediate environment. For a government that seeks to build upon global values and goals, the ability to present ideas and organize actions around common positions is a central component of effective and transformative leadership. In any case, leadership involves a cost-benefit analysis based on existing strengths and opportunities to avoid overinvesting resources, which, for an emerging power, remain limited.

Regarding the case presented here, this analysis is structured in three sections. The first section highlights key information on the greenhouse gas emissions profiles in Latin America and the level of progress in the energy transition. The second section provides a broad overview of Brazilian initiatives related to the energy transition regionally and globally, analysing Brazil's position based on a distinction between its role as leader, supporter, or outsider. Finally, the third section provides a series of key takeaways and policy recommendations, considering leadership as a structuring axis.

³ For further information, we recommend the Executive Summary of Argentina 1.5 (2025) "Shaping Brazil's energy transition: key actors, narrative and global engagement (2024-2025)" <https://arg1punto5.com/index.php/2025/05/30/executive-summary-shaping-brazils-energy-transition-key-actors-narrative-and-global-engagement-2024-2025/>

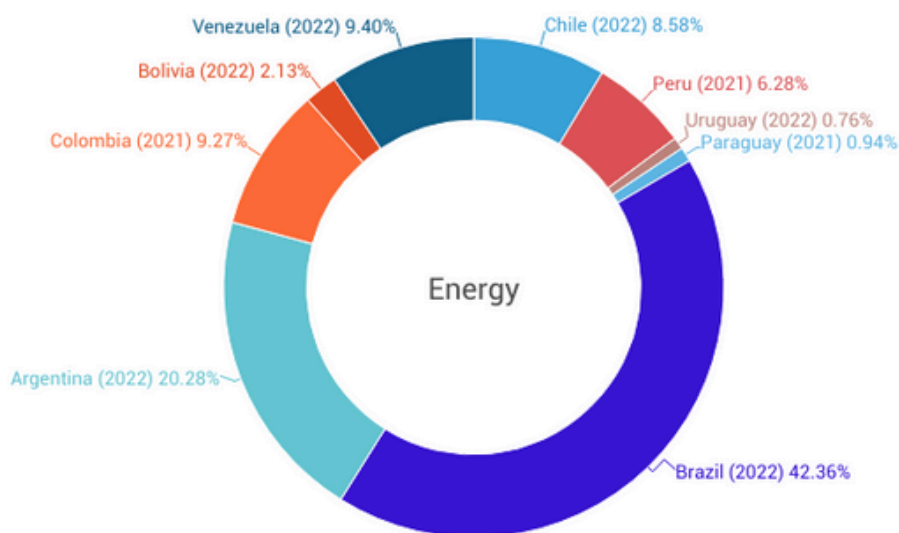


1. Brazil, the Leader in Emissions and in the Advancement of Renewable Energy in Latin America

The results of the latest National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (NGGI), published in 2024 by Latin American countries in their first Biennial Transparency Reports (BTR), provide an overview of emissions generated by energy production and consumption.

In 2022, Brazil's energy sector accounted for 81% of the country's emissions, excluding emissions and removals from the Land Use, Land-Use Change, and Forestry (LULUCF) sector, which accounted for more than 50% of total national emissions. The countries that follow in order of magnitude are Chile, Argentina, and Peru where the energy sector accounted for more than 50% of total emissions (excluding LULUCF) in the latest reported NGGI.

Figure 1. Share of the energy sector in total emissions by country, excluding LULUCF



Source: Authors' elaboration based on each country's Biennial Transparency Reports.





Based on Figure 1, if we consider only emissions from the energy sector in these countries, Brazil's emissions exceeded the sum of the emissions from the others countries combined (excluding Argentina), which highlights its significant weight in this area. It should be noted that, although Brazil's emissions in the energy sector are high, when analysed at the national level and including emissions from the LULUCF sector, energy accounted for 30% of total emissions in 2022. This is because historically, this country has recorded significant emissions from deforestation, which presents a double challenge: the need to prioritize mitigation measures for both the energy sector and the LULUCF sector.

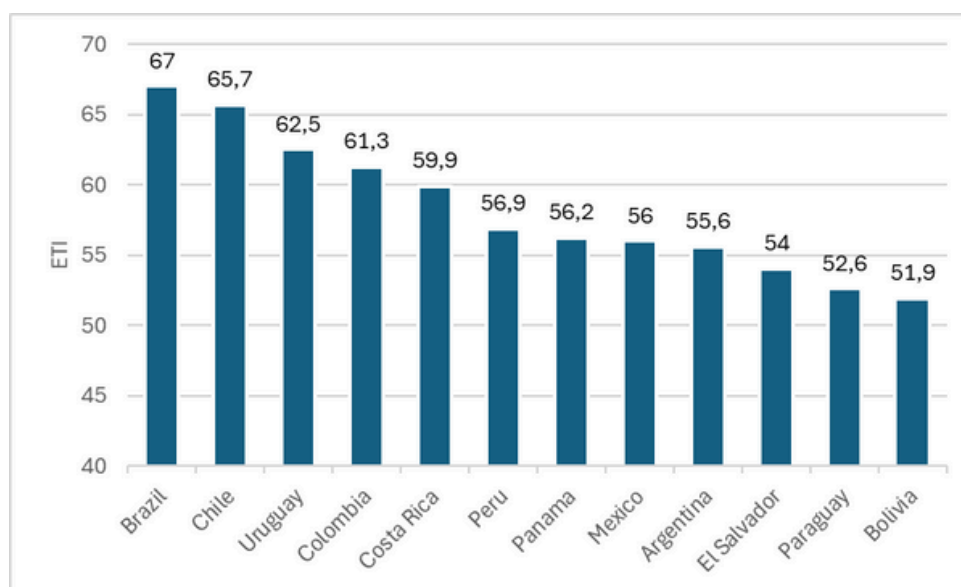
The data presented highlights the potential of the energy transition in these countries to further deepen their environmental commitment, given the energy sector's predominance in total emissions. It also shows the importance of Brazil's role in promoting initiatives and programs to strengthen decarbonization actions in the energy sector for the region, due to its significant role in this issue.

On the other hand, it is important to analyze the Energy Transition Index (EIT) developed by the World Economic Forum (WEF), which assesses the current performance of the energy system in terms of security, equity, and sustainability. This index also incorporates five readiness factors: 1) policy and political commitment, 2) finance and investment, 3) education and human capital, 4) infrastructure, and 5) innovation. According to these parameters, Latin America ranks third in the EIT among the six regions analysed. It is worth mentioning that the Advanced Economies group—which mainly includes the G7 countries— ranks first, while the Emerging Economies of Europe—composed mainly of Eastern European countries— rank second. Among its strengths, the Latin American region stands out for its high proportion of renewable energy and remarkable hydroelectric and solar potential. Among the challenges are regulatory and institutional instability and poor energy inclusion, as well as financing constraints and limited access to technology (limited innovation capacity) (World Economic Forum, 2025).

In this context, Brazil is the leading country in these statistics, reflecting the progress made in promoting renewable energy and improving equity, having made progress in energy access, energy affordability, and price stability (World Economic Forum, 2025).



Figure 2. Energy Transition Index in Latin American countries.



Source: Prepared internally based on data from the World Economic Forum.

In summary, the countries in the region clearly recognize the importance of the energy sector not only in their economies, but also as a priority sector for meeting climate commitments. The case of Brazil is paradigmatic, as in 2023 the country's renewable and non-renewable sources accounted for 49.1% and 50.9% of its energy matrix, respectively. According to the Brazilian Energy Information System (sieBRASIL, October 1, 2025), renewable energies have made a significant contribution to the energy matrix over the last 20 years and, in 2024 (the last year for which there is available data), reached a new high. This demonstrates a certain continuity in some measures to promote this sector linked to key partnerships, such as China's role in investments in this country (Dussort, 2022).

Given Brazil's profile as both a regional leader in emissions and in the development of renewable sources, its level of proactivity in related initiatives is analyzed below.



2. Description of the Main Initiatives and Proposals Involving Brazil and Focusing on Energy Transition

Brazil's Initiatives for Energy Transition		
Initiatives led by Brazil	Multilateral	Global Biofuels Alliance
		Global Coalition for Energy Planning
		Global Clean Power Alliance
		Clean Energy Ministerial
		Global Commission on People-Centred Clean Energy Transitions: Designing for Fairness, IEA
		Honorary Presidency of the World Energy Council
		OLADE
		Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization Summit
		G20
		BRICS Forum
		COP30
		Mercosur
	Bilateral	With Bolivia
		With Paraguay
		With Mexico
		With Germany
		With Japan
Initiatives Brazil supports or participates in	Multilateral	Energy Efficiency Hub
		COP29 Global Energy Storage and Grids Pledge (signature)
		Conference of Mining Ministries of the Americas
		Clean Energy Access Accelerator in the Amazon
Relevant regional and international initiatives Brazil has not joined	Multilateral	Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty
		Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA)
		Steering Committee of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA)

In recent years, Brazil has pursued an international strategy that combines diplomatic leadership, technical cooperation, and the promotion of coalitions to accelerate the just energy transition (JET).

These initiatives should not be viewed in isolation, but rather as part of a broader framework in which Brazil seeks to position itself as the coordinating voice of the Global South. Its actions respond not only to domestic interests linked to the development of biofuels, advances in energy efficiency, and improvements to electrical grids, but also to the need to build legitimacy as a regional leader in climate action. Below, we have classified these initiatives from 2023 to 2025, in which Brazil positions itself 1) as a multilateral and bilateral protagonist (leader) or 2) as a participating country (supporter) or 3) absent from forums that we consider central (outsider).





2.1 Initiatives Led by Brazil (Leader)

Brazil has played a leading role on energy matters in a series of multilateral negotiations, both global—in the G20, the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), the Clean Energy Ministerial Forum, the International Energy Agency (IEA), the BRICS Forum, COP, and the World Energy Council (WEC)—and regional forums such as the Amazon Cooperation Treaty, the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE), and MERCOSUR. Similarly, it has taken proactive action in the context of bilateral relations both within its region (with countries such as Bolivia, Paraguay, and Mexico) and outside of the region (notably with Germany and Japan).

Multilateral

Firstly, it is worth mentioning the initiatives developed within the **G20**. During the summit held in New Delhi in September 2023, the Global Biofuels Alliance (GBA) was launched. The United States, Brazil, and India were the leading figures in the launch of this alliance, considering that the first two are the world's leading nations in global biofuel production and consumption, respectively, while India ranks fifth (Statista, 2025). The objective was to expand cooperation in this sector and promote sustainability through the intensified use of renewable fuels (Biofuels Alliance, n.d.). It should be noted that Brazil, India, and South Africa—grouped in IBSA —along with the United States and the European Union, had already promoted the formation of the International Biofuels Forum in 2007. Brazil's leadership is therefore reflected in its continued active participation in the GBA, where it shares its experience in biofuel policies⁴, production infrastructure, and best practices with other member countries. In addition, Brazil has been recognized for its commitment to energy transition and the promotion of sustainable biofuels in international forums (IEA Bioenergy, 2024).

⁴ One notable example is the National Proálcool Program, created in 1975 with the aim of promoting the production and use of ethanol as a fuel, particularly in automobiles. The program remained in effect until 1995. (OPSAA, September 26, 2025). In 2003, the National Program for the Production and Use of Biodiesel (PNPB) was relaunched. Its uniqueness lies in the fact that it is aimed at the public transport and freight transport sectors. Biodiesel is mainly produced from soybean oil, and a 5% blend with gasoline was made mandatory (IEA, 2013 in Dussort, 2022). Also in 2003, vehicles that run entirely on or a blend of biofuels were introduced.





In line with this architecture, the Global Clean Power Alliance was launched during the **G20 Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 2024**, with support from the United Kingdom and Brazil as co-hosts. The alliance seeks to triple global renewable capacity and double energy efficiency by 2030, in line with the COP28 commitments. With the participation of Latin American countries such as Chile and Colombia, this platform reinforces the regional narrative regarding the need for investment in clean energy in emerging economies (World Resources Institute, 2024). However, for this alliance to have a real impact in Latin America and other countries in the Global South, it will be necessary to strengthen monitoring mechanisms, encourage financial and technological cooperation, and coordinate the participation of public and private actors in the region. This is necessary to prevent an energy transition that further exacerbates inequalities by exclusively involving the global actors best positioned in “the race for renewables”.

Within this framework, the **Global Coalition for Energy Planning (GCEP)** was established, which can be considered a milestone with significant strategic impact. The GCEP is a coalition that promotes inclusive, transparent energy planning, aimed at attracting clean investment, especially in emerging economies. It was launched under the **Brazilian presidency of the G20** and with the technical secretariat provided by the **International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA)** (IRENA, 2025a). Notably, it should be noted that the initiative was made official in June 2025 in Rio de Janeiro, at which the roadmap for this effort was presented, with an emphasis on participatory processes and “letters of principles” that connect planning and financing. In this sense, this coalition thus aims to foster robust and well-governed energy planning to reduce perceptions of risk, build investor confidence, and enable countries in the Global South to design strategies aligned with their development and climate goals (IRENA, 2025b).

Moreover, in 2024, Brazil assumed the presidency of the Clean Energy Ministerial Forum, a global platform that brings together energy ministers to accelerate clean energy policies and technologies. Brazil is the only member country of the Forum in the region, while other Latin American countries —Argentina, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Panama— are part of the Forum as participants (Clean Energy Ministerial, September 26, 2025). During the 15th Meeting of the Forum, Brazil launched the Action Plan for Future Fuels, coordinated with its domestic program “Combustível do Futuro” (Fuel of the Future), which promotes innovation in sustainable fuels and the consolidation of value chains for low-carbon transportation and mobility (Clean Energy Ministerial, October 1, 2025). This initiative allows Brazil to project its experience and leadership in biofuels to other countries, promoting knowledge transfer, South-South cooperation, and the implementation of more ambitious energy transition strategies, including in Latin America. Likewise, Brazil has indicated that this approach will be a priority during COP30, consolidating its role as a key player in the promotion of clean and sustainable energy at the global and regional levels.





Within the framework of the **International Energy Agency** (IEA), Brazil co-chairs the Global Commission on People-Centred Clean Energy Transitions: Designing for Fairness, alongside Teresa Ribera, Executive Vice-President of the European Commission. This commission brings together energy, climate, and labour leaders from governments, international organizations, and civil society representatives, including indigenous groups, youth, and trade unions (IEA, September 26, 2025). Its participation and recent leadership reinforce Brazil's narrative as the voice of Latin America in promoting fair and inclusive energy transitions, projecting its regional experience into global debates on equity, governance, and access to clean energy.

Likewise, at the **World Energy Council** (WEC), Brazil's Minister of Mines and Energy, Alexandre Silveira, assumed the honorary presidency of the Council in August 2025, highlighting that this was international recognition of Brazil's role in leading the sector's energy transition (Ministry of Mines and Energy, September 26, 2025). The WEC was established in 1923 and later incorporated as a United Nations body. It is composed of governments, companies, and think tanks.

It is important to highlight the emphasis that Brazil has given to this issue as the host country⁵ of the BRICS Forum in 2024 and COP30 in 2025. In this regard, in the 2025 BRICS Leaders' Declaration, the countries participating in this forum reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring a just and inclusive energy transition, in line with national circumstances, as well as to universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all, as described in Sustainable Development Goal 7 (SDG 7). In this regard, the work of the BRICS Committee of Senior Energy Officials and the BRICS Energy Research Cooperation Platform, chaired by the Ministry of Mines and Energy, was highlighted. In turn, under the Brazilian presidency, the BRICS Energy Cooperation 2025–2030 work schedule was updated, and the preparation of reports on Access to Energy Services and New and Sustainable Fuels continued. The bloc also recognized the interconnection between climate change and energy transitions and reiterated its commitment to ensuring sustainable economic development in line with the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement, and national circumstances.

⁵ For further information, we recommend reading the second technical report from Argentina 1.5 (2025) entitled: "Second Technical Report: The G20 Energy Transition Agenda: Brazil's legacy for the Latin America Region in the run-up to COP30 – ETF Project" <https://arg1punto5.com/index.php/2025/08/13/https-arg1punto5-com-wp-content-uploads-2025-08-technical-paper-n2-pdf/>





The BRICS Forum also highlighted the need to catalyse cooperation on access to finance and increase investment for just transitions (BRICS, n.d.).

Within the framework of **COP30** in 2025, the Brazilian presidency defined six thematic areas. One of these concerns the “transition in the energy, industry, and transportation sectors.” This pillar has four objectives: to triple renewable energy and double energy efficiency, to accelerate zero- and low-emission technologies in hard-to-abate sectors, to guarantee universal access to energy, and to transition away from fossil fuels in a fair, orderly, and equitable manner. Likewise, the issue of energy transition or just transition is mentioned in different ways in six of the seven letters published by the presidency⁶, mainly when it is linked to the objectives of the First Global Stocktake (GST) (COP30, 2025).

⁶ Published until September 3, 2025.



	Mentioned “just transition”	Mentioned “energy transition”
Letter #1	Related to the type of joint action to leverage climate action	Related to the objectives of the First GST
Letter #2	Not mentioned	Not mentioned
Letter #3	Related to the Just Transition Work Program (JTWP) and the collaboration and joint and systemic action required.	Related to the objectives of the First GST
Letter #4	Related to the initiatives of the COP30 Action Agenda	Related to the objectives of the First GST and the COP30 Action Agenda
Letter #5	Related to the Just Transition Work Program (JTWP)	Reference to the global energy transition and the role of individuals in it.
Letter #6	Related to the Just Transition Work Program (JTWP)	Related to the objectives of the First GST
Letter #7	Reference to “climate transition” as the driving force behind a new world order	Reference to renewable and clean energy sources

Source: Own elaboration.





However, focusing strictly on the Latin American region, after fourteen years of inactivity, Lula convened the **IV Amazon Cooperation Treaty Summit** in 2023 to showcase Brazil's leadership on tropical forests and climate change. The summit resulted in the Belém Declaration (2023), which links the sustainable use of fauna and flora with the energy transition. Despite the grandiloquence of the event, given that it renewed the country's commitment to combating deforestation of the biome, the Brazilian government's actions were strongly criticized: on the one hand, for the lack of commitment to resources to support the activities outlined in the Belém Declaration and on the other hand, for the rejection by Brazil and the other participants of a Colombian proposal for members to call for the phasing out of all fossil fuels (Burgess, 2024: 48-49).

Brazil has consolidated its leadership through its participation in the **Latin American Energy Organisation** (OLADE). During the First Meeting of the Regional Energy Planning Council, held in early 2025, it was highlighted that, through its *pro tempore* presidency of the G20 and the Working Group on Energy Transitions, Brazil positioned energy planning as a strategic axis for developing countries. This vision is aligned with the aforementioned Global Coalition on Energy Planning (GCEP), demonstrating its commitment to promote more integrated, sustainable, and resilient energy markets in Latin America. The coordination of regional planning and cooperation reduces risks, attracts investment in clean energy, and strengthens the institutional capacities of neighbouring countries (OLADE, n.d.).

At the CCLXXXVII Meeting of the Commission of Permanent Representatives of **MERCOSUR** (CRPM), Brazil, which holds the *pro tempore* presidency in 2025, presented its priorities for the second half of 2025, including the issue of energy transition (Mercosur, October 1, 2025). Likewise, at the XXXII Ordinary Meeting of the Mercosur Mining and Geology Working Subgroup (SGT-15), the group's 2025-2026 Work Plan was presented, which includes areas related to energy transition. Some of these areas include projecting long-term global demand for strategic minerals, analyzing opportunities for cooperation in research and development, and identifying strategic projects with potential regional impact. The meeting also addressed the proposal for a study to be carried out with technical support from the Latin American Energy Organisation (OLADE) and resources from the Development Bank of Latin America (CAF). This proposal aims to deepen the analysis of the region's potential regarding strategic minerals for the energy transition (Ministry of Mines and Energy, October 1, 2025a).





Furthermore, in 2025, Mercosur countries signed the Presidential Declaration on Energy Integration and Security in Mercosur, in which they “recalled the importance of a fair and inclusive energy transition and energy security to generate new opportunities for industrial development, promote technological innovation, attract investment, and create jobs” (Mercosur, n.d.). It is interesting to note that the work carried out this year in Mercosur highlighted the role of natural gas in the region's energy security as a transitional source.

Bilaterals⁷

At the start of his third term, Lula revisited one of his goals for Latin America that had been a central element during his first term in office: the creation of a regional energy market, which entails the construction of connectivity infrastructure. In fact, the proposal has played an important role in the historic and close bilateral ties he has established with Bolivia regarding gas supply and with Paraguay in hydroelectric power generation⁸. Lula's pivot in his 2023 interpretation of the Brazilian model of infrastructure integration was that it would enable coordinated action to address climate change (Burges, 2024: 47).

Regarding bilateral agreements, Brazil has agreements with several Latin American countries. At the political level, Brazil seeks to deepen economic integration by strengthening alliances in strategic sectors, while generating reciprocal benefits. Firstly, cooperation with Mexico can be highlighted within the framework of the “Declaration of Intent on Bilateral Cooperation on the Production and Use of Biofuels” (Ministério do Desenvolvimento, Indústria, Comércio e Serviços, September 26, 2025a), signed in 2025. The cooperation aims to exchange experiences, technical knowledge, and technology transfer to promote the development of the raw materials sector and the biofuel industry (Ministério do Desenvolvimento, Indústria, Comércio e Serviços, September 26, 2025b).

⁷ Brazil has a large number of initiatives related to the energy transition that it is carrying out with the support of extra-regional partners, mainly countries in the Global North. It is worth noting that these alliances were formed prior to Lula's third term. For example, the “Sistemas de Energia do Futuro” (SEF) project, launched in 2016 as part of Brazil-Germany cooperation, seeks to improve the overall conditions for integrating renewable energies and increasing energy efficiency in the Brazilian energy system. On the other hand, the project with Japan, which began in 2019, on “Promoting energy efficiency and energy conservation in energy- and equipment-intensive industries” aims to carry out efficiency actions in different sectors of the economy, such as industries, buildings, and equipment, focusing on labeling, energy efficiency certification, and laboratory training.

⁸ The energy development cooperation between Paraguay and Brazil resulted in the binational Itaipú hydroelectric dam. The construction of the dam—which began in the 1970s and became operational ten years later—was partly driven by the increase in oil prices in 1973 and was part of Brazil's policy to establish itself as a hydroelectric power producer (Itaipú, September 26, 2025). Regarding ties with Bolivia, in the 1990s, Memoranda of Understanding for gas supply to Brazil were signed, which were extended in the following decades.



2.2 Initiatives that Brazil Supports or Participates in (Supporter)

Secondly, it is worth mentioning those initiatives that did not originate in Brazil but are strongly supported by the Brazilian government. Among them is the Energy Efficiency Hub, a global collaboration platform under the IEA, launched in December 2021. This initiative is supported by 17 governments, with Brazil and Argentina as the only Latin American representatives. This platform seeks to facilitate the exchange of policies, regulations, and implementation practices in key areas such as buildings, industry, appliances, and transportation. The Brazilian government participates through the Ministry of Mines and Energy in all working groups and contributes specifically to the *Hub's Policy Exchange Workshop* (Energy Efficiency Hub, n.d.).

Furthermore, Brazil has sent positive signals about the energy transition in various international forums. In November 2024, during COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, Brazil joined more than 65 countries in signing the *COP29 Global Energy Storage and Grids Pledge*, which promotes the implementation of the ambitious goal agreed upon in the Global Stocktake (GST) decision: tripling renewable energy. Among the action-oriented goals set by the COP29 Presidency are the deployment of 1,500 GW of energy storage, doubling global investments in grids, and developing 25 million kilometres of grid infrastructure by 2030 (Global Renewables Alliance, n.d.).

In this same regard, within the framework of the XV Conference of Ministers of Mining of the Americas (CAMMA), held in August 2025, Brazil presented the various initiatives carried out to position itself as a global supplier of critical minerals, as well as its National Policy on Critical and Strategic Minerals for the Energy Transition and Food Security, and the MagBRAS project (Ministério de Minas e Energia, October 1, 2025b).





It is also worth noting that Brazil is part of the Amazon Clean Energy Access Accelerator, a regional project promoted by the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) under the Amazonia Siempre program, aimed at linking the Amazon with sustainable access energy. This platform channels investment and technical cooperation to help eligible Amazonian countries, including Brazil, expand access to reliable, safe, and affordable energy, diversify their electrical systems, promote clean cooking technologies, and drive emerging solutions in both rural and urban areas. Among other strategic partners, the initiative is supported by the Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), which provides financing and facilitates the participation of Brazilian actors in the development of microgrids, energy storage, sustainable mobility, and energy efficiency (IDB, 2025).

Brazil's participation in these initiatives creates a more solid foundation for the country to build trust as a regional leader in energy transition cooperation.

2.3 Brazil's Absence from Relevant Regional and International Initiatives (Outsider)

Despite its leadership in various forums for discussing energy issues, coupled with its committed and active support in other negotiations, Brazil has also, on other occasions, shown a cautious stance toward certain international commitments aimed at the phasing out of fossil fuels. While Colombia was a pioneer in Latin America in adhering to the **Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty**, Brazil has not yet signed this agreement, which highlights divergent interests and positions that call into question Brasília's alignment with global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, n.d.).

In line with the above, Brazil also does not participate in the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA), an international coalition that offers technical and financial resources to facilitate the transition to clean energy. Colombia's participation as a “friend” member of BOGA contrasts with Brazil's absence, once again calling into question its leadership and consistency with international commitments on energy transition and sustainability (Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, n.d.).

Finally, Brazil is also not part of the Executive Committee of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA), a regional platform that promotes cooperation on energy and climate change issues, including areas such as energy efficiency, renewable energy, and regional energy integration (ECPA, n.d.). Brazil's absence from this committee could limit its influence in shaping regional energy policies and in the implementation of joint projects.





These gaps reflect the domestic discrepancies the country has been facing. On one hand, Brazil upholds a clear narrative in favour of the energy transition; on the other, the expansion of the oil frontier into areas of high ecological value—such as the mouth of the Amazon River—appears imminent.

3. Key Messages for Brazil to Become the Voice of Latin America in International Forums

Historically, Brazil has sought to position itself as a regional leader. However, its actions within the multilateral climate regime have not demonstrated the strength required to consolidate that leadership. As Bueno and Dussort (2023) note, “Brazil, a climate leader in negotiations, was a solitary actor in relation to the Latin American and Caribbean (LAC) region, as it prioritised mitigation and market issues over others of particular interest to regional countries, such as adaptation and finance” (p. 141).

Indeed, it is important to recall that within the UNFCCC framework, there are multiple lines of negotiation, such as the Mitigation Work Programme (MWP). In this area, Brazil chose not to assume leadership of the SUR¹⁰ negotiation group, since the MWP negotiations began in 2022 and their objectives were not aligned with the priorities of the Bolsonaro administration. Consequently, the SUR group was led by Argentina, which maintained the bloc’s historical position: ensuring that agreed decisions strike a balance between raising climate ambition and providing the necessary means of implementation, thereby avoiding a transfer of mitigation responsibilities from developed to developing countries.

Furthermore, until 2024, there was no alignment between the positions of the Latin American negotiation groups — the SUR group and the Independent Association of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC) — which can be interpreted as a divergence on how mitigation responsibilities should be distributed (Anonymous interview, June 2025).

⁹ For further information, it is recommended to read the First Technical Report of Argentina 1.5 titled (2025) [Driving Brazil's Energy Transition: Key Actors, Narrative Development, and Global Engagement \(2024–2025\)](#), Argentina 1.5.

¹⁰ It is worth noting that, until 2023, the group was composed of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, and was known as ABU. With the inclusion of Ecuador and Paraguay, the group was renamed SUR.





Paradoxically, since 2023, the South American country has sought to reposition itself as a spokesperson for Latin America in international energy and climate change forums. This emerging leadership has enabled Brazil to strengthen its visibility and international credibility, projecting expertise in the deployment of renewable energy, innovation in biofuels, and energy efficiency policies — effectively positioning Latin America within the global debates on a just energy transition.

At the regional level, Brazil's participation in OLADE has promoted energy planning as a strategic axis for developing countries, fostering more integrated, sustainable, and resilient energy markets, and strengthening institutional capacities. Within Mercosur, Brazil has emphasised the relevance of a just energy transition and energy security as drivers of industrial development, technological innovation, investment, and job creation.

In terms of its performance in international forums, within the BRICS Forum, Brazil has contributed to cooperation on access to energy services, new and sustainable fuels, and has coordinated reports on energy transition, reaffirming the interconnection between climate change and sustainable economic development for Global South countries.

Assuming this leadership role entails major responsibilities, such as facilitating access to financing and investment for clean energy projects, promoting South–South cooperation, and strengthening technical capacities and knowledge transfer among neighbouring countries.

In this regard, Brazil faces significant costs and challenges. As the region's spokesperson, it must maintain coherence between its domestic policies and its international rhetoric, especially considering that the energy and LULUCF sectors account for the majority of its greenhouse gas emissions. This coherence is particularly complex given that, although Brazil has advanced in expanding renewable energy and promoting energy efficiency programs, challenges persist in the effective implementation of mitigation measures and in aligning the various levels of government and productive sectors.





Adding to this is a contradictory narrative: on the one hand, Brazil promotes a just and sustainable energy transition; on the other, it maintains its intention to join OPEC+ (the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries and allies) and refrains from firmly supporting the gradual phase-out of fossil fuels in multilateral spaces. This duality reflects the tension between its role as an oil producer and its ambition for climate leadership, undermining its climate credibility in key negotiation arenas such as COP30.

Moreover, sustained leadership requires continued diplomatic, technical, and financial commitments; however, the lack of tangible results from certain initiatives may limit its influence and diminish the credibility of its discourse. Demonstrating that domestic policies reflect international commitments entails balancing economic, social, and environmental interests, as well as managing the expectations of civil society, the private sector, and other regional governments.

Finally, the crisis of multilateralism limits the effectiveness of these actions. Despite the proliferation of initiatives and alliances led or co-led by Brazil, a fracture in multilateralism persists, constraining the real reach of its influence. In particular, the policies of the United States and other obstructionist actors hinder the adoption of more ambitious binding commitments. This directly affects countries of the Global South, which rely on financial and technical support to implement their energy transitions.

This situation illustrates that, although Brazil can lead coordination and planning processes, its capacity to deliver concrete and equitable outcomes remains limited by international and political dynamics.

3. Recommendations to Capitalize on Brazil's Position Ahead of COP30

Based on the analysis above, and as representatives of organised civil society committed to achieving a just energy transition, we call for Brazilian leadership that reflects the following points:

- **Strengthen regional coordination:** Ensure that Latin America's voice has an effective impact in multilateral decisions by aligning common agendas among countries and blocs such as OLADE, Mercosur, and the BRICS Forum.
- **Promote coherence between domestic and international objectives:** Guarantee alignment between internal policies and global commitments on the energy transition, including renewable energy expansion and emissions reduction, while avoiding contradictions that could undermine international credibility.



- **Broaden access to financing and technological cooperation:** Facilitate negotiations to secure resources and knowledge transfer for inclusive and sustainable clean energy projects, prioritising South–South cooperation and the integration of regional capacities.
- **Boost participation of civil society and subnational actors:** Create spaces that ensure the involvement of local communities, Indigenous and Afro-descendant peoples, trade unions, the private sector, and local governments — thereby promoting social and gender equity through the inclusion of diverse perspectives and needs.
- **Consolidate the narrative of a just and sustainable energy transition:** Position Brazil as both a regional reference and a bridge between Latin America and global high-level forums (G20, BRICS), which remain limited in participation for all Latin American countries. Brazil should leverage its COP30 presidency and leadership roles in OLADE, Mercosur, and BRICS to strengthen the inclusion of Latin American concerns in international discussions.

Final Remarks

Brazil's role as Latin America's representative in global debates on the energy transition presents both significant opportunities and challenges. While the country has the potential to exercise governmental leadership, structural and political limitations may reduce the effectiveness of such leadership.

Brazil's participation in major international forums such as BRICS and the G20 elevates its global profile in negotiations of high geopolitical relevance in the current context. However, this does not automatically translate into a consolidated regional leadership, mainly due to the multiplicity of interests across the region. Its positioning on energy transition within multilateral arenas is not necessarily shared by other influential regional actors, such as Colombia. A key element for projecting coherent leadership in the energy transition will be balancing its international visibility with its domestic priorities.





Seizing the opportunities that come with this role requires managing trade-offs among economic, social, and environmental interests, as well as ensuring coherence between domestic policies and international commitments. Success will depend on coordination with civil society and subnational actors, and on consolidating Brazil's credibility as a voice representing Latin American perspectives on a fair and equitable energy transition.

In this context, civil society emerges as a central actor for ensuring the legitimacy and effectiveness of regional leadership in the energy transition, acting as a watchdog, facilitator, and coordinator of diverse interests. Its influence is exercised through multiple channels — including policy observatories, cooperation networks, and community mobilisation — allowing it to shape priorities and influence policy implementation. Furthermore, it acts as a counterbalance to tensions between economic and environmental objectives, strengthening institutional resilience and promoting a technically viable, socially legitimate, and sustainable transition over time.

In summary, Brazil's leadership as the region's representative entails both significant costs and benefits. Among the benefits are increased international visibility, enhanced technical capacity, the creation of regional cooperation spaces, and the ability to influence fairer energy transition agendas. Among the costs are the need to maintain internal coherence between domestic policies and international commitments, generate viable initiatives, build consensus, manage diverse stakeholder expectations, and confront limitations stemming from multilateral and geopolitical dynamics.

This analysis shows that, while Brazil can influence the regional agenda and drive key themes in its foreign policy, building consensus depends on additional factors. So far, Brazil's leadership projection in the energy transition appears largely individual, with greater traction at the international level than within the region itself. In other words, within its immediate region, it remains a leader without followers.



Appendix

Brazil's Initiatives for Energy Transition				
			Year	Objectives
Initiatives led by Brazil	Multilateral	Global Biofuels Alliance	2023	- Expand cooperation in the biofuels sector - Promote sustainability through the intensified use of renewable fuels
		Global Coalition for Energy Planning	2024	- Foster robust and well-governed energy planning to reduce risk perceptions, build investor confidence, and help Global South countries design strategies aligned with their development and climate goals
		Global Clean Power Alliance	2024	- Triple global renewable capacity and double energy efficiency by 2030
		Clean Energy Ministerial	2024	- Accelerate clean energy policies and technologies
		Global Commission on People-Centred Clean Energy Transitions: Designing for Fairness, IEA	2025	
		Honorary Presidency of the World Energy Council	2025	
		OLADE	2025	
		Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization Summit	2023	
		G20	2024	
		BRICS Forum	2025	Commitment to ensuring a just and inclusive energy transition, consistent with national circumstances, and universal access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all
		COP30	2025	- Triple renewables and double energy efficiency - Accelerate zero- and low-emission technologies - Ensure universal energy access - Move towards phasing out fossil fuels
		Mercosur	2025	- Deepen the analysis of the region's potential regarding strategic minerals for the energy transition
	Bilateral	With Bolivia		- Gas supply
		With Paraguay		- Hidroelectric power generation
		With Mexico	2025	- Exchange experiences, technical knowledge, and technology transfer to boost the development of the raw materials sector and the biofuels industry
		With Germany		- Improve overall conditions for integrating renewable energies and increasing energy efficiency within Brazil's energy system
		With Japan	2019	- Implement energy efficiency measures across various economic sectors — including industries, buildings, and equipment — focusing on labeling, energy efficiency certification, and laboratory training
Initiatives Brazil supports or participates in	Multilateral	Energy Efficiency Hub	2021	- Facilitate the exchange of policies, regulations, and implementation practices in key areas such as buildings, industry, appliances, and transport
		COP29 Global Energy Storage and Grids Pledge (signature)	2024	- Implement the goal agreed under the Global Stocktake decision to triple renewable energy
		Conference of Mining Ministries of the Americas	2025	- Position Brazil as a global supplier of critical minerals, consistent with its National Policy on Critical and Strategic Minerals for Energy Transition and Food Security, and the MagBRAS project
		Clean Energy Access Accelerator in the Amazon		- Channel investment and technical cooperation so that eligible Amazonian countries, including Brazil, expand access to reliable, safe, and affordable energy; diversify their electricity systems; promote clean cooking technologies; and advance emerging solutions in both rural and urban areas
Relevant regional and international initiatives Brazil has not joined	Multilateral	Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty	Not signed	Could be interpreted as a lack of alignment with global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions
		Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA)	Not participating	Reveals an area where the country could strengthen its leadership and coherence with international commitments on energy transition and sustainability
		Steering Committee of the Energy and Climate Partnership of the Americas (ECPA)	Not participating	Brazil's absence from this committee may limit its influence in shaping regional energy policies and implementing joint projects



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