

October 8, 2026

**H.E. Murat Kurum**

COP31 President

Minister of Environment, Urbanization and Climate Change

Republic of Türkiye

**The Hon. Chris Bowen MP**

COP31 President of the Negotiations

Minister for Climate Change and Energy

Commonwealth of Australia

Dear President Kurum and Minister Bowen,

The Friends of the Ocean and Climate (FOOC) extends its congratulations and gratitude to the Governments of Türkiye and Australia for your leadership of COP31, and welcomes your commitment to keeping the ocean central to the climate agenda. Your partnership with Pacific Island countries, including the Pre-COP in Fiji, the leaders' visit to Tuvalu, and your convening and supporting technical workshops and fostering dialogue and collaboration among Parties and stakeholders, has created an exceptional opportunity for COP31 to further integrate ocean priorities across the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement.

Ocean-based climate action is relevant to some of the most pressing priorities facing governments today, from energy and food security to economic resilience, climate mitigation and adaptation, and the stability of communities and economies. Ocean-based solutions can support a just energy transition by advancing responsible marine renewable energy and maritime transport decarbonisation, strengthen food security and coastal livelihoods through resilient sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, and protect communities and critical infrastructure from climate impacts with healthy, resilient marine and coastal ecosystems. **As governments confront these interconnected challenges, the ocean should be understood not as a discrete sector or special interest, but as integral to delivering climate, economic, and resilience objectives.**

FOOC is a growing, global coalition of Parties committed to advancing sustainable ocean-based climate action within the UNFCCC. Together we work to strengthen the integration of ocean-related mitigation, adaptation, resilience, and implementation across the Convention while supporting incorporation of ambitious and sustainable ocean-based climate action into national climate strategies. FOOC members share a common objective heading towards COP31: to move past recognition of the ocean's importance to the climate system and toward systematic integration

of sustainable ocean-based climate action across the implementation of the Convention and the Paris Agreement.

**COP31 should move sustainable ocean-based climate action from recognition to implementation, backed by a clear political signal, a coherent plan for integration into the Paris Agreement ambition cycle, and its existing means of implementation.** Such implementation may be supported through enhanced access to climate finance, technology transfer, capacity building, and strengthened partnerships for developing countries, in particular, Small Island Developing States (SIDS). As the FOOC, we hope you will use the opportunity of COP31 to advance sustainable ocean-based climate action as an integral component of global climate action and as a practical contribution to addressing broader climate, economic, energy, food security, and resilience priorities.

One way to achieve this signal is by **advancing intergovernmental outcomes that promote the integration of ocean-climate action across the UNFCCC architecture**, building on existing processes and mandates, and strengthening the relevance of the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue to the work of the SBSTA and to relevant COP and CMA outcomes, so that its findings and recommendations can more consistently inform negotiations, implementation, and future climate action. The following elements would further sustainable ocean-based climate action and integration at the UNFCCC, and they were raised through the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue. As such, we believe they warrant consideration in an intergovernmental outcome for COP31.

- Promoting the consideration of sustainable ocean-based solutions within national planning, including to support implementation of nationally determined contributions, national adaptation plans, and LT-LEDS.
- Promoting the best available science and other forms of knowledge, strengthening data, and enhancing ocean observation;
- Strengthening integration of sustainable ocean-based climate action by reiterating and advancing the COP26 call for work programmes and constituted bodies to strengthen ocean-based action within their existing mandates;
- Ensuring progress made through the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue informs negotiations where appropriate, translates into effective implementation, and supports Parties in delivering more ambitious climate action; and
- Elevating ocean considerations as part of the second Global Stocktake, in line with relevant mandates.

Further, we appreciate the inclusion of an ocean segment in the pre-COP official program and we welcome the **continued prioritization, at a high-level, of the ocean through COP31**, to advance sustainable ocean-based climate action and overcome barriers to implementation.

**We also appreciate and welcome a segment on ocean-climate during the World Leaders Summit**, building on the momentum of the discussion at the Belém Climate Summit hosted by Brazil in advance of COP30.

**We thank the Presidencies for all you have done to elevate sustainable ocean-based climate ambition through the Action Agenda** and Action Group 7, “Efforts to preserve and restore oceans and coastal ecosystems.” This includes the “Blue Package” Plan to Accelerate Solutions and the Ocean Breakthroughs, which provide an established framework to move from commitment to implementation. Advancing ocean action through this existing priority strengthens coherence and continuity – ensuring a strong blue current continues to flow from COP30 to COP31 and beyond.

Collectively, these priorities reflect a shared aspiration among FOOC Parties to accelerate implementation, strengthen investment, and deliver measurable climate outcomes by embedding ocean considerations throughout the existing architecture of the Convention and the Paris Agreement.

At a time when the *Global Tipping Points Report 2025* has identified the widespread collapse of warm-water coral reefs as the first Earth system tipping point to be surpassed, COP31 presents a critical opportunity to demonstrate that the ocean is not only among the clearest indicators of the climate crisis, but also crucial to delivering greater climate ambition and implementing the Paris Agreement. We stand ready to work closely with the Presidencies to help build broad support for meaningful and implementable ocean outcomes at COP31.

Respectfully,

***The undersigned Friends of the Ocean and Climate Parties***

The African Group of Negotiators on Climate Change (AGN)

Brazil

Canada

Cook Islands

The European Union (EU) and its 27 member states (Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Republic of Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece,

Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden)

Federated States of Micronesia

Fiji

Iceland

Indonesia

Kiribati

Maldives

Mexico

Monaco

Nauru

Niue

Norway

Palau

Papua New Guinea

Republic of Marshall Islands

Samoa

Solomon Islands

Tonga

Tuvalu

United Kingdom (UK)

Uruguay

Vanuatu

**Cc: UNFCCC Secretariat**