POSITION PAPER

From Climate Commitments to Climate Security

Financing adaptation, climate-resilient infrastructure and managed retreat in vulnerable states



COUNTRY	DELEGATE	COMMITTEE
Republic of Colombia	Ayushmaan Tripathi	UNEP

47%
of Colombia's territory faces high or very high climate risk.

4.4%
of GDP: estimated upper exposure of disaster and climate risks as a contingent liability.

155–161
MtCO■e: Colombia's NDC 3.0 emissions ceiling for 2035.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT

Colombia considers climate change a direct development and human-security challenge. Floods and landslides are among the country's most prevalent hazards; the World Bank's 2024 assessment reports that flood frequency has more than doubled since the 1970s. Climate-related events can interrupt roads, schools, health services and access to water, while drought and changing rainfall patterns place additional pressure on agriculture and hydropower. These risks are not distributed evenly: rural communities, coastal settlements, Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant communities and low-income households often have fewer resources to prepare, recover or relocate safely. [1]

NATIONAL POSITION AND EXISTING COMMITMENTS

Colombia supports moving beyond declarations towards predictable, accessible and grant-focused adaptation finance. The country's NDC 3.0, submitted in September 2025, sets a 2035 greenhouse-gas emissions ceiling of 155–161 million tonnes of CO■-equivalent and places resilience within a long-term pathway towards carbon neutrality and climate resilience by 2050. Its adaptation priorities include water and food security, protection of strategic ecosystems, resilient infrastructure and human settlements, social protection and community-based adaptation. [2]

This direction builds on Colombia's domestic climate-policy architecture, including Law 1931 of 2018 on climate-change management and Law 2169 of 2021, which enshrines key climate goals and adaptation measures in national law. Colombia's position is that international support should strengthen national institutions and locally led implementation—not impose a single model on countries with different geography, fiscal capacity and development needs. [1]

> **"Climate security begins when communities can remain safely, rebuild resiliently, or relocate with dignity—without being left to finance the choice alone."**

POLICY PRIORITIES & PROPOSED ACTION

A practical framework for climate-resilient security

Colombia calls for a framework that connects finance to measurable risk reduction, community priorities and long-term public-service continuity.

1 | Establish a Climate Adaptation and Resilience Financing Window

Colombia proposes a dedicated financing window, coordinated with existing climate-finance institutions rather than duplicating them, to help vulnerable states prepare investment-ready adaptation programmes. Funding should prioritise grants and highly concessional finance for least-developed countries, small island developing States and highly vulnerable communities. Allocation criteria should reflect climate exposure, poverty, fiscal constraints, project readiness and the expected protection of essential services—not emissions levels alone. The window should provide technical assistance for project design, feasibility studies and transparent procurement so that limited administrative capacity does not block access.

2 | Make infrastructure resilient before disaster strikes

UNEP, working with relevant development banks and national authorities, should support climate-risk screening for roads, bridges, hospitals, schools, water systems, energy networks and ports. Projects should incorporate updated flood and landslide mapping, nature-based solutions, resilient design standards, early-warning systems and maintenance plans. Colombia further encourages regional technical partnerships to share risk data, engineering expertise and locally appropriate technologies. Public investment decisions should account for the full life-cycle cost of infrastructure failure, not merely initial construction costs.

3 | Adopt rights-based principles for planned relocation

Managed retreat must be a last-resort, planned adaptation measure where risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level—not a pretext for displacement or land appropriation. Colombia supports nationally led, community-informed relocation plans with meaningful participation before decisions are made; accessible risk information; protection of land, housing and cultural rights; fair compensation and secure tenure at receiving sites; continuity of education, healthcare, livelihoods and public services; and independent grievance procedures. Particular attention must be paid to Indigenous Peoples, Afro-descendant communities, women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. Where communities choose to remain, in-situ adaptation should be properly assessed and financed.

4 | Measure delivery, not announcements

Colombia recommends a voluntary reporting dashboard, aligned with existing UNFCCC processes and national adaptation plans, to track: (a) adaptation finance approved and disbursed; (b) people and essential services protected; (c) infrastructure meeting resilience standards; (d) early-warning coverage and response time; and (e) relocation outcomes, including tenure security and livelihood restoration. Reporting should be transparent, comparable where feasible and sensitive to national circumstances, while avoiding punitive rankings.

ROLE OF UNEP AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Colombia encourages UNEP to act within its mandate as a convenor, scientific and technical partner, and supporter of capacity-building. UNEP can help countries assess ecosystem-based adaptation, strengthen environmental safeguards, develop climate-risk information and connect national priorities with multilateral climate funds and development partners. Financing institutions should simplify application procedures, improve predictability and publish clear information on approval times, disbursement and results. Adaptation finance must be additional, accessible and responsive to locally identified needs.

CONCLUSION

The Republic of Colombia believes that climate commitments become meaningful only when they protect people, livelihoods and critical infrastructure. A fair global framework must make adaptation finance dependable, resilience

part of every major infrastructure decision, and managed retreat safe, participatory and dignified. Colombia stands ready to work with Member States, UNEP and international partners to turn climate ambition into practical climate security.

SELECTED REFERENCES | VERIFIED POLICY AND DATA SOURCES

[1] World Bank. *Colombia Green and Resilient DPO 2 — Program Information Document* (21 February 2024), pp. 3–4. Climate-risk exposure, flood frequency, contingent liability and national climate-law context. Open source.

[2] NDC Partnership. *Colombia Country Overview* (accessed 28 October 2026). NDC 3.0 submission and 2035 target; adaptation priorities. Open source. UNFCCC Adaptation Communications Registry records Colombia's NDC 3.0 submission on 19 November 2025: UNFCCC registry.

[3] Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development of Colombia. *Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) — official documents*. Open source.

Note: Figures are attributed to the cited source and date. The 47% and 4.4% figures are from the World Bank's 2024 assessment; the 155–161 MtCO■e figure is Colombia's NDC 3.0 2035 target, not a measured emissions result.