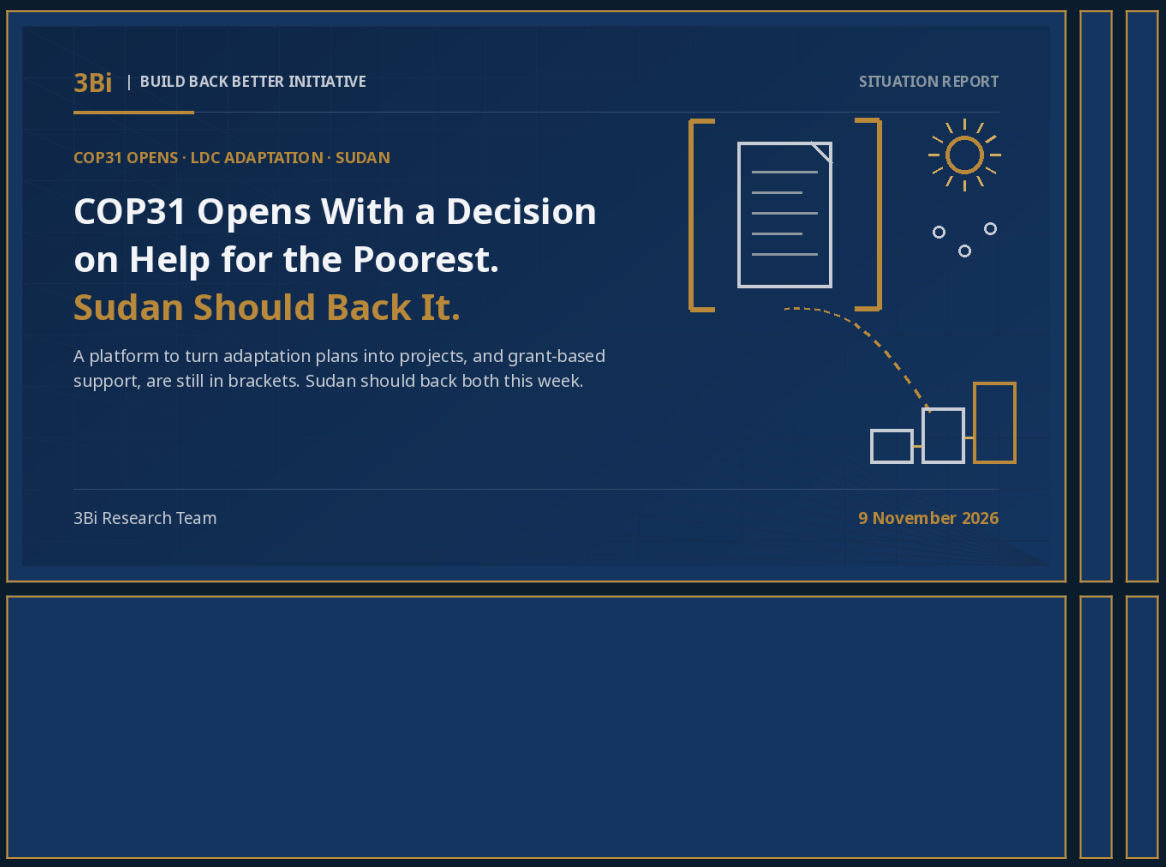
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COP31 Opens Today and Will Decide How the UN Helps Its Poorest Countries Adapt. Sudan Should Back the Two Lines Still in Brackets.

3Bi Research Team | Situation Report | 9 November 2026

2026-11-09 · Research Team

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COP31 opens in Antalya today, and one item reviews how the UN helps the 44 least developed countries adapt. A plan-implementation platform and grant-based language are still in brackets. Sudan should back both this week.

COP31 opens in Antalya on 9 November 2026. Under agenda item 11, parties review the UN Least Developed Countries Expert Group; a platform to implement national adaptation plans and grant-based language are still in brackets in the June draft. (Illustration: 3Bi)

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Headline Fact

COP31 opens in Antalya this morning. At the first plenary, the COP30 President, André Aranha Corrêa do Lago of Brazil, will propose Türkiye's Murat Kurum as President of COP31, while Australia's Chris Bowen leads the negotiations (UNFCCC, FCCC/CP/2026/1, 7 September 2026). Item 11 on the provisional agenda, "Matters relating to the least developed countries", is where parties take stock of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). The LEG is the UN body that gives the poorest countries technical guidance on national adaptation plans (NAPs) and on access to adaptation finance. The draft decision carried forward from the June talks in Bonn calls its mandate "fundamentally fit for purpose". Two consequential lines are still in square brackets: a decision to "establish and operationalize a national adaptation plan implementation platform", and an option that reaffirms developed countries' obligation to provide "grant-based" adaptation support (UNFCCC, SBI 64 draft text on agenda item 11, 17 June 2026). Sudan is one of the 44 countries in the LDC group (The Guardian, 8 November 2026; UNFCCC, Sudan Updated First NDC, 12 October 2021).

Timeline

- **2016:** Sudan publishes its National Adaptation Plan (PreventionWeb, Sudan National Adaptation Plan 2016).
- **COP26, November 2021:** Parties extend the LEG's mandate, set its next full review for COP36, and agree to take stock of its work and terms of reference at COP31, at the midway point, "as a way to reflect on the evolving needs of the least developed countries" (UNFCCC, FCCC/CP/2026/1, 7 September 2026, citing decision 15/CP.26).
- **17 June 2026:** At SBI 64 in Bonn, the stocktake begins. The draft text records broad agreement on what the LEG should prioritise but leaves the platform, the grant-based language and a paragraph on targeted country support in brackets (UNFCCC, SBI 64 draft text, 17 June 2026).

The subsidiary body agrees to continue at SBI 65, which meets alongside COP31 (UNFCCC, FCCC/CP/2026/1, 7 September 2026).

- **6–8 October 2026:** The Higher Council for Environment and Natural Resources (HCENR) holds a workshop in Khartoum to prepare Sudan's COP31 delegation. It covers adaptation planning, monitoring and reporting, bankable projects and access to climate funds (SUNA, 7 October 2026).
- **9 October 2026:** HCENR Secretary-General Suleiman Al-Bouni Suleiman sets out the delegation's priorities: direct, grant-based finance for adaptation and loss and damage; flexibility on climate transparency reporting; coordination with the African Group and the LDC group; and unified position papers on adaptation, finance, carbon markets, transparency, technology, capacity-building and mitigation (Al-Ahd, 9 October 2026).
- **5 November 2026:** UN climate chief Simon Stiell tells the African Group of Negotiators in Antalya that COP31 should finish the work on measuring adaptation, settle the next steps on a just transition, decide the future of the mitigation work programme and work out how to triple adaptation finance. The summit has 165 agenda items (AGN, 5 November 2026).
- **8 November 2026:** LDC group chair Adão Soares Barbosa says accessible and predictable finance, stronger adaptation and action on loss and damage "are not political choices but matters of survival" (The Guardian, 8 November 2026).
- **9 November 2026:** COP31 opens. More than 100,000 people are expected over two weeks. The hosts call it the "implementation COP", and observers expect few major breakthroughs (AFP via France 24, 9 November 2026).

What We Know / What We Don't

We know what the June draft asks the LEG to do. It requests the group to prioritise help for LDCs in implementing their NAPs, "moving beyond the implementation of individual projects towards a coherent, programmatic and portfolio-based approach" with implementation-ready proposals and pipelines. It also asks for help in navigating climate finance, including feasibility studies for project proposals. Third, on request, it asks for help in folding the voluntary global adaptation targets and the Belém indicators into national planning "while respecting the country driven nature of national adaptation plans and avoiding additional reporting burdens". Last, it asks for wider use of climate information services and remote sensing (UNFCCC, SBI 64 draft text, 17 June 2026).

We know which problems the text names. It notes that LDCs face limited technical capacity, gaps in monitoring and evaluation, limited access to scientific and risk information, and difficulty "translating national adaptation plans into implementable actions" (UNFCCC, SBI 64 draft text, 17

June 2026).

We know what is still bracketed. Paragraph 7 would establish the NAP implementation platform to help build pipelines of adaptation projects and improve access to finance from the operating entities of the Financial Mechanism, the Adaptation Fund and other sources. Paragraph 10 would encourage the LEG to give targeted support to individual LDCs, "particularly to those that have not yet submitted national adaptation plans", including help with project preparation and feasibility studies. Paragraph 3 offers a choice between reaffirming "scaled-up, adequate, predictable, and grant-based" adaptation support and having no text at all (UNFCCC, SBI 64 draft text, 17 June 2026).

We know that Sudan's stated priorities line up with those brackets. The delegation's plan calls for grant-based finance rather than loans, closer coordination with the LDC group, and flexibility on reporting (Al-Ahd, 9 October 2026). The draft's "avoiding additional reporting burdens" and its grant-based option say the same things in UN language.

We do not know whether the brackets survived the informal talks since June. The text cited here is the 17 June version. The text in front of SBI 65 may differ. 3Bi has not seen a Sudanese statement on item 11, and we do not know who on the delegation covers LDC matters. Nor do we know how a platform would be paid for. The draft makes the secretariat's work "subject to the availability of financial resources" (UNFCCC, SBI 64 draft text, 17 June 2026).

Implications

In our reading, item 11 is one of the few places where this COP could deliver something concrete for adaptation in the poorest countries. An opinion piece in attaqa.net expects procedural progress on the just transition and on adaptation, with the heavy files referred to Addis Ababa in 2027 (attaqa.net, Manal Sakhri, 3 November 2026). If that proves right, low-profile decisions such as the LEG stocktake will be what Antalya actually leaves behind for countries like Sudan. The decision shapes the technical help on offer to LDCs until the next review at COP36.

The bracketed lines matter most to a country whose plan is ten years old. 3Bi has made that point before. Here the stakes are narrower and more practical: a platform built to turn NAP priorities into project pipelines, and support aimed at countries that need hands-on help, are the parts of the text that would reach Sudan's planners directly. The rest of the draft mainly confirms what the LEG already does.

There is a fair objection. Developed countries may resist a new platform that has budget implications, and the draft itself asks the LEG to avoid "duplications of efforts" with existing support. 3Bi is not claiming that the platform will be agreed, or that it would bring Sudan money quickly. The point is narrower. Sudan has already said it wants grant-based support and lighter reporting. This text is where those positions can be written down, and the LDC group is the bloc that will carry it.

In our view, three low-cost steps follow for this week. First, the HCENR and Sudan's negotiators on adaptation should tell the LDC group's coordinators that Sudan supports keeping paragraph 7, paragraph 10 and Option 1 of paragraph 3. Second, Sudan could tell the LEG that it intends to request technical support in moving its NAP towards implementation, so that its needs appear in the synthesis of NAP priorities the draft asks for. Third, the delegation's planned daily coordination meetings could produce a short public note on item 11, so that Sudanese ministries and researchers can follow what is agreed in their name.

Watch Next

- **9 November 2026:** Adoption of the agendas, then a joint plenary for opening statements from groups of parties, where negotiating groups, including the LDC group, can set out their lines (UNFCCC, FCCC/CP/2026/1, 7 September 2026).
- **10 November 2026:** Launch of the 2026 global carbon budget report (Carbon Brief, 6 November 2026).
- **11–12 November 2026:** The Leaders Summit, "Towards a Sustainable, Resilient and Equitable Future", which forms the first part of the high-level segment (UNFCCC, FCCC/CP/2026/1, 7 September 2026).
- **During SBI 65:** Watch whether the conclusions on item 11 keep the NAP implementation platform, the targeted-support paragraph and the grant-based option.
- **17–18 and 20 November 2026:** The second part of the high-level segment, then the close (UNFCCC, FCCC/CP/2026/1, 7 September 2026).

Sourcing & Next Update

Primary sources: UNFCCC, "Provisional agenda and annotations. Note by the Executive Secretary", FCCC/CP/2026/1 (7 September 2026); UNFCCC, draft text on SBI 64 agenda item 11, "Matters relating to the least developed countries" (version of 17 June 2026); The Guardian, "Cop31 must deliver climate progress that people can see is real, host says" (8 November 2026); AFP via France 24, "COP31 opens as climate and geopolitical pressures mount" (9 November 2026); African Group of Negotiators, "African negotiators to COP31: make decisions happen on the ground" (5 November 2026); Carbon Brief, "DeBriefed 6 November 2026" (6 November 2026); attaqa.net, Manal Sakhri, «3) «[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] ..31 [illegible] November 2026); SUNA, «[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] COP31» (7 October 2026); Al-Ahd, «[illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] COP31» (9 October 2026); UNFCCC, Sudan Updated First NDC (12 October 2021); PreventionWeb, Sudan National Adaptation Plan 2016. For methodology questions or to propose a correction, contact 3Bi's Research Team via 3bisudan.org.

Next update expected when SBI 65 forwards its conclusions on LDC matters to the COP, or when Sudan's delegation states a position on item 11.

3Bi Research Team. This piece was produced through 3Bi's automated daily publications workflow, which monitors regional and international climate and energy reporting.

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