

# LULA OFFERS TO HOST 2025 U.N. CLIMATE TALKS IN BRAZIL'S AMAZON RAINFOREST

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Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva

Brazil's Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva received a warm welcome at the COP27 summit in Egypt on Wednesday, where he pledged to recommit the rainforest nation to tackling the climate crisis and offered to hold future U.N. climate talks.

"I am here to say to all of you here that Brazil is back in the world," he said, speaking at an event alongside governors of Brazilian Amazon states.

A leftist who won his third term in office last month, Lula said he would seek to make Brazil the host of COP30 in 2025 and would aim to put the venue in the Amazon rainforest, rather than the more populous coastal region.

The country had been set to host the annual U.N. summit in 2019, until Lula's predecessor — right-wing President Jair Bolsonaro — refused to go ahead with it.

"It's important for it to be in the Amazon. It's important for the people who defend the Amazon, the people who defend the climate, to closely get to know what the region is," said Lula, who is due to take office in January.

Brazil's 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro set the stage for all major international environmental agreements since, with the signing of U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, which is aimed at preventing extreme climate change and was the foundation of the COP meetings.

Lula's choice to make the COP27 summit the focus of his first international visit since being elected to the presidency last month has helped to energize this year's talks in the Red Sea resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh.

Hundreds of people crowded into the exhibition hall, chanting "Lula! Lula!" before the event began.

Arriving with a light security detail, Lula walked to the edge of the crowd, reaching out to shake outstretched hands. He was guided by governor Helder Barbalho of Para, the Brazilian state

with the highest rate of deforestation.

"It's very positive that he's coming here as president-elect because the current president never came to COPs," said Carlos Nobre, a climate scientist at the University of São Paulo.

He said Lula would turn around Brazil's environmental policies "180 degrees" from those of Bolsonaro.

Lula won office last month over Bolsonaro, who appointed climate skeptics as ministers and saw deforestation in Brazil's Amazon rainforest spike to a 15-year high.

Lula reduced deforestation to near record lows in his first presidency from 2003 to 2010. For his new administration, he has promised a sweeping plan to restore environmental law enforcement that eroded under Bolsonaro and create green jobs.

On Tuesday, Lula met U.S. Climate Envoy John Kerry and China's chief climate negotiator Xie Zhenhua. He was expected to meet EU climate policy chief Frans Timmermans on Wednesday.

On Thursday, Lula will meet with civil society and indigenous groups, as well as United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres. He departs on Friday for Portugal to meet government authorities there.

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