

## ICCI Annual Report 2025

### Overview:

From the launch of the International Year of Glaciers Preservation during January and March; to Sagarmatha Sambaad in Kathmandu and the International Glaciers' Conference in Dushanbe during May; through SB62 in Bonn, UNGA Climate Week in New York, and COP30 in Belém; and across dozens of scientific meetings worldwide, recognition of the Cryosphere's central role in climate action continues to grow. The message was clear: cutting fossil fuel emissions is urgent, and latest science leaves no room for delay. Importantly, the Paris Agreement limit of 1.5°C remains within reach. Whether these goals are met depends on urgent policy decisions, and on turning climate commitments into action. ICCI will continue to push this momentum forward in 2026 through the Cryosphere lens.

Some 2025 highlights:

### Launch of International Year of Glaciers' Preservation | Geneva | January 2025

A high-level [launch event](#) in Geneva marked the official start of the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation (IYGP), in which ICCI led Task Force 4 on Policy and Finance. This year was designated to highlight the need for immediate and deep emissions reductions to preserve the critical role of glaciers; and address the equally urgent adaptation challenges posed by accelerated glacier melt.

ICCI also launched a study on "Barriers to Glacier-related Financing" on the margins of this event in coordination with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), continuing the excellent cooperation with ADB begun at COP29 in Baku a few months earlier. The day-long scoping meeting including representative from the Green Climate Fund (GCF), World Bank, OECD and private sector including BNP Paribas, in addition to ADB; with subsequent consultations including the Inter-American Development Bank, GEF and EBRD. The study was later released at a side event at COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

### World Day for Glaciers & IYGP Sessions | Paris and New York City | March 2025

Friday March 21st marked the first World Day for Glaciers, bringing together global leaders, cryosphere scientists, and policymakers to address the urgent need for glacier preservation and water security. A [high-level event](#) was held at UN Headquarters in New York alongside ongoing events and sessions at UNESCO in Paris that also aimed at the start of the Decade for Action on Cryospheric Sciences, for which ICCI contributed the non-paper on Policy. World Day for Glaciers is a cornerstone of IYGP. The UN event included several leading glaciologists and was organized and moderated in part by ICCI, with a number of glacier-impacted nations joining glacier nations with formal interventions. Both served as a platform for high-level dialogue and action regarding the state of the world's glaciers and damage from their continued loss on water availability, food, and energy security.

### **National Conference of Chinese Society of Cryosphere Science | Lingshui | March 21-22, 2025**

ICCI's China Coordinator delivered a public-facing presentation at this biennial national conference, which included several sessions geared toward raising public awareness of cryosphere issues. Her presentation highlighted ICCI's role in promoting cryosphere-focused climate action and helped raise awareness among a wide audience of Chinese researchers. More than 400 scientists, postdoctoral researchers, and graduate students from universities and research institutions across China participated in this conference.

### **Ambition on Melting Ice (AMI) Strategy Meeting | New York | March 2025**

The spring [AMI](#) strategy, hosted by AMI Co-chair Chile at its UN Mission, included concentrated policy discussions as government negotiators prepared for SB62 and COP30. They also discussed how related work in other spheres including G7, the Arctic Council, and the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation can feed into the ambition agenda. AMI is a high-level group consisting of 25 countries who collaboratively work to strengthen commitments towards 1.5°C and limit the global impacts of snow and ice loss, for which ICCI serves as Secretariat. This in-person meeting took place under Chatham House rule, with highly experienced negotiators, several COP-IPCC-experienced scientists, and the UNSG's climate team.

### **Arctic Black Carbon | April, October, December 2025**

ICCI joined the Clean Arctic Alliance in London in early April for a retreat strategizing the next 2-3 years' work to gain concrete black carbon reductions from marine shipping in the Arctic, bringing its knowledge of Arctic sea ice process as well as connections with the UNFCCC and LRTAP Convention. Under CLRTAP, ICCI also took part in technical meetings in Stockholm in the fall, and the Executive Body in Geneva in December as it explored means to bring marine black carbon into the planned Gothenburg Protocol revision negotiations.

### **Cryosphere Workshop with Chinese Scientists | Shanghai | April 2025**

ICCI participated in a civil society-focused workshop bringing together scientists, NGOs, and stakeholders to raise awareness of accelerating cryosphere loss. This event received significant attention from national media outlets, increasing ICCI's visibility in the Chinese public sphere. These continued efforts strengthened ICCI's network within China's cryosphere community, expanded its presence among public and academic audiences, and laid further groundwork for sustained collaboration between Chinese and international cryosphere scientists.

In connection with this effort, the latest (2024) State of the Cryosphere Report was [translated](#) into Chinese and published online, alongside the original version in English. ICCI's China Program Coordinator distributed electronic copies of the report during the workshop and in subsequent meetings, alongside a focused social media campaign to amplify its reach.

### **Sagarmatha Sambaad (Everest Dialogue) | Kathmandu | May 2025**

This three-day discussion forum generated action to overcome challenges in environment, economy, and sociocultural fields related to mountains, glaciers, and climate change. Speakers strengthened international cooperation and commitments to bring necessary ambition into COP30 and onward during this critical decade. ICCI's Director attended preparatory meetings in the spring, helped plan

and facilitate sessions, and continued ongoing dialogues with national representatives in high mountain and low-lying regions.

### **International Conference on Glaciers' Preservation | Dushanbe | May 29 - June 1, 2025**

Coordinated by the government of Tajikistan in consultation with ICCI and international bodies including ADB, UNESCO and WMO, this mid-year conference served as another benchmark in IYGP 2025. It increased momentum in global efforts to highlight the critical role of glaciers and snowpack in both public and policy spheres. The conference strengthened conversations between heads of state and government, national representatives, local leaders, scientists and civil society to address global glacial melting and the cascading impacts on climate adaptation and resilience. ICCI arranged two high-level government roundtables focused on Mitigation/Ambition, and Adaptation. The [Dushanbe Glaciers Declaration](#) was presented to the UN General Assembly that fall.

### **2025 UN Ocean Conference (UNOC3) | Nice | June 2025**

ICCI participated in UNOC3 to bring the need for greater attention to both polar oceans, in particular the "triple threat" of warming, freshening and not least acidification, which has passed critical levels in parts of the Arctic and Southern Oceans.

### **SB62 UNFCCC Climate Negotiations | Bonn | June 2025**

ICCI provided briefings on the latest science and supported climate negotiators from AMI countries and other concerned nations during both weeks of negotiations, closely following developments in mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage negotiation tracks. ICCI also coordinated a [press conference](#) and supported the participation in the Research Dialogues of two lead authors from major papers released in 2025: one on [ice sheets](#), the second on [glaciers](#). In the press event, they explained how major tipping points for Earth's ice sheets and mountain glaciers can occur at temperatures well below 1.5°C. The two lead authors also briefed negotiators in break-out sessions, contributed to a subsequent poster session, and highlighted the relevant ice loss projections during an AMI strategy session and dinner.

### **Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings (ATCM) and CEP | Milano | June 23-July 3, 2025**

ICCI's Antarctica Director attended the joint ATCM and Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP) sessions in Italy as part of the Antarctic and Southern Ocean Coalition (ASOC) delegation, serving as lead author on two Information Papers: one on ocean acidification, and a second on geo-engineering proposals that would damage the fragile Antarctic environment with little global climate benefit; presenting these papers in plenary.

### **International Workshop on Cryosphere and Climate Change | Stockholm | August 2025**

This workshop at Stockholm University was the second in a series, following the success of the first workshop held in Beijing during 2024. These two workshops were a major achievement in ICCI's ongoing efforts to support Chinese cryosphere scientists to more meaningfully participate in various global climate forums, as well as provide latest cryosphere research and threats to decision makers in China. Hosted in cooperation with Stockholm University and the Bolin Centre for Climate Research, the Stockholm workshop [brought together](#) cryosphere scientists to discuss the latest updates in permafrost, ice sheet, mountain glaciers and snow, sea ice, and polar ocean science;

drew connections to the policy implications of current and future loss; and identified the best ways for scientists to contribute to global forums including the UNFCCC.

### **UNGA Climate Week | New York City | September 2025**

ICCI participated in a wide range of meetings on the margins of the UN General Assembly, with a focus on strengthening connections with Indigenous groups, strategizing outreach, identifying areas of momentum for the Highest Ambition Pathways soon to be released by Climate Analytics, and laying the groundwork for COP30.

### **AMI Strategy Meeting | Brussels | October 2025**

This pre-COP30 strategy meeting took place at Vrije University and included, in addition to the AMI Co-chairs Iceland and Chile, participants from Sweden, Norway, Antigua and Barbuda/AOSIS, Bangladesh, Belgium, Germany, Ireland, India, Monaco, Senegal, the United Kingdom and the European Commission, as well as a number of senior cryosphere scientists. They focused on the need for a science basis at COP30 to support 1.5°C ambition and fossil fuel phase-out, as well as the IPCC meetings that would take place the following week and which several participants would attend. Many of the strategies discussed and connections made in Brussels continued at COP30.

### **COP30 | Belém | November 10-21, 2025**

In addition to following climate negotiations, ICCI supported governments with the latest science, coordinated the Cryosphere Pavilion, and worked closely with Climate Analytics to spread knowledge of its newly developed "[Highest Possible Ambition](#)" pathways.

### **COP30 Cryosphere Pavilion**

The Pavilion took place in close coordination with AMI Co-chairs Iceland and Chile; with side events, exhibit area, and office space actively shared to promote greater climate ambition and emphasize the global need for 1.5°C. Many visitors commented on the positive and unique nature of this shared space between governments and civil society, a first for UNFCCC COPs, and encouraged this model for future years. The Pavilion was located in a distinctly climate-progressive Nordic corner, next to the Nordic Pavilion, across from Denmark and with Norway one space over.

Despite facing both flooding from heavy rains, and a near-catastrophic fire that shut down the Pavilion area during the final two days of COP30, the Pavilion hosted a large number of visitors to the exhibit and side events area, hosting 40 cryosphere-focused side events alongside 30 events by Chile, and the office space that was well-used for meetings by several ministers and sub-national leaders (including California's Governor Newsome).

### **COP30 Cryosphere Pavilion and UNFCCC Side Events**

Side event speakers included Arctic, polar and mountain researchers, Indigenous Peoples, youth, climate negotiators and policy experts, all of whom brought the urgency of mitigation and fossil fuel emissions reductions to the forefront with reference to the need to prevent global impacts from continued cryosphere loss. Many events focused on sea-level rise; others on the implications of glacier, permafrost and snowpack loss, including changes and decrease in water resource availability downstream. All emphasized that the Paris Agreement limit of 1.5°C remains

within reach. An increasing number of nations and scientists spoke to ensuring decisions are guided by the best available science, steering towards Highest Possible Ambition pathways that implement needed transformative climate action to meet 2030 and 2050 benchmarks.

The side events were livestreamed and recorded on ICCI's [YouTube channels](#) to expand their reach; the highest-performing events gained up to 6,000 views. Some of the most well-attended events featured updates on the potential slowdown of major Atlantic ocean currents (which gained extra attention when broken off due to the Nov. 20 fire, especially in Iceland social media as the Minister was speaking at that moment), and future extreme sea-level rise from Antarctic ice loss with continued high emissions.

Together with a number of partners, ICCI also organized a UNFCCC side event on cryosphere risks and impacts on Indigenous peoples and across regions. The event received widespread media attention, including [extensive coverage in the ENB report](#) for that day.

ICCI and Iceland's close collaboration with Chile at COP30 strengthened the participation of Brazilian and South American researchers and policymakers. Half of the ECS eight volunteers were from South America, including two from Brazil, one from Colombia and one from Argentina – emphasizing the connections between cryosphere and regions which do not always have ice or snow within their borders yet face increasing floods, water scarcity, and disruptions to their ecosystems, agriculture, and livelihoods.

## **Outcomes**

The Pavilion and office space served as an easily found gathering point, especially for many of the 25 members and "friends" of AMI. In the final press of negotiations, it was notable that of the 29 countries signing the Fossil Fuel Phase-out Letter to the COP30 Presidency, 20 were AMI members or "friends," several of which attended the pre-COP AMI strategy meeting in Brussels the month before. In its capacity as Secretariat to the AMI High-Level Group, ICCI with UN International Year of Glaciers' Preservation lead Tajikistan coordinated an AMI Ministerial Meeting on Nov. 18<sup>th</sup> which was opened and presided by Iceland Minister of Environment Jóhann Páll Jóhannsson as AMI Co-chair, with COP29 President Mukhtar Babayev also opening. High-level statements came from Chile, Senegal, Nepal, Liberia, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Georgia, Monaco, and Fiji; and AMI released a statement underscoring the urgency to remain within 1.5°C.

The 2025 State of the Cryosphere [Report](#) was released at the Pavilion during the first week of COP30, garnering extensive media coverage, reaching international news outlets as widespread as The Guardian's rolling updates to The Times of India, and WIRED Italy.

Follow-up in December 2025 included virtual briefings as well as in-person discussions at UNEA 7 in Nairobi, at UNESCO in planning for the Decade of Action on Cryospheric Sciences, and coordination with Colombia in planning for the first International Conference on the Just Transition from Fossil Fuels set to take place in April 2026.

## United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA 7) | Nairobi | December 8-12, 2025

ICCI's AMI Chief Science Advisor and Coordinator attended the 7<sup>th</sup> session of UNEA shortly following COP30, supporting negotiators as they worked on the first-ever Glacier Resolution and tackled water and transboundary issues, and keynoting a side event organized by UNEP and Tajikistan.

### Looking Ahead to 2026

A number of 2026 efforts will mark the opportunity to build on the strong cryosphere message that enhances not only climate ambition, but connections with air quality and the need for urgency to minimize overshoot. This means a combination of strong emissions reductions including fossil fuel phase-out, and sustainable carbon removal technologies. This approach also eliminates the need for so-called geo-engineering approaches that have known highly negative impacts, chief among them ocean acidification, fisheries and extreme weather disturbance, with little real effect on slowing climate-related loss and damage.

Perhaps the greatest opportunity in 2026 to highlight cryosphere-climate engagement, outside COP31 in Turkey, will be the First International Conference on the Just Transition from Fossil Fuels in Santa Marta, Colombia, co-organized with the Netherlands (28–29 April). This initiative aims to complement the UNFCCC process to create a roadmap for ending fossil fuels and offer steps to ensure a just and equitable transition. AMI has offered to organize a session on urgency and limiting overshoot, through proven climate solutions towards a just transition from progressive governments and other actors.

The May Antarctic Treaty meetings will take place in Hiroshima, Japan; and offer the possibility to emphasize climate solutions and strong "bi-polar" Arctic and Antarctic cooperation with Japan, alongside the slow but large-scale destruction that will take place with continued emissions reductions and potentially rapid collapse of the West Antarctic Ice Sheet. Hiroshima is extremely vulnerable to even moderate sea-level rise, and the city center – including the Hiroshima Peace Memorial – may need to relocate well prior to the end of this century should current emissions continue.

The June UNFCCC Inter-sessionals (SB64) will include a second Mountain Technical Dialogue, as agreed at COP30, which will determine whether such dialogues take place annually. A compromise (if necessary) might involve a Cryosphere dialogue alongside that on Oceans, consistent with the IPCC Special Report on Oceans and Cryosphere in a Warming Climate and that engages issues of Greenland and Antarctic Ice Sheet melt and sea-level rise for small island and low-lying coastal nations and communities, as well as potential AMOC collapse, alongside mountains issues.

Various International Maritime Organization (IMO) meetings have the potential to raise the impact of black carbon from Arctic shipping and the need to slow Arctic sea ice loss. These efforts combine both air quality (PM2.5) and climate benefits for nearby communities. The Nordic Council of parliamentarians [voted](#) in October to recommend that Nordic governments strive for the IMO to recognize polar fuels in the MARPOL convention and introduce stricter rules for vessels in Nordic countries' Arctic waters.

Finally, both UNGA Climate Week and COP31 offer the opportunity to strengthen mitigation and adaptation targets and policies by grounding these decisions on the latest snow and ice science. 2026-2035 is the Decade of Action on Cryospheric Sciences, with launch to occur in Paris on March 19-20 at UNESCO.