

Zero Waste Foundation Takes COP31 Implementation Agenda to the World Economic Forum

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, July 23, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Samed Ağırbaş, President of the [Zero Waste Foundation](#) and COP31 High-Level Climate Champion, concluded an intensive two-day programme of climate diplomacy in Geneva on 6–7 July, held within the framework of the World Economic Forum's programme. The engagements convened international organisations, the private sector and civil society around the circular economy, the energy transition, climate finance, and health and food systems.



The visit builds on the global expansion of the Zero Waste Movement under the leadership of H.E. Emine Erdoğan, Founder of the Zero Waste Movement, Chair of the UN Advisory Board s on Zero Waste and Honorary President of the Zero Waste Foundation. Across the meetings, Ağırbaş presented the outcomes of the recent Global Zero Waste Forum in İstanbul, which brought together more than 5,000 participants from 183 countries, and set out how its shared vision can be translated into concrete, measurable action through the COP31 process and beyond.

World Economic Forum cooperation: circular economy, decarbonisation and clean energy transition

In the opening engagement of the programme, Ağırbaş met Sebastian Buckup, Managing Director of the World Economic Forum's Centre for Nature and Climate. Discussions focused on the protection and restoration of natural ecosystems, the transformation of food systems, and joint workstreams to convert international climate commitments into on-the-ground implementation.

At the Forum's deep-dive session on the circularity and decarbonisation agenda, participants examined pathways to abate industrial emissions, improve resource efficiency and scale circular business models — including strategic measures to mobilise private capital in hard-to-abate

sectors and carbon removal. A further session on the Forum's energy, power systems and electrification agenda addressed the acceleration of the clean energy transition, the modernisation and expansion of electricity grids, and blended public-private investment partnerships in regions where energy access remains constrained. WEF Leadership Dialogue keynote: climate leadership as a driver of economic competitiveness

WEF Leadership Dialogue keynote: climate leadership as a driver of economic competitiveness

Ağırbaş delivered the opening remarks at the Leadership Dialogue “From Commitment to Competitive Edge,” held within the World Economic Forum programme. He argued that climate leadership is no longer solely an environmental responsibility but a strategic driver of economic competitiveness, and called for international partnerships in low-emission transport, green corridors, clean energy and sustainable industrialisation to be converted into tangible outcomes. Noting that the enabling technologies are largely mature, he stressed that the decisive challenge is accelerating the alignment of policy, finance and implementation.

Pointing to the COP31 process, Ağırbaş said the Global Climate Action Agenda would continue to strengthen implementation-focused cooperation among governments, the private sector and international organisations.

“The real value of commitments emerges in implementation on the ground,” he said. “We must arrive in Antalya not only with promises, but with projects delivered and results that can be measured.”

Zero waste, microplastics and environmental policy conference at Türkiye's Consulate General in Geneva

Opening the conference, Türkiye's Consul General in Geneva, Salih Boğaç Güldere, described the Zero Waste Movement as an exemplary initiative recognised by the United Nations and built into a global success story under the leadership of H.E. Emine Erdoğan. In his address, Ağırbaş traced the movement's trajectory from Türkiye to the global stage, warned that the waste crisis has become as urgent a planetary challenge as the climate crisis, highlighted the impact of microplastic pollution on human health, and recalled that the UN General Assembly's designation of 30 March as the International Day of Zero Waste marked a turning point in global environmental diplomacy.

Climate finance, private sector action and climate-health talks with IISD, We Mean Business and WHO

Ağırbaş also met Anne Hammill and Natalie Jones of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), alongside Member of Parliament Rümeyza Kadak, to discuss climate finance, adaptation investment and a just energy transition. In talks with María Mendiluce, CEO of the We Mean Business Coalition, he explored partnerships to strengthen private sector climate action

and advance the circular economy ahead of COP31. The programme concluded with a meeting at the World Health Organization on the health impacts of climate change and implementation of the Belém Health Action Plan. Through its engagements in Switzerland, the Zero Waste Foundation strengthened international cooperation on the road to COP31 in Antalya.

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