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Artificial Intelligence in Climate Negotiations: Between Innovation and Ethical Risk

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Abstract

Artificial Intelligence is becoming an increasingly influential tool in international climate diplomacy, particularly in global climate change discussions, where its predictive abilities can improve decision making and negotiations. However, its integration into diplomatic contexts raises ethical concerns about the risk of reducing human judgment. While existing research recognises Artificial Intelligence's indirect contributions to climate governance, its potential to act as a direct advisor in negotiations remains largely unexplored. This research addresses the gap through a qualitative case study methodology, exploring the advantages and disadvantages of employing Artificial Intelligence as a diplomatic advisor. The purpose of this paper is to explore how Artificial Intelligence might serve as a diplomatic advisor in climate negotiations, focusing on its benefits, risks, and potential role at future Conferences of the Parties summits. The study is based on a best-case hypothetical scenario in which Artificial Intelligence improves negotiation outcomes by promoting transparency and supporting data-driven decision making, and a worst-case hypothetical scenario in which its use leads to biased decisions, undermines trust and reduces the influence of human judgment. The results suggest that Artificial Intelligence can significantly improve the effectiveness of negotiations by providing real-time information and predictive models that help decision makers evaluate the long-term consequences of different policy options, identify optimal solutions, and build consensus faster. However, concerns about algorithmic biases, the complexity of decision making processes and the potential for over-reliance on technology underline the need for solid policy frameworks that ensure transparency, accountability and fairness, while ethical issues further highlight the importance of maintaining human oversight. As international negotiations on climate change continue to evolve, the responsible integration of Artificial Intelligence, guided by ethical principles, could play a key role in accelerating progress towards global climate goals, while preserving the essential role of the human factor in decision making.

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1. Introduction

Climate change stands as one of the most pressing and complex challenges of our time. Its impacts are not limited to environmental degradation but extend to economic instability, social inequality, and global security risks. In this context, climate diplomacy has emerged as an essential tool for fostering international cooperation. Through platforms like the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the annual Conferences of the Parties (COPs), states negotiate shared commitments to limit global warming and build pathways toward sustainable development.

Unlike traditional diplomacy, which often centres on security or trade, climate diplomacy is shaped by scientific evidence, long-term modelling, and intricate stakeholder dynamics. Recent developments have seen a new player enter this diplomatic landscape: artificial intelligence (AI). AI technologies are increasingly being used to model negotiations, optimise climate mitigation strategies, and predict negotiation outcomes (Zhang et al., 2022). At the same time, institutions like the UNFCCC have begun exploring AI's potential to improve climate monitoring and policy support, while also warning of the risks of bias, data inequality, and misinformation (UNFCCC TEC, 2023). The application of AI in global diplomacy brings both opportunities and ethical dilemmas. AI can process complex datasets, identify trends, and offer predictive insights, giving negotiators tools to craft better-informed strategies (Mostafaei et al., 2025). However, AI systems may also create a misleading sense of certainty, masking underlying uncertainties in climate data and negotiations (Di Martino & Ford, 2024). There is a growing concern that the opacity of AI algorithms, combined with their tendency to smooth over complexity, could undermine trust and transparency in diplomatic processes (Stanzel & Voelsen, 2022).

This study explores the role AI could play as a diplomatic advisor in the specific context of COP30. It adopts a qualitative, exploratory approach by analysing how five major AI platforms (ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Claude, Copilot, and Gemini) responded to the same open-ended question: „Should AI be a diplomatic advisor at COP30?" Their answers were thematically analysed to reveal dominant narratives, ethical concerns, and visions for AI's future in climate diplomacy. Building on these findings, the paper constructs two future scenarios. One imagines AI as an enabler of more just, effective, and participatory climate negotiations. The other highlights how reliance on opaque AI systems could worsen inequalities, amplify bias, and erode diplomatic legitimacy. These scenarios are not predictions but reflective tools designed to help scholars, policymakers, and negotiators think critically about the paths we may take.

Through this study, we aim to contribute to an emerging conversation about how AI can and should be used in shaping international climate agreements. As recent research suggests, the key will be ensuring that AI applications in diplomacy

uphold the principles of inclusivity, transparency, and human oversight (Kim & Boulanin, 2023). Only then can AI serve as a true partner in building a sustainable, equitable global future.

The next section of the paper reviews the key literature on AI in diplomacy and negotiation processes. This is followed by a detailed explanation of the methodology used to collect and analyse AI-generated responses. The results section provides a comparative analysis of five major AI platforms, along with two scenario-based reflections on AI's potential role at COP30. The final section discusses the implications of these findings and concludes with reflections on limitations and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Negotiation and Diplomacy in the Age of AI

For centuries, classical diplomacy has traditionally focused on issues such as national security, trade, and political alliances. Climate diplomacy emerged in the recent period as an imperative to solve climate change through negotiation, thus maintaining a sense of stability between states and international organisations. The main core difference between classical diplomacy and climate diplomacy is the reliance of climate diplomacy on forecasting, data analysis, and multilateral negotiations to develop climate policies and agreements, such as the Paris Agreement (UNFCCC TEC, 2023; Kim & Boulanin, 2023).

The importance of AI has risen tremendously over the years, emerging as a new actor in international relations, including climate negotiations. The integration of AI into the diplomatic process represents a fundamental shift in the manner in which international negotiations are planned, executed, and perceived. In the context of the growing urgency of climate change, governments and other actors are increasingly turning to AI to support diplomatic efforts. AI has been employed to enhance decision making processes, improve strategic planning, and expand analytical capacity. While this development offers many opportunities, it also raises concerns. Issues such as trust in automated systems, ethical use of technology, and the challenge of managing uncertainty remain important aspects to observe in the near future (Di Martino & Ford, 2024).

As Stanzel and Politik-SWP-Deutsches (2018) have noted, diplomacy now takes place in more complex environments, where negotiations such as the UN Climate Change Conferences (COPs) must deal with large-scale coordination, time-sensitive decisions, and a wide range of political perspectives. These changes demonstrate how environmental concerns are becoming a central part of international policy and highlight the growing demand for new, adaptive tools in a fast-changing digital world. According to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, AI is being used in diplomacy to support climate action through tools such as predictive modelling, satellite-based remote sensing, and early warning systems. These technologies help countries anticipate the effects of climate change, locate the most vulnerable areas, and test different adaptation

strategies in advance. For instance, AI has been used to track deforestation patterns in the Amazon and to strengthen early warning systems in Ethiopia by combining satellite images with data on population risks (UNFCCC TEC, 2023).

On a broader level, the #AI4ClimateAction initiative, part of the UNFCCC's Technology Mechanism, encourages the use of AI in developing countries, especially in least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS). The initiative focuses on using AI to support both climate mitigation and adaptation, while also helping countries build the knowledge and systems needed to manage AI effectively (UNFCCC TEC, 2023). From a security standpoint, AI plays an important role in filling information gaps in fragile regions. It supports real-time monitoring of environmental and social conditions by using data from satellites and social media, which helps inform diplomatic efforts and reduces the risk of instability caused by migration, food shortages, or competition over natural resources (Kim & Boulanin, 2023).

At the COP29 conference, AI's potential was recognised in regards to climate action, but also concerns rose over its environmental challenges (UN News, 2024). Leaders endorsed a declaration promoting digital tools, including AI, to combat climate change, with a focus on mitigating negative impacts and ensuring sustainability. Deloitte experts highlighted the importance of AI in energy efficiency, with companies like NVIDIA and SAP working on solutions to reduce power consumption and track emissions (Khan, 2024). However, experts also highlight that responsible and sustainable development and usage of AI are essential to realising its promise without exacerbating its environmental impact.

2.2 AI in Diplomatic Contexts: A Review of Key Studies

The appeal of using AI in diplomacy lies in its ability to process massive data sets, predict trends, simulate negotiation scenarios, and facilitate information gathering. Research conducted by Mostafaei et al. (2025) examines how AI is being applied in global diplomacy, focusing on predictive economic modelling, diplomatic decision making, and international trade analysis. It reviews advanced AI models and highlights their role in improving strategic planning, forecasting, and crisis response. Using case studies, the paper demonstrates the practical value of AI in areas such as consular services and negotiations, while also addressing ethical risks and challenges such as bias and over-reliance on automation.

Zhang et al. (2022) have developed a new simulation model called RICE-N, which uses multi-agent reinforcement learning to analyse global climate negotiations. This model goes beyond traditional integrated assessment models by incorporating dynamic strategic behaviour, bargaining mechanisms, and international trade. Each agent in the simulation represents a different region with its own goals, and can engage in various types of negotiations. The research introduces adaptive protocols like bilateral agreements and climate clubs, which influence how regions cooperate to reduce emissions. Simulation results demonstrate that when agents negotiate, both climate and economic outcomes

are improved compared to non-cooperative scenarios. The authors have initiated a global competition to encourage researchers to test negotiation strategies by connecting AI tools to real-world policymaking.

Stanzel and Voelsen (2022) discuss in their paper the use of AI in international negotiations. In one case, researchers used a machine learning model to predict how countries would vote on a Russian proposal challenging the existing Budapest Convention on cybercrime. The model was trained on past voting data, political alignments, and public statements. Although not all votes were correctly predicted, the model accurately predicted most of the changes, highlighting the potential for AI to improve diplomatic efforts.

The findings from these studies show that AI can play an important role in diplomacy by supporting strategic planning, helping develop negotiation scenarios, and improving prediction in international talks. Although AI is not a substitute for human judgment, it can assist diplomats by offering clear, data-based insights that help guide decisions and foster cooperation. To use AI responsibly in diplomacy, there is a need for careful testing, ethical guidelines, and collaboration across different fields.

3. Methodology

This study explores how artificial intelligence could act as a diplomatic advisor in future climate negotiations, with a particular focus on COP30. To address this topic, we designed an exploratory qualitative study grounded in comparative thematic analysis. Rather than evaluating the technical accuracy of AI models, we aimed to understand how different AI platforms imagine and frame their possible role in global diplomacy. This choice follows recent academic discussions that encourage seeing AI not only as a technical tool but also as a participant in shaping governance narratives (Mostafaei et al., 2025; Di Martino & Ford, 2024).

The research process involved collecting responses from five major AI platforms that are publicly available. These platforms were ChatGPT developed by OpenAI, Claude developed by Anthropic, Gemini developed by Google DeepMind, Copilot developed by Microsoft, and DeepSeek developed by DeepSeek AI. We selected these particular models because they represent a range of technical approaches and are among the most influential AI systems currently available to the public. Their diversity provided an important opportunity to capture multiple visions of how AI might influence climate negotiations. As noted by the UNFCCC Technology Executive Committee (2023), it is essential to assess the capabilities and limitations of different AI models when considering their use in climate governance.

To generate the data for analysis, we posed the same open-ended question to each platform. The question was:

"Do you think AI should be a diplomatic advisor in COP30 climate negotiations?"

We chose this question carefully because it invites broad reflection without leading the AI systems toward either a positive or negative answer. The neutrality of the question encouraged each platform to discuss both advantages and risks, a strategy aligned with the complex ethical and strategic debates that appear in the existing literature (Stanzel & Voelsen, 2022; Mostafaei et al., 2025).

All responses were collected during April 2025. We accessed the platforms through their standard public interfaces, without altering any settings or providing any additional prompts. In order to maintain consistency, the question was presented in identical form to each platform. This approach ensured that any differences in the responses would come from the AI systems themselves and not from the input they received.

Following the collection of responses, we carried out a thematic analysis. First, we extracted the main ideas and arguments from each response. We then organised this information into a comparative table, which is included in the Results chapter. We coded key themes such as trust, feasibility, collaboration, ethical risks, transparency, and concerns about bias. Through this methodical comparison, we were able to identify patterns, points of convergence, and areas of disagreement across the different platforms.

Based on this analysis, we developed two hypothetical scenarios. One scenario represents a best-case future where AI strengthens the quality and fairness of climate negotiations. The other scenario outlines a worst-case future where AI introduces new risks and undermines diplomatic trust. These scenarios were not copied from the AI outputs directly but were instead constructed as interpretative syntheses informed by the themes we identified. The process of building these scenarios was influenced by methods suggested by Stanzel and Voelsen (2022), who recommend using scenario-building as a way to anticipate challenges in diplomatic contexts.

An important aspect of our approach is that we treated the AI platforms as sources of discourse, not as conscious participants. Their outputs should be seen as products of probabilistic language models, shaped by their training data, rather than genuine opinions. Moreover, since AI systems are updated over time, the responses we collected reflect a specific snapshot from April 2025. Future versions of these platforms might generate different answers. While this presents a limitation, using consistent input methods allows our comparison to remain valid within the study's defined scope.

This study contributes a new angle to the emerging discussion about how AI might influence international climate negotiations. By combining AI discourse analysis with critical scenario-building, we offer insights into the opportunities and risks that AI brings to diplomatic processes. In doing so, we respond to calls in the literature to critically assess AI's growing presence in governance, while emphasising the importance of human oversight, transparency, and fairness as essential principles for future climate diplomacy (Kim & Boulanin, 2023).

4. Results Interpretation

4.1 Comparative Analysis of Five AI Platforms' Responses

This section presents the analysis of responses generated by the five major AI platforms, based on the same open-ended question: "Do you think AI should be a diplomatic advisor in COP30 climate negotiations?" Each answer was evaluated in its original form, and the most relevant content was compiled into a comparative table. Table 1, as displayed below, served as the foundation for a qualitative analysis that identified recurring themes, differences in reasoning, and the broader narratives reflected in each AI model's response.

Table 1. Comparative overview of AI platform responses on COP30 climate negotiations

AI Platform	Advantages	Disadvantages
ChatGPT	– Data processing at scale – Scenario simulation – Bias detection & transparency – Support for underrepresented countries	– Ethical & accountability concern – Over-reliance on tech – Power imbalance risks – Trust issues
Deepseek	– Data Analysis & Modelling – Efficiency & Real-Time Support – Objectivity & Neutrality – Inclusivity	– Lack of Human Nuance – Bias & Transparency – Accountability – Security Risks – Power Imbalances
Claude	Analysing vast amounts of climate data and policy documents. Modelling potential impacts of different proposals in real-time. Identifying potential compromise positions between negotiating parties. Ensuring transparency by tracking commitments and implementation.	Climate negotiations involve complex value judgments and ethical considerations about fairness, historical responsibility, and development rights that AI may not fully grasp. Trust and relationship-building between negotiators remains fundamentally human. The most difficult aspects of climate talks often involve balancing competing social, economic, and political priorities. AI systems lack lived experience of climate impacts and cultural context.

AI Platform	Advantages	Disadvantages
Copilot	Artificial intelligence has the potential to be a valuable resource in climate negotiations like COP30, offering data-driven insights and unbiased analysis. AI could help in modelling climate scenarios, analysing environmental policies, or even mediating complex disputes by identifying shared interests. Its ability to process vast amounts of information and suggest actionable strategies could speed up decision making.	However, diplomacy also relies heavily on human intuition, cultural awareness, and emotional intelligence—all areas where AI has its limits. A successful advisor would likely be a hybrid approach, where AI supports human negotiators rather than replacing them.
Gemini	– Enhanced Information Processing – Real-time Analysis and Insights – Identifying Synergies and Trade-offs – Objective Assessment – Support for Developing Nations	– Lack of Nuance and Context – Bias in Data and Algorithms – Trust and Acceptance – Transparency and Accountability – Security Risks – Ethical Considerations

Source: retrieved from Chat GPT, Deepseek, Claude, Copilot, and Gemini.

Across all five platforms, there is strong agreement that AI can help diplomacy by processing large amounts of information, modelling possible scenarios, and supporting decision making. ChatGPT and DeepSeek mention that AI can simulate different outcomes and help countries with fewer resources. Gemini adds that AI can help developing nations by offering technical support and balanced assessments. Claude and Copilot highlight how AI can help understand climate data, track policy progress, and suggest shared positions during negotiations. These findings reflect earlier research. Mostafaei et al. (2025) note that AI can make diplomacy more efficient and better informed by using advanced tools for forecasting and data analysis. Similarly, Zhang et al. (2022) show that AI-based models like RICE-N can support climate cooperation by helping countries explore different negotiation strategies. The UNFCCC TEC (2023) also recognises that AI can be useful in helping less developed countries participate more effectively in climate discussions.

While all platforms agree that AI has benefits, they also point to possible risks. ChatGPT and Gemini are concerned about trust, fairness, and accountability. These risks are supported by Di Martino and Ford (2024), who explain that AI might oversimplify complex issues and create problems if used without careful oversight. Claude and Copilot emphasise that AI lacks human

understanding. They point out that emotional awareness, cultural knowledge, and lived experience are important in diplomacy and cannot be replaced by machines. Claude also notes that climate talks often involve fairness and responsibility, values that AI may not fully understand. DeepSeek and Gemini raise issues about power and bias. They mention that if AI is not designed carefully, it could increase inequalities or produce unfair results.

Even though the platforms share some views, they differ in what they focus on. ChatGPT talks more about systems that check for bias and improve transparency. Claude focuses more on the values and emotions involved in negotiations. Copilot and Gemini both suggest that the best use of AI is to support, but not replace, human negotiators. DeepSeek focuses on speed and objectivity but also recognises the limits of AI when it comes to human judgment. These views match with the academic research. Mostafaei et al. (2025) stress that while AI tools can help, they need clear rules and ethical guidelines. Zhang et al. (2022) also point out that AI models should be used in a way that supports human-led processes, not replacing them.

Overall, the responses from the five platforms show agreement that AI can help in climate diplomacy by making analysis and decision making more efficient. But they also highlight important risks, especially around trust, fairness, and the need for human judgment. These findings support what has already been written in the scientific literature: AI can be useful in diplomatic settings, but it must be used carefully, with strong attention to ethics and collaboration between different fields.

4.2 Scenario Analysis of AI at COP30

This part of the study was developed entirely by the authors. It is based on the previous analysis of answers given by five AI platforms. The purpose is to show what could happen if AI is used in climate negotiations at COP30. The scenarios do not reflect the opinion of any one platform. Instead, they are the result of a careful comparison of patterns, risks, and possibilities drawn from the answers and the sources provided.

Best-Case Scenario: AI as a Helpful Advisor in Diplomacy. In the best-case scenario, AI is used to support diplomats, not to replace them. AI tools help process climate data, simulate possible negotiation outcomes, and show the effects of different decisions. This helps countries understand the issues more clearly and prepare better arguments. Small and developing countries benefit too, because AI helps make data more accessible and useful. As a result, the process becomes more balanced and fairer. AI is used carefully, within clear rules. There is strong oversight, and all users understand that AI is only a tool. The final decisions remain in human hands. The systems are transparent, and their suggestions are easy to check and understand. This builds trust among countries. With better information and more equal access to tools, negotiations become more inclusive and productive. Parts of this vision match with the advantages noted in the platform answers. ChatGPT highlights the value of transparency and support for less represented nations. DeepSeek focuses on real-time support and modelling. Claude points out

how AI can help find compromise positions. The academic sources agree as well. Zhang et al. (2022) show how frameworks like RICE-N can guide cooperation through AI without removing human control.

Worst-Case Scenario: AI Weakens Trust and Cooperation. In the worst-case scenario, AI is introduced into the negotiations without proper guidelines. Diplomats start to rely on AI for advice without fully understanding how the outputs are generated. AI models produce results that are not easy to explain. When problems arise, no one is sure who is responsible. This leads to confusion and mistrust. The technology is not equally available. Some countries have access to better AI tools than others. This creates an imbalance. The models might also reflect hidden biases. If the data used to train the models is not fair or complete, the results may favour certain viewpoints over others. This creates tension between countries. Diplomatic communication may also suffer. AI systems that try to help with messaging or crisis response might misinterpret cultural signals or public sentiment. This can lead to mistakes. If trust in the process declines, countries may stop working together. Instead of solving climate problems, the negotiations stall. These concerns reflect the risks mentioned by several platforms. Claude and Copilot talk about the lack of human understanding and emotional awareness. Gemini and DeepSeek point out that AI can make existing inequalities worse. Di Martino and Ford (2024) also warn that using AI without clear rules could harm diplomacy instead of helping it.

These scenarios are not predictions. They are tools to help understand what could happen if AI is used in climate negotiations. The best case shows how AI can support a fairer and more informed process. The worst case shows how poor design or weak oversight can create new problems. What matters most is how AI is used. If diplomats, researchers, and developers work together, and if the systems are transparent and accountable, AI can make diplomacy better. But if these steps are ignored, the risks may outweigh the benefits.

5. Conclusions

This study explored the potential role of artificial intelligence as a diplomatic advisor in future climate negotiations, focusing specifically on the context of COP30. By analysing the responses of five major AI platforms, we aimed to understand how these systems conceptualise their involvement in diplomacy and to construct scenarios that reflect both the opportunities and the risks that AI could bring to international climate governance.

It is important to recognise that this research has an exploratory character and carries certain methodological limitations. The AI platforms were treated as sources of discourse rather than human participants. Their answers represent automatically generated outputs, not opinions formed through conscious thought or individual experience. As such, the material analysed does not stem from classical respondents expressing personal views, but from algorithmic processes producing text based on training data. Furthermore, the responses provided by AI platforms can vary depending on the timing of access, the version of the model, or even minor

changes in the wording of the question. These factors reduce the reproducibility of the findings and introduce uncertainties that must be acknowledged when interpreting the results. The lack of full transparency regarding the training data and internal functioning of AI systems also limits the researcher's ability to control or fully understand the data generation process. The scenarios developed in this work should not be viewed as forecasts or definitive outcomes. They serve as reflective tools, built from a synthesis of recurring themes identified in the AI responses and supported by findings from specialised academic literature. The AI-generated content acted as a starting point, but the construction of the scenarios relied on critical interpretation and integration with broader scholarly discussions on AI in diplomacy and decision making. Consequently, the study's results are meant to encourage reflection and dialogue rather than to offer final judgments about the role of AI in climate diplomacy.

The findings highlight that AI holds significant promise in supporting international negotiations, particularly through enhanced information processing, scenario simulation, and the potential for increased transparency. At the same time, serious concerns arise regarding bias, accountability gaps, risks of power imbalances, and the erosion of trust between negotiating parties. These tensions underscore the need for careful and continuous human oversight (Henderson, 2023; Lokmic-Tomkins et al., 2024). They also stress the importance of embedding AI tools within robust ethical and governance frameworks that prioritise fairness, inclusivity, and democratic legitimacy. Looking ahead, future research should move beyond exploratory exercises by engaging in empirical investigations of real-world applications. There is a growing need to study how AI tools are actually used in live negotiation environments, to understand the practical challenges that arise, and to propose governance models that can ensure that AI strengthens, rather than undermines, the effectiveness and legitimacy of global climate diplomacy.

Declaration of Generative AI and AI-assisted technologies in the writing process: During the preparation of this work the author(s) used ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Claude, Copilot, and Gemini in order to generate responses for research analysis. After using this tool/service, the author(s) reviewed and edited the content as needed and take(s) full responsibility for the content of the publication.

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