Climate Week NYC 2026:

A Shift Toward Practical Solutions

At Climate Week NYC 2026, our FTI Consulting team attended many events with themes echoing last year's conversations: the data center buildout and its implications for the energy sector; the need for resilience and adaptation in the face of climate impacts; and a push by corporates to go beyond target-setting conversations and into actionable strategies and progress.

Several factors shaped the conversation towards more grounded, action-oriented dialogue, such as the midterm elections, geopolitical disruptions and the upcoming COP31. However, despite last year's shift away from "climate" language, this year made clear that companies continued to make progress on goals and to develop long-term strategies integrating climate risks — including energy, water, nature, policy and physical resilience — as part of financial and supply chain risks.

In fact, the most notable shift was a focus on practicality, with companies more clearly communicating the gap between what needs to be done and what can be done in the near term. Amid a quickly-evolving climate risk landscape, from geopolitical supply chain disruptions and extreme weather impacts to physical assets and aging infrastructure, companies are being pushed to adjust their frameworks for both near-term investments and long-term strategies. In a crowded conversation, **companies that broke through the noise came to the table with actionable strategies to mitigate risk and enhance resilience.**

Leaders discussed the means to accelerate existing solutions, by streamlining infrastructure deployment, scaling first-of-a-kind technologies and achieving economies of scale for next-generation energy, data center and critical minerals infrastructure. Notably, the backdrop of geopolitical tensions highlighted the overlap between national security and supply chain issues with clean energy and innovation, leading companies to accelerate investment decisions.

The focus on implementation was also balanced by the need for stakeholder engagement — in other words, moving not just "at the speed of AI," but also "at the speed of trust." This call for accountability was a common thread, with a growing recognition of trust as capital. Amid intensifying community pushback to data centers and other infrastructure projects, companies highlighted actionable strategies for responsible development and increased expectations for project transparency and community engagement. For communicators, the push for accountability and engagement can have strategic implications, as both media and stakeholders bring a "show me, don't tell me" lens to sustainability narratives.

On stages and at roundtables, this year's Climate Week marked a continuation of the shift from aspiration to action. Global geopolitics and elections continue to shape the climate dialogue, underscoring that practical solutions, tangible progress and near-term strategies are table-stakes for companies looking to be part of the conversation.

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