



CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK Briefing: Expectations for the 18th Informal Meeting on Further Actions Against Climate Change

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Climate Action Network (CAN) is the world's largest network of civil society organizations working together to promote government action to address the climate crisis, with more than 1300 members in over 120 countries.

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2020 is a decisive year - it marks the start of a decade of climate ambition and it starts now. We need to focus on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the closing of the emissions gap. This is what your citizens are asking you to do and assess you against at the end of this year. The 18th Informal Meeting on Further Actions Against Climate Change is a first moment to respond to that unprecedented urgency. and must be used as a moment to send strong and credible signals that countries are committed to delivering enhanced, transformative, just and fair NDCs.

Climate Action Network prepared this briefing outlining expectations for 2020 with the intention of supporting parties at this Meeting and expects countries to discuss and send clear signals for how they will increase their national climate targets by COP26; implement a robust climate agenda in line with the long term goals of the Paris Agreement; and develop a resilience framework responding to the needs of the most vulnerable countries.

Ambitious Climate Action: Preparing Enhanced, Fair, Transformative and Just NDCs

Millions of people made it clear last year that they expect governments to raise their climate ambition in 2020. This means nothing less than aligning national plans and actions to the three long-term goals of the Paris Agreement: reducing emissions, strengthening resilience, shifting the trillions, as well as delivering means of implementation as part of each countries fair share and in line with 1.5°C.

As a main vehicle countries' NDCs should be developed in an inclusive, participatory and transparent manner involving all stakeholders, including civil society in order to develop NDCs that take a whole of society approach. NDCs should, furthermore, be developed in a long-term strategic context of national transformative pathways that correspond with net-zero global emissions by 2050 and build resilience commensurate with the anticipated threats posed by the changing climate. The NDC should be the foundation base towards achieving this strategic vision for a country's 2050 sustainable social, environmental and economic development.

In enhancing their NDCs, countries must commit to far deeper emission cuts, in line with their fair share, equity and capability and based on the necessary global reduction of 50% of GHG emissions by 2030 in line with 1.5°C limit. The emission cuts must be backed with concrete policies including targets and measures for 2030 reductions of fossil fuel production, burn and export.

In addition to rapid decarbonisation, parties should look to secure additional ambition in NDC targets and policies using the potential of Nature Based Solutions both for climate change mitigation and adaptation. Countries should prioritise protecting and restoring remaining primary and intact ecosystems such as forests, peatlands, coastal wetlands and marine habitats, restoring degraded habitats, and mainstreaming sustainable land management practices. Without the protection and restoration of these natural systems, the 1.5 °C target is unobtainable. It is essential that this is done while respecting social safeguards and Indigenous Peoples' land rights and tenure.

Likewise, the national climate plan needs to include significantly enhanced efforts for resilience building, disaster risk reductions and adaptation nationally, regionally and locally in all relevant sectors, realizing environmental and social co-benefits where they might exist, such as in ecosystem restoration while respecting social safeguards and the rights of Indigenous Peoples. For the richer countries in particular, there are strong expectations for them to also substantially increase the support, finance and technology cooperation with and for poorer developing countries mitigation and adaptation efforts as well as loss and damage.

Countries have a range of opportunities throughout the year to announce enhanced NDCs and/or related plans, including during the Regional Climate Weeks, bilateral Summits such as the EU-China Summit, the Petersberg Dialogue, the Subsidiary Bodies meeting in Bonn, the Commonwealth Head of Government Meeting, the UN General Assembly in autumn and finally by COP 26.

Civil society will continue to monitor closely which countries are taking leadership in terms of climate ambition throughout 2020 and will in particular scrutinise the announcement from major emitting countries.

Delivering on Climate Finance

As 2020 is the agreed deadline to mobilize USD100 billion a year for climate finance, contributor countries have to demonstrate how the provision of climate finance has progressed since the last biennial assessment in 2016 and update their projections of the level of finance they have collectively reached, with a specific focus on bridging the adaptation finance gap. To preserve trust in the UNFCCC process, they must give reassurance that the 100bn target will not only be respected during the 2020-2025 period but that climate finance trends will also go upwards.

To enable transformational change in countries to not exceed the 1.5°C threshold, countries also have to consider how the continuation of the long term finance programme under UNFCCC and the process towards defining a new global finance goal will fully respond to the needs of vulnerable communities

in terms of adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage and foster the implementation of ambitious climate plans.

Finally, countries need to advance discussions on Article 2.1c to ensure a broader shift of financial flows. Countries must informally start this conversation well before COP26 to enable constructive discussions in Glasgow which should result in a work program to align financial flows.

Addressing Climate Impacts

Building on decisions of COP25, Parties must work together to discuss how new and additional finance and support can be scaled up to address loss and damage. Through the expert group on action and support, the Santiago Network, and discussions with other UNFCCC bodies, the Warsaw International Mechanism has the opportunity to ‘walk the talk’ by offering real support on the ground for those most impacted by the climate crisis.

New funding for loss and damage, however, must not cut into funding for adaptation. Action on both adaptation and loss and damage must be informed by the needs of developing countries and the best available science as to how they may be affected in the future. Commitments, plans and implementation announced in 2020 must put the most vulnerable communities at the heart of adaptation planning and response. Government policies that reduce the vulnerability of poor communities by addressing structural inequality need to be implemented urgently before climate change impacts become much greater. The international community must ensure that development is rapid, inclusive and climate informed.

Empower Non-State Actors to be Part of the Solutions through ACE

As the implementation of the Paris Agreement has started and millions of people have taken the streets to demand meaningful climate action, participation and empowerment of the public are even more critical for effective climate policy. The renewal of the UNFCCC Work Program on “Action for Climate Empowerment” (ACE) this year offers an opportunity to ensure that climate education, training, access to information, public participation, public awareness, and international cooperation are mainstreamed throughout the implementation of the Convention and the Paris Agreement. To deliver effectively the future ACE Work Program must take a more systematic and integrated approach while seeking to avoid duplication of work.

The work program could deliver this efficiently by fostering the integration of the six ACE elements across existing UNFCCC workstreams and constituted bodies, as well as by promoting the integration of ACE elements in nationally determined contributions and other processes established in the Paris Agreement. Aligning with the Paris Agreement 5-years cycles, the new ACE work program should lay out a coherent and incremental work plan addressing all six elements of ACE in a balanced manner. Additionally, the work program should seek to strengthen synergies and linkages with existing international frameworks relevant to ACE such as SDGs 4 and 16 and to facilitate input by relevant international institutions.

Stepping Up for Environmental Integrity and Human Rights under Article 6

COP26 significantly reduced the number of options in the presidency texts for Article 6. However, several options, not limited to but in particular for Article 6.4, have remained ambiguous and several unacceptable options breaching principles of environmental integrity and social safeguards are unacceptable.

While agreeing on the implementation guidelines for Article 6 of the Paris Agreement is desirable, parties at COP26 must only agree on implementation guidelines for Article 6 which ensure that Parties avoid all forms of double counting in their internationally transferred mitigation outcomes, adopt safeguards and ensure the protection of human rights, phase out Kyoto Protocol flexible mechanisms and do not recognise any Kyoto emissions units for compliance with non-Kyoto mitigation commitments. Parties should also adopt an automatic partial cancellation rate to go beyond zero-sum offsetting, and avoid setting any disincentives against moving towards economy-wide emission targets as called for in Article 4.4 of the Paris Agreement.

To ensure Article 6 does not undermine but serves the Paris Agreement, these minimum requirements must be enshrined in any agreed implementation guidelines to safeguard the integrity of the Paris Agreement. CAN encourages parties to use the Japan-Brazil Dialogue to step-up their commitment for strong principles for Article 6 building on the San Jose Principles announced at COP and bringing back human rights into the Article 6 draft texts.

Agree on Five-Year Common Time Frames for NDC

Establishing a five-year common time frame for NDCs from 2031 onwards would provide a powerful signal for ramping up ambition and ensuring the effectiveness and environmental integrity of the Paris Agreement. Five-year timeframes, furthermore, align with the pace of implementation to the five-year ambition cycle of the Paris Agreement.

A ten-year timeframe, however, poses a high risk to lock in low ambition until 2040 while five-year timeframes also allow for faster adjustments to real world technological developments and political accountability. Japan and Brazil are in a uniquely favorable position to generate a renewed determination by parties to make progress on this essential issue. They may lead by example by agreeing on a common position for a five year common timeframe for NDCs that could help build a consensus among all parties.