

QUESTIONS FOR STRUCTURING INPUTS TO THE MARRAKECH PARTNERSHIP FOR GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

Input by ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability

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PRIORITIES AND FOCUS AREAS

1. Priorities

As described in the indicative work programme for 2019 of the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, the priorities for this year are:

- a) Strengthening **interaction between Parties and non-Party stakeholders** and promoting integration of action, among all levels of government and sectors, with a view to catalysing concrete action on high-impact issues, in particular related to cross-cutting areas, and leveraging, inter alia, the collaborative experience of the Talanoa Dialogue process;
- b) **Broadening the participation** of non-Party stakeholders in the Marrakech Partnership in regions and sectors in order to ensure a more balanced representation and to realize greater potential for action, in particular in developing countries;
- c) Providing **follow-up, continuity and coherence** with and between major milestones. Engagement activities and milestones should not be viewed in isolation but build on one another;
- d) **Communicating with impact** the work of the Marrakech Partnership and developing coherent messages that are tailored and delivered to different audiences.

Q1. Do the above priorities adequately reflect what needs to be done to accelerate pre-2020 action and support enhanced ambition, adaptation, resilience and support? If not, how could they be refined? In the context of the priorities, could specific actions be taken to achieve the desired outcomes?

Action Tracker

An existing tool to support the implementation of the above priorities is the MPGCA Thematic Action Trackers, but the mission, visibility and impact of the Action Tracker is still not clear. ICLEI is of the view that connecting Action Trackers to existing platforms such as the NAZCA, Yearbook, thematic events at COP24 and even creating linkages to NDCs may be strong mechanisms to incentivise increasing entries and monitoring, as appropriate.

Creating synergy between Presidency initiatives/declarations

In the lead up to the Katowice Conference, the COP24 Presidency, including its Special Envoy for Initiatives and its High Level Champion seemed to introduce new mechanisms, declarations, and initiatives but in most cases, it was not clear how these were connected to MPGCA or they were announced too late. ICLEI would like to suggest that there needs a more effective synergy with the Champions with a view to scaling up the implementation of Presidency initiatives that could enhance actions under the MPGCA.

Interaction with non-Party stakeholders

2018 was the Year of Talanoa Dialogues where Cities and Regions Talanoa Dialogues¹ contributed be

¹ <http://e-lib.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Cities-and-Regions-Talanoa-Dialogues-2018-ICLEI.pdf>

engaging in 60 events in 40 countries. The para.37 of the Dec.1/CP24 invites Parties to consider the outcome, inputs and outputs of the Talanoa Dialogue in preparing their NDCs and in their efforts to enhance pre-2020 implementation and ambition. It would be helpful for the MP-GCA to continue the similar spirit of inclusive and innovative processes inspired by the Talanoa Dialogues.

Within the UNFCCC process, Observer Constituencies play a key role in mobilizing stakeholders into the official process. It would be helpful if a more active dialogue and collaboration can be developed with the MP-GCA stakeholders and UNFCCC Observer Constituencies.

There is a wide range of complementing initiatives led by non-Party stakeholders that will make a significant contribution towards raising ambition of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2020. The climate neutrality framework² of ICLEI—Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) is a good example. ICLEI has long advocated that local and regional governments commit to climate neutrality targets. In June 2018, ICLEI issued a call to action³ for the ICLEI network to address climate neutrality, starting with government operations. The ICLEI Montréal Commitment and Strategic Vision 2018 – 2024⁴ from which this call stems, encourages local and regional governments to aim for 100 percent renewable energy and divest from fossil fuels as critical steps to achieve climate neutral government operations and infrastructure. MP-GCA processes can play a more active role to bridge such initiatives with the Parties so that they can reflect these into their processes to revise their NDCs by 2020.

Q2. How could interaction and communication between Parties and non-Party stakeholders be enhanced? How could the high-level champions contribute to that enhancement?

MPGCA Leadership Network

Activities of the High Level Leadership Network could have been better organised and highlighted. The Mayor of Bonn who is also President of ICLEI, for instance, drew upon his role as a member of the Leadership Network at every opportunity he had in the lead up to and during COP24.

ICLEI would like to suggest that the roles of the MPGCA High Level Leadership Network be redefined and updated. Members of the Leadership Network should be encouraged to demonstrate their contributions in coordination with the high level champions. If necessary, replacement or additions to the Leadership Network membership should be considered with a view to mobilising stronger and more ambitious climate action.

Enhancing linkages with strong NDC implementation

Building upon the relevant COP24 mandate on the Talanoa Dialogue where national governments are invited to consider the outcome, inputs and outputs of the Talanoa Dialogue in preparing their NDCs and in their efforts to enhance pre-2020 implementation and ambition,⁵ high-level champions can play a crucial role in encouraging further interaction and communication between Parties and non-Party stakeholders. Developing low carbon, resilient development strategies needs to take into account relevant contributions from non-Party stakeholders. Local and regional governments can provide policy incentives to support the highest possible mitigation and adaptation efforts by all Parties. As of December 2018, the carbonn® Climate Registry (cCR)⁶ reported that subnational

² Further information available at: https://iclei.org/en/Climate_neutrality.html.

³ See a related blog on this at: <http://talkofthecities.iclei.org/four-steps-to-climate-neutrality/>.

⁴ Available at: <https://worldcongress2018.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/The%20ICLEI%20Montr%C3%A9al%20Commitment.pdf>.

⁵ Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 37, available at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cp24_auv_1cp24_final.pdf.

⁶ See <http://e-lib.iclei.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/cCR-report-web.pdf>.

governments reporting to the cCR have committed to reduce their emissions by 7.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) by 2020, increasing this amount to 14.9 gigatons by 2030 and 33.7 gigatons by 2050. This user-reported information is an important evidence that support by the global research and estimations such as the one by the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy⁷.

Q3. What obstacles and barriers do you face in taking enhanced action and engaging stakeholders?

MPGCA process

Participants or members of each Thematic Group are assumed to be part of the Collaborators Forum. However, neither the full list nor the name of the co-facilitators had been made publicly available. Each organization is voluntarily spending significant amount of staff and financial resources to participate in MPGCA events and this lack of recognition may hinder their long term commitment and engagement.

Support for ambitious climate action

Supporting more ambitious climate action requires access to finance, among other means of implementation for governments at all levels. Establishing an integrated planning and action in the climate finance sphere can help in providing the right conditions to unlock finance that would reach the scale needed to meet the long term goal of the Paris Agreement. Access to finance for local and regional governments remains a challenge. 2019 Forum of the Standing Committee on Finance will have a specific focus on financing sustainable cities and it will be important to link the relevant MP-GCA work, such as the concluding session of the Human Settlements Thematic Event⁸ at COP24, into this Forum.

Q4. What could the high-level champions and the Marrakech Partnership do to increase Parties' access to relevant experts and resources?

The champions can focus on enhancing the synergies across sectors that are represented by the Marrakech Partnership thematic groups and cross-cutting areas in the pre-2020 period, aiming at high impact outcomes. Building upon the existing processes, including the Technical Examination Process on mitigation and adaptation, the champions can invite Parties and non-Party Stakeholders to provide feedback on how to enhance the impact of knowledge products, such as the summary for policymakers and the Marrakech Partnership Yearbook. Establishing dialogue channels with regional stakeholders through the Regional Climate Weeks should also serve as another channel to gather constructive input on sharing the latest information on best practices, policy instruments, and programme outcomes.

Q5. How can non-Party stakeholders best support Parties and vice versa in the implementation of the Paris Agreement?

Enhancing the level of ambition of NDCs should be the focus of work in the pre-2020 period wherein the two-way cooperative support between Parties and non-Party stakeholders needs to be maximised to produce the highest ambition possible. National governments need to provide policy incentives and an enabling environment for non-Party stakeholders to undertake ambitious climate action. Cities and regions, in this regard, are leading the way for raising ambition by developing and deploying bottom-up models of climate action planning. ICLEI's initiatives like Ambitious City

⁷ https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2018_GCOM_report_web.pdf

⁸ Session outcomes are contained in the outcome document of the Human Settlements Thematic Group Action Event at: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/MPGCA%20Outcome%20document%20HS_0.PDF.

Promises⁹ or Urban-LEDS¹⁰ contribute to this work by capacitating local governments, engaging citizens and driving climate action through low emission development strategies (LEDS).

2. Thematic and cross-cutting areas

The Marrakech Partnership is structured around seven thematic areas (energy, land use, human settlements, industry, transport, water, and oceans and coastal zones) with specific cross-cutting areas (finance, health, resilience, gender, education and decent work) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) being focus areas for a particular year. As outlined in the indicative work programme, the focus in 2019 will be on finance and resilience, in addition to on four specific SDGs. Efforts will also be made to engage with media and communication specialists and networks and to reach out to the constituted bodies, as appropriate, to facilitate greater collaboration between Parties and non-Party stakeholders, promoting integrated approaches to adaptation and mitigation and highlighting innovative technologies and capacity-building opportunities.

Q6. Considering each of the thematic areas, cross-cutting areas, SDGs and priorities outlined in the indicative work programme, should any specific high-impact topics that address the greatest needs of Parties be discussed?

Finance and resilience as the 2019 focus areas are expected to provide a solid foundation to identify common challenges and highlights actions policymakers at the local, regional and national government levels could take to address them.

On finance, it has to be noted that 2019 Forum of Standing Committee on Finance will focus on sustainable cities. It will be important to connect the MP-GCA outcomes on finance to be conveyed into this meeting. ICLEI is a leading partner of the Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance and with global city networks is engaged in currently defining the division of labour, for the Global Urbis¹¹ launched by the European Commission and several banks at the One Planet Summit in 2017, in connection to its Transformative Actions Program (TAP¹²). ICLEI supports the Global Climate City Challenge,¹³ an initiative that will address key technical and financing barriers. Launched on 13 September 2018 at the Global Climate Action Summit, this initiative aims to strengthen investment in green projects and programmes essential to improve resilience to a changing climate in cities that are home to millions of people.

On resilience, ICLEI has developed a special Action Pledge under the UNFCCC Nairobi Work Programme on vulnerability, resilience and adaptation, to have a dedicated science-policy-practice dialogue at the UN Bonn Climate Conference (SB50) in June 2018 which will be held in close synergy with the 10th Resilient Cities Congress on 26-28 June. It would be important to connect the work of MP-GCA to such efforts.

OPERATIONAL APPROACH

3. Regional climate weeks

⁹ See <https://iclei.org/en/ACP.html>.

¹⁰ <http://urbanleds.iclei.org/>

¹¹ See <http://www.eib.org/en/infocentre/press/news/all/new-eib-partnership-to-support-climate-action-in-cities-announced-at-one-planet-summit.htm>.

¹² See <http://tap-potential.org/>.

¹³ See <https://www.globalcovenantofmayors.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Global-Climate-Change-City-Challenge-I-Press-Release-I-GCoM-x-EIB-I-September-13th-2018.pdf>.

The high-level champions began their engagement in the regional climate weeks in 2018 and the lessons learned from their experience will be taken forward this year. The intention is to catalyse concrete climate action on the ground, in particular in developing countries, and to facilitate regionally relevant discussion and interaction among and between Parties and non-Party stakeholders. Although the list remains open, the following regions have been scheduled so far for climate weeks in 2019:

- a) Africa (to take place in Accra, Ghana, from 18 to 22 March 2019);
- b) Latin America and the Caribbean (to take place in Salvador, Brazil, from 19 to 23 August 2019);
- c) Asia-Pacific (to take place in China or Bangkok, Thailand (TBC), from 2 to 6 September 2019).

Q7. Why do you attend the regional climate weeks and what would incentivize you to participate regularly?

Regional climate weeks present a strong stage for climate action at the local level, and ICLEI looks forward to engaging more in 2019.

At the 2018 Latin America and the Caribbean Climate Week, for example, ICLEI South America took part and contributed to discussions on Climate Finance, Climate Compatible Cities, Food Security and water-food systems, Energy and South-South Cooperation. This allowed wide dialogue with local governments such as Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Pernambuco State Government, São Paulo State Government, among others, and partners such as Avina Fundadion, CAF, IDB, UNOSSC, IAI, RAMCC, WBCSD, among others. Thus, the 2018 LACCW served as a great place for much needed meetings and gatherings, which featured ICLEI's breakfast with different national governments in the region, and a side meeting with the Brazilian Minister of Environment, Mr. Edson Duarte.

ICLEI would like to encourage a more clear collaboration between the Regional Climate Weeks and the work of the Thematic Groups of MP-GCA, including mobilizing resources to enhance participation.

Q8. Who would you like to meet at such events?

Strengthening multilevel coordination and ensuring coherence through a mix of policy instruments across different levels of government remains a key challenge. The 2019 Regional Climate Weeks should provide an avenue where government representatives from different levels exchange views on enhancing close cooperation across local, regional, national and international efforts to raise the global climate response rapidly.

It would be particularly helpful to meet with Party representatives that lead the implementation of the current and drafting of the new NDCs during this Regional Climate Weeks so that synergies could be created.

4. Technical examination processes on mitigation and adaptation

In accordance with decision 13/CP.23, the high-level champions will continue to support the technical expert meetings by, inter alia, recommending appropriate expert organizations, practitioners and other non-Party stakeholders from the Marrakech Partnership that can highlight case studies and solutions to enhance the technical discussion and exchange, including at the regional level, through the regional climate weeks. The policy options and opportunities identified

at the meetings will inform the development of the relevant summaries for policymakers. The most recent summary for policymakers was published in October 2018.

Q9. Are the messages and recommendations in the summaries for policymakers useful and clear? How could they be enhanced and made more effective?

Releasing the Yearbook and Summary for Policymakers (SPM) ahead of COP, and presenting it through a special high level event are good practices that shall be continued. However, there needs an additional effort to link these documents with the MP-GCA events at the COP. For example, key relevant messages can highlighted at the beginning of specific sessions and speaker can be invited to comment on the content of these documents.

5. Tracking and reporting voluntary action

The second edition of the *Yearbook of Global Climate Action 2018* was released before COP 24 in November 2018 and aimed to synthesize the key messages and trends in relation to climate action from that year. To facilitate distribution and accessibility, it was published solely in electronic format on the UNFCCC website. Meanwhile, a revamped version of the NAZCA portal was launched in September 2018. The NAZCA portal should be further enhanced to provide a continuously evolving picture of the voluntary commitments, action and progress of non-Party stakeholders and initiatives.

Q10. Is the Yearbook, as currently formatted and presented, a useful tool for Parties? Are the key messages clear and useful? How could it be improved?

The Yearbook 2018 did not provide sufficient space to each of the seven thematic areas, departing from the 2017 format. ICLEI had raised this issue as its feedback to the UNFCCC secretariat in its Yearbook submission. The Launch of the Yearbook as well as reflections of its contents into the debates at COP24 could have been better planned and organised.

ICLEI suggests to have a dedicated discussion early in the year on best ways to connect the contents of the Yearbook and its SPM as an input to the Thematic Events or Round tables and connections to NAZCA and Climate Action Tracker.

Outcomes that emanate from Regional Climate Weeks could also be highlighted in their own light as a separate item to demonstrate region-specific progress on climate action.

Q11. What is your feedback on the revamped NAZCA portal? Is the information useful for Parties? What other types of information and features should be added? What do you need to promote NAZCA and help mobilize non-Party stakeholders and initiatives to register their actions?

ICLEI feedback on the revamped NAZCA portal is threefold as follows: 1) double counting/miscounting risk reduction; 2) enhanced transparency and clear data selection criteria; and 3) enabling automated data sharing system.

First, the NAZCA presents a wealth of information by non-Party stakeholders but currently there are no measures that enable aggregation of these action without the risk of double counting or miscounting. Putting in place a mechanism to identify reporting overlaps so as to have a clear picture of emissions reductions at all levels of government would be an important goal for the NAZCA, going forward.

Second, there are currently no clear criteria established and disclosed on selecting which data is being displayed. Cities like Vancouver, for instance, report to multiple reporting systems whose data are shared on the NAZCA. There needs to be a transparency guidance on criteria to understand which of data sets on the same city is being chosen for display at the NAZCA platform.

Third, cCR as the one of the main data providers to the NAZCA is able to implement immediate automated data sharing, if this should be technically supported by the NAZCA. This automated data sharing would enable real-time display of data from cities and regions and could motivate more local and regional governments to join in this reporting as they can see the immediate display of their emission reduction targets through the NAZCA platform. ICLEI looks forward to further engaging with the UNFCCC secretariat on enabling this automation in 2019.

6. Marrakech Partnership activities at COPs

Since COP 22 the high-level event on global climate action, complemented by a full programme of action events and round tables, has been convened during sessions of the COP to highlight the progress made throughout the year, showcase transformational action and provide a space for dialogue between Party representatives and non-Party stakeholders. In addition, convening activities to take place during the regional climate weeks may help to distribute those activities and engagement with Parties throughout the year.

Q12. Are the high-level and action events and round tables held at the COPs in their current format useful? How could they be made more impactful and accessible?
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ICLEI commends the progress achieved in the visibility and engagement of MP-GCA events into the agenda of COPs since 2016. The sequence of the events COP24 was particularly successful. However, special attention can be developed to connect the messages among high level events, thematic discussions, MP-GCA products and providing a synthesis to the COP conclusions and outcomes.

The COP24 format of allocating a condensed 3 hours to each of the Marrakech Partnership thematic areas is deemed better suited to the packed schedules compared to one whole day each as had been the case of COP23. Overall, the presentation of a summary video of the COP24 Marrakech Partnership was a great idea. The wrap-up event where the video was unveiled was well attended and was a good opportunity for all stakeholders to share their prospects for the coming year.

It has to be noted that the COP of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) organizes specific summits at the weekend between the two weeks, where negotiations are officially suspended. The outcomes of each summit are then officially presented at the COP Plenary on the first working day of the negotiations in the second week.

At COP23, the UNFCCC has tested to continue to work on the Sunday of the first week. While this practice faced with certain difficulties on the work load of the UNFCCC staff and Party negotiators, it can be possible to reconsider this practice taking into account the experience of CBD COPs, combined with the condensed MP-GCA format at the COP24.

7. The United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Summit in 2019:

The high-level champions and Marrakech Partnership stakeholders will proactively engage to prepare for the United Nations Secretary-General's Climate Summit in 2019 and demonstrate

their contribution to the Summit of a broad set of impactful initiatives, solutions and action.

Q13. How can the high-level champions and the Marrakech Partnership best contribute to the Secretary-General's 2019 Climate Summit?

ICLEI welcomes the decision to connect the Regional Climate Weeks as part of the official preparatory process of the 2019 UN Climate Summit. It would be helpful if MP-GCA can receive a similar official recognition in the process as well since as of March 2019 no such relation is announced. It would be important that Champions, members of the Leadership Network, members of the Collaborating Forum can receive an official invitation and support to attend the retreat in Abu Dhabi in June 2018. It would be helpful to connect the co-chairing countries with the Thematic Groups as well.

LOOKING AHEAD

8. Post-2020 outlook

Ramping up pre-2020 action remains a top priority and focus. In addition, as the mandate for the high-level champions ends in 2020, this may also be a good time to receive some initial views on the potential role of the high-level champions beyond 2020, reflecting on experience so far.

Q14. Is there a need to discuss the possibility of a post-2020 role for the high-level champions? How could the current champions facilitate such discussion?

It is necessary to start discussing the possibility of a post-2020 role both the high-level champions but as well as partners involved in the MP-GCA process and the relevant products that are produced throughout the process. The key challenge is to introduce innovative mechanisms in order to encourage Parties to reflect these into their NDCs. A decision for MP-GCA at COP25, similar to the para.37 of Dec.1/CCP24 for the Talanoa Dialogue may be considered as a minimum requirement to ensure certain legitimacy to ensure this synergy. Mandated by the COP to facilitate the successful execution of existing efforts, high-level champions have been playing an instrumental role in scaling-up and introducing new or strengthened voluntary efforts, initiatives and coalitions by non-Party stakeholders during the period since 2016. In facilitating the discussion on the mandate extension beyond 2020, the champions may consider taking the lead in working with the current and incoming COP Presidencies to coordinate as well as the UNFCCC Executive Secretary to coordinate informal exchange of initial ideas with Parties and non-Party stakeholders in this regard.

Q15. Could the high-level champions be more helpful in the implementation of the Paris Agreement beyond 2020?

The role of champions would continue to be essential beyond 2020 in engaging with Parties and non-Party stakeholders. Raising ambition of NDCs will be at the heart of implementing the Paris Agreement. Cities and regions are addressing and responding to climate change and their efforts to reduce emissions and to build resilience will make a significant contribution to Parties in their NDC implementation. In the post-2020 period, the champions will need to facilitate, through strengthened high-level engagement, the exchange between Parties and non-Party stakeholders where specific policies, practices and actions would be scaled up and replicated, as appropriate, in the context of the Paris Agreement as well as the SDGs.

Post-2020 climate action and NDCs should be strongly connected to the implementation of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including its SDGs, as well as other global processes like the

New Urban Agenda and post2020 biodiversity framework. High Level Champions can be mandated be the messenger of the Climate Community to decision making meetings (e.g. COPs or Assemblies) of relevant non-UNFCCC processes where MP-GCA Leadership Network or Collaborating Forum Partners can be announced as their Ambassadors and resourced as appropriate to support this work.

Q16. What key functions of the high-level champions would be useful to take forward beyond 2020?

In addition to the current mandate, the champions may consider strengthening multilevel climate action, aimed at mobilizing all levels of government to enhance the level of NDCs by facilitating the implementation of policies, practices and actions at local, regional and national levels. The technical examination process on mitigation and adaption can be utilized here to promote exchange of information, experiences, and best practices. Parties may be invited to define specific national contact points that can respond to the high-level champions as well.
