



# How to Improve the Marrakech Partnership for Enhancing Ambition:

## *A submission by WWF<sup>1</sup> in response to the the High-Level Champions' Call*

31 July, 2020

### 1. How would you define success of the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership in terms of enhancing ambition in the next 5 years and beyond?

The Global Climate Action (GCA) agenda is fundamental to both the successful achievement of the Paris Agreement and to the world's confidence and trust in the global climate regime. In recent years, as global leadership on climate has shifted and collective government momentum has waned, the action agenda has held strong. It has grown the base of allies and partners, deepened the strength of global commitments, and shifted our global narrative to one of collective progress.

As laid out by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), global greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by 45-50% relative to 2010 levels by 2030 to prevent global temperatures from surpassing 1.5 C, the world's guardrail to contain catastrophic climate change<sup>2</sup>. The next 10 years are therefore crucial for people and the planet.

In the next five years – a time which will be judged not by commitments logged or negotiations completed but by **action delivered** – the GCA's role will and should grow further. As the Paris Agreement shifts to implementation and the COVID pandemic lays bare the urgency of building healthy and resilient economies, the GCA agenda *within the UNFCCC* (with its High-Level Champions and supporting institutional arrangements<sup>3</sup>) should play a prominent and decisive role in encouraging climate action that helps the world deliver on the goals of the Paris Agreement.

---

<sup>1</sup> As a member of Galvanizing the Groundswell of Climate Actions (GGCA), WWF has worked with partner organizations to support discussions convened by GGCA to support the implementation of the Global Climate Action agenda in the UNFCCC, including an "online atelier" held May 2020 (the [summary report](#) from which can be found on the GGCA website). WWF's individual submission is complemented by a separate collective submission by GGCA, informed by these discussions.

<sup>2</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2018). *Summary for Policymakers. In: Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change, sustainable development, and efforts to eradicate poverty* Available online at: [https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2018/07/SR15\\_SPM\\_version\\_stand\\_alone\\_LR.pdf](https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2018/07/SR15_SPM_version_stand_alone_LR.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Currently, those institutional arrangements are organized under the "Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action."

In the period 2020-2025, the GCA agenda within the UNFCCC should focus on *driving the transformation of key sectors*<sup>4</sup> based on sectoral pathways that achieve emissions reductions aligned with 1.5°C, enhance climate resilience and deliver socio-economic benefits that build healthy, resilient economies. In other words, **the GCA should become, first and foremost, a systems transformation agenda**, and both its measures of success and functions be defined to deliver on that vision. With this in mind, the GCA should focus on delivering success in the following areas:

**1. Clearly articulated transformational pathways for key sectors, as organizing principle for the GCA:**

- These pathways should: (a) build on the clear guidance of the IPCC and supporting science; (b) define clear endpoints and scenarios for system transformation; (c) articulate transformational actions, milestones and tipping points; and (d) spell out not just what needs to be done, but who can do it (i.e. the kinds of actors (Parties/non-Parties) that can implement the proposed actions, based on the actors' different roles within the sectors).
- The pathway analyses should also shed a light on: (e) our best understanding to date about the barriers and challenges, and (f) the critical players that need to be engaged to accelerate sectoral systems transformation.
- It is important to note that these should not be *negotiated outcome* documents. Rather, while the GCA should encourage broad engagement in the development of the pathways, they should ultimately reflect our best understanding of the science and options available, and serve as tools to empower all actors to be positive agents of change. They should also be understood as dynamic documents that are meant to evolve as our actions and the science underpinning them evolves too. In other words, they should serve as common roadmaps for implementation, as platforms that can attract substantive engagement from key actors.

**2. Demonstrable scaled up climate action from subnational and non-state actors and national governments to deliver on those pathways.** This should be reflected through the following interim and ultimate measures of success:

- **Subnational and non-state actors.** A significant expansion (as reflective of the pathways' proposed scale of change as possible) in: (a) the number and diversity of subnational and non-state actors<sup>5</sup> taking actions consistent with the transformational pathways.
- **National Governments.** A significant expansion in the number and geographic diversity of national governments proactively engaged in GCA and implementing policies and measures aimed at

---

<sup>4</sup> Key sectors to consider include, but are not limited to, power, industry, transport, buildings, and agriculture, forestry and other land-use (AFOLU).

<sup>5</sup> This encompasses geographic (enhancing participation from across the world, particularly from the Global South) and constituency (broadening engagement to constituencies that are less visible in this agenda, like health institutions, labor unions and others) diversity.

delivering systems transformation aligned with the pathways in their countries (particularly from line ministries that are directly responsible for sector-specific actions).

- **Publicly-Disclosed Commitments *and* Results.** By 2025, through its Global Climate Action Portal (formerly NAZCA), GCA success should be reflected both in: (c) a significant expansion in the number and ambition of verifiable commitments by all actors tied to the pathways; and (d) demonstrable and concrete progress in delivering on those pledges and contributing to accelerating sectoral systems transformation (i.e. results achieved *and* reported through public disclosure platforms that feed the Global Climate Action Portal, such as CDP).

### **3. Demonstrable progress in fostering “ambition loops” between national governments and subnational/non-state actor actions in support of the pathways.**

One of the key areas of added-value of the GCA in the UNFCCC is its aim to foster collaboration between Parties and non-Parties. This promise is yet to be realized. One of the measures of success for the GCA in the next period should be its ability to foster and then showcase concrete examples of Parties policies and measures creating enabling conditions for more ambitious non-Party action, and non-Party action emboldening Parties to set more ambitious targets, policies and measures to accelerate systems transformation in the sectors prioritized by the GCA. A particular effort on this front between 2021 and 2023 will be critical to feed the GST with concrete examples, lessons and new opportunities for accelerating systems transformation in the sectors prioritized by the GCA. A complementary measure of success under this area would be the NDCs that incorporate the lessons and opportunities from the GCA into the NDCs in 2025.

### **4. A mainstreamed narrative of hope and momentum, supported by data and concrete examples.**

In the past several years, non-Party action has shaped a critically important narrative around forward progress even as government commitments have lagged. In the coming five years, the GCA must increase its ability to measure and track not only commitments but also actual progress through the UNFCCC’s Global Climate Action Portal based on minimum criteria, and effectively assess the aggregated impact of global climate action in collaboration with the CAMDA community for Credible Climate Action. The GCA should also play a stronger role in disseminating this information together at periodic intervals (e.g. annually) and at critical moments (e.g. in the run up to the GST in 2023) together with CAMDA and other institutions active in the GCA community. This is critical to give credibility and depth to the narrative of unstoppable global decarbonization and resilience.

### **5. A Consolidated GCA.**

The first five years of the GCA were an experiment. Based on the lessons to date and the further insights to be gained in the coming years, the GCA should use the next five years to consolidate its mandate, transformational program, governance and human/financial resources to deliver on its transformative vision during the next five years and beyond. By 2025, the GCA should be structured such that, (a) while each successive Champion builds on the previous one based on a shared ownership of a 5-year program tied to the pathways, so the GCA strategy can be both stable and cumulative; (b) GCA work is sufficiently resourced and stable to allow effective planning and delivery of transformative value; and (c) GCA governance is inclusive, fostering “co-ownership” of the vision by all stakeholders.

## 2. How can the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership add the most value and complement existing efforts to drive ambition and transformation in the next 5 years and beyond?

While the UNFCCC is not an implementing agency and the GCA arrangements within it do not themselves “deliver” implementation (as this is accomplished by the actors that shape socio-economic activity<sup>6</sup>), the GCA has a unique added-value in the broader ecosystem of climate action.

The GCA has been established to champion the urgency and opportunity of climate action *by all actors*, by encouraging individual climate leadership, fostering collaboration between national governments (‘Parties’) and the myriad of subnational and non-state actors (‘non-Parties’) with the ability to bring these actors together at regular intervals defined by the UNFCCC calendar, and mainstreaming a solutions-oriented and collaborative approach to the climate crisis with the legitimacy of the UNFCCC.

The GCA can complement existing efforts to drive ambition and transformation in the broader ecosystem of climate action through the following specific functions and actions:

- 1. Catalyzing Action.** Using the transformational pathways as the organizing tool and the convening power of the UNFCCC’s GCA, the GCA can bring key actors together to *broker transformational partnerships* to accelerate the transformation of key sectors prioritized within the GCA, and proactively *inspire* further ambitious climate action aligned with the pathways by actors across the world. In collaboration with the many institutions that make part of the GCA community, the GCA can do so by:
  - **Focusing the role of the High-Level Champions.** The High-Level Champions have a unique ability, through their own informal relationships with key non-Party and Party actors as well as their connection to the formal process, to drive forward partnerships that can unlock and accelerate outcomes across sectors. To add the most value to existing ambition efforts, the Champions should focus on large-scale partnerships with high transformation potential in key sectors, such as hard-to-abate industry.
  - **Using campaigns and complementary ambassadors to build momentum.** In the next five years, the GCA should use its unique platform tied to the UNFCCC to mainstream net-zero and 1.5°C aligned targets, as well as key actions or milestones that can significantly accelerate the transformation of the sectors prioritized by the GCA. It can do so through campaigns that can help mainstream the pathways and have an ongoing drumbeat of actions that can help the world realize that the transformation is within reach and galvanize the groundswell of climate action. These could be campaigns organized by the GCA (e.g. Race to Zero), or campaigns in coordination with other institutions (e.g. the [One Planet City Challenge](#), which focuses on a different sector every year). The GCA can also do so through rotating ambassadors (for different sectors, geographies and

---

<sup>6</sup> These include national governments, state and regional governments, local governments, companies, investors, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and many others.

constituencies) under the banner of the “Friends of the Champions.” Their service to the community would be to disseminate the pathways and related work and inspire more actors to take part.

- **Supporting communities of action.** The GCA should move away from its primary focus on events to one that fosters sustained collaboration during the year by actors around the world focused on collaborating to deliver systems transformation. The GCA has a small team and it cannot be expected to convene the entire ecosystem of climate action alone. However, building on the lessons from its first five years, the GCA can rely on a committed community of institutional actors to ground this agenda, with some initiatives being global (e.g. the [Science-Based Targets Initiative](#)), regional and/or finally others national or local in scope (e.g. [Alliances for Climate Action](#)). By definition, these communities should be open and inclusive, encourage innovation and feed results and lessons back into the GCA.

**2. Facilitating capacity building and information exchange between Parties and non-Parties.** Using sectoral pathways as the common roadmaps for implementation, the GCA can encourage the engagement of both interested national governments and subnational and non-state actors willing to work together to accelerate the transformation of their sectors. Key to this is for the GCA to focus on a solutions-oriented and collaborative approach that aims to foster exchange of approaches and lessons for the purposes of addressing barriers to implementation and supporting further action. In collaboration with the many institutions that make part of the GCA community, the GCA can do so by:

- **Implementation Labs.** Using the sectoral pathways as guidance, the sector-specific communities of action can collaborate on specific issues that are critical to meeting and exceeding the countries’ commitments (NDCs, LTS). These can range from *technical/policy collaborations* for how to reach key tipping points through supportive policy and financial mechanisms and voluntary measures, as well as more *cross-cutting aspects* such as how to incorporate subnational and non-state actors into the formulation and implementation of NDC/LTS commitments, and how to account for subnational/non-state actor contributions in national inventories.
- **Dialogues.** The GCA can use the infrastructure and calendar of the UNFCCC to organize dialogues that support capacity-building and exchange *in support of climate action tied to the pathways* (rather than focusing all of its attention on events as ends in and of themselves). Two promising areas of development have been the use of *Regional Climate Weeks* to ground GCA discussions and bring new actors to the table (line ministry representatives and regional/national organizations) and the organization of *ministerial dialogues* during the COPs or events during other key global moments (such as the United Nations Secretary General Summits). Moving away from panel-style events and more into workshop sessions could help to focus participants’ attention on using the space to make progress on implementation.

**3. Enhancing reporting and communication.** Building an informed case for ambitious and collaborative climate action to inform a decisive implementation of the Paris Agreement is critical and the GCA has a unique value to play in this space. Using the pathways as the GCA’s organizing principle, available tools like a strengthened Global Climate Action Portal and a supportive community to make sense of the information (analytical groups in CAMDA and other actors in the GCA community), the GCA can play a critical role in:

- **Encouraging public disclosure of commitments and results** through its data aggregators and eventually the Global Climate Action Portal, creating further accountability among participating actors.
  - **Strengthening the credibility of the participating actors' commitments by articulating expectations** in the form of minimum criteria to report in the portal and/or to participate in key campaigns (such as the Race to Zero).
  - **Distilling and disseminating information** regarding the aggregate scale of climate action in the key sectors, as well as progress, challenges/opportunities and lessons learned through periodic reports that can enhance awareness and complement efforts at catalyzing further climate action. These can be annual (such as the Yearbook) as well as timed for critical moments (particularly the GST).
  - **Complementing these efforts with a communications campaign aimed at broader audiences** to inspire further climate action. These should inform the “narrative” of the COP, with GCA outcomes and messages featured prominently, but also the broader narrative of climate action over the course of the year.
4. **Strengthening organizational dimensions.** The GCA can add value not only through what it does, but also how it organizes itself to inspire systemic change. Key considerations include:
- **Helping the High-Level Champions focus on the areas in which they can add the greatest value** (as per above), with (a) clearer terms of reference, (b) pre-defined and agreed-upon selection criteria to nominate Champions every year, and (c) a well-defined and structured program while retaining the ability to bring particular interests of each new Presidency.
  - **Creating a deep bench of ambassadors** to disseminate and ground the GCA's systems transformation agenda. This should be a diverse and talented team made up of rotating representatives of different constituencies, regions and sectors willing to provide a service to the GCA community.
  - **Consolidating a support team** made up of a core group of staff from the UNFCCC Secretariat, complementary staff brought by the Presidencies and seconded staff from supportive organizations for key priorities (e.g. sector-specific work, analytics, etc.)
  - **Helping involved actors structure effective communities of action**, with clear mandates and comprised of willing Parties and non-Party institutions committed to driving the transformation of key sectors.

### 3. How can the High-Level Champions enhance collaboration between Parties and non-Party stakeholders to further catalyze global climate action?

a) How can Parties benefit from the action resulting from the Global Climate Action movement and how can this action best be reflected in the work of the High-Level Champions?

Based on the premise that the GCA beyond 2020 should be a systems transformation agenda powered by sustained “communities of action” comprised of willing Parties and non-Parties, the GCA can benefit Parties by creating a solutions-oriented space that:

- **Informs concrete national-level action in key sectors.** Communities of action should form for each key system transformation area and should intentionally identify opportunities for collaboration between and among subnational and non-state actors and national governments. This can allow national governments to tap into new actors that can support them in meeting and beating their targets, as well as potentially leverage new resources for national-level work. In addition, given that these communities of action would include actors from different countries pursuing actions in the same sector, participating in a GCA community of action would allow national governments (and other actors) to learn from others’ innovations and experiences and problem-solve on key barriers, thereby allowing countries to make progress more quickly and effectively.
- **Provides useful practices for Party/non-Party actor collaboration** for the development of national targets (NDCs, LTS) and policies, their implementation, accounting of contributions and reporting.
- **Generates useful data on the scale, breadth and depth of subnational and non-state actor action** taking place in different countries. While the Global Climate Action Portal should not be looked at as the perfect tracking tool, it can provide an initial landscape of existing actions, particularly if more explicitly tied to both the sectoral pathways and country-specific commitments (e.g. NDCs).
- **Distills progress, barriers/opportunities and lessons learned across transformational sectoral pathways** to facilitate target-setting and further action by national governments.

b) How can the COP and the UNFCCC process be more effective in the collaboration between Parties and non-Party stakeholders to further catalyze global climate action?

As laid out in the previous sections, focusing the GCA’s program of work on a systems transformation agenda organized around sustained communities of action bringing together Parties and non-Parties for a given sector to implement solutions, ramp up “ambition loops” through a combination of voluntary action and enabling policy

conditions, and rapidly disseminate concrete lessons across geographies can bring real meaning to the term “collaboration.” This collaboration can and should also be reflected in contributions of the GCA into the 2023 GST and the formulation of future NDCs.

Key to this effort is a GCA that is stable and resourced to perform this task, both through the core team that organizes it, as well as through the many organizations that give their time and support to make it happen.

c) How could the High-Level Champions through their work in accelerating action and ambition of non-Party stakeholders most effectively contribute to the global stocktake of the Paris Agreement?

**The GCA should:**

- **Encourage a systems transformation framing** to the GST with focus on the sectoral pathways.
- **Facilitate broad and direct non-Party actor participation** in the GST dialogues themselves, and in the lead-up to the GST with that focus, as well as joint sharing of lessons from the communities of action by participating Parties and non-Parties during the GST.
- **Produce a “Global Climate Action Stock Take Report”** (akin to a ‘super yearbook’) as an input to the GST. The purpose of this document should be to provide a comprehensive and data-driven view of non-party actor contributions, with a particular focus on how the contributions to date can inform ambitious national target-setting and the kinds of targets, policies and measures that national governments can take to accelerate sectoral transformation broadly and encourage more ambitious non-Party specifically.
- **Encourage the Parties and non-Parties that are actively engaged in the GCA to take the results of the GST and ongoing work within GCA to collaborate post-GST** in the design of the new NDCs, so that they fully incorporate the opportunities and lessons elevated by the GCA.

To ensure alignment to the 2023 timeline, the GCA may want to encourage 2023 interim targets and reporting of progress to make sure that the “snapshot” of climate action that could inform more ambitious NDCs is as grounded on compelling data as possible.

Q4. On the basis of experience so far, how can the Marrakech Partnership be improved for enhancing ambition, including through new and existing tools?

**As mentioned in previous section, the main areas of refinement for the GCA are as follows:**



- **Shift from a focus on broad thematic areas to a systems transformation agenda** organized around clearly-articulated sectoral pathways aligned with 1.5°C.
- **Shift from a focus on event-planning to sustained communities of action** focused on delivering implementation of concrete actions with a solutions-oriented collaborative approach, with events as a means to an end and not solely tied to COPs.
- **Broaden the breadth and depth of Parties and non-Parties participating in the GCA**, with a particular focus on engaging line ministries, new constituencies, rotating ambassadors under a “Friends of the Champions” umbrella, and spaces for engagement closer to the ground (e.g. Regional Climate Weeks)
- **Strengthen GCA’s organizational dimensions** to sharpen its functions based on the GCA’s greatest added value and governance to support an all-hands-on-deck effort in support of a systems transformation agenda.
- **Contribute to the ratchet mechanism of the UNFCCC** by building information and lessons in support of the 2023 GST.
- **Continue to strengthen the Global Climate Action Portal** through the creation of minimum criteria for commitments - starting with highly polluting sectors like fossil fuel producers and electrical sector - and progress benchmarks in alignment with the sectoral pathways.

Finally, the GCA could use this initial round of submissions to inform further outreach to Parties and non-Parties in the subsequent months to increase awareness about the GCA and encourage further inputs to inform its refinement for the period 2020-2025.

For more information contact

**Mark Lutes**  
 Senior Advisor: Global Climate Policy  
 WWF Climate and Energy Practice, and  
 UNFCCC Focal Point for WWF

[marklutes@wwf.panda.org](mailto:marklutes@wwf.panda.org)



Working to sustain the natural world for the benefit of people and wildlife.

together possible. panda.org

© 2020

© 1986 Panda symbol WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature (Formerly World Wildlife Fund)

® “WWF” is a WWF Registered Trademark. WWF, Avenue du Mont-Bland, 1196 Gland, Switzerland. Tel. +41 22 364 9111. Fax. +41 22 364 0332.

For contact details and further information, please visit our international website at [www.panda.org](http://www.panda.org)