

INPUTS TO THE SHARM EL-SHEIKH MITIGATION AMBITION AND IMPLEMENTATION WORK PROGRAMME

**SUBMISSION OF CALLS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE UNFCCC BY THE
HOME OF THE SIBUYAN ISLAND PEOPLES¹**

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Background

At COP26, Parties agreed as part of the Glasgow Climate Pact to “establish a work programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade ... in a manner that complements the global stocktake” (Decision 1/CMA.3, par. 27). This was made as a response to existing national commitments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions being insufficient to limit global warming to “well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels”.

Within this decision text is also the call for “Parties to accelerate the development, deployment and dissemination of technologies, and the adoption of policies, to transition towards low-emission energy systems, including by rapidly scaling up the deployment of clean power generation and energy efficiency measures, including accelerating efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, while providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable in line with national circumstances and recognizing the need for support toward a just transition” (Decision 1/CMA.3, par. 36). Critical to achieving this as part of scaling up mitigation globally is strengthening the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) of all Parties, especially the highest GHG emitters; this was also part of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

The details of this mitigation work programme (MWP) were finalized at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt. Parties agreed that it should run until 2026, unless extended per the decision of the body. Its outcomes will also be linked to the COP decisions and considered within an annual series of high-level ministerial roundtables aiming to strengthen climate targets, which should make these outcomes more impactful. The programme would also conduct events to drive more investments and other forms of climate finance towards mitigation.

However, the COP27 decision text fails to set new and enhanced mitigation targets, instead recalling how at Glasgow, “Parties were requested to revisit and strengthen the 2030 targets” in their NDCs. This was also reflected in the resulting call for Parties “to accelerate the development, deployment and dissemination of technologies, and the adoption of policies, to transition towards low-emission energy systems, including by rapidly scaling up the deployment of clean power generation and

¹ Home of Sibuyan Island Peoples is an accredited observer organization to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The positions and recommendations presented in this paper also reflect those of Living Laudato Si' Philippines, a Philippine interfaith movement campaigning for fossil fuel divestment, social justice, and sustainable development.

energy efficiency measures, including accelerating efforts towards the phasedown of unabated coal power and phase-out of inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, while providing targeted support to the poorest and most vulnerable in line with national circumstances and recognizing the need for support towards a just transition” (Decision 1/CP.27, par. 13), which is the exact language used in a corresponding part of the Glasgow Climate Pact.

The lack of any meaningful enhancement of targets from the Sharm el-Sheikh climate negotiations is already contradictory to the mandate of the MWP, a mistake that cannot be repeated in succeeding COPs. Failing to urgently and justly increase both mitigation ambition and implementation would result in more extreme climate change impacts, the brunt of which would be taken by developing countries and the most vulnerable communities.

Despite increased awareness of the climate crisis and enhanced commitments and actions at the global and national scales, the current emissions and finance gap remains significant. Even if all national pledges for climate solutions are implemented, global warming would still rise to 2.7°C by the end of the 21st century². Fossil fuel subsidies in 51 countries also exceed all global investments in climate finance by 40% in the past decade, indicating a major barrier that still exists to maximize available funds for scaling up climate action³.

Heading into COP28, the world must not only translate ambition into action, but also aim as high as it should. Key to this is conducting an inclusive and effective global stocktake (GST), which has to produce outcomes that would enable stakeholders to enhance all aspects of climate action, including mitigation as recognized upon the formulation of the MWP.

Recommendations

Avoiding, reducing, and removing GHG emissions is neither a luxury that some entities can afford nor a mere political statement to appease the public. It is a necessity to slow down global warming and allow nations, communities, and ecosystems to adequately adapt to climate change impacts, and still keep the door open for humankind to achieve sustainable development, where no one is left behind.

On the road to the Dubai climate negotiations, the MWP must be conducted such that it is flexible enough to adjust to emerging and evolving priorities, needs, and gaps not just on mitigation itself, but also on other facets of the climate and development sphere. Its activities and outputs must also recognize and respect core principles under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement, most notably on “common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities” and the right of Parties to self-determine their climate goals and targets.

Yet it should also not become yet another platform under the UNFCCC whose operationalization would be hindered by the same factors that have resulted in global climate action lagging behind the rate of global climate changes. There is simply too much at stake for billions of people, belonging to either the current or future generations, for any further delay in mitigation action.

This programme must ultimately produce a set of *science-based, politically-relevant, socially-equitable, and ecologically-just* outputs that enable Parties and non-Party stakeholders to increase

² UNEP (2022)

³ Naran et al. (2022)

their mitigation ambition and improve their implementation of mitigation options, aligned with the ultimate goal of the Paris Agreement of limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures.

Given this global context, the MWP must feature the following recommended principles, approaches, and strategies:

1. **The MWP must anchor its approaches towards limiting global warming to a maximum of 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperatures.** Minimizing global warming to slow down global climate change is arguably the most critical goal inscribed in the Paris Agreement. With 1.5°C of warming being regarded within the global scientific community as a threshold that should not be crossed, its importance should never be de-emphasized in any political decision, especially within the jurisdiction of the UNFCCC. It is an imperative for the programme to ensure that Parties would stay committed to scaling up mitigation ambition and actions to achieve this ultimate goal, through all the strategies and activities it would conduct until 2026 and potentially beyond.
2. **A strategic phaseout of all fossil fuels and an accompanying just transition to renewable energy, aligned with the IPCC findings, must be the foundation of the outputs under the MWP.** Urgently scaling-up the ambition and implementation of mitigation solutions is impossible without drastic decarbonization, as has been repeatedly established under the IPCC reports. The programme needs to be conducted such that the resulting targets and timelines are consistent with IPCC findings, including on decreasing the global use of coal, oil, and gas by 95%, 60%, and 45%, respectively by 2050⁴. It also needs to produce outputs and activities that enable Parties to minimize, if not fully close, the existing emissions gap and avoid more catastrophic climate change. It must also identify pathways for the development of cost-effective renewable energy technologies across different sectors (i.e., energy, transport), while minimizing the ecological footprint throughout the life-cycle of such technologies.
3. **The MWP must emphasize the need for all Parties, especially those with the highest GHG emissions, to review and enhance their respective NDCs.** Updating the NDCs of Parties is not only vital to the successful implementation of said programme, but is also a critical component of the GST. As such, the MWP should prioritize exploring and determining the most cost-effective and scalable mitigation options that would help nations achieve their NDC targets or enhance their existing pledges to be aligned with the 1.5°C limit. These options can be assessed and/or presented during dialogues, workshops, and knowledge-exchange spaces to Parties and non-Party stakeholders, and can be incorporated as part of a technical annex containing the list of opportunities for scaling up ambition and actions under the outputs of the GST process.
4. **Outputs and outcomes from multilateral mitigation-related collaborations established within and outside the official UNFCCC spaces must be integrated into the processes involved in the MWP.** One of the shortcomings of COP27 decisions is the lack of strong follow-up to the international pledges made during the Glasgow climate negotiations and

⁴ IPCC (2021)

recognition of the ones formed in Sharm el-Sheikh, especially on mitigation. Accounting for the outcomes of these pledges, such as the Global Methane Pledge, Glasgow Leaders Declaration on Forests and Land Use, and several joint commitments to decrease coal use are needed to better assess progress on emissions reductions and identify challenges and opportunities for increasing mitigation ambition and implementation.

5. **The reduction of emissions of short-lived climate pollutants (SLCPs) should be a key part of the scope of the MWP.** Despite the importance of SLCPs in climate change mitigation being recognized under the findings of the IPCC⁵, this group of pollutants was not mentioned in the COP27 decision text specifically pertaining to the MWP. Addressing emissions of methane, black carbon, hydrofluorocarbons, and other SLCPs must be included within the themes tackled by the activities and outputs under the work programme, given both their contributions to limiting global warming and providing other benefits to different facets of national sustainable development.
6. **Identified opportunities for increasing investments into mitigation solutions must account for their impacts across the wider climate and development landscape at the global and national scales.** Analyzing national mitigation needs, barriers, and opportunities of Parties, especially among developing countries, cannot be done in isolation from their national circumstances and contexts, especially in pursuit of their respective sustainable development goals and recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic. The presentation of ways for enhancing mitigation ambition and action must take into consideration the potential co-benefits that options for emissions reductions can provide for adaptation, loss and damage, and other key issues in the climate and development sphere. Utilizing this approach can help attract a wider range of investors and financiers, speed up the divestment of financial assets from fossil fuel industries, and increase the mobilization of funding and, subsequently other means of implementation. Said outputs should also feed into the eventual results of the GST process at COP28, given the emphasis of their implications on other aspects of climate action.

⁵ Szopa et al. (2021)

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