Arab Group Submission on the Global Dialogues of the MWP
February 2024

Saudi Arabia, on behalf of the Arab Group, is pleased to share the group views on suggested topics in line with the scope of the Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme, to be discussed at the global dialogues in 2024.

Context

The Sharm-el-Sheikh decision states that the scope of the work programme should be based on broad thematic areas relevant to urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade and include all sectors covered in the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, thematic areas in the contribution of Working Group III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR6), and relevant enabling conditions, technologies, just transitions and cross-cutting issues.

We welcome the progress made in the first year of the MWP on Accelerating Just Energy Transitions and look forward to successful work ahead covering different topics as agreed upon in paragraph 8 of decision X/CMA.5.

Principles

The MWP and all its dialogues and events should be operationalized as stated in the decision: "*Decides that the work programme shall be operationalized through focused exchanges of views, information and ideas, noting that the outcomes of the work programme will be non-prescriptive, non-punitive, facilitative, respectful of national sovereignty and national circumstances, take into account the nationally determined nature of nationally determined contributions and will not impose new targets or goals*"

Accordingly, the dialogues must be conducted in line with the mandated, as a focused exchange of views, information, and ideas, providing a platform to share best practices and experiences on voluntary basis, while **avoiding**:

1) Changing the mandate of the MWP to be an implementation mechanism for certain elements of the GST decision.
2) Any policy prescription or calling for any actions following top-down approaches.
3) Outcome of scenarios and projections targets or goals set for specific dates for actions, as these are beyond the mandate of this program.
4) Infringing on nationally determined nature of the NDCs. The dialogues should rather incentivize party's ambitions through the investment-focused events, in particular to support developing countries implementation of their NDCs.

Proposed Topics for 2024

While planning the global dialogues in 2024, it is important to keep in mind the agreed scope of the MWP to cover the full range of sectors, recognizing that the first year has already focused on energy transitions and transport. Additionally, it is important to keep in mind the COP28 decision in which parties have agreed that **successive global dialogues should cover different topics,** to ensure that all sectors are covered during the course of the 4-year duration of the MWP.

The primary objective is to ensure that all mitigation sectors and thematic areas are addressed within the scope of the mitigation work program by its completion. This inclusive approach will enhance the effectiveness of our collective mitigation efforts and ensure equal opportunities for progress across all sectors.

With this in mind, the Arab group proposes the below topics for 2024:

Nature based solutions

Mitigation is defined as reduction of emissions from sources and enhancing absorption of emissions by sinks. However, the second part of the definition remain undermined in mitigation action. Some of the natural sinks include nature-based solutions for not only managing emissions but also addressing environmental issues such as reducing the impact of desertification and supporting ecosystems. The IPCC indicates that afforestation and reforestation are among the most widely practiced CDR methods. Forest can act as sinks, absorbing about 2 billion tons of carbon dioxide annually. Peatlands and mangroves also play a significant role not only for carbon sequestration but also in biodiversity conservation, supporting fisheries, and protecting coastlines against storm surges and erosion. Maintaining the health of these ecosystems is crucial for climate mitigation as well as adaptation. Such nature-based solutions are critical to reducing emissions and regaining balance within our natural ecosystems.

Sustainable cities - urban planning and form

according to the IPCC "*The global share of emissions that can be attributed to urban areas is increasing".* Urban planning and form are crucial elements in shaping sustainable, livable cities while offering numerous opportunities for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, with different strategies for established cities and new or expanding cities. Some examples include enhancing carbon storage through urban greening (parks and green spaces act as carbon sinks), smart urban planning (mixed use development and people centered urban design), urban waste and wastewater management (circularity approaches), resource efficiency, sustainable construction material, innovation, and technology. Rapidly growing cities can avoid future emissions by co-locating jobs and housing to achieve compact urban form, while established cities can efficiently improve, repurpose, or retrofit buildings. Cities can play a positive role in reducing emissions if the right enabling conditions, including access to financial and technological resources, local governance capacity are in place.

Low and net-zero buildings

The mitigation potential of the buildings sector, particularly in urban areas, is substantial and multifaceted, offering significant opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This potential can be harnessed through various strategies, each contributing to the overall reduction of the sector's carbon footprint.

Efficiency improvements: This can be achieved through better insulation, high-efficiency HVAC systems, efficient lighting and appliances, and smart building management systems.

Materials and construction: Utilizing construction materials that are sustainable, lightweight, durable, and reusable.

Retrofitting existing buildings: Since many existing buildings will remain in use for decades, retrofitting them with efficient technologies and materials is crucial. This includes upgrading

insulation, windows, lighting, HVAC systems, and integrating smart building technologies and systems.
Behavioral and operational changes: Promoting efficient use of resources, can significantly reduce the carbon footprint of buildings. Training and awareness programs are essential in this regard.

Ocean-based mitigation - blue carbon ecosystems

The ocean is gradually becoming established as an important element of climate change mitigation due to the far-reaching contribution of healthy marine ecosystems to climate change mitigation. Ocean based climate mitigation can have significant positive effect on the carbon stored in seagrass, mangroves, and sediments. As per the IPCC oceans report, "Blue carbon" ecosystems, specifically, mangroves, seagrass meadows, and tidal marshes, are most efficient at storing carbon, and could provide climate change mitigation through increased carbon uptake and storage of around 0.5% of current global emissions annually. The IPCC has already acknowledged and quantified the mitigation value of these three types of coastal ecosystems and has produced guidelines to include them in national GHG inventories. Furthermore, protecting marine carbon pools for carbon sequestration will also provide additional climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits through synergies resulting from conservation. For example, the protection of blue carbon ecosystems can also enhance coastal protection, a critical ecosystem service for coastal populations to adapt to sea-level rise. Similarly, the protection of fish stock can generate greater food security through the spillover of larvae and fish to nearby fishing grounds.

Organization of the Global Dialogues

I. Maintain the structure of the two-day dialogues. Whereby the first day discusses opportunities, actionable solutions, and technologies and the second day on barriers, challenges, and financing issues. This structure has created balanced dialogues and ensured that all topics were covered thoroughly.
II. Avoid activities that limit virtual participation. The World Café introduced in the second global dialogue was not very productive as it excluded the participation of virtual experts. We would request that any such activities are avoided in future dialogues. Our virtual experts should be able to participate in all breakouts.
III. Ensuring the "global" nature of the global dialogues both in terms of geographical representation and relevance of topics. The dialogues should be conducted in a global, inclusive, balanced, and Party-driven manner, which allows Parties to participate on topics of relevance to everyone. The MWP is a platform to share specific country experiences, best practices and lessons learned. Participants who wish to highlight specific regional circumstances may do so in a global context. Therefore, we do not support any regional, non-inclusive approach to the global dialogue, which undermine the "global" character of the dialogues.
IV. Hosting the 1st global dialogue in 2024 in conjunction with SB60 (June 2024) in Bonn. To avoid any logistical and additional expenses and for more efficiency, we propose to hold the 1st global dialogue of 2024 in conjunction with SB60 (June 2024).