

Mitigation Work Programme 2024

Submission by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

**In response to the call for submissions on Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and
implementation work programme**

29 March 2024

In the context of the upcoming cycle of National Determined Contributions (NDCs) submissions, the Mitigation Work Programme's first dialogue in 2024 provides an excellent opportunity for all Parties and non-Party stakeholders to recognize the role of Buildings and urban systems to tackle climate change. Buildings and urban systems have a key role to play for mitigation but also for adaptation. The buildings constructed today will still be in use in 2070 and beyond, but the climate they encounter will have changed. A low-carbon, efficient and resilient buildings and construction sector is a necessary step to make cities healthier, more resilient, and inclusive. Cooling demand in buildings, as the fastest growing electricity end-use, requires urgent and integrated action across the building sector, including to enhance access to thermal comfort and switch to more sustainable cooling solutions.

The Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme should seize the opportunity to keep the momentum fostered by the Buildings Breakthrough and Global Cooling Pledge launched by the COP28 and the Declaration de Chaillot endorsed by 72 countries at the Buildings and Climate Global Forum that took place in Paris in March 2024. These country-led engagements demonstrate a strong commitment from many Parties towards accelerating climate action in the buildings and construction sector and on sustainable cooling and that there is strong support from non-Party stakeholders to transforming the sector.

The Mitigation Work Programme 2024's first dialogue is a relevant **opportunity** for Parties and non-Parties stakeholders to:

- Advocate for Climate Action Roadmaps for the sector and integrating ambitious actions and targets for buildings and construction and sustainable cooling in the next round of NDCs.
- Highlight best practices in policy and finance measures for climate action in the buildings and construction sector, including a sectoral emphasis on sustainable cooling.
- Build on the Buildings Breakthrough, the Declaration de Chaillot and the Global Cooling Pledge to strengthen international collaboration at all levels to accelerate climate action in the buildings and construction sector globally.
- Advocate for strong multi-level mechanisms and involvement of subnational governments for the development of the next round of NDCs, including in buildings and

construction sector that have a strong urban relevance such as buildings and cooling, and as called out for by the COP28 Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) for Climate Action.

Green building and sustainable construction solutions exist. Upscaling and mainstreaming [best practices and actionable solutions](#) reside in enforceable public policy, integrated finance and international cooperation as key levers:

1. **Ambitious national Climate Action Roadmaps for the buildings sector** will accelerate decarbonisation through collaboration of policymakers, private companies, and NGOs on incorporating material efficiency strategies, low-emission design and technology solutions, electrification, and renewable energies. These roadmaps will enable parties to identify the sectoral actions and targets to integrate in the new round of NDCs.
2. Developing and implementing **National Cooling Action Plans (NCAPs)** that prioritize efforts on sustainable cooling in buildings as part of coordinated economy-wide efforts will rationalize cooling demand growth and lower emissions from cooling equipment while ensuring access to passive and active cooling solutions. Developing and implementing **Subnational Building and Cooling Action Plans** that support the development and implementation of the relevant national action plans and support decarbonization of the buildings and sustainable cooling.
3. Integrating **climate considerations at the heart of decision-making processes of development and private finance in the Real Estate sector** combined with financial incentives will drive greater investment in decarbonising the buildings and construction sector, including in innovation, increased emphasis on financing passive cooling, and a shift to reuse, circularity, natural/bio-based materials, or green mortgages offered by banks.
4. Building on the Declaration de Chaillot (Annex 1), the Buildings Breakthrough (Annex 2) and the [Global Cooling Pledge](#) (Annex 3), enhancing international cooperation will **accelerate action involving all stakeholders of the buildings' value chain to strengthen cooperation at and across all levels**, including through technical assistance, technology transfer, enhanced financial flows and frameworks for ambition raising and market transformation, and to promote support for developing countries.

Therefore, the inherent [challenges and barriers](#) remain in:

- Recognizing the **massive mitigation potential of the buildings and construction sector** and its contribution to advancing sustainable urban development in line with the 2030 Agenda.
- Addressing the lack of **common definitions and nomenclature for net zero and resilient buildings and their performance**. Countries should work towards harmonising whole-life carbon assessments, developing resilience assessments, and aligning certification scheme with net zero and resilient requirements while accommodating different regional contexts.

- Addressing the lack of **data and MRV methodologies to measure, report, and verify emissions in the buildings sector and support decision making** for sustainable and low-carbon urban development.
- Enhancing **building and construction policies to deliver on climate objectives and related implementation measures and mechanisms (including financial measures and mechanisms)**. This includes using procurement levers and adopting mandatory building codes that support passive solutions, resource efficiency, energy efficiency, renewable energy and resilience.
- Recognizing **the blindspot of rapidly increasing cooling demand and associated emissions and the increasing risk of urban heat**, particularly in developing countries. Also recognizing that sustainable buildings and urban development will support a just, inclusive, and equitable transition.
- Addressing **the integrated challenges of fast-paced real estate growth with low adoption of passive cooling and heating and rising urban temperatures** both driving high-levels of future demand for air conditioning, high consumer bills and significant heat stress for those unable to afford cooling and heating. There is a need for rapid skilling of real estate sector and urban planners to address rising heat and cooling-use in developing countries.
- Addressing **knowledge gaps** and defining **training and capacity-building priorities** to deploy innovative technologies, construction practices, tools and business models at scale.

The annexed **Declaration de Chaillot** (see Annex 1) summarizes the current situation and related challenges of the Buildings and Construction sector (refer to section 2, 3 and 4) and outlines the solutions that must be pursued (refer to section 5).

In addition, the **Buildings Breakthrough** outlines a clear set of priority actions for international collaboration (see Annex 2) which were officially disclosed at the Global Forum for Buildings and Climate, in Paris, March 2024:

The annexed **Global Cooling Pledge** (see Annex 3) summarizes the current situation and related challenges of the Cooling sector. The Global Cooling Watch [report](#), launched by UNEP at COP8 demonstrates the potential and the pathways to achieve near-zero emissions from cooling and provides a call to action for countries to pursue the policies and strategies that have the greatest impact in reducing cooling-related emissions and advancing sustainable cooling for all.

References and resources:

[COP Presidencies Troika Letter](#), UNFCCC, 21 Mar 2024

[Declaration de Chaillot](#)

[General Sessions Summary](#), Proceedings of the Global Forum on Buildings and Climate, March 2024

[Global Cooling Watch Report](#), UNEP, 2023

[Global Forum on Buildings and Climate 's press release](#), Paris, 8 March 2024

[Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#), GlobalABC, 2023

[Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction](#), GlobalABC, 2021

[Outcome document of the local leaders' roundtable on decarbonizing buildings](#), Proceedings of the Global Forum on Buildings and Climate, March 2024

[UNEP Submitted letter to the UNFCCC in response to the call for submissions on Sharm el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme](#), January 2024

[UN Environment Programme website](#)