

# Recommendations to Enhance the Work of the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership

## Submission

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Center for Climate and Energy Solutions

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### A. Context and Main Recommendations

1. In recognition of the outcomes at COP28 and the increase in activities by non-Party stakeholders (**NPS**) to scale up, introduce new, or strengthen voluntary efforts, the UNFCCC High-Level Climate Champions (**HLCs**) and the Marrakech Partnership (**MP**) for Global Climate Action launched their 2024 Work Programme (the **Work Programme**) at the June 2024 Subsidiary Body meetings in Bonn (**SB60**).<sup>1</sup>
2. The Work Programme consolidates the role of NPS in the implementation of the global stocktake (**GST**) outcomes, including through improved accountability and progress on commitments. Among key priorities, it seeks to mobilize NPS to maximize ambition, drive systems transformation, and strengthen collaboration with national governments toward strengthened nationally determined contributions (**NDCs**)—due to be submitted by February 10, 2025. Action points include: promoting initiatives to accelerate the just transition away from fossil fuels, protecting and restoring nature, and ensuring equitable finance flows to climate solutions.
3. In addition to the Work Programme, the HLCs launched a call for inputs—to which this submission responds—on the following questions:
  - How can the HLCs and the MP add the most value and complement existing efforts to accelerate climate action and drive implementation?
  - How can the HLCs enhance collaboration between Parties and NPS to advance the outcomes of the first GST?

- How can the MP be enhanced to support Parties in achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, including through new and existing tools?

### Recommendations

The HLCs and MP should strive to establish the ambition loop<sup>2</sup> as an effective mechanism of international cooperation whereby policy design and implementation is supported by tangible and robust climate action on the ground. To this end, the HLCs and the MP should:

- support the UNFCCC in providing a robust upgrade of the Global Climate Action Portal (**GCAP**), in a manner that enhances transparency and improves voluntary initiatives' accountability mechanisms, including by providing capacity building to NPS in the Global South to join existing initiatives and build robust new ones to be featured in the GCAP
- bring the 2030 Climate Solutions framework<sup>3</sup> and underpinning initiatives to the attention of Parties and policymakers as a toolkit for accelerated implementation toward halving global emissions by 2030, addressing adaptation gaps and enhancing the resilience of vulnerable groups and communities exposed to climate risks by 2030, in line with GST outcomes
- strengthen NPS networks around international agencies working on advancing GST outcomes and work on establishing, whenever possible, regional initiatives and leadership for their accelerated implementation on the ground, enhancing cooperation at the regional level for the fulfilment of national commitments
- engage in new multilevel partnerships focused on designing and implementing enhanced NDCs
- emphasize the role of high-integrity market-based voluntary approaches and carbon policy frameworks as effective tools to support country objectives and broader Paris Agreement goals, as well as other initiatives engaging businesses to invest in decarbonization and provide just transition finance.

## B. Recommendations for Complementing Existing Efforts to Accelerate Climate Action and Drive Implementation

### Enhanced Accountability and Voluntary Initiatives

4. The MP and HLCs could provide strategic and operational assistance to the Transparency and Accountability team at the UNFCCC as it upgrades the GCAP<sup>4</sup> to enhance transparency of voluntary climate initiatives globally. Following the Recognition and Accountability Framework (**RAF**) consultation,<sup>5</sup> its recommendations should be implemented and further work undertaken by the UNFCCC to improve voluntary initiatives' accountability mechanisms, through increased transparency as a first step.<sup>6</sup> To this end, the HLCs could support the UNFCCC in collecting information and highlighting best practice on accountability mechanisms including as promoted by the Race to Zero and Race to Resilience campaigns.<sup>7</sup>
5. HLCs and the MP could help robust voluntary initiatives to be recognized in GCAP, for easier identification by Parties. Once identified, robust voluntary initiatives could help demonstrate progress and ratchet ambition toward updated NDCs. Countries could further engage with these and

understand how they may support NDC implementation and ambition, together with dedicated NDC design and tracking initiatives such as the NDC Partnership<sup>8</sup> and UNDP Climate Promise.<sup>9</sup>

6. Given weaker representation of the Global South in the MP's Global Climate Action Agenda, HLCs could convene capacity building sessions for NPS to join existing initiatives and build new robust cooperative frameworks with Parties in emerging and other developing country economies, with a view to highlight voluntary best practice, including through the GCAP.

### **C. Recommendations for Enhancing Collaboration Between Parties and NPS to Advance the outcomes of the first GST**

#### **2030 Climate Solutions Framework and Regional Initiatives**

7. The MP's 2030 Climate Solutions Framework has the potential to facilitate systemic transformation and enable NPS to play a consequential role in implementing climate action in support of GST outcomes. While Parties draft and design new and more ambitious NDCs, it is primarily NPS that fulfil actions aimed at implementing NDCs and contributing to achieving the Paris Agreement's goals.<sup>10</sup> The MP could usefully highlight the 2030 Climate Solutions to Parties and policymakers as a sectoral mitigation and adaptation toolkit informed by best international practice. The MP could encourage both Parties and NPS to engage in agendas and campaigns that underpin and operationalize the framework (e.g. Breakthrough Agenda,<sup>11</sup> Sharm el-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda,<sup>12</sup> Race to Zero, and Race to Resilience).
8. In addition to existing initiatives underpinning the framework, new regional-level initiatives can substantiate international efforts toward meeting the outcomes of the GST. The HLCs and MP could encourage the establishment of regional initiatives to support just and inclusive energy transitions and defined renewable energy capacity and energy efficiency improvement goals that address specific needs and harness the implementation capacity of stakeholders on the ground.
9. C2ES is preparing a series of papers that examine leadership on taking forward key signals and targets from the GST outcome. International and regional leadership can enhance international cooperation, including through the 2030 Climate Solutions framework. Regional organizations leverage their convening power and expertise to coordinate with relevant financial institutions, capacity building centers, and businesses to allow progress toward these signals and targets.

### **D. Recommendations on Enhancing the Marrakech Partnership to Support Parties in Achieving Paris Agreement Goals, Including Through New and Existing Tools**

10. The MP and HLCs can also actively support greater ambition and implementation of voluntary COP28 pledges and initiatives by fostering collaboration and enhanced international cooperation between Parties and NPS. For example, the Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (**CHAMP**)<sup>13</sup> initiative brings subnational and national governments together to work on new, updated NDCs.
11. The MP, in collaboration with the HLCs, can continue to support private financial institutions in channeling finance to specific climate solutions from the 2030 Climate Solutions framework. For example, the HLCs and MP could continue orienting the work of the Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (**GFANZ**) and country platforms to advance just transitions in emerging economies.<sup>14</sup> GFANZ has engaged with a variety of in-country stakeholders, enabling the blending of capital to reduce the

upfront financial commitment from governments for project implementation. GFANZ launched regional networks in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Asia Pacific regions, harnessing in-country expertise to deliver net-zero transition outcomes.

12. In line with 2024 business engagement priorities, the HLCs and the MP could offer a unique platform to highlight best practice in carbon pricing policy and high integrity voluntary carbon market frameworks as carbon pricing policy enablers. Carbon pricing policies are effective in driving decarbonization, enabling Parties to make progress towards NDC targets. High integrity voluntary carbon markets can provide mitigation outcomes that are additional to what is achieved by policies, and so both support achievement of current NDCs and enhanced ambition by going beyond them. Carbon credits create the incentives for capital to flow towards mitigation projects in unregulated sectors that also advance the Sustainable Development Goals.
13. For example, the HLCs could enhance engagement with:
  - the Integrity Council for Voluntary Carbon Markets (**ICVCM**)<sup>15</sup> and the Voluntary Carbon Markets Initiative (**VCMI**),<sup>16</sup> which lead the development and application of international standards to align carbon markets to the Paris Agreement goals
  - the Energy Transition Accelerator (**ETA**),<sup>17</sup> a joint Party-NPS initiative that aims to catalyze private capital to accelerate the clean energy transition in developing countries. When it is operational at the scale of national or subnational jurisdictions, the ETA is expected to produce verified greenhouse gas emission reductions, which participating jurisdictions will have the option of issuing as marketable carbon credits to help finance the energy transition.

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<sup>1</sup> High-Level Climate Champions [hereinafter HLCs], *Work Programme for the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action for 2024* (Bonn, Germany: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [hereinafter UNFCCC], June 4, 2024), <https://unfccc.int/documents/639104>.

<sup>2</sup> The ambition loop is the cycle whereby non-Party stakeholders (**NPS**) and Parties co-create the ecosystem and enabling conditions required for ambitious climate action to take place.

<sup>3</sup> HLCs and Marrakech Partnership, *2030 Climate Solutions: Implementation Roadmap*, Version 1 (HLCs, December 2023), <https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2030-Climate-Solutions-Publication-Implementation-roadmap.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> “Global Climate Action (NAZCA),” UNFCCC Climate Action, accessed July 25, 2024, <https://climateaction.unfccc.int/>.

<sup>5</sup> On May 24, 2024, in response to the UNFCCC Recognition and Accountability Framework (**RAF**) and the first Draft Implementation Plan, a set of recommendations was outlined to enhance the transparency of voluntary initiatives among NPS. In addition to enhancing transparency of voluntary initiatives among NPS, a revision of the GCAP presents an opportunity to turn voluntary cooperative initiatives into the foundation for enforceable legal frameworks, providing further policy tools to pursue domestic climate-related goals.

<sup>6</sup> Catalina Cecchi Hucke, “New Transparency Recommendations for International Voluntary Initiatives are an Important Accountability Enabler,” *Center for Climate and Energy Solutions [hereinafter C2ES]* (blog), June 11, 2024, <https://www.c2es.org/2024/06/new-transparency-recommendations-for-international-voluntary-initiatives-are-an-important-accountability-enabler/>.

<sup>7</sup> “Race to Zero,” UNFCCC Climate Champions, accessed July 25, 2024, <https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/system/race-to-zero/>; “Race to Resilience,” UNFCCC Race to Zero, accessed July 25, 2024 <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/system/racetoresilience/>.

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<sup>8</sup> “Country Engagement,” NDC Partnership, accessed July 25, 2024, <https://ndcpartnership.org/country-action/country-engagement>.

<sup>9</sup> “What We Do,” United Nations Development Programme [hereinafter UNDP] Climate Promise, accessed July 25, 2024, <https://climatepromise.undp.org/what-we-do>.

<sup>10</sup> Catalina Cecchi Hucke, “2030 Climate Solutions: implementation as the new measure of ambition,” C2ES (blog), April 25, 2024, <https://www.c2es.org/2024/04/2030-climate-solutions-implementation-as-the-new-measure-of-ambition/>.

<sup>11</sup> International Energy Agency [hereinafter IEA], International Renewable Energy Agency, and HLCs, *The Breakthrough Agenda Report* (Paris, France: IEA, September 2023), <https://breakthroughagenda.org/>.

<sup>12</sup> HLCs, *Sharm-El-Sheikh Adaptation Agenda: Implementation Report* (HLCs, 2023), <https://climatechampions.unfccc.int/system/sharm-el-sheikh-adaptation-agenda/>.

<sup>13</sup> “Coalition for High Ambition Multilevel Partnerships (CHAMP) for Climate Action,” UAE COP28, 2023, <https://www.cop28.com/en/cop28-uae-coalition-for-high-ambition-multilevel-partnerships-for-climate-action>.

<sup>14</sup> Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero [hereinafter GFANZ], *GFANZ Actions to Mobilize Capital to Emerging Markets and Developing Economies* (Glasgow: GFANZ, November 2023), <https://www.gfanzero.com/our-work/mobilizing-capital-for-emerging-markets-and-developing-economies/>.

<sup>15</sup> “The Core Carbon Principles,” Integrity Council for the Voluntary Carbon Market, accessed July 25, 2024, <https://icvcm.org/core-carbon-principles/>.

<sup>16</sup> Voluntary Carbon Markets Integrity Initiative [hereinafter VCMI], *Claims Code of Practice: Building integrity in voluntary carbon markets*, Version 2 (London: VCMI, November 2023), <https://vcmintegrity.org/vcmi-claims-code-of-practice/>.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. State Department, Bezos Earth Fund, and The Rockefeller Foundation, *Energy Transition Accelerator: Core Framework* (ETA, December 2023), <https://www.etaccelerator.org/eta-framework>.