

Feedback to the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership on how to accelerate climate action and drive implementation

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The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) welcomes the opportunity presented by the High-Level Champions (HLCs) to share its insights and recommendations for advancing the HLCs and the Marrakech Partnership drawing on its extensive experience in promoting climate action across the Arab region.

How can the High-Level Champions and the Marrakech Partnership add the most value and complement existing efforts to accelerate climate action and drive implementation?

The High-Level Champions (HLC) and the Marrakech Partnership can add significant value by emphasizing the critical role of biodiversity conservation in climate action, especially considering the nature focus of COP28 and the youth and stakeholder engagement focus of COP29. In 2023, ESCWA launched the Multistakeholder Biodiversity Platform at the inception meeting held in Beirut. The platform seeks to enhance collaboration among varied groups in the Arab region to jointly prepare project concepts to mobilize climate finance for biodiversity conservation. The platform is supported by three working groups focusing on nature-based solutions for climate resilience, land degradation in arid agricultural ecosystems, and renewable energy and biodiversity. We propose the HLC focus on:

- Integrating Biodiversity into Climate Strategies and Policies: Encourage stakeholders to adopt climate strategies and policies that prioritize biodiversity conservation and restoration, highlighting the co-benefits for climate resilience and carbon sequestration and creating supportive regulatory environments that incentivize biodiversity conservation within climate action plans and encourage project implementation.
- Fostering Multistakeholder Collaboration: Leverage the Multistakeholder Biodiversity Platform created in the Arab Region to bring together governments, private sector, NGOs, and local communities for preparing proposals, mobilizing resources, financing and implementing relevant projects. The HLC Team, having been invited to the Inception Meeting in July 2023 and the Mashreq Workshop, is well-positioned to drive this effort highlighting the importance of cooperation efforts for biodiversity protection.



- Promoting Best Practices and Building Capacity: Showcase successful biodiversity-inclusive climate projects and share best practices to inspire and guide other stakeholders. Offer capacity-building programs on project preparation addressing common challenges is essential in addition to promoting use of innovative financial instruments for mobilizing climate finance for biodiversity.

How can the High-Level Champions enhance collaboration between Parties and Non-Party Stakeholders (NPS) to advance the outcomes of the first Global Stocktake?

The first Global Stocktake (GST) under the Paris Agreement is a comprehensive process assessing the collective progress towards achieving the Agreement's long-term goals. The assessment to identify gaps, inform future actions, and enhance global climate efforts. Along the main thematic and cross cutting themes identified the High-Level Champions can enhance collaboration between Parties and Non-Party Stakeholders (NPS) by focusing on relevant means of implementation that can ensure progress towards equity, sustainable development, loss and damage along with stakeholder engagement for ensuring a transparent and inclusive process. Focus could thus be placed on

- Creating Synergy Between Parties and NPS: Utilizing existing platforms such as the Multistakeholder Biodiversity Platform to facilitate dialogues, partnerships and joint action plans that align the goals of Parties and NPS, particularly in biodiversity conservation and ecosystem restoration projects.
- Incentivizing Participation and Transparent Reporting: Develop incentives for NPS to engage in the GST process, ensuring their contributions to biodiversity and climate action are recognized and valued. Also to encourage and ensure the transparent and consistent reporting on climate actions from both Parties and NPS, encouraging mutual accountability and learning.
- Adopting and Adapting Capacity Building Programs to diverse stakeholders: Prepare and implement programs that aim to equip both Parties and NPS with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively collaborate on climate initiatives that address national, regional and global challenges. As seen with the support provided to the Multistakeholder Biodiversity Platform, about 40 regional and national institutions from the Arab region were trained and assisted on the preparation of elaborated project concept note that can be used to raise awareness about the regional and national challenges in the form of project and are able to solicit funds from various donors.



Question: How can the Marrakech Partnership be enhanced to support Parties in achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, including through new and existing tools?

The Marrakech Partnership can be enhanced by adopting a multifaceted approach that emphasizes thematic integration across climate financing sectors, including biodiversity, energy, water, sanitation, and agriculture. Recent events and initiatives provide a valuable roadmap for this approach, leveraging both new and existing tools to support Parties in achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. Key strategies for enhancement could include:

- **Promote Integrated Climate Financing Strategies:** The development of integrated climate financing strategies that address multiple sectors simultaneously, such as biodiversity, energy, water, sanitation and agriculture can maximize co-benefits and ensure more resilient outcomes.
- **Using Innovative Financial Instruments:** Introduce and scale up innovative financing tools that cater to integrated climate actions. Examples include Climate/SDGs Debt Swap Mechanism, Green Bonds, Biodiversity Credits and blended finance models that attract investment across multiple sectors.
- **Promote Cooperation and Collaboration:** Leverage events to enhance collaboration among governments, private sector, civil society, and local communities and where the High-Level Champions (HLC) team could be invited to foster cooperation. Such events provide opportunities to discuss and develop integrated financing models that support cross-sectoral initiatives, aligning with the goals of the Paris Agreement.
- **Enhancing Use of Digital Tools and Platforms:** Create and improve digital platforms to facilitate real-time data sharing, monitoring, and transparent reporting of climate actions. These tools can help track progress, identify gaps, and promote accountability.
- **Facilitating Knowledge Exchange:** Establish or promote existing networks for knowledge sharing and capacity building. This includes organizing workshops, webinars, and training sessions that focus on climate resilience strategies, and sharing best practices and lessons learned that drive the development and implementation of integrated climate finance projects.

