GCCA Submission to the consultation on the "Five-Year Vision" of the Marrakech Partnership and the Climate High-Level Champions

Context

Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA) is a global industry initiative with its primary focus on driving decarbonisation of our essential materials. We serve as a dynamic collaboration platform representing and working with the majority of industry CEOs and leaders, companies and national regional associations, and by collaborating in close partnership with critical stakeholders such as United Nations (UNFCC, *UNIDO, UNEP), Clean Energy Ministerial (CEM CCUS,CEM IDDI), Breakthrough Agenda (Cement Breakthrough, Buildings Breakthrough), Climate Club, Global Matchmaking Platform, IEA, Hyperscalers, Race to Zero Accelerator,* and the many NGOs to advance the industrial decarbonisation agenda.

Cement is the most widely used construction material in the world, forming the backbone of modern infrastructure. However, due to the vast quantities produced, cement manufacturing is responsible for approximately 7–8% of global CO_2 emissions. In 2020 alone, global cement consumption reached 4.2 billion tonnes, and this figure is expected to continue rising in the coming decades, driven by rapid urbanization and population growth particularly in developing economies, as well as the need to build more resilient communities in the face of a changing climate.

In 2021 the GCCA and its members who operate in just about every country across the world committed to a global roadmap to net zero by 2050 – the first global industry to set out a credible pathway, and in line with global climate targets of limiting global warming to a 1.5°C scenario, aligning with the Paris goals. Our sector is undergoing an industrial-scale transformation to achieve a net-zero future through strategic action, progress and innovation on decarbonization, circularity, and key technology.

The GCCA 2050 Net Zero Roadmap sets out the detailed pathways, levers and milestones required to achieve this ambitious target. Together, the industry is committed to accelerating the shift to green concrete by cutting CO_2 emissions by a further 25% by 2030, and full decarbonisation by 2050.

Drawing on our experience as observers and active contributors to the climate agenda, we welcome an opportunity to share our inputs and observations to inform the vision and strategic direction of the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA) over the next five years.

1. What should success look like for the GCAA in the next five years, and how can it be measured effectively?

Strengthening the integration between non-Party stakeholder (NPS) actions and Party-led processes, as set out in the 2025 work programme, will be essential to delivering the global climate agenda. This alignment should be assessed by examining the correlation between key negotiation agenda items and the initiatives being designed or implemented by non-state actors. The GCAA can play a pivotal role in translating high-level commitments into concrete projects, creating a virtuous cycle between multilateral agreements and local implementation.

In this context, we welcome the establishment of Activation Groups to enhance engagement and deliver on the 30 identified priority areas. Bringing together leading international initiatives and coalitions under a shared framework will help align objectives, coordinate efforts, and strengthen collective progress reporting.

We strongly encourage the GCAA to maintain continuity in objectives and priorities, as policy and investment certainty are vital to mobilising decarbonisation efforts and sustaining momentum on net zero projects. In particular, long-term commitments to multilateral initiatives supporting decarbonisation in hard-to-abate industries is critical, given the scale of capital investment and the need for enabling policies at global, regional, and national levels.

In this regard, we encourage the GCAA to keep decarbonisation of hard-to-abate industries high on the climate agenda and continue to mobilise national governments, non-state actors, and the finance community, with industry know-how and commitments at the heart of these efforts. The decarbonization of heavy industry is a crucial step in our journey to a resilient net zero emission future. While this investment-heavy transition does need to accelerate, promising changes are taking hold – and the cement industry's progress is a key part of that.

By 2030, a successful trajectory for the cement and concrete sector would see decarbonisation no longer constrained by technology availability but driven by systemic transformation in both supply and demand. In such a scenario, sustainable cement and concrete would increasingly become the default market choice. Achieving this outcome requires coherent and supportive policies at the global, regional, and national levels to stimulate demand, incentivise production and the investment required for low-carbon cement and concrete. The GCAA can act as a catalyst to encourage governments to implement the enabling policy frameworks necessary for our sector to decarbonise at pace.

Above all, the GCAA should prioritise the mobilisation of effective finance mechanisms — accessible in particular to countries in the Global South—that can unlock investment, reduce risk, and accelerate decarbonisation. Such mechanisms are essential to scaling solutions and ensuring equitable progress across markets.

2. How can the GCAA facilitate direct and impactful engagement between Parties and NPS to support implementation efforts at both national and sectoral levels, in order to advance the full delivery of the GST, NDCs, and NAPs?

Thematic and sectoral partnerships between Parties and non-Party stakeholders (NPS) are essential for the effective planning and delivery of the Global Stocktake (GST), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). The continuity of these initiatives is equally critical to sustaining momentum and ensuring lasting impact. The Global Climate Action Agenda (GCAA) should therefore focus on preserving and building upon the progress achieved to date, while avoiding any dilution of effort or purpose.

In the cement and concrete sector observe a multitude of new initiatives, some of which come and go, and while well-intentioned can risk overlap or fragmentation. This can be more confusing than helpful, especially in our industry. The "Brazilian way" of unifying and coordinating complementary initiatives is one we fully support, and we hope this approach can serve as a model more broadly.

The GCCA and our members work with the Breakthrough Agenda to enrich collaboration across all the many initiatives contributing to progress in the sector, as well as to encourage new countries to join and commit, and also to provide a range of technical briefings and support. The Cement Breakthrough as a coordinating entity has achieved tangible progress - none more so than the invaluable solution pathways developed on a country-by-country basis. These have not only clarified opportunities but have galvanized targeted action; we strongly believe this momentum must not be lost.

3. How can the GCAA promote an inclusive and equitable engagement, in particular from underrepresented groups and regions?

We urge the GCAA to prioritise funding and technical assistance for projects that facilitate knowledge transfer and information exchange between pioneer countries in decarbonisation and those at an earlier stage of the journey to support just transition. This is particularly important in hard-to-abate industries, where initial investment and targeted support are essential to incentivise markets to embark on the decarbonisation pathway.

The GCCA works closely with local industry and policymakers to support the cement and concrete sector in meeting its decarbonisation commitments. Through our Net Zero Accelerator programme, we assist governments and industry stakeholders in identifying local enablers, challenges, and priority actions to adapt and implement the global decarbonisation roadmap at a regional level. Access to finance remains however a decisive factor in the implementation of net zero roadmaps in our sector in the Global South. Without accessible financing, underrepresented regions risk being excluded from the development of sustainable cement and concrete, ultimately undermining their competitiveness and delaying the global transition to net zero.

4. What improvements can be made to ensure better transparency, reporting and follow up of the GCAA, including in existing tools such as the Global Climate Action Portal (a.k.a NAZCA) and the Yearbook of Global Climate Action?

Improvements should aim to move from voluntary, fragmented reporting to more standardized and inclusive systems to incentivise accountability and monitor performance across all actors so progress can be tracked and monitored more easily. A unified template for reporting progress would make it easier to compare outcomes across sectors and regions while reducing duplication of effort.

In terms of reporting, the GCAA would benefit from moving towards more frequent and consistent progress updates. Annual reporting cycles, coupled with clear and measurable indicators—such as emissions reductions, adaptation outcomes, and climate finance delivered—would allow for a more accurate assessment of progress. Linking these reports to Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the Paris Agreement's Global Stocktake would help align non-state action with national and global climate goals.

We need to move beyond only showcasing commitments and track initiatives beyond their launch phase to evaluate whether they are sustained and delivering real-world impact. Recognition and incentive systems, such as highlighting high-performing initiatives in COP reports and announcements or offering technical and financial assistance to struggling ones, would encourage ambition and accountability.

Contact details

Paul Adeleke | Strategy, Communications and Policy Director
paul.adeleke@gccassociation.org
Global Cement and Concrete Association (GCCA)
Paddington Central
6th Floor, 2 Kingdom Street
London, W2 6JP
United Kingdom
www.gccassociation.org