

Proposal

From Pledge to Impact

Leveraging the Climate Promise to turn enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions into ambitious climate action

United Nations Development Programme

As part of the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit in 2019, the United Nations Development Programme pledged to support at least 100 countries to enhance their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) ahead of COP26. This pledge turned into **UNDP's Climate Promise**, which is now the world's largest offer of support to countries on NDC enhancement and has contributed to an increase of climate mitigation and adaptation ambition. This success has built on the strong foundation of UNDP's NDC Support Programme and overall portfolio, including support for National Adaptation Plans, Low-Emission Development Strategies, as well as partnerships at the national, regional, and global levels.

The next chapter of the Climate Promise will scale-up support for countries to raise ambition and implement their NDCs. This will also be underpinned by strong support to green COVID-19 recovery measures, as well as leveraging UNDP's strength through measures that align UNDP's broader portfolio with the Paris Agreement and NDCs.

The next chapter of UNDP's Climate Promise comes at a time when countries are finalizing their NDC submissions and navigating the COVID-19 pandemic and economic and development challenges. To identify key entry points of support for this next chapter of the Climate Promise, UNDP undertook an extensive analysis on trends, partnerships, challenges, lessons, and insights. Each service line reflects this analysis in order to help countries at this critical moment in history.

UNDP's proposal aims to help countries move from pledge to impact. The next phase of the Climate Promise will scale-up support in at least 100 countries to use their NDCs as sovereign plans for investment in key engines of sustainable development – such as energy, nature-based solutions, forests, agriculture, transportation, and green economy. We will leverage the Climate Promise infrastructure and networks to help deliver NDCs and transition toward net zero and climate resilient development pathways - directly in line with the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Building on our work along the UN's three strategic pillars of support on NDCs - Ambition, Acceleration and Mobilization, and as a major contribution to the NDC Partnership, we plan to scale-up support in three core areas:

- Scale and Speed – Leverage the NDC as a gateway to deliver ambitious climate action across sectors and thematic areas to achieve the bold targets set forth in revised and enhanced NDCs. This includes strengthening policy, institutional and budgetary environments, shifting incentives

and frameworks to attract private sector funding, linking to sectoral approaches, and employing innovation and technology. This work will be closely coordinated with actions of supporters and partners.

- **Lasting Inclusivity** – A key lesson from the Climate Promise is that more inclusive NDCs tend to be more ambitious. The next chapter will leverage the stakeholder engagement processes of NDC development to help all actors be agents of change to deliver the NDC and continue to advocate for ambition. This will also support marginalized groups, such as women and youth, to bring their unique voices and skills to NDC implementation.
- **Amplifying Ambition** – Strong and integrated NDCs must connect to long-term net zero and climate resilient pathways, and to the next NDC. In addition, NDCs must be translated and mainstreamed into development and sectoral plans and budgets in order to achieve the Paris Agreement and SDGs. These approaches will be closely coordinated across the UNDP portfolio and with donors and partners.

Given the immense needs of countries facing multiple crises, the next chapter of the Climate Promise will also address immediate, medium, and long-term timeframes. In the immediate term, a strong focus will be on leveraging NDC processes to strengthen and inform **green COVID-19 recovery** measures. The medium term will focus on **meeting the targets** set in the most recently enhanced NDC, and the long-term will ensure strong **linkages with SDGs and mid-century net-zero targets**. In addition, underpinning the entire initiative will include a targeted effort to leverage UNDPs strength as the UN’s development arm to **align UNDPs broader portfolio with the Paris Agreement**.

While aligning with the Decade of Action and the achievement of the SDGs by 2030, the next chapter of UNDP’s Climate Promise will operate from 2022 to 2027. Implementing this ambitious proposal will require a stepwise approach that brings together a variety of support measures and variety of partners and stakeholders, further deepening existing partnerships as well as establishing new partnerships and networks.

Context: A continued commitment to implementation of the Paris Agreement in an evolving and uncertain future

The world has entered a critical development emergency, one which sees the intersection of COVID-19, inequality and the climate crisis having devastating impacts on our development ambitions. For the first time in 30 years, global human development is set to drop, primarily due to the socio-economic crisis caused by COVID-19. According to new UNDP research with the University of Denver, by 2030, one billion people could be living in extreme poverty, a quarter of them due to the pandemic. The climate crisis is getting worse, with the last seven years the warmest since the beginning of modern record-keeping. Despite a temporary dip in carbon emissions in 2020 as the world hit ‘pause’, there is a real danger of building back worse, with a majority of initial stimulus funds so far invested in fossil fuel-intensive projects.

However, the world stands at an unprecedented moment of opportunity to simultaneously address the climate change crisis and accelerate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). With the 5th Anniversary of the adoption of the Paris Agreement, Parties have the (first) opportunity to submit

a revised NDC – with expectation that this would be a stronger, more robust contribution and raises climate ambition. Currently, according to UNFCCC and UNDP data, over 170 countries are planning to submit a revised NDC, demonstrating countries’ strong commitment to the Paris Agreement and the multilateral approach that underpins it. The COVID-19 crisis is clearly having a concrete impact on the approaches taken for NDC revision processes, the timeline for submission, and the capacity of Governments. However, **data from UNDP’s engagement with countries shows an encouraging trend, that countries are still committed to the Paris Agreement, and plan to submit revised and more ambitious NDCs ahead of COP26 in November 2021, despite the impacts of the pandemic.**

As Governments are accelerating their work on defining their national climate pledges, a broad range of partners, donors and stakeholders are mobilizing resources towards this effort. However, it must not stop there. **Momentum is required to ensure that the targets and measures of these enhanced NDCs are actually realized.** As countries come to the end of their NDC revision process and submissions begin to materialize, the critical question emerges: Are countries prepared to take these new pledges forward and turn them into concrete and ambitious action that lead to reduced greenhouse gas emissions and increased resilience?

UNDP has committed to support countries to implement the Paris Agreement around three tracks, aligned with the UN’s three strategic pillars in its joint approach to support NDCs: Ambition, Acceleration and Mobilization. On **Ambition**, as stated above, UNDP launched its [Climate Promise](#) at the UN Climate Action Summit in September 2019, with the aim to support over 100 countries enhance their NDCs towards greater ambition.

On **Acceleration**, UNDP has been supporting countries to accelerate implementation and deliver impact on the ground. UNDP’s extensive climate change portfolio supports over 140 countries to deliver integrated climate solutions that align with NDC priorities, through access to over USD 3 billion in grant financing (GEF, GCF, LDCF, SCCF, AF, bilateral donors), as well as UNDP’s broader Global Policy Network and UN system coordination. On NDCs, UNDP’s flagship NDC Support Programme has been a leader in supporting countries on NDCs, alongside other relevant UNDP initiatives supporting National Adaptation Plans, strengthening transparency (CBIT), and supporting National Communications, Biennial Update Reports and other enabling activities.

Finally, on **Mobilization**, UNDP is engaging all actors to collectively take ambitious climate action, ensuring all voices are clearly heard with a focus on youth, gender, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized groups through a rights-based approach. For example, an impressive 75% of Climate Promise countries are prioritizing youth in their revised NDCs, and 97% are including gender-responsive activities in their NDC enhancement process. In addition, UNDP is working to capture and communicate the voice of the people directly to decision-makers to inform NDC and climate change planning processes. The Peoples’ Climate Vote, building on the innovative Mission 1.5 gaming platform developed with the University of Oxford, is the largest poll of public opinion on climate change ever conducted. Using a new and unconventional approach to polling, it asked people whether they thought climate change was a global emergency and how they would like to solve it across 18 policy options for energy, economy, transportation, farms and food, protecting people, and nature.

Through this multi-faceted effort and direct engagement with Governments and local stakeholders, UNDP has gleaned unique insight into the challenges and lessons learned through the NDC processes, as well as the gaps and needs required to implement these pledges and turn them into ambitious climate action. These efforts on Ambition, Acceleration and Mobilization will be further strengthened in the next chapter of the Climate Promise – from pledge to impact.

Supporting countries to advance on a path toward net zero and climate resilience: Leveraging NDC enhancement and implementation processes

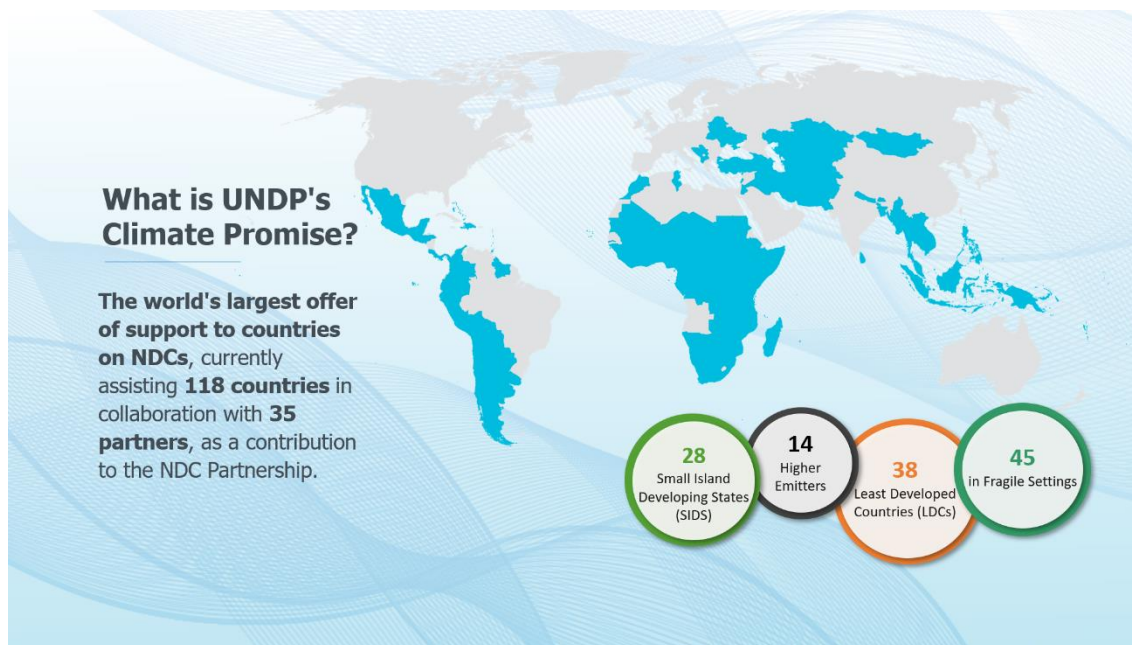
OVERALL OBJECTIVE AND AIMS:

Of the 170 countries planning to submit an enhanced NDC ahead of COP26, 93 are developing countries, 89 of which (95%) are being supported by UNDP's Climate Promise – as a major contribution to the NDC Partnership. As of 31 March 2021, 79 countries have already submitted their enhanced NDC to the UNFCCC. Of these countries, 43 are developing countries¹, and 28 of those countries (65%) were supported by UNDP under its Climate Promise. It has been demonstrated that **Climate Promise countries have submitted NDCs that are stronger, more ambitious, more inclusive, and easier to implement** than their first round of NDCs. In addition, through Climate Promise support, as well as UNDP's broader portfolio of work on climate action and development, initial steps are being made to put in place the necessary foundations for ambitious implementation of these NDCs. In order to pursue climate action at the scale required to realize the targets set out in these enhanced NDCs, countries must strengthen these foundations and develop the required capacities, mechanisms, plans and strategies for action.

At the same time, within the context of COVID-19 and the ongoing response and recovery efforts, **meeting NDC targets will require an integrated approach that examines the shifting economic and social conditions in the country.** Enhanced NDCs must be used to inform a more robust green recovery, providing guidance on how to transition to green and resilient pathways that help spur economic growth and job creation, while aligning with national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They can also provide the steppingstones to strengthen and design long-term strategies, development plans and net-zero pathways that then inform more ambitious, revised NDCs. With the five-year cycle of the NDC, countries are also required to put in place systems and mechanisms to support the repeated phases of implementation, monitoring and revision of NDCs.

Based on the data and insights gained through UNDP's Climate Promise, as well as through the NDC Support Programme, **UNDP plans to scale up its support to at least 100 countries engaged under the Climate Promise to enable them to advance on a path toward net zero and climate resilience.** This includes support across the three pillars outlined above: Ambition, Acceleration and Mobilization.

¹ based on [UNTAD May 2020](#) and [UN World Economic Situation and Prospects 2020](#) report



GLOBAL TRENDS AND INSIGHTS ON NDCs: DEFINING NEEDS AND CHARTING A PATH AHEAD

Through UNDP's extensive reach in supporting over 100 countries under the Climate Promise, and its unique relationship and engagement with Governments, valuable data and insights on NDCs have been tracked and analyzed. The emerging trends provide an important lens in which to examine current needs as well as guide future support. The following section examines each of these trends, grouped around the three overarching areas of intervention: Scale and Speed, Lasting Inclusivity, and Amplifying Ambition – recognizing that many of these trends are cross-cutting. It then highlights the needs/problems emerging from this analysis, followed by the type of support that could be strengthened looking ahead. These areas of support will further define the offer established under this proposal.

Scale and Speed: NDCs as a gateway to deliver ambitious climate action

NDCs and Green Recovery

Trends analysis: Despite the challenges posed by COVID-19, including setbacks to NDC submission timelines, many countries are also recognizing the opportunities of leveraging recovery efforts to advance bold climate action. **More than half of Climate Promise countries are linking NDC enhancement with green recovery**, in line with the [UN Secretary-General's Recover Better principles](#). Many of these countries are generating data and evidence on the linkages between NDCs and green recovery, such as undertaking an analysis of the impact of COVID-19 on NDC implementation and of NDC measures on COVID-19 recovery. This also includes using both NDC sectoral/economy-wide assessments and COVID-19 socio-economic impact assessments to identify priorities and advocate for green recovery. Further, several countries are aligning and integrating NDC measures and strategies with COVID-19 recovery plans, as well as developing new recovery programs or initiatives that also align with NDC measures and targets. Financial strategies are also being aligned, developing integrated strategies or options for green recovery. Finally, many countries are increasing advocacy, awareness and institutional capacities to help strengthen engagement with Ministries of Finance and Planning who usually are leading recovery efforts.

Nonetheless, many countries are requesting further support to help make these links. As a relatively new area, good practices and experience from countries already undertaking these approaches are highly sought after.

Need: While some linkages between NDCs or climate action and COVID-19 recovery exist, there remains a need to further place NDCs and the Paris Agreement at the heart of ongoing recovery efforts – building an onramp for further scaled up project development and implementation.

Looking ahead: With the need to urgent respond and recovery from the devastating socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, there is a pressing need to identify, advocate and maximize opportunities for greener and more resilient recovery pathways. NDCs can be the guidepost, providing data, networks, engagement and plans for a greener development path. In this context, to sustain political engagement and interest, it is important to anchor the NDC narrative in solutions to development and economic challenges, especially on health and job benefits. Under the Climate Promise, countries have started to implement concrete ways to link NDC enhancement processes with COVID-19 response and recovery efforts. A recently launched pilot initiative is further supporting five countries to strengthen this focused support and develop a global toolbox which can support all countries to use NDCs to boost green recovery. This work can be further advanced, replicated and scaled up, leveraging UNDP’s leadership role within the UN System COVID-19 recovery effort on the socio-economic response.

Advancing NDC Implementation

Trend analysis: The 2019 UNDP/UNFCCC report, *The Heat Is On - Taking Stock of Global Climate Ambition* identified key trends and barriers identified by developing countries for NDC implementation.² Among the top barriers identified by developing countries, a **lack of access and availability of funding** is the biggest hurdle to NDC implementation and raising ambition. The survey revealed that countries with a finance strategy have more often managed to mobilize both domestic funding and international grants financing³ for their NDCs. However, many countries cited a lack of technical, human and financial capacity to put in place a financing strategy, investment plan or undertake analysis of costs or financial flows. Overall, access to private finance remains a key challenge across a majority of countries.

Political will and engaged citizens were also key bottlenecks cited by a majority of countries. Many countries strengthened these systems through their NDC enhancement process (see trends for inclusive approaches below) but maintaining these through implementation will likely remain a challenge. The survey also highlighted the **lack of access to reliable information and data, and related transparency systems**. While almost all countries have a reporting system in place or in preparation, very few are working on a comprehensive transparency and MRV system required for NDC implementation tracking. In addition, **limited technical understanding of how NDC targets link to specific existing policies, plans and budgets** was also cited by many countries.

One year after this survey, **significant progress has been made** through UNDP’s Climate Promise and support from other partners, most notably through the NDC Partnership.⁴ However, at the same time,

² These findings were based on information received from 133 developing countries across all five regions, which responded to a survey conducted in May-Aug 2019

³ 14 of 16 nations with finance strategies in place at the time of the survey managed to secure international grants

⁴ For example, many countries have put forward major policy and legislative frameworks and undertaken institutional and policy reforms to enable implementation of ambitious climate action. Some countries have made good progress in ensuring that NDC measures are aligned with national development policies and plans, including the SDG process, and vice versa. Several countries have completed assessments and analysis around baselines,

countries are also reporting on **several common challenges**, many of which reiterate what was identified in the 2019 survey. In some countries pushing for political buy-in and leadership remains a key challenge and efforts are being pursued to ensure consistent engagement and advocacy at the highest level. At the same time, limited government capacity has also been cited in many countries, along with challenging systems and bureaucratic bottlenecks (e.g. delayed Government approvals). These types of challenges point to a need for longer-term engagement with Governments in order to fully realize the mechanisms required for implementation.

Need: Progress has been made on foundations for NDC implementation, but many barriers remain which must be addressed in order to realize the more ambitious pledges being made in revised NDCs.

Looking ahead: In many countries, the comprehensive approach taken to support NDC enhancement through UNDP's NDC Support Programme and Climate Promise, has established a strong foundation for implementation. Specifically, this includes strong ownership and broad engagement both within and outside government, robust data and analyses across relevant sectors, integration and alignment of NDC targets with other development and sectoral plans, initial strategies and plans to assess financing options and investment opportunities, and transparency systems necessary to track and assess progress. implementation of NDCs.

Therefore, moving forward a tailored approach will meet countries where they are in establishing the policy frameworks and links to SDGs, institutional capacities and coordination, finance and investment strategies/plans, and transparency systems. In particular, strong ties will also be made to National Communications, BURs and the evolving Enhanced Transparency Frameworks, to ensure that efforts to support these processes and policy tools are aligned with ongoing support for NDC implementation. In a majority of Climate Promise countries, a strong focus was on meeting the timelines set for NDC submission. As such, further engagement, enhanced capacities, and scaled up resources are required to fully realize some of the infrastructure required for effective NDC implementation.

Thematic Approaches

Trends Analysis: Across UNDP's Climate Promise, countries focused on a broad range of sectors in their NDC enhancement – with a majority looking at energy and nature-based solutions (forests, agriculture, and land use). In addition, the focus on adaptation and resilience in many NDCs, which cuts across sectors and themes, is also prevalent across the portfolio.

Energy: Energy continues to be the sector included in the most NDCs to date. Within the Climate Promise, 91 countries (79%) are updating or adding energy-related actions and/or targets to their updated NDCs. Many countries are still seeking support in turning these pledges and targets into concrete action. In many cases, this is tied to limited access to finance, or limited engagement of the private sector in energy-related initiatives. With the NDCs providing the blueprint for action, this provides an incredible opportunity for advancing the shift to low-carbon and renewable energy.

Forestry and Nature-based Solutions: Countries are increasingly recognizing the mitigation and adaptation potential of forests and nature-based solutions. Over half of Climate Promise countries are strengthening

scenarios and target setting in priority sectors to generate an evidence-base and inform the revision of their NDCs. Many countries are also demonstrating progress on assessing costs, investment opportunities and financing strategies for NDC measures, while others are showing good progress on transparency and MRV related activities, with several countries already putting in place comprehensive MRV systems to track progress of NDC implementation. Specific country examples and details on progress made can be found in the latest Climate Promise Progress Reports.

inclusion of nature-based solutions – including forestry, land use and agriculture. Specifically, over 50 Climate Promise countries have requested support on LULUCF, with a primary focus on forests. Many developing countries that included forest-related activities in their NDCs are also working to implement REDD+. Through REDD+, developing countries have made important advancements in terms of generating country-specific data, creating systems to track forest cover and land use change nationally, and developing national policies to address drivers of deforestation and forest degradation.

Adaptation: There is increased political momentum and commitment from countries to further support adaptation and resilience, and for it to be recognized equally with mitigation efforts. 97% of countries supported under UNDP's Climate Promise plan to enhance adaptation in their revised NDC, with 25 out of the 26 countries which already submitted having enhanced the adaptation component. Three countries (Argentina, Colombia and Panama) included clear Adaptation Communications in their revised NDCs. Many countries are also increasingly recognizing the close linkages between the adaptation planning process and disaster risk reduction processes under the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Leveraging this momentum can help to raise the profile of adaptation and resilience to the top of the international agenda and move from plans to concrete action at the scale and pace required.

Need: Technical and financial support is needed to help countries meet NDC targets in specific sectors and thematic areas. In particular, means of implementation, including technology transfer, is necessary to many support countries adapt and strengthen resilience, especially for LDCs and SIDS. This requires high political buy-in and investment at scale, incentivized by a clear narrative focusing on the development and mitigation co-benefits of adaptation action. It also requires clearly defined, quantifiable metrics for adaptation and resilience and systems for monitoring progress.

Looking ahead: NDCs can be used as a gateway for scaled up support to achieve bold targets across key thematic areas, with a focus on Energy, Forests, and Nature-based Solutions, as well as strengthening adaptation and resilience. Other critical cross-cutting areas are also emerging as key entry points for implementation, including circular economy, food systems and water. This should be closely aligned with SDG planning and implementation. Support could focus both at the advocacy level and at policy and programming support to countries. On advocacy for example, focus can be around supporting the SG's call for prioritizing adaptation and resilience (following on the Climate Adaptation Summit and the Adaptation Action Coalition) the High-level Dialogue on Energy planned in 2021, or the Biodiversity COP and Leader's Pledge for Nature. At the policy and programming level, support in the energy sector could focus on de-risking renewable energy and increasing investment. On Forests, continued REDD+ readiness can help capitalize on the potential of nature-based solutions in NDCs, and ultimately realize them using established REDD+ mechanisms. On adaptation and resilience, support can be further scaled and deepened as part of the NAP preparation in line with the NDC revision and implementation support. In addition, many of these thematic approaches can also be used to strengthen green recovery efforts. For example, introducing new jobs linked to clean energy and nature-based solutions as a critical first step to jumpstarting economies and meeting development priorities.

[Lasting Inclusivity: Engaging all actors](#)

Inclusive Approaches

Trends Analysis: UNDP's Climate Promise has shown an encouraging trend, where enhanced NDCs in all countries aim to be increasingly inclusive and country-driven. This is further demonstrated in the latest NDC submissions, with an increasing level of country ownership, inclusiveness and public awareness of the NDC in all the countries. Specifically, over 94% of Climate Promise countries are prioritizing political will and societal ownership as part of their NDC enhancement. In addition, specific groups are being

targeted for engagement in the process. Over 97% of Climate Promise countries are working to strengthen gender in their NDCs, including strengthening participation and governance processes. At the same time, 75% of Climate Promise countries prioritize youth in their enhanced NDCs, primarily through proactive consultations, awareness-raising and advocacy campaigns.

Need: Building on the enhancement process, countries must ensure continued inclusivity in NDC implementation.

Looking ahead: Building on the momentum and mechanisms established through inclusive NDC enhancement processes, the focus will be on ensuring a similar level of inclusivity and a rights-based approach in NDC implementation. This requires further strengthening long-term governance systems and structures for ambitious climate action, with a focus on gender, youth, marginalized communities and human rights. Many strategies and initiatives are ongoing to support this effort which can be built on, including Mission 1.5 and the NDCP Youth Strategy.

[Amplifying Ambition: Connecting to long-term net-zero and climate resilient pathways](#)

Mitigation and Adaptation Ambition

Trends Analysis: Despite the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, a majority of countries have already or still plan to raise ambition in their NDC. Of the 118 Climate Promise countries (representing just over 28.3 percent of global emissions⁵), over 70% plan to raise mitigation ambition. This is an increase from 53% in March at the onset of the pandemic. By the end of March, twenty-eight Climate Promise countries had submitted revised NDCs to the UNFCCC, twenty-three (82%) of which increased mitigation ambition, including stronger emissions targets.⁶

At the same time, almost all Climate Promise countries (96%) plan to strengthen adaptation measures in their revised NDCs. Among the twenty-eight Climate Promise countries that submitted enhanced NDCs in 2020, twenty-seven (96%) strengthened the adaptation component by adding new sectors, targets and actions. Three countries (Argentina, Colombia and Panama) included clear Adaptation Communications, while others such as Bangladesh, Chile, Thailand, Rwanda and Suriname, have better aligned the NDC with the NAP processes. Many countries are also looking to aligning efforts with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Need: While a majority of countries intend to raise mitigation and adaptation ambition, as indicated in the latest [UNFCCC NDCs Synthesis report](#), greater ambition is still needed in order to limit warming to 1.5°C and reach the Paris Agreement goals. This is particularly true for higher-emitting countries with greater carbon footprints.

Looking ahead: To further support countries to pursue greater ambition will require a combination of advocacy and technical support. Leveraging existing coalitions and initiatives (e.g., Climate Ambition Alliance, Global Coalition for Carbon Neutrality, Race to Zero), targeted advocacy and diplomacy can help to generate the political will to take bolder action on climate change. This must be coupled with technical support to demonstrate the concrete opportunities and feasibility of strengthening ambition by generating the evidence. This can be done through sectoral assessments, strategy development, NAP

⁵ CAIT, 2016

⁶ This includes: Chile, Ecuador, Grenada, Moldova, Mongolia, Rwanda and Suriname. In addition, Thailand reaffirmed existing targets and provided more clarity on how they will achieve these and track progress along the way. At the same time, while Vietnam's targets may not necessarily represent a significant increase in ambition, it has expanded sectoral scope and measures and is more robust

formulation, and greater consultations with line Ministries, local government and technical groups. Identifying opportunities to advance ambitious action through green recovery efforts can also help make the case to Governments, where economic benefits are clear. Further supporting countries to implement their enhanced NDCs and to reap the benefits of a low carbon economy will lead to an increase of ambition in the next round of NDCs enhancement. On the adaptation side, this also requires scaling-up climate and disaster risk finance and insurance solutions (e.g. InsuResilience Global Partnership). This will of course leverage the NDC Partnership’s coordination function with implementing partners, UN system strategies, and other partner engagement to ensure coordinated outreach, engagement and support to governments.

Long-term Strategies and Race to Net-Zero

Trends Analysis: Countries are increasingly committing to a timeline for reaching net-zero or carbon neutrality, including a majority of G20 countries. At the recent Climate Ambition Summit, 24 countries announced new commitments, strategies or plans to reach net zero or carbon neutrality, and 16 countries indicated that an LTS will be submitted to UNFCCC soon. Argentina became the latest member of the G20 to make a leader level net zero pledge by 2050 and commit to a strategy to deliver it. The majority of G20 countries have now committed to a timeline for net-zero or carbon neutrality, firmly establishing a benchmark for all major economies.

To date, UNDP has been explicitly supporting LTS processes in 10 countries, completed in 2. At the same time, the Climate Promise has provided opportunity to undertake research, advocacy and guidance for using NDCs and the enhancement process as stepping-stones for countries’ long-term visions.

Need: There is a need for countries to create a stronger alignment between NDCs and long-term, net-zero visions in order to design the pathway for meeting the Paris Agreement goals, while ensuring these targets are embedded in national development and sectoral plans and budgets.

Looking ahead: While developing countries are increasingly requesting support to develop long-term strategies and net-zero pathways, UNDP’s focus will continue to be on how to build on the NDC process and align long-term strategies and targets with plans for national development and SDG implementation. Scaled up support can be provided to help make this link and mainstream targets, while also using long-term strategies and targets to inform the next round of NDCs so they are increasingly ambitious – creating a feedback loop. Support can also be focused on leveraging public finance to attract private investment for net zero pathways, including innovative approaches. Green recovery efforts can be a critical entry point for initiating these linkages. All of this will be done working closely with the NDC Partnership’s implementing partners and plans for linking NDCs and LTS, as well as the next iteration of the NDCP’s CAEP initiative.

Establishing Bold and Integrated Support across Critical Pillars and Time Horizons: Strategy and approach

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Building on the insights generated through UNDP’s Climate Promise, the scope of support under the scaled-up Climate Promise would be provided to ensure Scale and Speed, Lasting Inclusivity as well as Amplifying Ambition. The activities under each of these areas of intervention will be embedded within UNDP’s broader support on governance, poverty reduction, SDG integration, as well its role in driving UN’s support on COVID-19 response and recovery. Specifically, UNDP would work to further **align UNDP’s**

overall corporate portfolio with the Paris Agreement and mainstreaming climate-related measures in core development planning and across sectors (e.g. urban development, energy, nature, agriculture, urban development).

- **Scale and Speed** – Delivering the bold targets set forth in NDCs through strengthening policy, institutional and budgetary environments, linking to sectoral approaches, and leveraging innovation and technology. This means leveraging NDCs as the gateway to take concrete action and deliver on targets related to energy, forestry, adaptation and resilience, biodiversity and nature-based solutions, gender, youth, and human rights, as well as other sectors and thematic areas. This also includes working closely through countries' Partnership Plans, and putting in place the necessary governance structures, capacities, finance and mechanisms to translate enhanced NDCs into concrete actions (e.g. financing strategies, regulatory and legal frameworks, and reporting/transparency systems). Through this work is also an opportunity to align NDC implementation with COVID-19 recovery efforts to demonstrate the social and economic investment case for ambitious climate action –leveraging the leadership role UNDP is playing in COVID-19 recovery across the UN System, and the economic advisors initiative under the NDC Partnership. Work on greening COVID-19 recovery efforts will also be based on the results generated by the “Green Recovery Toolbox” initiative that is currently being piloted in 5 countries (Albania, Benin, Ecuador, Jordan and Viet Nam). UNDP’s portfolio of climate-related initiatives will also be leveraged to help countries access finance to meet NDC targets. In addition, UNDP’s broader corporate strength will be capitalized in ensuring NDCs are closely aligned to implementation of national development plans, utilizing UN system country planning tools (e.g. UNDAF and CPD), and mainstreaming NDC measures and targets into sectoral plans and budgets, in an effort to prioritize and direct funding and action.
- **Lasting Inclusivity** – Leverage the stakeholder engagement processes of NDC development to help all actors be agents of change to deliver the NDC and continue to advocate for ambition. Building on the momentum for inclusive and whole-of-society NDC enhancement processes (promoted and supported under UNDP’s Climate Promise), support would be focused on further strengthening governance systems and engagement processes that reinforce inclusivity for implementation – through a rights-based approach. This includes a strong focus on gender, youth, indigenous communities, and other marginalized communities. This will leverage existing work and strategies from partners (e.g. UNDP Mission 1.5, NDC Partnership’s Youth Strategy, gender-responsive NDC planning approaches) to scale-up work to empower vulnerable and marginalized groups and use climate action to help address issues of injustice. Once again, UNDP’s comparative advantage in supporting the most vulnerable, establishing inclusive governance systems, and acting as a neutral partner will be leveraged to advance inclusive climate action.
- **Amplifying Ambition**: Strong and integrated NDCs must connect to long-term net zero and climate resilient pathways, and to the next NDC. In addition, NDCs must be translated and mainstreamed into development and sectoral plans and budgets in order to achieve the Paris Agreement and SDGs. Supporting developing countries to fully implement their enhanced NDCs will help to showcase that the impact of bold climate action on achieving the SDGs and contributing to long-term climate resilient and net-zero targets. This will thus create a positive feedback loop for the next iteration of NDC enhancement ahead of 2025, the next step towards this long-term pathway. Further, by aligning NDCs with national strategies (including long-term strategies), integrated national finance frameworks, and SDG roadmaps, as well as COVID-19 recovery efforts, we will ensure that long-term visions inform the next NDC. This support would

be closely aligned with other partners and leverage the NDC Partnership and its plans for linking NDCs and LTS, as well as the next iteration of the CAEP initiative. This builds on and continues the successful collaboration and joint support being provided to countries. In addition, UNDP's strong engagement in countries' socio-economic response to COVID-19, broader development planning and budgeting, as well as SDG implementation will be leveraged to contribute to building greater ambition.

Underpinning the entire initiative, UNDP will leverage its strength as the UN's development arm and align UNDP's broader portfolio with the Paris Agreement.

TIME HORIZONS

Given the evolving global context of the COVID-19 crisis and the nature of UNFCCC processes including NDC revision cycles, the specific areas of support under each of these three pillars will be organized according to immediate, medium, and long-term horizons. While activities under these three horizons may be initiated or be running at the same time, this perspective provides a clear indication of priorities and alignment with efforts beyond the immediate scope of NDC and climate processes.

The **immediate horizon** focuses specifically on aligning with the **urgent COVID-19 response and recovery** efforts ongoing in countries, with an aim to capitalize on the moment and help orient large-scale investments (e.g. stimulus packages) towards net-zero and climate resilient development pathways. This will require close alignment with recovery planning processes and the right data, technical support, and coordination to leverage NDCs, UNFCCC processes and other climate strategies in the immediate term. It will also leverage and build on UNDP's broader efforts on COVID-19 recovery, tapping into the broad network and capacities across UNDP that are contributing to the UN's socio-economic response, a sustainable and green recovery.

At the same time, in the **medium-term horizon** there is a need to focus on **meeting the targets of recently enhanced NDCs and turning pledges into concrete and ambitious action**. Specifically, this aims to leverage NDCs to further inform ambitious development planning and budgeting while also focusing on putting in place the necessary planning, financing, capacities and systems to translate NDC targets into action. This includes setting up governance systems that ensure inclusivity and a rights-based approach.

Finally, the **long-term horizon** builds in a **strong link to long-term net-zero visions and the achievement of the SDGs**. This of course also links to future NDC revision cycles and other processes under the Paris Agreement that provide steppingstones for countries to meet these visions. The aim is to strengthen the feedback loop between these processes – NDCs, SDGs and long-term strategies and targets, as well as support bold actions across priority sectors towards these net-zero and sustainable development goals. Finally, a critical component of this effort is to enable long-term and consistent inclusivity across these processes.

Why UNDP?

For successful implementation and impact, the strategy laid out above requires an integrated approach drawing on a range of expertise that links directly to sustainable development and SDGs. To ensure it remains country-driven, a strong and trusted relationship with NDC stakeholders, both Government counterparts as well as broader stakeholders is also important.

UNDP's broad scope and extensive portfolio is grounded in supporting transformative sustainable development agenda. In 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, UNDP leveraged its work on SDG integration to focus on linking immediate response efforts to medium- and longer-term sustainable development needs. Our COVID-19 2.0 offer: *Beyond Recovery, Towards 2030* focuses on helping decision-makers to set priorities, make choices, and manage complexity in four integrated areas -- governance, social protection, the green economy, and digital disruption, with a focus on gender equality and human rights throughout, while crisis management and health system support continued where needed.

Leveraging this work, UNDP is well placed to provide the support to countries on NDC design and implementation, given the extensive networks and relationships built through its climate change portfolio over the past few decades and its links to green recovery and development. This includes the long-standing engagement with countries on NDC-related processes through the Climate Promise and associated projects such as the NDC Support Programme, EU4Climate, and the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency, as well as global support initiatives for National Adaptation Plans, REDD+, National Communications and Biennial Update Reports and Green Climate Fund readiness. Drawing on these initiatives, UNDP's Climate Promise has set a solid foundation for NDC implementation, alongside UNDP's broader portfolio of support provided across key thematic areas (e.g. energy, nature-based solutions, gender, climate finance, adaptation, water, SDG integration, health).

The proposed support will further leverage UNDP's unique Global Policy Network, which provides integrated sustainable development expertise to advance NDC priorities in the context of the 2030 Agenda. These networks have fostered unparalleled relationships, partnerships and trust with governments and other stakeholders over decades of work. Specifically, the GPN provides strategic and operational support to countries through expertise in a range of different sectors and thematic areas. This includes extensive resources, good practice, tools and guidance.

Partners

Existing partnerships and networks will be leveraged to ensure coordination and collaboration of support to countries. Specifically, this includes working closely with the NDC Partnership Support Unit and its Institutional Members, and ensure all work is done as a direct contribution to the Partnership. In addition, this work will leverage the ongoing partnerships through the Climate Promise, which includes coordination with over 35 partners, 21 of which are delivering joint activities in-country. In addition, UNDP will also build on the relationships with partners currently engaged in green recovery efforts through the UN System, including the Partnership for Action on Green Economy (PAGE).

Indicative Budget and Timeframe

Given the strategic objective and broad scope of this initiative, this proposal will align with the Decade of Action and the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. Within this scope, the next chapter of UNDP's Climate Promise focuses on 2022 – 2027 with a total budget of \$150 million of pooled resources to allow a variety of donors and partners to join.

The aim is to create a portfolio of support in at least 100 countries, building on the extensive footprint and progress made across the 118 countries under the Climate Promise. Aligned with experience from the NDC Support Programme and UNDP's Climate Promise, we expect countries to require \$200,000 to \$400,000 per year throughout the lifetime of the initiative.