

## Meeting Summary Report

# UPDATING AND ENHANCEMENT OF NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS (NDC) – THE EXPERIENCE OF ASEAN COUNTRIES

Singapore, January 13-15, 2019

## INTRODUCTION

The year 2020 has critical importance under the Paris Agreement. Parties are requested to update their NDCs, representing the first formal opportunity to revisit questions of coverage and ambition. Since countries presented their first NDCs, they have gained considerable experience through the process of implementation. The Katowice Climate Package adopted in December 2018 at the 24<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP-24) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) included guidance on information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding (ICTU), which Parties were strongly encouraged to provide when communicating or updating their first NDCs by 2020, accounting for Parties' NDCs and reporting obligations under the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF).

This meeting, co-hosted by the government of Singapore and the NDC Partnership's Support Unit and supported by the UNFCCC Secretariat, brought together representatives from ASEAN countries to exchange experiences and plans for updating of NDCs in 2020. The aim was to highlight the various opportunities, challenges and options that Parties could consider in enhancing and implementing their NDCs, and the support available for Parties to overcome these challenges. Hands-on training sessions were also convened on how to apply the Katowice guidance on ICTU, accounting and tracking of progress for Parties' NDCs. A session on preparing long-term low emissions development strategies (LEDS) was also convened by the 2050 Pathways Platform.

The full list of participants is in [Annex A](#) to this report. All discussions were conducted under Chatham House Rules. As such, this report summarises the main points raised during the workshop but does not attribute particular points to individuals or countries.

## OPENING PRESENTATIONS

### Mr Joseph Teo, Singapore Chief Negotiator for Climate Change

In welcoming the participants, Mr. Teo underscored the importance of strengthening the multilateral framework of cooperation under the UNFCCC and maintaining the momentum of global climate action. Apart from ramping up ambition, effective implementation of the provisions of the Paris Agreement, notably Parties' reporting obligations, was key. Parties were obliged under the Paris Agreement to communicate and maintain NDCs and requested/invited to submit new or updated NDCs and LEDS by 2020. Singapore was committed to updating its NDC and communicating its LEDS soon and hoped that others would do so too. Transparency was a key tenet of the Paris Agreement and was central for building trust. The Enhanced Transparency

Framework (ETF) played a crucial accounting role. It was important for all Parties to implement these agreed guidelines. As such, the workshop aimed to help participants understand and apply the Katowice guidance when updating or submitting new NDCs and to prepare their LEDS.

### Mr Jigme, Team Lead, Mitigation and Transparency Support Unit, UNFCCC Secretariat

Mr. Jigme outlined the goal and objectives of the workshop. The overall goal of the workshop was to contribute to accelerated implementation of the Paris Agreement by supporting the improved quality and enhancement of NDCs in 2020. In that context, the objectives of the workshops were to:

- Socialise and facilitate improved understanding of NDC-related guidance from the CMA adopted in Katowice, particularly information to facilitate ICTU, and the ETF;
- Provide “first-hand” experience of applying the modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) and guidance adopted in Katowice would contribute to the planned or on-going process to develop new or revise/update NDCs;
- Provide a platform for countries to share lessons learned and experiences on updating and/or revising NDCs and increasing NDC ambition, drawing on the NDC Partnership’s Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) experiences thus far;
- Strengthen the Southeast Asian network of climate change actors; and
- Understanding the planned and on-going efforts on LEDS in the region and presenting support opportunities available for countries.

Mr. Jigme also presented an overview of timeline of implementation of different processes under the Paris Agreement, including NDCs, the ETF and the global stocktake.

### Mr Robert Bradley, Director of Knowledge and Learning, NCD Partnership Support Unit

Mr Bradley shared that the NDC Partnership was a coalition of more than 160 countries, international institutions and non-governmental partners dedicated to accelerating the implementation of NDCs and enhancing their ambition over time. As of January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020, six<sup>1</sup> ASEAN countries were members of the Partnership.

The Climate Action Enhancement Package (CAEP) was a new offering of the NDC Partnership designed to deliver targeted, fast-track support to countries to enhance the quality, increase the ambition, and implement NDCs. After two rounds of requests, CAEP had mobilised support for NDC enhancement activities in 65 member countries, with the support of more than 35 implementing partners and development partners. Four of the supported countries<sup>2</sup> were ASEAN members.

Activities in ASEAN countries supported by the Partnership focused primarily on stakeholder engagement and the definition or updating of targets—together these accounted for more than half of all activities. Broadening the scope of the NDC, developing roadmaps and improving data and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems were also important areas for support by the Partnership.

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<sup>1</sup> Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Philippines, Singapore, Vietnam

<sup>2</sup> Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Vietnam

In addition to CAEP, the Partnership's ongoing support for NDC implementation in response to country requests included mobilising support for activities related to NDC revision and raising ambition.

## DISCUSSION AMONG PARTICIPANTS

Participants had a rich and wide-ranging discussion on how they were approaching NDC revision and enhancement, and on the challenges they still faced. This section highlights a few of the key points raised.

**All countries are actively considering how to update and enhance their NDCs.**

While not all countries had formally announced an intention to submit an updated NDC, it was clear that all participants were undertaking active processes towards doing so.

### Mitigation

All countries were reviewing their mitigation options. All were considering stronger policies and actions for inclusion in their NDC, and most were considering strengthening their GHG targets. Some countries were also considering strengthening their non-GHG targets. Many countries were also interested in enhancing their access to low-carbon technologies.

Challenges highlighted included:

- In some cases, climatic or other conditions made renewable energy options less effective than in some other parts of the world.
- Access to relevant technologies on easy or affordable terms was not always possible.
- Efforts to set emission targets were complicated by the fact that climate variation (such as those due to the El Niño cycle) could significantly affect the level of emissions from major sectors such as energy and forests. This added to the uncertainty of setting targets for a specific year.
- Developing MRV systems at country level.

### Adaptation

In the first round of NDCs, most countries had included high-level write-ups on their adaptation efforts or plans. Some countries preferred to use other options for communicating their adaptation actions such as national adaptation plans (NAPs) and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs). Some countries were considering how to provide more comprehensive or updated adaptation information when updating their NDCs. Reasons for doing so included the need to enhance opportunities for adaptation support and to give political prominence to adaptation actions.

At the same time, some participants raised concerns on whether including adaptation actions in NDCs might impose more onerous or duplicate existing reporting obligations. Participants also noted the difficulty of defining adaptation targets and metrics.

## Finance

Most countries highlighted that securing finance for NDC implementation remained a major challenge. This covered a wide array of factors, including:

- Getting political buy-in from finance ministries for NDC definition and implementation;
- Allocation of domestic budgets, including tagging and tracking of climate spending;
- How to define projects so as to effectively access climate finance and international funds;
- Domestic budgeting for climate actions remains a key issue, with often no dedicated financial instruments and budgeting approaches in place.
- To put in place the necessary legal, regulatory and other instruments to drive private sector investment.

## Stakeholder engagement

One of the common challenges highlighted was to ensure that different parts of government and society were consulted, informed and supportive of implementation. Lead ministries on climate change (typically environment ministries) often did not have the resources needed to convene other parts of government or external stakeholder groups. To facilitate effective NDC implementation, it was important to ensure holistic engagement involving:

- Sectoral ministries/ agencies;
- Leadership (including cabinets and parliaments);
- Private sector;
- Subnational governments; and
- Civil society.

## Modeling, data needs, etc.

Often this was not about lack of data, but how to obtain robust, consistent and appropriate data specific to the country's planning purposes. Some participants expressed concerns about using global data sets for the purposes of implementing their NDCs, as these were not always compatible with the requirements of national processes or legal frameworks. It was also critical to build the national capacity to plan, implement, monitor and report on the progress of relevant activities on an ongoing basis.

Countries also identified a number of technical assistance needs, including:

- Modelling GHG emissions from different sectors and activities;
- Climate vulnerability and impact assessments; and
- Economic assessments, cost-benefit analyses.

## HANDS-ON TRAINING ON ICTU, ACCOUNTING AND TRACKING OF PROGRESS

The UNFCCC Secretariat conducted hands-on training sessions to highlight how Parties could prepare, communicate and track progress towards their NDCs in line with the Katowice guidance on ICTU, accounting for NDCs and tracking of progress under the ETF.

The morning session focused on exercises to help participants understand and **apply the ICTU guidance** to their NDCs through hands-on exercises, followed by discussion on key lessons and challenges countries faced in relation to applying the ICTU guidance when developing or updating NDCs.

### Key points from this session were:

- The ICTU guidance was only mandatory for Parties' second and subsequent NDCs (to be submitted in 2025) onwards;
- Parties were "strongly encouraged" to provide the information referred to in the ICTU guidance when updating NDCs by 2020. This could serve as an opportunity for Parties to gain experience on how to apply the guidance;
- The ICTU guidance was to be applied "as applicable" to Parties' respective NDCs (i.e. there is no "one-size-fits all" approach for all Parties);
- The ICTU guidance did not prescribe a reporting template and might be interpreted differently by Parties. As such, some participants highlighted that an informal technical guide/tool with relevant examples might be helpful;
- The ICTU guidance mainly addressed the mitigation aspects of the NDC. Guidance for the adaptation communication as part of the NDC was provided by decision 9/CMA.1.

The subsequent session was dedicated to **accounting for Parties' NDCs (decision 4/CMA.1) and tracking of progress (decision 18/CMA.1) under the ETF**. The UNFCCC Secretariat provided an overview of the guidance on accounting and the elements under the ETF that were relevant for the tracking of progress of NDCs. This was followed by a "hands-on" exercise for participants to apply the elements of the accounting guidance to their respective NDCs and to identify indicators for tracking of progress towards their NDC targets. The participants also exchanged views on the challenges and capacity needs related to using various indicators for tracking progress towards their NDC targets.

### Key points from this session were:

- The Paris Agreement required all Parties to account for their NDCs.
- Accounting guidance shall be applied from the second NDC onwards, but as applicable to Parties' respective NDCs;
- Accounting guidance provided high level principles but was not an accounting blueprint;
- Accounting guidance established the principle of "no backsliding" and of transparency;
- Parties were to account for, track progress and assess achievement of their NDC targets based on selected indicators which they needed to include in their biennial transparency reports;
- Indicators were self-determined by each Party, as it deemed relevant for tracking progress towards its NDC target; and
- Having data available to support and report on the indicators was critical.



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Climate Change

## LONG-TERM STRATEGIES

The 2050 Pathways Platform convened a session on how Parties could prepare and submit their LEDS in response to the invitation in the Paris Agreement to do so. The presentation covered an overview of the status of LEDS submissions and the various considerations for preparing LEDS.

Questions raised by participants related to: the level of details to be provided in the submission to the UNFCCC (scenarios); the modelling approaches available for long-term projections; the type of targets, including “carbon neutrality”, that had been submitted by other parties; the scope of the LEDS including whether adaptation would need to be included; and how countries could articulate the conditions under which they would meet their LEDS targets.

The 2050 Pathways Platform also highlighted the various ways it could provide assistance to countries working to prepare their LEDS.

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## ANNEX A: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Country Participants		
Name	Country	Organisation/Title
Mr. Sok Bun Heng	Cambodia	NDC Focal Point, Official, Ministry of Economics and Finance
Mr. Doeun Dara	Cambodia	Head of Climate Policy and Coordination Office, Department of Climate Change
Ms. Yulia Suryanti	Indonesia	Deputy Director for Monitoring of Climate Change Mitigation, Directorate, MOEF
Ms. Teuanchith ALOUNLASY	Lao PDR	Deputy Director of Department of Climate Change, MONRE
Ms Daovinh Souphonphacdy	Lao PDR	Deputy Director of Division, Department of Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)
Dr. Elizabeth Philip	Malaysia	Head of Unit, REDD Plus Unit, Ministry of Water, Land and Natural Resources
Mr. Yusmazy Md. Yusup	Malaysia	Senior Assistant Secretary, Climate Change Division, Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change
Mr. San Win	Myanmar	Deputy Director, Climate Change Division Environmental Conservation Department
Mr. Khin Maung Soe	Myanmar	Staff Officer Environmental Conservation Department
Mr. Sin Liang Cheah	Singapore	Lead Coordinator for Climate Negotiations, National Climate Change Secretariat, Strategy Group, Prime Minister's Office, Singapore
Mr. Muslim Anshari Rahman	Singapore	Assistant Director, International Policy, National Climate Change Secretariat, Strategy Group, Prime Minister's Office, Singapore
Ms. Chanutsakul Supirak	Thailand	Environmental Official, Professional Level Policy and Strategy Section Climate Change Management Coordination Division (CCMC) Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)
Ms. Waranij Kraipinij	Thailand	Professional Level Policy and Strategy Section Climate Change Management Coordination Division (CCMC) Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP)
Mr. Nguyen Van Tue	Vietnam	Senior official and Adviser for Climate Change Policy, Department of Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam
Mr. Pham Nam Hung	Vietnam	Division of Mitigation and Ozone Layer Protection, Department of Climate Change Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Viet Nam

<b>Co-Organisers</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Organisation/Title</b>
Mr. Robert Bradley	NDC Partnership Support Unit	Director of Knowledge and Learning, NDC Partnership Support Unit
Mr. Deo Gabinete	NDC Partnership Support Unit	Regional Specialist, NDC Partnership Support Unit
Ms. Lisa Bow	NDC Partnership Support Unit	Head of Knowledge Services, NDC Partnership Support Unit
Mr. Joseph Teo	Singapore	Chief Negotiator for Climate Change, Singapore
Ms. Maryanne Pan	Singapore	Deputy Director, Climate Change Negotiations Office, Ministry of Environment and Water Resources
Ms. Alyssa Ng	Singapore	Assistant Manager, International Policy, National Climate Change Secretariat, Strategy Group, Prime Minister's Office
<b>Supporting Organisations</b>		
Mr. Jigme	UNFCCC	Team Lead, Mitigation and Transparency Support Unit, Mitigation, Data and Analysis Programme, UNFCCC Secretariat
Mr. Bernd Hackmann	UNFCCC	Programme Officer Mitigation, Data and Analysis Programme, UNFCCC Secretariat
Mr. Siddarth Pathak	2050 Pathways Platform	Director of Partnerships, 2050 Pathways Platform
Mr. Richard Baron	2050 Pathways Platform	Executive Director, 2050 Pathways Platform
<b>Observers</b>		
Ms. Yang Xianhui	Singapore	Manager, Mitigation and Resilience Policy and Planning, National Climate Change Secretariat, Strategy Group, Prime Minister's Office
Mr. Wan Lek Kong	Singapore	Senior Assistant Director, National Environment Agency
Ms. Lorraine Tan	Singapore	Manager / Projects (International Biodiversity Conservation), National Parks Board
Mr. Cheong Heng Jer	Singapore	Senior Assistant Director, Ministry of Trade and Industry
Ms. Sharon Seah	Singapore	Associate Director, Centre for International Law, National University of Singapore