



Note

Effective implementation of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions

Critical role of the Ad-hoc working group on the Paris Agreement and relevant actions to be taken by members

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Summary

This note will focus on the effective implementation of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). It will provide answers on the critical role of the Ad-hoc working group on the Paris Agreement (APA) and relevant actions to be taken by members.

INDCs and their critical role in achieving goals set in Paris

Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, or INDCs, are public outlines which lay out a country's vision for climate action and what they plan to do with a changing climate. Governments agreed to initiate and intensify domestic preparation of their INDCs to meet the ultimate convention. This vision will drive policy and investment at the local, national and global level for years to come¹. It was initiated during the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Nineteenth Conference of Parties (COP 19) at Warsaw in 2013, under the work of the Ad-hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) (previously established during the UNFCCC COP, in 2011, in Durban). The ADP work was to develop a new legally binding climate deal. During the COP 20 in Lima in 2014 a decision further specified what information INDCs should integrate. Submission of INDCs to the UNFCCC was due by the first quarter of 2015 in a manner that facilitates the clarity, transparency and understanding of the INDC². According to the World Bank, more than 180 countries submitted their INDCs laying out the action they will take to reduce emissions and increase resilience to climate change impacts³. A synthesis was made by the UNFCCC Secretariat thanks to those INDCs and was used

as a basis of negotiation and as critical inputs for the COP 21 in Paris, 2015. Their objective was reach with the Paris Agreement (PA) signature but ratification from all parties is still pending. As a reminder, once the PA will be ratified or accepted by at least 55 countries accounting for an estimated 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions, the agreement would come into force 30 days after. As of 19 May 2016, there are 177 signatories to the PA. Of these, only 15 states (mostly Small Island Development States or SIDS) have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval and accounted for 0.03% of total global greenhouse gas emissions⁴. However, despite national wills expressed by INDCs, contents are not sufficient to meet the decisions taken by the PA. Effectively, it is noted "with concern"⁵ that the gas emission levels of greenhouse gases resulting from these national contributions (a total of 187 to date) does not achieve the objective of limiting global warming below 2°C. The projected level is "55 gigatonnes" in 2030. "Emissions reduction efforts much greater than those associated with INDCs will be needed to contain the rise in global temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels by reducing emissions to 40 gigatonnes or below 1.5°C ". The new *ad hoc* working group, APA, has an important role for the entry into force of the PA, which is detailed below.

Role of the Ad-hoc working group on Paris Agreement (APA) in

¹ WRI (2015), *Decoding Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs): A Guide for Understanding Country Commitments*, World Resources Institute, /wri.org/indcs

² http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php

³ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/climatechange/>

⁴ http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9444.php

⁵ <http://ucesif.org/ucesif/15-12-12-les-principales-dispositions-de-laccord-et-de-la-decision-de-paris-sur-le-climat/>

implementing NDCs

On 12 December 2015, by decision of the COP, the PA was adopted and the APA was established, by this same decision. Effectively, the APA has been created to replace the ADP which fulfilled its goal by reaching the PA signature⁶.

APA's overall role

The APA has received a to-do list in the Paris Agreement that should be finished by the first session of the “Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the PA” (CMA). Nevertheless, the CMA agenda is uncertain because it depends on the entry into force of the PA. As agreed, the entry into force of the PA will be possible only when 55 countries accounting for 55% of global greenhouse gas emissions have ratified the PA. The first formal meeting of the APA, under the UNFCCC, since COP 21, was held in May 2016 in Bonn, in Germany. Moreover, one of the APA's main roles is to prepare the PA entry into force and its work has to be finish by the CMA 1⁷. APA⁸ has to respond to the four broad substantive issues which aim to initiate negotiations on producing⁹:

- *Further guidance for countries on the commitments they must make on emissions reductions as part of their NDCs (ex INDCs)*

- *Modalities, procedures and guidelines to ensure transparency of action and support under the Paris Agreement*
- *Matters relating to the five-yearly global stock-take to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose and long-term goals of the agreement, and*
- *Modalities and procedures to facilitate implementation and promote compliance under the Paris Agreement.*

Moreover, to initiate negotiations, the UNFCCC secretariat proposed a draft agenda outlining the tasks that should be completed by the UNFCCC bodies. Table 1, shows the APA's actions to be completed.

Table 1. Timeline of work related to the transparency framework to be undertaken by the APA, 2016-2025

Start date	Completed by	Topic	Work item (<i>italic= included the provisional agenda for APA I</i>)
2016	2018	Cross-cutting	Provide recommendation on modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework, action and support to be adopted at CMA 1
2016	CMA 1	Cross-cutting	Identify sources of inputs and develop modalities for the global stocktake, facilitating implementation and promoting compliance
		NDCs	Develop guidance for NDCs
TBD	CMA 1	NDCs	Develop guidance on information to be provided to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding of NDCs and for accounting for NDCs

Source: Climate change expert group (2016)

APA's role in implementing

⁶ <http://www.carbonbrief.org/paris-agreement-on-climate-change-what-happens-next>

⁷ <http://unfccc.int/bodies/apa/body/9399.php>

⁸ <http://www.carbonbrief.org/paris-agreement-on-climate-change-what-happens-next>

⁹ <http://www.iied.org/taking-paris-agreement-forward-what-expect-bonn>

INDCs

Once the PA comes into force, INDCs will become National Determined Contributions (NDCs). As INDCs are self-determined, transition from INDCs to NDCs should occur. Effectively, some countries included LULUF (Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry) in their INDCs while the others included REDD+ (Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries)¹⁰; thereby INDCs are not comparable. INDCs¹¹ were a bottom-up approach and with the PA, the APA should develop a top-down approach with centrally determined targets. The APA should develop a guideline so the submitted information of NDCs' can be more uniform, clear, transparent and comparable.

Countries' participation in the APA

In order to fully participate in the APA's main activity which is to prepare the entry into force of the PA, all countries should have submitted their INDCs by April 2016. In the meanwhile, each country must also establish binding commitments to make their NDCs (ex INDCs) ambitious but achievable. For that countries must put in place the necessary national measures to meet their NDCs' commitments. Even if countries agreed to enhance capacity building activities in order to support the PA,

many of them lack the necessary capacity to undertake climate actions. The Paris Committee in Capacity Building (PCCB) has been instituted to help those countries. Despite the multilateral and bilateral efforts to help the least capable countries, challenges at the local level are numerous. We can mention: lack of public awareness and support by countries; lack of established or strong policies, systems, and processes and many more¹².

Capacity-building being a crosscutting issue brings other challenges in some countries. The lack of centralized institutions put forwards the lack of coordination, coherence and monitoring. In this case, countries should reform their institutions if needed or **implement new policies but yet, "improving capacity building on the ground through enhanced national institutional, governance, and administrative systems with sustained resource provisions is critical to success"** (Dagnet and Northrop, 2015).

According to the PA, countries will have to report regularly on their emissions and **"progress made in implementing and achieving" their NDCs¹³**. They will also have to submit every five years a review of their NDCs that have to be more ambitious than the previous one in order to avoid taking a step back. Developed countries should be an example for developing countries and support their effort. Support includes climate finance, technology and capacity-building for poor and less capable countries. However, 90 developing countries launched an action plan to support

¹⁰ <http://www.ecosystemmarketplace.com/articles/paris-agreement-signed-now/>

¹¹ <http://www.climatelawandpolicy.com/en/blog/29-blog-climate-change/102-analysis-paris.html>

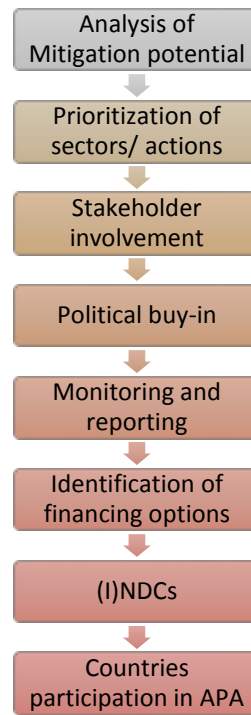
¹² <http://www.wri.org/blog/2015/12/3-reasons-why-capacity-building-critical-implementing-paris-agreement>

¹³ <http://www.c2es.org/international/negotiations/cop21-paris/summary>

renewable energy. In 2015, investments in this sector were more important in developing countries (+19% with 156 billion USD) than in developed countries (-8%, 130 billion USD)¹⁴.

The PA does not stand alone; certain matters such as mitigation, adaptation, means of implementation and support to developing country parties, transparency of action and support, compliance and others are established under the existing UNFCCC system¹⁵. All parties should also continue to work through their Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) to establish their (I)NDCs and so participate in the APA's mission (Figure 1). NAMAs can be used as a tool of implementation and its experience should be used by countries to have good NDCs which should represent concrete actions¹⁶.

Figure 1. NAMAs in the NDCs



Source: GIZ, 2016

General recommendations

Although the PA represents a universal framework of cooperation and solidarity, it lacks ambition in facing the climate emergency. One of the major concerns is whether we can succeed to act quickly enough to avoid the worst impacts and worst scenarios? We must rediscover the sense of urgency present in Paris last December. Currently, (I)NDCs and the current adaptation and mitigation efforts are not sufficient for reaching the goal of reducing by at least 2°C -1.5°C degrees, so we need to review the NDCs to rise.

According to a new World Bank report, “Water scarcity, exacerbated by climate change, could cost some regions up to 6 percent of their GDP,

¹⁴ <http://www.notre-planete.info/actualites/4447-investissements-record-energies-renouvelables>

¹⁵ <http://www.iied.org/taking-paris-agreement-forward-what-expect-bonn>

¹⁶

http://mitigationpartnership.net/sites/default/files/u2605/namas_and_indcs-final_inga_zachow.pdf

spur migration, and spark conflict¹⁷. This is why action shall be taken and settles as quickly as possible.

At the time of writing, Climate negotiations are ongoing in Bonn, Germany. It is the first formal meeting since the COP 21, and the only one before COP 22. Series of negotiations are set from May 16-26, 2016. The Bonn session is important in order to answer to potential challenges issued from the PA, i.e. Procedural uncertainties, Substantive coherence, Cross-body complementary and Support to developing countries¹⁸.

Even if governments want to declare climate adaptation a national priority to implement projects to help local communities become more resilient and inclusive, good governance from countries is needed and capacity building¹⁹ is required.

It is necessary to evolve the taxation to stop subsidies for fossil energies²⁰, especially in this sector; the price of a barrel of oil has greatly decreased over the last few years so countries will struggle to discard it in order to turn to renewable energy.

Climate negotiators and Policy makers should take advantage of this first session of negotiations which is held in Bonn in order to

set the direction of the future negotiations i.e. in COP 22.

During this session, they should settle essential rules, procedures, modalities and guidelines in order to make the PA operational and help the UNFCCC bodies to fulfill their missions.

The Bonn session need to recall the importance of the NDCs under the APA work which need to be clear.

The Interim NDC Registry Launched *National Climate Action Intentions Becoming Concrete under Paris Agreement, May 2016*²¹ is a tool which provides transparency as all documents submitted by parties will be display. It can be use by Climate negotiators and Policy makers to submit their comments on NDCs upload.

To conclude, the PA has to be known and integrated by the citizens. Citizens must adopt this agreement in their behavior and adopt new lifestyles. Therefore, countries must inform their population on the climatic emergency and the solutions coming from UNFCCC (INDCs and Paris Agreement).

¹⁷ <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2016/05/03/climate-driven-water-scarcity-could-hit-economic-growth-by-up-to-6-percent-in-some-regions-says-world-bank>

¹⁸ <http://www.iiied.org/taking-paris-agreement-forward-what-expect-bonn>

¹⁹ <http://www.wri.org/blog/2015/12/after-paris-making-good-climate-commitments-requires-good-governance>

²⁰ <https://www.fne.asso.fr/dossiers/cop-21-notre-analyse-de-laccord>

²¹ <http://newsroom.unfccc.int/paris-agreement/ndc-interim-registry/>



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