

Information Note on the 2019 Climate Action Summit of the Secretary-General

Objectives of the Summit

On 23 September 2019, the Secretary-General of the United Nations will host the Climate Action Summit in New York with the objective of boosting ambition and rapidly accelerate action to implement the Paris Agreement. The Secretary-General aims to demonstrate a leap in collective national political ambition and massive low-emission movements in the real economy by:

1. Raising national ambition: Countries are asked to present concrete, realistic plans, compatible with the latest Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, to enhance their Nationally Determined Contributions by 2020, reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent over the next decade, and to net zero by 2050.
2. Prompting transformative changes needed to support the implementation of these plans in the areas of energy transition; infrastructure, cities and local action; industry transition; resilience and adaptation; nature-based solutions; climate finance and carbon pricing.
3. Generating political momentum through enhanced social and political drivers as well as youth and public engagement.

This Summit will be action oriented. The deliverables and initiatives that will be showcased need to be implementable, scalable and replicable and have the potential to get us in line with the commitments of the Paris Agreement. Initiatives developed should also include a broad range of stakeholders, including private sector and civil society.

Involvement of Member States: Approach and process

To structure the process of identifying the transformational initiatives for the Summit, nine interdependent tracks have been defined:

- The Mitigation Strategy track will be led by Japan and Chile with the support of Ms. Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Mr. Paul Polman, Vice-Chair of the Board of the United Nations Global Compact and will focus on strategies mainly for the major emitters.
- The Social and Political Drivers track will be led by Peru and Spain with the support of the United Nations Department Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) and will focus on issues cutting across all the other tracks including health and just transition and consider gender, climate and security and others.

Climate Action Summit Team

- The Youth and Mobilization track will be led by the Marshall Islands and Ireland with the support of the United Nations Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth and will focus on mobilizing youth and civil society in support of the Summit and streamline youth participation across all the tracks of work.
- The Energy Transition track will be led by Denmark and Ethiopia and supported by Sustainable Energy for All (SEforAll) and will focus on main elements of accelerating energy transition, including boosting renewable energy, energy efficiency, energy storage, access and innovation as well as mobilizing investments for the energy transition.
- The Resilience and Adaptation track will be led by Egypt and the United Kingdom and supported by UNDP and will focus on integrating climate risks into public and private sector decision-making to assure sustainability of food, water and jobs for the future as well as to prevent disasters and to allow a quick recovery after disasters especially of the most vulnerable groups.
- The Nature-based Solutions track will be led by China and New Zealand and supported by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Mr. David Nabarro, Strategic Director of Skills, Systems and Synergies for Sustainable Development, and will focus on forests and land-based ecosystems, smart agriculture and food systems, regenerating life in rivers, lakes and oceans and enabling all people (and families) to connect to nature.
- The Infrastructure, Cities and Local Government track will be led by Turkey and Kenya and supported by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and will focus on scaling ambitious commitments on low-emission and resilient infrastructure, specifically land-based transportation, buildings, water and waste systems and the requisite private and multilateral development bank financing. This track will also mobilize cities and subnational governments and necessary resources to develop and finance Paris-aligned plans and budgets.
- The Climate Finance and Carbon Pricing track will be led by France, Jamaica and Qatar and supported by the World Bank and will focus on delivering on former commitments of providing USD 100 billion annually by 2020 for mitigation and adaptation.
- The Industry track will be led by India and Sweden and supported by World Economic Forum and will focus on creating stronger commitments from the hard-to-abate sectors and build on positive momentum in areas such as shipping.

The coalitions on the different tracks will work with other partners, including other governments and a wide range of stakeholders to advance potential deliverables in and across the tracks, to be presented at the Summit.

Member States are encouraged to reach out to Mr. Luis Alfonso de Alba, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the 2019 Climate Summit, to show their interest in participating in a coalition and advance ambitious proposals for the Summit.

Each coalition is currently developing a work plan that will lay out main focus areas, schedule of work and of meetings and expected outcomes. Workplans will be published on the Summit's website by the end of March.

Assessment of initiatives – Selection Criteria

Coalitions are expected to present a set of potential Summit deliverables by 30 June 2019 at the Summit's preparatory meeting in Abu Dhabi (30 June 2019 – 1 July 2019).

This meeting will provide the opportunity to discuss, analyse and select the proposals to be presented at the Summit. Specific criteria for selection of initiatives will be developed under the leadership of the Special Envoy for the Summit with support of the Summit Steering Committee and two separate groups that have been set up in support of the Summit preparations (The Climate Science Advisory Group and the Ambition Advisory Group).

Benchmarks for selection criteria include the following:

- **Transformational impact:** Ambition on climate action (mitigation/adaptation) either setting a new precedent in a sector, regionally or internationally or dramatically scaling up an existing initiative;
- **Sustainable development co-benefits: Addressing political and social issues:** Initiatives will need to demonstrate that they are inclusive (ensuring that no-one is left behind), advancing sustainable development and multi-stakeholder (i.e. cutting across sectors and societies at large).
- **Replicable and scalable:** Initiative with the ability to be scaled up or replicated across sectors or regions.
- **Measurable and implementable:** Initiative should be concrete enough to be immediately implemented or already working and with a measurable effect that allows the proponents to demonstrate their contribution and secure accountability. Initiatives will need to be supported by an implementation plan with concrete milestones and the corresponding financial requirements.
- **Innovative and visible:** Development of a competitive, innovative solution that helps raise public awareness.

Summit format and participation

Heads of States and Government from Member States will be invited to the Summit along with civil society, businesses, organizations, youth and other representatives from the public or societies at large.

The Summit will take place on Monday, 23 September at the United Nations Headquarters. On Saturday 21 September and Sunday 22 September, a range of Summit events will be hosted where the broader work of the coalition's initiatives can be presented.

On 23 September, only the initiatives selected according to the above-mentioned criteria will be featured. The exact format of the event will be decided after the selection made at the preparatory meeting. It will be a Summit of showcasing ambitious proposals for climate action and implementation.

A Chair's summary will capture the initiatives and commitments showcased at the Summit. Follow up arrangements will be put in place to track progress, ensure accountability and to facilitate implementation of the Summit proposals, including by being furthered by the United Nations system and being fed into the process leading up to the 25th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP25) and beyond.

Tentative timeline and key dates

- 28 March: President of the United Nations General Assembly event; round table lunch for coalitions: First stock-take on work plan and possible outcomes.
- 30 April: Presentation of the initial list of Summit outcomes by the Special Envoy and the nine coalitions.
- 15 May: Presentation of a revised long list of Summit outcomes by the Special Envoy and the nine coalitions.
- June 15: Presentation of the refined criteria for ambition that will be used at the Abu Dhabi meeting by the Special Envoy.
- 30 June – 1 July: Abu Dhabi Preparatory Meeting for the Summit: Presentation of the short list of Summit outcomes.
- 21-22 September: Summit events in and around the United Nations Headquarters: Presentations of ambitious climate solutions by the nine coalitions and other invited participants and related coalition events.
- 23 September: Summit: Only the most ambitious coalition outcomes on the stage and Heads of States and Government with ambitious and credible 2020 to 2050 plans.
- 2-13 December: COP25: First check-in on commitments made at Summit.