

Committee of Permanent Representatives
Subcommittee Meeting
Tuesday 11 June 2019
10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
United Nations Office at Nairobi, Gigiri
Conference Room 4

**Background Document for Agenda Item 5:
Secretariat briefing on Preparations for the UN Climate Summit.**

This document serves as the background document for Agenda Item 5: Secretariat briefing on Preparations for the UN Climate Summit.

A. Background on Summit

- The UN Secretary-General is convening the [Climate Action Summit](#) on 23 September 2019 to mobilize political and economic actors at the highest levels. The Summit will aim to boost ambition and accelerate actions to implement the Paris Agreement goals and to demonstrate transformative action in the real economy in support of the goals.
- In preparation for the Summit, the UN Secretary-General has identified nine interdependent [actions areas](#) around which coalitions have been established. These action areas are recognized as having high potential to curb greenhouse gas emissions and increase global action on adaptation and resilience: Nature-based Solutions (NBS); Finance and Carbon Pricing; Energy Transition; Industry Transition; Infrastructure Cities and Local Action; Resilience and Adaptation; Increasing Mitigation Ambition; Social and Political Drivers; and Public Mobilization (includes youth).
- Each coalition is led by national governments, and supported by institutional bodies and the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, led by Special Envoy Luis Alfonso de Alba.
- Each coalition's remit is to undertake preparatory work for the Summit focussing on 'concrete' 'realistic' and 'transformative' outcomes, in line with stopping the increase in emissions by 2020, to reach net zero emissions by 2050.
- A key milestone for the Summit includes the preparatory stocktaking [meeting](#) taking place from 30 June-1 July in Abu Dhabi, where progress will be reviewed to enable the most transformative outcomes to be featured at the Summit.

B. UN Environment's Role

- UN Environment is the lead Agency for the Nature-based Solutions workstream, invited by the SG to support the co-leads and serve on the Summit Steering Committee in this capacity.
- UN Environment is also engaged across the majority of the nine action areas, including:
 - Energy transition: Cooling, methane and efficiency of data centres;
 - Infrastructure: Initiatives related to G7 adoption of RE/Climate (IRP), Zero emission, efficient, and resilient buildings for All.
 - Resilience & adaptation: Finance, food security, climate data services have been identified as actions for the Summit and the Global Commission on Adaptation supports this through its action tracks and its flagship report on adaptation to be launch at the time of the Summit.
 - Climate finance & carbon pricing: Related to announcement of at least 5 large investment moving assets under management to low carbon mandates.
 - Social mobilization & youth: 1 billion people to play for the planet, University climate action pledge.
 - Increased ambition: Inputs on system-wide sustainability strategy and launch of the 2019 edition of the Greening the Blue report showing efforts of the UN system in becoming climate neutral.

C. Nature-based Solutions (NBS) Action Area

- The NBS action area is co-led by China and New Zealand, with UN Environment co-facilitating in partnership with Dr David Nabarro, Strategic Director of Skills, Systems and Synergies for Sustainable Development (4SD) (see NBS [workplan](#)),. A number of countries are also engaged in the coalition, currently including Costa Rica, Fiji, Norway, Portugal and Tajikistan.
- NBS broadly comprise forests and land use, food and agriculture, freshwater, marine and oceans.
- There is a range of important reports (including IPCC and IPBES) confirming that NBS are an effective, long-term, cost-efficient and globally scalable approach to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, making millions of people more resilient to climate change,

promoting biodiversity everywhere, and providing important socio-economic benefits including fresh air, clean water, and healthy diets from sustainable food production.

- The Summit offers an extraordinary opportunity to trigger transformative change in the way that people's connection with nature can be massively scaled up and make a major contribution to climate action, to biodiversity and to the SDGs.
- Given that nature is ready to contribute now, a massive scale up in NBS in the coming decade would take us to the tipping point that ensure the world is Carbon Neutral by 2050 and stabilize at less than 2 degrees. The Summit is a step on the road to 2050 via events through 2020 and beyond.
- Delivering nature-based solutions at scale can lift a billion people out of poverty, creating 80 million jobs and adding an additional US\$2.3 trillion in productive growth to the global economy. At the same time, nature-based solutions can provide co-benefits by enhancing biodiversity and supporting vital biodiversity and ecosystem services (which are estimated to be worth US\$ 140-365 billion a year annually for the forest sector alone) including access to fresh water, and improved livelihoods and healthy diets from sustainable food.

Progress to date

- A global solicitation on NBS was initiated by China and New Zealand from mid-April until the 6th of May. This was shared with stakeholders including with Member States via NY Permanent Missions, and published online on the UN Environment [website](#).
- The coalition received over 120 contributions from a wide range of stakeholders including countries, institutions, UN agencies, corporations, NGOs and civil society, featuring a broad geographical coverage, a variety of scales and a broad diversity of thematic areas.
- The proposition for [NBS](#) is now emerging, shaped by the rich contributions received. This aims for a more systemic understanding of the interconnection between humans and nature, as well as concrete actions to integrate natural systems to mitigate and adapt to climate change, in four thematic areas (Forest and other terrestrial ecosystems; Ocean ecosystems and water resources; Agriculture and food systems; Nature's systemic role in development). Key enablers and accelerators are also critical (Leadership and governance; Finance; Communications, campaigns and popular engagement).

Next steps

- The proposition and coalition will continue to be developed in the lead up to the Abu Dhabi meeting, with great scope for synergy with the other Summit action areas.
- Overall, there is an impressive and growing level of commitment and interest in the process that has been initiated by the coalition co-leads. There are also signs of good alignment with a number of other processes, which can be brought together with the Summit as a focus.
- Systematic investments in nature-based solutions are needed now to meet the Paris Agreement long-term goal of carbon neutrality in the second half of the century.
- The co-leads and facilitation team continue to encourage inclusive engagement in the development of the proposition incorporating NBS in climate action.