



COP 25- UNFCCC: An opportunity for Latin America

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#CLIMATEAMBITION

COP 25, which will be hosted in Madrid, Spain and will take place under the Presidency of the Government of Chile, is an unprecedented scenario for the Latin America region to strengthen its leadership in the climate international agenda, accelerate domestic action, and to reinforce current commitments. LAC countries have played a unique role in the 2019 climate agenda, by hosting relevant spaces like the PreCOP 25 in Costa Rica ¹ and the LAC Climate Summit in Brazil, which generated important momentum on the road towards an ambitious COP 25. Presiding COP 25 is good proof of the long-term desire to build on the region's leadership at the UN climate negotiations, which helped to secure the Paris Agreement, and help accelerate national and regional climate action.

*This document seeks to provide **key messages relevant for the LAC engagement in the framework of COP 25 in alignment with WWF's top three expectations/priorities**: 1) closing the gap with enhanced NDCs; 2) mobilizing urgent action from state and non- state actors ; 3) and filling the gaps and strengthening the multilateral response to climate crisis (Paris Agreement Rulebook).*

1. Background

Latin America is a region **particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change**. In economic terms, ECLAC estimates that a 2.5°C rise of global temperature would signify costs equivalent to 5% of LAC's GDP, and it is expected that 25,000 million dollars would need to be invested annually for the countries of the region to adapt to climate change effects. Currently, it is estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 million dollars are invested in LAC annually.

Secondly, **climate change, social wellbeing and inequality** are strongly linked in LAC. Geographical and demographic factors as well as socio economic conditions **have contributed to the most vulnerable populations to be the most affected by the consequences of this phenomenon**. Therefore, investments to tackle climate change impacts are direct investments to reduce inequality and population vulnerability. **Also, the political context and recent mobilizations have shown the urgency to implement transformation changes in the development model strengthening social equity and climate justice**. This implies, among others, incorporating the concept of equality in national climate action, the respect to relevant treaties like the Escazú Agreement and the principle of free, prior and informed consent.

On the environmental site, climate change and nature conservation must be approached coordinately in LAC. This region supports rich biological diversity, with around sixty per cent of global terrestrial life found within it, alongside diverse freshwater and marine flora and fauna, and holds 5 of the megadiverse countries of the world. The LAC region's biomes extend from wetlands and coastal ecosystems to deserts, tropical forests, extensive savannah grasslands and high-altitude Andean habitats, which are highly vulnerable to climate change. Therefore, nature must be mainstreamed in mitigation and adaptation strategies, in support of a New Deal for Nature and People.

This context showcases the importance of adequate considerations when it comes to **tackling climate change in Latin America. Climate action must consider the regional economic, social and**

¹ As an example, during Pre-COP 25, the Costa Rican Government with the support of France, Finland, Gabon, Granada and UK, made an announcement to create a High Ambition Coalition to support a New Deal for Nature that protect the 30% of the planet by 2030

environmental particularities, aligned with global priorities, in order to ensure just transition which respects local populations and communities' rights and livelihoods, as well as those who depend on fossil fuel economies as their life support. Transitioning to environmentally and socially sustainable economies can turn into an important source of jobs, social justice and poverty eradication.

2. Priorities

I. Closing the gap to 1.5°C through enhanced NDCs and sectoral actions

Countries, like Chile, Costa Rica and Argentina, have showcased their interest in revising and strengthening their NDCs. However, all the countries of the LAC region have opportunities to continue enhancing their contributions NDC Long Term Strategies towards carbon neutrality by 2050:

Nature Based Solutions (NBS)

Considering that LAC region is one of the most biodiverse regions in the world. LAC countries must prioritize Nature Based Solutions in their NDCs revision by reinforcing existing initiatives in the following areas:

- **Enhancing the role of PA and other conservation strategies:** PA and other conservation strategies should be included in climate change strategies and development plans of LAC countries in order to facilitate climate-resilient development and promote a safer climate future. Existing initiatives, platforms and instruments like Amazon Vision lead by RedParques², OTCA, Leticia Amazon Pact, and Lima Declaration, must be implemented and reinforced with the help of non-state actors. LAC countries should also increase the coverage and representability of PAs and other conservation strategies to 30% by 2030 (30x30 initiative) and implement effective management plan with climate change adaptation approach to climate change for 100% of the terrestrial and marine areas by 2025.
- **Strengthening the contribution of Indigenous and Collective Territories³ in the NDC:** IPs are natural protectors of the forest and are therefore key stakeholders in the accomplishment of climate goals. It is necessary to safeguard them from external sources of pressure like mining, fossil fuels extraction, the expansion of the agricultural frontier, and forest clearing, among others. NDC's should contemplate the implementation of actions that, within the particularities of each indigenous territory, contribute to generating and/or consolidating the necessary conditions for indigenous communities to continue contributing in an effective manner to climate change mitigation and adaptation
- **Increase the ambition of forest conservation, restoration and sustainable management** Avoiding deforestation has the greatest potential contribution for achieving zero-carbon scenarios in the LAC region. Nonetheless, LAC forest ecosystem are in imminent danger. In 2018 WRI revealed that of the 12 million hectares of this forest cover lost globally that year, almost two million were lost in Latin America. To tackle this threat, LAC countries must strengthen their commitments to achieve zero deforestation and net degradation of forests, wetlands and peatlands. Reducing deforestation would prevent CO₂ emissions but would also prevent changes in rainfall patterns in local and regional areas of influence and climate destabilization in the region. **Eliminating deforestation should be at the core of government efforts to significantly reduce the carbon footprint of the region.** Integrated national and regional strategies related to forest protection and management, sustainable low carbon economic development and infrastructure, along with the development of stronger policies, regulatory and incentives efforts are required to arrest the rate of deforestation, acknowledging that, in the long term, the benefits can be significantly higher than the costs of avoiding deforestation. These benefits include soil protection and formation, the maintenance of surface hydrology and rainfall, carbon storage,

² The Latin-American Network of National Parks.

³ Related Panda Pavilion Event: **Amazonia Viva: Indigenous People and Climate Change**. The event will take place Thursday 12th (19:30- 21:00).

biodiversity protection, genetic resources and cultural assets. The implementation of the Leticia Pact for the Amazon in hand with non-state actors will also be key to increase coordinated regional efforts against deforestation.

- **Strengthen the role of oceans** COP 25 is also known as the Blue COP thanks to the Chilean government efforts to strengthen their relevance in climate negotiations. LAC countries have the opportunity of marine and coastal ecosystems in their NDC by encouraging the development, diffusion and incorporation of scientific knowledge to evaluate the capacity of these ecosystems to absorb CO₂, identify important sites for biodiversity conservation, and their potential to boost the resilience of traditional activities (artisanal fishing) in coast communities.

Promoting energy transition towards a resilient and Low Carbon development

Under the leadership of the Chilean government, 59 nations, including Costa Rica, Colombia, Chile, Dominican Republic, Guyana; Jamaica; México and Panamá, expressed their intention **to sign a climate action plan during the 2019 UN Climate Action Summit, to boost high level action by 2020 and carbon neutrality by 2050**. WWF celebrates this effort as an important step to fulfil the goals of the Paris Agreement and maintain the global temperature rise at 1.5 ° C. Energy sector is at the core of a decarbonized world, and we call on LAC countries to reinforce key elements of their NDCs to carry out the necessary transition through the following opportunities

- **Accelerating decarbonization of the energy matrix by 2030 by promoting renewable energy penetration in domestic markets.** National efforts must be aligned with Colombia's regional proposal launched in the Climate Action Summit in hand with Honduras, Guatemala, Haití, República Dominicana, Chile, Ecuador, Costa Rica y Perú to work together **to achieve, at least 70% of Renewable Energies installed capacity. This should occur mainly with the use of non-conventional renewable energies like solar and wind.**
- **Recognize the role of cities and promote changes in energy consumption patterns** Ambitious NDC must incorporate goals and ways of implementation that allow increasing climate action in local governments and municipalities. Examples of key actions are the reinforcement of public urban planning instruments with minimum energy efficiency standards for new buildings, and incentives for the refurbishment of existing one. In addition, with the impulse of electromobility and reduction of dependence on fossil fuels, it is possible to upscale more sustainable urban transport systems (cycle paths, circulation of pedestrians, incentives for shared vehicles). It is also urgent to improve waste management to limit and reduce the surface of sanitary landfills, which are worrisome sources of pollution and GHG emissions.

Promoting a Sustainable Land Sector – AFOLU

The majority of GHG emissions in Latin America are generated from agriculture, forestry and other land uses (AFOLU), this sector represents the main challenges in terms of mitigation and adaptation to climate change, but furthermore in ensuring food security and the livelihoods of millions of people in the region. LAC is the second largest producer of agricultural emissions globally, accounting for nearly 17% of the total, second only to Asia (44%). LAC countries have unique opportunities on the LAND Sector considering current initiatives on the following areas:

- Reforestation, land restoration and sustainable practices in agriculture are key in securing land use-based carbon sinks in the region. Significant public and private efforts need to continue in slowing down agricultural expansion into forest and other natural habitats.
- Promote concrete public and private partnerships the 30x30 Forests, Food and Land Challenge calls on States, businesses, cities and local governments, and global citizens to take action for better forest and habitat conservation, food production and consumption, and land use, working together across all sectors of the economy to deliver up to 30% of the climate solutions needed by 2030. Additional, local direct incentives to farmers, work with supply chains, a territorial approach to addressing land restoration and sustainable practices in agriculture represents an opportunity to GHG emissions reductions, climate adaptation and food security for the region.

II. Mobilizing urgent action from state and non-state actors

According to the Rabid Climate Change and Sustainable Development Observatory, 71% of LACs population recognize the urgency to prioritize the fight against climate change, notwithstanding the economic consequences it may have. Nonetheless, while climate action is growing, there is an urgent need to engage more subnational and non-state actors at the national level. **This can be done through Alliances for Climate Action (ACAs), a WWF led initiative throughout the globe.**

ACAs seeks to connect cities, academia, the private sector, investors, subnational governments, and civil society organizations with national governments to accelerate the fulfilment of the commitments made in the Paris Agreement. Currently, in collaboration with partners, WWF is supporting ACAs in Argentina, Mexico and Colombia.

III. Strengthening the multilateral response to climate crisis

LAC countries can play a unique role in COP 25 negotiations. Negotiation blocks like AILAC, composed by 8 countries (Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panamá, Paraguay y Perú) are key to mobilize coordinated and ambitious regional positions which contribute to multilateral negotiations. Some of LAC negotiation priorities for COP 25 will be:

- The definition of common time frame definition which correspond to the ambition mechanism and the 5-year revision cycles.
- Ambition related policy deliverables of COP 25 must signal the importance of using the best scientific information possible in alignment with the 1.5°C goal.
- 2020 must be an opportunity for LAC countries to formulate a common vision around their needs to strengthen capacities facing reporting commitments under the transparency structure.

Adequate multilateral response by LAC countries will also require the alignment of climate negotiations with other international agendas discussions in the Convention on Biological Diversity and the SDGs.

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