WWF

ROAD THROUGH PARIS

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Introduction

The global movement for a fair and just energy transition away from fossil fuels is growing. Investments into solar and wind energy are rising rapidly in many countries, rich and poor alike, and we see a growing drive to divest from fossil fuels, particularly coal, the single largest cause of climate change. The continued decline in costs of renewable energy and the significant economic energy saving potentials leave little excuse for inaction. In addition, the September 2015 agreement on Sustainable Development Goals, if fully implemented, would pave the way for more just and clean economic development and environmental protection up to 2030. WWF, with the global CSO community, large faith groups, trade unions and progressive business demand nothing less from Paris than a clear signal that the energy transition is underway and irreversible and that we are on a path consistent with keeping global warming within levels that can prevent catastrophic climate change. The UNFCCC could deliver such an agreement if governments showed true political will.

In Paris all of 195 Parties must act responsibly by putting in place an agreement that speeds up the global transformation towards zero-carbon economies and climate resilience while also supporting the millions of vulnerable people and ecosystems that already bearing the unavoidable impacts of climate change. For this to be achieved the Paris agreement must deliver a strong, fair and transformational outcome consisting of the following:

1. A sense that the direction we are moving towards is a fair and science-based trajectory
2. An international climate architecture that ensures climate actions will become increasingly stronger
3. Ensures the security and resilience of the vulnerable
4. Provision of a solid resourcing foundation

A Fair, Ambitious and Transformational Paris Outcome

1. A sense that the direction we are moving towards is a fair and science-based trajectory

1.1. An "Ambition Mechanism" to address the pre- and post-2020 emissions gaps

In order to limit warming to below 1.5 or even 2°C, experts call for global emissions to peak before 2020 and decline rapidly thereafter. While the Cancun pledges, and recent submissions of INDCs help bend the emissions curve they do not put us on this trajectory.

By 1 October 2015 146 countries covering 87% of global greenhouse gas emissions had submitted INDCs[i]. This reflects a new level of political commitment around the world to address climate change and to collectively start bending the global emissions curve, but much more is needed to close the emissions gap created by these INDCs in order to be consistent with keeping warming below 1.5 or 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Estimates put the emissions gap at 8-10 billion tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Gt CO2eq) by 2020[ii] and up to 15 Gt CO2eq by 2030[iii].

5-YEAR CYCLES OF PROGRESSIVELY MORE AMBITIOUS NATIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The INDCs submitted so far only address around half of the reductions required and should be seen as a floor for further and stronger national action. Multilateral cooperation within a strong international framework is required and it is vital that Parties deliver agreements in Paris that directly addresses the pre-2020[iv] and post-2020[v], vi ambition gaps while also ensuring that adaption and finance ambition will be increased over time.

The risk of a likely 'bottom up' nature of the Paris outcome, where countries offer commitments based on purely their "national circumstance" and with little or no consideration to the requirements of science or equity, will virtually guarantee an emissions gap and an unfair sharing of effort for decades to come.

Although the Paris outcome won't be able to fully close these gaps, countries cannot ignore them or simply leave the problem to future governments.

Instead, the Paris outcome needs to explicitly create processes that will promote action that goes beyond existing INDCs. The following elements would form an important 3-part plan to address the emissions gap:

1. Cooperative efforts by Parties to Address the Gap: All parties should agree to take steps beyond their unconditional INDCs to cut the post-2020 emissions gap by half or more before 2025 and close it entirely soon thereafter. Developed country parties, and others willing to do so, should make quantified pledges of support (expressed in terms of finance or a target of emissions reductions) to developing countries to satisfy their conditional targets and take other steps to help meet this 2025 goal.

2. Permanent Action Agenda: The Lima-Paris Action Agenda has provided an important spotlight on the need for near-term action and encourages new cooperation among non-state actors and governments. The Paris outcome should develop a permanent high-level action agenda, led by prominent champions that incentivizes and tracks progress on new, transformative cooperative actions between governments and among non-state actors and governments.

3. Enhanced Technical Examination Process (TEP): The existing technical examination process under ADP Workstream 2 has helped engage experts and catalyse new ideas. But the process has not been given the political attention and resources needed to become transformative. The Paris outcome should link the TEP to the action agenda and key mechanisms of the convention including the Green Climate Fund.

In addition to these three steps to begin to immediately address the gap, countries should build the new climate regime around regular 5-year cycles of progressively more ambitious national contributions informed by science and equity reviews (see the next section of this paper).

To implement this plan to address the emissions gap, WWF proposes that the Workstream 2 decisions in Paris should:

1. Strongly call for developed countries to take additional action to close the pre-2020 gap, and for developing countries without mitigation pledges to submit one. Developing countries with existing pledges should also increase their efforts, where possible, with additional support.

2. Include clear commitments to address the emissions gap including:

- All Parties commit to cooperate with each other to ensure that any remaining emissions reduction gap is closed

- Developed countries, and others willing to do so, jointly pledge to provide adequate support to developing countries to cooperatively achieve large emissions reductions before 2020 while in the post-2020 period these pledges should help achieve reductions beyond developing country's unconditional INDCs.

Individual developed countries commit to quantified pledges of support to developing countries (in the form of finance or expressed in tonnes of emissions to be reduced) that reflect the developed country's fair share of the joint goal to cooperatively eliminate the emissions gap.

The new Agreement should capture this mode of work as part of the mechanisms to address the gap in the post-2020 period

3. Create formalised annual opportunities for Parties, particularly developed countries, to announced enhanced and accelerated action that goes beyond existing efforts, including scaling up targets or over-achieving them.

4. Establish a permanent Action Agenda to develop and launch new actions and report back on previously launched initiatives. The Action Agenda should be led by high-level champions or facilitators and linked to the technical examination process.

5. Establish clear social and environmental principles and criteria for the inclusion of initiatives in the action agenda.

6. Decide to enhance and continue the collaborative technical examination process (TEP) until the ambition gap is closed, including through clear guidance to the finance and technology mechanisms to support new initiatives that are developed under that process, particularly in areas with large mitigation potential and numerous co-benefits such as renewable energy, energy efficiency and land use.

7. Finally, recognizing the shortfall in mitigation ambition and growing adaptation needs, the WS2 Decision should introduce a technical examination process on adaptation.

While it is unlikely that Parties will be able to agree to all the components of an Ambition Mechanism in Paris, the agreement/s needs to set the foundations for a collaborative approach to addressing the emissions gap and incentivising these enhanced actions.

100% RENEWABLE ENERGY BY 2050

1.2. A strong long-term goal for 2050, in line with keeping warming below 1.5°C underpinned by the inclusion of mid-term targets for 2025 and 2030

The Paris Agreement needs to provide a clear signal, through a commitment to a long-term goal, that we are in a just transition towards a zero carbon future. This long-term goal should also signal that continued investments into fossil fuels, infrastructure and exploration, will be economically risky and lead to stranded investments.

These signals can be captured in a long-term goal that caps emissions in line with the carbon budget outlined in the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report for keeping warming below 1.5˚C [vii, viii, ix]. Agreement on a global carbon budget consistent with the temperature goal enables Parties to more readily identify and address the emissions gap and it should go hand in hand with a global GHG emission reduction target for 2050, consistent with keeping warming below 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

To make these goals concrete, it should include the aim of phasing out all fossil fuels and phasing in 100% renewable energy by 2050. These 2050 goals should be underpinned by 2030 goals for sourcing 45% of all primary energy from renewable sources by 2030 and ramping up global energy intensity improvements to 4.5% annually. In addition to ambitious action in these sectors, countries must express their collective commitment to halt deforestation by 2020 as stipulated in the SDGs. All goals should be based on the common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities of countries. Such a trajectory of both long and mid-term goals would deliver a clear signal that there is no future for investment in unsustainable energy sources or in the conversion of natural forests to other uses.

2. An international climate regime that ensures climate actions will become increasingly ambitious over time

2.1. A Strong International framework and agreed guidelines to inform countries' national contributions

The submissions of national contributions by countries should be comprehensive and include mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation.

The agreement should ensure provide confidence that Parties will implement promised efforts but there should be flexibility to strengthened these in terms of coverage and ambition over time. These commitments should be based on five year periods and must recognise varying levels of responsibility and capability in terms of form and ambition.

It should be clear that all Parties, as they reach higher levels of capability, should eventually move to clear cumulative emission targets for five year periods.

When these commitments are updated every five years, they must clearly go beyond earlier efforts. Irrespective of the placement of those commitments, there has to be an assurance in the agreement that Parties "nationally determined" mitigation commitments have legal force.

Developed countries and others with similarly high responsibility and capability should clearly indicate the emissions reductions that they will achieve.

Parties with high responsibility and capability that cannot meet their full fair share of emission reductions domestically should also indicate how much emission reduction they will achieve beyond their own borders through setting targets for support to developing countries, either in terms of finance or a target of emissions reductions.

INDCS SHOULD BE REVIEWED PERIODICALLY TO ENSURE THAT ADAPTATION EFFORTS AND ADAPTATION SUPPORT NEEDS ARE INCREASED IN LINE WITH PROJECTED CLIMATE IMPACTS

Other developing countries should indicate the climate action they will take with their own resources as well as indicate what support is needed to enable additional actions.

With regard to the forest and land sector the Paris agreement should adopt a simple, flexible and transparent approach, which promotes high ambition and environmental integrity. Parties must recognize that actions in the forest and land sector are crucial to keep global warming below 1.5° C and include the land sector comprehensively in their nationally determined contributions. Parties must also promote mitigation and adaptation actions in the forest and land sectors, including through REDD+, to help close the ambition gap before 2020;

In recognition of the fact that climate change impacts vulnerable communities everywhere, all parties should also present intended nationally determined adaptation contributions to the UNFCCC. These INDCs should be reviewed periodically to ensure that adaptation efforts and adaptation support needs (finance, technology and capacity-building) are increased in line with projected climate impacts due to increased temperatures.

2.2. Rules to enhance transparency & comparability

Transparency is needed to both understand what countries are offering in their INDCs and to track progress of mitigation, adaptation and delivery of finance. Transparency facilitates understanding of Party commitments, helps to build trust in the international climate change framework, ensures that governments can be held accountable for their actions and tracks whether sufficient action is being taken to keep warming below 1.5°C. Fully disclosing information of what the atmosphere sees from country-specific mitigation actions and support, along with internationally consistent and clear rules for monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) must be included in new agreement(s) in Paris.

The post-2020 climate framework should build on the existing MRV framework, extend the scope beyond mitigation, and allow flexibility for countries (particularly LDCs and SIDS) while they build their capability. It should provide methodological guidelines and create opportunities to review the efficacy of the MRV system in future. The Agreement should include a formalized transparency framework that defines common principles, applicable to all Parties, for monitoring, reporting and verification of the implementation of national mitigation action and the provision of support. The Agreement needs to include provisions to secure the principles of environmental integrity and that there is no double-counting of efforts within the transparency framework.

Transparent and comparable accounting is also relevant in the land sector where additional complexities of the interaction of human activity and natural processes, and the fact that the land sector can be both a source of emissions as well as a sink. There also needs to be a harmonization of land-based accounting rules.

2.3. Regular ambition & equity reviews with clear mechanisms to increase emissions reduction targets and support and match additional support with ambitious conditional targets.

The Paris agreement must establish a regular five year process for Parties, supported by experts and civil society, to review intended national emission reduction targets and available means of implementation against the global carbon budget and an agreed equity reference framework. The review has to be done at both global and individual country levels and Parties should be urged to ramp up their pledges based on this review. As part of the review process parties should address the mobilisation of support to achieve the additional

emission reduction potential identified through conditional targets. This review mechanism should start no later than 2018 to have a chance to impact the targets put forward in current INDCs.

3. Ensuring the security and resilience of the vulnerable

3.1. The establishment of a Global Adaptation Goal

The Paris agreement must establish a global goal for adaptation to adequately address adaptation needs and treat it at same level of priority as mitigation in the international framework. Such an Adaptation Goal should be both qualitative such as "to build resilience to climate change impacts and protect vulnerable people and ecosystems" and concrete through setting clear objectives for adaptation finance, institutional frameworks, and adaptation readiness.

3.2. Adequate public financing for adaptation

Adaptation finance should be sufficient to meet the needs of those countries that are most vulnerable to climate change yet have the least responsibility for causing the problem and the least capability to deal with the challenges. A major adaptation funding gap for the pre-2020 period already exists, and this gap will grow in the post-2020 period unless new and additional finance for adaptation is made available. According to UNEP[x] the funding required for adaptation in developing countries in already unsafe 2oC warming scenarios is to the order of USD 150 billion per year by 2030 and USD 250-500 billion per year by 2050. Therefore the Paris Agreement has a critical role to play to ensure that sufficient adaptation finance is made available. This finance should take the form of new, additional, predictable and sustainable commitments from mainly public sources.

3.3. Loss and damage as a central provision in the Agreement

The issue of loss and damage should be strongly and fairly captured as a stand-alone provision in the Paris Agreement in recognition of the fact that irreversible loss and damage due to climate change will increase where adaptation and mitigation can no longer curb the most severe impacts of climate change. Even with strong mitigation and adaptation support there will be residual losses and damage as a result of emissions that are already in the atmosphere, and will impact highly vulnerable places and people such as in low lying Island nations, mountainous regions, among others. Therefore, loss and damage should be treated distinctly from adaptation and the Paris Agreement should establish a separate and robust international mechanism on loss and damage[xi].

4. A solid resourcing foundation

First and foremost developed countries must deliver the pledged USD100 billion by 2020. This should include concrete pledges of additional finance in the run up to COP21 as well as a clear roadmap and commitments to scaling up to the promised level by 2020.

Transfers and mobilization of predictable, new and additional[xii] public finance from multiple sources must remain a central element of the overall financing strategy and the post-2020 framework should ensure that finance contributions grow from the floor of USD100 billion per annum in 2020. However, the Paris Agreement should also reflect an expanded approach to climate finance that uses a range of instruments and commitments to shift large scale investments towards low-emissions renewable energy technologies and energy efficiency, building resilience as well as for activities in the forest and land sector, including REDD+. Is should specifically include predictable, new and additional funding for adaptation. Developed countries should continue to lead the way on finance contributions but other countries with similar levels responsibility and capability should step up, following the recent leadership of countries like China and Mexico. All other countries are welcome to contribute if they are willing to do so. Similar to the mitigation commitments, finance commitments should be reviewed and scaled up through the regular cycles of an ambition mechanism.

Parties should also be strongly urged to create policy frameworks to mobilize the USD 2 trillion annually that is necessary in 15 to 20 years for the sufficient rollout of renewables and energy efficiency[xiii],[xiv] while also phasing out and removing the USD one trillion in fossil fuel investments. Parties also need to remove the staggering direct and indirect fossil fuel subsidies that amount to up to 6.5% of global GDP (including climate and air pollution externalities). Though overall energy investments will be higher than at present, it will be cheaper overall when considering avoided externality costs. Policy processes linked to climate finance, should detail how countries will involve the private sector in climate mitigation and adaptation projects. Strengthening domestic industries within low-carbon sectors is vital, and will create the space for enhanced use of domestic resources for climate resilience, and sustainable development.

5. Equity in the post-2020 framework

The Paris Agreement must embody an approach to equity and differentiation that is crosscutting and appropriate within each part of the agreement. In particular the approach to equity should recognise that parties have varying levels of responsibility and capability. The global temperature goal can only be met if developed countries, and those developing countries with similar responsibility and capability, complement their domestic efforts as part of their fair share, with support for poorer developing countries to transition to low carbon economies. The most appropriate basis for this is an equity reference framework with clear principles and criteria for sharing the global carbon budget and responsibilities for remaining within it in an equitable manner.

Closing Remarks

Many factors are aligning to create favourable circumstances for more ambition to address climate change. The 5th IPCC Assessment Report has reiterated that emissions must peak before 2020 and with renewable energy prices falling sharply[xv] there is every possibility that this can be achieved. The increasing incidence of extreme weather events such as heat waves, floods, storms and droughts serve as reminders of what is at stake. While fossil fuel investments still totaled an estimated USD 1 trillion in 2014, they are increasingly considered to be high risk and investments in renewables (excluding large hydro) grew by 17% to more than USD 270 billion in 2014[xvi]. On top of the changing economics, people everywhere are mobilizing to call for much greater action. Ongoing struggles by frontline communities, events such as the largest ever climate march in New York in September 2014 and calls to action from faith leaders, including Pope Francis[xvii] and Islamic Scholars[xviii] emphasize how strong the moral, economic and scientific case for increased climate action is. Governments have to build on this momentum and give the world an agreement that gives us all hope for a better future.

Leaders and governments have the opportunity to act responsibly and speed up the just transition to a decarbonized and climate resilient world.

Notes And References

[i] UNFCCC. 2015. Unprecedented Global Breadth of Climate Action Plans Ahead of Paris. Available at http://bit.ly/1YU79QW. Accessed 17 October 2015

[ii] UNEP. 2014. Emissions Gap Report 2014. Available at http://www.unep.org/publications/ebooks/emissionsgapreport2014/portals/50268/pdf/EGR2014_LO WRES.pdf (Accessed 28 July 2015)

[iii] Fair Shares: A Civil Society Equity Review Of INDCs. 2015.

[iv] UNEP. 2014. Emissions Gap Report 2014. Available at http://bit.ly/1vpj11m (Accessed 28 July 2015) and Climate Action Tracker. 2015. G7+EU INDCs: some improvement, but a large emissions gap remains. Available at http://bit.ly/1dOsMiJ (Accessed 28 July 2015)

[v] Climate Action Tracker. 2015. G7+EU INDCs: some improvement, but a large emissions gap remains. Available at http://bit.ly/1dOsMiJ (Accessed 28 July 2015)

[vi] The Grantham institute projects that the emissions gap in 2030, taking into account INDCs submitted up to June 2015, would be 10-17 GtCO2e. Boyd, Turned and Ward. 2015. Tracking intended nationally determined contributions: what are the implications for greenhouse gas emissions in 2030? Available at: http://bit.ly/1E7Ywe7 (Accessed: 16 September 2015)

[vii] For a high likelihood of staying below 2°C the available carbon budget is 1000 GtCO , but it has to be considered that roughly 100 GtCO2 of that budget has already been used in the period between 2011 and 2014.

viii 400 – 850 GtCO for the period 2011 – 2050 as per: IPCC AR5 Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Page 68 Available at: http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/SYR_AR5_LONGERREPORT.pdf. Accessed 20 November 2014.

ix A recent study puts the range of cumulative carbon emissions in 1.5 °C scenarios as 680–895 GtCO2 from 2011 to 2050 but then gives a carbon budget of 200–415 GtCO2 from 2011 to 2100. Rogelj et al. 2015. Energy system transformations for limiting end-of-century warming to below 1.5 °C. Nature 5, 519–527 (2015) http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/v5/n6/full/nclimate2572.html

[x] UNEP. 2014. "Adaptation Gap report", Available at http://bit.ly/1vZ07Nl (accessed 22 September 2015)

[xi] The Warsaw International Mechanism {WIM) lacks durability and does not capture the full spectrum of the loss and damage issue {slow onset events, climate induce migration and plan relocations, compensation regime, risk transfer, loss and damage finance etc.).

[xii] By additional we mean the public finance should be additional to existing ODA targets – and in particular the finance cannot be simply a reallocation within existing ODA budgets.

[xiii] Only USD1 Trillion: Annual Investment Goal Puts Climate Solutions Within Reach Available at http://bit.ly/1m5HKUv (Accessed 22 September 2015)

[xiv] International Energy Agency (IEA), 2014 , "World Energy Investment Outlook", pp 135 – 160. The IEA calculates a need for USD 1,1 trillion by 2035 needed, but most of that investment will pay back later through massively saved fuel costs, Bloomberg New Energy Finance (BNEF). 2013. "Global Renewable Energy Market Outlook 2013 – Fact pack", The option (policy driven) about USD 900 billion annual investments in renewables, particularly solar and wind.

[xv] Photovoltaic solar is 80% cheaper and 40% more efficient than in 2008 - IRENA. 2014. Rethinking Energy. Available at http://www.irena.org/rethinking/Rethinking_FullReport_web.pdf Accessed 12 October 2015.

[xvi] Frankfurt School-UNEP Centre/BNEF. 2015. Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2015. Available at: http://www.fs-unep-centre.org (Frankfurt am Main) Accessed (22 September 2015).

[xvii] Francis. 2015. Laudato Si. Available at: http://bit.ly/1Gi1BTu (Accessed 16 September 2015)

[xviii] International Islamic Climate Change Symposium. 2015. Islamic Declaration on Global Climate Change. Available at: http://bit.ly/1WBlJvA (Accessed 16 September 2015)

For Further Information Contact:

Tasneem Essop
WWF Head of Delegation
tessop@wwf.org.za
@tasneemessop
+27 83 998 6290

Jaco du Toit
Policy Coordinator
WWF Global Climate and Energy Initiative
jdutoit@wwf.org.za
+27 82 765 9461

Why we are here
To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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