



# For Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) 3.0

## INTRODUCTION

In 2025, parties are due to submit their third-generation Nationally Determined Contributions, “NDC 3.0”, which should reflect the “highest possible ambition”, while considering countries’ common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances. Ultimately, these new NDCs represent stepping-stones on a pathway towards limiting the global average temperature rise to 1.5°C.

To support this effort, UNDP has developed a quality assurance checklist for NDC 3.0, to reflect lessons learned from UNDP’s support on NDC enhancement and implementation in over 125 countries and to incorporate the first [Global Stocktake’s relevant outcomes and guidance to Parties on the preparation of their new NDCs](#). This checklist builds upon an earlier UNDP quality assurance checklist for revising NDCs published in 2020 and draws from related NDC guidance and tools from key partners.<sup>1</sup> The objective is to support countries in preparing and submitting NDCs aligned with the ICTU guidelines (the Information necessary to facilitate Clarity, Transparency and Understanding).<sup>2</sup> The checklist complements more comprehensive tools and guidance for NDC revision provided in the NDC Partnership’s [NDC 3.0 Navigator](#).

This checklist outlines five dimensions that UNDP considers essential for ambitious, transparent, inclusive and investable NDCs.

- 1. Country ownership and inclusivity:** Political and societal stakeholders at all levels are meaningfully engaged and the outcomes of these engagements, along with the roles, needs, and priorities of these stakeholders, are fully integrated into NDCs.
- 2. Ambition:** NDC targets, policies and measures aim for the highest possible ambition for mitigation and adaptation, reflect the outcomes of the first Global Stocktake, are aligned with pathways towards limiting the global temperature rise to 1.5°C, and reflect countries’ common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances.
- 3. Just transition and sustainable development:** NDC targets, policies and measures deliver sustainable development priorities, aligned with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, and include social justice and equity considerations that leave no one behind.
- 4. Clarity and transparency:** The clarity, transparency and understanding of NDC targets, policies and measures, as well as cross-cutting issues and enabling actions communicated in NDCs, are informed by robust, credible methodologies using the latest and best available science.
- 5. Feasibility:** Key enabling conditions and needs for accelerating implementation of NDCs are described, i.e., finance mobilization, technology transfer and institutional capacity-building.

<sup>1</sup> See the Annex for resources.

<sup>2</sup> UNFCCC. 2018. [Decision 4/CMA.1, annex 1](#) - Further guidance in relation to the mitigation section of decision 1/CP.21.

## HOW TO USE THE CHECKLIST

This quality assurance checklist can be used in three ways. First, this checklist provides a comprehensive set of guiding questions to assist government officials in the early stages of the NDC 3.0 preparation. Second, the checklist can also be used as a quality assurance tool for countries that are more advanced in the NDC 3.0 development process to review the draft NDC and provide feedback for final improvements before adoption. Third, the checklist can also be used to assess the quality and ambition of NDCs after submission to inform various analyses and take stock of trends and key features that can inform future revisions or development of new NDCs.

It should be noted that the checklist has been developed as a form of guidance. It does not imply that countries are expected to fulfill all the elements in this checklist. Given the nationally determined nature of NDCs, each country has its own starting point and may choose to build on existing policies, plans and strategies. The NDC 3.0 should reflect a progression from a country's last NDC and will define a unique roadmap of targets, policies and measures, taking into consideration the national context and capacities. Countries may also choose to present details of these targets, policies and measures including means of implementation within the NDC itself or in a separate instrument(s).

## DIMENSION ONE: COUNTRY OWNERSHIP AND INCLUSIVITY

This section focuses on efforts to strengthen country ownership through an inclusive and gender-transformative<sup>3</sup> engagement process, taking a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach in the design and implementation of the new NDC. This includes ensuring that the needs, roles and priorities of key stakeholders are meaningfully reflected in NDC targets, policies and measures. Key considerations include:

### Country ownership and inclusivity

	Yes	Partially	No
1. Have <b>key ministries, departments and agencies of government</b> played an active role in revising the NDC (including those mandated to promote gender equality and social inclusion)?			
2. Have government institutions at subnational levels (i.e. <b>regional, municipal and local authorities</b> ) been engaged and consulted on the NDC revision?			
3. Have the following <b>actors</b> been meaningfully engaged and consulted throughout the NDC revision process? Click all that apply:			
• Academia			
• Civil Society Organizations			
• Indigenous Peoples and local communities			
• Private sector			
• Women's groups			

<sup>3</sup> See definition in the Glossary of Gender-related Terms and Concepts on [UNWOMEN's Training Center](#).

- Youth
- Other vulnerable and marginalized groups (e.g. elders or persons with disabilities)
- Other (describe):

4. Does the NDC include targets, policies and/or measures that are **gender-transformative** (e.g. gender policy,<sup>4</sup> mitigation/adaptation gender actions, sectoral measures/targets<sup>5</sup>)?

5. Does the NDC include targets, policies and/or measures that are **youth- and/or child-sensitive**, or that address needs and priorities of youth and/or children?

6. Does the NDC include targets, policies and/or measures that address the needs, rights, and priorities of **Indigenous Peoples and local communities**?<sup>6</sup>

7. Does the NDC include targets, policies and/or measures that address the needs, priorities and roles of **other vulnerable groups** (such as elders, persons with disabilities)?

8. Are the roles and contributions of the **private sector** to support NDC implementation clearly articulated?

9. Does the NDC include targeted **awareness-raising, advocacy and education** related activities?

## DIMENSION TWO: AMBITION

This section assists countries in communicating NDC targets, policies and measures that indicate progression compared to the previous NDCs, aim for the highest possible ambition for mitigation and adaptation, reflect the outcome of the first Global Stocktake (GST) and align with pathways towards limiting global average temperature rise to 1.5°C. Key considerations include:

### Mitigation

**Does the NDC provide information on how the preparation of the NDC has been informed by the GST outcomes, taking into account different national circumstances, with regards to:**

1. **1.5 °C alignment:** Does the NDC specify that it is 1.5°C aligned?

If yes, does the NDC indicate a specific methodology or approach that has been applied to make that determination?

4 Gender equality policy or gender approach recognized as part of the climate policy framework.

5 These considerations can be based on the development of a gender analysis. For more, see: UNDP. 2019. [Gender Analysis and NDCs: Short Guidance for Government Stakeholders](#).

6 In some countries, this could refer to ethnic minority groups.

2. **Time frame:** Is an end date of 2035 communicated?

3. **GHG target(s):** Does the NDC:

- **Strengthen 2030 target(s)** to align with the Paris Agreement temperature goal, as per para. 37 of the GST (Decision 1/CMA.5<sup>7</sup>)?
- Set **specific, quantitative GHG targets** in relation to a **base year**?
- **Strengthen and/or add a GHG reduction target(s)** that would result in lower cumulative GHG emissions compared to the previous NDC?
- **Increase the proportion of the unconditional component** in relation to the conditional component of its mitigation target(s), compared to its previous NDC?
- Set an **absolute emission reduction target**?
- Introduce a **timeframe for peaking emissions**?

4. **Scope (Sectors):** Does the NDC:

- **Cover all sectors** as defined by the IPCC: energy; building; transport; industrial processes and product use; agriculture, forestry and other land use; and waste?
- **Expand scope within existing sectors** (i.e., cover all relevant GHG source or sink categories and/or sub-categories, as defined by the IPCC)?
- **Increase sectoral coverage** since the previous NDC?
- **Strengthen or add sectoral non-GHG target(s) in response to** the calls to action from **the first GST** (Decision 1/CMA.5<sup>8</sup>)?

5. **Scope (Gases):** Does the NDC:

- **Cover all greenhouse gases** as defined by the IPCC (i.e. CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFCs, PFCs, SF<sub>6</sub>, NF<sub>3</sub>)?
- **Increase GHG coverage** since the previous NDC? (i.e. adding methane, HFCs, SLCPs, etc.)?

7 UNFCCC. 2024. [Decision 1/CMA.5](#) - Outcome of the first Global Stocktake.

8 UNFCCC. 2024. [Decision 1/CMA.5](#) - Outcome of the first Global Stocktake (Para 28, 33, 35 and 36). This decision calls on Parties to contribute to, among others, just and orderly transition away from fossil fuels in energy systems towards net zero, improve energy efficiency and expand renewable energy, phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies, and accelerate methane and transport emissions reductions. It also invites Parties to preserve ocean and coastal ecosystems and notes the importance of circular economy.

6. **LT-LEDS alignment:** Does the NDC align with the country’s long-term low-emissions development strategies (LT-LEDS)<sup>9</sup>, if one exists?  
This includes:
- The inclusion of long-term or net-zero targets outlined in the LT-LEDS
  - Establishing specific interim targets that act as benchmarks toward the LT-LEDS goal, ensuring a consistent trajectory toward long-term decarbonization
  - The inclusion of policies and measures that directly support the objectives laid out in the LT-LEDS to avoid contradictory measures or carbon lock-ins
  - Harmonization of in-country reporting mechanisms to track progress against short-, medium-, and long-term targets

7. Does the NDC include information on **strengthened and/or new policies and measures for accelerating implementation of mitigation actions** compared to the previous NDC?

8. Have the NDC’s mitigation targets been **informed by the best available science**, including assessing how IPCC findings relate to the NDC targets?

## Adaptation

1. Does the NDC increase **sectoral coverage** of adaptation activities since the previous NDC?
2. Does the NDC increase the **geographical coverage** of adaptation activities since the previous NDC?
3. Does the NDC **expand scope** within the already included sectors?
4. Are the adaptation sectoral and thematic targets **aligned with the thematic and dimensional targets of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience**<sup>10</sup> outlined in para 63, Decision 1/CMA.5 Outcome of the first GST and Decision 2/CMA.5<sup>11</sup> on Global Goal on Adaptation?
5. Does the NDC consider **quantifiable adaptation targets for 2030** (in line with the GST/UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience) and **2035 (in line with NDC 3.0 timeframe)**?

9 For more guidance on key elements of an LT-LEDS, please see: UNDP. 2021. [Quality assurance checklist for long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies](#); and UNDP. 2024. [Planning for a net-zero future: Guidance on how to develop a Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategy \(LT-LEDS\)](#).

10 UNFCCC. 2024. [Decision 1/CMA.5](#) - Outcome of the first Global Stocktake. Sectoral and thematic areas include: water, agriculture, health, biodiversity, infrastructure, human settlements, livelihoods, poverty, cultural heritage.

11 UNFCCC. 2024. [Decision 2/CMA.5](#) - Global Goal on Adaptation.

6. Does the NDC reflect progress on adaptation planning and the **linkages between the NDC and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)** or other adaptation planning processes or instruments?

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7. Does the NDC include new or **updated information on climate change impacts, risks, or vulnerabilities** (e.g., climate and/or disaster risk and vulnerability assessments)?

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8. Does the NDC include **updated or new information on adaptation actions and/or economic diversification plans**, including those resulting in mitigation co-benefits (e.g., sectoral/thematic adaptation actions)?

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9. Does the NDC include information elements identified in Decision 9/CMA.1 and its annex on **elements of an adaptation communication**<sup>12</sup>?

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10. Does the NDC include information on **the implementation of adaptation policies and measures** that have been included in the previous NDC?

## DIMENSION THREE: JUST TRANSITION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

This section provides guidance related to ensuring that the targets, policies and measures identified in new NDCs consider the socio-economic impacts and opportunities of climate action, integrating the principles of justice, equity and human rights to leave no one behind. It also captures key considerations on ensuring that NDC policies and measures are delivering sustainable development priorities, aligning with the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. Countries may also choose to present details of these elements in the NDC itself or in a separate instrument(s). An option to indicate such preference is also made available in this section.

### Just transition and sustainable development<sup>13</sup>

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
1. Have the <b>socio-economic impacts</b> of NDC targets, policies and measures been assessed?				
2. Does the NDC identify steps and measures for <b>an inclusive, rights-based, just, equitable and orderly transition and economic diversifications</b> including green skills and jobs?				
3. Does the NDC identify policies and measures that elaborate the national <b>priorities of both achieving climate targets and the SDGs</b> ? <sup>14</sup>				

<sup>12</sup> UNFCCC. 2019. [Decision 9/CMA.1](#) - Further guidance in relation to the adaptation communication.

<sup>13</sup> To learn more about integrating just transition into NDCs and ensuring they contribute to sustainable development, refer to the following resource: UNDP. 2022. [How Just Transition Can Help Deliver the Paris Agreement](#).

<sup>14</sup> Such as, for example, increasing the share of renewable energy and improving access to energy for poor households.

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
4. Does the NDC identify activities <b>involving vulnerable or underrepresented groups</b> in planned mitigation and adaptation policies or measures addressing the needs and priorities of identified vulnerable groups of stakeholders?				
5. Have <b>national, sectoral, and/or subnational development strategies/plans</b> been aligned with the NDC?				
6. Has the NDC elaborated how its targets, policies and actions <b>align with the SDG targets</b> ?				
7. Has the NDC elaborated how its targets, policies and actions align with the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) under the <b>United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)</b> ?				
8. Has the NDC elaborated how its targets, policies and actions align with the National Action Programme to combat desertification (NAP) or the voluntary Land Degradation Neutrality Targets under the <b>United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD)</b> ?				

## DIMENSION FOUR: CLARITY AND TRANSPARENCY

This section examines whether the revised NDC is robust and applies guidance for the “Information necessary to facilitate Clarity, Transparency and Understanding,” in accordance with the Paris COP<sup>15</sup> decision and further decisions of the CMA<sup>16</sup>. An [enhanced transparency framework \(ETF\)](#) was established and countries are currently transitioning from the existing Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system to the ETF, with submission of the first Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) whose deadline was December 31, 2024. Therefore, the following guiding questions might also be helpful for countries to consider how to meet reporting obligations under the ETF, along with the NDC revision process. Countries may also choose to present details of these guiding questions on the NDC itself or in a separate instrument(s) such as MRV systems/framework or M&E framework for adaptation. An option to indicate such preference is also made available in this section. Key considerations include:

### Clarity and transparency

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
1. Does the NDC provide information on the country’s transparency system?				

<sup>15</sup> COP: Conference of the Parties

<sup>16</sup> CMA: Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
2. Is the transparency system aligned with the Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines (MPGs) <b>Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF)</b> ? <sup>17</sup>				
3. Are the corresponding institutional arrangements and relevant laws and regulations in place to support the <b>transparency system</b> ?				
4. Does the NDC revision process consider the improvement of <b>monitoring for SDGs and other cross-cutting issues</b> ? (e.g. gender-related indicators, parameters, baseline, and project targets highlight impacts on human rights, gender equality, and vulnerable or underrepresented groups (youth/children, women, Indigenous Peoples and local communities, etc.)				
5. Does the NDC indicate that <b>tracking of support (finance, technology and capacity)</b> is in place, or plan for improvements to achieve this?				
6. Does the NDC contain an annex/table outlining all key information as per the <a href="#">ICTU guidelines</a> <sup>18</sup> ?				
7. Does the NDC include targets or indicators enabling <b>monitoring and evaluation of just transition policies and measures</b> ?				
8. Does the NDC include quantitative/qualitative targets on adaptation and provisions for a <b>monitoring and evaluation system for adaptation</b> linked to the thematic and dimensional targets of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience?				
9. Does the NDC include information on whether <b>quality assurance and quality control of data, methodologies, and other relevant information</b> has been carried out (e.g. technical review)?				
10. Does the NDC provide clarity on the <b>NDC trajectory</b> ?				
11. Does the country have a plan for voluntary <b>loss and damage</b> reporting?				

17 Decision 18/CMA.1 and its Annex. (for the assessment of NDCs updated before the next round of the NDCs is due, the question should refer to the progress in implementing the ETF, for countries that communicated enhanced or updated NDCs after the deadline for submitting their first BTRs (not later than 31 December 2024, to undergo the ICA process in 2024-2026) the question should assume that the ETF is in place and it has superseded the previously used MRV system, in line with decision 1/CP.24, para.39)

18 Parties are required to apply the ICTU guidelines and the guidance for accounting for NDCs in accordance with paras 7 and 14 of [Decision 4/CMA.1](#).



## DIMENSION FIVE: FEASIBILITY

This section aims to provide guidance to determine whether the NDC revision process has undertaken assessments of cost benefits, financing options, and investment opportunities of NDC actions from both international and domestic public and private sources. This section also assists countries to assess governments' institutional, human and technological capacity required for successful NDC implementation. Countries may also choose to present details of these elements in the NDC itself or in a separate instrument(s) such as an NDC implementation plan or investment plan. An option to indicate such preference is also made available in this section.

### Finance

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
1. Does the NDC include information on the <b>costs</b> of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achieving mitigation targets, policies and/or measures?</li><li>• Achieving adaptation goals, policies and/or measures?</li></ul>				
2. Does the NDC include information on the <b>investment strategy</b> for achieving targets and/or implementing specific policies or measures (including those that are gender-transformative and socially inclusive)?				
3. Does the NDC include information on NDC-related <b>financial mechanisms</b> established or being developed (e.g., national climate funds, green bonds, carbon finance instruments, debt swaps, etc.)?				
4. Does the NDC provide information on how <b>domestic public funding sources</b> will be mobilized for reaching the identified unconditional targets and goals?				
5. Does the NDC provide information on how <b>domestic private funding sources</b> will be mobilized for reaching the identified unconditional targets and goals?				
6. Does the NDC provide information on how <b>international public funding sources</b> will be mobilized for reaching the identified conditional targets and goals?				
7. Does the NDC provide information on how <b>international private funding sources</b> will be mobilized for reaching the identified conditional targets and goals?				
8. Does the NDC state intent to engage in <b>international carbon markets</b> (Articles 6.2 and 6.4)?				

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
9. In terms of Article 6 readiness, does the NDC include information on how the country (plans to) set up or strengthen relevant <b>institutional and legal/regulatory frameworks to participate in Article 6 carbon markets</b> ? <sup>19</sup>				
10. Does the NDC describe measures that are planned or being implemented to reduce <b>investor risks and/or remove barriers</b> to attracting private sector finance?				
11. Does the NDC contain information on intent to engage in <b>non-market approaches</b> (i.e., Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement) in order to implement identified NDC targets, policies, and measures?				
12. Does the NDC identify <b>fiscal risks and structural barriers</b> to enable finance and capital flows for climate investments?				

## Institutional arrangements, technology transfer and capacities for implementation

	Yes	Partially	No	Included in a separate instrument
1. Does the NDC include information on <b>institutional arrangements</b> , with clear roles and responsibilities for NDC implementation identified across priority sectors and different levels of government that build on existing coordination mechanisms (e.g. climate change committees, NDC coordination committees, NAP committees, disaster risk management and recovery committees, etc.)?				
2. Does the NDC include information on a <b>mechanism to coordinate and engage non-government stakeholders</b> to ensure inclusive and effective NDC implementation?				
3. Does the NDC describe <b>institutional capacity development needs and plans</b> for public administration, as well as other key actors including the private sector?				
4. Does the NDC identify <b>technology gaps and needs</b> that are essential for the implementation of the NDC?				
5. Are the targets, policies and measures within the NDC supported by national <b>legislation and/or relevant legal frameworks</b> ?				
6. Does the NDC identify <b>policy, legal and regulatory gaps</b> (barriers to implementing NDC actions)?				
7. Does the NDC include <b>policy recommendations or potential solutions</b> to address policy, legal and/or regulatory gaps?				

<sup>19</sup> In line with [Decisions 2/CMA.3, 3/CMA.3](#) (with Annexes), relevant decisions adopted by [CMA.4](#) and [Decision 18/CMA.1](#).

# Annex

## Resources

1. Climate Action Tracker. 2024. [The CAT guide to be a good 2035 target.](#)
2. OECD. 2024. [Insights for designing mitigation elements in the next round of NDCs.](#)
3. NDC Partnership and UNFCCC. 2024. [NDC 3.0 Navigator.](#)
4. UNEP. 2024. [Emissions Gap Report 2024.](#)

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