

Honorable guests,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking the Chair of the SBSTA, Mr. Carlos Fuller, and the Chair of the SBI, Mr. Tomasz Chruszczow, for the invitation to speak at the closing of this Technical Expert Meeting.

The mandate for these technical expert meetings comes from the recognition that pre-2020 action is a crucial part of meeting climate change challenge, and every nation must have access to the knowledge, ideas and innovations that make this urgent action possible.

Now that the Paris Agreement has entered into force and 145 countries have ratified the agreement, a cooperative approach and capacity for action in the near future is more important than ever. Pre-2020 climate action is now in sharp focus and determines our ability to deliver on the promise of Paris.

The Technical Expert Meetings play an important role in identifying new opportunities for enhanced climate action and collaboration. These meetings provide a platform to identify high-potential mitigation policies, practices and technologies, and facilitate implementation through strong partnerships.

Friends, high-potential mitigation comes from transforming urban growth and land use.

You have certainly heard how cities produce 75 percent of both global GDP and emissions, a trend that will accelerate and put pressure on energy, housing, mobility, security and employment – the necessary components for robust economic growth.

City planners and policy makers can address these long-term challenges through action now, action which also improves the lives and livelihoods of people in cities. At this Technical Expert Meeting, I understand you saw more cities moving in this direction.

- Singapore showed their Smart Nation Programme, which harnesses the power of networks, data and IT to create economic opportunity and promote cleaner, greener lives.
- Bogota presented innovative transit-oriented development ideas that improve mobility while reducing emissions.
- The City of Zoersel in Belgium presented how north-south and cross-city partnership with Bohicon in Benin can advance adaptation and mitigation.
- The City of Bonn demonstrated how the private sector can actively engage in the renewable energy push – and from our work with the City of Bonn, I can tell you this is just one of the ways they are taking action.

- We also heard about innovative policy and technology solutions, such as bus rapid transit and climate-friendly cooling.

Together, these initiatives help bend the emissions curve and promote the wellbeing of people. I welcome this sharing of experiences as a way to inspire and encourage more cities to take similar action.

Urbanization was not the only topic of this meeting. The land in rural areas must also be sustainably managed and land use must point squarely at low-emission and resilient development. New approaches to agriculture, forestry and resource management can ensure the needs of people are met and the planet is protected as the population grows from 7 to 9 billion people or more.

Land use accounts for nearly 25 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, covers crucial areas such as food production and water management, and, for some countries, forms the foundation of the economy.

Agriculture and forestry are also the basis of the livelihoods of the planet's poorest and most vulnerable. Transformation of land use can make a positive impact in poverty alleviation, food security, energy access, protection of traditional lifestyles and sustainable management of the resources that underpin economic growth.

This opens the door for high-potential mitigation. Because of the synergies at the intersection of these critical areas, mainstreaming climate change in land-use offers unprecedented opportunity for integrated action. Cooperation is the key that unlocks this potential. So I was particularly glad to hear about several of the ambitious initiatives presented at this meeting.

- Indonesia, Australia, France, and Colombia presented their experiences with REDD+ actions to safeguard tropical forests and discussed forest management's role in increasing the uptake of carbon.
- Innovative practices in livestock and soil carbon management were shared by Brazil, New Zealand, Japan and the EU.
- We also heard valuable perspectives from environmental, research, farmer and indigenous peoples' constituencies.
- Several examples of the private sector mobilization for sustainable land use were also presented.

The TEMs focus on climate action happening right now. We have heard from many governments, stakeholders and practitioners with real world, real economy examples in cities and the land use sector. The Global Environment Facility, Green Climate Fund and others outlined their technical and financial support for accelerated actions.

Transformation is not just possible, it is underway. This is what the TEMs are about.

The action presented here is extremely encouraging, but it is not enough. We must turn all commitments into action. We must transform reality on the ground. This will only happen if we take what has been shared and learned here – and in all the technical expert meetings – and put it into practice to fulfill the high potential demonstrated today.

This is our mandate in this new era of implementation. The secretariat remains committed to further this conversation in this crucial pre-2020 period. We are holding TEMs events at the major carbon forums to enable regional and local action. We are supporting the work of the High Level Climate Champions.

And we will work to bring the outcomes and experiences of these meetings to the global network of actors being mobilized by the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action, who can take forward recommendations and deliver solutions.

Looking ahead, Parties have a mandate to assess the effectiveness of the Technical Examination Process. I invite you to come prepared with your ideas so we can strengthen this collaborative work and ensure that the TEMs remains an effective resource for building our low-emissions and resilient future.

Collaboration between governments looking to increase ambition and experts with real-world experience about how to do that is incredibly important.

These meetings put us on the path to the vision outlined in Paris. The actions showcased here enable and accelerate action under the Paris Agreement.

We must work quickly now to move the world closer to development that is climate-safe and sustainable, marked by peace and prosperity with opportunity open to all.

Thank you.