

# Submission from World Resources Institute on the Roadmap for Global Climate Action

August 1, 2016

World Resources Institute (WRI) would like to thank the two high-level champions, Ambassador Laurence Tubiana, Climate Champion, France and Dr. Hakima El Haité, Minister in Charge of Environment, Morocco, for the opportunity to submit views regarding the Roadmap for Global Climate Action and respond to the specific questions laid out in the call for submissions. We congratulate them on their appointment as high-level champions and commend their efforts to date.

Our submission focuses on three key themes: the role of the champions; transparency and tracking; and the high-level event and technical examination process. Our submission also includes a proposed template of information to be collected from cooperative initiatives participating in the Action Agenda.

## 1. General State of Climate Action and the Role of the Champions

Climate action in the pre-2020 period is key to implementing the Paris Agreement. The goals of the Agreement signal the global intention to achieve a zero-carbon and climate resilient economy,<sup>1</sup> and the odds of meeting these global goals can be greatly improved by increasing near-term action. The important rallying cry of “more, faster, and now” for enhanced pre-2020 action must be realized through concrete action. Countries and non-Party stakeholders alike must heed the call and the high-level champions can play a critical role by providing effective tools and incentives to support and encourage their mobilization and participation in the Action Agenda and advancing implementation.

In 2015, we witnessed unprecedented political will and increased deployment of technology to address climate change, but still it is not enough. To enhance pre-2020 action, we must:

- Foster greater implementation and spur innovation,
- Create effective bridges among different actors, including among non-state actors and governments to build further momentum and synergies, and
- Create the necessary political, institutional, and regulatory environment for more ambitious target and goal setting.

We believe that the Action Agenda, the high-level event under the UNFCCC at each Conference of the Parties (COP), and the two high-level champions can play a significant role in these pursuits and can be the interface linking real-world needs and challenges to the solutions coming from both Party and non-Party stakeholders. The high-level champions can play a true leadership role in advancing these efforts and have already shown their ability to do so. We would like to highlight four key areas of attention for the high-level champions:

1. **Focus support and attention on initiatives, actions and efforts that are concretely improving the landscape of climate action.** To help achieve that objective, the champions can especially

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<sup>1</sup> Dagnet, Y., et al. 2016. “Staying on Track from Paris: Advancing the Key Elements of the Paris Agreement.”

highlight and support the advancement of existing initiatives that are making significant progress toward their goals and the goals of the Paris Agreement, celebrating their successes and amplifying their impact. In addition, the high-level champions should support new initiatives that add demonstrable value to the landscape of climate action and fill unaddressed gaps and challenges or include under-represented sectors, communities and regions. This should include an increased focus on adaptation initiatives; we agree with the high-level champions' interest in supporting those initiatives, which deserve particular attention given the substantial climate impacts felt by the most vulnerable communities around the world. Nonetheless, support for all types of initiatives remains important. Meanwhile, the champions should be mindful of the potential for overlap between initiatives and should strive to ensure potential synergies are nurtured between new and existing cooperative initiatives.

2. **Ensure that the diversity of climate actors are engaged.** The high-level champions should ensure inclusion of all sectors of the economy and participation from all types of actors including national governments, subnational and local governments, business, civil society, and indigenous communities, as well as balanced gender representation. As noted above, new initiatives should include underrepresented actors, such as businesses in developing countries and developing country-led cooperative initiatives. To help promote inclusion, the high-level champions can ensure that the right group of participants and audience are at the table for the high-level event and the Technical Expert Meetings. This can include drawing ministers representing a broad range of issues – not only environment ministers but also transport, housing and urban development, agriculture, finance, planning and other areas.
3. **Foster effective relationship-building and synergies.** The high-level champions should help broaden and deepen discussions among different groups of actors – national governments, businesses, community leaders, cities, civil society groups, and local and indigenous experts – enabling engagement to strengthen relationships, identify synergies, and facilitate the development of innovative solutions to climate challenges. The high-level champions should especially facilitate greater access to information and opportunities for dialogue between Parties and non-Party stakeholders to identify synergies among their efforts and to support implementation of nationally determined contributions (NDCs). For example, 129 nationally determined contributions include plans to expand renewable energy<sup>2</sup> and it could be useful to build stronger linkages between those countries and the different initiatives and actors working to advance renewable energy. This can be critically important to build connections between actors that need assistance, on the one hand, and actors that can provide advice and support, on the other.
4. **Bring greater transparency to the broad range of climate action.** In order to better understand the state of overall progress, build confidence among actors, and ensure the integrity of the high-level event and Action Agenda, the champions can help promote increased transparency concerning the initiatives. The high-level champions should play a filtering role to help bring to the surface and highlight those cooperative initiatives that are transformative and are making

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.wri.org/blog/2016/05/how-dozens-businesses-cities-and-other-non-state-initiatives-will-help-countries>

real progress, as well as to monitor the emergence of new initiatives and promote synergies between new and existing initiatives. The high-level champions should also oversee a light-touch tracking and monitoring process that does not overburden or discourage initiatives and actors, but can improve the understanding of what is working well and is transformative and can demonstrate the effectiveness of action. Our views on this will be further elaborated in the following section.

## 2. Transparency and tracking in the Action Agenda

Transparency within the Action Agenda is important to ensure recognition is appropriately attributed, to establish credibility and legitimacy of the Action Agenda, and to build trust among the wide range of stakeholders involved. It is important to see whether and how initiatives and coalitions are doing everything in their power to advance and achieve the targets they set for themselves; that these targets are truly consistent with the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement; and that cooperative initiatives cover all opportunities for action in each sector. Additionally, effective transparency mechanisms can help spur action by highlighting successes and providing learning opportunities among initiatives. Meanwhile, however, it is also important to ensure that the means to enable transparency should not be overly burdensome or discourage participation and implementation of action.

Some actors already follow strong monitoring and evaluating frameworks and systems, such as individual companies reporting to CDP. Others share information at their discretion and on a voluntary basis, and still others have no reporting and evaluation systems in place at all. Within the UNFCCC system, Parties are not required to report information about the actions and efforts of non-Party stakeholders and cooperative initiatives and there are no systems in place to gather the data necessary to understand the level of progress by all initiatives and non-state actors participating in the Action Agenda. To enhance transparency, it will be important for the Action Agenda to capture information that is already available about cooperative initiatives and individual commitments, make that information publicly available, and encourage initiatives to share at least a minimum set of information to facilitate the understanding of progress without adding undue burden.

**Criteria for cooperative initiatives and non-state actors:** The high-level champions have a key role to play in maintaining a minimum standard for the initiatives and actors participating and receiving recognition in the Action Agenda and the high-level event. The French and Peruvian COP presidencies have established a solid foundation with a set of criteria<sup>3</sup> for initiatives included in the Lima-Paris Action Agenda. We believe these criteria can be improved in two ways: First, to minimize the subjectivity of the criteria, further descriptions and detail should be provided to define the context and framing for each criterion. Second, guiding questions could also be provided to help initiatives and actors self-assess and determine if they are meeting the criteria. This would benefit existing initiatives and could also inform new initiatives and guide their development. In addition to maintaining strong criteria, any evaluation of cooperative initiatives against the criteria should also be conducted through a clear and transparent process. Initiatives will want to know how they will be assessed, and it will be important to ensure that the process is consistent (particularly given transitions between high-level champions), fair, and

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<sup>3</sup> The criteria for the Lima Paris Action Agenda: be cooperative, inclusive, open, and regionally balanced; be ambitious; be science based; have the capacity to deliver; showcase implementation; and be ready to report. [http://newsroom.unfccc.int/media/408544/lpaa\\_-\\_briefing\\_at\\_bonn\\_session\\_-\\_02\\_sep\\_15.pdf](http://newsroom.unfccc.int/media/408544/lpaa_-_briefing_at_bonn_session_-_02_sep_15.pdf)

provides greater understanding for the initiatives themselves. We provide further details of our views on the evaluation process in the sections on the NAZCA Portal and the high-level event.

**NAZCA Portal:** The NAZCA portal can be an important and extremely useful tool. To maximize its value, its role as the go-to source for information about actions and commitments by non-state actors and initiatives can be enhanced. The NAZCA portal should include more information from cooperative initiatives about implementation and their objectives and targets; expand its coverage to capture ambitious action by all actors, including community-scale actions such as the lighthouse activities under Momentum for Change; provide links to further resources such as initiative websites; and provide space to highlight particularly effective, successful, and ambitious initiatives and actions.

To increase the information provided for cooperative initiatives and non-state actor commitments, we suggest that participating initiatives should be required to provide a minimum amount of information on an annual basis. Individual non-state actors already do this through the data partners that feed information concerning non-state actors to the NAZCA portal, but cooperative initiatives do not have such a clear pathway. To address this gap, the UNFCCC Secretariat, with support from the high-level champions, could undertake an annual voluntary questionnaire to collect information about new and existing cooperative initiatives (An example questionnaire is included in the annex of this submission.) The questionnaire could be initiated through an open call for expression of interest to cooperative initiatives for participation in the Action Agenda and high-level event.

The questionnaire could be improved and refined over time. All questions would be voluntary, and initiatives could determine if they want to answer all or some of the questions. New initiatives could report on the full suite of information requested, while existing initiatives could update only the information that has changed or that is newly requested. The structure of the NAZCA portal should be enhanced to accommodate the information provided and this information could then be used to update the non-state actor and cooperative initiative pages on the NAZCA portal.

For cooperative initiatives, there are four general categories of information that could be collected: 1) governance structure; 2) information made available by the initiative; 3) financial and other resources that are available to or are needed by the initiative; and 4) outcomes and impact.<sup>4</sup> The UNFCCC Secretariat and high-level champions should also work with the data partners to ensure similarly relevant information is provided on individual non-state actors as well.

Additional data provided by the annual questionnaire and the data providers could then be used to evaluate whether cooperative initiatives and non-state actors meet the criteria for inclusion in the high-level event. It could also be used to understand how existing initiatives are progressing. In addition to enhancing the profile of each initiative and actor on the NAZCA portal, the data collected should be downloadable in a spreadsheet format available to third-parties.

The NAZCA portal could also be enhanced to provide space to showcase success stories and highlight initiatives making substantial progress. This could be an incentive for initiatives and actors to provide more information on how they are progressing, and, information provided could help identify which initiatives to showcase at the high-level event and in other fora. Selected initiatives could prepare

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<sup>4</sup> Harrison, N., et al. 2015. "Tracking International Cooperative Initiatives." Nordic Working Papers. Nordic Council of Ministers.

promotional videos, infographics or other informational materials that could be posted on a special page within the NAZCA website. The website could also connect to the Momentum for Change program to better capture the whole picture of climate action, including action at local levels.

The high-level champions should be responsible for delegating the management of the data collection efforts and operation and upkeep of the NAZCA portal, which could be supported by the UNFCCC Secretariat.

### **3. The High-Level Event and Technical Expert Meetings**

The continuation of the high-level event and the technical expert meetings through 2020 can provide a critical opportunity for non-Party stakeholders to participate in UNFCCC processes, elevating the COP from just a “Conference of the Parties” COP to a more inclusive “Community of Practice” COP.

Moreover, in the coming years, these events can also go beyond serving as platforms for recognition and awareness-building to ones that play a concrete role in incubating innovation and accelerating implementation.<sup>5</sup>

**The high-level event** under the Action Agenda serves now as the main annual showcase of climate action, bringing together a diverse set of actors working to address climate change through different sectors and channels. The high-level champions have a central role to play in ensuring that the high-level event continues to grow and improve over time and provides a space for cooperative initiatives and non-state actors to highlight and discuss the implementation of climate-friendly policies, practices, and actions.

To facilitate and create a clear process for participation, cooperative initiatives should be able to self-nominate their participation in the high-level event through an open call for statements of interest. The initiatives and non-state actors to be highlighted can then be selected using the criteria set by the champions and based on the relevant public information about the initiatives provided by the initiatives themselves and data partners. This evaluation should be led by the high-level champions and the evaluations of individual initiatives should be shared privately with each initiative or non-state actor. If an initiative is not chosen to be featured in the high-level event, it should be notified as to why if, for example, it did not meet one or more of the criteria.

With this process in mind, we believe the high-level event should have four main components:

1. Provide recognition for the successful execution and strengthening of existing efforts and the introduction of new voluntary efforts, initiatives and coalitions. Space should be given to highlight initiatives and coalitions that have made significant progress toward their targets and objectives, as well as for initiatives and coalitions practice high levels of transparency and reporting. Particular focus could be given to joint efforts between state and non-state actors working collaboratively. New initiatives should also have a space, but their value add should be clearly identified and their level of development should be noted.
2. The high-level event should provide a space for incubating ideas and building relationships. There should be opportunities for active dialogue between high-level representatives from Party and non-Party stakeholders and among diverse initiatives from all sectors and issue areas. In

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<sup>5</sup> Dagnet, Y., et al. 2016. “Staying on Track from Paris: Advancing the Key Elements of the Paris Agreement.”

particular, this should include opportunities to highlight synergies between initiatives and implementation of NDCs, as well as with the Sustainable Development Goals. Positive, effective collaboration between Party and non-Party stakeholders and among different sectors should be featured in public workshops to share examples of how synergies were identified and amplified. Participants should have opportunities to raise questions and share views to identify where more collaboration opportunities exist.

3. Overcoming existing challenges and obstacles is key to unlocking further ambition and implementation. We therefore recommend that space should be provided under the high-level event to showcase how specific initiatives and coalitions have overcome key challenges and how they can seize upcoming opportunities. Initiatives, coalitions and actors can share their experiences and provide details of the real-world challenges and needs they face. Continuing and expanding efforts like the “Gallery of Solutions” at COP21 can provide lessons and best practices for overcoming technical and political challenges. To avoid overlap with and duplication of other efforts such as the TEMs, this showcase should focus on exchanging ideas between new innovative technical solutions and the technical and political challenges of implementation. Participants should be encouraged to share needs and challenges that have not yet been overcome to provide space for the development of solutions in addition to highlighting positive examples of success.
4. Finally, the high-level champions could make short annual declarations that capture the overall progress of the past year from both the Technical Examination Process and the Action Agenda, highlighting major accomplishments and strategy for the coming year. Specific transformative efforts, ways to enhance cooperation, collective efforts to overcome barriers and when possible, new or enhanced pledges of actions and support could be highlighted and could include messages from the outgoing high-level champion to the incoming high-level champion.

**The Technical Examination Process (TEP)** serves a practical function as a space to learn about existing policies, measures and actions to address climate change. The high-level champions can help to strengthen and improve the impact of the TEP. First, the technical examination meetings (TEMs) should include broader attendance and participation that include government policy makers, international financial institutions, and other actors such as the private sector, civil society, and indigenous communities. At the moment, the TEMs currently serves Parties and, more specifically, their negotiating teams; in many cases, these participants may have limited opportunities to implement or replicate the ideas and practices shared in the TEMs. The high-level champions can play a key role in drawing a broader set of actors to the meetings.

Second, the technical expert meetings should be expanded. One or two meetings held during a single timeframe in the year and in a central location limits the potential for participation. It also limits the ability of the conversation to involve deep, focused investigation of policies, actions and measures in specific sectors or for specific regions. Technical expert meetings should be undertaken more frequently, in different locations around the globe, covering topics of regional interest to ensure the substance is more applicable to the audience in attendance.

Given the additional financial and capacity burdens these additional meetings may entail, we suggest TEMs could be sponsored on a national or regional basis (i.e. one country or a group of countries could organize, facilitate and sponsor regional TEMs in collaboration with the UNFCCC Secretariat). The sponsor could provide support and funding for that particular TEM, draw the appropriate audiences, and

direct the focus of the meeting toward specific challenges and opportunities for the region. Information shared during these meetings could be incorporated into the Summary for Policymakers and Technical Paper of Policies and Options which serve a wider audience.

Third, the high-level event or future technical expert meetings provide an important opportunity for the international community to recognize those actors who have undertaken or replicated effective policies and options for climate action that were identified during the course of the TEP. Emphasizing successes that are built on earlier information about best practices would enable the TEP and the Action Agenda to serve a powerful role as a continual, positive feedback loop.

Finally, the results of the high-level event, as well as the outputs of the Technical Examination Process (including the Summary for Policy Makers and the Technical Paper of Policies and Options) should be effectively delivered to policy makers, mayors, CEOs and others who have the means to replicate and implement their ideas. The high-level champions can play a central role in developing an outreach strategy for sharing these documents widely and distributing them to the appropriate audiences.

WRI would like to thank again the high-level champions for this opportunity to share our thoughts and perspectives. We would be happy to provide further inputs and look forward to engaging with the champions going forward.

## Annex: questionnaire template for voluntary reporting

<b>Governance</b>	Initiative/ Coalition / Actor Title:		Date Established:		
	Category / Theme:		Sub category:		
	Target / Goal:		Target / Goal Start Date (Baseline):	Target / Goal End Date:	
	Point of Contact:	Address:	Phone:	Website:	
	Please describe your objective:				
<b>Transparency</b>	Does this initiative support achievement or implementation of other targets or goals? [ Y / N ] <i>If yes, which ones?</i>				
	In the past year, have you collaborated with other initiatives, coalitions, or actors? [ Y / N ] <i>If yes, which ones?</i>				
	Are M & E processes in place to assess progress? [ Y / N ]		Are milestones established to assess progress? [ Y / N ]		
	Do you provide reports or updates? [ Y / N ]		Is information reported publically available? [ Y / N ]		
	Please provide an example of how you have made progress over the past year:				
<b>Resources</b>	Are current monetary resources sufficient? [ Y / N ]		Are current human resources sufficient? [ Y / N ]		
	Please describe any resource needs:				
<b>Impact</b>	What is the primary impact or benefit of this initiative / coalition / action?				
	What are the secondary or co-benefits of this initiative / coalition / action?				
	Who are the beneficiaries?		Please describe the geographical coverage:		
	Please describe the benefits for participants:		Can anyone join? [ Y / N ]		