

Joint Statement from UNFCCC Executive Secretary and High-Level Champions to Race to Zero partners

1. Guided by the IPCC's sixth assessment report all stakeholders must intensify their efforts to deliver the global net zero just transition required to achieve the objective of the UNFCCC and aim of the Paris Agreement.
2. The Integrity Matters report was published at COP27 and welcomed by the COP in the Sharm El-Sheikh Implementation Plan. The United Nations Secretary-General has endorsed the report as *"a how-to guide for credible, accountable net-zero pledges"* from non-State actors and asked voluntary net-zero initiatives and UN agencies to *"abide by these standards and criteria"*.
3. He has requested the UNFCCC secretariat to develop an implementation plan to enable transparency, verification and accountability. The COP has also invited the UNFCCC secretariat to enhance the accountability of voluntary initiatives.
4. Net-zero initiatives continue to update, through their governance arrangements, their norms and criteria, based on lessons learned from implementation of commitments by their members. The recommendations of Integrity Matters should inform this process.
5. The UNFCCC secretariat and High-Level Champions are committed to enhancing transparency of progress toward the delivery of climate commitments from Non-State Actors and recognizing the leadership of those delivering robust and credible contributions to limiting global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
6. Since the Race to Zero campaign was launched by the High-Level Champions in 2020, the number of non-State actors with commitments to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net-zero by 2050 at the latest has significantly expanded.
7. Delivering the global net-zero just transition at the pace required to limit warming to 1.5°C will need:
 - a. Creation of a supportive and aligned regulatory and policy environment that enables all actors to achieve net-zero;
 - b. All remaining economic actors to follow the example of those Race to Zero members already making and delivering on net-zero pledges, and commit themselves to contributing to this journey, guided by science and equity and the principles of the UNFCCC; and
 - c. Transparency on the proposed actions and progress from all stakeholders
8. The UNFCCC secretariat and the High-Level Champions recognize the need for transparency regarding the systemic impact of those who have not yet made credible net-zero commitments. The UNFCCC secretariat and the High-Level Champions will engage with relevant stakeholders to facilitate the enhancement of transparency on this.
9. The UNFCCC secretariat and the High-Level Champions further recognize the need to address the challenges facing non-state actors from developing countries in formulating and

implementing net-zero targets and will work towards identifying the measures needed to support them to formulate and deliver on credible net-zero targets.

10. Recognizing the importance of delivering on the objectives above, and to avoid duplication of efforts, Race to Zero will not proceed with the annual review of the campaign, which was due to commence on 15 June 2023. It will instead focus on working with non-state actors, network partners and other relevant actors to identify and address barriers and opportunities and mobilize additional net-zero pledges and action. The Race to Zero looks forward to welcoming new members and to seeing the progress of the existing members reflected in the outcomes of the UNFCCC secretariat's recognition and accountability framework.
11. As requested by the UN Secretary-General, the UNFCCC secretariat is working to enhance its Global Climate Action portal to be a single source of information of climate action pledges and plans by non-State actors. These upgrades to the Global Climate Action portal will be delivered prior to COP28. The UNFCCC secretariat is also working with the Climate Data Steering Committee and NZDPU to deliver a unified global open climate data utility to ensure comparable and verifiable data on progress of implementation of non-state actors is publicly accessible. A pilot version of the utility will be delivered by COP28 and the utility will ultimately be integrated with the Global Climate Action portal.
12. Building on the work done by Race to Zero, its Expert Peer Review Group, and as requested by the UN Secretary-General, the UNFCCC secretariat's recognition and accountability framework will establish a process to monitor and analyze existing voluntary Net-Zero Alliances and initiatives and ensure that there is publicly accessible data on pledges, plans and progress of members. For non-State actors making commitments outside such Alliances and initiatives, the UNFCCC secretariat's recognition and accountability framework will ensure that there is publicly accessible data on pledges, plans and progress and will monitor and analyze the effectiveness of the assurance methods being applied to these.
13. Existing Net-Zero Alliances and their members have helped establish important science-based norms for target-setting and progress reporting, which the UNFCCC secretariat-led process will take into account. The UNFCCC secretariat-led process will be guided by the recommendations in the Integrity Matters Report.
14. The aim of the UNFCCC secretariat-led process is to recognize those non-state actors that have made credible commitments and are delivering on these and to celebrate graduated progress toward alignment with the recommendations in the Integrity Matters report. The UNFCCC secretariat aims to maximize the extent of credible pledges, plans and progress to inform the outcomes of the Global Stocktake in 2023 and the update of NDCs in 2025.
15. Initial results of the UNFCCC secretariat-led process will be announced prior to, or at, COP 28 and will be updated on an annual basis thereafter to provide public assurance on progress made, recognize credible leadership in climate action and inform Parties' actions to address systemic barriers to the required transition. The UNFCCC secretariat will be guided by the need to support Parties through providing a clear evidence base regarding effective policy interventions which they can consider in updating and implementing their NDCs.

16. The UNFCCC secretariat in developing its recognition and accountability framework will:
 - a. Release prior to the UNFCCC June 2023 session its initial plan for ensuring public accessibility of, and assurance on, pledges, plans and progress reports and its initial plan for enhanced recognition and accountability of voluntary initiatives;
 - b. Conduct an inclusive stakeholder engagement process between the June session and the opening of the UN General Assembly in September 2023 to inform the development of a more detailed implementation plan for the UNFCCC secretariat's recognition and accountability framework;
 - c. Establish the required working structure, including expert groups and operational processes, drawing on the expertise of the High-level Champions and other stakeholders and the knowledge from existing arrangements, to deliver initial results by COP28 and further develop the implementation plan for 2024 and 2025; and
 - d. Assist, together with High Level Champions, in mobilizing the required capacity building required to align ambition and action with science.