

# THE HIGH-LEVEL CHAMPIONS AND MARRAKECH PARTNERSHIP FOR GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

*This informal document provides a brief overview of the outcomes related to the work of the High-Level Champions and Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action from January 2020 to April 2021.*



Marrakech  
Partnership



## Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action

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Launched at the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 22), the Marrakech Partnership provides a framework that aims to enhance and accelerate global climate action among Parties and non-Party stakeholders (NPS). Its mission, which is to strengthen collaboration between governments and key stakeholders (international and regional initiatives and coalitions of cities, regions, businesses, investors, and civil society), focuses on immediate climate action that supports the implementation of the Paris Agreement and helps Parties to achieve and surpass their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs) and long-term low emission development strategies. These actions are to be guided by the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement and undertaken in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

## Marrakech Partnership Work Programme for 2020–2021

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At COP 25, Parties acknowledged the important role of non-Party stakeholders, welcomed the continuation of the Marrakech Partnership, and decided to continue appointing High-Level Champions until 2025, requesting the Champions to explore ways to improve work under the Marrakech Partnership for enhancing ambition.<sup>1</sup>

The work programme for 2020-2021<sup>2</sup> was developed on the basis of the work programme for 2019– 2020<sup>3</sup> and outcomes of the activities undertaken in 2019<sup>4</sup>, taking into account the COP 25 mandate, the shared vision of the High-Level Champions from Chile and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the emerging priorities of the COP 26 incoming Presidency and the discussions at the strategy and planning meeting with stakeholders held in February 2020. It focuses on environmental, economic, and social system transformation, promoting higher ambition of all stakeholders to collectively strive for the 1.5 °C temperature goal and a climate-neutral and resilient world.

The High-Level Champions, working with the Marrakech Partnership, have sought to move forward the objectives for 2020-2021, including:

1. Strengthening collaboration amongst national governments and non-Party stakeholders
2. Broadening participation
3. Creating enabling conditions for breakthroughs in ten tipping points for systems transformation
4. Following up on and ensuring continuity and coherence
5. Tracking progress, impacts and results

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<sup>1</sup> See decision [1/CP.25](#), paras. 26–28

<sup>2</sup> The 2020-2021 work programme: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/MP\\_Work\\_Programme\\_2020-2021.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/MP_Work_Programme_2020-2021.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> The 2019–2020 work programme published in May 2019 by the High-Level Champions from Poland and Chile: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/MPGCA\\_WorkProgramme\\_2019-2020.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/MPGCA_WorkProgramme_2019-2020.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Detailed overview of the 2019 achievements and outcomes: <https://unfccc.int/documents/204701>.

## PROGRESS OF 2020-2021 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE HIGH-LEVEL CHAMPIONS AND MARRAKECH PARTNERSHIP FOR GLOBAL CLIMATE ACTION

Objective 1	Strengthening collaboration amongst national governments and non-Party stakeholders
<p>1. With the aim to strengthen the collaboration amongst national governments and key non-Party stakeholders to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement, accelerating an ambition loop where national government policies and non-Party stakeholder leadership reinforce each other. This work included providing advice and also supporting country-led dialogues with non-Party stakeholders, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The <b>Placencia Ambition Forum (20-22 April 2020)</b>, hosted by the Government of Belize and the Alliance of Small Island States, engaged on discussions on how to increase ambition and scale up action through nature-based solutions, transport and finance;</li><li>• The <b>Petersberg Climate Dialogue (28-29 April 2020)</b>, co-hosted by the Government of Germany and the incoming COP Presidency, the Champions convened the first ever non-Party stakeholder session to discuss how to accelerate a net-zero climate-resilient transition globally in the power and road transport sectors amidst recovering from COVID-19 pandemic;</li><li>• The <b>Climate Ambition Summit (12 December 2020)</b>, co-convened by the United Nations, the United Kingdom and France, in partnership with Italy and Chile, on the 5th anniversary of the Paris Agreement, the Summit marked a major milestone towards COP 26 where the Champions and the Partnership helped mobilize businesses, cities, among others, to outline new commitments and concrete plans and actions to achieve the Paris Agreement alongside with 75 countries;</li><li>• The <b>Climate Adaptation Summit (25-26 January 2021)</b>, hosted by the Government of Netherlands, where the Champions formally launched the Race to Resilience;</li><li>• The <b>Zero Carbon City International Forum (17-18 March 2021)</b>, hosted by the Government of Japan, and in collaboration with ICLEI -Local Governments for Sustainability and other partners, provided a platform for cities, regions and organizations to share concrete actions and discuss necessary measures to transition to a zero-emission and resilient future;</li><li>• Ahead of the <b>Climate and Development Ministerial (31 March 2021)</b>, hosted by the Government of United Kingdom, the High-Level Champions convened an event to announce the first 20 initiatives to join the Race to Resilience;</li></ul>	
<p>2. In addition to supporting country-led dialogues above, the High-Level Champions convened the <b>Race to Zero Dialogues on 9-19 November 2020</b>, which brought together national government representatives in a constructive dialogue with non-Party stakeholders across the thematic and cross-cutting areas of the Marrakech Partnership. Further details on these dialogues and outcomes are described below.</p>	
<p>3. Building on the dialogues convened and as part of the on-going work to improve the Marrakech Partnership, the Champions intend to pilot implementation labs as part of the Regional Climate Weeks, providing a space for national government representatives and non-Party stakeholders in the region to</p>	

have an open and solution-oriented dialogue on priorities and needs of countries with options for policies, technologies and solutions based on the Climate Action Pathways<sup>5</sup>.

Objective 2	Broadening participation
4.	The High-level Champions continue aiming to broaden participation in the Marrakech Partnership with stakeholders from all regions and sectors, in particular, from developing countries, to bring more balanced representation and to promote an environment of inclusiveness.
5.	The <b>Race to Zero</b> <sup>6</sup> campaign led by the Champions, under the umbrella of the Climate Ambition Alliance launched in 2019 by Chile, UNFCCC, and UNDP at the UN Secretary-General's Summit aims to rally leadership and support from businesses, cities, regions, investors for a healthy, resilient, zero carbon recovery that prevents future threats, creates decent jobs, and unlocks inclusive, sustainable growth. With a goal to have a 10-times increase of commitments by COP 26, over 3,000 non-Party stakeholders (509 cities, 23 regions, 2,162 businesses, 127 investors and 571 higher education Institutions) have successfully qualified to join the Race to Zero. <sup>7</sup> Regional diversity remains a key focus to the Race to Zero, for example materials are currently translated into Spanish, French, Mandarin and Japanese.
6.	The <b>Race to Resilience</b> <sup>8</sup> campaign – a sibling to Race to Zero – is catalyzing a step-change in global ambition and action for climate resilience, putting people and nature first in pursuit of a resilient world, with the overall goal to mobilize action from non-Party stakeholder to build the resilience of 4 billion people and ensure that the voices of front-line communities and practitioners are heard. After the launch, the Race to Resilience had its first Action Dialogues on March 30, 2021 where 20 initiatives joined with a combined global reach of over a billion people, focusing on a wide-range of issues, from water resilience to nature-based solutions, to disaster risk reduction, to agricultural resilience, to finance and insurance.
7.	Over the course of the latter part of 2020, a series of <b>Regional Resilience Dialogues</b> <sup>9</sup> were convened by the Global Resilience Partnership together with the Marrakech Partnership and with the support of the Champions. Taking place in Southeast Asia, South Asia, Africa, the Pacific, and Latin America, the Dialogues highlighted the needs, priorities, and local experiences and insights on adaptation and building climate resilience in each region, which were opportunities for the Champions to understand the regional contexts and translate them into actions to advance these local ambitious actions through the Race to Resilience campaign. One remaining dialogue in the Caribbean is planned to take place this year.

<sup>5</sup> Marrakech Partnership's Climate Action Pathways: [https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate\\_action\\_pathways](https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate_action_pathways)

<sup>6</sup> Race-to-Zero Campaign: <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/race-to-zero-campaign>

<sup>7</sup> <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/the-race-to-zero-is-on/>

<sup>8</sup> Race-to-Resilience Campaign: <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/race-to-resilience/>

<sup>9</sup> Regional Resilience Dialogues: <http://www.globalresiliencepartnership.org/regional-resilience-dialogues/>

8. With regards to broadening sectoral engagement, the Champions approach is to help and scale-up existing initiatives to promote efficiencies and avoid duplication where possible. However, the Champions will also help incubate and start-up new initiatives where there is an immediate need and gap. An example of such an initiative is the **Green Hydrogen Catapult**<sup>10</sup> that was launched in December 2020 with the participation of industry leaders to accelerate the scale and production of green hydrogen.
9. Also in December 2020, the High-Level Champions convened the dialogue with African non-Party stakeholders in the effort of strengthening regional engagement and broadening the participation of stakeholders from under-represented regions and sectors. The discussion between the Champions and stakeholders from the region, some already part of the Partnership, enriched the understanding of key issues and opportunities for climate action in Africa, and how the Champions and the Marrakech Partnership can better support action in the region, with the intention of convening similar types of dialogues and bringing in new stakeholders in different regions going forward.
10. The **UNFCCC Regional Climate Weeks**<sup>11</sup> continue to be one of the strategic engagement opportunities for the Champions and the Marrakech Partnership to catalyze concrete climate action on the ground. The Champions helped kick off the 2021 Regional Climate Weeks by mobilizing non-Party stakeholders to participate in the Virtual Regional Roundtables in March and crystallized the key priorities, opportunities and challenges facing countries across the regions.
11. In April 2021, the Champions supported the launch of the **Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero (GFANZ)**<sup>12</sup> that coordinates finance institutions to accelerate the transition to a net-zero economy and to align with the Race to Zero criteria, which currently brings together over 160 firms with combined assets of over \$70 trillion.

Objective 3	Creating enabling conditions for breakthroughs in ten tipping points for systems transformation
	<p>12. Launched at COP 25, the <b>Climate Action Pathways</b><sup>13</sup> are a vital part of the Marrakech Partnership tools to enhance climate action and ambition towards fully implementing the Paris Agreement. Under the leadership of the Champions, these Pathways have been produced by the stakeholders, setting out sectoral visions for striving for a 1.5° C resilient world by 2050. They aim to provide a roadmap to help countries and non-Party stakeholders alike to identify actions and options needed by 2021, 2025, 2030 and 2040 as steps to achieve these visions across Energy, Human Settlements, Industry, Land Use, Oceans and Coastal Zones, Transport, Water and Resilience. They are intended as living documents, to be updated periodically with the latest information and lessons learned. Major revisions were released at the end of 2020 that provided further granularity with feedback from the scientific community. They are currently being updated to further strengthen the aspects of just transition, gender-responsiveness,</p>

<sup>10</sup> Green Hydrogen Catapult initiative: <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/green-hydrogen-catapult/>

<sup>11</sup> UNFCCC's Regional Climate Week: <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/regional-climate-weeks>

<sup>12</sup> Glasgow Financial Alliance for Net Zero: <https://unfccc.int/news/new-financial-alliance-for-net-zero-emissions-launches>

<sup>13</sup> Climate Action Pathways: [https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate\\_action\\_pathways](https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate_action_pathways)

resilience, and circular economy, deepening the alignment of actions across the Pathways. Together with the first version of a Pathway for private finance, the updates are planned to be released by June.

13. Using the information described in the Climate Action Pathways<sup>14</sup>, the **Race-to-Zero Breakthroughs**<sup>15</sup> pinpoint specific tipping points for each sector and highlight what key actors must do to deliver the sectoral changes. In the run up to COP 26, the Champions are mobilizing stakeholders to achieve breakthroughs in at least 10 sectors of the economy with additional milestones by 2023 ahead of the Global Stocktake and toward 2030. With over seven months before COP 26, the first breakthrough was achieved. A total of 73 major asset managers, representing USD32 trillion in assets, have joined the Race to Zero via the Net Zero Asset Managers Initiative. This is well over the 20% tipping point for transformative systems change.

Objective 4	Following up on and ensuring continuity and coherence
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14. Through engagements and capturing commitments, outcomes and related progress, the Champions and Marrakech Partnership have been working to ensure that milestones throughout the year build on one another through a shared narrative and by focusing on transformative action linked to national sustainable development priorities.</li> <li>15. With the postponement of COP 26 in 2020, the Champions convened the <b>Race to Zero Dialogues</b><sup>16</sup> on 9-19 November 2020, in close collaboration with the Marrakech Partnership. Dialogues were organized on Built Environment, Cities &amp; Regions, Climate &amp; Health, Energy, Finance, Industry, Land use, Ocean, Regenerative Food and Agriculture Systems, Transport, and Water. With the support of nearly 100 organizations, more than 80 sessions were delivered with over 350 speakers from nearly 65 countries, across a range of formats, from panel discussions, working-style sessions, to creative videos, poetry, and live meditation. The dialogues brought together businesses, cities, subnational regions, investors with new voices with diverse perspectives, from youth representatives, the art and culture community to Heads of Government and a number of new commitments made by various stakeholders. It was explored how best to mobilize actors to align with the Climate Action Pathways<sup>17</sup> whilst highlighting gaps and needs within them and showcasing transformational shifts already underway in all sectors. The sessions were across different time-zones, with some sessions notably attracting tens of thousands of viewers and had a reach of 63 million on social media. The Champions liaised closely with the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body Chairs to ensure that the dialogues were not convened in isolation, developing a common narrative and enabling a smooth flow from action (starting with the Race to Zero Dialogues), the multilateral process (the UNFCCC Climate Change Dialogues that took place from 23 November to 4</li> </ol>

<sup>14</sup> Marrakech Partnership's Climate Action Pathways: [https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate\\_action\\_pathways](https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate_action_pathways)

<sup>15</sup> Race-to-Zero Breakthroughs: <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/breakthroughs/>

<sup>16</sup> Race to Zero Dialogues: <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/race-to-zero/race-to-zero-november-dialogues-programme>

<sup>17</sup> Marrakech Partnership's Climate Action Pathways: [https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate\\_action\\_pathways](https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate_action_pathways)

December) and national commitments (culminating with the Climate Ambition Summit convened on 12 December), demonstrating how all three need to be mutually reinforcing to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

16. To build momentum ahead of the Race to Zero Dialogues and leverage communication and curation expertise for broader awareness-raising, the Champions supported the global launch of **Countdown**<sup>18</sup> on 10 October 2020, a global initiative led by TED and Future Stewards and a partner of the Race to Zero campaign.

Objective 5	Tracking progress, impacts and results
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>17. The Champions and the Marrakech Partnership are committed to tracking progress, impacts and results, and identifying best practices and lessons learned through tools such as the Yearbook of Global Climate Action, and supporting the enhancement of the UNFCCC Global Climate Action portal (formerly known as NAZCA) and the work of the data, tracking and analysis communities.</li> <li>18. The <b>2020 Yearbook for Global Climate Action</b><sup>19</sup> presented the current range and state of global climate action by non-Party stakeholders, including an analysis on pre-2020 data on climate action, sectoral analysis of the impact of COVID-19 and opportunities for a sustainable recovery and reflections from the Champions on a new era of implementation and the future of the Marrakech Partnership.</li> <li>19. In response to the request from Parties given at COP 25, the UNFCCC secretariat progress tracking metrics for non-Party stakeholders and cooperative initiatives through an inclusive process, taking into account the needs of different products of the <b>climate action methodologies, data and analysis community (Camda)</b><sup>20</sup> and the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action team. A set of these metrics were identified as suitable for incorporation into the <b>Global Climate Action portal</b><sup>21</sup>. In collaboration with key data partners, the UNFCCC secretariat surveyed over 300 cooperative initiatives to gather feedback on how to evolve the portal and for initiatives to provide information on their near-term and long-term targets. Working in close cooperation with the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Team, the initiatives launched at the 2019 Climate Action Summit will report their progress on the Global Climate Action portal on an ongoing basis. Campaigns launched by the High-Level Champions, such as the Race to Zero, will also be tracked on the portal.</li> <li>20. To help amplify progress and key milestones throughout the year and highlight key elements of the Climate Action Pathways<sup>22</sup>, a <b>Race to Zero campaign website</b><sup>23</sup> was launched. In addition, the</li> </ol>

<sup>18</sup> TED Countdown: <https://countdown.ted.com/>

<sup>19</sup> 2020 Yearbook for Global Climate Action: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/2020\\_Yearbook\\_final\\_0.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/2020_Yearbook_final_0.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Climate action methodologies, data and analysis community (Camda): <https://camda.global/>

<sup>21</sup> Global Climate Action Portal (NAZCA): <http://climateaction.unfccc.int/>

<sup>22</sup> Marrakech Partnership's Climate Action Pathways: [https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate\\_action\\_pathways](https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/reporting-and-tracking/climate_action_pathways)

<sup>23</sup> Race to Zero Campaign's website: <https://racetozero.unfccc.int/>



**newsletter**<sup>24</sup> of the High-Level Champions and Marrakech Partnership is now released every two weeks, with a focus on transformations already underway across key sectors.

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## IMPROVING THE MARRAKECH PARTNERSHIP FOR ENHANCING AMBITION - STATUS OF PROCESS

21. At COP 25, Parties requested the High-Level Champions to explore how to improve the work under the Marrakech Partnership for enhancing ambition, taking into consideration feedback from Parties and non-Party stakeholders. In response to this request and building on the work programme, lessons learned and achievements over the past years, the Champions sent a letter to Parties and non-Party stakeholders on 27 March 2020 requesting feedback. Forty-two written inputs were received, including seven from Parties and groups of Parties (representing more than 100 Parties), and the remainder from non-Party stakeholders. The High-Level Champions also convened various meetings to gain additional insight from both Parties and non-Party stakeholders. The summary of the feedback received can be found [here](#).
22. Based on this feedback, the Champions released their reflections on the future of the Marrakech Partnership, highlighting the core principles around organizing a breakthrough approach for a stronger and nimbler architecture that serves as the backbone for climate action, which includes the following: be guided by science, take a systems approach, foster vitalized collaboration, drive exponential change, accelerate the ambition loop, and maximize diversity and inclusion. More details on the reflections can be found [here](#).
23. The High-level Champions are currently in a phase of validating the vision and design of the improved Marrakech Partnership with Parties and non-Party stakeholders. The Champions intend to release a set of new Marrakech Partnership materials, including piloting new and revised tools and bringing in new partners, over the second half of the year and provide an opportunity to take stock at COP 26.

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<sup>24</sup> Marrakech Partnership newsletter: <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/marrakech-partnership/background/marrakech-partnership-newsletters-archive>