

Track 4 - Societies, health, livelihoods, and economies

1. Overall scope and objectives of regional Climate Weeks in 2023

The recent IPCC AR6 synthesis report confirmed that the world is not on track to meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement. According to the report, emissions need to fall by 43% by 2030 compared to 2019 levels to avoid the worst impacts of climate change. However, projected global GHG emissions from the 2022 NDC Synthesis Report, which analyses the latest available NDCs covering 193 Parties to the Paris Agreement, make it likely that warming will exceed 1.5 degrees unless more ambitious mitigation measures are implemented immediately. Similarly, current actions toward adaptation and resilience do not match the ambition for transformational adaptation and climate resilient development at large.

The increasing climate change impacts will affect all regions and in particular the most vulnerable groups and communities. At the same time, it is at the regional, national, and local level where climate change solutions are being implemented, lessons being learned, and experiences are being shared and cooperation is forged to enhance climate action.

The first global Stocktake, which will conclude at COP 28 in UAE in December this year, offers a unique opportunity to call for decisive change and for urgently responding to the need for accelerating progress by collectively embarking on a swift and deep transformation of our economic and social systems.

The 2023 Regional Climate Weeks provide a timely opportunity for policymakers, practitioners, business and civil society to exchange on climate solutions, approaches for overcoming barriers, and opportunities realized in the different regions. The aim is to provide region focused contributions across four major systems-based tracks to inform the global Stocktake:

- 1. Energy systems and industry;**
- 2. Cities, urban and rural settlements, infrastructure and transport;**
- 3. Land, ocean, food and water;**
- 4. Societies, health, livelihoods, and economies.**

Such systemic transformation requires not only significant investments and uptake of innovative solutions well beyond the current levels of available climate finance, but also other types of enabling support. The costs and benefits of such global transformation are unevenly distributed within and across countries and regions hence we need to accelerate global and regional cooperation and support, in particular on climate finance, technology, and capacity-building, to ensure that the transformation is just, equitable and advances sustainable development.

Actions across the four systems-based tracks together with support, cooperation and just transition will allow us to course-correct and achieve the Paris Agreement goals and objectives.

The 2023 Regional Climate Weeks will also allow regional policymakers, practitioners, businesses and communities to showcase their achievements and lessons learned so far, how they intend to enhance their climate action and cooperation and also how they will ensure credibility of and trust in their climate pledges and initiatives to contribute to the required transformation across the above-mentioned systems-based tracks.

2. Expected overall outcomes of regional climate weeks in 2023

The events organized and delivered under all the systems-based tracks are expected to:

- Contribute substantively to the GST process by identifying region relevant actions and timelines necessary to accelerate the progress needed to keep the 1.5 C trajectory reachable.
- Enable and support the dissemination of valuable of good practices and lessons learnt, facilitating the identification of impactful initiatives for replication or inspiration at local, subnational, national and regional level.
- Provide a platform that fosters constructive dialogues between Parties and non-Party stakeholders creating opportunities to explore partnerships and /strengthening of networks in the regions.
- Provide insights for enhancing the engagement of non-Party stakeholders, including regional and local governments, the private sector, investors, youth, science, academia, indigenous people, and others, thereby increasing effectiveness and active participation.

3. Linkages between tracks

The four tracks are designed with a view to provide region focused contributions to inform the global stocktake at COP28. The tracks are also developed in such a way as to provide opportunities to advance regional and local dialogues and individual and collective climate action at both regional and local level by taking regional priorities into consideration.

Events/sessions under each thematic track are cross-cutting and are linked to each other. For instance, water, **energy, industry, and ecosystems** are central to the **economic and social development** of any society. Energy is particularly essential for most activities including the provision of daily services like lighting, cooking, and heating, etc. Access to energy is critical to **cities, urban and rural settlements, transport systems, infrastructure, and waste management**. Yet there is a need for the global community to shift to a swift and deep transformation across a wide spectrum of economic, environmental, and social systems in pursuit of climate resilient development.

Land, water, oceans, and food are key for **societal and economic development, livelihood and ecosystem services provision** and **food security**. There are evolving land uses –for urban expansion and food production while **water** is important for society's most essential needs hence a lever for sustainable development. Unsustainable land uses associated with urban expansion and infrastructural evolution cause degradation of natural ecosystems such as wetlands and forests, and subsequently resulting in loss of ecosystem services. The **ocean** on the other hand sustains **livelihoods, provides ecosystem services including those of aesthetic and cultural value** to many communities. Yet, climate change is increasing sea-level rise, ocean acidification and warming, de-oxygenation, and marine heat waves causing among other things increased inundation, biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation (particularly coral reefs), and salinization of groundwater and soil, all of which interrupt food webs and ecological connectivity.

These impacts not only affect basic human needs, but they also have an impact on human and animal health. Indeed, there is growing acknowledgment that **health and climate change** are interlinked. This nexus is of particular importance for both **rural and urban settlements** and entails **gender, economic and policy dimensions**. For instance, **certain health**

conditions are caused by air pollution and transport in urban settlements. In cities, waste discharges to land, water and air threaten the environmental integrity and thereby human health. Similarly, increased temperature projections in several regions across the world are threatening human, animal and planetary health thereby compromising livelihoods and economies dependent on natural systems.

The cross-cutting aspects of the four tracks offer an opportunity to encourage behavioural shifts, spark innovation, and encourage collaboration towards a just and transformative solutions at the regional and national levels.

4. Scopes and themes of Track 4: Societies, health, livelihoods, and economies.

The intensifying impacts from human-caused climate change are threatening human well-being and planetary health including causing widespread losses and damages. Every region in the world is projected to face further increases in climate change impacts. Climate sensitive sectors like agriculture, fisheries and health amongst others are already facing the brunt of climate change with observed impacts resulting in economic damages, loss of livelihoods, adverse human and ecosystem health outcomes, increased gender and social inequity and loss of biodiversity.

This track will look at how government actions at sub-national, national, and international levels, together with civil society and the private sector can enable and accelerate shifts in economic and social pathways towards sustainability and climate resilient development. According to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report, climate resilient development is enabled when governments, civil society and the private sector make inclusive development choices that prioritize risk reduction, equity, and justice, and when decision-making processes, finance and actions are integrated across governance levels, sectors, and timeframes.¹

5. Thematic Focus

The Thematic Focus of each Track of the Regional Climate Weeks in 2023 provides a broad non-exhaustive framework and can act as guidance for developing individual events and sessions to be aligned with the overarching narrative.

a. Circular economy approaches

- Governance – Enabling policy frameworks and incentives, from local to regional to national
- Finance, including new and innovative financing and economic models
- Production systems – approaches and successful examples
- Measuring and tracking circularity – approaches and good practice case studies
- Economic diversification and poverty reduction

b. Whole of society approaches to transformation

- Multilevel governance, facilitating cooperation across line ministries and thereby unlocking innovation and systems change, as well as across levels of government.
- Inclusive and enhanced civic engagement, including children and youth, in climate policy, decision making and action – approaches and good practice case studies.

¹ IPCC AR6 SYR SPM, C1

- Individual and collective action – approaches and good practice case studies e.g., behavior change through awareness-raising, education, technical and managerial training, media
- Social protection and adaptive social safety nets – approaches and good practice case studies

c. Health

- Explaining the health and climate change nexus – including the aspects of extreme heat on human health and well-being, as well as the interlinkages of climate change and air pollution via short-lived climate pollutants, affecting people's health as well as ecosystem health – understanding the concepts, interlinkages, gender dimensions, vulnerability and investment needs and opportunities, including those viable solutions that allow for multiple benefits for climate, clean air and health
- Preparedness and resilience in health systems – approaches and good practice case studies including in relation to health infrastructure, with a focus on urban and rural settlements
- Health and the care economy – approaches and good practice examples
- Changes occurring in the natural environment due to climate change are compromising food security and increasing the spread of infectious diseases. One Health is a powerful approach that can enable the achievement of health for humans, animals, plants, and the environment, as well as food and water security and safety.

d. Livelihoods

- Decent jobs and skills building for gender-responsive just transitions – approaches and good practice case studies
- Agricultural systems and rural livelihoods
- Livelihoods and land / oceans (supply of food, freshwater and multiple other ecosystem services, as well as biodiversity), including indigenous peoples' traditional livelihood practices
- Disaster risk reduction approaches to livelihood protection