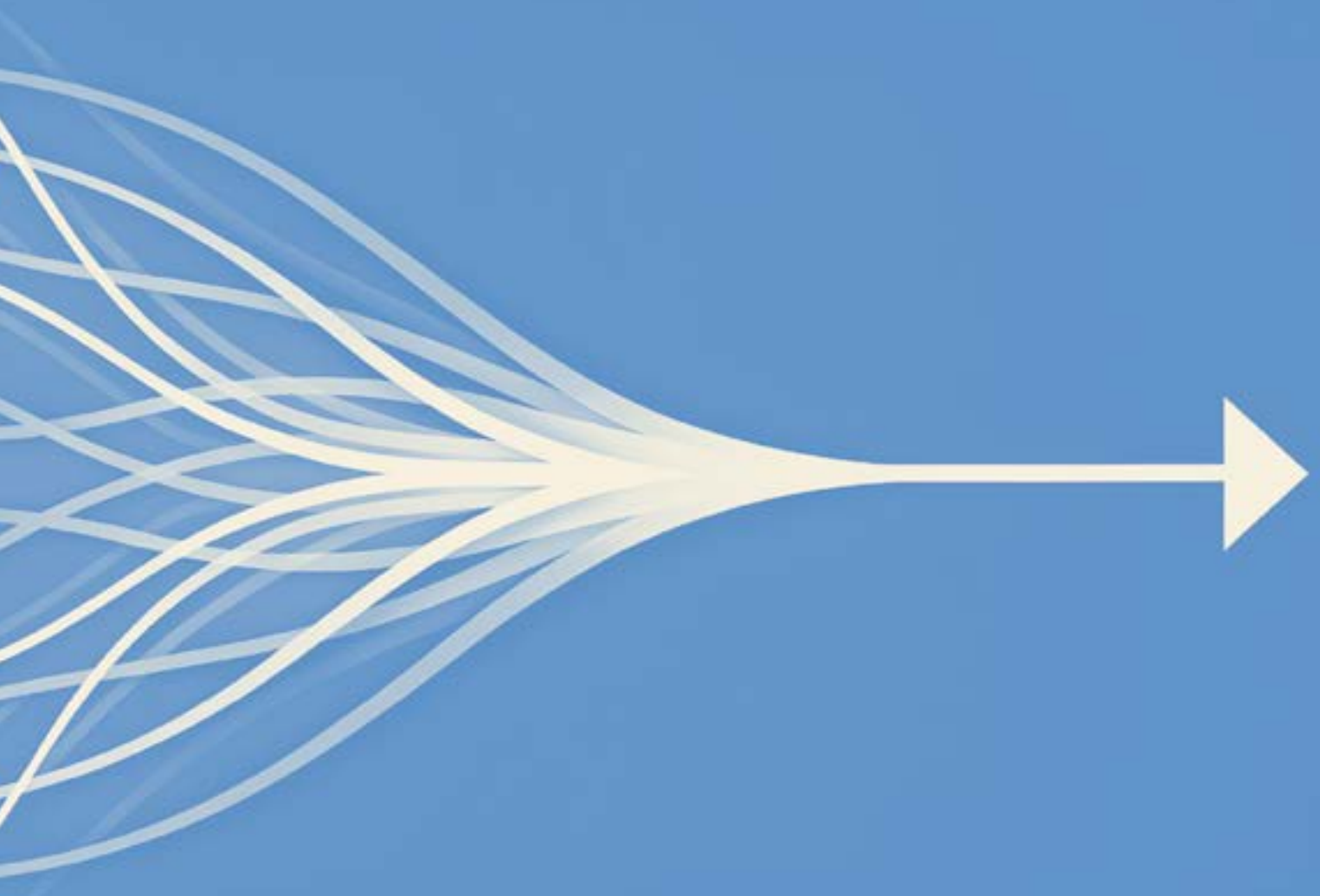




United Nations
Climate Change



UNFCCC Mission Framework

Foreword

The climate crisis is the most systemic and existential threat humanity and the global economy have ever faced – and the greatest test of our ability to act together.

At the same time, the climate crisis has also galvanized global cooperation on a scale unprecedented in human history. While this response still does not yet fully match the urgency of the threat, intergovernmental cooperation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC, or the Convention) and the Paris Agreement has delivered remarkable global progress. Without it, global temperature rise would be as high as 5° C – which no economy or society could survive.

Through UN-convened climate multilateralism, that trajectory has already been reduced. The sixteenth edition of the *Emissions Gap Report* finds that, if all Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are fully implemented, warming is now projected at 2.3–2.5°C, while current policies point to 2.8°C. This demonstrates that collective action is already making a measurable difference and that continued efforts can further lower the trajectory—highlighting both how far humanity has come through this process and the vital journey still ahead.

Recent United Nations Climate Change Conferences have delivered global outcomes amid challenges, through a complex process that requires the unanimous agreement of nearly 200 Parties. These include a historic loss and damage fund, a global agreement to transition away from fossil fuels in a fair and equitable manner and ambitious targets to triple renewable energy capacity by 2030, new global goals on adaptation and climate finance, the operationalization of the enhanced transparency framework and carbon markets, and a landmark decision to develop a just transition mechanism. The UNFCCC secretariat has played a key part in all aspects of this progress, supporting Parties in the roles they have mandated us to perform – as convenor, custodian, and catalyst.

An essential part of our work is providing frank reality checks, grounded firmly in scientific, economic, and social facts, and principles of equity.

Despite recent advances, the world remains substantially off-track in averting the most severe climate impacts. While the massive expansion of renewable energy in most major economies has driven jobs, growth and investments, this global shift remains beset by deep inequalities, with the most vulnerable developing nations unable to share in these benefits.

Meanwhile, climate impacts are reducing GDP by up to 5% in many nations, hitting supply chains and economic stability, and escalating food prices and driving food scarcity across every economy. The most vulnerable communities in each country are the most severely affected, and nearly half of humanity lives in climate hotspots, where they are 15 times more likely to die from climate-related disasters.

In short, far more progress is needed to limit global warming to 1.5 °C this century, protect all peoples today through more climate resilience, and ensure the benefits of climate action are shared equitably. A faster transition to renewable energy is essential to ensure energy security, economic stability and competitiveness, policy-making autonomy and sovereignty for all nations. As the primary international organization for facilitating global climate diplomacy, the secretariat is fully committed to delivering on its rich mandates entrusted by Parties. This demands continuous improvement in efficiency, transparency, and accountability to maximize the real-life impact of the secretariat's efforts.

Meeting the urgency of this moment also means looking ahead in this era of implementation to ensure the intergovernmental process can help drive forward real-economy outcomes across every sector, as well as tangible benefits shared more equitably among all nations and communities.

Within this context, and the growing mandates from Parties front of mind, the secretariat developed this mission framework to maximize our impact and efficiency across our core functions as convener, custodian, and catalyst. This document sets out our core mission, strategic functions, and critical enablers for delivering on mandates from Parties in the years ahead.

Through this framework, the UNFCCC secretariat is determined to keep delivering fully on all our mandates and, in doing so, to play its part in helping to protect people and prosperity in every part of the world.



Simon Stiell,
Executive Secretary

Mission

Enabling multilateral decision-making and action to achieve the goals of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement, while advancing global cooperation towards a net-zero, climate-resilient future.

Strategic Functions



CONVENER

Facilitate climate multilateralism

Provide expert knowledge and support for inclusive negotiations, and curate platforms where Parties and other stakeholders drive collective climate action.



CUSTODIAN

Uphold the treaties

Safeguard the UNFCCC process and host official climate data and tools, providing Parties with tools, guidance, and analysis to support planning, implementation, and compliance, and track collective progress toward global climate goals.

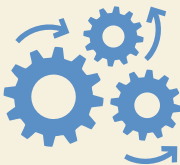


CATALYST

Enable accelerated action

Support Parties and other stakeholders to close ambition and implementation gaps by connecting actors, aligning initiatives, and leveraging partnerships for inclusive climate action.

Critical Enablers



Strengthen organizational foundations

Grounded in UN values, the secretariat's mission-driven culture underpins all its work, upholding dignity and accountability in every action. Centered on a skilled, diverse, and engaged workforce, the secretariat advances trust, efficiency, and continuous improvement through robust policies, transparent resource management, strategic resource mobilization and partnerships, effective systems and tools, and strong governance and sustainability practices - delivering lasting impact for people and the planet.

Our mission



The secretariat operates with a clear and unified mission: enabling multilateral decision-making and action to achieve the goals of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement, while advancing global cooperation towards a net-zero, climate-resilient future.

We work to support Parties in preventing dangerous human interference with the climate system and safeguarding all economies and societies from climate impacts now and in future generations. Acting in accordance with international climate treaties and the decisions of the governing bodies, we provide high-quality services across all mandates entrusted to us.

We strive to inspire and mobilize Parties and other stakeholders to take collective climate action to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 °C, enhance adaptation and resilience to climate impacts, support implementation through finance, technology, and capacity building, and provide Parties with evidence-based guidance for informed decision-making through reliable data and expertise.

In doing so, we champion the United Nations values of inclusivity, integrity, humanity, and humility. Our mission-driven culture values every voice, upholds dignity, and fosters a genuine sense of belonging, empowering us to act with unity and purpose.

As one UN Climate Change team, we embrace an adaptive, resilient, and forward-thinking culture that amplifies respect and accountability in all we do. We take a people-centred approach, honouring diversity and multilingualism as pillars for co-creating solutions that meet the evolving needs of Parties and the global climate community. Our work is anchored in principled decision-making, transparency, and a commitment to sharing accurate, reliable information. We face challenges with courage and compassion, driving transformation and continuous improvement as we deliver impactful results while advancing effective collective climate action. Together, we nurture an environment of mutual support and care.

The strategic functions

Convenor – facilitating climate multilateralism



The convenor function sits at the heart of the secretariat’s mission. The secretariat facilitates global climate multilateralism through intergovernmental negotiations across all thematic areas under the UNFCCC process and establishes the platforms and processes that enable Parties and other stakeholders to advance collective climate action.

A core part of this function is the substantive, technical, legal, operational and procedural support that the secretariat provides to facilitate negotiations, ensuring that the UNFCCC governing, subsidiary and constituted bodies and other mandated processes are grounded in robust evidence and expert guidance. The substantive negotiation support spans thematic areas, including mitigation, adaptation, climate finance, technology, capacity-building, loss and damage, just transition, gender, and Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE). Through this support, the secretariat enables Parties to build consensus, make well-informed decisions, and conduct negotiations effectively and efficiently.

The secretariat organizes and facilitates the convening of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (sessions of the Conference of the Parties, or COPs), the largest annual United Nations conference and the principal global forum on climate change. COPs bring together nearly 200 Governments and thousands of observers, including civil society, private sector actors, science and academia, and international organizations, serving as a critical platform for sustaining international momentum, fostering inclusive collective action, and advancing the global climate agenda with tangible outcomes. Equally important, the secretariat convenes every mid-year the subsidiary body sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

(SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Science and Technological Advice (SBSTA). Constituted Body Meetings are organized to support Parties in advancing the intergovernmental process. In addition, the secretariat organizes a wide range of other meetings and events, including, climate weeks, workshops, dialogues, ministerial consultations, and high-level events that promote engagement and informed decision-making.

The secretariat supports COP Presidencies and the Chairs of Subsidiary Bodies in delivering ambitious and impactful sessions that adhere to the highest standards of conduct and safeguard the integrity and credibility of the UNFCCC process. In doing so, it leverages its institutional memory to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the annual rotations of COP host countries.

In organizing COPs, the secretariat collaborates with the host country. It negotiates and concludes the host country agreement and is responsible for coordinating and delivering the conference's venue and core

operational services according to UN standards. Delivered services range from preparing and managing official documentation, accreditation, and registering participants, overseeing on-site arrangements such as side-events, to deploying modern information and communication technologies, thereby helping to ensure that sessions are efficient, transparent, and broadly inclusive.

The secretariat fosters dialogue among Parties and non-Party stakeholders, upholding multilateralism as a cornerstone of the global climate process and ensuring that diverse perspectives shape collective decision-making and advance the global climate agenda. This includes meaningful engagement with the observer community as well as non-governmental organizations, local communities, and Indigenous Peoples. Such inclusivity enriches the UNFCCC process by reflecting a wide range of perspectives, such as gender equality, the empowerment of women, respect for human rights, intergenerational equity, and the participation of youth, children, migrants, persons with disabilities, and people in vulnerable situations.



Looking ahead

The secretariat will continue to strengthen the convenor function by enabling effective, inclusive, and well-coordinated negotiations and events across all thematic areas under the UNFCCC process. The secretariat will forge stronger connections among Parties and non-Party stakeholders to improve coordination, capacity, and knowledge sharing, supporting coherent and efficient implementation of climate actions. The secretariat will provide expert guidance and substantive support to the governing, subsidiary and constituted bodies and other mandated processes, ensuring negotiations are grounded in robust evidence and technical advice. The secretariat will modernize core conferencing infrastructure and services, improving virtual access and collaboration tools while maintaining inclusivity, so that all stakeholders can work together toward coordinated collective progress on global climate goals. toward coordinated collective progress on global climate goals.

Custodian – upholding the treaties



The custodian function protects and advances the rules, systems and processes established under the UNFCCC process. It does so by ensuring adherence to agreed procedures, facilitating Parties’ implementation and compliance with their obligations, safeguarding confidential information, and providing the tools, methodologies, reporting systems, legal guidance, and targeted technical assistance that help Parties meet their commitments and translate global goals into national, regional, and local action.

As the authoritative host of official climate data submitted by Parties, the secretariat collaborates with other UN agencies and trusted data providers to ensure that Parties along with other policymakers, real economy actors and the public have clear, accessible and reliable evidence on collective climate actions.

Building on its custodial role, the secretariat supports Parties in planning and implementing climate action through their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and national adaptation plans (NAPs). This support includes guidance, technical assistance, and training to ensure that Parties can effectively use the tools, methodologies, and reporting systems provided, and comply with their reporting obligations. It focuses on enabling Parties to implement commitments in line with the UNFCCC process requirements, particularly supporting developing country Parties.

In their NDCs, Parties outline their plans to contribute to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement, while NAPs set out priorities for managing climate risks and protecting economies and communities against worsening impacts. Through the annual NDC synthesis report and targeted sectoral analyses, as well as NAP progress reports, the secretariat provides updates on collective global ambition, highlighting progress and gaps relative to Paris Agreement long-term goals. It provides technical guidance, methodological support, and tools to help Parties translate their commitments into concrete, measurable outcomes in the real economy. Special attention is given to least developed countries and small island developing States, including tailored capacity-building and advisory support, to ensure progress is inclusive and addresses the needs of the most vulnerable.

The enhanced transparency framework (ETF), a cornerstone of the Paris Agreement, provides the foundation for tracking progress through biennial transparency reports (BTRs). It builds on and enhances the measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) system under the Convention. BTRs provide a robust evidence base to help Parties strengthen climate policies over time, and outline funding needs and investment opportunities. They monitor Parties’ greenhouse gas inventories, implementation, and achievement of NDCs, adaptation actions, financial commitments and the mobilization and receipt of financial support, technology transfer and capacity-building, with the option to include a section on loss and damage. The secretariat’s BTR synthesis report provides updates on Parties’ progress in implementing the Paris Agreement.

The secretariat supports the Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee (PAICC) in holding Parties to their obligations of communicating their NDCs and BTRs on time and helping them to comply with their reporting

obligations, identify challenges and resolve existing shortcomings. By enhancing awareness and capacities for implementation, the work of the Committee and its supporting secretariat strengthens credibility and robustness of the Paris Agreement climate regime.

The second Global Stocktake (GST), to be concluded in 2028, is a key milestone for assessing collective progress toward the objective of the Paris Agreement and its long-term goals. Drawing on NDC and BTR synthesis reports, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessments, NAP progress reports, and other relevant data, the GST will evaluate the implementation of Parties' pledges and actions. This process will identify gaps and needs, as well as opportunities to boost ambition, accelerate action, and strengthen support. The insights from the GST will inform future strategies for mitigation, adaptation, and the means of implementation and support reinforcing international cooperation and solidifying the results-driven approach of the Paris Agreement.

The secretariat supports the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) in assessing climate finance flows and the needs of developing countries. This includes preparing the Biennial Assessment and Overview of Climate Finance Flows and the Needs Determination Report, which provide Parties with transparent information on financial commitments, support provided and received, funding gaps, and progress toward the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG). These reports complement the secretariat's custodial role in ensuring reliable climate data and informing Parties' planning and decision-making. The SCF tracks progress on scaling up finance

to developing countries toward the NCQG, with the secretariat providing dedicated reporting and analytical support. The secretariat also facilitates coordination and information exchange with the institutions established under the UNFCCC process, including the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation Fund, and the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage.

Recognizing the critical role of nature and ecosystems in climate action, the secretariat supports knowledge-sharing, transparent reporting, and cooperation among Parties to integrate the protection, conservation, and restoration of ecosystems into national climate strategies. It supports alignment in agriculture, forestry, and other land use with global climate goals, contributing to both mitigation and adaptation objectives, and facilitates reporting under relevant mechanisms, such as commitments to halt and reverse deforestation and forest degradation by 2030.

International carbon markets play a key role in cost-effective emission reductions and global cooperation. The secretariat strengthens these markets by supporting the operationalization of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, including the Paris Agreement crediting mechanism, a project-based trading mechanism under Article 6, paragraph 4, with features strong environmental and human rights safeguards. It also facilitates country-to-country trading under Article 6, paragraph 2, and promotes collaboration through mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building under Article 6, paragraph 8. By overseeing registrations, transactions, reporting and capacity-building, the secretariat fosters trust and measurable climate benefits.



Looking ahead

The secretariat will continue to strengthen the custodian function by ensuring mandated climate data are collected, aggregated, and analyzed to provide robust and transparent insights. The secretariat will actively support the second Global Stocktake, connecting information from NDCs, BTRs, NAPs, climate finance, Article 6, and other reporting streams to give Parties a comprehensive picture of global progress. The secretariat will leverage technology, including data visualization and analytical tools, to make climate data accessible and actionable, enabling evidence-based decision-making. By reinforcing the credibility, accountability, and transparency of the UNFCCC process, the secretariat will ensure that mandated reporting continues to support tangible progress toward the Paris Agreement and Convention objectives.

Catalyst – enabling accelerated action



The catalyst function focuses on helping Parties and other stakeholders to close ambition and implementation gaps that hold back full delivery of obligations under the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement. This is achieved through a wide range of activities and mission-driven initiatives, which support Parties in translating commitments into concrete climate action.

Collaboration across the UN system and with regional and international organizations is central, with the secretariat aligning its catalytic activities with partners to complement their work and add unique value. This approach strengthens coordination, leverages secretariat expertise, and supports system-wide coherence on climate action, helping to integrate climate priorities across development, humanitarian, and economic agendas in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, and other UN mandates. Regional and global collaboration with relevant partners strengthens Parties' implementation on the ground through integrated, impactful solutions. In doing so, the secretariat draws on synergies across the Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, Convention on Biological Diversity, and United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification) to promote coherent approaches to climate action, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable land management.

Innovation and systemic change are promoted through mandated and complementary platforms that bring governments, business, investors, and civil society together. These include partnerships for climate action and hubs showcasing new technologies, finance solutions and capacity-building opportunities, for example the Global Climate Action Portal (NAZCA), which highlights the commitments of non-Party stakeholders to act on climate change and helps increase visibility and inspires greater ambition for the good of current and future generations. Such platforms accelerate uptake of solutions, create momentum, and spread effective practices across sectors and regions.

The secretariat's catalytic capacity-building focuses on enabling higher ambition and effective implementation by identifying barriers, connecting actors and initiatives, and providing targeted technical assistance, skills, and networks, particularly for developing countries. It supports and strengthens regional stakeholder engagement through its Regional Collaboration Centres (RCCs) and aligns these efforts with the intergovernmental process via Climate Weeks, helping Parties implement climate actions in the real economy. In this role, the secretariat facilitates collaboration and connects stakeholders to deploy innovative solutions, helping accelerate tangible climate outcomes.

Inclusivity and equity are essential to catalytic climate action. Platforms like the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action (MPGCA) support the implementation of the Paris Agreement by enabling collaboration between governments

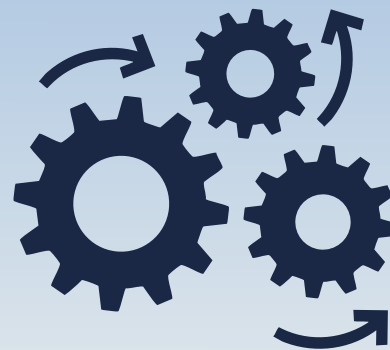
and non-Party stakeholders such as cities, regions, businesses, investors, and civil society to act on climate change to drive innovation and shared climate ambition. Programmes such as the Just Transition Work Programme are helping to advance the social dimensions of climate action under the Paris Agreement, including by recognizing that achieving its long-term goals requires approaches that are people-centered, rights-based, equitable, inclusive, and tailored to national circumstances. Through the Enhanced Lima Work Programme on Gender, the secretariat promotes knowledge and understanding of gender-responsive climate action and its coherent mainstreaming. In collaboration with Parties, COP Presidencies, high-level and youth climate champions, the secretariat also advances ACE to ensure that youth, local communities, and other under-represented groups are fully involved in climate decision-making and benefit from climate action.



Looking ahead

The secretariat will continue to strengthen its catalytic role in helping Party and non-Party stakeholders to close ambition and implementation gaps, boosting economic outcomes. The secretariat will leverage partnerships and platforms to showcase and share solutions and strengthen the use of climate information and robust evidence to guide catalytic actions. The secretariat will align catalytic efforts with the broader UN system, including through Regional Collaboration Centres and Climate Weeks, to enhance coherence, complement UN initiatives, and bring the intergovernmental process closer to the real economy at global, regional, and local levels. In doing so, the secretariat aims to spread the benefits of climate action to more people across all segments of society.

Critical enablers



The secretariat’s ability to achieve its mission through its three strategic functions relies on a set of critical enablers.

These enablers provide the structures, systems, and capacities, as well as the legal and operational frameworks, needed to convene Parties and other stakeholders effectively, manage and safeguard vital climate information for the benefit of Party and non-Party stakeholders, including real-economy actors, and help catalyse transformative climate actions.



A CULTURE OF PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE

At the heart of critical enablers are the secretariat's **people and organizational culture**. The secretariat is committed to ensuring that all personnel, regardless of background, identity, or perspective, can thrive, continuously learn, innovate, and contribute fully to the shared mission. A skilled, diverse, and mission-focused workforce is supported by policies that promote equitable hiring, professional development, and career growth, while fostering a culture of professional excellence, service, and creativity firmly anchored in UN values and competencies. Staff engagement and satisfaction, well-being, diversity, and inclusion are priorities, recognizing that a well-resourced secretariat and motivated staff are essential to delivering results across all mandates, particularly during high-intensity work periods such as COPs. This requires fair and transparent workload management, careful planning, and close interaction between external stakeholders, management, and staff.

The secretariat's **mobilization of financial resources** is critical to delivering mandates and the broader objectives of the UNFCCC process. This includes securing adequate, predictable, and flexible financial and in-kind support and requires continuous engagement with Parties, voluntary contributors, and new donors, including private sector and philanthropic partners, to diversify funding streams. By leveraging the expertise, capacities, and resources of partners, the secretariat strengthens delivery, supports strategic priorities, and ensures alignment with mandates.

Financial management underpins the delivery of the secretariat's work programme by ensuring that resources are planned, allocated, and reported in full alignment with mandates approved by Parties, with all outputs fully costed in a transparent and consistent manner. This includes enhancing budget methodologies, systems, and tools and identifying efficiencies, managing cash and other assets rigorously, and maintaining timely, transparent reporting to Parties.

The secretariat depends on robust and adequate **systems and tools** to support its core functions: facilitating intergovernmental negotiations, safeguarding climate information, and accelerating climate action. They support the complex management and analysis of data, preserve vital institutional knowledge, sustain daily operations, and service stakeholder needs. Transformational technologies, including well-regulated artificial intelligence, strengthen the secretariat's capacity to analyze large volumes of data, identify patterns, and generate insights that underpin informed decision-making, with high standards of quality control. Digital tools optimize efficiency, enable real-time collaboration and support hybrid meetings for dynamic engagement while upholding the highest standards of cybersecurity.



LEVERAGING EXPERTISE, CAPACITIES AND RESOURCES

Communications is central to the secretariat's capacity to deliver effectively on all mandates. In a quickly evolving information landscape, the secretariat works with the UN system and external partners to counter



**TRANSPARENT
DECISION-MAKING,
CLEAR POLICIES
AND ROBUST RISK
MANAGEMENT**

major new threats to scientifically sound climate information and the growing risks and costs of climate disinformation. Clear and accessible information is essential for enabling Parties to understand and meet their obligations under the UNFCCC process. The secretariat supports communications by facilitating the participation of thousands of media representatives from all regions in climate events, providing and managing media and communications spaces, and disseminating key content, such as summaries of climate data and mandated reports, across official UN channels and languages. Through multilingual platforms and targeted outreach, the secretariat ensures that information on climate impacts and the benefits of climate action is timely, accurate, and accessible to stakeholders at all levels. Internal communication is equally essential, ensuring the secretariat's diverse workforce remains informed, connected, and empowered. Through regular updates, collaborative platforms, and transparent dialogue throughout the organization, the secretariat fosters a unified organizational culture that supports its collective mission.

Governance and sustainability underpin the integrity, accountability, and effectiveness of the secretariat's work. Transparent decision-making, clear policies, and robust risk management guide all activities, while rigorous due diligence ensures responsible management of financial and in-kind contributions, partnerships, and other arrangements. The secretariat maintains strong internal controls and oversight mechanisms, supported by an annual workplan, ongoing internal reviews, and regular management reporting. It is also subject to audit by the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the United Nations Board of Auditors, reinforcing compliance with rules, regulations, and best practices. Sustainability and climate neutrality are core principles of the secretariat's operations, reflected in sustainable procurement, energy-efficient infrastructure, and organizational activities that minimize its footprint and demonstrate exemplary practices for others to follow.



Looking ahead

The secretariat will continue to cultivate an organizational culture grounded in UN values that empowers, equips, and inspires every staff member to thrive and contribute fully to meeting current and future challenges. It will enhance financial and resource management, diversify funding, and optimize resource use. The secretariat will also strengthen multilingual external communications through more tailored public platforms, ensuring that information on the UNFCCC process is accessible, accurate, and trustworthy. Finally, it will continue to strengthen its governance framework and sustainability practices to ensure operations are transparent, efficient, legally sound, and climate-neutral - reinforcing credibility and integrity as the secretariat continues to support Parties in achieving the goals of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol, and the Paris Agreement.



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