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Climate Change Secretariat  
Executive Secretary

**Nations Unies**  
Secrétariat sur les changements climatiques  
Secrétaire Exécutif

Date: 29 May 2024  
Reference: ES/MTP/O/QR1 2024  
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## MESSAGE TO PARTIES AND OBSERVERS

### UN Climate Change Quarterly Update: Q1 2024

#### Introductory Message from UN Climate Change Executive Secretary Simon Stiell

Welcome to our first Quarterly Update for 2024. We're doing things a little differently this year, providing bite-sized updates on some key developments each quarter, and highlighting some notable milestones in the quarter ahead.

We're taking this new approach, instead of an exhaustive catalogue of all our work across our many mandates each quarter, with the aim of making these updates more accessible, more streamlined, more practical, and more forward-looking. Our annual reporting will continue, as mandated.

We hope you find these updates helpful, as our work proceeds apace to support all Parties in their climate efforts. These efforts, underpinned by international cooperation, have never been more crucial, to confront the global climate crisis hitting all peoples and all nations now.

Yours sincerely,

*(Signed by)*

Simon Stiell

**Distribution:** To Parties and observer States through their national focal points for climate change and diplomatic missions accredited to the Federal Republic of Germany, United Nations and related organizations and specialized agencies and observer organizations admitted by the Conference of the Parties.



## **The road to COP29**

The first quarter is always a good opportunity to plan and set a clear course for the year ahead. It was with this in mind that Executive Secretary Simon Stiell went to Baku, Azerbaijan, to meet with the incoming Presidency of COP29 and together progress planning for this year's UN Climate Conference. Hosting a COP, which brings together nearly 200 Party delegations and thousands of other participants, is a huge undertaking for any nation. This year, as every other year, the secretariat has been working overtime early in the year to help the incoming Presidency make strong early strides forward.

Discussions on the host country agreement, which sets the broader legal framework for the COP and related legal instruments have been progressing well. The aim is to conclude these in June.

In Baku, the Executive Secretary also delivered his [first major speech](#) of the year, also available in [Chinese](#), [Russian](#) and [Spanish](#). In it, he set out what needs to be achieved through cooperative global efforts, based on science, and on three timeframes: 2050, 2030 and in the crucial years ahead, building on the historic progress achieved through the UAE Consensus at the COP28 UN Climate Conference in Dubai last December.

“We have already proven we can meet the challenge ahead, having bent the curve of expected global temperature rise from nearly 5 degrees, to 3, closer to 2.5 through UN-convened global cooperation,” the Executive Secretary said.

“Whilst last year’s agreement on the Global Stocktake at COP28 was far from perfect, it would have been unthinkable just a few years ago, and sends a very strong signal about the inevitability of global decarbonization. But now is no time for victory laps. It’s time to get on with the job.”

## **From billions to trillions**

2024 will need to instigate a major step up in climate finance, both in quality and quantity. At COP29, Parties are expected to set the New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance (NCQG) from a floor of USD 100 billion per year, taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries.

At least three technical expert dialogues (TEDs) will be convened this year to enable in-depth examination of the elements of the NCQG. This will be followed by at least three meetings held back-to-back with the TEDs where Parties will work on developing a substantive framework for a draft negotiating text for consideration at COP29. UN Climate Change colleagues worked tirelessly over the first months of 2024 preparing for the [ninth technical expert dialogue](#) (TED9) and the [first meeting under the ad hoc work programme](#) on the NCQG.

In parallel, the Standing Committee on Finance launched work on its mandated technical reports – vital barometers for tracking climate finance flows, presenting the needs and priorities of developing countries, and assessing progress on climate finance mobilization.



We have also substantially upgraded our [capacity-building portal](#) to ensure all Parties and other stakeholders have access to information, tools and resources across 17 climate-related topics, ranging from finance to adaptation strategies to Nationally Determined Contributions. Users can now find curated resources to help with their specific needs and local contexts, currently available in [English](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#) and [Chinese](#).

### **National Climate Plans as economic blueprints for growth, jobs, health, affordability & security**

A key priority this year for UN Climate Change – working with the wider UN system, is to play our part helping enable Parties to deliver their next round of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), from early 2025. These should strive to keep the 1.5 °C goal within reach, with developed country Parties taking the lead by undertaking economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets and developing country Parties moving over time toward economy-wide emission reductions, in light of different national circumstances.

In a [letter](#) to Parties and observer States, the Executive Secretary emphasized how new NDCs can and should serve as cross-sector economic and social blueprints which can help drive forward economic growth, more job opportunities, less pollution, better health, and secure and affordable clean energy for all. He described the new NDCs as “the most important climate documents produced so far this century in securing the safety and prosperity of [all] peoples.”

As new NDCs due next year have a time horizon to 2035, the Executive Secretary urged governments to also update their 2030 targets this year, given global efforts remain badly off-track to halve global emissions this decade, as required by science, on the way to a net-zero emissions global economy by 2050.

In March we also [brought together](#) more than 50 development and implementing organizations to explore ways to coordinate the support and expertise available to Parties in crafting their new NDCs. This group will reconvene during the June UN Climate Meetings – to chart a course for the support available through the second half of the year. The work on NDCs is taking place also in consultation with the COP28, COP29 and COP30 presidencies (known as the [COP Presidencies Troika](#)).

### **Biennial Transparency Reports – crucial enabling tools to help Parties boost their climate efforts**

Under the Paris Agreement, Parties agreed to submit inaugural Biennial Transparency reports (BTRs) by the end of 2024, with some discretion on timing for Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries. The BTRs will provide a snapshot of the state of climate action and support, enabling Parties to better respond to climate change by providing a crucial policy-making evidence base for Parties as they develop more ambitious NDCs.

In February, Guyana became the second nation, after Andorra, and the first Small Island Developing State to [submit its BTR](#), well ahead of the deadline. UN Climate Change coordinated the first technical expert review of Andorra's BTR, following the guidance from lead reviewers in their first meeting in April. Lessons learned from this experience will be shared at an event on 6 June at the June UN Climate Meetings in Bonn (see below for more information).



Several events are also planned during the June Meetings on the support available to developing countries, including the [In-person Workshop on ETF Support](#) (4 June) and the [In-session Facilitative Dialogue on ETF Support](#) (10 June), which will feature keynote remarks from the Executive Secretary and the incoming COP29 President. UN Climate Change is on track to finalize its BTR reporting tools, fully on schedule, by 30 June.

Since September 2023, the secretariat has trained more than 1,000 participants from various regions on the use of the new ETF reporting tools (including hands-on and live demos). This training enables Parties to submit their reports in 2024.

In parallel, more than 2,000 experts have completed training as review experts, having completed the overview course and exams offered by UN Climate Change. These experts are now eligible to participate in the technical expert reviews of BTRs, most of which will take place in 2025.

In close collaboration with other UN agencies and support providers, UN Climate Change will continue to offer training workshops globally, providing crucial support for developing countries with less experience in reporting.

### **Protecting people everywhere: building resilience to worsening climate impacts**

Under the Paris Agreement, Parties are committed to adaptation planning processes and actions to boost resilience against more intense and frequent climate impacts. At COP28, as part of the outcome of the Global Stocktake, UN Climate Change is urging Parties to develop National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) by the end of 2025, and to make progress in implementing them by 2030. We are working with Parties, implementing partners and financial institutions to help speed up the development of NAPs and ensure they are designed in a way that will help them secure finance of the quantity and quality needed.

Our efforts are focused on practical solutions and support for the Parties based on their needs. In March, the secretariat-supported Adaptation Committee held a virtual dialogue to build the capacity of developing countries to access adaptation finance. The Committee also hosted its 2024 Adaptation Forum in March, to move the adaptation-related outcomes of COP28 forward – including the adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience and the first global stocktake orchestrated by UN Climate Change, and to explore opportunities for further collaboration to speed up and scale up action on adaptation.

Looking ahead to Q2, participants at the [NAP Expo's](#) high-level transformational dialogue have developed a list of what's needed to step up adaptation progress.

### **The UN's new carbon crediting mechanism: operationalizing Article 6.4 in 2024**

The UN Body responsible for establishing a new global carbon market under [Article 6.4](#) of the Paris Agreement outlined a clear roadmap for operationalizing the mechanism this year.

At its [first meeting](#) since COP28, the Article 6.4 Supervisory Body launched work to develop methodological tools and guidelines, as well as a call for input on concerns raised by Parties in Dubai.



Their aim is to move ahead with operationalizing the mechanism, while developing further documents for consideration at COP29 in Baku.

Ahead of COP29, the most critical work is to finalize the recommendations on methodologies and removals. At the June Climate Meetings in Bonn, the Supervisory Body will [convene Parties and non-Party stakeholders](#) to discuss concerns raised and build consensus for a way forward at COP29.

The Supervisory Body also aims to finalize a package of environmental and human rights safeguards and redress procedures in the run up to COP29. One part of this package, a [historic Appeal and Grievance Procedure](#), was adopted at the start of Q2. This is a crucial step towards developing a new international carbon market that sets the benchmark for high-integrity carbon credits.

### **Advancing gender equity and bolder climate action in tandem**

Last month, UN Climate Change teamed up with UN Women and UNDP to host the first-ever African [regional workshop](#) for National Gender and Climate Change Focal Points in Nairobi, Kenya. The agenda included the upcoming review of the UNFCCC enhanced Lima work programme on gender, highlighting opportunities for national gender-responsive climate policies and plans, with a record-breaking 110 submissions from Parties and observers.

As the Executive Secretary said in a major speech to [Chatham House](#): “the transformative potential of bold climate action - in tandem with steps to advance gender equality - is one of the fastest ways to move away from business as usual.”

### **June UN Climate Meetings**

Each year the June UN Climate Meetings – formally called the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs), or informally sometimes known as the "intersessionals", take place in or around June, in Bonn, Germany, where UN Climate Change is headquartered.

These meetings are expected to drive forward progress on many of the key issues mentioned in this update, as well as many other vital issues.

As always, we'll work to ensure that the voices of all stakeholders are heard, and that they are engaged and included in decision-making by governments.

The schedule, webcast links, information on participants and more, is available on our [June Meetings webpage](#).

In concert with the High-Level Champions, we also have a [series of events](#) to explore how businesses, cities, regions, Indigenous Peoples and civil society are working alongside governments to deliver ambitious climate action ahead of COP29.



## **Last, but not least: funding UN Climate Change to deliver the growing mandates directed by Parties**

At the upcoming June Meetings in Bonn, Parties have requested around 20% more mandated events than last year – just one example of the ongoing growth in new mandates that Parties have directed the secretariat to deliver each year.

We welcome the vote of confidence in the UN-convened multi-lateral process and the secretariat's capacity to provide high-value, high-quality services in support. However, financial contributions have not increased to match these growing mandates, and many existing funding pledges have not been fulfilled on time. But this approach has its logical and human limits, and growing costs.

Ensuring all Parties have a meaningful seat at the table is absolutely core business for UN Climate Change, in our role as neutral-broker and custodian of the process. After a concerted push in recent months, we have been able to secure new funding pledges, as part of the Trust Fund for Participation, to ensure all Parties - including the most vulnerable - are represented at the upcoming June UN Climate Meetings in Bonn. But this by no means solves the problem.

Much more pledged funding needs to be delivered to ensure all Parties – especially the most vulnerable, are adequately represented right throughout the process this year, including at the COP29 negotiations in Baku, in November. More broadly, stop-gap funding fixes must be replaced by more sustainable, consistent and ongoing funding solutions to ensure all the many existing and new mandates that Parties have directed the secretariat to deliver have the resources needed to deliver them.

### **Just a taste. Keeping up to date**

The short updates above are just a small sample of all the work taking place right across the UN Climate Change secretariat. We aim to highlight the vital work in many other areas in future Quarterly Updates, and as always, we value any feedback.

You can also keep up to date on our work in real-time by following us on social media and on our website.

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