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## What robust NDCs 3.0 look like, how the next generation of Framework Climate Laws can support them, and the role of parliamentarians and policymakers in translating them into domestic law

### A joint statement by WWF, ClientEarth, and GLOBE

Article 4, Paragraph 2 of the Paris Agreement requires each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive domestic climate action plans to the UNFCCC known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Parties to the Paris Agreement are legally obligated to have an NDC, and to pursue measures to achieve it. The Paris Agreement provides that successive NDCs represent a progression compared to the previous NDC and reflect its highest possible ambition (Art 3). However the achievement of the NDC is not legally binding or enforceable.

WWF ClientEarth and GLOBE publish this joint statement as Parties are preparing new NDCs to be submitted in 2025 with climate ambition up to 2035 (known as 'NDCs 3.0'). We call for robust NDCs 3.0, as well as renewed discussions on the role of the next generation of Framework Climate Laws (i.e. domestic legislation setting out the strategic direction of travel for national climate change policy) in ensuring strengthened and accelerated national implementation.

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### Manuel Pulgar-Vidal, WWF Global Climate and Energy Lead, on robust NDCs 3.0

*"To meet the urgency and scale of the climate crisis, our commitments must be backed by robust, transparent, enforceable actions, especially on phasing out all fossil fuels. At COP29 and in 2025, we need much more than promises; we need credible, accountable plans embedded in national legislation that is fit for purpose to ensure that every NDC is a true commitment to action, not a symbolic gesture. Countries must commit to regular scrutiny and alignment with science, so that these pledges translate into real, measurable progress. Without this, we risk a future where climate governance loses credibility and the window to limit warming to 1.5°C slips away, leading us to catastrophe."*

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### Laura Clarke OBE, ClientEarth CEO, on the next generation of Framework Climate Laws

*"COP29 presents a crucial opportunity for positive, co-ordinated climate action on a global scale. Previous COPs have produced landmark climate commitments and promises, not least the milestone of the Paris Agreement in 2015. This huge achievement, based on collective endeavour, helped translate political rhetoric and ambition into tangible goals and activities."*

*On the back of the Global Stocktake, we urge all Parties at COP to make a concerted effort to submit robust nationally determined contributions ahead of the February 2025 deadline. We also call on them to commit to the right domestic legal frameworks to operationalize their nationally determined contributions through new or strengthened Framework Climate Laws."*

## Malini Mehra, GLOBE Chief Executive, on the role of parliamentarians and policymakers

*"COP29 takes place against the backdrop of another year of unprecedented heat and climate disasters across every region. The global emissions gap is not closing and nature is collapsing. The threats to humanity and our world could not be more stark. The task before world leaders at COP29 is clear: get serious and raise your game. This means strengthening the NDCs. The world's current national climate plans are not ambitious enough and the next round of NDCs need to be bolder, economy-wide and far more effective. Crucially, they need to engage national parliaments to secure commitments in national laws, ensure democratic accountability, build domestic consensus, and ensure oversight over implementation. Failure is not an option."*

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## Robust NDCs 3.0

NDC pledges thus far are collectively insufficient to limit global warming to 1.5°C, with limited or no overshoot. NDCs 3.0 provide a key opportunity for Parties to reflect an urgent scale up of ambition to get us on track to limit temperature rise to 1.5°C in this critical decade. In the spirit of *nationally determined* ambition with the scope of what is needed to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement Goals, **the NDCsWeWant checklist provides a benchmark for robust NDCs 3.0**, highlighting key areas for countries to demonstrate progress:

**Strengthened Ambition:** G20 countries must lead the way in strengthening climate targets, according to their responsibility and capacity. Alongside establishing a 2035 target, all countries must review and enhance their 2030 targets in order to keep cost-effective 1.5°C pathways in reach. This will include enhanced finance commitments, and clearly stated conditionality. Other characteristics of robust NDCs 3.0 include economy-wide target setting, carbon budgeting until at least 2035 aligned to 1.5°C, and NDC targets aligned to a 2050 or earlier Net-Zero Long-term Strategy. Countries should also refer to the Global Goal on adaptation formulating sector specific objectives, alongside strategies to avert loss and damage.

**Strengthened actions to foster systemic change:** Shifting national and global economies requires countries to consider strategies to stimulate the necessary transitions - including shifting away from fossil fuels, ecosystem conservation and halting and reversing deforestation - such as quantitative sectoral targets, just transition planning and cross-sectoral strategies. Commitments for upscaling the existing cost-effective mitigation technology (e.g. costing under US\$100 per ton of CO<sub>2</sub>e) is one means by which countries can show strengthened efforts to close the pre-2030 ambition gap.

**Inclusive and participatory planning processes:** Transparent public processes involving national parliaments, civil society, business, financial sector, subnational governments, and citizens will strengthen the quality of policy measures and their implementation. Robust NDCs 3.0 will progress previous efforts towards whole-of- government and whole-of-society climate governance structures - such as Framework Climate Laws - aiming to identify clear roles and responsibilities in NDC implementation.

**Strengthened contribution to Sustainable Development:** Synergies with Sustainable Development Goals are a prerequisite for pursuing new development pathways. Likewise, robust NDCs 3.0 should consider how to protect the role of carbon rich ecosystems and upscale other nature-based solutions, to the benefit of the communities they support, and beyond.

**Measuring progress and accountability:** A robust climate plan must comprise appropriate systems to track implementation, and ensure accountability, such as oversight by national parliaments. NDCs 3.0 should also reflect progress in the convention, acknowledging how the respective country has responded to the outcome of the Global Stocktake.

# How next generation Framework Climate Laws can support robust NDCs 3.0

Countries should implement the next generation of Framework Climate Laws at the domestic level in 2025. WWF, ClientEarth and GLOBE call for these to be consistent with more ambitious robust NDCs 3.0, as part of a comprehensive and streamlined system of national Framework Climate Laws, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

Building on ClientEarth's existing work, we call on each country to develop an FCL to align with the following principles:

**Recognise and support those most vulnerable to climate change:** Climate change is not a hazard on the horizon; it is happening now, and it is impacting more people in more places around the world than ever before. Human rights must be placed at the core to ensure a focus on delivering climate justice. States must seek to broaden the agency of citizens and civil society to participate in legal proceedings, with a particular focus on youth and indigenous peoples and local communities;

**Alignment with the Paris Agreement:** Each State's national framework climate law should operationalise the plans and commitments embodied in their NDCs. This must guide institutional practices to align with implementing national climate targets and reflect best available science. It should facilitate accountability across current and future governments by providing a binding law that include interim and long-term targets requiring absolute reductions of all national greenhouse gas emissions;

**Address the key drivers of climate change:** FCLs should empower actors across all sectors, particularly energy, food and agriculture, ecosystem conservation and halting and reversing deforestation to support robust NDC implementation. Businesses must look to FCLs for certainty about future regulatory landscapes and ensure urgent investment into the transition to zero carbon industries. This includes, for example, strengthened safeguards against misrepresenting the scientific consensus, harmful subsidies and incentives, lobbying, compromising carbon rich ecosystems, and greenwashing regulation;

**Reflect and uphold the outcomes of international legal proceedings related to climate change,** including the International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Human Rights and Climate Change, and the Advisory Opinion from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, for example. To be effective, FCLs must be specifically tailored and anchored within the national legal and political context, including any relevant regional or international law or policy provisions where applicable;

**Introduce a mechanism for progressive strengthening of FCLs and national climate laws over time, in line with the timeline of the NDC ambition cycle.** The first Global Stocktake offers a critical chance to course-correct, and reestablish trust, by accelerating climate action and ambition through new generation climate laws. Such laws must align national legislative review periods with the Paris Agreement ambition cycle - ensuring opportunity over time to strengthen existing laws and policies and introducing new ones reflecting new policy relevant findings.

## The critical role of parliamentarians and policymakers in translating NDCs 3.0 into the next generation of Framework Climate Laws

WWF, ClientEarth and GLOBE recognise the critical role played by parliamentarians on the climate and sustainability agenda. Parliaments are central to the process of incorporation of international treaties into domestic legislation, and **members of parliament have a fundamental role to play in 2025 in the creation of national legislation**, including the next generation FCLs. Parliamentarians can further the climate agenda by continuing to champion, and lead on, refining the international architecture of climate laws, aligned with the latest climate science, taking into account national circumstances.

There has been an enormous development of legislation concerning climate over the lifetime of the UNFCCC. At COP3 in Kyoto in 1987, there were 54 climate laws in the world. There are now over 3000 globally. GLOBE's 2015 study, Climate Laws of the World, showed that already before Paris, climate laws had doubled every five years since Kyoto, and three-quarters of the world's annual emissions of greenhouse gases were covered by national targets.

Around COP26, many Parties responded to the call for increased ambition by setting out new intentions for net-zero targets. Many have been supported by new or strengthened FCLs. More than 60 countries now have FCLs and more than 90% of the global economy is now covered by net-zero policies.

As Parties move to establish the next round of commitments parliaments are uniquely placed to be engaged in this process at the domestic level. They can ratchet up ambition and action on the ground through enabling legal frameworks, set budgets fit for purpose, and secure political and public consensus for action, for example.

Whilst lawmaking is the first step, parliamentarians must also engage in post-legislative scrutiny and review to ensure existing laws are fit for purpose. These can enable more ambitious policy targets and fill legislative gaps. Parliamentarians should be the custodians of progression at the national legislative level, ensuring opportunity over time to strengthen existing laws and policies and introducing new ones reflecting new policy relevant findings.

WWF, ClientEarth and GLOBE call on Parliaments and parliamentarians to play a stronger role in setting bolder science-led national targets and laws, as well as the Monitoring, Reporting and Verification of these targets in democratic chambers of parliaments. Parliaments must also exercise their budgetary powers to secure and allocate adequate financial resources for urgent climate action, and scrutinise their deployment and impact, as part of their constitutional accountability mandates.

## Concluding remarks

Parties are in the process of developing NDCs 3.0 which are critical to keeping open pathways to achieving the Paris Agreement goal in a cost-effective manner. These plans will be delivered throughout 2025, with high expectations for all to demonstrate ambition and leadership across all elements of robust NDCs 3.0, particularly the G20 countries.

The process of developing domestic FCLs can help build national consensus and galvanise a whole-of-society approach to the climate debate. The next generation of FCLs can strengthen the Paris Agreement by ensuring that NDCs 3.0 commitments are backed by the force of law, are subject to parliamentary oversight and implemented at the national level. This is a step up from merely communicating targets in non-binding NDC 3.0s, to being built into a statutory legal framework, with a coherent and financed delivery plan, subject to the scrutiny and oversight of an empowered parliament.

WWF, ClientEarth and GLOBE call on all countries to consider the role of next generation Framework Climate Laws. These should:

- Recognise and support those most vulnerable to climate change;
- Align domestic legislation with Parties' commitments to the Paris Agreement;
- Address the drivers of climate change according to national circumstances;
- Reflect, uphold the outcomes of international legal proceedings related to climate law;
- Introduce mechanisms for the progressive strengthening of Framework Climate Laws over time, in line with the NDC ambition cycle.

Parliamentarians can and should support this process through more effective engagement in building national political and public consensus for bolder climate action in the next round of NDCs 3.0. All Parliamentarians can and must take a leadership role in driving the next generation of FCLs at the domestic level, in line with the principles set out above.

