

Memorandum

How non-party stakeholders can use COP23 to highlight opportunities to step up ambition in 2018

October 2017

Summary: *2018 will be an critical year to step up climate ambition. The groundswell of climate action by non-party stakeholders creates opportunities for national governments to harvest the experience, resources, and achievements of non-party stakeholders to enhance their own ambition. At COP23, non-party stakeholders can signal their interest to identify such opportunities for parties over the coming year.*

Key points

1. 2018 is a critical year to step up climate action. COP23 is an important opportunity for non-party stakeholders to prepare for success and signal their intent for 2018 to parties.
2. Climate action at COP23 will be structured around demonstrating progress, highlighting ambitious action and success stories, and identifying new opportunities for action.
3. “New opportunities” should come in two forms: 1) new, improved, and scaled up commitments by non-party stakeholders; and 2) opportunities for national governments to work with non-party stakeholders to enhance NDCs.

COP23 as a bridge to raising ambition in 2018

Non-party stakeholders at COP23 should focus on cultivating the ground for 2018, which presents numerous opportunities to push for enhanced national and international climate action. In September 2018, the Global Climate Action Summit will mobilize sub-national and private sector actors to advance real economy progress on decarbonization. A successful summit will signal the opportunities for increased ambition in the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue and COP24 that December, where countries are expected to signal a willingness to enhance ambition in their climate action plans as specified by the ratcheting mechanism of the Paris Agreement. Successful and increasing action by cities, states/regions, businesses, and other non-party actors is a critical signal that the world can reach the Agreement’s objective of staying well below 2° C and pursuing 1.5° C, the urgency of which will be highlighted by the IPCC Special Report on 1.5° C due in 2018.

Role of non-party stakeholders in bridging COP23 and 2018

At COP23, non-party stakeholders should build anticipation and lay the groundwork for maximizing policy impact in 2018. The choreography of events and communications around non-party climate action at COP23 is structured around three areas: *demonstrating progress, highlighting ambitious action and success stories, and identifying new opportunities for action*. Under the theme of “new opportunities,” non-party stakeholders can signal to countries that they are not only studying how to increase their own ambition, but also preparing “policy asks” and opportunities for collaboration with national governments in 2018. These will highlight ways in which national governments can enhance climate action by harvesting the knowledge, innovations, and achievements of non-party actors to raise ambition in national and international policy. One of the most effective ways to

achieve this is for non-party actors to examine how their own efforts can be enhanced with changes in national and international policy, and devise ways to work with national governments to act on these “new opportunities” to raise ambition.

How COP23 can signal “new opportunities” to step up ambition in 2018

At COP23, there are several steps non-party stakeholders can take to highlight their intention to find “new opportunities” to step up ambition in 2018, including:

1. *Signal to parties an intention to examine how national and international policies can boost the climate action efforts of non-party actors.* Non-party actors can announce intentions to produce policy recommendations in 2018 to feed into the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue. While the exact process for such inputs is still being discussed by parties, it is important for non-party stakeholders to signal that they have contributions to make. For example, sub-national governments will call for enhanced ‘vertical integration’ of NDCs with subnational climate action, identifying specific ways that national governments can enhance the ability of local and regional governments to deliver climate action. Business and investor groups will identify the policy frameworks countries can adopt, such as carbon pricing or climate-related risk disclosure, that can help the private sector adopt more ambitious actions.
2. *Provide inputs under the theme of “new opportunities” in Global Climate Action events to complement those in the Yearbook of Climate Action.* The structure of Global Climate Action at COP23, in various events and in the Yearbook of Climate Action (which will be published at the COP), offers a stage under the heading of “new opportunities” to amplify the signal that non-party stakeholders will be identifying opportunities for countries in 2018. Non-party stakeholders should review where “new opportunities” can and will be featured in events and signal their intentions for making “policy asks” in those events. The Yearbook of Climate Action will also feature a “new opportunities” section, and non-party actors affiliated with the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action have made inputs into that section of the Yearbook.
3. *Engage governments on ways to maximize the impact of “policy asks” in 2018.* In 2018, May UNFCCC Subsidiary Body meetings, the Global Climate Action Summit in September, and other events can serve as a springboard for enhanced “policy asks” to enter the Facilitative Dialogue and COP24. COP23 is a place to begin creating the channels for non-party actors into these processes. Policymakers should be prepared to receive these “policy asks” and to act on them in a way that can maximize momentum on climate action coming out of 2018—setting up the ability to ratchet ambition. GGCA intends to organize an event on this topic at COP23, bringing together senior-level representatives of climate action coalitions and policymakers.

Who we are: Galvanizing the Groundswell of Climate Actions

Galvanizing the Groundswell of Climate Actions is a series of dialogues that brings together organizations supporting climate action at all levels. Its objectives include:

- Bringing the groundswell of climate actions from cities, regions, companies, and other groups to a higher level of scale and ambition;

- Increasing efficient coordination among cooperative initiatives and sub- and non-state networks;

- Improving analysis and understanding of “bottom up” climate actions;

- Building a positive narrative of pragmatic, concrete action on climate change; and

- Identifying opportunities for the groundswell of climate actions and the multilateral process to support and catalyze each other.

Galvanizing the Groundswell of Climate Actions brings together city and regional networks, company networks, cooperative initiatives, governments, international organizations, and researchers to discuss and advance these objectives. By convening the community of actors that make up and support the groundswell of climate actions, we seek to realize the full potential of this extraordinary innovation in global governance.

www.climategroundswell.org