

BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL'S ASKS FOR UNFCCC COP22

Background: From Paris to Marrakesh

The adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015 was a major success in multilateralism. One hundred and ninety-five governments committed: to hold average global temperature “well below 2°C” and pursue efforts to hold it within 1.5°C above preindustrial levels; to increase the ability to adapt to climate change and deliver climate-resilient, low-carbon development; and to make finance flows sufficient to achieve these objectives.

For the first time in history we have a global climate change agreement that recognises the critical role of forests, oceans and other ecosystems in combatting climate change and helping communities to adapt. The Agreement also stresses the need to ensure the integrity of ecosystems and the protection of biodiversity when taking action to address climate change. This is critical for safeguarding ecosystems and ensuring that climate change actions are truly sustainable.

Since Paris, governments have demonstrated ongoing commitment. One hundred and ninety-one Parties have signed the Paris Agreement and 85 Parties accounting for more than 60% of global emissions have now deposited their instruments of ratification, allowing the Paris Agreement to enter into force on 4 November 2016, three years earlier than expected. COP22 in Marrakech must build on this momentum. While the Paris Agreement laid out an ambitious overarching framework, much work is required to develop the rules, procedures and guidelines that enable the agreement to be effectively operationalised. And the devil is in the detail!

COP22 will also need to catalyse further action. We are quickly running out of time: temperature records are being smashed on a monthly basis and the impacts of climate change are being felt on every continent (see BirdLife’s report [The Messengers](#) on impacts of climate change on nature and people). If we continue on our current trajectory, global temperature could rise by as much as 4°C by the end of the century. While initial pledges by governments under the Paris Agreement improve this outlook, they remain insufficient: estimates indicate that the aggregate of proposed mitigation efforts would lead to a warming of 2.7°C above preindustrial levels by the end of this century.

This document outlines BirdLife International’s policy position for COP22. BirdLife is an active member of the Climate Action Network (CAN) and also contributed to and endorses CAN’s position for COP22: [Marrakech: Galvanizing Ambition](#).

KEY POINTS OF BIRDLIFE’S POSITION FOR COP22

- There is an urgent need to **ramp up climate action pre-2020**, with further **investment in nature-based solutions** for mitigation and adaptation
- **Nationally Determined Contributions** (pledges) should be comprehensive, have a common 5yr timeframe, and include clear targets and information on assumptions and methodology
- The **Sustainable Development Mechanism** must raise overall ambition and incorporate social and environmental safeguards, robust monitoring and processes for participation
- **Land-use accounting** must be comprehensive, robust, comparable and transparent
- A **robust transparency framework**, including MRV for all climate action, should be developed by no later than 2018, requiring good progress in Marrakech
- Governments should commit to **scale-up finance for adaptation** and establish a **mandate for the Adaptation Fund** to serve the Paris Agreement

BirdLife's Asks

Increase climate action pre-2020

According to the fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC, at current emission levels the carbon budget for a strong likelihood (66%) of keeping warming to 1.5°C could be exhausted by 2020. The longer we wait, the less likely we are to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement and the more we rely on unproven negative emission technologies such as bioenergy and carbon capture and storage (BECCS), which may not only be ineffective but could also devastate our natural environment.

BirdLife calls on countries to ramp up their mitigation action, and ensure it is delivered in harmony with nature. Through the Technical Expert Meetings and with the support of High-level Champions, countries should have a frank exchange to identify best practices and innovative ideas that can be scaled-up and replicated, and to identify and address barriers to implementation.

Conserving and restoring forests and other ecosystems is a simple, cost-effective and proven approach to delivering mitigation in the short and long-term, and if carefully designed can also provide adaptation benefits to people and nature. **BirdLife calls for further investment in REDD+ and other nature-based solutions to climate change.**

COP22 also needs to **catalyse further action on adaptation pre-2020, and mobilise funding for priority adaptation actions.** Climate change is already happening and current levels of adaptation and adaptation support are insufficient to protect people and nature from its impacts.

Promote clear, comparable and transparent NDCs

Under the new Paris Agreement countries submit pledges or nationally determined contributions (NDCs) outlining what climate action they intend to take. BirdLife believes that for this approach to be effective, the **NDCs must be clear, comparable and transparent.** The Intended NDCs vary considerably in their content and quality and this must be addressed to facilitate understanding of countries' pledges and build trust in the Paris Agreement. At COP22 governments will be discussing the features of NDCs and information needs to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding.

BirdLife believes that **NDCs should have a common timeframe of five years.** This would improve comparability and enable Parties to scale up their ambition in light of the latest science and progress rather than lock in insufficient ambition and inadequate responses. It would also facilitate the five-year cycle of NDC communication and global stocktake.

NDCs should be comprehensive and include clear targets – including quantified mitigation targets – timeframes, and information on assumptions and methodologies. In addition to unconditional mitigation targets, NDCs could include conditional targets to help increase overall ambition and promote collaboration. However, for these to be effective, it will be important for governments to outline what financial and technological conditions are required in order to deliver on these conditional targets. NDCs should also outline whether and how international markets will be used to achieve mitigation targets and how double-counting has been avoided.

BirdLife encourages governments to include **information on participation** of civil society, indigenous peoples and affected communities as well as **information on efforts taken to ensure climate action does not compromise ecological integrity** and that it supports biodiversity protection.

Establish a common and robust approach to land-use accounting

Agriculture, forestry and other land use (AFOLU) contributes about one quarter of global anthropogenic emissions: **mitigation actions taken in AFOLU play a fundamental role in keeping temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius**. The “land sector” is unique in that there are opportunities to not only reduce emissions (e.g. by reducing deforestation) but also to remove carbon from the atmosphere (e.g. through reforestation and restoration). Furthermore, AFOLU plays an important role in adaptation, food security and biodiversity conservation, and mitigation efforts should not compromise this.

Paragraph 31 of the Paris Agreement initiated a process to elaborate guidance on accounting for Parties’ mitigation pledges. The Decision refers to both emissions and removals, implicitly including Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use (AFOLU) where it is included in NDCs. **BirdLife believes that to be effective, land-use accounting under the Paris Agreement must address the following issues:**

- **Comparability and transparency:** It is vital that all countries account for emissions and removals from AFOLU in a comparable and transparent way. Special allowance should be made for countries with the least capacity (e.g. Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States)
- **Land-based systems of reporting and accounting:** The Convention employs a land-based system of reporting and this should be used in the new agreement and should also be applied to accounting. Parties should use the methodologies provided in the 2006 IPCC Guidelines, which employ a land-based approach, or methodologies consistent with them.
- **Comprehensive reporting and accounting:** Parties should comprehensively report on and account for their emissions and removals from land use, accounting for ‘what the atmosphere sees’ in terms of emissions and removals, when they occur.
- **Historical baseline consistent with other sectors:** The base year or period used for reporting and accounting for AFOLU should be consistent with a Party’s overall NDC to facilitate comparability (i.e. baseline periods should be the same for the AFOLU sector for other sectors and be historical and not projected ones) and be measured using agreed methodologies to estimate the emissions, removals and stocks of the sector.

Develop a Sustainable Development Mechanism that protects ecosystems and the communities that depend on them

Article 6 of the Paris Agreement establishes “a mechanism to contribute to the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and support sustainable development”. The rules, modalities and procedures for this Sustainable Development Mechanism (SDM) will be developed over the next rounds of negotiation.

To be effective, the **SDM must raise overall mitigation ambition** (i.e. it must lead to emission reductions beyond current national pledges). Carefully developed rules, modalities and procedures are needed to **ensure that the SDM is consistent with core principles of the Paris Agreement**. Specifically, the SDM must ensure ecological integrity and biodiversity protection, protect human rights, promote equity, equality and non-discrimination and maximize public participation, transparency, and accountability.

BirdLife believes the SDM requires **strong social and environmental safeguard policies** accompanied by a system for monitoring and reporting. Furthermore, the SDM should provide opportunity for public participation, protect the right to consultation and to free, prior and informed consent, and include a grievance mechanism.

Design a robust transparency framework

BirdLife believes that **transparency is critical for the success of the Paris Agreement**: transparency builds trust between Parties, helps hold them to account, and enables assessment of progress towards targets for mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building). Article 13 of the Paris Agreement establishes an Enhanced Transparency Framework for Action and Support, and governments will discuss the features and design of this framework at COP22.

BirdLife calls governments to make considerable progress at COP22 to **ensure completion of a robust transparency framework, including monitoring, reporting and verification for all climate action, by no later than 2018**. Countries have varying levels of capacity, and the framework will therefore need to include a degree of flexibility. Nonetheless, the objective should be to transition all countries towards a common and robust framework, and to provide countries with any support needed to achieve this. Priority areas include monitoring, reporting and evaluation of mitigation and adaptation efforts, tracking of financial flows and accounting for emission from the land sector.

BirdLife also believes that **the new transparency framework should facilitate reporting on how countries have addressed the principles of the Paris Agreement**, such as ensuring the integrity of all ecosystems and the protection of biodiversity, and respecting, promoting and considering human rights and the rights of indigenous peoples when taking action to address climate change.

Scale-up finance and ensure effective and consistent accounting and reporting

Finance will continue to be a central piece of the negotiations at COP22. At Paris, countries committed to deliver funds consistent with a low-emission and climate-resilient development pathway. COP22 must make progress to help governments deliver on this goal. **BirdLife calls donor governments to announce ambitious financial commitments** to close the funding gap. Specifically, donor governments should announce financial contributions to the Adaptation Fund – as well as the Least Developed Countries Fund – to meet its target of USD80 million. This is imperative to help developing countries meet the growing challenges posed by climate change.

BirdLife also believes it is **important that the COP22 adopts a decision that clarifies the role of the Adaptation Fund under the Paris Agreement**. The Adaptation Fund is set to terminate with the end of the Kyoto Protocol in 2020, but it has an important role to play in supporting relatively small-scale adaptation projects. A mandate for it to serve the Paris Agreement should be established.

Donor countries recently laid out a road map for achieving a target of USD100 billion a year. While it is encouraging to see that the USD100 billion target is within reach, it is important to note that this is at the lower end of estimated funding needs. The [United Nations](#), for instance, estimates that developing countries could be facing adaptation costs of as much as USD300 billion per year by 2030. Furthermore, according to the roadmap, adaptation finance is only projected to account for about 20% of the USD100 billion by 2020. **BirdLife stresses the importance of scaling up adaptation finance and promoting greater parity between mitigation and adaptation support**.

The Paris Agreement sets up a process to establish modalities for accounting and reporting on climate finance. **BirdLife encourages governments to adopt a clear work program at COP22 to ensure that the modalities of financial accounting have been developed by no later than 2018**. The in-session workshops on the modalities for accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized through public interventions and on adaptation finance provide important opportunities for engaging in constructive discussions on accounting methodology, and for enhancing the effectiveness and consistency of financial reporting to better track financial commitments and progress.