

# POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 2023 MID-YEAR UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (SB 58)

Fifty-eighth session of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI 58)

Fifty-eighth session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 58)

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At the last UN climate conference in 2022 (COP 27), countries signaled that they recognize the urgency of action needed to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement and are committed to closing the implementation gap on several fronts – including the long-awaited agreement to establish a fund to respond to losses and damages being caused by an already-changing climate. Countries also launched the new four-year Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security. The COP decisions included calls for ensuring the integrity of forest and ocean ecosystems, conserving biodiversity, protecting water-related ecosystems, encouraging countries to use nature-based solutions and ecosystem-based approaches to address climate challenges, and funding for maintaining forests and their carbon stores. **These decisions recognize that delivering accelerated action to limit global warming to 1.5-degrees Celsius requires urgent, transformational efforts by governments and non-state actors, including efforts to harness the full potential of nature to mitigate and adapt to climate change.**

At the 2023 mid-year conference and at COP 28, countries must make progress on several key issues to close notable gaps in collectively achieving this needed scale and ambition – from the Global Stocktake to Article 6 to agriculture. Countries should ensure that their discussions in Bonn are underpinned by the need to shift business-as-usual practices and redirect incentives toward nature-positive economies that deliver meaningful outcomes for nature, biodiversity, people, and the climate.

## Key Recommendations

Conservation International proposes the following policy recommendations for the 2023 mid-year conference:

### **Ensure the Global Stocktake (GST) fully reflects the critical role of nature in realizing the goals of the Paris Agreement:**

- Participants in the GST Technical Dialogue should focus on key gaps in climate action and solutions to close them and drive implementation of nature-based solutions for climate change mitigation and adaptation, including access to finance, capacity-building, and technology transfer to ensure robust consideration of these solutions in the GST.
- Parties should begin the substantive discussions needed to fully mobilize nature within the GST outcomes, ensure an effective Consideration of Outputs phase, and develop a comprehensive suite of outcomes to capture the breadth and depth of technical and political guidance developed during the GST.

## Key Recommendations, *continued*

### **Increase efficiency of delivering climate goals and finance through cooperative mechanisms:**

- Negotiations should focus on major outstanding issues for the operationalization of Article 6 and ensure the work programme on emissions avoidance under Article 6.2 and 6.4 maintains a narrow scope in line with its mandate and does not undermine the role of nature-based solutions.
- To incentivize ambitious mitigation action, all approaches under Article 6 should accelerate nature-based solutions with rigorous environmental and social integrity and broad inclusion of countries and stakeholders.
- Parties should engage Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in discussions on the linkages between Article 6 operationalization and the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform.

### **Effectively structure the new Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security (SJWA) to accelerate, nature-positive climate action in the agriculture sector:**

- Ensure the SJWA workshop topics enable the pivot to accelerating implementation by focusing on how countries, via a nationally determined approach and with the support of the UNFCCC, will *collectively* work over the long-term to unlock ambitious climate action in agriculture, ensure food security, and achieve the agreed objectives from COP 27.
- Develop the modalities of the SJWA workshops to give significant time for informal interventions and back-and-forth dialogue from Parties and non-Party stakeholders and ensure that each workshop includes a variety of voices.

### **Strengthen the functions of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) to ensure inclusive and effective participation in climate policy processes and benefit-sharing:**

- Increase meaningful engagement of government stakeholders in the LCIPP activities, especially in those aimed at improving the participation of IPLCs in national climate policy planning processes, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and related opportunities.
- Ensure all the functions of LCIPP are met by implementing the second three-year work plan and improve their linkages to the climate negotiations by facilitating IPLC engagement in all relevant agenda items under the UNFCCC.
- Disseminate the results and lessons learned from LCIPP regional exchanges and use them to inform key UNFCCC agenda items and highlight linkages with other UN conventions, such as the Global Biodiversity Framework.

### **Continue building and enhancing urgent action on the ocean–climate nexus:**

- Call for increased technical support, knowledge exchange, and financing to include coastal and marine nature-based solutions in updated Nationally Determined Contributions, such as via the Ocean and Climate Change Dialogues and the Nairobi Work Programme's Thematic Expert Group on Oceans, among other processes.
- Increase and mobilize finance flows for coastal and marine nature-based solutions within negotiations and processes related to climate finance.
- Support synergies for ocean–climate action across international policy processes, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the 2030 Agenda and related Sustainable Development Goals.

# The Global Stocktake

SBSTA, Agenda Item 8

SBI, Agenda Item 7

Technical Dialogue 1.3

**Relevant Documents:** [Summary report following the second meeting of the technical dialogue](#); [SBSTA/ SBI 57 Conclusions on the GST](#)

The ongoing Global Stocktake (GST) process is assessing collective progress toward the Paris Agreement's goals to develop recommendations on enhanced national climate commitments and international cooperation. As a key part of the Paris Agreement's ambition cycle, the GST can be a powerful propeller toward the transformative action needed by 2030 if executed well. **To produce a robust and effective Global Stocktake, it is essential to fully consider the critical role of nature, including coastal and marine ecosystems, in ambitious climate action.** Analysis from Conservation International shows the land sector emissions can reach net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, transitioning to a 5 Gt sink by 2040 and a 10 Gt sink by 2050 – a crucial contribution to limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 °C.<sup>1</sup>

At the mid-year conference, the GST will continue with its third and final Technical Dialogue, focused on synthesizing important takeaways for the political outcomes. Parties will also meet to transition from the current stage of the GST, the Technical Dialogues, to the final stage of the GST, the Consideration of Outputs, and discuss how to ensure a successful conclusion to the GST. **To advance the GST at SB 58, Conservation International recommends:**

- **During the Technical Dialogues, participants should focus on collating specific solutions to accelerate climate action and means of implementation needed to close key gaps, especially those needed to accelerate implementation of nature-based solutions.** Participants should come prepared with inputs, guided by the need for transformational, urgent action from all stakeholders, which:
  - Highlight experiences on **processes, frameworks, and support needed to create high-integrity, science-based commitments and targets for nature-based solutions in Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Adaptation Plans, and Long-Term Strategies, among others**, and how these processes can better promote the inclusive involvement and active participation of non-state actors, including Indigenous peoples and local communities.
  - **Identify policies, institutional frameworks, and cooperative models** with the international community that have **supported effective implementation of nature-based solutions**, including lessons-learned for scaling-up, and clearly articulate information gaps and needs related to finance, capacity-building, and technology transfer.
  - **Present case studies and lessons learned on implementation of commitments for nature-based solutions**, at the national, regional, and/or local level, especially reflecting on the role of various stakeholders in implementation.
  - Reflect on the **importance of taking an integrated and cross-sectoral approach to implementing nature-based solutions to avoid negative trade-offs**, and clearly articulate any concerns about the coordination of steps needed to shift away from business-as-usual, including the potential for unintended consequences on trade, economic development, or human well-being and rights.

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<sup>1</sup> Conservation International, 2022. <http://www.conservation.org/roadmap>

- **During negotiating sessions, Parties should advance preparations for an effective Consideration of Outputs phase, especially by agreeing upon the structural elements needed to develop a comprehensive suite of GST outcomes that fully integrate the critical role of nature.** These elements should ensure the outcomes will capture both the rich technical detail collected during the GST and galvanize high-level political support for accelerated climate action.
  - **Parties should advance a shared understanding of the necessary elements for a decision under the Paris Agreement (CMA) and call for submissions on the elements of the CMA decision before the October informal consultations to ensure that text-based negotiations can begin as soon as possible.** The CMA decision elements should ensure to allow for linkages between the GST outcomes to other ongoing discussions on nature-based solutions, such as under the Ocean-Climate Dialogue, and ensure to call attention of ecosystems that have been particularly overlooked to date under the UNFCCC.
  - In addition to a CMA decision, **inclusion of a technical annex in the outcome may be critical to communicating detailed, best practice guidance** and next steps needed for ambitious climate action in all natural ecosystems. This annex could also include details of effective options for policy frameworks and instruments countries need to accelerate implementation of nature in NDCs. **A high-level political declaration could also be a powerful tool to galvanize support for enhanced international cooperation** and call for action needed by non-Party stakeholders to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

## Cooperative Mechanisms under the Paris Agreement

SBSTA, Agenda Items 13, 14, 15

**Relevant Documents:** CMA 4 Conclusions on [Article 6.2](#); [Article 6.4](#); [Article 6.8](#)

Article 6 of the Paris Agreement establishes a broad framework for voluntary cooperation among Parties in delivering climate action. It sets out three approaches through which Parties may interact: 1) bilateral or regional cooperative approaches via internationally transferred mitigation outcomes (ITMOs); 2) a centrally governed UNFCCC mechanism to contribute to mitigation and support sustainable development; and 3) non-market approaches.<sup>2</sup> **Encouraging the transfer of high-quality emission reductions generated in all sectors, including the land sector, can drive needed flows of finance to climate actions addressing both sources and sinks, and generate opportunities for overall increased ambition.**

At COP 26 in Glasgow, Parties finalized the guidance for how cooperative approaches will be implemented, governed and counted, and reached an Article 6 outcome that was favorable for nature. With the main rules decided, and some work undertaken at SB 56 and COP 27, further work at a technical level is still required to define the details for implementation of each cooperative approach under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. **Nature-based solutions must be prioritized under market and non-market approaches to secure financial flows for nature;** for this purpose, Conservation International recommends that:

- **Parties focus negotiations on priority outstanding items required to fully operationalize Article 6 and ensure the work programme on emission avoidance under Article 6.2 and 6.4 is limited to the scope within its mandate.** Two work programmes in relation to emission avoidance were established at COP 26 and further work is expected to be undertaken during the year 2023 in the lead up to COP 28. Though the term “emission avoidance” has not been officially defined by the UNFCCC, it is generally understood to refer to a scenario where there is no current emissions source, but a mitigation intervention is needed to avoid or prevent the release of stored carbon stock (e.g., the Yasuni-ITT Initiative). Even through the term “emission avoidance” has been used informally by some to refer to a

<sup>2</sup> Paris Agreement, Article 6, Paragraphs 2, 4, and 8, respectively.

large swathe of mitigation activities, in the Article 6 context, it has a very specific meaning as described above. **Therefore, discussions on the work programme on emission avoidance should be limited to this scope and by no means encompass activities that reduce emissions or enhance removals, or reopen areas already agreed at COP 26.**

- **Nature-based removals are prioritized in the near term under Article 6.4.** At COP 26, the Article 6.4 Supervisory Body (6.4SB) was requested to prepare recommendations on activities involving removals. Although several iterations of recommendations were discussed last year, there was limited progress around this topic at COP 27. The 6.4SB is undertaking further work on removals throughout the year 2023, with the goal of having recommendations approved at COP 28. Nature-based removals are especially important in the near term since they can provide co-benefits including reducing loss of biodiversity, increasing water security, providing benefits to those communities that depend on forests. These types of removals have also been widely tested and monitored; moreover, they count with systems to ensure that any risk of reversals can be addressed (e.g., using buffer pools).
- Market-based approaches under Article 6.2 and Article 6.4 as well as non-market approaches under Article 6.8 should accelerate nature-based solutions. **Under the work programme on the framework for non-market approaches under Article 6.8, Parties should continue to work to deliver clear pathways for non-market cooperation through nature-based mitigation and adaptation approaches.**
- Parties and non-state actors should **proactively engage Indigenous peoples and local community representatives in discussions on the linkages between Article 6 operationalization and the work of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples' Platform**, including the establishment of an independent grievance mechanism under Article 6.4, equitable inclusion of Indigenous peoples and local communities in benefit sharing mechanisms resulting from Article 6 implementation, advancing land tenure rights, and identifying relevant criteria for defining non-market approaches under Article 6.8.

## Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security

SBSTA, Agenda Item 10

SBI, Agenda Item 10

**Relevant Documents:** [3/CP.27 Sharm el-Sheikh joint work on implementation of climate action on agriculture and food security](#)

The COP 27 outcomes on agriculture underscored that countries recognize the importance of synergistic and rights-based approaches to climate-smart agriculture that yield benefits for people, nature, and the climate; however, they also recognize that more needs to be done to achieve this. To this end, Parties established the four-year Sharm el-Sheikh Joint Work on Implementation of Climate Action on Agriculture and Food Security (SJWA) to implement key outcomes from the now-concluded Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture and previous activities addressing issues related to agriculture. The SJWA aims to strengthen work on agriculture under the UNFCCC and enhance collaboration among bodies and actors within and outside of the UNFCCC to scale up action and support for the solutions identified during earlier workshops.

Recent analysis from Conservation International shows that countries must double the use of climate-smart agricultural management *every year* through 2026 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2030, while protecting and restoring natural ecosystems and the services they provide for agriculture.<sup>3</sup> This transformation in agriculture also carries multiple co-benefits: increased biodiversity, clean air and water, human health and wellbeing, rural jobs, environmental justice, and resilience to climate change.

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<sup>3</sup> Conservation International, 2022. [www.conservation.org/roadmap](http://www.conservation.org/roadmap)



The discussions at SB 58 are crucial to guarantee the new SJWA is structured effectively to be an important accelerator for this unprecedented scale of needed action. To achieve this, Conservation International recommends:

- **Parties ensure the SJWA workshop topics enable the pivot to accelerating implementation by focusing on how countries, via a nationally determined approach and with the support of the UNFCCC, will collectively work over the long-term to unlock ambitious climate action in agriculture, ensure food security, and achieve the agreed objectives from COP 27.** While there is an ongoing need to compile global or regional information on specific technical issues related to agriculture, Parties should request that this work be taken up by institutions outside of SJWA and made available to Parties on an ongoing basis, such as via the new online portal. Workshop topics should include:
  - Improving cross-coordination and public policy coherence at all scales and levels to ensure multiple benefits,
  - Accelerating incentives for climate action in agriculture and addressing challenges related to means of implementation at national, subnational and local levels, especially through NDCs, NAPs and other integrated planning efforts; and
  - Developing shared principles for climate efforts in agriculture that protect vulnerable populations — including Indigenous peoples and local communities — and protect food security and critical ecosystem services.
- **Parties should structure the modalities of the SJWA workshops to give significant time for informal interventions and back-and-forth dialogue from Parties and non-Party stakeholders and ensure that each workshop includes a variety of voices.**

Please see Conservation International's full recommendations on the SJWA [here](#).

## Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform

### 9th Meeting of the Facilitative Working Group

**Relevant Documents:** [Report on the Joint dialogue on advancing the leadership and highlighting the solutions of women from local communities and indigenous women in climate policy and action](#)

The Paris Agreement explicitly recognizes the rights of Indigenous peoples and local communities (IPLCs) in the context of climate action. Through the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) and its Facilitative Working Group, Parties and Indigenous peoples work to exchange knowledge and build capacities to strengthen inclusive participation of IPLCs and recognize their contributions to addressing climate change. The LCIPP is currently implementing its second, three-year work plan, which stipulates several activities through 2024, including an annual thematic meeting, training workshops, youth roundtables, and multistakeholder workshops, among others. In addition to these activities, **Party and non-Party stakeholders should aim for the following at the mid-year conference and COP 28:**

- Explore how to **continue strengthening the LCIPP's functions** and better ensure **the inclusive and effective participation of IPLCs in national and international climate policy processes**, via knowledge exchange, strengthening capacity for engagement, climate policy and actions.
- **Increase meaningful engagement of governments in the LCIPP activities**, especially in those aimed at improving the participation of IPLCs in national climate policy planning. Parties should collaborate with IPLCs to strengthen the connection between local-national and regional-global climate actions of IPLCs.

- Ensure all the elements of the LCIPP are fully functioning by implementing the second three-year work plan, and especially by improving the linkages between the LCIPP and the climate negotiations by **facilitating IPLC engagement in all relevant UNFCCC agenda items.**
- **Disseminate the results and lessons learned from LCIPP regional exchanges and use them to inform key UNFCCC agenda items** and highlight linkages with other UN conventions, such as the Global Biodiversity Framework

## Ocean–Climate Nexus

### 2nd Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue

**Relevant Documents:** [Informal Summary Report – 1<sup>st</sup> Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue](#)

Building upon the outcomes of the first annual Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue, at COP 27 Parties were encouraged to consider ocean-based action in their national climate goals and in implementing these goals. Parties also decided that future dialogues will be led by two co-facilitators who will be responsible for deciding the topics for and conducting the dialogue in consultation with Parties and observers. Despite these advancements, numerous opportunities remain to strengthen the ocean–climate nexus under the UNFCCC. **At the mid-year conference and leading up to COP 28, Conservation International encourages Parties to:**

- **Within negotiations and processes related to climate finance, work to increase and mobilize finance flows for coastal and marine nature-based solutions.** In ongoing processes and negotiations related to finance, including the Ad hoc Work Programme on the **New Collective Quantified Goal on Climate Finance, the Standing Committee on Finance, COP guidance for the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility, and the Adaptation Fund**, countries should prioritize efforts to increase and accelerate climate finance flows to coastal and marine ecosystems through all sources – public and private, market and non-market, including financing programs and projects dedicated to coastal and marine nature-based solutions.
- **Call for increased technical support, knowledge exchange, and financing to include coastal and marine nature-based solutions, such as blue carbon ecosystems, in updated NDCs.** Countries with coastal blue carbon ecosystems, such as mangroves, salt marshes, and seagrass, have multiple avenues by which these ecosystems can be included within new and updated NDCs to the Paris Agreement. Parties should call for specific areas of support they require for the development and implementation of blue carbon commitments, including within future Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue discussions, resources from the Nairobi Work Programme and its Thematic Expert Group on Oceans, ongoing processes and negotiations related to finance (see above), and the Paris Committee on Capacity-building, among others. [Guidelines for Blue Carbon and Nationally Determined Contributions](#) is a currently available resource available to countries and will be updated in 2023.
- **Support synergies for ocean–climate action across international policy processes.** Shifting from traditionally siloed approaches to integrated approaches across policy processes – including the Convention on Biological Diversity, Ramsar Convention on Wetlands, and the 2030 Agenda and related Sustainable Development Goals – can help enhance ambition, accelerate implementation and deliver high-quality outcomes for coastal and marine ecosystems. Conservation International and the International Union for the Conservation of Nature have also prepared a detailed list of opportunities to enhance synergies across policy processes.

**A full list of opportunities to strengthen the inclusion and advancement of coastal and marine nature-based solutions across relevant UNFCCC processes and negotiations can be found in resource developed by Conservation International and partners, ‘[Options for strengthening action on the ocean and coasts under the UNFCCC.](#)’**