

# Parliaments and the Paris Agreement

Strengthening parliamentary engagement in the development and implementation of international climate commitments. An overview of emerging global experience.

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September 2021



**INTER PARES** | Parliaments in Partnership  
*EU Global Project to Strengthen the Capacity of Parliaments*



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# Introduction

As the world's governments come together for the annual gathering of the United Nations General Assembly in New York, there is a deep sense of foreboding. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has confirmed that every region on Earth is experiencing dangerous climate change as a result of human activity. The UN Secretary General calls this moment 'code red' for the planet.

Leaders across the world, including in parliaments, are right to be alarmed. Climate destabilisation, evident in the hottest decade since records began, has taken its toll through unprecedented and deadly wildfires, storms, droughts and hurricanes across the world. As countries continually grapple with these climatic hazards, they have also had to simultaneously respond to the impacts of an ongoing pandemic, a phenomenon that could be increasingly experienced as zoonotic diseases become more prevalent due to climate change and environmental degradation<sup>1</sup>. The [IPCC report](#) released in August 2021 notes that, "Many of the changes observed in the climate are unprecedented in thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of years, and some of the changes already set in motion—such as continued sea level rise—are irreversible over hundreds to thousands of years." It warns that unless there are "immediate, rapid and large-scale reductions in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, limiting warming to close to 1.5°C or even 2°C will be beyond reach."

The UN climate summit COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021 has concentrated minds on the climate crisis and its observable impact on planetary well-being, progress and development. Equally the UN biodiversity summit COP15 slated for later this year in Kunming, China, has highlighted the twin crisis of biodiversity, which has been observable over the same timeframe of rising emissions and habitat destruction. All four organisations behind this report recognise that the world is at an inflection point and the role of parliamentarians, in advancing and working for solutions to the conjoined crises of climate

and nature, is needed now more than ever.

## Five years after the Paris Agreement on climate change

We are entering the fifth year after the entry into force of the Paris Agreement with the presentation of key commitments such as countries' updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and long-term strategies. Countries around the world are also addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic effects as well as its links with climate change and environmental degradation. It is a timely occasion to reflect on the role the parliaments have played in advancing these international climate commitments, predicated as they are on principles of multilateral cooperation, common but differentiated responsibilities and multistakeholder engagement. This report seeks to provide a snapshot of action to date by parliaments to respond to the challenge of the Paris Agreement and the commitments it demands from national governments and member states.

## Parliaments as critical actors

Parliaments are critical actors in the development, implementation, and monitoring of their country's climate objectives. As representatives of the people, they can inform the development of national negotiating positions in international agreements and contribute to building political and public support and momentum for ambitious commitments across electoral cycles. The implementation of such

commitments generally also requires supporting legislation, budget allocations and oversight by the legislative branch to hold the government accountable. Parliaments are crucial pillars of strong environmental governance and invaluable to promoting environmental democracy<sup>2</sup>.

As part of the development of this publication, a short survey was circulated to the parliaments of the Americas and the Caribbean to understand how parliaments have organised their work to contribute to global commitments on climate action and collect good practices. The results, although geographically limited, demonstrated that while significant legislative advances are taking place to support climate action, there is room for greater coordination of parliamentary efforts to align this work with the implementation of national climate commitments related to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Paris Agreement.

Many parliaments have established mechanisms for receiving information from their governments on the results of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the Paris Agreement and the government's national climate commitments, but more can be done to align corresponding parliamentary committees' legislative, oversight, and budgetary responsibilities with the international objectives.

For example, only a small number of parliaments have carried out or reviewed assessments of the readiness and adequacy of national policy or legislation for the implementation of the Paris Agreement's NDCs and long-term climate strategies to identify legislative priorities. Few parliaments have examined these objectives to ensure that national climate plans are ambitious enough and consider the potential for unintended impacts on vulnerable populations.

Even fewer parliaments have included a gender assessment of the differential impact of policies and measures on women and men,

as urged under the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan. Few have examined their governments' other international commitments related to the Paris Agreement and corresponding legislative needs, such as the implementation of ACE initiatives to guarantee access to information, education, and public participation in relation to climate issues, or connection with the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, or the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This publication therefore aims to provide guidance and share good practices to strengthen the alignment between the substantial climate efforts underway in parliaments and their governments' national climate commitments - a term which henceforth will be used to refer to a country's various mitigation and adaptation commitments under the UNFCCC's Paris Agreement, as communicated through NDCs, long-term strategies, and National Adaptation Plans. The report first provides background information on the Paris Agreement, and its various components, as well as other relevant international frameworks and agreements. It then addresses parliamentary contributions to the development and adoption of national climate commitments and provides guidance to strengthen the alignment of parliaments' oversight, legislative and budgetary efforts to national climate commitments and the broader objectives of the Paris Agreement. Each section contains good practice, suggested priorities and guidance questions for legislators undertaking this work.

# Background:

## Multilateral Environmental Agreements and Treaties

### Paris Agreement

The [Paris Agreement](#) is a legally-binding international treaty on climate change which was adopted in 2015 and came into force in 2016, with the common goal of “holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels”<sup>3</sup>. The Paris Agreement builds upon and enhances the implementation of the UNFCCC detailed in the following section on the Rio Conventions.

The Paris Agreement is implemented through [Nationally Determined Contributions](#) (NDCs), which are mandatory shorter-term climate pledges that Parties develop to communicate the actions they plan on taking to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and contribute to meeting the common global goal. Each country, or Party to the Agreement, is therefore responsible for preparing, communicating, and maintaining their successive NDC, which should be re-communicated every five years and each submission should be more ambitious than the last. This rise in ambition is also known as the ratchet mechanism. The first round of NDCs were submitted in 2015 or shortly after the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the second round was due in 2020 and the next one in 2025, and so on.

Recognizing the importance of adaptation to the impacts of climate change in addition to mitigation efforts covered in the NDCs, article 7 of the Paris Agreement establishes that Parties should also undertake adaptation objectives, and submit and periodically update [adaptation communications](#). These can be submitted in conjunction with their

NDC, or as a separate report such as a [National Adaptation](#) Plan established as a mechanism of the UNFCCC at COP16 under the [Cancun Adaptation Framework](#).

The Paris Agreement also calls for Parties to “strive to formulate and communicate [long-term low GHG emission development strategies](#)” by 2020. These strategies are not mandatory, but they provide a vision and direction for a country’s long-term (usually defined as 2050) sustainable development and climate neutrality targets. These strategies can help support the development of a country’s NDC, ensuring that short-term actions will align with and contribute to national long-term goals and those of the Paris Agreement.

To encourage inclusiveness, the Lima Work Programme on Gender was established under the UNFCCC in 2014, and in 2019 at COP25 the [5-year enhanced version and its Gender Action Plan \(GAP\)](#) was agreed upon. The Gender Action Plan sets out five priority areas for Parties, the UNFCCC, and all stakeholders to ensure gender-responsive and human rights-centred climate action is mainstreamed in all efforts to advance the climate agenda. These priorities include: **1)** Capacity building, knowledge management and communication; **2)** Ensuring gender balance and meaningful participation of women in the UNFCCC process; **3)** Consistent implementation of gender-related mandates and activities within all UN entities; **4)** Gender-responsive implementation; and **5)** Improving monitoring and reporting on gender-related mandates.

Moreover, the term [Action for Climate Empowerment](#) (ACE) has been adopted to refer to Article 6 of the UNFCCC and Article 12 of the Paris Agreement, to empower all members of society in understanding and engaging in inclusive climate action, through education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these issues. It calls on Parties to appoint ACE national focal

points, develop national strategies to implement these objectives and include these elements within their NDCs. This is supported through the [Doha work programme](#) established under the UNFCCC which has expired (2012-2020) and its future will be debated in 2021 at COP26.

To standardize reporting practices to allow for increased transparency and facilitate the comparative analysis of all national commitments, the Paris Agreement established an [Enhanced Transparency Framework](#), under article 13. It is an adapted and enhanced version of the Measurement, Verification and Reporting (MRV) requirements that were adopted as part of the UNFCCC. The [modalities, procedures and guidelines](#) were decided upon at COP24, where it was determined that developed countries would be required to transition to this new reporting framework by 2022 and developing countries by 2024.

The [global stocktake of the Paris Agreement](#), under article 14, is a process for taking stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement which is facilitated partly by the Enhanced Transparency Framework. It aims to assess the world's collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and its long-term goals. The first one will take place from 2021 to 2023 and the process will be repeated every 5 years thereafter<sup>4</sup>. Its outcomes should inform the development of future NDCs and other relevant plans and strategies.

Finally, the [Katowice Climate Package](#) (also known as the Paris Rulebook), is a set of detailed procedures and mechanisms that will support the implementation of the Paris Agreement. It offers guidance on communicating NDCs and adaptation efforts, the Enhanced Transparency Framework, the global stocktake, compliance measures, climate finance, among other elements of the Paris Agreement. Although most of the rulebook was decided upon at COP24, there are still some elements that need to be resolved.

## Rio Conventions

The Rio Conventions are the three conventions, among other documents, that were adopted in 1992 as a result of the [United Nations Conference on Environment and Development](#), also known as the Earth Summit, which discussed the impact of human socio-economic activities on the environment and aimed to produce an agenda that orients international action on environmental and development issues:

- 1 The [United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change](#) (UNFCCC) came into force in 1994, and its objective is to provide the foundation for multilateral action to mitigate and adapt to climate change<sup>5</sup>. As a result of this Convention, the [Kyoto Protocol](#) was adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 2005. It enhanced the UNFCCC by requiring legally-binding emissions reductions from a set of industrialised countries (identified as [Annex I parties](#) by the UNFCCC) according to specific emissions reduction targets over different commitment periods. Although the Kyoto Protocol remained active until 2020, it was effectively replaced by the Paris Agreement in 2015 which goes beyond the Kyoto Protocol to include all countries. The Paris Agreement is a universal pact requiring all signatory 195 countries to adopt mitigation targets through a more flexible system based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities.
- 2 The [Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (CBD) came into force in 1993 and its objective is to "conserve biological diversity, promote the sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from commercial and other utilization of genetic resources"<sup>6</sup>. In 2010, the updated [Strategic Plan for Biodiversity including the Aichi Biodiversity Targets](#) were adopted. This framework on biodiversity is used to guide and update [National Biodiversity Strategies and](#)

[Action Plans](#), the implementation mechanism of the CBD. The development of the [post-2020 framework](#) is currently underway.

For more information on the interlinkages between climate change and biodiversity consult the report, [Biodiversity and Climate Change](#), developed by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

### Supplementary Protocols of the CBD

a. [The Cartagena Protocol](#) on Biosafety and the [Nagoya – Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol](#) aim to govern the movements of living modified organisms.

b. [The Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity](#) aims to achieve the fair and equitable utilization of genetic resources.

- 3 The [United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#) (UNCCD) came into force in 1994, and its objective is to improve the living conditions for people in drylands, to maintain and restore land and soil productivity, and to mitigate the effects of drought. In 2017, the [UNCCD 2018-2030 Strategic Framework](#) was adopted. It supports the implementation of the UNCCD and guides the development of the [National Action Programmes](#), along with the sub-regional and regional programmes, which are the implementation mechanisms of the UNCCD.

### Other Relevant International Frameworks and Agreements

The [Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), also known as the Escazú Agreement, came into force in 2021 and its objective is to guarantee the rights of access to environmental information, public participation in environmental decision-making processes and access to justice in environmental matters, as well as the creation and strengthening of capacities and cooperation, contributing to the protection of the right of every person of present and future generations to live in a healthy environment and to sustainable development.

The [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), adopted in 2015, offers 17 universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with respective targets and indicators that encapsulate and integrate the economic, social, and environmental realms of society. This tool offers a roadmap of what a just and sustainable future looks like for current and future generations and provides strategies for building resilience against future shocks.

For more information on how parliaments can support the implementation of the SDGs consult the publication [Parliament's role in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals](#), developed by ParlAmericas and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The [Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030](#) was adopted in 2015. Its objective is to "achieve the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries over the next 15 years"<sup>77</sup> by setting out seven targets and four priorities for action. For more information on how parliaments can support

its implementation consult the publication [Parliamentary protocol for disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation](#), developed by ParlAmericas and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR).

For more information on the linkages between the Paris Agreement and the Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework on DRR and incorporating the outcomes of the Beijing +20 process assessing progress on women's rights, consult the publication, [Bringing the 2015 Summits Home: An action agenda for legislators](#) (2015) by GLOBE International and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

For a full list of other Environmental Multilateral Agreements and Treaties that affect the Americas and the Caribbean please visit the [UN InforMEA Portal](#).

## Developing and Adopting International Commitments under the Paris Agreement

While international commitments are negotiated by the executive, parliaments have a role in informing negotiation positions in advance and in ratification of these agreements. Parliamentary engagement also plays a significant role in ensuring that there is continued long-term political support for such international agreements and their implementation nationally beyond electoral cycles.

The Paris Agreement has been ratified by 191 out of the 196 UNFCCC members, which must continue to establish their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) every 5 years, along with a long-term low GHG emission development strategy due in 2020, among other commitments. In addition, participating countries continue to negotiate international mechanisms and develop tools to support the implementation of the Paris Agreement, such as the Gender Equality Action Plan and strategies to implement Action for Climate Empowerment previously described.

### Conference of Parties

The Conference of Parties (COP) is the supreme decision-making body of the Paris Agreement. These annual gatherings provide an opportunity to review progress and take decisions regarding legal instruments and institutional and administrative arrangements to support the implementation of the Agreement.

Prior to the COP, as countries prepare their negotiating positions, parliaments or corresponding parliamentary committees can receive briefings from the responsible minister, chief negotiator or other public servants on the issues that will be discussed at the upcoming COP. As a result, a committee could undertake a study to provide recommendations to inform the

government's negotiating positions.

Alternatively, governments may hold public consultations in which parliamentarians may also participate. The participation of parliamentarians in these spaces can contribute to strengthening the government's communications, or to request to improve certain aspects of these positions to better reflect the concerns of the citizens that parliamentarians represent.

Parliamentarians can also participate as members of their country's official delegation to COP. In some cases, this allows them to participate in briefings to learn about the government's negotiating positions or to contribute perspectives as part of the development of these negotiating positions. It may also allow them to observe international negotiations and represent their institution in official and side- events, including parliamentary meetings that take place at COP such as those organised by the Interparliamentary Union and GLOBE. When determining the composition of the parliamentary delegation, gender equality and multi-partisan representation are important considerations, and particularly that members of the political opposition are included. In addition to the contributions that parliamentarians can make as part of their participation at the COP, it can be an important learning opportunity as well as an occasion to hold bilateral meetings with stakeholders; which can be valuable to building partnerships and national support for these initiatives, strengthening the parliamentary work required to implement and oversee these commitments nationally.

## Good practices

**Congress of Brazil:** The Congress of Brazil is developing, in partnership between the Committees on Environment and on Foreign Affairs and National Defence, a parliamentary position for COP26 in Glasgow of the UNFCCC, as well as for [COP15](#) in China of the CBD. In addition, the Committee on Foreign Affairs and National Defence of the Chamber of Deputies held a [public hearing](#) to discuss the proposal that Brazil will take to COP26, as well as parliamentary debates in the Senate.

**House of Commons of Canada:** The House of Commons held a [debate](#) prior to voting on the country's ratification of the Paris Agreement in October 2016 to bring attention to this crucial issue.

**House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI):** DPR-RI has always been involved in the COP of UNFCCC by sending a delegation consisting of relevant committees led by a deputy speaker. The parliament sent the Committees on energy, environment, mineral resources, forestry, agriculture, and inter-parliament cooperation to join the Indonesian delegation in COP21, hence, was fully aware of the Paris Agreement. Since then, DPR-RI has consistently sent a delegation to COP22 in Marrakech, COP23 in Bonn, COP 24 in Katowice, and COP25 in Madrid. This participation is deemed necessary by the Parliament considering that it has to ratify any agreement signed by the Government of Indonesia resulting from the UNFCCC.

**Senate of Mexico:** The [Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Climate Change](#) has within its responsibilities to attend international events on environmental and climate change matters. Prior to the international conferences, legislators are provided the opportunity to request information, contribute general opinions, and evaluate international policy and the negotiating position that the Government of Mexico will present. At the conferences, legislators observe negotiations, obtain briefings, attend informative side sessions, and have bilateral meetings with key stakeholders, taking note of the issues discussed that would require legislative support for their implementation.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** Nigerian legislators led by former Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki participated in COP21 where the Paris Agreement was adopted. During this period, the Nigerian legislators interacted with legislators from other countries as they participated in the [GLOBE COP21 Legislators Summit hosted by the French Parliament](#) and the Parliamentary Meeting on the occasion of the UNFCCC organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the French Parliament. As a result of the legislator's participation in COP21 the then Chairman of the House of Representatives Committee on Climate Change, Representative Sam Onuigbo, was able to further push to ensure the creation of a climate change law, a legal framework to guide Nigeria's Paris Agreement commitments.

**House of Representatives of the Philippines:** The Committee on Climate Change has within its responsibility to attend the COP of the UNFCCC. The members of the Committee, aside from participating actively in the negotiations, hold bilateral meetings with the UNFCCC leadership, global climate champions, and COP Presidencies to further advance the Philippine viewpoints and expectations. Legislators also engage in international parliamentary dialogues, among other forums to convey the Philippines' priorities in the climate talks. Deputy Speaker Loren Legarda headed the Philippine delegation to COP25 in Madrid in 2019 and delivered the national statement of the Philippines at the high-level segment.

## Nationally Determined Contributions and Other Mechanisms

Countries participating in the Paris Agreement are responsible for the development, submission, and implementation of several initiatives to contribute to achieving its goals, the main one being NDCs. These are 5-year plans communicating the short-term actions they will take to reduce GHG emissions. Additionally, Parties must also submit periodical adaptation communications, or a National Adaptation Plan and a long-term strategy, as described previously.

According to the [2021 NDC Synthesis Report](#) developed by UNFCCC, many Parties have strengthened their commitments to reducing or limiting GHG emissions, but despite these efforts, current targets are not enough to achieve the temperature goal of the Paris Agreement. To achieve the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions need to decrease by 45% from the 2010 levels by 2030, reaching net zero around 2050<sup>8</sup>. According to [Climate Action Tracker](#), it is estimated that end of century warming will be 2.4°C, taking into consideration the updated NDCs and the commitments made at the Leaders' Summit held in April 2021, which still overshoots the Paris Agreement goals of limiting global warming to well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C<sup>9</sup>. The [2020 UNEP Production Gap](#) Report also provides a warning on the manner in which countries are planning and projecting an average annual increase of 2% fossil fuel production between 2020 and 2030, which is inconsistent with the 6% decrease per year needed to pursue the 1.5°C target. There is therefore still a need to review and further strengthen mitigation commitments and align shorter term decisions with the long-term climate strategy and targets.

To this end, it can be valuable for the NDCs, adaptation communications or plans and long-term strategy to be developed in consultation with different sectors of society, including parliamentarians. The participation of parliamentarians in these consultations can take place through a broader public consultation process or through specific engagement of the corresponding parliamentary committee.

They can play an important role in ensuring that these actions consider human rights obligations, especially the potential impact on Indigenous peoples, afro-descendants, migrants, children, people with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations, that they conduct a gender-based analysis and apply an intersectionality lens, as per the Gender Action Plan of the Paris Agreement, and that they include a plan on Action for Climate Empowerment.

## Good practices

### National Parliament of Bangladesh - Jatiya

**Sangsad:** In November 2019 the Jatiya Sangsad adopted unanimously a Motion on Declaring a Planetary Emergency:



#### **Text of Motion on declaring a Planetary Emergency moved by Saber H. Chowdhury MP and unanimously adopted by Bangladesh Parliament on 13th November 2019.**

"That this House declares a Planetary Emergency on account of existential crisis of climate change, devastating impact of disasters and increase in extreme weather events, irreparable loss of bio-diversity, looming food insecurity, rising water stress, unprecedented pressure on oceans and unsustainable use of resources;

The global community must act urgently, decisively and with considerably higher ambition in achieving net zero emissions well before 2050, capping temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius and transitioning swiftly to low carbon economies as overarching priorities;

Despite being least responsible, Bangladesh and many other countries in developing world, including Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are the most impacted and vulnerable; All commitment at global level including Paris Agreement must be implemented in full and in shortest possible time; Planetary justice and climate equity demands that these vulnerable countries are assisted with requisite finance and technology to meet their development aspirations;

This House therefore, calls on Parliaments, Governments, the United Nations and all stakeholders to work on a war footing, as custodians and as one team, to protect and fortify our Planet- the only Home we have."

**Senate of Brazil:** The Senate is debating [bill 1539](#), which aims to reduce Brazil's NDC implementation timeframe from 2030 to 2025 by strengthening the implementation of existing frameworks to prevent deforestation.

**Congress of Guatemala:** The Congress participated in the consultation process led by the Government to develop the first NDCs by designating several Congress Members to participate and provide their input.

**House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI):** All international agreements signed by the Government of Indonesia (GOI) must be approved and ratified by the Parliament. Upon ratification, the agreement is passed into Law. The Paris Agreement was passed into Law by DPR-RI in 2016 and has been implemented through different mechanisms. As mandated by the Law, the government established a National Agency for Climate Change, set up a commission for a climate change trust fund, and developed a national action plan on GHG reduction to meet their NDC's pledge of reducing

emissions by 29% without conditionalities and 41% with international support. The GOI also included the climate commitments under the Paris Agreement into the five-year Medium-Term National Development Plan and the annual workplans and budgets submitted to the Parliament for approval.

**Parliament of Ireland:** A resolution of the Oireachtas, the Irish Parliament, commissioned a Citizens' Assembly that deliberated on five different topics, including climate change. The Assembly convened between 2016 and 2018 and reported back to Parliament in spring 2018. The Citizens' Assembly addressed climate change in 26 hours of listening, discussion and deliberation involving 99 participants in autumn 2017. The participants, seated around round tables, heard from scientific and other experts on climate change. At the end of the process, they voted on a series of 13 recommendations, some of which proposed quite radical commitments and policy changes. More than 80% of Assembly members supported all 13 recommendations. Parliament then established a special Committee on Climate Action to study the recommendations from the Citizens' Assembly. In March 2019, the parliamentary Committee on Climate Action published its own report, that endorsed and amplified the recommendations of the Citizens' Assembly. The Assembly and the parliamentary committee report informed the government's ambitious Climate Action Plan announced in June 2019.

**Congress of Mexico:** The Congress of Mexico participated in the national consultation organised by the Government to obtain citizens' opinions on the country's second NDC. Furthermore, representatives of the Congress are a part of the National System of Climate, a mechanism aimed at fostering synergies to address the vulnerabilities and risks being faced by the country, and establishing priority actions for climate mitigation and adaptation. Through this mechanism, the Congress is also

able to contribute and remain informed of the development of the country's NDC and long-term strategy.

**National Assembly of Nicaragua:** The [Committee on Environment and Natural Resources](#) was invited by the Ministry of Environment, along with other State institutions, to take part in an Assessment Workshop for COP25 and through this activity were informed of the process for developing the country's NDC.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** Nigeria's National Assembly has developed a Climate Change Bill which will serve as the legal framework that will guide the country's efforts at climate change mitigation and adaptation and to meet the NDC. This Bill, which has [been passed by the House of Representatives](#) makes provisions for specific actions from public and private entities in meeting the NDC. It also keys into the global target of net zero emissions by projecting a 2050-2070 timeline for net zero emissions. Additionally, the Bill makes provisions for sustained oversight on Nigeria's efforts to meet the NDC in a timely manner.

**National Assembly of Panama:** The National Assembly is represented on the [National Committee on Climate Change](#) by the Technical Secretariat of the Committee on Population, Environment, and Development, with a principal and two alternates. The representatives contribute to the preparation and review of the NDC reports, among other relevant reports presented by the country. They participated in the [intersectoral working groups](#) organised by the Ministry of Environment and the UNDP to support the development of a Gender and Climate Action Plan for the NDCs which is still in development.

### **House of Representatives of the Philippines:**

The Committee on Climate Change conducted public hearings and consultations to inquire on the development of the NDC of the Philippines, including sector-specific policies and measures, which also provided a venue for the civil society and private sector stakeholders to be part of the conversation. The Committee adopted a resolution urging the Climate Change Committee to submit the country's NDC with the highest possible climate ambition, as part of the country's commitment under the Paris Agreement and in solidarity with the world's vulnerable countries, the global community's resolve to address the climate emergency, and to drive the country towards a sustainable post-pandemic recovery.

**Trinidad and Tobago:** The parliament is invited to participate in the public stakeholder consultations when they take place. The Carbon Reduction Strategy was adopted by the Parliament and is the main policy on climate change and represents the key instrument which guided the elaboration of the country's first NDC, which was submitted before the adoption of the Paris Agreement at COP21.

## **Oversight for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement**

Parliamentarians have an important responsibility of overseeing the executive branch to ensure accountability for the efficient and effective delivery of expenditures, laws, policies, and programmes for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and national climate commitments. The Paris Agreement also recognises the importance of accountability to reach its goals at an international level and has established key reporting criteria through its previously described [Enhanced Transparency Framework](#) which can be helpful to parliamentarians in monitoring and overseeing progress.

Most parliaments around the world have a parliamentary committee with a mandate to address environmental and climate issues, which is well positioned to oversee the implementation of the country's national climate commitments. In certain circumstances, more than one committee has a mandate that covers these issues who share aspects of this responsibility, such as committees on urban planning, agriculture, oceans and fisheries, water resources, energy, among others. Alternatively, or in addition to these committees, some parliamentarians may decide to form a multi-party group to take on this role or to complement the work of the committee or committees.

Although rules of procedure may differ in different parliaments, the following mechanisms can generally be considered by committees, political parties, or individual parliamentarians:

- **Inquiries:** Conduct a formal investigation to identify any climate policy or information gaps, or examine how policies are impacting vulnerable populations, and present recommendations to the government.

- **Post-legislative scrutiny (PLS):** Conduct a formal study to determine if key climate legislation that has previously been adopted is achieving its intended use, identify any unforeseen impacts on vulnerable populations and present amendments if necessary. In some cases, it may be possible to build in a requirement for PLS (or a sunset clause) to legislation requiring such an assessment after a few years. For more information about the practice of PLS of climate legislation consult the publication [Post-legislative scrutiny of climate and environment legislation: Guide for parliamentary practice](#), developed by WFD. This guide outlines an approach to assessing the implementation and the impact of climate and environmental legislation at national level.
- **Question period and interpellations:** Call on ministers or other senior public officials to provide information about government action to achieve climate goals.
- **Public hearings:** Hold public hearings to request further information from government officials and gather input from experts and civil society representatives.
- **Reports:** Request and review government reports on the implementation of NDCs and other climate related plans, including those from other oversight bodies such as the supreme audit institution who may already report regularly on these issues.
- **Outreach and campaigns:** Undertake communication campaigns to build awareness of priority issues and mobilize public support to call on government action.
- **Motions or resolutions:** Present a motion or resolution for adoption by the chamber to request information or call on the government to act regarding climate objectives.

## Priorities and International Milestones

### Establish a process for regular monitoring of progress on national climate commitments

For parliamentarians to fulfill their roles in advancing this agenda, they must be informed of their governments' commitments and have access to information to monitor progress towards these goals. It may therefore be helpful to map out the current process in place in the parliament for monitoring the implementation of the Paris Agreement and identify any gaps and strategies to rectify this. It would be recommended for this process to be led by a parliamentary committee, and to include reporting in advance and after the COP, upon the adoption of new NDCs or a long-term strategy, as well as at regular intervals to monitor how current legislation, policies and programmes are working to achieve these targets.

## Good practices

**Parliament of Belize:** The Parliament is working on the creation of a joint parliamentary committee on climate change and sustainable development to provide a space for parliamentarians to shape and influence climate action to support low carbon development pathways while delivering on global environmental commitments and national development goals.

**Congress of Brazil:** Parliamentarians of both the upper and lower chambers created the multiparty [Environmentalist Parliamentary Front](#) in 2007 which works to strengthen related legislation and promote environmental and social sustainability within the Congress to help address the environmental issues the country is facing, while ensuring the active participation of civil society. The Front is organised into seven thematic working groups.

**Parliament of Denmark – Folketing:** the Folketing works closely with the Climate Change Council, an independent advisory body composed of nine experts high-level climate-relevant expertise. The Council is tasked with studying and commenting on the government's annual Climate Programme. The Council provides annual recommendations to Parliament and government on national climate efforts, assessing whether the government actions are likely to deliver the adopted climate targets. The Climate Act contains an obligation to act, so if it is deemed improbable that targets will be reached, the government must present new corrective initiatives and communicate them to Parliament. Already within the first year of the Climate Act a broad majority in Parliament activated the government's obligation to act in response to the critical comments made by the Climate Change Council. Each September the government must present a Climate Programme for Parliament, to allow it to be taken into consideration during the national

budget negotiations, thus establishing a link between climate action and budget allocation.

**Parliament of Finland – Eduskunta:** The Finnish Climate Change Act, which became effective in 2016, mandates establishment of the Climate Change Panel, an independent scientific advisory board. One of the Panel's tasks is to enhance the knowledge of politicians on climate science to increase the quality of the climate change debates.

**Federal Parliament of Germany – Bundestag:** Under the Climate Change Act, parliament has the duty to scrutinise the national emissions targets defined in the emissions budget, as well as the annual emissions per sector which are the responsibility of the relevant ministries. The government must present the Bundestag with an annual climate action report by June 30, containing sector-by-sector information on GHG emissions and on progress in implementing the climate action programmes. If an emissions budget has been exceeded in a reporting year, the government must take measures in the relevant sector or in other sectors, or cross-sector measures and must inform parliament of the adopted measures. The Climate Change Act establishes a Council of Experts on Climate Change, charged with examining the emissions data and providing an independent assessment to parliament and the government. The Bundestag can also task the Council with preparing special reports. From 2021, the government must present the Bundestag with a climate projection report by 31 March every two years, including projections for GHG emissions and specifying the national policies and measures adopted for the emissions reduction.

**Congress of Guatemala:** Parliamentarians created a multi-party parliamentary group called “Frente parlamentario del cambio climático” to conduct technical analysis and promote bills focused on the environment, as well coordinate efforts with national and international institutions to create consensus, as well as promote citizen participation.

**House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI):** DPR-RI does not have a standing committee on climate change. Paris Agreement matters fall under the remit of several existing Committees: Committee for Agriculture, Forestry and Environment; Committee for Energy, Mineral Resources, and Science-Tech; Committee for Finance and Development Planning, Committee for Budget, and Committee for Inter-parliament Cooperation. The Parliament, therefore, scrutinised and approved programme planning and budget allocation, debated proposed legislations and conducted oversights of the implementation of the Paris Agreement through their regular committee processes which include regular working meeting with ministries, hearings with relevant officials, public hearings with experts and CSOs, and working visits to the sites or study visit to learn or benchmark to the best practices. In addition, DPR-RI also has developed a [Monitoring Portal of SDGs](#), including the climate change goal, to track progress of the Government of Indonesia’s performance in implementing its National Action Plan on SDGs. Apart from those, DPR-RI also organised an annual World Parliamentary Forum on SDGs (WPFSD), convening Parliaments across the globe to share progress and best practices as well as challenges in achieving the SDGs, including the climate change goal. The WPFSD in 2017 resulted in the [Bali Declaration](#) which included the agreement of the attending parliaments to take concrete action on climate change and environment.

**Senate of Mexico:** The [Committee on Environment, Natural Resources, and Climate Change](#) actively examines international instruments such as treaties and agreements related to the environment, climate change, biodiversity, and conservation of species, as well as oversees the implementation of these instruments by the Government. For example, in meetings with the Ministry of Environment, the Committee Chair regularly asks about the actions the Ministry is undertaking to fulfil the goals of the Paris Agreement and for a report on the results of the previous COP.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** As part of efforts to ensure proper legislation for the environment, national legislators in Nigeria come together under parliamentary organisations with the mandate to advance on biodiversity conservation, climate change, renewable energy, and sustainable development. Two of these organisations include GLOBE and Climate Parliament. Through these platforms, the legislators have been able to advance discussions especially during debates on appropriation, recommendations for passage of Bills or amendments of certain sections of Bills. For example, the House Committee Chairman on Environment has, in collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and some of its subsidiary agencies and buoyed by discussions with other members of these organisations, led the committee to propose amendments to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Act, which was enacted pre-Paris Agreement. The amendment sought to give more attention to the impact on the environment caused by infrastructural initiatives, including mitigation and adaptation infrastructure, and the projected environmental cost of such impacts. This would help guide the country in making more holistic decisions on infrastructural development.

**Congress of Peru:** Parliamentarians created a multi-party [Green Caucus](#) to lead and support the design and implementation of environmental legislation, raising the awareness of other parliamentarians on the importance of this work, and promoting citizen engagement on these topics. The Caucus established a working document to set the foundation and commitments for work, as well as coordinated actions with the Ministry of Environment.

**Parliament of the United Kingdom:** The 2008 UK Climate Change Act places the parliament at the heart of oversight of the government's climate action. The Act established the Climate Change Committee, an independent statutory body, to report to Parliament on progress made in reducing GHG emissions and preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change, and advise the government on emissions targets. In addition to the select committee on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee that scrutinises the Government's Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, parliament has established the Environmental Audit Committee, with a cross-government mandate to consider the extent to which the policies and programmes of government departments and non-departmental public bodies contribute to environmental protection and sustainable development. The committee audits departments' performance against sustainable development and environmental protection targets.

## **Review and monitor the development and implementation of national climate commitments**

In 2020, countries were expected to submit their second NDC and long-term low GHG emission development strategies, which in some cases have been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. By monitoring the NDC and long-term strategy development and implementation process, parliamentarians can play an important role throughout this cycle. Parliamentarians can call on governments to ensure a participatory process in the development of these national climate commitments which includes opportunities for participation from various stakeholders including Indigenous peoples, civil society organizations, academia, youth, private sector and unions, vulnerable communities, and individuals, among others. They may call on governments to undertake gender-based analysis of these plans and improve the collection of gender-disaggregated data. They may also hold public hearings or participate in government consultations to contribute to the development of these targets and ensure they are ambitious and proportionate to the country's contribution to global emissions, as well as promote the inclusion of a just transition plan and gender-based analysis.

Once adopted, parliamentarians can review the government's targets to ensure they are aligned with the Paris Agreement. The [Climate Action Tracker](#) has a useful tool which performs an independent scientific analysis of how compatible a country's NDC, and policies are with the Paris Agreement, as well as published an [Evaluation methodology for national net zero targets](#) which identifies 10 key elements that setting these targets should consider. They can also review plans to ensure that existing or proposed new policies and programmes will effectively achieve the targets. This review can take place in three steps: upon adoption to

ensure the plans are sufficient; halfway through their implementation to examine if policies and programmes are having the intended impact or if a shift may be required; and upon the end of the period to assess whether goals were reached to provide recommendations that can then be incorporated into the next NDCs.

## Good practices

**Senate of Canada:** The [Standing Committee on Energy, Environment and Natural Resources](#) undertakes special studies and has released five interim reports relating to relevant sectors of the Canadian economy, namely: electricity; transportation; emissions-intensive and trade-exposed industries; oil and gas; and buildings. Additionally, Senators are joining forces to create a [Senate working group on climate change](#) modelled from the [UK House of Lords' Peers for the Planet](#), leveraging Canadian Senators' long-term appointments to build consensus, momentum and identify practical solutions to bring about a fair transition to a net-zero world.

**House of Commons of Canada:** The [Standing Committee on Environment](#) and Sustainable Development enquires into and reports on matters referred to it by the House of Commons. These include legislation, departmental activities and spending, and reports of the [Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development](#) who is appointed by the Auditor General of Canada, Officer of Parliament, and reports on the effective use of resources, progress, and state of the work undertaken by the Government in environmental and sustainable development issues.

**House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI):** The Committee for Agriculture, Forestry and Environment consistently conducts oversight meetings and hearings with the ministry of forestry and environment, National Agency for Peat Land Restoration, CSOs, and experts to inquire about forest and peatland fires and hold the government accountable in handling these problems. This regular oversight contributed to Indonesia's success in reducing GHGs from deforestation, including forest fires, in 2016-2017. Another notable commitment of DPR-RI to the Paris Agreement concerns its support to the Government of Indonesia in reducing

the use of fossil fuel. The Parliament fully endorsed the enactment of the Presidential Regulation on energy policy which aims to increase percentage of renewable energy to 23% of the national energy annual consumption in 2025 and 31% in 2050.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** In October 2018, 108 out of the 109 Senators of the Nigerian Senate moved a motion calling on the Executive to do more to tackle the now recurrent issues of flooding in the country. This was followed up by another resolution by the Senate on October 7, 2020.

Moreover, in the Climate Change Bill which was recently passed by the House of Representatives, Section 21 specifically empowers the Senate and House Committees on Climate Change to annually receive and scrutinise reports on the state of the nation in regard to climate change.

In November 2016, less than two months after President Muhammadu Buhari signed the Paris Agreement, Nigerian legislators led by the Senate President participated in the Nigerian Clean Cooking Forum. They stressed the need to improve cooking practices to address the resultant high emissions of these practices and health hazards especially for women in rural areas. [The Senate President stated the Senate's commitment](#) to provide budgetary allocations to the clean cookstoves sector in Nigeria in the 2017 budget.

**House of Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago:** The House of Representatives adopted a [motion](#) agreeing that the Government develop a holistic and sustainable national response to climate change, inclusive of solutions to the perennial flooding in Trinidad and Tobago and the effective management of drought conditions and the impact of such disasters on the quality of human life. Moreover, Members of Parliament could utilise various resources developed by the Government on gender-mainstreaming in national development and climate policies, including the [National Policy on Gender and Development](#), [Trinidad and Tobago Gender Analysis](#), and [Mainstreaming Gender in Trinidad and Tobago's Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement](#) to guide their oversight efforts to ensure climate policies are gender-responsive.

## Undertake post-legislative scrutiny (PLS) of existing climate legislation

Legislation is a critical component of national efforts to achieve national climate commitments. As parliamentarians undertake a review of the policies and programmes to achieve these targets, it may also be beneficial to conduct a review of existing legislation that aims to support these efforts to ensure it is effectively implemented and having the intended outcomes. This process is often referred to as post-legislative scrutiny and can help identify implementation gaps, areas of improvement, good practices, and assess overlap or underlap in agency mandates. It also allows for a space to update legislation based on recent changes in international and national development related to advancing the climate agenda. This topic is ever evolving, and new knowledge is always emerging so it is helpful to periodically evaluate and update legislation based on the latest advancements, ensuring it is as ambitious as it can be. It also provides an opportunity to improve public participation, consult with technical experts to get feedback, and achieve greater horizontal coordination between parliamentary committees, government branches, different sectors, among others<sup>10</sup>.

## Good practices

**House of Commons of Canada:** Parliamentary committees may be tasked with undertaking statutory reviews of legislation. For example, Section 343 of the Canadian Environmental Protection Act 1999 provides for a parliamentary review of the administration of the statute every five years after its coming into force. In June 2017, following the most recent statutory review, the [Committee on Environment and Sustainable Development](#) tabled a report entitled [Healthy Environment, Healthy Canadians, Healthy Economy: Strengthening the Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999](#).

Additionally, a similar amendment was proposed by parliamentarians and included in the [Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act](#) to ensure a comprehensive review of the provisions and operation of the Act by the Houses of Parliament after 5 years of it coming into force. Likewise, the Parliament introduced a reform bill to modify the Auditor General Act to mandate the Commissioner of the Environment and Sustainable Development to examine and report on the Government of Canada's implementation of measures to mitigate climate change and provide a review of the Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act which was approved on June 29, 2021.

**House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI):** DPR-RI passed the Law on Law-making in 2010, which was amended in 2011. The Law regulates that law-making in Indonesia shall involve a full cycle of planning, drafting, pre-legislative scrutiny, debating, passing, promulgation. Previously, only the Parliament was mandated to monitor and evaluate legislation through PLS. In 2019, the Parliament amended the Law on Law-making and decided to add PLS into the cycle, requiring not only the Parliament but also the government to carry out PLS. Due to the large volume of pieces of legislation passed,

governments and DPR's Committees have competing priorities for their PLS agenda, and welcome think tanks, CSOs and universities to support. The Legislation Committee, for instance, has sought the support of WFD to support the Committee to prepare a preliminary study on PLS of the Law on Job Creation, which aims to ease business activity in Indonesia and boost economic growth, but creates high risks of driving environmental degradation.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** The Committees on Environment and on Climate Change from both the Senate and House of Representatives regularly reviews and amends legislation. For example, the House Committee on Environment is currently reviewing, with the aim of amending, Nigeria's Environmental Impact Assessment Act and Nigeria's National Agency for the Great Green Wall Establishment Act, among others. Similarly, in collaboration with relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of Nigeria, and professional bodies, these committees work to develop new legislation. At the House of Representatives, the Environment Committee is currently pushing to adopt two new Bills, "Act to regulate the profession of forestry in Nigeria and for related matters" and "Act to establish the Environmental Trust Fund charged with the responsibility of imposing tax, managing and disbursing the funds for environmental restoration and for related matters". These two Bills resulted from collaborations with a body of professional foresters and the Ministry of Environment and seek to enshrine responsible use of forest products and the rehabilitation of the environment.

## Promote participation in international accountability mechanisms

Starting in 2023, and then every 5 years thereafter, governments will take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving its purpose and long-term goals. This global stocktake is facilitated by the application of the Enhanced Transparency Framework previously described, and will inform the preparation of subsequent NDCs, in order to allow for increased ambition and climate action to achieve the purpose of the Paris Agreement and its long-term goals<sup>11</sup>. Parliamentarians can call on their governments to ensure their timely participation through these international accountability mechanisms which are key to ensure that as a global community we are on track to achieving these critical goals.

## Guiding Questions for Parliamentarians

The following questions can provide guidance to parliamentarians overseeing the development, implementation and evaluating the progress of the national climate commitments.

### Participation in international negotiations:

- ? Was the government represented in international negotiations at the most recent COP?
- ? Was the parliament included as part of the national delegation to COP?
- ? Is there equal representation of women and men in the delegation to COP?
- ? Are indigenous peoples, youth, and other traditionally marginalized and/or climate vulnerable groups represented within national delegations, and do they have a meaningful participation?
- ? What mechanisms were negotiated at the most recent COP and how do these impact the country?
- ? What were the delegations' priorities and were these achieved?

### National targets:

- ? Has the government prepared and submitted a second NDC, which was due in 2020 as part of its commitment to the Paris Agreement?
- ? What was the level of achievement of the country's first NDC?
- ? Has the government prepared and submitted a long-term strategy, which was due in 2020 as part of its commitment to the Paris Agreement?
- ? Does the NDC align and contribute to achieving the goals of the long-term strategy?

### Process for developing national targets:

- ? What process did the government undertake to develop the new NDCs and long-term strategy?
- ? Who was consulted as part of this process? Did consultations include Indigenous Peoples, youth, civil society organizations, vulnerable communities, private sector, and unions, among other stakeholders?
- ? What efforts were undertaken to ensure that these targets are evidence-based and ambitious enough to effectively contribute to the Paris Agreement's objective?

## Content of national targets and plans:

- ? Is the second NDC more ambitious than the first NDC?
- ? Are the second NDC mitigation targets proportionate to the country's impact on GHG emissions worldwide, to contribute fairly to global efforts?
- ? Does the current NDC guarantee the feasibility of the long-term strategy?
- ? Does the second NDC, adaptation communication or National Adaptation Plan include appropriate adaptation targets to build the country's resilience to disaster risk?
- ? If the first NDC was not fully accomplished, what strategies or plans are developed to ensure that this one is achieved in the 5-year term?
- ? Do national climate commitments consider all sectors of society, particularly women, traditionally marginalized groups and those dependent on sectors most likely to be affected by corresponding policy efforts?
- ? Is existing legislation aiming to contribute to these national climate commitments effectively implemented, does it achieve its purpose, and does it have any unintended consequences that need to be mitigated?
- ? What government policies are currently in place or need to be modified to achieve the various targets adopted?
- ? Does the country have a strategic, adequately funded plan for Action for Climate Empowerment (education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information and international cooperation) and a corresponding focal point?

## Reporting mechanisms:

- ? Does the government report to parliament on their negotiation position in advance of COPs?
- ? Does the government report to parliament on the result of COPs?
- ? Does the government report to parliament on the development, adoption, and implementation of its national climate commitments?
- ? Are progress reports developed in accordance with international standards and good practices, such as the UN Framework for Development of Environmental Statistics and the UN System for Environmental-Economic Accounting?
- ? Does the Supreme Audit Institution or another independent state actor report on national progress to achieve the NDCs?
- ? Does the government abide by the Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement for international reporting?

## Legislation for the Implementation of the Paris Agreement

Through proposing, reviewing, amending and/or approving legislation, parliamentarians can contribute directly to the development and implementation of its national climate commitments and meeting the broader goals of the Paris Agreement.

According to the [2016 NDC Synthesis Report](#) developed by the UNFCCC, most of the first NDCs aimed to build on their country's existing climate change and/or development strategies, policies, and legislation, and many were supported by existing national laws<sup>12</sup>. Certain NDCs likewise established commitments to strengthen laws and regulations on climate change and further integrate related objectives into long-term economic and social development plans. Similarly, the [2021 NDC Synthesis Report](#) indicated that many Parties integrated their NDC targets, goals, and policies into national legislative, regulatory, and planning processes as a means of ensuring implementation<sup>13</sup>.

National legislation can help contextualize international commitments to a national scenario and harmonize these climate efforts with other development priorities and environmental frameworks such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and other multilateral environmental agreements<sup>14</sup>. Moreover, an ambitious climate framework at a national level can trigger and facilitate additional efforts in other sectors, government levels, and private institutions. Strong commitments can incentivize, enable, and provide certainty to the private sector, potential donors, and investors to support the country's objectives of achieving climate neutrality and a circular economy.

## Good practices

**Parliament of Canada:** In June 2021, the Parliament of Canada adopted the [Canadian Net-Zero Emissions Accountability Act](#) that establishes a legally-binding process for Canada to achieve net-zero GHG emission by the year 2050. This law requires that an emissions reduction plan, progress report and assessment report for each target be tabled in each House of Parliament, provides for public participation, and establishes other reporting requirements to oversee progress towards achieving these objectives.

Canada also has an updated NDC to reduce emissions by 40-45% compared to 2005 levels by 2030<sup>15</sup>. The province of Prince Edward Island (PEI) has gone further, with its own legally binding target of net zero emissions by 2040<sup>16</sup>. Whilst Canada has no national renewable energy targets, there are provincial targets, such as in Nova Scotia, where 80% of electricity must be from a renewable source by 2030<sup>17</sup>.

In 2016, Canada adopted the Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change (PCF), which focused on clean growth in the economy, reducing GHG emissions, and increasing resilience to climate change. In 2020, Canada released a strengthened climate plan with policies, programmes, and investments to accelerate emission reductions and continue to grow a cleaner economy<sup>18</sup>.

Canada has the regulatory framework in place to phase out unabated coal by 2030 but will replace a lot of that capacity with natural gas. They aim to phase coal out completely by 2050, although this goal has been criticised for being too late. Canada has also committed to reducing methane emissions from its oil and gas sector by 40-45% compared to 2012 levels by 2025. Carbon pricing has also been in effect throughout the country since 2019<sup>19</sup>. Within the transport sector, Canada has adopted sales

targets for zero-emissions passenger vehicles: 10% by 2025, 30% by 2030, and 100% by 2040, and funding has been allocated to support the EV charging infrastructure, along with awareness campaigns<sup>20</sup>.

The government is updating energy efficiency regulations within the building sector for residential and commercial products. During the 2019 federal elections, the government promised to plant two billion trees over the next decade<sup>21</sup>.

**National Assembly of France:** In May 2021 the French National Assembly adopted the Climate and Resilience Act. This Act was studied over three weeks, one of the longest parliamentary debates of the Fifth Republic (three weeks). It codifies into law the measures proposed by the Citizens' Assembly. The Assembly, convened by the French President, gathered 150 citizens representing France in its diversity. Over five months, The Assembly designed 149 climate and resilience measures covering all aspects of life. The National Assembly reviewed, modified, and legislated for 146 of the 149 proposed measures; more than 1,000 amendments were considered during the legislative process.

**Federal Parliament of Germany – Bundestag:** Germany's Climate Change Act was adopted by the parliament in December 2019. Under the Act, Germany commits to cut GHG emissions by 55% by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. It also sets out yearly allowed GHG emissions across various sectors, such as agriculture, industry, buildings, energy, waste, and others. If a sector exceeds its upper limit of GHG emissions, an action plan needs to be developed by the minister in charge of that particular sector.

Germany has a legally binding net zero target of 2045 following a court ruling. A 65% reduction in GHG emissions compared to 1990 levels by 2030 and an 88% reduction by 2040 are also enshrined in law, as well as annual emission reductions<sup>22</sup>. Emission

reduction targets are distributed to different sectors, the ministries of which are responsible for implementing them. The energy sector alone will have to reduce its emissions by 62% compared to 1990 levels by 2030<sup>23</sup>.

The government has set a target for 65% of electricity consumption to be generated by renewable sources by 2030. Their National Hydrogen Strategy focuses on hydrogen produced using renewable energy and includes measures to support the production and identify fields of application. The COVID-19 stimulus package includes a €9 billion investment to support the technology development in both Germany and partner countries. Within the stimulus package is a "package for the future" that contains investments into climate-friendly technologies and transport, although the package garnered criticism for not completely aligning with the country's climate goals. Within the transport sector, the government is investing in new car technologies and low-emission vehicle infrastructure, as well as funding the expansion of public transport, spending €1 billion from 2021, with this spending set to increase to €2 billion from 2025<sup>24</sup>.

In 2019, a multi-stakeholder coal commission proposed completely phasing out electricity generation in coal power plants by 2038, with the option of bringing this date forward to 2035. However, this is not fast enough to be compatible with the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit<sup>25</sup>. The German government is increasing reforestation efforts as well as measures to ensure the forests are more resilient to extreme weather conditions<sup>26</sup>.

The government set up an Independent Council of Experts on Climate Change who will report on emissions developments and the effectiveness of measures in achieving German targets every two years, as well as annually examining and evaluating the emissions data in the government's annual

reports after they are published. The council also assesses the GHG reduction effect of proposed emergency measures and gives its opinion on climate action programmes<sup>27</sup>.

**House of Representatives of the Republic of Indonesia (DPR-RI):** DPR-RI supported the Government of Indonesia's energy policy to increase the percentage of renewable energy of the annual national energy consumption by 23% in 2025 and 31% in 2050. To this end, the Committee for Energy, Mineral Resources and Science-Tech, tabled a Bill on Renewable Energy in 2020 and will soon debate it.

**National Diet of Japan:** The Act on Promotion of Global Warming Countermeasures was amended, without any objection, by the Diet on May 26, 2021. The Act stipulated the carbon-neutral target by 2050 as the basic principle to clarify its legal ground and ensure its policy continuity. This basic principle also uniquely places "the citizens" at the top of the list that enumerates "the parties involved".

**Parliament of New Zealand:** New Zealand has a legally binding target for net zero by 2050, as well as a legally binding target for a 30% reduction in emissions compared to 2005 levels by the end of 2030<sup>28</sup>. However, these targets exclude methane emissions from agriculture and waste sectors, with these sectors having their own target of a 24% to 47% reduction in methane emissions compared to 2017 levels by 2050. Methane emissions from agriculture and waste account for over 40% of New Zealand's emissions. The Zero Carbon act established an independent Climate Change Commission to oversee a five-year carbon budgeting process to drive the required emission reductions<sup>29</sup>.

The New Zealand government has implemented an emissions trading scheme (NZ-ETS)<sup>30</sup>. However, this largely excludes agricultural emissions, which represents 48% of the

country's GHG emissions (excluding land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF))<sup>31</sup>. The government has a renewable energy target of 90% by 2025 and 100% by 2035, and plans to develop policies to support a Renewable Energy Strategy work programme to meet these targets. The government is also developing a roadmap for hydrogen, looking at the domestic use and export of green hydrogen<sup>32</sup>.

Within the building sector, the government has allocated NZ\$56 million to the insulation and heating programme, as well as repealing a clause in the 2004 Resource Management Act, which made it difficult for local and regional councils to prevent high-emitting projects based on emissions and their effects on climate change<sup>33</sup>. Within the transport sector, all new vehicles entering the government fleet must be fully electric by mid-2025<sup>34</sup>. The government launched the New Zealand Green Investment Finance Ltd (MZGIF) with a NZ\$100 million budget, with the aim to accelerate and facilitate investment in emissions reductions in New Zealand<sup>35</sup>. New Zealand plans to use the LULUCF sector as an emissions sink and has a target to plant one billion trees by 2030<sup>36</sup>.

**House of Representatives of Nigeria:** In July 2021 Nigeria's House of Representatives passed the Climate Change Bill, and then transmitted it to the Senate for concurrence. The Bill which when assented to will serve as Nigeria's legal framework for attaining her Climate Change obligations in line with the Paris Agreement, Section 1(f) proposes "...a target for the year 2050-2070 for the attainment of net zero GHG emission in line with Nigeria's international climate change obligations".

**Senate of the Philippines:** The Senate Committee on Finance introduced general and special provisions in the annual General Appropriations Act (GAA) to integrate disaster and climate resilience in the programmes of the government. These provisions cover the

areas of climate and disaster risk assessments for government programmes and projects; sustainable and climate-resilient education and healthcare facilities; climate-readiness of agriculture communities; renewable energy development planning; and climate-resilient livelihoods for indigenous peoples. In 2018, the Committee included a special provision in the 2019 GAA to ensure that the Climate Change Commission, in coordination with the economic planning and sectoral agencies, facilitate the development of the NDC of the Philippines pursuant to the Paris Agreement.

**National Assembly of Suriname:** In 2020, the [Environment Framework Act](#) was passed, which sets out to protect and sustainably manage Suriname's environment as well as support the fulfilment of the international agreements signed by the country, such as the Paris Agreement, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, among others. It establishes the National Environment Authority, governs the development of national environmental strategies, establishes standards for environmental pollution, waste, and hazardous substances, and determines offenses and sanctions along with their enforcement.

**Parliament of the United Kingdom:** Parliament adopted the Climate Change Act in November 2008; it is considered a landmark in climate change legislation and enjoyed strong cross-party support. Its features, particularly the multi-annual carbon budgets, have inspired many other pieces of legislation in Europe and beyond. The Act sets out legally-binding targets for GHG emission reduction by 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels. This was the first legally binding national climate change mitigation target in the world. In 2019, the 80% reduction target was enhanced when the UK became the first major economy to commit to a 'net zero' target by 2050. Since then, the UK has had a legally binding target of net zero by 2050<sup>37</sup> along with targets in law to reduce GHG emissions compared to 1990

levels: 51% by 2025, 57% by 2030, and 78% by 2035. The government is off track to reach these targets. The government has announced that it will publish a comprehensive Net Zero Strategy in the lead up to COP26<sup>38</sup>.

Included within the [Government Response to the Committee on Climate Change's 2020 Progress Report to Parliament](#) are sector-specific actions, which includes: transport, such as a £2 billion package for cycling and walking and £1 billion of support for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs); buildings, including over £3 billion to reduce emissions from the UK's buildings which includes grants to help homeowners obtain funding for energy saving home improvements; industry, £350 million to cut heavy industry emissions, £100 million to scale up low carbon hydrogen production and £100 million into direct air capture technologies; power, including plans to increase offshore wind electricity generation to 40GW from 30GW, and phasing out coal powered electricity generation by 2024; and natural resources, where the government has announced funds to contribute towards planting 30,000 hectares of trees across the UK by 2025 and to restore 35,000 hectares of peatland<sup>39</sup>.

The Scottish government has set a more ambitious and legally binding target of net zero emissions by 2045, with legally binding interim targets of a 75% reduction in GHGs (from 1990/1995 baselines) by 2030 and 90% by 2040<sup>40</sup>. By 2030, they aim to generate 50% of Scotland's energy consumption from renewable resources, and by 2050 they aim to have decarbonised their energy system almost completely<sup>41</sup>. Scotland is also investing in reducing emissions in their transport sector, as well setting targets in their building sector: around 50% of homes and non-domestic buildings will be converted to a low or zero carbon heating system by 2030. The Scottish government is committed to utilising its natural capital in its net zero economy, such as developing rural communities based around

woodland creation, peatland restoration, biodiversity, and sustainable tourism<sup>42</sup>.

Since 2008, five carbon budgets have been approved by Parliament. These budgets have created a pathway towards meeting the UK's 2050 GHG emissions reduction target: in 2018, the UK's GHG emissions were 44% below 1990 levels. This means the UK has met the first two carbon budgets (2008-12 and 2013-17) and is on track to meeting the third (2018-22). However, UK is not currently on track to the fourth (2023-2027) or fifth (2028-2032) budgets.

## Priorities and International Milestones

### **Adopt a legal requirement to hold the government accountable to national climate commitments**

Legislation can play a critical role in fortifying the country's commitments made under the Paris Agreement, and holding governments accountable for achieving their short and long-term mitigation and adaptation commitments. Climate framework laws can be adopted or amended to make these national commitments legally binding, and they can also establish shorter term carbon budgets that support the long-term climate neutrality goals. Specific targets and indicators can be incorporated to monitor and evaluate progress, with shorter accountability checkpoints to ensure the country is on track and to evaluate the need to modify the plan to make it more effective or increase ambition. It should also include oversight and enforcement mechanisms. For example, it can include minimum standards for planning and reporting, appropriate financing for implementation entities and a requirement for a parliamentary review after a certain period. In addition, it can be helpful to establish or identify a third party, made up of technical experts, to provide scientific advice to support the implementation of these plans and monitor their progress. Finally, it is important for this legislation to reinforce active transparency, to keep the stakeholders and the public informed and establish partnerships for the implementation of these goals.

## Good practices

**Congress of Chile:** The Congress of Chile is debating a proposed [Framework Law on Climate Change](#), which would create a legal framework that addresses climate change and supports the country's transition towards economic development that is low in GHG emissions, establishing the goal of achieving climate neutrality by 2050. It also aims to reduce vulnerability and increase resilience to the adverse effects of climate change and to comply with the international commitments assumed by the Government.

**Parliament of Denmark – Folketing:** In 2020 the Folketing adopted a new Climate Act that sets a target to reduce Denmark's emissions by 70% by 2030 compared to 1990 emissions levels, and to achieve climate neutrality by 2050. The act sets out guiding principles, including the recognition that climate change is a global problem and Denmark needs to be a 'leading nation'; that Denmark's targets need to be cost effective; that the green transition should go hand in hand with the welfare state; and that GHG emissions need to be reduced domestically but also cannot simply be relocated outside Denmark. The Climate Act requires the government to set a 10-year national climate target, every five years as well as submitting an annual climate status and projection report to the Folketing.

**Parliament of Finland – Eduskunta:** The Finnish Climate Change Act, which became effective on June 1, 2016, was an initiative from the political parties which formed the coalition government after the 2011 elections. The Act commits Finland to reduce its GHG emissions by at least 80% from its 1990 levels by 2050<sup>43</sup>.

## Assess legislative gaps to effectively deliver national climate commitments

As mentioned, many countries have a framework law on climate change or a set of laws or policy instruments to address climate change<sup>44,45</sup>. The Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment has a [database](#) that tracks climate related laws, policies, and litigation cases globally. In an analysis conducted in 2018, they found that all Parties that ratified the Paris Agreement have at least one law or policy on climate change, and that since the adoption of the Paris Agreement there has been an increase in legislation related to climate change. However only 26% of these legislative acts reference the Paris Agreement<sup>46</sup>.

As countries now develop and work to implement their second NDC and submit their long-term strategies, it is a good opportunity to evaluate existing legislation and identify gaps and priorities to either adopt new legislation or modify existing laws to align these with enhanced short-term and long-term climate commitments. This analysis can also consider new developments to international standards.

The following process can be used to plan a study and identify legislative gaps: **1)** Determine the scope of the study (i.e. as part of a study on SDG related laws, all climate related laws or only those related to a specific number of priority themes relevant to the NDCs); **2)** Identify any legislation that may have adverse impact on the achievement of these goals; **3)** Identify which targets require new laws or amendments; **4)** Determine an order of priority for these reforms; and **5)** Consider creating a medium to long-term legislative reform agenda to guide the drafting and enacting of relevant laws.

Moreover, efforts can be made to mainstream climate considerations into all bills, and when deemed necessary include environmental impact assessments which may ensure that

they are consistent with climate mitigation and adaptation goals. Such strategies can include the development of a checklist or report that is attached to proposed bills to identify how it will support the fulfilment of the national climate goals. Certain countries already have similar tools to track how laws align with the SDGs, including climate action (SDG 13). These tools could be expanded to include other climate priorities such as those listed in the NDC or the long-term strategy.

## Good practices

**National Assembly of Ecuador:** The National Assembly of Ecuador, through the [Parliamentary Group for the Eradication of Poverty and Achieving the SDGs](#), developed a [Verification Checklist](#) that identifies how bills align with and support the implementation of the SDGs. The Organic Law of the National Assembly (its standing orders) was modified to require that each bill include a completed checklist.

**Congress of Mexico:** In 2018, a reform was proposed by the legislative branch to the [General Law on Climate Change](#). The approved reform integrated elements of the Paris Agreement, such as adopting the country's NDC as an instrument in which Mexico established their national mitigation and adaptation goals, as well as their long-term objectives in relation to the UNFCCC. The reform also introduced the mandate to create a National Adaptation Policy and the development of an early warning system for disaster management, as well as progressively and gradually establish an emissions trading system to promote the reduction of GHG emissions.

**Chamber of Deputies of Mexico:** The Chamber of Deputies of Mexico created a [Legislative Strategy for the 2030 Agenda](#) to identify legislative reforms needed to achieve each SDG, including SDG 13 on Climate Action. The strategy not only identified key legislative reforms necessary to address climate commitments but also examined standing committees' understanding of SDGs and how they are working to support these goals.

**Congress of Mexico:** The [General Law on Climate Change](#) established that National Policies on Climate Change will be subject to periodic and systematic evaluation, taking into account the evaluation reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and the evaluations

established under the Paris Agreement. This evaluation is undertaken by the [Coordination of Evaluation](#). The results of the evaluation are published and provided to the Chamber of Deputies and Senate.

**National Assembly of Nicaragua:** Under the National Assembly's [Implementation Plan](#) for Institutional Policies, a checklist was developed to promote the integration of environment and climate change, and generational and intergenerational considerations into all bills that are being reviewed and proposed by permanent committees. Meanwhile, the [Committee of Environment and Natural Resources](#) has developed a [joint work agenda](#) with the Ministry of Environment through which its members attend capacity building workshops on climate change and environment issues and identify areas of legislation which are nationally or internationally relevant that need to be reviewed, developed, or reformed. For example, the Committee examined the Kigali amendment as part of the Montreal Protocol, among others.

**Congress of Paraguay:** The Congress of Paraguay developed an online platform, [Congreso2030Py](#), to track how legislation relates to the different SDGs and their respective targets. This open-source tool helps individuals find answers to questions like: Which SDGs are affected by certain legislative initiatives? Which objectives or goals receive the most attention from parliamentarians, and which are the most overlooked?; and Who are the most active parliamentarians in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda? It includes an algorithm that can automatically classify bills according to the included SDGs, based on a dictionary that is continually improved.

**House of Representatives of the Philippines:** The Committee on Climate Change adopted a resolution calling on the House of Representatives, in the exercise of its oversight functions, to conduct an audit of relevant national

government agencies and local government units in relation to their compliance to existing environmental, climate, disaster risk reduction and management, and appropriation laws, and relevant international agreements, with the aim of ensuring an enhanced national monitoring and evaluation system. In the resolution, the House of Representatives urged that climate urgency be placed at the centre of all policy decision-making from local to national level.

**National Assembly of Senegal:** Senegal's parliamentarians are responsible for authorising the ratification of international agreements. They were among the first to ratify the Paris Agreement, hence Law No. 2016-19 of July 6, 2016 authorising the President of the Republic to ratify the Paris Agreement. The members of the Statutory Committee on Sustainable Development and Ecological Transition participated in the validation of the NDC with the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. In addition, several legislative advances were noted, in particular Law No. 2018-25 of November 12, 2018 on the Forestry Code, which includes provisions for mitigating emissions from the forestry sector. Legislators have also pleaded for the implementation of a targeted communication plan for national climate change project leaders so that they master the mechanisms for submitting applications for access to the Green Climate Fund and equip them better for a better use/absorption of the funding obtained.

The National Assembly has also conducted an evaluation report on climate policies (*Étude sur l'évaluation des politiques publiques sur les changements climatiques*); and produced several technical reports and briefing notes, e.g., a parliamentary report on flooding.

## Support the implementation of Action for Climate Empowerment (ACE) and inclusive climate action

As previously described, ACE refers to efforts to empower all members of society in understanding and engaging in inclusive climate action, through education, training, public awareness, public participation, public access to information, and international cooperation on these issues. It acknowledges the critical role of non-governmental actors and aims to empower them to engage in climate governance, which in turn ends up strengthening governmental efforts by creating an “ambition loop.” Parliaments can support these efforts through various ways, including:

- Adopting or strengthening the national access to information law. [The Inter-American Model Law 2.0 on Access to Public Information](#) provides useful guidance, particularly on active transparency which can be important for the publication of climate related information.
- Adopting or strengthening legislation related to environmental education, skill development or training. Consider the UNFCCC [Guidelines for Accelerating Solutions through Education, Training and Public Awareness](#).
- Adopting legislation that requires public consultations in the development of climate plans.
- Calling on governments to adopt multi-annual national ACE strategies and work plans and ensuring that they are:
  - aligned strategically with the executive’s long-term legislative planning on climate, incl. NDC formulation;
  - reflected in national action plans following related pledges and commitments (e.g. under the [Bali Guidelines](#) for the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration; under regional Environmental Democracy agreements such as the previously described [Escazú Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean](#), or the [Aarhus Convention](#) in Europe; and under the Open Government Partnership);
- communicated to the UNFCCC as part of updated NDCs; and
- adequately resourced and implemented, through the exercise of their oversight and budgetary powers.
- Serving as delivery partners of the national ACE work plans, e.g., communicating information on legislative work related to climate issues with citizens on an ongoing basis.
- Creating spaces for public participation in the development of climate legislation, ensuring that legislation is designed with an intersectional lens and responds to the needs of traditionally marginalized populations and does not exacerbate inequities. The [ParlAmericas Toolkit on Citizen Participation in the Legislative Process](#) and Westminster Foundation for Democracy [Guide for Participation in Democratic Environmental Governance](#) provide many examples of strategies to enable such participation.
- Ensure transparent and equitable access to decision making. Legislation to ensure transparency in lobbying activities, including the creation of a lobbyist registry and a registry of lobbying activities that is accessible to the public, is a critical component of a public integrity system to ensure that decisions are made free of conflict of interests and hold up to democratic processes.

- Calling on governments to push for a high-ambition agreement on a new multi-annual ACE framework at UNFCCC COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021.

The transition to a more environmentally sustainable society should be rooted in climate justice, and seek to equitably improve community resilience, ensure a just transition, and leave no one behind. Climate legislation and policies could negatively impact traditionally marginalized populations, which is why it is so important to include measures to mitigate such impacts when adopting legislation. Participative spaces in law-making can play an important role in identifying potential unintended consequences and developing solutions to address them. For example, it may be important for an environmental conservation bill to consider the impact it may have on their land rights or way of life of Indigenous peoples, and exceptions may be included. In addition, it is important that workers, including those in informal sectors, and communities reliant on non-sustainable industries are engaged through social dialogues and parliamentary hearings, to collaboratively develop just transition strategies towards a green economy. The International Labour Organization's [Guidelines for a just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all](#) shares a set of recommendations to promote decent work on a large scale and mechanisms for social dialogue.

In addition, the previously described [Escazú Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean](#) is another framework that can be a helpful tool in supporting these efforts. Legislators can call on their governments to ratify this agreement and examine any legislative gaps that may exist in their respective countries for its implementation. These may include legal

frameworks to guarantee access to information, the protection of environmental defenders' human rights, systematic consultation with traditionally marginalized groups who have been underrepresented in public decision-making spaces, access to environmental justice, and incentives for private sector sustainability reporting, among others. [The Observatory on Principle 10](#) is a useful tool that analyses legislation, policies, jurisprudence, and treaties that guarantee the full enjoyment by all persons of the rights to have access to information, public participation, and justice in environmental matters, as enshrined in Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration<sup>47</sup>.

## Good practices

**Congress of Argentina:** The Congress of Argentina has adopted a Law on Environmental Education which will create a National Strategy on Environmental Education based on a set of principles, such as a respect for biodiversity, equity, gender equality, citizen participation, among others. Recently, the Congress of Argentina has also approved the Environmental Legislative Forum which has the objective of holding a series of roundtable discussions on different environmental issues between parliamentarians, relevant organizations, and civil society, with the goal of co-creating bills that address the climate crisis.

**Congress of Colombia:** The Government of Colombia has adopted a National Strategy of Education, Formation, and Public Sensibilization on Climate Change which complements the General Law on Education.

**Congress of Dominican Republic:** The Congress of the Dominican Republic participated in the development of their National Strategy to Strengthen Human Resource and Capacity to Advance a Green Development with Low Emissions and Climate Resilience. The country also counts on a Gender and Climate Change Action Plan which recognises the link between gender and climate change and provides strategies to address this relationship within climate commitments. It includes actions that would involve the Congress.

**National Assembly of El Salvador:** The Government of El Salvador has adopted a [National Policy on Environmental Education](#), which considers the references made to environmental education in other related national environmental laws.

**Parliament of Grenada:** Representatives of parliament were consulted to develop the Gender Equality Policy Action Plan which integrates climate action and identifies related policies that should integrate a gender lens.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** The Climate Change Bill creates a platform to achieve Article 12 of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change by legally backing public access to Nigeria's efforts at climate action, provision of education and awareness, and public participation. Also, in March and June 2021, Nigeria approved a [National Action Plan on Gender and Climate Change](#) and a revised [National Climate Change Policy](#) respectively. These two documents make provisions for gender considerations in Nigeria's efforts at addressing climate change.

**National Assembly of Panama:** The National Assembly of Panama through the National Directorate for the Promotion of Citizen Participation has the mandate to promote the submission of citizen proposals and opinion on governmental oversight.

**Parliament of Saint Lucia:** The government of Saint Lucia created a [Climate Change Communication Strategy: Under the National Adaptation Planning Process](#) to provide short and mid-term advice on how the Government can use strategic communications to support NAP, including the Members of the Senate and the House of Assembly.

### **House of Commons of the United Kingdom:**

Six Select Committees of the House of Commons commissioned the [Climate Assembly UK](#) in June 2019 to understand public preferences on how the UK should tackle climate change because of the impact these decisions will have on people's lives. The six committees involved were: [Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy](#); [Environmental Audit](#); [Housing, Communities and Local Government](#); [Science and Technology](#); [Transport](#); and [Treasury](#). The Assembly brought together 108 individuals from across the UK and from diverse populations to examine the question: "How should the UK meet its target of net zero GHG emissions by 2050?" The assembly met for six weekends between late January and mid-May 2020 and published its [final report, The Path to Net Zero](#), in September 2020. The report shows how a representative sample of the population believe the UK should meet its net zero emissions commitment with detailed recommendations across ten areas including: travel, food and land use, consumption, heat and energy use in the home, electricity generation, and GHG removals. The committees aim to use the Assembly's results to inform their work in scrutinising the government.

## Guiding Questions for Parliamentarians

The following questions based on good practices found in existing legislation and through advice by expert organizations can provide guidance to parliamentarians to ensure that climate legislation aligns with national climate commitments<sup>48 49 50 51 52</sup>,

### Coherence

- ? Is there legislation that recognises the country's most updated NDC, long term climate strategy, and National Adaptation Plan, ensuring that the law is coherent with these instruments?
- ? Is there legislation that integrates the importance of climate governance, identifying responsibilities for different national entities, ensuring that the whole country is systematically working together to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement? Does it include responsibilities for compliance and enforcement?
- ? Is there legislation that recognises the importance of evidence-based decision making, and as a result ensure that national climate action considers the advice and reports conducted by scientific bodies, including [IPCC](#) reports?
- ? Is there legislation that aims to ensure that the government follows the guidelines of the [Katowice climate package](#) which support the implementation of the Paris Agreement?
- ? Are climate change considerations mainstreamed into all legislation and policies, ensuring that they are compatible with the country's climate goals? Are impact assessments on new proposed initiatives conducted, and are they validated by a third party if deemed to significantly affect the ability to meet climate goals?

- ? Has an assessment been conducted to evaluate current climate related legislation and policies to ensure they are compatible with the framework climate change law, as well as the country's NDC, the 2030 Agenda, and other relevant multilateral agreements?

### Mitigation targets

- ? Is there legislation that provides ambitious and legally binding long term GHG reduction targets that are compatible with the goals of the Paris Agreement?
- ? Is there legislation that incorporates carbon budgets, the cumulative amount of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions permitted over a period to keep within a certain temperature threshold<sup>53</sup>? Does it limit emissions across the country and sectors?
- ? Is there legislation that limits the number of offsets that the country can use to lower their emissions to encourage domestic emission reductions?
- ? Is there legislation that accounts for and aims to reduce offshore emissions?
- ? Has an assessment of existing national and local legislation on mitigation related topics (i.e., energy law) conducted to identify its connection and compatibility with existing legislation on climate change?
- ? Do the mitigation targets and net-zero objectives found in legislation cover all sectors and GHGs, including aviation and shipping?
- ? Do the mitigation targets and net-zero objectives found in legislation clearly state what the role of carbon dioxide removal technology will be in achieving these goals?

## Adaptation and disaster risk reduction targets

- ? Is there legislation that acknowledges and mandates the assessment of the projected climate impacts on the public, paying special attention to traditionally marginalized communities, and the way they will be addressed?
- ? Is there legislation that promotes the creation or update of national and sub-regional climate adaptation plans and stipulates the need to create or periodically improve national disaster risk management plans and undergo community-based vulnerability and risk assessments to natural hazards?
- ? Has an assessment of existing national and local legislation on disaster risk reduction been conducted to identify its connection and compatibility with existing legislation on climate change?
- ? Do disaster risk reduction plans respond to more than just natural hazards (i.e., do they incorporate biological hazards)?
- ? Has legislation related to building code requirements and/or land zoning been updated to include adaptation measures and respond to climate and disaster risk assessments?

## Transparency and accountability

- ? Is there legislation that integrates specific monitoring and evaluation guidelines that align with the [Enhanced Transparency Framework](#) of the Paris Agreement, as well as enforcement provisions?
- ? Does key climate legislation include specific targets which can be measured during post-legislative scrutiny to help assess the success of the law?
- ? Is there legislation that mandates for progress reports to be tabled before parliament on the advancements the country has made to achieve its short term and long-term national climate objectives? Does it incorporate accountability checkpoints every 5 years which align with the renewal of NDCs and the Global stocktake under the Paris Agreement?
- ? Is there legislation that creates an advisory committee or third-party body made up of different stakeholders including the scientific community, academia, civil society, among others that is responsible for overseeing progress?
- ? Is there legislation that develops or adapts an existing platform to include information and promote transparency on the government's climate advancement? Does it ensure that the public has the right to information and is able to track government progress?
- ? Does climate legislation include a requirement to publish and disseminate accessible guidance that clarifies how it will be implemented, ensuring that stakeholders understand what is required and expected, paying special attention to those individuals that will be especially affected?

? Is there an access to information law that covers the ministry and departments responsible for climate action? Does it meet the international standards established by the [Inter-American Model Law 2.0 on Access to Public Information](#)?

### **Inclusive climate action and public participation**

? Does climate legislation include provisions to mitigate any negative impacts that climate policies may have on vulnerable populations?

? Does climate legislation ensure that the benefits of taking climate action are equitably distributed? Does it contribute to improving social welfare and reducing inequalities associated with factors such as race, sex, class, religion, ethnicity, class, disability, age, sexual orientation, or other relevant characteristics?

? Does climate legislation incorporate mechanisms to support the [Gender Action Plan](#), ensuring that policies are gender responsive by requiring a gender analysis of initiatives and programmes, and improving the availability of sex-disaggregated data?

? Is there legislation that establishes a requirement for public participation in the development of climate policies and programmes?

? Does climate legislation incorporate measures to facilitate a just transition strategy for workers from high-carbon or vulnerable industries? Is there a need for consultation with sub-national legislatures to encourage corresponding legislation at a regional level to reflect their circumstances?

? Is there legislation that supports education, training and public awareness of climate issues and mitigation and adaptation strategies?

### **Financing climate action**

? Is there legislation that establishes a national climate fund to collect and administer public, private and donor financing for mitigation and adaptation efforts?

? Do climate legislation and provisions provide predictability for investors?

? Are there any legislative gaps (i.e., transparency or accountability) to meet requirements to access multilateral funds for climate action?

## Analysis and overseeing the budget for the Paris Agreement

Achieving the Paris Agreement will require financial support to implement NDCs, long-term strategies, National Adaptation Plans, Action for Climate Empowerment plans, among other mechanisms. While financing to achieve these goals is not limited to public funds, these are an integral component to support the implementation of government policies. Parliaments play a crucial role in the allocation of public resources for climate action through the review, amendment (depending on the parliamentary system), approval and oversight of the national budget.

Although rules of procedure may differ in different parliaments, the following mechanisms can generally be considered:

- **Pre-budget consultations or debates:** Some parliaments may undertake their own pre-budget consultations or debates based on key priority issues which can include climate plans, that allow for the participation of civil society organizations, academia, private sector, and citizens. These result in a report to inform the government's budget proposal and/or serve as an informative analysis to set the stage for the parliament's own scrutiny of the budget proposal once presented by the government.
- **Scrutiny of budget proposal and appropriations:** In most parliaments, the finance or thematic focused parliamentary committees, including those on the environment and climate change, have the mandate to review the estimates provided in the budget proposal. This is an opportunity to ensure that they align with climate objectives prior to its parliamentary approval.

- **Monitoring budget implementation:** As the government implements the budget, parliamentarians and corresponding parliamentary committees can oversee the implementation of the adopted policies and programmes to ensure they meet their intended objectives.
- **Scrutiny of audit reports:** Generally, the Supreme Audit Institution will table an annual audit report in parliament, usually for the review of the finance or public accounts committee. It is an opportunity to review past public spending in relation to climate objectives. Some Supreme Audit Institutions may also publish specific findings related to climate and sustainable development objectives which can support parliamentarians' work in these areas.

National budgetary processes naturally focus on the revenues and expenditures included in the State budget; the finances managed by the national government. Some funds geared to climate change are not channelled directly through state budgets. These off-budget expenditures include of course private investments in green technologies, for example solar, wind and tidal power generation, but also multilateral funds such as the [Global Environmental Facility](#) and the [Green Climate Fund](#). These financing instruments deliver much of their support through non-state organizations, in particular international NGOs and multilateral organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, Conservation International, UN agencies, and multinational development banks. Typically these projects do not appear within state budgets and thus parliament does not have any oversight over the effectiveness and value for money of such projects even when they are delivered entirely within state borders. While in the broader field of international development there has been an international commitment to move to country ownership<sup>54</sup> through mechanisms such as budget support, this is not yet the case in the field of climate change financing. In many cases the funds spent on climate change mitigation

and adaptation through these multilateral instruments and delivered by international organizations greatly exceeds environmental expenditures within the national budget voted and overseen by parliament. Environmental, climate change, and finance committees of parliaments need to establish systems for monitoring these off-budget financial flows, their effectiveness, and to move towards country ownership and integration in national budget systems.

As parliamentarians participate in budgetary processes, some budgeting methodologies may be helpful in guiding scrutiny and analysis from a climate perspective. One such methodology is the [Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review \(CPEIR\)](#) developed by UNDP to identify government baseline expenditures for target sectors at the national level. It allows countries to assess the percentage of gross domestic product spending on climate change, the sources of this spending and the related institutional architecture. This methodology has already been successfully applied in 31 countries globally<sup>55</sup>. While to date Ministries of Environment, Ministries of Finance or Planning have been the main partners of CPEIR assessments, this methodology holds significant potential to support parliaments in their role of guidance and oversight of the budget process.

Additionally, the [Paris Collaborative on Green Budgeting](#) established by the OECD has developed a [Green Budgeting Framework](#), which recommends the development of a Green Budgeting Statement to accompany the budget proposal, to facilitate accountability and transparency of the budget's alignment with climate objectives.

### **Gender-Responsive Budgeting**

Budgets and budgeting processes are not gender-neutral, and without appropriate analysis, they can be gender-blind, unintentionally reinforcing inequities between and among groups of women and men. A gender responsive budget recognises the different sex-based needs, interests, and

realities of different groups of women and men and the underlying inequities that arise from these and provides resources to address them. It also recognises the contributions, remunerated or not, that men and women differentially contribute to the production of goods and services, as well as in work, and takes them into account in mobilizing and distributing resources. This is also relevant in the scrutiny of financial allocations to support climate action. One of the benefits of analysing the budget from an intersectional gender perspective is that it can help to reveal how government revenue and expenditures support the achievement of international commitments made in priority areas such as women's rights, reducing inequality, ending social injustices, and sustainable development, and what adjustments are necessary to reach these goals and obligations.

### **For more information consult:**

[Gender-based Analysis Plus \(GBA+\)](#), Canada: Analytical process used to assess how diverse groups of women, men and non-binary people may experience policies, programmes, and initiatives.

[Intersectionality](#), ParlAmericas: Tool which recognises that the experience of systemic inequalities is shaped by overlapping social factors such as gender, race, and class.

### **Parliamentary Budget Offices**

Independent fiscal institutions (IFI), also called Parliamentary Budget Offices or Congressional Budget Officers, are public bodies that aim to promote sustainable public finances through various functions, including monitoring compliance with fiscal rules, production, or endorsement of macroeconomic forecasts for the budget, and/or advising the government and parliament on fiscal policy matters<sup>56</sup>. It should be organizationally, administratively, and financially independent of the executive branch of the government. These offices can provide non-partisan information and analysis to support the parliament's scrutiny of budget proposals and its oversight including on matters

related to climate action.

## Priorities and International Milestones

### Scrutinise budget proposals to ensure they align with national climate commitments

Parliamentarians can analyse budget proposals and appropriations to ensure that these align with the policies and programmes required to achieve the country's national climate commitments and have sufficient financing for their successful implementation. Pre-budget consultations can help identify key priorities or challenges related to these commitments that the budget should aim to address, public hearings with public officials, academic experts and civil society groups can help identify any gaps and reports prepared by the parliamentary budget office can provide important analytical data to determine if the budget will contribute to achieving these climate objectives.

## Good practices

**Parliament of Austria:** The Austrian Parliamentary Budget Office (PBO) was established in 2012, to support the parliament in its national budget responsibilities and to reduce information asymmetry that often limits parliaments' ability to effectively scrutinise government finances. The PBO advises the Budget Committee by providing independent analyses and technical expertise on budget-relevant documents. The PBO provides analysis of the Medium-Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and the Annual Federal Finance Act (budget), as well as monthly reports on budget and outcome oversight. The PBO also provides analysis upon request of the Budget Committee or at its own initiative. In an innovative approach, as part of the 2021 budget analysis, the PBO reviewed all SDGs in comparison to the individual indicators against the EU indicators. It developed a special set of indicators measuring progress against Eurostat's monitored indicators. The PBO has developed a report on performance objectives related to the SDGs by analysing the achievement of the objectives related to gender or climate in a cross-cutting approach. The PBO has developed a Green Climate Dashboard, similar to the SDG Dashboard, which reviews Austria's green budget performance based on a set of indicators, and provides a comparison over time, along with policy recommendations.

**Parliament of Barbados:** Estimates set out the details of the operating and capital spending requirements of Ministries for the fiscal year and constitute the Government's formal request to Parliament for approval of the amounts required in support of budgetary spending sought through Appropriation Bills. Once the Estimates have been approved by Cabinet and are laid in the House of Assembly, the [Standing Finance Committee of the whole house holds a series of meetings](#). When the specific head of each relevant ministry is called, the Minister, along

with their team consisting of the Permanent Secretary, the technical officers, and the heads of the departments under the ministry, go into the “well” of parliament where they are subjected to questions from the other ministers and back benchers (i.e., all parliamentarians) to explain the components of the Estimates that are relevant to their portfolio. This is also the case for the Ministry of Environment and Natural Beautification. These meetings are open to the public and live streamed on YouTube and the Barbados Parliamentary TV.

**House of Commons of Canada:** The Standing Committee on Finance of the House of Commons of Canada leads pre-budget consultations starting approximately nine months prior to the executive’s tabling of the budget proposal in parliament. The committee identifies consultation themes, announces upcoming public hearings, and calls for written submissions. It holds public hearings in Ottawa and across the country four months after this announcement, where the public provide their thoughts on issues they believe should be addressed in the next budget. The consultation process ends with the presentation of recommendations to the Minister of Finance for consideration in the development of the national budget. [The committee’s report to inform the 2021 budget](#) included a significant number of recommendations on the implementation of the Paris Agreement and national climate goals.

**Congress of Chile:** The Library of the National Congress of Chile has established an interactive webpage to [visualize the national budget](#) and its corresponding expenses with disaggregated data by sector and by programme in each sector, including the [environment](#). It also has historic data and presents this information with graphics and charts that can be downloaded. The information displayed is gathered from the government’s budget department.

**National Assembly of France:** France is the first country in the world to implement a green budget approach, an initiative requested by the National Assembly. This approach introduces a new expenditure classification that aims to identify the environmental impact of government spending. It also allows the National Assembly and government to assess the compatibility of the national budget with France’s commitments under the Paris Agreement. The green budget approach responds directly to citizens’ demands to improve transparency and access to environmental information, revealed during the French Great National Debate, which emerged as a response to the Yellow Vests movement. The green budget approach was first tested in 2019 and fully implemented in the 2021 Finance Bill as an annex to the budget. This annex provides a detailed analysis of the environmental assessment of the budget and presents public and private funding mobilised to support the ecological transition, as well as public resources allocated to the environment. National expenditure is assessed based on six indicators: the fight against climate change; adaptation to climate change and natural risk prevention; water resources management; circular economy, waste, and technological risk prevention; the fight against all kinds of pollution; and the protection of biodiversity. This dashboard provides a 360 overview of the level of alignment between the French state expenditure and environmental objectives. The tool helps make ministries accountable for greening their expenditure, enhances transparency, and helps parliamentarians use a budgetary approach to tackle environmental issues.

**Senate of Mexico:** In 2021, the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico piloted [technical tools](#) to integrate sustainable development within the framework of analysis, debate, and approval of the national budget. These included the establishment of criteria for the analysis of the budget, a public report that links proposed expenses with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a tool to guide standing committees in identifying the level of alignment between the proposed programmes and the SDGs.

**Federal Parliament of Nepal:** In collaboration with the federal government, the Federal Parliament's Finance and Environment Committees together developed a handbook for scrutinizing the federal budget with a climate change lens the handbook was first tested in a Provincial Assembly.

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** Shortly after Nigeria became a signatory to the Paris Agreement in 2016, Nigeria's House Committee on Climate Change was able to get an unprecedented Naira 8.1 billion set aside to combat Climate Change in the 2017 Appropriation Act. Although this amount was modest, it amounted to a first step which was driven by the legislators following the signing of the Paris Agreement. This amount was to be reduced in the subsequent years but following efforts by national legislators, under the auspices of the Nigerian chapter of GLOBE in October 2020, there was an increase in the amount budgeted in the 2021 Appropriation Act to address climate change issues. Section 15 of the recently passed Climate Change Bill also makes provisions for a Climate Change Fund.

**Congress of Peru:** The Congress of the Republic of Peru has created a budget visualization tool that provides information on national and subnational expenditures and resources allocated by regions and sectors, including the environment, with graphics, while emphasizing the overall level of implementation (by percentage). The information displayed is gathered from the Ministry of Economy and Finances. The information provided through this tool helps inform the work of parliamentary committees and legislators, particularly in terms of debates and oversight of the national budget.

**House of Representatives of the Philippines:** A provision was introduced in the 2021 General Appropriations Act of the government to strengthen the implementation of the country's climate budget tagging programme: all national government agencies, State Universities and Colleges, and government-owned and controlled corporations shall tag their budgets for climate change adaptation and mitigation in accordance with the established guidelines. The results of the budget tagging shall guide the formulation of subsequent budgets to mainstream climate change adaptation and mitigation strategies in the national development process.

## Promote the alignment of fiscal incentives with national climate commitments

Reforming fiscal policies to put a price on pollution and remove environmentally damaging subsidies can play a significant role in reducing pollution, improving resources efficiency, increasing economic activity by incentivizing sustainable innovation and green economic opportunities, and generating co-benefits such as improvements in human health<sup>57</sup>. Despite these known benefits, it is reported that subsidies for fossil fuel production are on the rise and public funds continue to support fossil fuels more than clean energy, despite this being inconsistent with the 6% reduction per year of fossil fuel production needed between 2020 and 2030 to meet the Paris Agreement<sup>58</sup>. Appropriate reforms can influence private sector and consumer behaviours and contribute to driving investments in green technology research and development which may be critical to achieving the country's national climate commitments. However, such reforms should also consider their potential impact on various segments of the population, including Indigenous Peoples, workers, and communities dependent upon unsustainable industries and lower-income populations, and include strategies to mitigate any negative impacts which may exacerbate existing inequalities. For example, if a carbon tax is adopted, the profits it generates can be recycled back and invested into helping any affected individuals or communities.

## Good practices

**Parliament of Canada:** Since 2016, the Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) has published several reports on carbon pricing, climate change and GHG emissions to support parliamentarians in scrutinizing budget and policy proposals to ensure they meet the country's NDC. These reports can be found below. The 2019 fiscal and distributional analysis discusses the structure of the carbon tax, including how the carbon pricing system is revenue neutral and funds generated are redistributed to provinces and households, particularly to lower-income households.

- 2017: [Canada's greenhouse gas emissions: developments, prospects and reductions](#);
- 2018: [The impact of a pan-Canadian carbon pricing levy on PBO's GDP projection](#);
- 2019: [Fiscal and distributional analysis of the federal carbon pricing system](#); and
- 2019: [Closing the gap: carbon pricing for the Paris target](#).

**National Assembly of Nigeria:** Section 15(e) of the recently passed Climate Change Bill makes provisions for carbon tax and emissions trading, while Section 15(j) specifically provides for "incentivising private and public entities for their efforts towards transiting to clean energy and sustaining a reduction in GHG emissions."

**Congress of the United States:** The [Congressional Budget Office](#) produces several reports that analyse the effects of policies that would reduce pollution and limit the impact of human activities on the climate. The agency addresses the impact of proposed policies on the federal budget, the emissions of GHGs and other substances, overall economic output and income, and the incomes of different groups.

## Champion the incorporation of climate considerations in post-COVID-19 economic stimulus packages

Given the urgency of the climate emergency and the potential co-benefits of a green recovery for population health, economic opportunities, and for reducing inequities, there are many reasons to support a green recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Allocating resources to “clean physical infrastructure, building efficiency retrofits, investment in education and training, natural capital investment, and clean research and development”<sup>59</sup> are among the green policies with the most climate impact potential and that are most likely to gain widespread public support; additionally, these can be implemented relatively quickly and many are labour intensive which would immediately help stimulate the economy, as well as provide positive long-term economic returns. However, it was found that many governments have committed more COVID-19 funds to fossil fuels with many of these funds not being accompanied by any social, economic, or environmental conditions<sup>60</sup>. It is therefore important that as parliamentarians debate proposals for such economic recovery initiatives, they can promote the incorporation of green investments. Consult ParlAmericas’ [Guide on Supporting a Post-COVID-19 Green Economic Recovery](#) for additional recommendations.

## Good practices

**Chamber of Deputies of Chile:** The [Committee on Challenges of the Future, Science, and Technology](#) have proposed legislative initiatives to go beyond the Government’s NDC commitments, as well as include post-COVID19 related criteria and considerations. Examples of such initiatives include calling for the design of a national green hydrogen policy, a forestry initiative as well another on sustainable mining.

**European Parliament:** in December 2020 the European Parliament gave its consent to the 2021-2027 Multiannual Financial Framework (MFF) of the EU support can get to citizens as from the start of next year. Negotiators devised a roadmap to introduce new Own Resources to feed into the EU budget during the next seven years. This roadmap is part of the [‘Interinstitutional Agreement’](#) with the European Commission and the European Council, a legally binding text. The roadmap includes an ETS (Emissions Trading System)-based Own Resource (from 2023, possibly linked with a carbon border adjustment mechanism).

The EU’s long-term budget, coupled with NextGenerationEU (NGEU), the temporary instrument designed to boost the pandemic recovery, will be the largest stimulus package ever financed in Europe. A total of €2.018 trillion in current prices will help rebuild a post-COVID-19 Europe.

The pandemic recovery instrument (Next Generation EU) is based on an EU treaty article (Art. 122 TFEU) which does not provide for any role for the European Parliament. However, EP negotiators secured a new procedure, setting up a “constructive dialogue” between Parliament and Council. These exceptional funds, provided outside the regular EU budget to restart the economy heavily impacted by the pandemic, will be spent in a transparent manner and Parliament, together with Council,

will check any deviation from previously agreed plans. There will be improved tracking to make sure that at least 30% of the total amount of the European Union budget and Next Generation EU expenditures will support climate protection objectives, and that 7.5% of annual spending will be dedicated to biodiversity objectives from 2024 and 10% from 2026 onwards.

### **Call for the government to meet international climate financing commitments**

Recognizing the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances, Article 9 of the Paris Agreement indicates that developed country Parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties with respect to both mitigation and adaptation objectives<sup>61</sup>. According to the OECD, while climate financing for developing countries continues to grow it was still short of the USD 100 billion annual goal in 2018<sup>62</sup>. Moreover, most of the current financing has been provided for mitigation efforts and there is a need for increased financing for adaptation measures, especially for countries that are particularly vulnerable to disasters caused by natural hazards such as small island developing states. Parliamentarians in developed countries can call on their governments to provide or mobilize an appropriate contribution to this critical financial objective to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement on a global scale. In countries that are recipients of official development assistance (ODA), it is important that these funds are also included as revenue in the national budget proposal alongside international loans. This allows parliamentarians to accurately assess the total budget being allocated towards national development priorities.

## Guiding Questions for Parliamentarians

The following questions can provide guidance to parliamentarians in their efforts to ensure the national budget aligns with national climate commitments and promotes a green economic recovery post-COVID-19.

### Budget process

- ❓ Is the national budget process open and transparent so that legislators and the public have access to the relevant information to analyse the Government's budget proposal and implementation? (See the [ParlAmericas Toolkit on Fiscal Openness](#) for more information)
  - ❓ Does the parliament lead or participate in pre-budget consultations or debates where climate issues are discussed?
  - ❓ Does the parliament have a parliamentary budget office or technical support to support the scrutiny of budget proposals related to climate issues?
  - ❓ Does government keep track of 'off budget' expenditures on climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts, such as through multilateral instruments including [GEF](#) and [GCF](#), as well as through private investments, so that parliament has an overall picture of investments and of gaps?
- ### Analysing budget and other financial proposals
- ❓ Does the government apply a [climate sensitive budgeting approach such as the Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review \(CPEIR\)](#) or OECD recommendations as per the [Green Budgeting Framework](#)?
  - ❓ Do programmes or subsidies for non-sustainable sectors include conditions to promote a green transition? Are these conditions public (not constrained by commercial confidentiality) so that compatibility with climate commitments can be assessed?
  - ❓ How does proposed spending for climate action compare to previous years?
  - ❓ How much funding is allocated to efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change respectively?
  - ❓ Does proposed spending align with the policies and programmes indicated in the plan to achieve the country's NDC?
  - ❓ Does the proposal include a gender-based analysis? Does this analysis cover climate related initiatives?
  - ❓ Does the proposal support the creation of green jobs, including training programmes to facilitate a just transition for workers in unsustainable sectors?
  - ❓ Does the proposal improve social welfare and protection, and address inequities that may result from a transition to a green economy?

- ❓ Do they respond to the needs of the population, including the segments most vulnerable to disasters and other systemic shocks?
- ❓ Does the proposal consider the risks posed by climate change to the national economy and population and include provisions for climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction (i.e., risk of disasters caused by climate hazards)?
- ❓ Do fiscal policy proposals align with the country's emission reduction targets (i.e., does it include investments, subsidies, or other tax benefits for environmentally damaging sectors, and if so, are there conditionalities tied to the support)?
- ❓ Do fiscal policy proposals create incentives for private investment in green technologies and sectors?
- ❓ For developing countries, does the budget include public investments and/or policies to facilitate private investment in climate mitigation and adaptation efforts in developing countries?
- ❓ Do COVID-19 economic recovery stimulus responses include investments that both stimulate the economy and support climate objectives?

## Scrutiny of audit reports

- ❓ What were the findings of the Supreme Audit Institution (such as Auditor General or Audit Court, depending on the country's political system)? Were there any red flags raised regarding climate impact and environmental sustainability?
- ❓ Is information reported in a timely manner?
- ❓ Have expenses budgeted for climate action been spent towards these objectives?
- ❓ Have programmes to support climate policies been effective in their delivery?
- ❓ Have they had any unintended consequences?

## Additional Resources for Parliamentarians

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