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# COP27: DESIGNING A WORK PROGRAMME TO SCALE UP PRE-2030 MITIGATION AMBITION & IMPLEMENTATION FOR 1.5°C

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At COP27, Parties will agree the details of a “work programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade”. This will be a crucial piece of the global governance structures for closing the emissions gap in the 2020s to keep 1.5°C in reach.

This briefing outlines potential components of this work programme, a timeline for its negotiation, and how it can interact with other governance structures and processes within the UNFCCC.

**A summary of this briefing is also available.**

## 1. Context

The COP26 **Glasgow Climate Pact** acknowledges that limiting warming to 1.5°C requires a 45% reduction in global CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2030 relative to 2010 levels.

Accordingly, the Pact agreed to establish a “*work programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade*”. A decision on this will be adopted at COP27.

The Pact also establishes a suite of complementary measures for further scrutiny of progress and dialogue to close the 1.5°C emissions gap. This includes: a request for Parties to revisit and strengthen 2030 targets in NDCs (nationally



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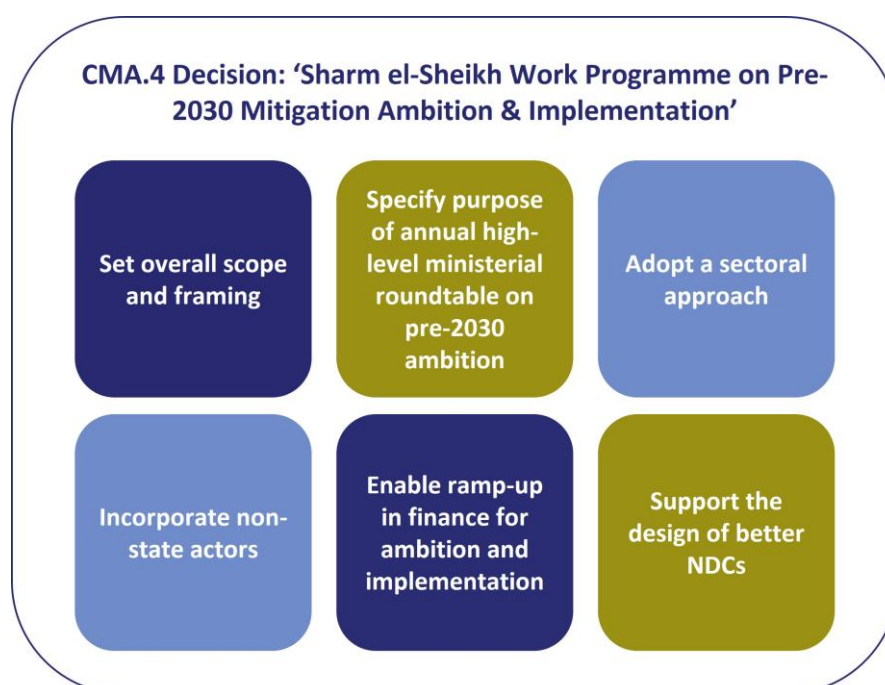
determined contributions); annual high-level ministerial roundtables on pre-2030 ambition; annual NDC synthesis reports; a synthesis report on long-term strategies (LTS) by COP27; and an invitation for the UNSG “to convene world leaders in 2023 to consider ambition to 2030”.

The role for the work programme alongside these processes needs to be defined. Of particular importance will be its relationship to the Global Stocktake (GST), the existing 5-yearly cycle for assessing progress and ratcheting up ambition. The GST is not itself sufficient for addressing the ambition gap this decade as it primarily influences target-setting for 2035 NDCs. In contrast, the WP will be crucial for the 1.5°C emissions gap as it can influence policy-decisions in the 2020s, as a complementary process aimed at informing the GST.

## 2. Proposed elements of a work programme decision at COP27

This section details potential components for the work programme, building on key considerations detailed in the **Annex**. These potential components would be contained within a CMA.4 decision on a ‘Sharm el-Sheikh Work Programme on Pre-2030 Mitigation Ambition and Implementation’ at COP27.

### Summary





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### (a) Set overall scope & framing

To ensure it has a clear focus on pre-2030 ambition and implementation, the COP27 decision will need to explicitly tie the WP to the **aim of closing the emissions gap in the 2020s for 1.5°C** by delivering at least 45% carbon dioxide emissions reductions on 2010 levels by 2030.

- > In practice, this requires the scope of the WP to be broad, with a focus on **not just enhanced 2030 NDCs, but also further sectoral commitments and real implementation of plans and policies**. All three elements together are crucial to close the emissions gap in the 2020s to keep 1.5°C in reach.
- > This also requires a wide scope of actors to be included in its activities. The COP decision should clearly identify that the WP will engage **sub-national, national, regional, and global levels actors, state and non-state alike**.
- > Set annual **one-year** cycle to avoid multi-year cycles of activities creating confusion alongside the existing five-yearly Global Stocktake. A one-year cycle will allow a more **dynamic** WP that could be updated at each COP to reflect lessons learned and incorporate new elements. The WP intuitively should run **until 2030**. This is desirable as it aligns with the existing five-year ratchet cycle and can serve to inform the GST process. Other end dates may only risk adding unnecessary complexity.

### (b) Specify purpose of annual high-level ministerial roundtable on pre-2030 ambition

COP26 has already established high-level annual ministerial roundtables to focus on pre-2030 ambition. The decision on the WP is an opportunity to provide further clarity on the nature and purpose of these dialogues.

- > These ministerials could be designed to serve as **'accountability checkpoints'** every year. At each COP, Parties would be expected – though not mandated – to demonstrate how they are addressing gaps on ambition and implementation (via 2030 NDCs, sectoral commitments, demonstrable implementation of plans and policies). All these elements are required by all Parties to close the 1.5°C emissions gap this decade.

By providing a high-level moment through the WP at which the political expectation is set on countries to turn up with ambition and implementation measures to close the 1.5°C gap, the UNFCCC and its COPs can play to its strengths as an action-forcing forum.



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### (c) Adopt a sectoral approach

The WP can address a key gap in the existing machinery of the UNFCCC and the GST, which to date has lacked a strong focus on sectors.

- > The WP could establish **sectoral dialogues** aimed at exploring progress and forward pathways for decarbonisation, bringing together Parties and non-party stakeholders including experts (e.g., IEA) and civil society. The aim of such dialogues could be to **develop recommendations and roadmaps for delivering on sectoral commitments and their role in enhancing and contributing to the delivery of 2030 NDCs**.
- > These could take place in the run-up to the annual ‘accountability checkpoint’, laying foundations and building political momentum towards Parties delivering new sectoral ambition and implementation, and joining existing plurilateral sectoral initiatives (e.g., Glasgow Breakthroughs, the Global Methane Pledge, Powering Past Coal Alliance, etc.), in providing updates on their progress at the COPs.
- > This could naturally build on sectors that were profiled in the Glasgow Climate Pact, including calls for action on coal phase-down, fossil fuel subsidy phase out, further actions on non-carbon dioxide emissions including methane, and restoring nature and ecosystems.
- > The inclusion of line ministries in such dialogues can ensure their connection to national level policy-making. Outputs from these dialogues would be well-placed to inform the Global Stocktakes too, as a means of influencing post-2030 ambition.

In addition to accelerating sectoral action, the WP is an opportunity to enhance tracking and monitoring of sectoral commitments.

For Parties, progress against the implementation of NDCs will be captured by the enhanced transparency framework (ETF) due to come into force in 2024. There is considerable room for improvement in terms of how NDCs outline domestic mitigation measures at a sectoral level. Most Parties’ NDCs do reflect broad sectoral action being taken, but measures at a more granular level – which will be critical to implementing NDCs in practice – are lacking. According to the **NDC Synthesis Report**, for example, 89% of Parties refer to energy supply measures in some way. But more than two-thirds of Parties do not refer to grid improvement, energy efficiency improvement or shifting to low- or zero-carbon fuels. Similarly, 80% of Parties refer to transport measures. But only 36% refer to electrification,



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32% to shifting to low- or zero-carbon fuels, 12% to shipping and just 6% to aviation. Only 44% refer to industry mitigation measures in any way.

- > The WP could seek to improve this by **inviting Parties to enhance and integrate sectoral action into their NDCs across specific sectors** (energy, transport, buildings, industry, agriculture, land use and waste, or sectors outlined by the Glasgow Climate Pact).
- > This would be an opportunity for Parties to present these in updated NDCs, **either recomunicating NDCs entirely or through simply submitting annexes to existing NDCs.**
- > This would enable them to serve as a transparent log of commitments and implementation, docking neatly with the ETF process. This could also facilitate shared understanding of progress, gaps and best practice, and ultimately help Parties' connect their sectoral commitments to raising the ambition of their 2030 NDCs and delivery of policies to implement those targets.

#### **(d) Incorporate non-state actors**

A sectoral approach naturally involves far greater inclusion of non-state actors, given their integral role in implementing sectoral transitions. Non-state actors can never be a substitute for state action, and there are valid concerns around the integrity of non-state action, particularly the environmental integrity of corporate net zero commitments. Nonetheless, if done well, non-state actors can spur 2030 ambition and implementation through enhancing the 'ambition loop' wherein non-state initiatives reduce costs and create political room for faster-than-expected government policymaking.

- > The WP can capture these synergies by building out a **clearer assessment of the relationship of non-state actor commitments to Parties' emissions reductions**, as a way to strengthen links between the UNFCCC process and real economy action. This analysis would complement the discourse taking place in sectoral dialogues and could foster a better understanding of how high-integrity non-state climate action can quantifiably contribute to Party emissions reductions and in turn help raise 2030 ambition and implementation.

The integrity of non-state action is crucial. There is a risk that integrating non-state actors into the WP risks leading to analysis that double counts their efforts against that of Parties; that non-state action could be seen as substituting for that of Parties; and that non-state actors with low environmental integrity



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'greenwash' the UNFCCC platform by their inclusion. To address these concerns, there are options over the extent to which non-state actors are integrated into the WP.

- > A **curated** approach could see the WP decision text specify sectoral areas (and fossil sources) of particular priority for emissions reductions, including energy transition, transport, industry, land use and agriculture, non-CO2 gases, etc. The role of non-party actors in the UNFCCC is largely formalised through the work of the High Level Champions appointed by COP Presidencies to lead the Marrakech Partnership for Global Climate Action. This could continue to serve as an appropriate model through which to involve non-party actors. It could also build on sectors of interest to the High-Level Champions (e.g., sectors for which S-curve transition pathways have been identified), and strongly dock into assessments of the integrity of corporate net-zero targets led by the UN Secretary General taskforce announced at COP26.
- > Alternatively, a less formalised, broad and **open** platform could bring in more non-state actors and a wider range of sectors. This could improve its legitimacy and buy-in from actors and would be less restrictive than creating a formal link to the work of the High Level Champions. However, it particularly raises the risk that non-parties use the WP as a platform for greenwashing and the broader scope of sectors included may lack focus. Efforts to provide robust analysis on the integrity of sectoral action profiled in a non-curated platform would be essential to root out bad faith actors and sectoral initiatives without environmental credibility.

#### **(e) Enable ramp-up in finance for ambition and implementation**

Finance is a critical ingredient for ambition and implementation. Finance for the implementation of plans and policies is especially key for middle and lower-middle income developing countries and small island developing states. The WP can help ramp-up the flow of investments to support emissions reductions.

- > To do this, the WP could establish processes that **support Parties to build NDC investment plans, thereby making them 'investable'** national-level planning documents that can serve as a basis for attracting public and private investment.
- > Technical dialogues could also enable Parties who wished to, to **review gaps in the provision of resources to finance investment plans** for the implementation of their NDCs and identify ways to close them.



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#### (f) Support the design of better NDCs

The quality of NDCs is crucial to their environmental effectiveness and their usefulness as a planning and investment tool. Support structures (such as the NDC Partnership or UNDP Climate Promise) already provide support to improve their quality.

- > The WP could establish **processes and dialogues to assess and recommend improvements in these support structures**, building stronger institutional architecture to support the design of NDCs.

#### Additional considerations

- > **Equity** will be a crucial component of any final negotiated outcome on the WP. Likely issues to be raised in this regard include the inadequate performance of Annex 1 countries in the pre-2020 period and the need to scale up resources to fulfil the \$100bn climate finance goal.
- > Implementation of emissions reductions policies naturally raises questions surrounding **Just Transition**, and the WP should also embed ways of addressing these issues into its processes and dialogues.
- > The **Sustainable Development Goals** already provide Parties with clear pathways for cross-cutting action on climate and development through to 2030. As such, there may be scope to more closely connect the WP to the SDGs, thereby reinforcing linkages between the UNFCCC and the wider UN sustainable development ecosystem, building further buy-in to already accepted shared goals, and reinforce tracking and implementation in particular of SDG 13 on climate action.
- > Finally, the WP is important but not sufficient for building the politics for accelerating action in the 2020s. The **broader architecture of the global climate regime** will require orienting around this task too. Further consideration is needed as to the accountability and coordination structures across existing initiatives (Glasgow Breakthroughs, Major Economies Forum, Clean Energy Ministerial, Mission Innovation, IEA, IRENA, etc.) that can raise pre-2030 ambition and implementation.



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### 3. Additional UNFCCC opportunities

The design of the work programme should also take into consideration existing elements of the UNFCCC architecture driving ambition and implementation set up at COP26. Potential opportunities they present are summarised below:

Process	Opportunity
<i>COP27: annual high-level ministerial roundtable on pre-2030 ambition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host pre-roundtables exploring progress achieved against Glasgow Climate Pact sectoral commitments (including coal, fossil fuel subsidies, clean power generation, energy efficiency, restoring ecosystems and methane)</li> <li>• Frame ministerial as landing point for Parties to deliver a) revisited and strengthened 2030 NDCs (as urged by the end of 2022 under the Glasgow Climate Pact), b) sectoral commitments and c) demonstrable implementation of policies – all of which are required to close the 1.5°C emissions gap this decade.</li> <li>• Set expectation that countries bring demonstration of progress on ratcheting up targets and implementation each year</li> </ul>
<i>COP27: LTS synthesis report</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess extent to which short-term ambition (2030 NDCs, sectoral commitments, and implementation plans and policies) are aligned with long-term strategies (LTS)</li> <li>• Mandate the UNFCCC Secretariat to prepare annual LTS synthesis reports incorporating these elements, to be made available at COP28 and subsequent COPs</li> </ul>
<i>Annual NDC synthesis reports</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before COP27 shape 2022 NDC synthesis report (and/or other reports e.g., Breakthrough Agenda State of Transitions Report, UNEP Emissions Gap Report) to track sectoral commitments, implementation and their relationship to 2030 NDCs</li> <li>• Decision at COP27 mandating the UNFCCC Secretariat to include analysis in its annual NDC synthesis reports on (i) the contribution of sectoral commitments to reducing 2030 emissions; and (ii) whether sectoral commitments have been fully and appropriately reflected in Parties’ NDCs</li> </ul>
<i>UNSG summit on ambition to 2030 in 2023</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision at COP27 providing more detail on the focus, inputs to and outcomes from this summit</li> </ul>

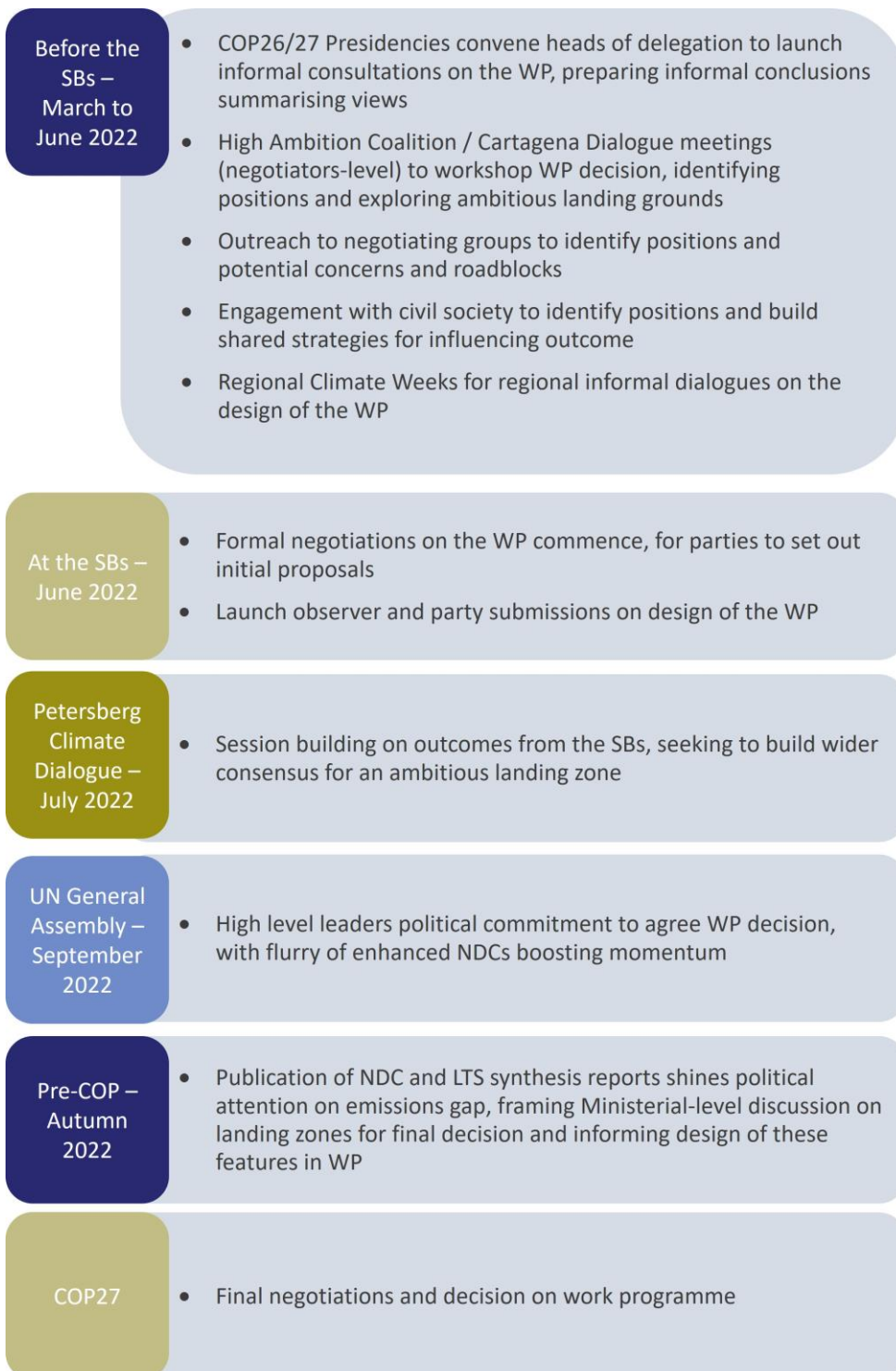




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## 4. Roadmap for landing agreement on the work programme at COP27

Building a coalition of support for an ambitious decision will require concerted diplomacy throughout 2022:





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## Annex: Gaps in the UNFCCC ambition regime

Mapping the existing ambition mechanisms of the UNFCCC against the possible breadth of functions that the regime might play can be instructive as to where the WP can have added-value.

Function <sup>1</sup>	Existing Mechanisms	Possible Gaps
<b>Guidance and Signal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paris temperature goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stronger link to need to halve emissions in 2020s and reach mid-century net zero</li> <li>Strong role in sending signals on common sectoral transformations required on the path to net zero</li> <li>Stronger integration of sectoral and non-state actor commitments into existing NDCs</li> </ul>
<b>Rules and Standards</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Requirements on NDC ratcheting and LTS development</li> <li>Parties to pursue domestic mitigation measures, with aim of achieving NDCs (Article 4.2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More regular review and enhancement of NDCs and LTS</li> </ul>
<b>Transparency and Accountability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency requirements on parties – existing Annex 1 biennial reports and national communications, and transition to Enhanced Transparency Framework</li> <li>NDC synthesis report annually</li> <li>LTS synthesis report by COP27</li> <li>High Level Champions / MPGCA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transparency of non-state actors</li> <li>Tracking and monitoring of sectoral commitments</li> <li>Tracking non-party actions and their relationship to party actions</li> <li>Additional LTS synthesis reports</li> </ul>
<b>Means of Implementation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Climate finance goals and accountability mechanisms for tracking progress on finance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Linking finance more strongly to mitigation outcomes</li> <li>Sectoral pathways</li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge and Learning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Technical dialogues/technical expert meetings (TEMs), best-practice exchange and technical assistance</li> <li>Regional climate weeks</li> <li>Action for climate empowerment (ACE)</li> <li>Collective progress assessment via GST</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Connecting to national level line ministries and regional level coordination</li> <li>Greater role for non-party actors and experts, both in UNFCCC processes and in domestic stakeholder consultations on ways to enhance mitigation ambition</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Typology of governance functions derived from **Obergassel, Hermwille & Oberthur (2021)**



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## About E3G

E3G is an independent European climate change think tank with a global outlook. We work on the frontier of the climate landscape, tackling the barriers and advancing the solutions to a safe climate. Our goal is to translate climate politics, economics and policies into action.

E3G builds broad-based coalitions to deliver a safe climate, working closely with like-minded partners in government, politics, civil society, science, the media, public interest foundations and elsewhere to leverage change.

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