



THIMPHU AMBITION SUMMIT

Momentum for a 1.5°C world

9 Dec 2020



LDC CHAIR'S REFLECTIONS

Overview

Amongst the most vulnerable to climate change, and hit hardest by its impacts, the 46 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) recognise the importance of urgent and more ambitious climate action all too well.

While the COVID-19 crisis has moved to the forefront of political discussions, the climate crisis remains the greatest threat to humanity and science tells us it cannot be ignored as we respond to COVID-19. Indeed, climate action can and must steer COVID-19 recovery efforts. It is in this context that – even in the midst of a global health pandemic, which has paused many things but has not slowed climate change – the LDC Group virtually convened the **Thimphu Ambition Summit**, to build political momentum on climate action for a 1.5°C world.

The Summit showcased LDC leadership on climate action; called for countries to submit by the end of 2020, new and updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Long-term Strategies that are consistent with 1.5°C pathways; demonstrated the need for the international community to scale up the level of finance provided to support vulnerable countries to address climate change; and called for COVID-19 recovery options to align with inclusive and green economic development pathways.

The context: What does science tell us?

As we approach the 5-year anniversary of the Paris Agreement, the existing commitments reflected in current NDCs are far from enough to prevent warming from exceeding 1.5°C – the commitment we collectively made under the Paris Agreement.

Science tells us that limiting warming to below 1.5°C remains possible. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in its Special Report on 1.5°C has warned that, unless the 2030 emission reduction targets in the new and updated NDCs are substantially strengthened and fully implemented through policy and other actions, limiting warming to 1.5°C will be out of reach. Our collective actions must lead to the halving of global greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 to align with 1.5°C pathways.

Warming over 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels will expose millions more people to devastating impacts of climate change. And while the entire planet will share these catastrophes, the impacts will fall most heavily on the most vulnerable, such as LDCs.

There has been a series of encouraging recent announcements on long-term ambition. Countries responsible for around 63% of global emissions have announced net zero emissions by mid-century goals, which analysis has found could limit warming to 2.1°C by 2100 (Climate Action Tracker). If those goals are to be achieved, it is crucial for short term actions between now and 2030 close the ambition gap. The LDC Group reiterates its call for countries to strengthen their 2030 targets consistent with 1.5°C pathways.

LDC leadership

The **Thimphu Ambition Summit** saw a number of Ministers from LDCs setting out their Governments' plans for reducing emissions, increasing adaptation capacity and progressing towards sustainable, green growth development.

LDCs have contributed the least to climate change. Yet, we are committed to action and to stepping up our ambition, even though this burden should not rest on our shoulders.

Last year in September at the UN Climate Action Summit, we launched the LDC vision: *to be on climate-resilient development pathways by 2030 and deliver net-zero emissions by 2050 to ensure our societies and ecosystems thrive.*

Nepal and Rwanda have already submitted updated NDCs; and a significant number of LDCs are planning to submit new and updated NDCs, National Adaptation Plans and Long-term Strategies, and are counting on support from the international community to help implement these plans. All our other fellow LDCs are in the process of preparing new and updated NDCs.

Call for ambition

The **Thimphu Ambition Summit** was able to draw attention to opportunities, challenges and concerns LDCs face in addressing climate change. It also provided an opportunity to hear from a wide range of speakers on climate action and commitments. There was a repeated call for multilateral cooperation, scaled up climate finance for adaptation, building resilience to prevent loss and damage, youth engagement and green economic recovery. The message was loud and clear that fighting climate change is a matter of social justice. We know that while many in our countries are already suffering from climate impacts, the worst is yet to come, and it will be the next generations who suffer the most from our collective inaction.

We welcome the enhanced NDCs that have been submitted already, and the recent announcements with more ambitious 2030 targets. We urge all other countries, especially those with greater emissions, capacity and responsibility, to follow this example and submit more ambitious NDCs consistent with 1.5°C pathways by the end of this year.

We also need to see countries bring forward their Long-Term Strategies, as visionary and transformational planning and actions are essential if the world is to limit warming to 1.5°C, and to undertake robust National Adaptation Plans to foster adaptation and resilience.

We are concerned that there is no agreed process to track the progress made on achieving the goal of \$100 billion per year by 2020. We call for the international community to deliver on this commitment and increase its financial and other support that responds to the needs of the most vulnerable. Increasing the scale of climate finance – including finance for adaptation and loss and damage – and its accessibility remains critically important. The challenges regarding access to finance, technology transfer and capacity building are where support from the international community matters the most.

The Summit also recognized the need for societal change across all sectors. Not only it is important to empower and engage youth and community movements, but it is also important to work across systems, in light of net-zero emissions targets, in order to transform skills and ways of thinking to achieve the scale of change necessary.

We further call for the recovery processes from the COVID-19 crisis to be aligned with transformation that puts us on a pathway to limit global temperature increase to 1.5°C, in line with the Paris Agreement. As called for in the panel discussion, all must work together to change the trajectory of global emissions pathways and end dependency on fossil fuels. We must place the dignity of every human being and the natural environment at the heart of our efforts. Global COVID-19 recovery efforts must be green, fair and attuned to those most affected and align with the targets of the Paris Agreement.

The Ambition Statements from LDCs are [available here](#).