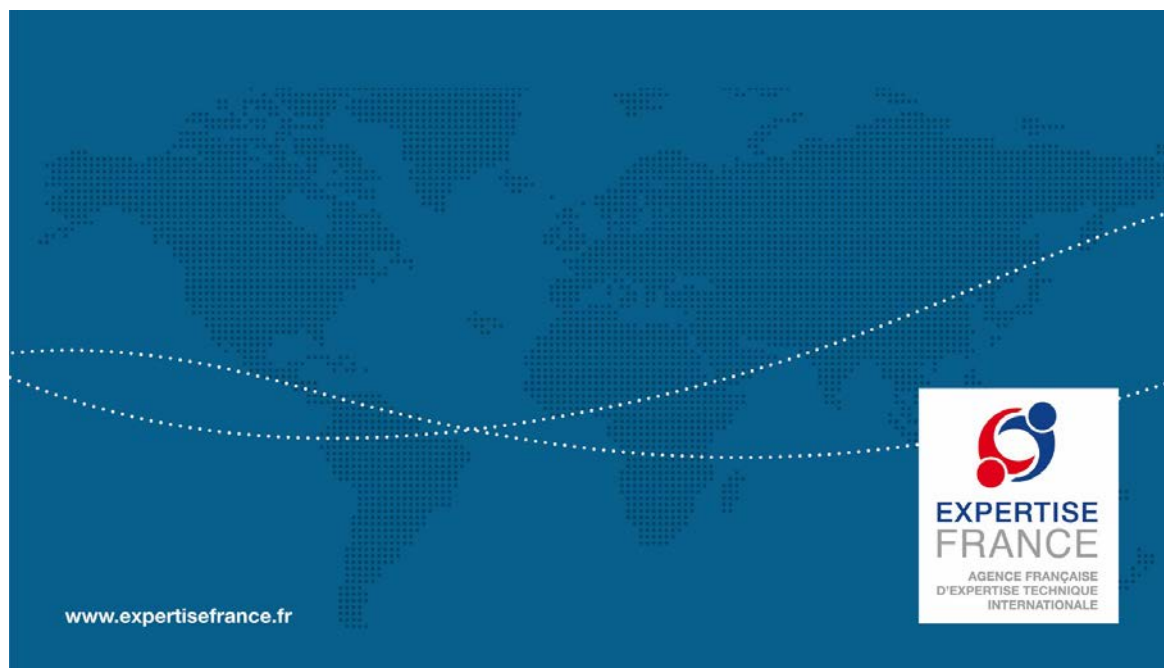




# Pacific guidelines for INDCs: a guide to the development of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions and their further implementation



## SPREP Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Pacific guidelines for INDCs: a guide to the development of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions and their further implementation. - Apia, Samoa : SPREP, 2015

p. cm.

ISBN: 9789820405615 (print)  
9789820405622 (e-copy)

1. Climatic changes – Political aspects – Oceania. 2. Climatic changes – Government policy – International cooperation.  
3. Global warming – Government policy – International cooperation  
4. Conservation of natural resources – Oceania – Congresses.  
5. Sustainable development – Government policy – International cooperation. I. Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) II. Title.

551.69099

This project is financed by The French Development Agency, with a technical assistance assignment to SPREP for the support of the elaboration of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) by its members. The consortium SOFRECO-ENERGIES 2050 has been entrusted by Expertise France under the terms of the service contract no. Framework Contract N°2015-AC-001-15-DDU0C006-INDC-SUPPORT-FACILITY. The opinions expressed are those of the consultants and do not necessarily represent the official view of the AFD



These guidelines have been developed under this contract by:

- Stéphane Pouffary, ENERGIES 2050
- Murray Ward, Global Climate Change Consultancy (GtripleC)
- Gavin Kenny, Earthwise Consulting Ltd
- Ed Langham, Institute for Sustainable Futures

**Acknowledgments:** These guidelines and the thinking behind them have greatly benefitted from the generous input of Espen Ronneberg, Ewan Cameron (SPREP); Celine Dyer, Teina Rongo, (Cook Islands); Charlotte Pihigia (Niue); Nicholas Kloulubak, Lorraine Rivera (Palau); Losana Latu, Ofakiolohau Sefana (Tonga); Jamie Ovia, Fafetai Namoto (Tuvalu)

## Table of contents

Acronyms.....	5
Section 1: INDCs in the context of PICs .....	6
1.1. An international political momentum, a unique national opportunity .....	6
1.2. INDCs within the context of LDCs/SIDS unique circumstances.....	8
Section 2: Methodological approach for INDC elaboration .....	9
2.1 Some general points.....	9
2.2. INDC suggested template.....	9
Section 3: A step by step roadmap to help PICs INDCs elaboration .....	10
Step 1: Mandate for INDC framing and political message .....	10
Step 2: Collect the important key background information .....	10
Step 3: Undertake analysis of this key information .....	11
Step 4: Identify practical options for new actions that align with priorities for resilient national development .....	11
Step 5: Identify nature, form and scale of the contributions in the INDC .....	11
ANNEX 1. Template for an INDC.....	13

This Guide provides practical guidance to Pacific island countries (PICs) on how to prepare their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions or ‘INDCs’ to be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat.

It is informed by existing ones such as the Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) and Ricardo-AEA “*Guides to INDCs*” second edition which focus on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs)<sup>1</sup> as well as the World Resources Institute (WRI)<sup>2</sup>, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and UNFCCC ones. A policy brief by the South Centre also provided helpful insights.<sup>3</sup>

It has been developed in conjunction with, and informed by discussions at an INDCs workshop held at the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Apia, Samoa on 28-29 September, 2015 and a subsequent meeting with representatives of five PICs on 30 September.

The first section of this Guideline presents the context for the elaboration of the INDC and key objectives in the context of the unique circumstances of Pacific island countries. The second section provides some guidance on the elaboration process. The third section describes process steps for preparing and submitting an INDC in advance of the COP 21 meeting in December 2015.

---

<sup>1</sup> Downloadable at <http://cdkn.org/resource/resource-guide-helps-least-developed-countries-navigate-intended-nationally-determined-contributions-indcs/>

<sup>2</sup> Downloadable at [http://unfccc.int/focus/indc\\_portal/items/8766.php](http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php)

<sup>3</sup> Downloadable at [http://unfccc.int/focus/indc\\_portal/items/8766.php](http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php)

## Acronyms

CDKN - Climate and Development Knowledge Network

COP - Conference of the Parties (to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change)

GHG - Greenhouse gas (emissions)

INDC - Intended Nationally Determined Contributions

JNAP - Joint National Action Plan on climate change and disaster risk management

LDCs - Least Developed Countries

MRVable - Measurable, Reportable, Verifiable

NAMAs - Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions

PICs - Pacific island countries

PIM - Preliminary Information Methodology document

RE - Renewable Energy

SIDS - Small Island Developing States

UNFCCC - United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WRI - World Resources Institute

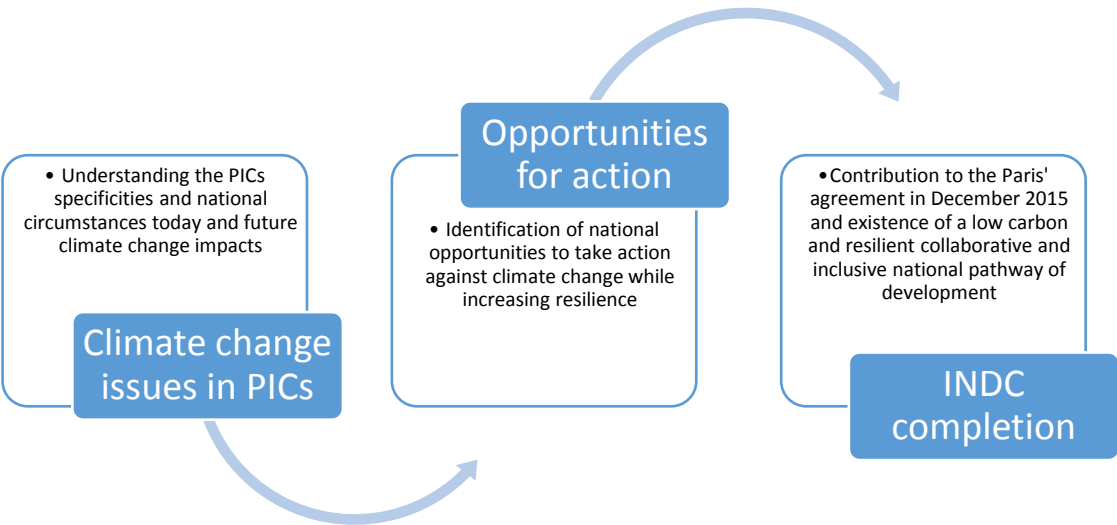
# Section 1: INDCs in the context of PICs

## 1.1. An international political momentum, a unique national opportunity

All Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have agreed on behalf of the Lima Call for Climate Action (Decision 1/CP.20) to develop and communicate to the Convention secretariat before 1<sup>st</sup> of October, their Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs). This is a voluntary contribution to the expected global agreement to be reached in Paris at the end of this year during the 21<sup>st</sup> Conference of the Parties (COP 21). The Secretariat will then prepare by 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2015 a synthesis report on the “aggregate effect of the INDCs”. It has to be mentioned that, so far, the legal nature of INDCs is not yet determined.

Pacific island countries (PICs), as Small Island Developing States (SIDS), despite their minimal contributions to global GHG emissions, are among the most vulnerable countries to the consequences of climate change. Most SIDS are also Least Developed Countries (LDCs) or have just recently graduated from LDC status. Poverty reduction and economic development are therefore key priorities.

The Lima Conference of the Parties (COP 20) outcomes has specified that INDCs from LDCs and SIDS should take into account their special circumstances, referred to as “national realities” and level of preparedness. In other words, these countries are not committed to include absolute or economy-wide emission reduction commitments, as developed countries should do. More specifically, even if wording remains unclear despite several intersessions dedicated to clear the issue, LDCs are invited to base their INDCs on conditional external finance or support to help them implement strategies, plans or projects while putting the emphasis on their development needs. This is likely to increasingly include their resilience building needs and concerns, along with low carbon development priorities.



Source: ENERGIES 2050

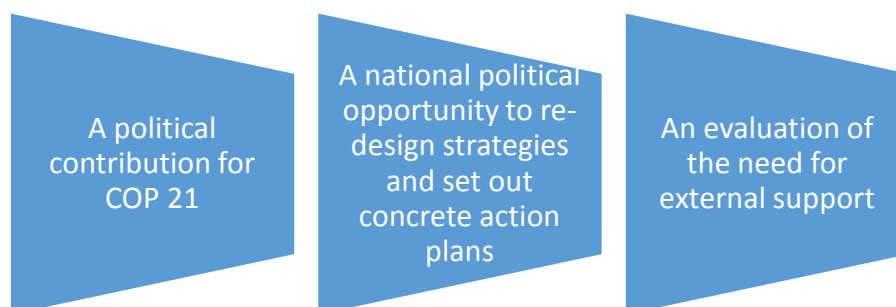
Even if the ambition of the future climate agreement relies almost exclusively on the commitments of developed and emergent economies, the contribution of LDCs and SIDS is of the utmost importance to help build the necessary political momentum for strong commitments to GHG emission reductions. This is therefore a unique opportunity for PICs to (Ricardo AEA – CDKN, 2015):

- *(demonstrate) that plans for economic growth are compatible with low-carbon development pathways and avoid lock-in to carbon intensive infrastructure;*
- *(highlight) the adaptation-related co-benefits of mitigation actions, and other co-benefits such as poverty alleviation, improved air quality and health, energy access and security;*
- *(capture) the mitigation-related co-benefits of planned and potential adaptation activities;*
- *(encourage) other countries to take equivalent action, thereby increasing global ambition and reducing climate impacts;*
- *(attract) international support to implement action such as finance, technology transfer and capacity-building.”*

With the submission of commitments through INDCs the COP 21 meeting will represent a particularly important moment in time for humanity. From a PIC perspective it is an important opportunity to remind the international community of their needs for sustainable development, with a strong focus on resilience building at the forefront of their solutions to climate change. For PICs, INDCs are not only a way to contribute to the global objective of the UNFCCC convention; they also are clearly a unique opportunity for countries to describe their own long-term development future from mitigation and adaptation perspectives. By doing so this should serve both international and domestic agendas.

Despite many uncertainties relating to the content, form as well as the legal nature of INDCs, LDCs and SIDS should consider their INDCs as an opportunity to proactively support the international process while remaining concentrated on their needs for a low carbon and resilient pathway of development. As depicted below, the INDCs process can be seen as serving three purposes:

- (1) preparing a political document for a political purpose – the COP 21 negotiations
- (2) an opportunity for an integrative domestic process to evaluate and redesign climate change related strategies and plans within an overall framework aimed at enhancing resilience and supporting low carbon development
- (3) through this integrative effort, to better identify and articulate the need for external support – for finance, capacity building and technology – by transforming strategies into measurable, reportable and verifiable ('MRVable') concrete actions in the near, medium and longer terms.



Source: ENERGIES 2050

In conclusion, while contributing to the global climate agenda, INDCs can be considered by PICs as a unique opportunity at the national level to scale up on-going initiatives and to design national

strategies that are climate-compatible. Thus the logical entry point for an INDC can be through resilience building with mitigation co-benefits.

**Given these considerations, these guidelines therefore look at INDC's through a 'resilience first' lens. INDCs developed by PICs (and potentially other SIDS and LDCs) using these guidelines will present differently than INDCs that have focused first on mitigation contributions with additional information then provided on adaptation.**

## 1.2. INDCs within the context of LDCs/SIDS unique circumstances

LDCs and SIDS face a series of common challenges as summarised in the CDKN and Ricardo-AEA's INDCs guide<sup>4</sup>:

- *Their emissions are low in global perspective, but they may wish to take actions to embrace low-carbon development and climate-proof their national policies and infrastructure investments;*
- *They have a prevailing need for economic development and poverty reduction, including improving energy access;*
- *They have limited capacity to undertake the analysis needed to develop the evidence base for their INDC;*
- *They are likely to face constraints in implementing the actions envisaged in their INDCs and certain actions/levels of ambition are likely to be dependent or conditional on the provision of funding from developed countries;*
- *They are among the most climate-vulnerable countries and therefore adaptation is likely to be a major focus of their national climate change plans."*

To put the issues mentioned above into perspective, PICs are exposed to many challenges as a consequence of climate change. This includes the impacts of sea-level rise and coastal degradation, ocean acidification and temperature effects on coral reefs and marine life, impacts of extreme weather events, consequences for agriculture and food security needs, impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems, and potential severe effects on limited water resources in many cases.

In parallel PICs rely heavily on fossil fuels to cover their electricity needs – while only 30% of the population on average has access to electricity<sup>4</sup>. At the same time, these countries have some of the highest renewable energy (RE) potential per capita such as solar, biomass, and sea resources. Indeed, *"RE can reduce the PICs' dependence on fossil fuel thereby reducing the growth rate of GHG emissions from fossil fuel use. In addition, it can provide cleaner, more reliable and cost-effective energy services that are needed for the sustainable development of the PICs. However, this has been hindered / constrained by many barriers"* (SPREP website: <http://www.sprep.org/Pacific-Islands-Greenhouse-Gas-Abatement-through-Renewable-Energy-Project/about-piggarep> accessed on September 9 2015).

---

<sup>4</sup> Source SPREP website: <http://www.sprep.org/Pacific-Islands-Greenhouse-Gas-Abatement-through-Renewable-Energy-Project/about-piggarep> accessed on September 9 2015.



## Section 2: Methodological approach for INDC elaboration

### 2.1 Some general points

Given practical constraints and considerations PICs face, a pragmatic approach is needed by PICs that are preparing INDCs before COP 21 to overcome barriers such as the **absence of relevant information** at the time of INDC preparation, including:

- lack of information on the financial resources and technology transfer that will be made available to developing countries and specifically to the developing country preparing the INDC;
- absence of comprehensive (or even initial) action plans for mitigation or for adaptation (and loss and damage);
- absence or incomplete assessment of needs in terms of financial resources, technologies, institutions, and human resources, etc.

Because of these and other reasons, it is reasonable for developing countries to put forward their initial INDCs with some contributions containing figures, while other contributions may not have figures. It should be understood that **countries can revise their initial INDCs** and/or provide more information (including on needs and financial or technological resources required). There is a time period of four years between the COP 21 in Paris and the start of 2020, the first year of the Paris agreement. Therefore there is ample time for a country to revise its INDC.

In this context, countries need not feel they have to put forward a complete set of information or the most ambitious actions they can envisage, as this initial set of contributions can be amended before 2020. Since the information on financial resources and technology support is not yet provided, the developing countries do not yet know the level of support that will be available. They thus need not put forward what they may consider the highest level of actions, as this may have to wait for more information to be available (i.e. information on support, and on the country's needs and gaps, as well as its post-2020 action plans).

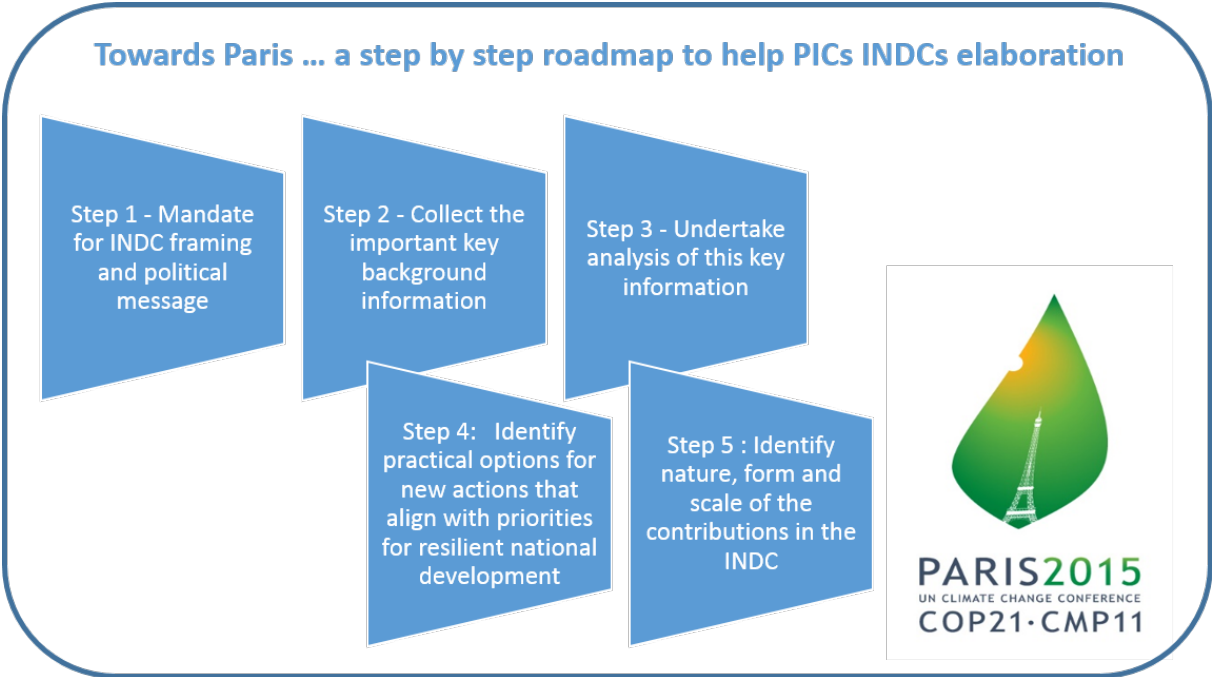
The INDCs to be submitted need not be complex or complicated. **INDCs can be simple.** The items on adaptation and loss and damage (as applicable) can draw from strategies and plans the country already has in place. Items on mitigation can contain the items or sectors where figures are available.

### 2.2. INDC suggested template

Ideally, in line with the political purpose of an INDC (wherein it can be a background document for bilateral discussions between Ministers, supported by senior advisors) an INDC should be quite short. It can refer to other publicly available sources of detailed data and analysis as needed, including the results of new analysis undertaken during the INDC process.

An indicative general template for an INDC is provided in Annex 1.

### Section 3: A step by step roadmap to help PICs INDCs elaboration



Source: ENERGIES 2050

#### Step 1: Mandate for INDC framing and political message

It is possible that there may be misunderstandings at the political levels in the country and by relevant stakeholders about the purpose and scope of the INDC process (e.g. that it is just about mitigation so not aligned with the country’s important priorities). Officials responsible for the INDC should find an early opportunity to clarify with their political leaders, superiors in their departments and other stakeholder groups that the INDC process presents much greater opportunities to support the political message that the country wants to convey at the COP 21 meeting and for their national climate resilient development agenda.

In this way officials can seek and receive a mandate for the INDC that will emerge from their efforts.

#### Step 2: Collect the important key background information

To prepare for the task of completing all the sections of the INDC as set out in the template in section 2.2, it will be necessary to collect relevant background policy and planning documents to identify existing planned national activities across relevant resilience, adaptation and mitigation themes.

This task is likely to be easier for documents related to resilience building because of the national priority given to these. (Note however that this would be a far more complicated task, and much more time consuming, if a full analysis of resilience building needs and costs were to be undertaken.) Within the context of these initial INDCs it is likely to be much more difficult for mitigation. Countries may not have recent GHG emissions inventories for recent years that provide the data for current emissions and recent trends in emissions. Given that a core component of an INDC is what contribution can be made to mitigate GHG emissions in the post 2020 period, it is important to understand the main activities in the country that give rise to GHG emissions and removals, and the mitigation actions existing and planned. GHG inventories require the **quantity of an activity** in a

given year (e.g. the amount of diesel used for electricity generation), and then multiply this by an **emission factor** to convert this to an amount of emissions of a specific GHG e.g. carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) or methane.

As existing GHG inventories may be out of date, the most recent activity data should be collected (or estimated where appropriate) to obtain an understanding of current GHG emissions and emission trends. To assist PICs to undertake this data collection process quickly, a *Preliminary Information Methodology (PIM)* document has also been prepared under this contract and should be used as a companion document to these guidelines.

### Step 3: Undertake analysis of this key information

The objectives of this analysis step are to better understand:

- the nature, scope, timeframes and funding status of existing planned national activities:
  - to improve resilience or to implement adaptation measures, especially where these may have synergies with and co-benefits for mitigation
  - for mitigation, in sectors that will have a substantial bearing on national GHG emissions
- gaps and needs, with respect to the likely achieving of goals and objectives in national strategies, policies and sector plans, including whether additional support is required to address such gaps and needs (so what conditionalities exist)
- the current levels and trends of GHG emissions (by looking at the inventory and activity data).

### Step 4: Identify practical options for new actions that align with priorities for resilient national development

Based from this collection of information and analysis, countries then need to work towards developing a simple and clear 'story' for their INDC, as described in the sections of the template described in section 2.1.

It is likely that many PICs will have plans and targets for the period to 2020, but no defined activities beyond this timeframe. As such, it may be necessary to consider how national development plans contributing to climate resilience might evolve over the period 2020-2030. This step considers potential new activities, or extensions of planned activities that might be expressed as adaptation or mitigation efforts.

The decision as to what form and scale of quantitative mitigation contribution to include in the INDC is likely to be a key challenge facing INDC officials (and their technical assistance team). This should be approached by assembling a list of **practical options** in key sectors and sources and, to the extent possible, identifying their merit rankings (e.g. their materiality in terms of mitigation outcomes and their costs) and associated conditionalities.

### Step 5: Identify nature, form and scale of the contributions in the INDC

Every 'story' for adaptation and mitigation will have consequent implications for needed investment – in technologies, implementation systems and human capacity. These implications need to be analysed by the INDC officials so that a clear picture can be presented in the INDCs as to what types and amounts of external support the country will need to implement their resilience, adaptation and

mitigation plans.

A useful approach for this analysis is, for each of the major investment plans, to consider the **what** (the nature and scale of the needed/proposed investments), the **who** (the domestic and international players involved in these plans, both public and private) and, the **why** (the motivation for these players to act). It also needs to address relevant MRV issues.

INDCs should categorise contributions as ‘unconditional’ or ‘conditional’ upon international support. For example, activities already implemented may just form part of the business as usual GHG emissions baseline, planned activities that have a clear path to implementation and secured national funding may form part of an ‘unconditional’ contribution, while planned activities that are *not yet funded* may form part of a ‘conditional’ contribution. Countries may wish to include new, unplanned activities for which sufficient data is not yet available in a qualitative or indicative way. These may not be considered MRVable at this stage, but can be elaborated further in a later INDC update.

## ANNEX 1. Template for an INDC

### Top Page: Key Messages

*This should present the key messages of the INDC. Its purpose is to provide Ministers of the country that will be attending COP 21 with a document that can be used in bilateral meetings with counterparts in other countries. Key messages should be presented as bullet point statements with a small amount of additional elaborating text.*

### Section 1: Introduction

*This section should set the scene for the INDC. It should*

- (1) summarise the national circumstances of the country,*
- (2) set out the broader development issues and priorities, and where addressing the challenge of climate change fits within these priorities*
- (3) summarise the key climate change issues faced by the country.*

*Its primary purpose is to help convey the key political message of the country with respect to the challenges they face in addressing climate change, and what they hope to see emerge from the COP 21 negotiations. This information can also set the base for the 'Fair and Ambitious' response in section 7 of the INDC. (Notional length: 1 page)*

### Section 2: National Response (high level)

*This section should describe how, in light of the information set out in section 1, the country has established a strategic framework for its broader development. This can, for example, involve high level vision statements, and sustainable development frameworks. The purpose of this section is to provide the national context for climate change action.*

### Section 3: Approach to building resilience to climate change

*This section should provide some greater detail about the structure of how the country is addressing the challenge to build its resilience to climate change. Here, the term 'resilience' is an overarching one, so inclusive of adaptation, mitigation, and disaster risk reduction. This can include information on visions, policies, goals, objectives, plans and implementation status. The primary source material is the national climate change policy and JNAP<sup>5</sup> (or equivalent). In the absence of either of these other relevant information should be used, with reference to the need for a climate change policy and JNAP. The purpose of this section is to provide a more detailed context for resilience building policy development and plan implementation across all sectors and throughout the country.*

*(Notional length: 1-2 pages)*

---

<sup>5</sup> Joint National Action Plan on climate change and disaster risk management

#### Section 4: Sector Policies and Plans

*This section should provide climate resilience-related details in specific sectors policies and plans, e.g. Energy Roadmaps, Water Sector Plans, Agriculture Sector Plans, Forest Policies, Waste and Sanitation Plans, Health Sector Plans. The primary purpose of this is to identify major gaps, needs, and actions required. An example of a need could be the need for funding for a sector plan that is already fully aligned with a national focus on resilience building; or a gap could be the need for development/revision of a sector plan to ensure that resilience building is an integral part, with a further need for subsequent funding. The timeframes for this information should be those that are applicable to the specific policies and plans. These may be near term, e.g. the next few years; mid-term, e.g. to 2020 or 2025; or longer term e.g. to 2030 or longer. Where gaps and needs are identified, this information should also include whether these gaps and needs are expected to be addressed and met within national budgets, or whether international support is still needed. In this latter case, it should also note where such international support has already been secured, and where new and additional support is necessary. Any other conditionalities, beyond these ones to do with support, should also be flagged here. A table is also provided in Annex 1 to summarise the priority items that you want to highlight as needing support.*

*(Notional length: 1-2+ pages)*

#### Section 5: Mitigation context

*This section should provide the context for mitigation action in the country, with reference to relevant sector policies and plans to ensure alignment with the national planning context. This should include how any mitigation goals connect to the information already contained in sections 1-4. A key piece of information in this section would be a GHG emissions inventory overview (emissions and emission trends). It should have relevant quantitative information on the key sectors and sources where sector plan actions are intended to be taken that are expected have a material effect on emissions. (Note that such actions may not be planned for climate change mitigation purposes.)*

*(Notional length: 1-2 pages)*

#### Section 6: Mitigation contribution

*This section should provide the details of the proposed contribution to mitigation. This is best presented in a tabular form. An example of such a table is provided below. The information should:*

- be as **clear and transparent** as possible (Note that this should be a key criteria when the country decides the nature and form of the contribution, or contributions, it includes in this section – so, for example, whether this is a fixed level of emissions in a given sector or subsector in a future year with respect to some past or future year; or a specific level of e.g. renewable energy or electricity in a future year; or some commitment to strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emission development as allowed for in paragraph 14 of the Lima decisions at COP 20 upon which the INDC process is based.)*
- provide detail of existing and proposed **concrete actions**, which outcomes are quantified/quantifiable and ‘MRVable’, including on what support is sought to implement these actions (Note that the level of detail here should just be what is possible. It can be quite concise*

including, for example, that further details will be provided in future NAMAs (Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions) or specific requests to, e.g., the Green Climate Fund.)

- provide **timeframe information** that indicates when these actions will or may be implemented, and **what conditionalities exist** with respect to these actions and timeframes. (Note that some actions, such as policies, may already have been undertaken; however the implementation actions flowing from these policies may not yet have happened, and conditionalities may exist with respect to such implementation. While INDCs are intended to refer to the period after 2020, this is not meant to exclude information on actions that are occurring prior to 2020, which will have lasting effects that occur after 2020. This is especially important where such pre-2021 actions may still be conditional, so such post-2020 effects are not certain to be achieved. The key issue in the information on mitigation outcomes is to provide clarity as to what is ‘in baseline’ and what is expected to occur based on actions that are yet to be taken, including those for which support is needed. The need for support can be a key conditionality. Other conditionalities can be associated with external factors such as the availability of new affordable technologies – or the improved affordability of existing technologies – and the cost of fossil fuels in the future.)

A table is also provided in Annex 1 to summarise the priority items that you want to highlight as needing support.

- provide qualitative statements on more speculative contributions in sectors without MRVable plans, or where existing data on these sectors is not an adequate basis upon which to provide quantifiable contributions.  
(Notional length: 1-2+ pages)

COUNTRY:		DATE:
Parameter	Information	
Period for defining contribution (outcomes)	Contribution year/s: Implementation period:	
Type and level of contribution		
Reference year/ Reference case		
Estimated quantified emissions impact		
Coverage	Sectors	
	Gases	
	Geography	
Planning Processes		

### Section 7: Statement on “Fair and Ambitious”

The purpose of this section is to boldly state that contributions by PICs to address climate change are not the responsibility of PICs, as it is the emissions of other countries that have

*caused these challenges to them. This statement can recall salient details included in section 1. This statement can also reinforce the conditionality aspects contained across the INDC.  
(Notional length: < half page)*

#### **Section 8: General caveats statement**

*This final section provides a place to outline other general caveats that may not have been already flagged in the detail provided on conditionalities. This may, for example, include things such as data and planning uncertainties, unknown costs etc.  
(Notional length: < half page)*



**Annex 1 Specific strategies, policies, plans and actions, including timing and support needs**

*Include here high priority items on which you wish to provide specific details that link to more general statements (e.g. around gaps and needs) in the main INDC narrative. The main purpose of this table is to provide a summary of priority items that you want to highlight as needing support. But even where additional support is not needed, it can also be useful to highlight significant initiatives that the government is needing to take from their own budget resources.*

Item	Planned period of implementation	Conditional on additional support?		Support partner(s) identified?		Notes
		Y	N	Y	N	

