

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD

on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

GOVERNMENT OF VANUATU

UNFCCC Engagement Framework for Vanuatu

UNFCCC Engagement Framework for Vanuatu

© National Advisory Board of Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB)
UNFCCC Engagement Framework for Vanuatu 2025

Disclaimer

All rights for commercial/for profit reproduction or translation, in any form, reserved. NAB authorises the partial reproduction or translation of this material for scientific, educational or research purposes, provided that NAB and the source document are properly acknowledged. Permission to reproduce the document and/or translate in whole, in any form, whether for commercial/for profit or non-profit purposes, must be requested in writing.

Prepared by

Ms. Leana William
Multilateral Environmental Agreement Officer
Secretariat
The National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction
Ministry of Climate Change
Government of Vanuatu
Port Vila

Phone: +678 22068 / 34360
Website: www.nab.vu



Contents

Acronym List	04
01 Executive Summary	05
02 What is the UNFCCC?	06
03 UNFCCC Negotiating Blocks	13
04 Vanuatu's Engagement in International Climate Change Negotiations	15
05 Coordination of UNFCCC COP Arrangements	17
06 Regional Networks	18
07 Mainstreaming of UNFCCC Engagements into National Plans	20
08 Institutional Arrangements	22
09 UNFCCC Focal Points - Vanuatu	24
10 UNFCCC Taskforce	25

Acronym List

ADP	Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for enhanced Action
SIS	Alliance Of Small Island States
AOSIS	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to
CMP	the Kyoto Protocol
COP	Conference Of the Parties
DEPC	Department of Environmental Protection And Conservation
GHG	Green House Gas
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
NAB	National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MSG	Melanesian Spearhead Group
MOCC	Ministry of Climate Change
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
PMU	Project Management Unit
PIFS	Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environmental Program
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USP	University of the South Pacific
VBTC	Vanuatu Broadcasting and Television Corporation
VCAN	Vanuatu Climate Action Network
VEPAC	Vanuatu Education Policy Advocacy Coalition
VMGD	Vanuatu Meteorological and Geo-Hazards Department

1 Executive Summary

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provides the basis for concerted international action to mitigate climate change and to adapt to its impacts. Its provisions are far-sighted, innovative and firmly embedded in the concept of sustainable development. This framework aims to guide the NAB Secretariat, the Ministry of Climate Change, respective Government sectors, researchers, civil society and others interested in the international climate change negotiations of Vanuatu's engagement to the UNFCCC.

It is important to understand that the climate change problem is a work in progress for the scientific community; however the risks that it already poses to global - and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in particular mean that mitigation and adaptation efforts command the expertise of economists, development agencies and policy makers alike. Policy makers have been involved in trying to secure a global and comprehensive climate change agreement through international negotiations UNFCCC.

Vanuatu is among the most vulnerable countries within the Pacific and said to be the "global front line" in the struggle for developing countries to adapt to climate change. The livelihood of its people and economy which are shaped and driven by climate sensitive sectors, the effect of climate and sea level change are already very real and pose a tangible threat to the future socio-economic well-being of Vanuatu. The Ministry of Climate Change is continuing in its efforts to accommodate the climate change negotiations while strengthening Vanuatu's engagement to the UNFCCC and create appropriate institutional set-up that seeks to mainstream international climate change issues into the national legal frameworks.

Vanuatu is also a party to other environmental based UN conventions, namely the United Nations Convention on Biological diversity (UNCBD) and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss.

2 What is the UNFCCC ?

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), entered into force on the 21st March 1994. Today, it has near-universal membership. The 195 countries that have ratified the Convention are called Parties to the Convention. The aim of the UNFCCC is to prevent “dangerous” human interference with the climate system.

The ultimate objective of the Convention is to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations “at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic (human induced) interference with the climate system.” It states that “such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened, and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.”

THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in Kyoto, Japan, on 11 December 1997. Due to a complex ratification process, it entered into force on 16 February 2005. In short, the Kyoto Protocol is what “operationalises” the Convention. It commits industrialized countries to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions based on the principles of the Convention. The Convention itself only encourages countries to do so.

KP, as it is referred to in short, sets binding emission reduction targets for 37 industrialized countries and the European community in its first commitment period. Overall, these targets add up to an average five per cent emissions reduction compared to 1990 levels over the five-year period 2008 to 2012 (the first commitment period).

KP was structured on the principles of the Convention. It only binds developed countries because it recognizes that they are largely responsible for the current high levels of GHG emissions in the atmosphere, which are the result of more than 150 years of industrial activity. KP places a heavier burden on developed nations under its central principle: that of “common but differentiated responsibility”.

As the KP expired in 2012 The Bali Action Plan process seeks to develop a new framework for long-term cooperative global action on climate change and create a new commitment, including targets and timetables, to succeed the terms in the Kyoto Protocol. The new negotiating text highlights the key pillars in the negotiations—adaptation, mitigation, finance and technology. This requires governments to reach agreement on: ways that developed countries can help developing ones adapt to impending climate change; strengthening efforts to curb emissions of greenhouse gases from industrialized countries and the larger developing countries; and committing developed countries to helping developing ones deploy energy technologies or forest policies that limit their emissions, even as they try to grow their economies.

THE PARIS AGREEMENT

What is the Paris Agreement?

The Paris Agreement is a legally binding International Treaty on Climate Change. It was adopted by 196 Parties at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP21) in Paris, France on December 12, 2015 and entered into force on 4 November 2016. Vanuatu signed the Paris Agreement on 22 April 2016 and later ratified it on 21 September 2016. Its overarching goal is to hold “the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 degrees celcius above pre-industrial levels” and pursue efforts to “limit the temperature increase to 1.5 above pre-industrial levels.”

The Paris Agreement is a landmark in the multilateral climate change process because, for the first time, a binding agreement brings all nations together to combat climate change and adapt to its effects.

How does the Paris Agreement Work?

Implementation of the Paris Agreement requires economic and social transformation, based on the best available science. The Paris Agreement works on a five-year cycle of increasing ambitious climate action carried out by countries. Countries have been submitting their national climate action plans known as nationally determined contributions (NDCs). Each successive NDC is meant to reflect an increasingly higher degree of ambition compared to the previous version.

Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC)

Countries communicate actions they will take to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in order to reach the goals of the Paris Agreement. Countries also communicate in their NDC actions they will take to build resilience to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Long-Term Strategies

To better frame the efforts towards the long-term goal, the Paris Agreement invites countries to formulate and submit long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-LEDS). Unlike NDCs, they are not mandatory.

In respect of this call, Vanuatu has submitted a revised enhanced NDC which will be open for further enhancement in the coming years following the 5 years cycle. Vanuatu has also developed and submitted to the UNFCCC its LT-LEDS in 2022.

Paris Agreement Framework

The Paris Agreement provides a framework for financial, technical and capacity building support (also referred to as the means of implementation) to those countries who need it.

Finance. The Paris Agreement reaffirms that developed countries should take the lead in providing financial assistance to countries that are less endowed and more vulnerable, while for the first time also encouraging voluntary contributions by other Parties. Climate finance is needed for mitigation, because large-scale investments are required to significantly reduce emissions. Climate finance is equally important for adaptation, as significant financial resources are needed to adapt to the adverse effects and reduce the impacts of a changing climate.

Technology. The Paris Agreement speaks of the vision of fully realizing technology development and transfer for both improving resilience to climate change and reducing GHG emissions. It establishes a technology framework to provide overarching guidance to the well-functioning Technology Mechanism. The mechanism is accelerating technology development and transfer through its policy and implementation arms.

Capacity-Building. Not all developing countries have sufficient capacities to deal with many of the challenges brought by climate change. As a result, the Paris Agreement places great emphasis on climate-related capacity-building for developing countries and requests all developed countries to enhance support for capacity-building actions in developing countries.

How are we Tracking Progress?

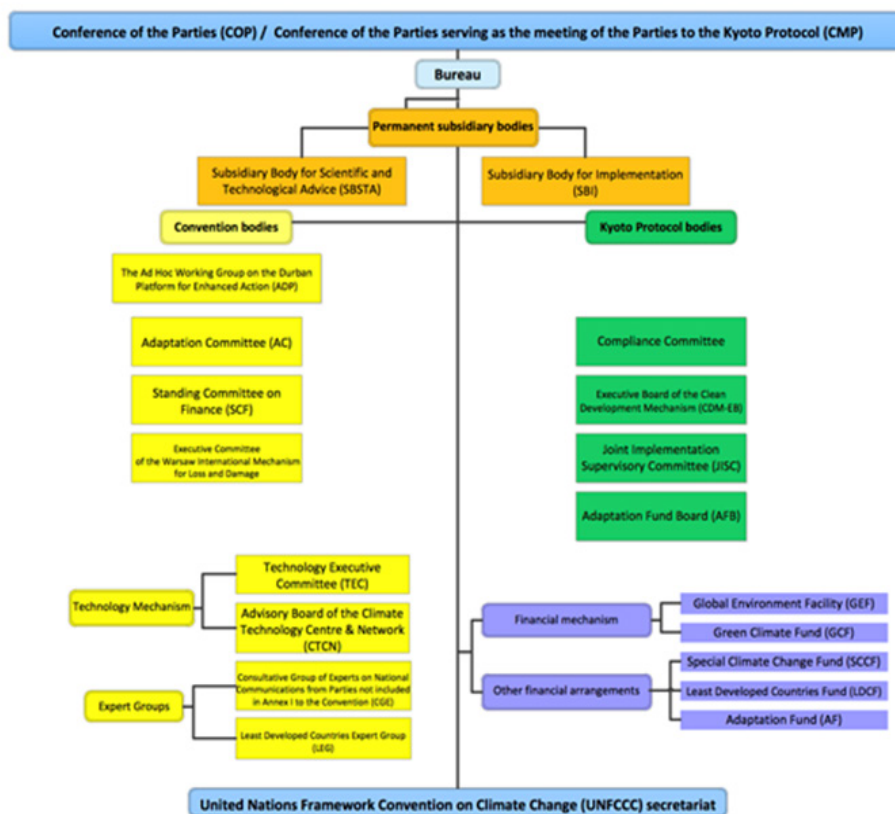
With the Paris Agreement, countries established an enhanced transparency framework (ETF). Under ETF, starting in 2024, countries will report transparently on actions taken and progress in climate change mitigation, adaptation measures and support provided or received. It also provides for international procedures for the review of the submitted reports.

The information gathered through the ETF will feed into the Global stocktake (the first Global Stock Take was held in 2023) which will assess the collective progress towards the long-term climate goals. This will lead to recommendations for countries to set more ambitious plans in the next round.

THE BODIES OF THE UNFCCC

The UNFCCC architecture and processes are built on over two decades of work by the world's governments and over half a century of scientific measurement and observation. It is a multifaceted process set up to tackle a highly complex problem.

Several institutions and bodies work within the framework of the Convention and the Protocol. These include those established by the Convention – the Conference of the Parties to the Convention (COP), the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), the subsidiary bodies (SBs), the Bureau and the secretariat. They also include other bodies established by the COP, in accordance with Article 7.2(i) of the Convention: committees, working groups and expert bodies. Those established under the Protocol, include the executive Board of the CDM, the JI Supervisory Committee, the Adaptation Fund Board and the Compliance Committee.



Conference of Parties (COP)

The annual sessions of the COP are pivotal to multilateral climate change policy and the negotiation process. These sessions bring together all countries that are Parties to the Convention and is considered to be the supreme decision-making body of the Convention, where every year they review the implementation of the Convention and any other legal instruments that the COP adopts. In particular, its role according to (Article 7.2 of the Convention) is to:

1. Periodically examine the obligations of the Parties and the institutional arrangements under the Convention in light of the objective of the Convention, the experience gained in its implementation and the evolution of scientific and technological knowledge;
2. Promote and facilitate the exchange of information on measures adopted by Parties to address climate change and its effects, taking into account the differing circumstances, responsibilities and capabilities of the Parties and their respective commitments under the Convention;
3. Facilitate, at the request of two or more Parties, the coordination of measures adopted by them to address climate change and its effects, taking into account the differing circumstances, responsibilities and capabilities of the Parties and their respective commitments under the Convention;
4. Promote and guide, in accordance with the objective and provisions of the Convention, the development and periodic refinement of comparable methodologies, to be agreed on by the Conference of the Parties, inter alia, for preparing inventories of greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks, and for evaluating the effectiveness of measures to limit the emissions and enhance the removals of these gases;

5. Assess, on the basis of all information made available to it in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, the implementation of the Convention by the Parties, the overall effects of the measures taken pursuant to the Convention, in particular environmental, economic and social effects as well as their cumulative impacts and the extent to which progress towards the objective of the Convention is being achieved;
6. Consider and adopt regular reports on the implementation of the Convention and ensure their publication;
Climate Change Diplomacy: Negotiating Effectively under the UNFCCC
7. Make recommendations on any matters necessary for the implementation of the Convention;
8. Seek to mobilize financial resources in accordance with Article 4, paragraphs 3, 4 and 5, and Article 11;
9. Establish such subsidiary bodies as are deemed necessary for the implementation of the Convention;
10. Review reports submitted by its SBs and provide guidance to them;
11. Agree upon and adopt, by consensus, rules of procedure and financial rules for itself and for any subsidiary bodies;
12. Seek and utilize, where appropriate, the services and cooperation of, and information provided by, competent international organizations and intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies; and
13. Exercise such other functions as are required to achieve the objective of the Convention as well as all other functions assigned to it under the Convention.

In addition to decisions, the COP can produce other outcomes, such as declarations or resolutions. These are non-binding political statements intended to guide the work of the Convention or express the will of the COP.

The sessions of the COP usually last two weeks, and are often held in parallel with sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and other groups (e.g. Ad hoc Working Groups). In general, a few thousand participants attend these sessions, including government delegates and observers (including members of civil society and nongovernmental organizations).

The COP venue is the seat of the secretariat in Bonn unless a Party offers to host the session, which has usually been the case. Traditionally, the venue rotates among the five United Nations regional groups (Africa, Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean states, Western Europe and others).

For each COP session, the secretariat drafts a provisional agenda in agreement with the President, respecting any work plan of agenda items established by previous COP and SBs decisions. The secretariat makes the provisional agenda available to Parties at least six weeks before the session.

The agenda of the two week COP meetings is broken down to daily programmes, which is an indispensable document for delegates attending the negotiations. The Daily Programme is the official guide to each day's official meetings. It also provides an overview of the status of the previous day's negotiations.

For more details and to view with previous COP programmes, please visit:
http://unfccc.int/essential_background/convention/items/6036.php

Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP)

All States that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol are represented at the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), while States that are not Parties participate as observers. The CMP reviews the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol and takes decisions to promote its effective implementation.

Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA)

All States that are Parties to the Paris Agreement are represented at the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), while States that are not Parties participate as observers. The CMA oversees the implementation of the Paris Agreement and takes decisions to promote its effective implementation.

Subsidiary Bodies (SBs)

The Convention establishes two permanent subsidiary bodies (SBs), namely the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). These bodies advise the COP and CMP. They are both multidisciplinary bodies open to participation by any Party and governments send representatives with relevant expertise. The SBSTA and the SBI are the main working bodies of the Convention and meet twice a year for one or two weeks (usually in June during the Bonn Intersessional and at COP).

SBSTA- Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

The SBSTA supports the work of the COP and the CMP through the provision of timely information and advice on scientific and technological matters as they relate to the Convention or its Kyoto Protocol.

SBI- Subsidiary Body for Implementation

The SBI supports the work of the COP and the CMP through the assessment and review of the effective implementation of the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol.

ADP- Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for enhanced Action

The Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) is a subsidiary body that was established by decision 1/CP.17 in December 2011. The mandate of the ADP is to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties, which is to be completed no later than 2015 in order for it to be adopted at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and for it to come into effect and be implemented from 2020. By the same decision, the COP launched a work plan on enhancing mitigation ambition to identify and to explore options for a range of actions that can close the ambition gap with a view to ensuring the highest possible mitigation efforts by all Parties.

- For more details regarding the subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC refer to <http://unfccc.int/bodies/items/6241.php>
- For more details regarding the scheduling of UNFCCC body meetings, refer to <http://unfccc.int/meetings/items/6240.php>

MAIN WORKING GROUPS OF THE UNFCCC

Adaptation Committee. As part of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, Parties established the Adaptation Committee to promote the implementation of enhanced action on adaptation in a coherent manner under the Convention through a number of functions.

LDC Expert Group. Parties decided to establish a least developed countries expert group (LEG), to be nominated by Parties, with the objective of supporting the preparation and implementation strategy of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs).

Executive Committee for Loss and Damage. Parties established an Executive Committee to guide the implementation of functions of the Warsaw International Mechanism for loss and damage.

Transitional Committee. In 2022, following the COP27 Decision to establish for the first time a Loss and Damage Fund, the COP also decided to set up a Transitional Committee to oversee the operationalization of the new funding arrangements and fund was established, to make recommendations for consideration. COP 27 and CMA 4 agreed that the recommendations of the Transitional Committee shall consider, inter alia:

- a. Establishing institutional arrangements, modalities, structure, governance and terms of reference for the fund;
- b. Defining the elements of the new funding arrangements;
- c. Identifying and expanding sources of funding;
- d. Ensuring coordination and complementarity with existing funding arrangements.

3 UNFCCC Negotiating Blocks

Each Party to the Convention is represented at sessions of the Convention's bodies by a national delegation consisting of one or more officials who are empowered to represent their governments. Their purpose is to negotiate agreements and make proposals on behalf of their governments. The complexity of the negotiations poses particular challenges to governments with small delegations, developing countries in particular.

Based on UN practice, Parties are organized into regional groups and in addition to the five regional groups; the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) has achieved formal recognition in climate change deliberations. In practice the regional groups do not represent the substantive interests of Parties. Several other groupings are much more important in the negotiations.

These groups are known as "coordinated groups" and Vanuatu is represented within; G77+China, SIDS and AOSIS. NB: Vanuatu graduated out of the list of the Least Developed Countries in 4th December, 2020.

G77 + China

The Group of 77 (G-77) is the main developing country coalition and was formed in 1964 during the New International Economic Order negotiations under the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). China regularly allies itself with this group, now gathering over 130 members.

In the negotiations developing countries generally work through the G77 plus China. This group works together to establish common negotiating positions. As the climate change negotiations have become more complex, the G-77 plus China has delegated coordination for specific issues to individual member countries.

The Group of 77 is the largest intergovernmental organization of developing countries in the United Nations, which provides the means for the countries of the South to articulate and promote their collective economic interests and enhance their joint negotiating capacity on all major international economic issues within the United Nations system, and promote South-South cooperation for development.

LDCs and SIDS are also members of the Group of 77 and China. However, the G77+ China also has some of the largest greenhouse gas emitters among developing countries. The dilemma for LDCs and SIDS in relation to climate change mitigation negotiations is that they are members of the same negotiating group with countries whose emissions levels are continuously increasing. These same countries (large developing country emitters) are reluctant to reduce greenhouse gas emissions because of their development objectives.

AOSIS- Alliance of Small Island States

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) was formed in 1990 during the Second World Climate Conference to represent the interests of low-lying and small island countries that are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rise. It comprises of some 43 states, most of whom are also members of the G-77.

The AOSIS countries are united in the view that climate change poses a significant threat to their survival, and frequently adopt a common stance in negotiations. Given that the emission levels of small island developing countries are low (SIDS account for less than one percent of global greenhouse gas emissions); their policy focus is essentially on adaptation. In addition, as they are among the most threatened by some of the negative impact of climate change, they advocate the most stringent emission reduction targets. They are also concerned about funding for adaptation and climate finance in general.

The unique challenges facing Small Island Developing States (SIDS) within the context of sustainable development were first formally recognized by the international community at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 1992. The special case of small islands and coastal areas was highlighted in Agenda 21 – the programme of action for sustainable development adopted as an essential outcome of the conference. SIDS acts as an intergovernmental consortium as a body under the UNFCCC.

PSIDS – Pacific Small Island Development States

The Pacific Small Island Development States are comprised of these Pacific islands; Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The PSIDS share common interests, challenges and climate vulnerabilities. PSIDS is a recognised grouping under the United Nations.

4 Vanuatu's Engagement in International Climate Change Negotiations

Vanuatu is desirous of being a world leader in adaptation action, with lessons learnt being available from the multitude of grass roots initiatives now being implemented within the country. Due to the increasingly negative impacts of climate change and a strong focus on loss and damage issues in island nations such as Vanuatu, it has become of paramount importance to equip the Vanuatu national delegation for COP with all of the skills, knowledge, resources and capacities possible to effectively and powerfully engage in negotiations and derive national and global benefit from the process. Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have the most at stake during negotiations, and thus require extremely strong negotiators.

Vanuatu participates in negotiating blocks within the UNFCCC and was historically the first chair of the Association of Small Island States (AOSIS) and the Least Developed Countries (LDC) grouping. While in recent years it has lost much of its clout in these groupings, 2013 saw a major resurgence in Vanuatu's negotiating bloc engagement with support of partners including Government sectoral agencies, local civil society groups (Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Network) and development partners (SPC-GIZ, SPREP, USP etc).

At the sub regional level, Vanuatu has recently emerged as a leader in the Melanesian Spearhead Groups' (MSG) Environment and Climate Change negotiation arm, developing sub regional cooperation measures and solidarity programs.

In keeping with Government climate change reforms, all UNFCCC engagement will now fall under the jurisdiction of the NAB Secretariat with the assistance and support from the Department of Climate Change and the UNFCCC Taskforce.

Moving into the future the primary objective is to strengthen the Republic of Vanuatu's capacity to engage with and derive increased direct benefit from the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Via a series of procedural reforms, technical trainings, participatory meetings, and engagement with all sectors of society, and alongside its multiple civil society, non-government, private sector, academic and international development partners, Vanuatu's Ministry of Climate Change aims to:

1. Reform and streamline the Republic of Vanuatu's engagement with the UNFCCC Secretariat, its bodies, committees, working groups and funding mechanisms
2. Effectively meet the reporting obligations to the UNFCCC (e.g. National Communications, Biennial Update Reports, National Adaptation Plans, and Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions etc.
3. Strengthen the climate change negotiation and representation capacity of the Republic of Vanuatu at the regional and international level (including but not limited to the fora under the UNFCCC, AOSIS, SPREP, PSIDS, MSG etc.).
4. Improve the participation of key stakeholders (including sectoral government, civil society, private sector, academia, community, and youth) in UNFCCC processes with increasing attention paid to gender equity and balance.
5. Expand the general public's awareness and knowledge of the country's engagement in UNFCCC processes and

resultant benefits to the nation.

6. Support any other climate change initiatives in parallel with UNFCCC engagement (including but not limited to ICJ, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty etc..)

Triple Planetary Crises

The triple planetary crisis refers to the three main interlinked issues that humanity currently faces: climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. Each of these issues has its own causes and effects and each issue needs to be resolved if we are to have a viable future on this planet.

There are UN agencies dedicated to each of the planetary crises: UN Climate Change or UNFCCC tackles climate change; UN Environment tackles pollution and UN Biodiversity focuses on biodiversity. The UN Convention to Combat Desertification focuses on land and mitigating the effects of drought.

The UNFCCC secretariate (UN climate Change) supports a range of bodies that serve to advance the implementation of the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement. UN Climate Change also supports non-Party stakeholders (i.e. everyone from companies to NGOs) through a variety of programmes and campaigns such as Marrakech Partnership, Race to Zero, the Fashion Charter for Climate Action, Sports for Climate Action and Climate Neutral Now.

Set up in 1972, the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, known as UN Environment)** is the global authority on the environment, that sets the environmental agenda, promotes the coherent implementation of the environmental dimension of sustainable development within the United Nations System. It focuses on everything from disasters to the green economy and biosafety.

The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) is a legal framework set up to protect biodiversity. It entered into force in 1993 and has been signed by 196 nations. Its three main aims are the conservation of biodiversity, the sustainable use of biodiversity and the fair sharing of the benefits from the use of genetic resources. Vanuatu is a party to the UNCBD and signed the convention in 1992, and ratified it in **March 1993**.

The **United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)** is a Convention to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought, which was adopted 1994 and entered into force in December 1996. It counts 197 Parties, making it near universal in reach. As a global voice for Land, UNCCD looks at how land affects climate change, food security and agriculture and biodiversity. Vanuatu is a party to the UNCBD and ratified it in **8 October 1999**.

UNFCCC collaborates with other UN entities to help ensure coordinated and efficient support to countries and stakeholders as they take climate action. In 2021, the UNFCCC, UNEP and CBD worked with a range of other UN agencies to examine solutions to the triple planetary crises to give UN resident coordinators and UN country teams the tools to help governments address all aspects of the crisis. This type of work is vital to ensure that countries translate their commitments into national actions.

5 Coordination of UNFCCC COP Arrangements

The NAB Secretariat will be responsible to coordinate and facilitate all COP related activities together with the support of the UNFCCC Taskforce. It is at their discretion if they would want to outsource the tasks as a COP Project with a COP coordinator with the NAB secretariat providing the overarching steering and guidance. The project coordinator will report to the NAB secretariat and will provide a formal report and recommendations at the end of the project.

Refer to COP Procedural Manual for more information about COP Arrangements for Vanuatu – See Annex

6 Regional Networks

SPREP- South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) has been charged by the governments and administrations of the Pacific region with the protection and sustainable development of the region's environment. SPREP's activities are guided by its Strategic Action Plan 2011-2015, developed through extensive consultation with Members, Secretariat programme staff and partner organisations, the Plan establishes four strategic priorities, which include Climate Change.

The strategies and targets of the region support education and awareness programmes as well as regional networks and information portals: these will improve the availability of climate change information to scientists, policy makers, and decision makers. It is also important to strengthen Members' ability to engage in climate change negotiations, access international funding sources, and meet their international responsibilities such as under the UNFCCC.

SPC- Secretariat of the Pacific Community

SPC is an international organisation that works in public health, geoscience, agriculture, forestry, water resources, disaster management, fisheries, education, statistics, transport, energy, human rights, gender, youth and culture to help Pacific Island people achieve sustainable development.

SPC's members are the 22 Pacific Island countries and territories that are the beneficiaries of its services, along with four of the original founding countries.

SPC's work programme is determined by members, and all of its regional initiatives aim to support members' national policies and plans. The organisation is owned and governed by its members, who come together at the Conference of the Pacific Community and the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) to make decisions in a spirit of Pacific consensus. Vanuatu is a member of the SPC and acts as important stakeholder in climate change awareness and programs across the Pacific.

Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development - PACE

Born out of the University of the South Pacific's (USP) 1999 strategic plan, the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) has established itself as a Centre of Excellence for Environmental Education, Research and Community Engagement in the Pacific Island Region.

The Centre is the University's answer to the region's need for further research of the environment so as to empower its people with the adequate knowledge to be able to adapt to the impacts of climate change and also pursue sustainable development.

The Centre collaborates with relevant faculties across the university as well as national, regional and international development partners in the CSO and NGO sector. As a way of mainstreaming climate change and sustainable development into the development process the Centre also works with regional governments in an advisory capacity.

MSG- Melanesian Spearhead Group

The MSG is an intergovernmental organization, composed of the four Melanesian states of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and New Caledonia. It was founded as a political gathering in 1983 and in 2007 members signed the Agreement Establishing the Melanesian Spearhead Group, formalizing the group under international law. It is headquartered in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

One of the key features of the MSG is the Melanesian Spearhead Group Trade Agreement, a sub-regional preferential trade agreement established to foster and accelerate economic development through trade relations and provide a political framework for regular consultations and review on the status of the Agreement, with a view to ensuring that trade both in terms of exports and imports is undertaken in a genuine spirit of Melanesian Solidarity. Vanuatu is a member of the MSG and hosts the Secretariat in Port Vila. MSG acts as important stakeholder in climate change information and awareness and programs across the Pacific.

PIFs – PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

The Pacific Islands Forum is the region's premier political and economic policy organisation. Founded in 1971, it comprises 18 members. The Forum's Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives. The Pacific Islands Forum works to achieve this by fostering cooperation between governments, collaboration with international agencies, and by representing the interest of its members. The work of the Forum is guided by the Framework for Pacific Regionalism which was endorsed by Forum Leaders in July 2014. It sets out the strategic vision, values, objectives and approaches to achieve deeper regionalism in the Pacific.

A key climate change policy driven by PIF is the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. The 2050 Strategy sets out our long-term approach to working together as a region, and as countries and territories, communities, and people of the Pacific. It frames our regional cooperation and broader action around seven key thematic areas which are designed and developed to support the achievement of our vision. These thematic areas include 2050 Strategy for Blue Pacific Continent, Political Leadership and Regionalism; People-Centred Development; Peace and Security; Resource and Economic Development; Climate Change and Disasters; Ocean and Environment; and Technology and Connectivity.

Addressing climate change and disaster risk management requires coordinated and coherent efforts founded on robust and genuine partnerships. The Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific 2017-2030 (FRDP) is a global-first regional strategy that is inclusive of all sectors and enables more people and more interests to be involved and have shared ownership of and accountability to the resilience agenda.

The Pacific Resilience Partnership implements the FRDP, bringing together Pacific Island Countries and territories, national and sub-national governments, communities, citizens, non-government and civil society organizations, private sector entities, sub-regional, regional and global partners.

As part of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP), the Forum Secretariat, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), The Pacific Community (SPC), the University of the South Pacific (USP), and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) also work together to progress Forum Islands countries climate change and resilience priorities.

In 2023, PIF has also engaged PSIDS Ministers as their political climate champions to COP28 with Vanuatu represented by Honourable Minister Ralph Regenvanu as the Loss & Damage Political Climate Champion. This engagement is understood to be an ongoing undertaking.

7 Mainstreaming of UNFCCC Engagements into National Plans

It is worth reiterating that there are some main UNFCCC guiding principles of relevance that enables Vanuatu with its capacity to implement UNFCCC Mandates;

1. The principle of Common but differentiated responsibilities
Article 3(1) of the Convention states that “The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and **in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities**. Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof.”
2. Developed Countries must support Developing Countries
Article 4(4) of the Convention states that “**The developed country Parties** and other developed Parties included in Annex II **shall also assist the developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change in meeting costs of adaptation to those adverse effects.**”
3. Promotion of Sustainable Development
Article 4(3) of the Convention states that “The Parties have a right to, and should, **promote sustainable development. Policies and measures to protect the climate system against human-induced change should be appropriate for the specific conditions of each Party and should be integrated with national development programmes**, taking into account that economic development is essential for adopting measures to address climate change.”

Vanuatu is now classified as a Developing Country and the Enhanced Transparency Framework provides flexibility to Developing countries that need it owing to their national capacities.

In the recent years, Vanuatu has developed some of its highest level strategic plans (including others that have been in development prior to endorsement of UNFCCC) in alignment with the ultimate objective of the Convention through its updated Enhanced NDC and Long Term Strategies (e.g LT-LEDS) and others. To mention a few;

- a. the fundamental duties defined under the Constitution: “to protect the Republic of Vanuatu and to safeguard the national wealth, resources and environment in the interests of the present generation and of future generations”;
- b. The Meteorology, Geological Hazards and Climate Change Act No. 25 of 2016 (Climate Change Act), Part 7 provides for the implementation of the UNFCCC;
- c. **National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2016–2030 also called Vanuatu 2030: The People’s Plan** - Environment Goal 3 which aspires to a strong and resilient nation in the face of climate change and risks posed by hazards and natural disasters & guided by its National Vision - “A stable, sustainable and prosperous Vanuatu”;
- d. **Goal 13 of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG)** focused on taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;
- e. Vanuatu’s long-term climate action vision is governed by the **Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2016–2030** (CCDRR Policy – to promote good governance and establishes priorities and strategies for future climate actions). The government of Vanuatu is committed to six key priorities to direct the country’s climate change and disaster risk reduction efforts. These priorities fall into two categories — systems and themes. Systems include governance, finance, knowledge and information, while themes include climate

change adaptation and disaster risk reduction, low carbon development, and response and recovery. To see more on the mainstreaming of the CCCDRR Policy, please refer to CCCDRR Mainstreaming Guideline.

- f. In addition, **Vanuatu's revised enhanced NDC** reflects existing sectoral policy targets. Vanuatu's enhanced NDC is based on these three major thematic areas, Mitigation, Adaptation and Loss and Damage which are of key priority to Vanuatu. For each target under each of these thematic areas, the specific policy reference is provided, as well as the link to Vanuatu's National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP), the most relevant Global Sustainable Development Goal (SGD), the level of conditionality of finance required from developed country Parties, and the overall financial envelope to successfully meet the target by 2030. Implementation of Vanuatu's NDC is conditional upon Technical and Financial support. This enhanced NDC also helps guide the prioritisation of projects and other climate change initiatives. To see more on project management, please refer to Project Development Procedural Guideline.

Also to note, Vanuatu is following a few significant thematic areas which for a small Island country like Vanuatu, emphasis is focused more on Adaptation, more recently the Loss and Damage & Climate Finance. Vanuatu is also currently working on its readiness for the development of its National Adaptation Plan which will complement the Adaptation actions already in the Enhanced NDC.

8 Institutional Arrangements

In Vanuatu, the National Advisory Board (NAB) is the supreme policy making and advisory body for all disaster risk reduction and climate change programs, projects, initiatives and activities in Vanuatu as mandated by the MGCC Act No. 25 of 2016. NAB develops Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and Climate Change policies, guidelines, national positions, advises on international and regional DRR and CC obligations, facilitates and endorses the development of new DRR & CC programs, projects, initiatives and activities, acts as a focal point for information - sharing and coordination on CC/DRR, as well as guides and coordinates the development of national climate finance processes. The nab Secretariat works closely with other sectors to review, implement and strategies on CC&DRR activities.

In addition, Section 9 (e) of the MGCC Act No.25 of 2016 provides that one of the functions of the Board is to advise any person on matters relating to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in which Vanuatu is a party or matters relating to disaster risk reduction; and section 14(c) to coordinate the preparation of papers related to global and regional climate change and disaster risk reduction obligations.

To see more on the mainstreaming of the CCCDRR Policy, please refer to CCDRR Mainstreaming Guideline.

National Greenhouse Gas Inventory

One of the main aspect of the UNFCCC is the institutional set up of a national Greenhouse Gas Inventory to show progress to meeting the ultimate objective of the Convention. The MGCC Act No. 25 of 2016 under Part 6 relating to the functions and powers of Climate Change defines Climate Change Mitigation as activities relating to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. The Department of Climate change functions amongst others as per the MGCC Act No.25 of 2016 is as provided in section 23 to establish, collate, archive and make available climate change data and information required. The NAB Secretariat in its role will support the Department of Climate Change in its efforts to establish the national greenhouse gas inventory.

Enhanced Transparency Framework

The Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) is a concept under the Paris Agreement as a transition from the Monitoring, Review and Verification (MRV) framework mandated under the Convention. Starting this year 2024, as part of the enhanced transparency framework (ETF), all countries who have ratified the Paris Agreement including Vanuatu will follow a single, universal transparency process.

By design, the ETF covers all aspects of the Paris Agreement, including tracking progress of implementation and achievement of nationally determined under Article 4. The requirements for reporting, technical expert review and facilitative multilateral consideration of progress, known as FMCP, are universally applicable, while recognizing the need for flexibility developing countries who need it in the light of their capacities.

The rules to operationalize the ETF, referred to as the modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs), were agreed by countries in Katowice, 2018. The remaining details to allow countries to fully implement the ETF, including the

development of the common reporting tables and formats for reporting information, outlines of the reports, and the training programme for experts were finalized in Glasgow, 2021.

The ETF process is significant as it provides countries with key information to enhance domestic ambition and make informed decisions about national policies. It is equally important to have appropriate institutional arrangements in place particularly within the Ministry of Climate Change and other key sectors to accommodate this transition for an effective ETF nationally. The NAB Secretariat will work closely with other key sectors to strengthen its institutional arrangements to support this ETF.

Reporting Obligations

Under this ETF Process, countries including Vanuatu have reporting obligations that they have to meet. Below is a list of the National Reports that have to be submitted by countries to the UNFCCC Secretariat;

1. National Determined Contributions
2. National Communications (and National Inventory Report)
3. Biennial Update Report (BUR) now replaced by Biennial Transparency Report (BTR)
4. Adaptation Communications
5. National Adaptation Plan (NAP)
6. LT-LEDS

9 UNFCCC Focal Points - Vanuatu

Vanuatu's UNFCCC Focal Points are categorized into political and operational representatives. They are to ensure Vanuatu's participation in UNFCCC meetings, sessions and any other required engagements throughout the year, such as development and submissions of national thematic positions. Keeping in sync with government reforms, it is suggested that all UNFCCC engagements falls under the jurisdiction of the NAB Secretariat to assist coordinate UNFCCC communications & matters.

The following personnel are currently registered with the UNFCCC as the focal and contact points for Vanuatu.

Position	Organization & Type of FP	Contact Details
Director General	Ministry of Climate Change Operational Focal Point	Tel:22068 Voip:
Director	Department of Climate Change Operational Focal Point	Tel: 22160 Voip:5325
Strategic Manager	NAB Secretariat – Ministry of Climate Change Operational Focal Point	Tel: 34360 Voip: 5410
Multilateral Environmental Agreement Officer	NAB Secretariat – Ministry of Climate Change Operational Focal Point	Tel: 34360 Voip:5435
Director	Department of Foreign Affairs and External Trade Political Focal Point	Tel: 33180 Voip: 3008
UN Division - Head	Department of Foreign Affairs Political Focal Point	Tel: 33180 Voip: 3009

10 UNFCCC Taskforce

In efforts to improve transparency in engagement with UNFCCC, Vanuatu's Ministry of Climate Change established in 2015 a UNFCCC Taskforce, under the oversight of the National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB), to serve as the primary Government-led planning, information sharing and implementation mechanism for all initiatives related to the UNFCCC.

On the 4th of March 2016, the Director General of the Ministry of Climate Change approved the establishment of permanent UNFCCC Taskforce. In early March 2017, NAB members approved amendments made to the Terms of Reference of this taskforce, related to its composition (from 10 members to 6 members). With the developments in the TF roles since 2023, the TF has had 2 further changes, with the inclusion of MoCC's sector Analyst at the Department of Strategic Planning, Policy and Aid Coordination as a member and appointment of the Department of Climate Change as the TF deputy chair.

The Taskforce is currently comprised of 7 members from different key institutions.

- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Cooperation and External Trade: The UN Desk(CHAIR)
- NAB Secretariat (Secretariat)
- Civil society representative (VCAN)
- Department of Women's Affairs
- Ministry of Finance: Treasury Division; Expenditure Analyst
- Department of Climate Change
- Department of Strategic Policy Planning and Aid Coordination (DESPPAC)

Other persons may be invited to attend the meetings of the UNFCCC Taskforce by the Chair. These persons may take part in the business of and discussions at the meeting but have no voting or decision-making rights.

The Vanuatu UNFCCC Taskforce is mandated by the NAB to;

- Plan, share information about, seek finance for and delegate the implementation of all initiatives related to Vanuatu's engagement with the UNFCCC;
- Seek endorsement from and make recommendations to the NAB regarding UNFCCC engagement
- See annex the UNFCCC Taskforce ToR

A stylized, light green palm tree graphic is positioned on the right side of the page, extending from the bottom towards the top. It has a long, slender trunk and several large, curved fronds.

NAB Secretariat

Ministry of Climate Change
PMB 9054
Port Vila, Vanuatu

Phone: +678 34360 / 22068 (Ext. 5410 / 5365)

Email: nab@vanuatu.gov.vu

Website: www.nab.vu