



Climate Action Network

INDC – Intended Nationally Determined Contributions Factsheet

Background: What are INDCS?

Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) are the actions that each Party will undertake to contribute to meeting the objective of the Convention which is "... stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system."

While the term INDC is not fully defined by any COP decision (see box below), the term Intended Nationally Determined Contributions gives some hints of the anticipated process that can inform Parties preparations:

Intended:

When INDC as a concept was agreed in Warsaw (COP 19) – the word 'intended' was put to ensure that these actions put forward by countries are not final but are markers that exhibit the country's intention to act on climate change. If all countries show their intent for action – that would lead to getting a clear picture of who is doing how much as well as creating more transparency and trust among countries.

Nationally Determined:

INDCs are not meant to TOP DOWN but are bottom up intentions. All countries have agreed that the climate action a particular country is taking should be within the context of that country and should not be dictated arbitrarily. So INDCs are meant to be determined nationally in order to take into account national contexts, capabilities and responsibilities. Though this also means that when INDCs from all countries are aggregated they should not fall short from the agreed international temperature/emissions benchmarks – As of now we have 2 Degrees as one agreed benchmark.

Contributions:

Earlier actions between developed and developing countries were distinguished as commitments and actions BUT in COP19 it was agreed that all countries would put forward contributions. This is not to say that the distinction is done away with but these will not be prejudice the legal nature of final outcome from Paris. Depending on the legal form of the Paris outcome (Protocol/legal instrument/agreed outcome with legal force) these contributions will then be embedded within the agreed legal form accordingly.

What can/should the INDC include?

INDCs are meant for the period from 2020 – 2025/ 2030, as INDCs are meant to be embedded in the Paris Agreement. The operating timelines for the agreement is from 2020 onwards.

INDCs can/ should (depending on how you interpret the UNFCCC decision) include mitigation, adaptation and finance. Traditionally we have only seen international national commitments on mitigation and finance (primarily from Annex 1 countries). But ALL countries can include these three components and countries can/ need to include the justification of ambition i.e. how the country thinks what they are putting forward as their INDC is fair /equitable in relation to others.

Potential mitigation components

- Carbon budget: Adoption of multi-year contributions.
- Peak timing: Consideration of National emissions peak.
- Rates of de-carbonization: Adoption of plausible future rates of de-carbonization.
- Reductions below business-as-usual: Significant reduction of emissions below the jurisdiction's business- as-usual emissions trajectory (taking into account currently implemented and adopted mitigation policies).
- Long-term phase out: Consideration of the need to phase-out fossil fuel emissions in the long- term.

Potential adaptation and finance components

- INDCs can/should include finance and adaptation component.
- These will be highly subjective based on different national circumstances.
- On Adaptation – It could range from vulnerability assessments to National Adaptation Plans.
- On Finance – It could be for developed countries – contribution of international climate finance.
- For developing countries – this could be financial measures they are taking towards climate actions.

Conclusion:

Making of an INDC is primarily left up to the country and what it wants to do. It is a blank slate and could include any type of climate action, BUT at the end of the day when it is communicated to the international community, it should reflect the following:

- Facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding;
- Should have some reference point;
- Time frames and/or periods for implementation;
- Scope and coverage;
- Planning processes;
- Assumptions and methodological approaches; and;
- How INDCs are fair and ambitious.

UNFCCC decision language on INDCs COP19 & COP20

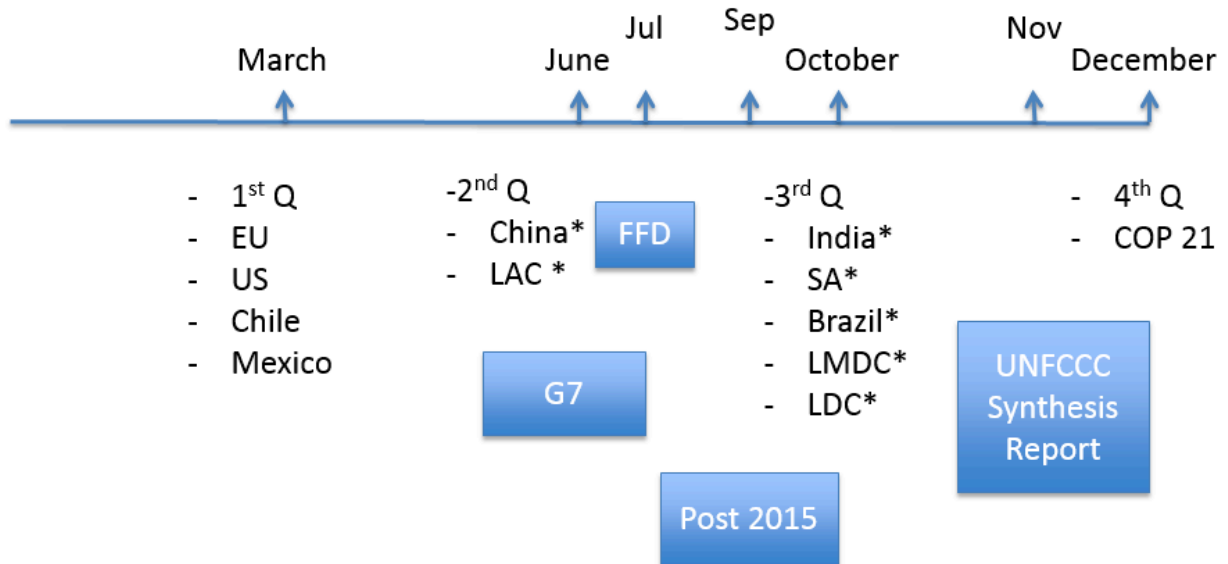
The COP, by its decisions 1/CP.19 and 1/CP.20, invited all Parties to communicate to the secretariat their INDCs well in advance of COP 21 (by the first quarter of 2015 by those Parties ready to do so) in a manner that facilitates the clarity, transparency and understanding of the INDC.

In pdf-icon decision 1/CP.20 it is further specified that in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions may include, as appropriate, inter alia, quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage, planning processes, assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals, and how the Party considers that its intended nationally determined contribution is fair and ambitious, in light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2;

Source: UNFCCC Homepage (2015), http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php

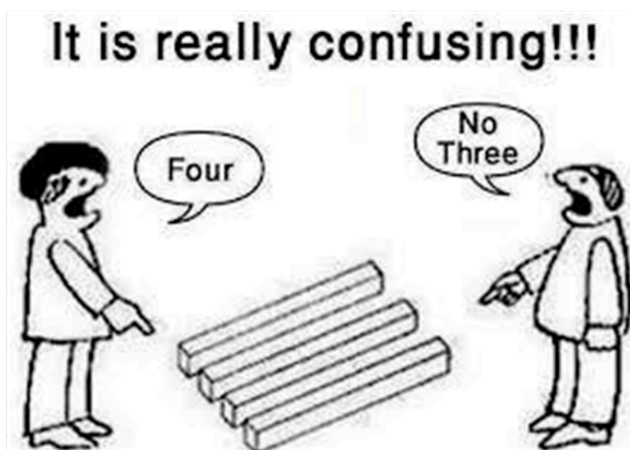
Timeline for Submissions

Timelines for INDCs are vague but there is a broad timeline most countries are taking:



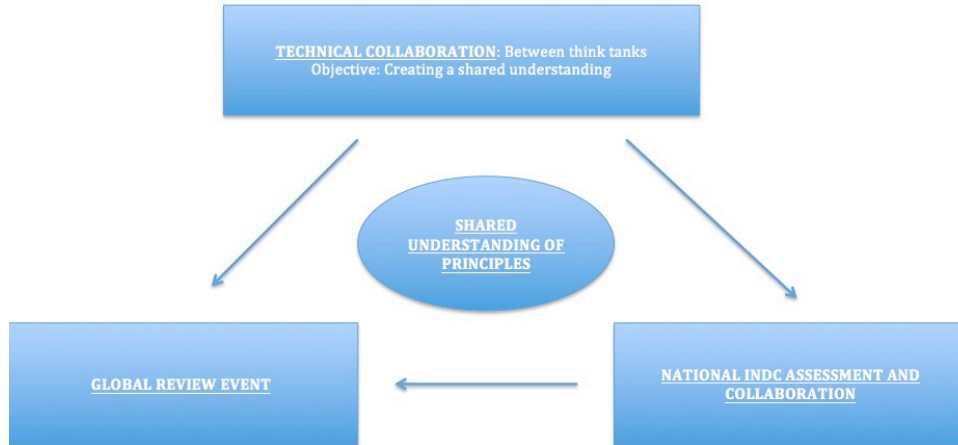
Key Events

- There are three UNFCCC sessions (June, August, October).
- G 7 – Critical towards developed country ambition as well finance.
- FFD – Finance for Development in July is going to be a key meeting on overall finance for development and climate change.
- Post 2015 – The post 2015 (SDGs) are going to be agreed by September.
- UNFCCC Synthesis Report – The UNFCCC secretariat is going to make a synthesis report, which will aggregate all the proposed INDCs. The cut off date for the INDCs to be included in the report is 1st October 2015.
- Multiple informal meetings co-hosted by the French Presidency.



What can civil society do?

Now mostly all countries are in the process of developing their INDCs, that means governments should hold consultations with civil society. Civil society should have a clear set of demands towards the government and should hold governments accountable for the actions they are putting forward.



Steps for INDC assessment and collaboration

Phase 1: National consultations

National consultation around what should be part of INDC of the particular country. (This should be beyond the pledged climate action the country is currently undertaking and should build on that).

Phase 2: Articulation of demands

A clear set of demands (whatever suits the national context) for actions/policies within the INDC.

Phase 3: Review phase

- National Review (Consultation): Review of the proposed INDC against the demands, put forward by the national coalition. This is also the moment to identify the gaps and inadequacy of actions (if there are any and propose solutions to improve them).
- International Review: This phase should highlight the solutions to make the INDC better as identified in the national review. This is also the moment to articulate how the particular INDC fares compared to other countries (Comparative equity and fairness) and if it is equitable and fair.



Literature:

CAN Submission on Intended National Determined Contributions:

<http://www.climatenetwork.org/publication/submission-intended-nationally-determined-contributions-indc>

CAN Submission on Post-2015 Agreement and Post-2020 Actions, November 2014:

<http://www.climatenetwork.org/publication/can-submission-2015-agreement-and-post-2020-actions-november-12-2014>

UNFCCC INDC registry:

http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php

Contact:

Siddharth Pathak

Policy Coordinator

Climate Action Network

Email: spathak@climatenetwork.org