



# NBI NEWS UPDATE 2019

30 July 2019

Dear Abbas

## September 2019 and Climate Ambition

The end of September marks a big moment in the climate change calendar this year. New York will see an influx of the climate change community as the city simultaneously hosts Climate Week New York (CWNY) and the United Nations Secretary General's (UNSG) Summit on Climate Change. Both events seek to push up ambition, Climate Week of business and the UNSG Summit of government. There is a lot of pressure on both sides to take more realistic positions in response to the latest synthesis of climate science represented by the IPCC 1.5-degree report. This News Update summarises both events, describes their key intentions as input to our strategic planning, and provides links to the resources we have available. There are limited (but not zero) opportunities for business to attend the Summit, whereas CWNY is a wonderful opportunity for business to engage.

## UNSG Summit: 21 to 23 September 2019

The **UNSG Summit** is largely closed to business (a few select business leaders will be invited) but it is illustrative of global trends we will face. During the Summit, it is the UNSG's intention that leaders will announce initiatives with the aim of accelerating and scaling up global ambition to implement the **Paris Agreement** and limit global warming to **1.5 degrees**. There will be two categories of announcements:

- **Raising national ambition** on mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation, through: Upgraded Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) by 2020, including with targets contributing to a global reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by at least 45 per cent over the next decade as well as enhanced adaptation objectives, and a Net zero emissions by 2050 ambition, entrenched in long term development strategies submitted by 2020.
- **Initiatives** – Leaders from governments, local authorities, the private sector, civil society, youth and other stakeholders will come together to present initiatives to cut emissions and strengthen adaptation.

The **Secretary-General** has written to Member States, urging them to consider enhancing national ambition on mitigation, adaptation and finance, with the view to making an announcement at the Summit. He has already written to the South African government putting pressure on it to enhance national ambition. DIRCO and DEFF are working on the response and the announcements to be made by President Ramaphosa. The Secretary-General has publically stated that leaders are invited to come to the Summit with a plan, not with a speech.

There will be 9 tracks of discussion during the Summit (coalitions), each of which will try to develop economic transition pathways to a zero-carbon economy by 2050 and to build resilience to current and future changes:

- The Youth Engagement and Public Mobilization coalition
- The Social and Political Drivers coalition
- The Mitigation Strategy coalition
- The Adaptation and Resilience coalition
- The Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) coalition
- The Energy Transition coalition
- The Industry Transition coalition
- The Infrastructure, Cities and Local Action coalition
- The Climate Finance and Carbon Pricing coalition

Government Ministers from around the world recently attended the **Abu Dhabi Climate Action Summit Preparatory Meeting** (30 June to 1 July 2019) where they stressed the need to collaborate with the private sector to accelerate action.

These UN engagements are also critical for the global debate on common but differentiated responsibilities of developed and developing economies. Many participants at the Abu Dhabi Summit Preparatory Meeting insisted on the need to meet the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the UNFCCC of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020. Many also referred to the importance of achieving a successful replenishment of the Green Climate Fund.

The political goal of the Secretary General is to enhance ambition for the next international negotiations (COP25) in Chile in December this year and, perhaps even more so, for COP26 in the UK in 2020. What is

important for us as business therefore, is to demonstrate what we are already doing and to monitor the political messages emerging from the Summit as an indicator of the future we face. The messages are already clear that countries around the world (including our trade partners) are seeking net carbon neutrality by 2050 – we as South Africans need to up our multi-stakeholder efforts to determine what this transition plan looks like for us, in order to manage our global competitiveness.

While getting into the Climate Summit is challenging there are some non-guaranteed, potential pathways:

- Through **We Mean Business**, get connected with an implementation track and actively support emerging initiatives.
- Sign the 1.5-degree pledge and/or the Just Transition pledge. Governments are seeking support for their 1.5-degree ambitions from the private sector. The NBI together with WWF and C40 through our Alliances for Climate Action (ACA) partnership, are asking companies to make a net carbon neutral commitment ([www.alliancesforclimateaction.co.za](http://www.alliancesforclimateaction.co.za)), which closely parallels an official Summit pledge hosted by the United Nations Global Compact (<https://www.unglobalcompact.org/take-action/events/climate-action-summit-2019/business-ambition>).

The Just Transition pledge, hosted by the B-Team, is equally important to South Africa and additional information can be found here: <http://www.bteam.org/announcements/join-the-business-pledge-for-just-transition-and-decent-green-jobs/>.

(For more information contact **Steve Nicholls** on [SteveN@nbi.org.za](mailto:SteveN@nbi.org.za)).

Further details on the UNSG Summit can be obtained by clicking [here](#).

### **Climate Week New York (CWNY): 23 to 29 September 2019**

Working alongside the UNSG's Summit and hosted by the **Climate Group** (a We Mean Business founding member), **Climate Week** is one of the best opportunities for us as business to engage with the international climate community (in addition to the COPs). Planning for CWNY is always tight; the event schedule goes live in mid-July and is continually updated right up to the last day. Getting into events is often not easy so if you are going to New York it's a good idea to get online early and plan your itinerary (requesting invites for key events). These take place generally all over New York and as the transport system is effective, it doesn't really matter where you stay (we though recommend the more lived-in parts of New York such as the affordable lower east side). Affordability in New York is however a relative concept and so if you are planning on going to CWNY, you will need a decent budget.

The events of this year's Climate Week align with the 9 themes of the SG Summit and will repeat the conversations happening within the UN compound but with greater business participation. It is always an exciting agenda with many other organisations hosting parallel events. The **CWNY agenda** is available to view [here](#).

The central event of CWNY is however **"the Hub"**, a two-day event programme for business, policy and government representatives. The Hub is designed for decision makers and practitioners focused at the forefront of the clean transition and will feature a series of events curated by The Climate Group showcasing the strength and momentum of non-state actors in advancing ambitious climate action. The Hub will be active on the 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> September. However, getting in can be challenging but through our relationship with We Mean Business, the NBI may be able to facilitate you in obtaining an invitation. If you are an NBI

member and you are planning to attend CWNV, please let us know. We can then keep you informed of any news we may get and assist in event attendance where possible.

**If you are not able to attend CWNV, the NBI hosts an annual feedback session in October to update you on key outcomes. NBI members are most welcome to join us for these sessions. At this event we also provide feedback from our trip to Stockholm Water Week (CWNV for water), which takes place 25 to 30 August 2019.**

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