



NBI News Update

The call for greater ambition in the battle against Climate Change Outcomes of Climate Week NYC 2019 and the UNSG Summit

The outcomes of Climate Week New York and the United Nations Secretary General's Summit meant that there was an unequivocal call for greater ambition in the battle against climate change. The conclusions of the IPCC 1.5-degree report, that in order to avoid the worst feedback loops of spiralling natural disaster we need to keep greenhouse gas emissions at a level that would result in global temperatures remaining below 1.5 degrees, was repeated over and over again. To achieve this the global economy must become climate neutral by 2050.

Greater ambition was emphasized by:

- A global youth march of millions of people around the world
- Governments committing to change and to ratcheting the ambition contained in their NDCs* by 2020
- Businesses demanding more from their governments and demonstrating commitment led action

During climate week the **National Business Initiative (NBI)**, **WWF** and **C40** launched the **Alliances for Climate Action (ACA)**. This alliance has been in the making for some time and asks companies to sign a

leadership statement focused on actions that would move the South African economy, alongside the rest of the world to net zero emissions. Achieving this will require companies to do the work necessary to develop company plans that would feed into a national plan. During Climate Week over 280 companies from 140 markets around the world, representing over 16 million employees and US\$5.5 trillion combined revenue, made low climate commitments (see details [here](#)). This included 87 companies signing up to a 1.5 degree commitment hosted by We Mean Business, the Science Based Targets Initiative and the UN Global Compact (details [here](#)). The NBI will shortly be inviting its member companies to sign up to the local declaration that underpins the Alliances for Climate Action - **you can sign up [here](#)**. The following companies have already signed this commitment: **Vodacom, Virgin Active, Liberty Holdings Limited, Intelligent Transport Society South Africa, Pinpoint, MISER Hybrid Technologies, Mellowcabs, SESSA - Sustainable Energy Society Southern Africa, The Thorny Bush Game Lodges, and the City of Cape Town and Ethekewini Municipality.**

The ACA coalition supports the statements made by our government. At the UN Secretary General's Climate Summit, President Ramaphosa submitted a strong statement which was also referenced by several leaders within the UNFCCC, business and governments around the world. The South African example was used in some discussions as the basis for how we think about future international cooperation in transition planning. Key highlights from the President's statement were:

- "Taking all of these factors into consideration, it is clear that strong and durable social compacts will need to be forged between government, labour, business and civil society."
- "We will also be finalising our Just Transition Plan, including defining a vision compatible with the 1.5-degree Paris temperature goal."
- "In 2020, South Africa will be updating its adaptation NDC, to reflect national progress on implementing a comprehensive response and updating international support requirements."
- "Mr Secretary General, we cannot overemphasise your call that this transition should not lead to winners and losers and deepen global inequalities amongst and within states."
- "We will be enhancing our current mitigation NDC by the end of 2020. Additional mitigation ambition by 2030 will require a bold programme which targets our key emissions source, the electricity sector, and goes beyond current plans to invest further in renewable energy."

A full transcript of the President's statement can be viewed [here](#).

Regarding business involvement, some economic sectors have made major advances, while others are still lagging. Strong emerging themes were:

- Business action to address Natural Capital considerations. See the [natural capital finance alliance](#) and [Nature4Climate](#) and [WBCSD's natural climate solutions](#).
- Financial quantification of climate risk, stimulated by the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosure (TCFD).
- Financial innovation and collaboration across the vertical finance value chain, although establishing a pipeline of projects remains the biggest challenge.

Honest and demanding conversations were held around these issues as senior business people and politicians as well as practitioners tried to get to grips with the real-world challenges and centrally with the challenge of how to transition economies without leaving anybody behind. This year this became a mainstream conversation. One sign of this was the acquisition of or partnership with niche climate analytics firms by major firms in the financial services sector: HSBC, Moody's and McKinsey, to name a few.

The NBI will be hosting a member only deep feedback session where we will elaborate on the spirit, the content and the implications of the week's developments. We will also reveal key trends and highlight new and interesting reports and best practice. Please join us on 29 October in Johannesburg, 30 October in Durban and 31 October, in Cape Town.

In the meantime, please consider whether your company can add its voice to a growing global private sector movement on climate change and join the **ACA South Africa**.

*NDCs or Nationally Determined Contribution's are the bottom up commitments and descriptions of mitigation and adaptation measures made by countries, ultimately capturing the ambition they believe they are capable of. Current NDC ambition would take us to roughly 4 degrees warming and ambition needs to be enhanced by all nations.

For more information on the **NBI climate programme** or signing the **ACA leadership statement** please contact: [Steve Nicholls](#) or [Reitumetse Molotsoane](#).



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The National Business Initiative (NBI) is an independent and voluntary coalition of South African and multinational businesses launched in 1995 by the then President, Nelson Mandela

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