

# Finding the right words at COP28

## Instructions for Party E

Anselm Dannecker,\* Sue Biniaz†

It is 2023. You're at COP28 in Dubai representing a Party to the Paris Agreement. A text has been proposed for a decision by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (the so-called "CMA"). The CMA is the highest decision-making body under the Paris Agreement, comprising all the Parties to the Agreement.

Such decisions are first negotiated at the technical level and subsequently moved to the CMA for adoption. As a negotiator, your job is to advocate your country's position while also working with other Parties to develop a text that is agreeable to all. A meeting chair has been nominated to facilitate and guide your deliberation

## The proposed draft CMA 28 decision

The following text has been proposed:

"The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement ("CMA") urges Parties that have not already done so to include in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs) economy-wide targets covering all greenhouse gases no later than the upcoming round of updated NDCs in 2025."

### Background:

- Under the Paris Agreement, Parties must regularly submit "nationally determined contributions" (NDCs). In their NDCs, Parties set out emissions targets/actions with respect to a future year.
- NDCs must be updated every 5 years. The next round of updating NDCs will take place in two years, in 2025, with Parties encouraged to submit targets relating to 2035.
- When the Paris Agreement was completed in 2015, developed countries and some developing countries had already submitted economy-wide targets in their first round of NDCs. Article 4.4 of the Agreement provided that developed country Parties should continue to take the lead by undertaking economy-wide targets and that developing country Parties should move in that direction over time, in light of different national circumstances.
- At this point, eight years after Paris, and with the updating of NDC targets on the horizon, the question has arisen whether a COP 28 decision should encourage Parties that have not yet submitted economy-wide targets to do so.

---

\*Anselm Dannecker, Senior Fellow, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Collaboratory, (NCRC) Center for Public Leadership (CPL), Harvard Kennedy School.

† Sue Biniaz, Lecturer, Senior Fellow, Yale Jackson School of Global Affairs, Yale University

This simulation was written under the Climate Case and Simulation Series by the Negotiation and Conflict Resolution Collaboratory, Center for Public Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School.

© 2024 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. This work is licensed under [CC BY-ND 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd/4.0/).

However, countries have different opinions about the issue.

### Party positions

- Some Parties think that Article 4.4 speaks for itself and that the CMA should not say anything more on the subject.
- Some Parties think that all Parties should be taking on economy-wide targets in the next round of NDCs and that the CMA should be strongly encouraging them to do so.
- Some Parties think that the CMA should encourage the major economies of the world that do not yet have economy-wide targets to include them in the next round of NDCs, but that this encouragement does not need to include all Parties.
- Some Parties think it makes sense for all Parties except small island developing States and least developed country Parties to adopt economy-wide targets in the next NDC round, because these Parties are given more flexibility under Article 4 of the Paris Agreement and elsewhere.
- Some Parties also want to make clear that NDC targets should not only be "economy-wide" but should include all greenhouse gases (e.g., not just carbon dioxide).

### Your position as Party E:

You represent a small island developing State that is particularly vulnerable to climate change. Given the latest science, it is clear that an acceleration of climate action is needed. The text should encourage or request that **all** Parties move to economy-wide targets that cover **all** greenhouse gases. Some major economies are only including carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) so far, yet other highly potent gases such as methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) or nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) are frequently not covered. This needs to change. However, there should be exemptions for small islands and least developed countries. Their contributions to global emissions are negligible, and they face strong capacity constraints.