

Accelerating the Multilateral Response to Climate Change

Virtual High-level Roundtable



On 1 November 2021, world leaders will gather in Glasgow for COP26 to discuss, and hopefully agree on how to address the urgent climate crisis—the defining challenge of the 21st century. Time is fast running out as this slow-moving crisis gathers steam with current projections showing that humanity is running out of time to meet the 2015 Paris Agreement and safeguard the health of our planet.

To spark the conversation on climate action, MOPAN members, leaders of multilateral organisations, and distinguished multilateral stakeholders met yesterday at a High-Level Roundtable to discuss the findings of MOPAN's recent report [Pulling Together: The Multilateral Response to Climate Change](#) and to consider concrete policy actions. Drawing upon key lessons from the report, participants spoke of the importance of having a whole-of-government and -society approach, climate financing mechanisms and transformative technology to combat climate change.

Emphasis was placed on the need for policymakers to incorporate climate action at both the global and country level. This includes placing a greater focus on Long Term Strategies, and breaking the “silos” in governments. Lasting policy change is not possible unless we make “every Minister a Climate Minister”, argued Bernard Mazijn from the Belgian Ministry of Environment. It is crucial to ensure coherence between governments, multilateral organisations, and the private sector. The United Nations Development Programme's Assistant Secretary-General, Haoliang Xu, further underscored this need by stating that a coherent approach is the only way to make “broad and holistic change”.

Scaling-up private sector support was emphasised by many speakers during the event. Philippe Le Houérou, former CEO of International Finance Corporation (IFC), stated, “there is no way that we can win the fight on climate change and sustainable development without the private sector”. But the private sector is rational and reacts to incentives and respect for the rule of law. Best-practice examples were highlighted, including the Government of Luxembourg's support for de-risking climate investments and IFC's role in supporting the Benban solar park in Egypt, as mentioned in MOPAN's report. Global Environment Facility CEO, Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, emphasised the need for multilateral stakeholders to work together to ensure that “incentives are in place for the private sector to be aligned to the Paris Agreement”. He gave the example of the successful collaboration of private and public sector during the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in expedited vaccine development. Ireland's Climate Change Envoy, Sinead Walsh, also spoke of the need to reduce the barriers for the private sector to help locally-led adaptation efforts.

Participants further highlighted the transformative power of technology in supporting efforts towards a carbon-neutral world, and the need for a greater investment in research and development—which traditionally lies outside of the mandate of multilateral organisations. According to Bruno Carrasco, Director General of the Asian Development Bank, in order to develop and scale-up these technologies, the “risk-averse, failure averse” environment that multilateral organisations face will have to change, necessitating the “creation of new platforms to enhance public-private co-operation”.

Jyotsna Puri, Associate Vice-President of International Fund for Agricultural Development, emphasised that promoting greater synergies, “beyond planning and technical expertise, and furthering climate action via multilateral partnerships and integrated approaches” can also improve the co-ordination of the multilateral system in responding to climate change.

The Director of the Development Co-operation Directorate at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Jorge Moreira da Silva, also spoke to the importance of organisations setting global normative standards. He highlighted the newly announced [OECD DAC Declaration](#), aligning development co-operation with the goals of the Paris Agreement as a best-practice example.

State Secretary, Terhi Lehtonen, of Finland praised MOPAN for its commitment to improving performance and enhancing learning. She welcomed the future use of its unique vantage point to promote best practice and collaboration across the multilateral system.

Discussions around climate change solutions need to recognise the big picture and take a multilateral approach to encourage action and a coherent strategy. As OECD Secretary-General Mathias Cormann remarked, “the multilateral system has a central and critical role to play in supporting climate action”. He also highlighted the role of the private sector and market pricing of emissions.

The MOPAN Secretariat stands ready to support multilateral organisations and their stakeholders as they pull together to accelerate the multilateral response to climate change and take climate action – before it is too late.

More comprehensive proceedings the roundtable will be made available over the coming week.

