



# Between negotiation support and ambition catalyser

## Recommendations for next steps of the International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV (IPMM)

### 1. Background information on this paper

This paper is based on the results of a study conducted by adelphi in 2015 and commissioned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. The aim of the study was to analyse the role of the Partnership in international climate policy, assess its previous performance as well as prepare recommendations for the possible contribution of the Partnership following the adoption of the Paris Agreement. For the purposes of the study, a desk review of the Partnership's activities since its establishment as well as the presentation of these activities on the Partnership's website was conducted. In addition to that, selected Partnership members were interviewed. In the following we present a summary of the recommendations with regard to the possible next steps in the Partnership's activity.

### 2. Lessons to be learned

#### 1) Initial lessons

For the first five years of the Partnership, a number of key lessons can be summarised:

- a. A dialogue at eye level:** Partners from Developing Countries noted that this was not a top-down communication of experiences but an honest exchange addressing the challenges of climate change.
- b. Be political by going technical:** By providing a "safe space" for questions on key aspects of the negotiations, the Partnership was able to reveal the actual technical nature of many political or politicised debates throughout the negotiations.
- c. Ensure high level engagement:** The high level engagement of key players (with relevance to the negotiations) has been mentioned as a key factor encouraging participation. To this end, the increasing participation of non-governmental representatives has been mentioned as a potential future barrier to participation since this development is perceived as potential challenge of the genuine character of partnership meetings.
- d. Occupy the MRV niche:** MRV has been considered as blind spot in the world of climate governance when it comes to technical discussions and capacity building. By outlining first experiences as well as problems industrialised countries faced in the past, it was possible to initiate a forward-looking discussion that has helped to start de-politicising this issue.
- e. Enable a broad but specific participation:** By involving a large number of partner countries it was possible to engage a number of different levels of climate policy development. Since this may actually be a challenge to a useful debate for some partners, it was important to offer additional capacity building activities recognising the different levels of partner capacities.
- f. Provide a flexible but stable institutional structure:** There is quite some reluctance by a number of countries concerning new and additional institutional structures for climate governance. The current format of the Partnership, especially after an initial learning phase and the involvement of a partner to address some of the unavoidable administrative burden, is widely considered as a positive feature of the partnership.

## 2) Next steps for the Partnership after Paris

The overall performance of the Partnership has been widely welcomed by its members. However, with the Paris Agreement, new expectations and concerns among partner countries are likely. Some pertinent questions in the near future include:

### a. How to stay relevant?

**Continue to support negotiations:** to stay relevant for post-2015 climate governance, the successful way of complementing international negotiations needs to be continued. This, first of all, requires accompanying the process of further specifications of the provisions of the Paris Agreement, especially as far as the framework for mitigation activities is concerned. Special focus could be on providing support for partner countries to strengthen their national contributions as well as building upon the transparency framework set by the Paris Agreement. It is the Partnership that may significantly contribute to developing the details of the transparency requirements that have not been elaborated yet.

**Consider the role of an ambition catalyser:** Catalysing ambition can be facilitated when the Partnership positions itself as legitimate follow up (and may be forerunner) of the High Ambition Coalition – as a club of frontrunners whose participants seek to take the lead to realize the ambitious nature of the Paris Agreement. For example, even though during the first global stocktake countries (2018) are not legally obliged to strengthen their contributions, but only to communicate or update them, it is the Partnership that could catalyse action and encourage more ambitious contributions.

### b. Why and how to ensure high level engagement after Paris?

**Identify immediate demand for discussions:** By exploring and informing the details of the Post-Paris process the Partnership can stay relevant for participants as well as climate negotiations. To this end the German government may be the first to ensure that high level negotiators continue to participate (or even chair) the Partnership meetings. In this way not only the high political relevance of the partnership will be underlined but also crucial demand can be identified at a very early stage. Doing so, the Partnership can serve as a door-opener for successfully deal with politically sensitive topics.

**Enable leadership capacities:** subsequent stocktaking that will take place every five years will require constant strengthening of national contributions. It will thus be necessary for the Partnership to support this process and continuously enhance the capacities of partner countries. In particular, the Partnership can engage in highlighting good practice and supporting the conversion of NDCs into action. To this end, it needs to take an ongoing function as “early warning systems” for support needed to address key negotiations issues.

**Continue the “Climate Ambition Academy”:** One main active contribution of the Partnership to the negotiation process could be its role in “growing climate professionals”, i.e. enhancing capacities of policymakers who later become professional climate negotiators. The resulting networks are a long-term resource to solve future negotiations stalemates that will come. The summer retreats and instruments of peer-to-peer learning are major pillars

**Find the balance between political and expert level:** For the partnership meeting a balance needs to be found between the participation of non-state experts and the exclusive nature of discussions that take part on various platforms of the Partnership. On the one hand, experts representing civil society and private actors enrich the work of the Partnership due to possessing up-to-date expert knowledge on the relevant topics. On the other hand, however, excessive participation of the non-governmental sector might hinder frank discussions among policymakers.

### c. What kind of innovation and transformation is needed?

**Be responsive to expand the focus:** Responding to the needs and demands of its participants, the Partnership can deal with additional focus areas, including finance or technology transfer. The Partnership has succeeded in enhancing partner countries’ readiness for tracking mitigation and can now continue with supporting states in preparing MRV of tracking climate finance. Given the significant differences in contribution types developing an MRV framework under the Paris Agreement will be particularly challenging, and how to make this process most transparent will be a particular challenge that the Partnership can address. Moreover, to foster an atmosphere of trust and encourage openness among the participants the Partnership can pay attention to those topics that help to keep a level playing field among the former grouping of Annex-I and non-Annex-I countries. An open question is if and how to encourage new partners to participate to also “preach to those not yet converted”.

**Ensure a strong(er) regional engagement:** Offering more opportunities for intra- and interregional dialogue could be one possible way of reaching a stronger engagement of Asian countries like founding partner South Korea. This may also include developing specific regional knowledge products that can be presented during partnership meetings. Whereas regional activities restrict the choice of cooperation partners, increased interregional activities would provide Asian countries with a chance to cooperate with those who currently face more similar challenges.

**Foster cross learning between regional hubs: (Francophone, Anglophone, Latin American):** Peer-to-peer exchange can spark renewed interest in the Partnership from countries that may not have found it as relevant or useful for their mitigation policies. This may in particular be the case for countries that are regional pioneers in implementing MRV, developing inventories or other technical issues (e.g. Morocco, Chile), as regional exchange with countries less progressed might be unrewarding for them.

**Explore the options of additional deliverables:** Consider publishing short and precise summaries of the Partnership meetings that respect the Chatham House Rule and at the same meets the wish of partners to have a take home message. As a format

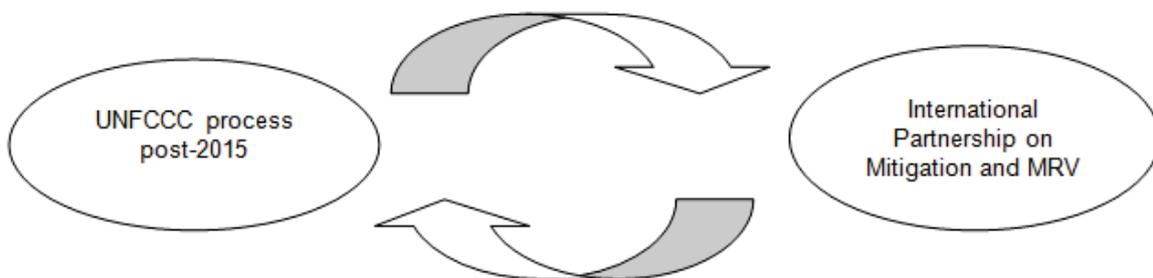
a “FAC-paper” or “Wish list” may be options. This can help to enhance the image of the Partnership and make it more attractive to refer to as valuable network also in the future. It may be worth to further consider means of strengthening public outreach and especially the use of social media based on a communication strategy. Social media such as Twitter can play an important role in disseminating the knowledge products and insights from capacity building activities (incl. twitter chats etc.). This can also mean to explore how to use resources most efficiently (e.g. phase out Facebook and focus on twitter etc.).

**Keeping the website updated** is, however, at least as important: In comparison with similar initiatives that were launched in the past few years, the Mitigation Partnership has been particularly successful because there is continuous activity and commitment from the founding parties. Partner countries have the impression that the Partnership is “alive” and not another initiative that was launched and then abandoned. This is also reflected by the regular website updates and the frequent activities as well as by the responsiveness of IPMM staff. Continuous funding has also contributed to this positive reputation and is a strong signal to partner countries about the importance that is attributed to the Partnership.

**Twofold role of the IPMM for the UNFCCC process after Paris:**

**Negotiation Supporter**

- Implementation (special focus: transparency provisions, strengthening national contributions)
- Exploring of concepts of the Paris Agreement



**Ambition Catalyser**

- Scaling up ambition, particularly important before 2020 due to absence of obligations to strengthen national contributions in this period
- Feeding in lessons learned, progress and challenges
- Building capacity among policymakers that later become professional negotiators

Further reading:

<http://mitigationpartnership.net/>

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Suggested Citation: Dennis Tänzler, Katharina Nett, Aki Kachi and Julia Melnikova 2016: Between negotiation support and ambition catalyser. Recommendations for next steps of the International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV (IPMM). Paper commissioned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. Berlin: adelphi.

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