



Chile: A Short Way to Go

On April 9, 2020, Chile became the first Latin American country to submit an updated NDC. This is a strong political signal as it demonstrates Chile's commitment to the Paris Agreement despite the domestic social unrest and the difficulties posed by COVID 19. According to the Checklist for the NDCs We Want and taking into account that Chile is a middle-income country with a relatively low emissions profile, the Chilean NDC can be rated as an **NDC that has a short way to go** to become the NDC We Want.

Advances

Chile has made important advances in relation to its previous NDC: the country has enhanced its target; committed to net zero by 2050; moved from an intensity to an economy-wide target; established 2025 as a peak year and moved from having conditional and unconditional targets to an unconditional target (no international finance needed for the achievement of the commitments). Chile also introduced an integration component to deal with mitigation, adaptation and development.

Points worth highlighting in the NDC revision process are the establishment of a Presidential Committee, a Scientific Committee and the Citizen Consultation Process.

The Just Transition and Sustainable Development pillar is an innovation that introduces a socioeconomic perspective to the NDC. Nature-Based Solutions are considered under this approach, in line with their IUCN definition of "actions seeking to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, addressing social challenges effectively and adaptively, while simultaneously providing benefits for human well-being and biodiversity".

Ecosystems feature strongly in The Chilean NDC. It includes targets for the sustainable management and recovery of forests, for afforestation and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation and a national inventory of peatlands. A national landscape restoration plan with an ambitious and measurable target for both mitigation and adaptation is also included. The NDC has a strong focus on Oceans under the integration component, with clear commitments for the creation of marine protected areas, enhanced management of existing ones and an assessment of their co-benefits for adaptation and mitigation and actions to strengthen them.

Another strength of the Chile NDC is the clear linkage between climate commitments and SDGs, demonstrated throughout the updated submission. For each cited contribution in the Just Transition and Sustainable Development pillar there are respective SDGs listed.

Gaps

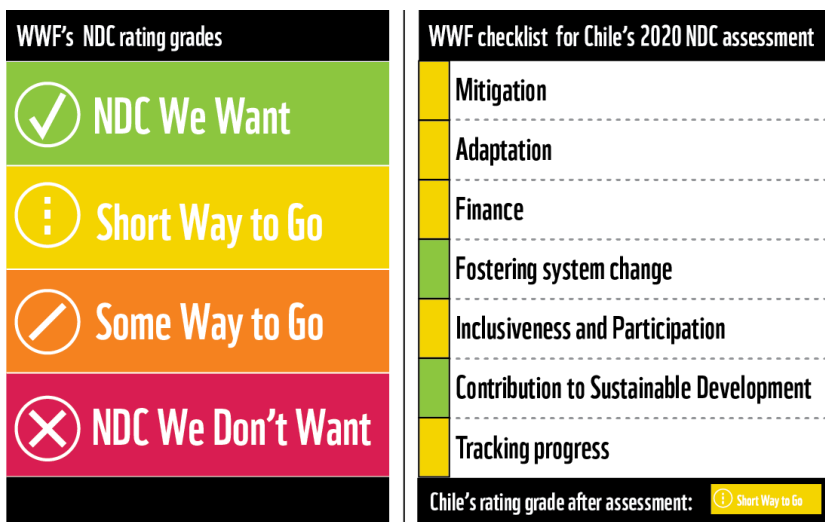
On ambition, the adaptation session lacks clarity on measures beyond elaborating plans especially on water management, a critical issue in the country.

Regarding coal phase out, the decommissioning of Chile's 28 coal-fired power generation plants is supposed to conclude in 2040; the NDC mentions 3 plants are currently in the process of closing and 7 more will be closed by 2024, but no detail or schedule is provided on the 18 plants that should be closed between 2024 and 2040. A 2023 peaking year is feasible considering the potential of renewable energies in Chile to accelerate the coal phase out.

A potential contradiction that must be flagged is the heavy reliance on negative emissions from forest sequestration (50% of the 2050 target) and the targets and plans for afforestation, reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation and peat lands. The forest sequestration component includes a strong contribution of forest plantations, which are highly vulnerable to big forest fires, produce mostly short life cycle products and generate negative impacts on water availability.

On NBS, terrestrial protected areas that covers 21% of the country are not considered. Their effective management could contribute significantly to carbon sequestration and adaptation. NBS on cities and green infrastructure could also play a strong contribution and were not included.

According to one analysis¹, Chile's climate commitment is not in line with any interpretation of a "fair" approach to the former 2°C goal, let alone the Paris Agreement's 1.5°C limit. The rating of the previous NDC has improved from "Highly insufficient" (consistent with warming between 3°C and 4°C, assessing current policies) to "insufficient" taking into account planned policies (which includes a full coal-phase out by 2040). A different view², taking into account a 2°C scenario, categorized Chile's carbon budget for 2020 as 30% of its fair budget under a climate justice model considering percentage of emissions at a global scale and links to equality (emissions per capita), responsibility (historical emissions), capacity (GDP per capita) and the right to development.



For more information

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¹ Climate Action Tracker, 2020. <https://climateactiontracker.org/climate-target-update-tracker/chile-submitted-ndc-2020-04-09/>

² Alcaraz et al, Key elements "Key elements to incorporate justice, development and ambition in an NDC. Available at <https://mma.gob.cl/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Elementos-clave-para-incorporar-justicia-desarrollo-y-ambicion-en-una-NDC.pdf>



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