



Singapore: Some Way to Go

Singapore's updated NDC was submitted on March 31, 2020. Although the NDC mentions an update of presenting economy-wide absolute target in place of the previous intensity target, the country maintained its previous commitment without enhancing its ambition, converting it to an absolute reduction of 65MtCO₂ by 2030.

Some strengths of the updated NDC are the introduction of a carbon tax in 2019 (the first in Southeast Asia) and solar energy commitments. It also presents an Annex that identifies vulnerabilities and presents adaptation measures. Quantitative targets related to coastal and flood protection; local food production; and solar energy deployment are presented, as well as measures for the transport and building sectors and for energy efficiency. Singapore incentivizes research on solar energy and adaptation and supports developing countries through a capacity building international cooperation program.

Our analysis concludes that more ambition was expected from Singapore, considering it is a small low-lying island state particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change and a high-income country that is one of the world's most competitive economies. We consider that Singapore's NDC has Some Way to go to become the NDC We Want.

Advances

The NDC contains an Annex that details Singapore's adaptation vulnerabilities and strategies and states that, given the complexity and challenges in adaptation planning, Singapore has integrated **long-term adaptation planning into national policies**. It also mentions investments and measures related to research; protection from sea level rise; water and flood management; energy and infrastructure; public health, greenery and biodiversity; and food supply.

Singapore's [Long-term Low-emissions Development Strategy \(LEDS\)](#), which aims to guide the transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient future, is also mentioned. Beyond 2030, the LEDS aspires to halve emissions from its peak to 33 MtCO₂e by 2050, with a view to achieving net-zero emissions as soon as viable in the second half of the century.

The introduction of an economy-wide carbon tax should also be noted. The tax is considered of the main financial incentives applied to direct emissions from carbon intensive installations. According to the government, it covers 80% of Singapore's carbon emissions and provides a price signal across the economy to encourage emission reductions, support other mitigation measures and facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy.

Singapore will continue to explore innovative approaches to coastal protection measures, which may include a combination of conventional engineering solutions and nature-based solutions. Conservation and restoration of mangroves are also mentioned, along with recovery plans for animals and plant species and planting one million trees across the island by 2030.

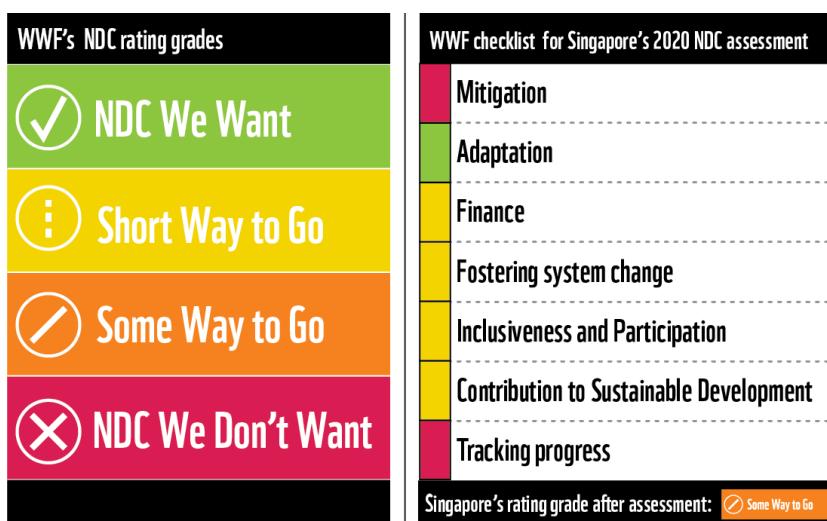
The Singapore Government carried out stakeholder consultations, including with members of the public, in order to obtain feedback on possible measures to reduce carbon emissions. The NDC also mentions that the Government will continue to engage stakeholders (including businesses, civil society, youths, schools, and the research community) to co-create and co-deliver solutions, amplify awareness, and encourage a whole-of-nation effort to address climate change. A key best practice highlighted is to put in place effective and pragmatic institutional arrangements to coordinate domestic climate efforts, such as the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Climate Change, that coordinates Singapore's climate change policies from a whole-of-government perspective.

Gaps

The NDC target does not raise ambition in emissions reductions. The commitment to peak emissions at 65 MtCO₂e around 2030, that will allow Singapore to achieve a 36% reduction in Emissions Intensity from 2005 levels by 2030, is basically the same target presented in 2015 converted to an absolute target¹.

The participatory process conducted by Singapore for the Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategy (LEDS) from July to September 2019 was much more comprehensive and complete than the consultations for the NDC. For the LEDS, the public consultation was aimed at seeking views on measures and actions that could be taken by the government, businesses, households and individuals towards becoming a low-carbon global city-state. The consultation process was conducted by the National Climate Change Secretariat and of the 2,000 responses from various stakeholders were received, 1,600 were received through **WWF Singapore** and Speak for Climate, that had created online forms for the public to submit their feedback. For the NDC, no disclosure of information or reporting back on the process took place.

Although the institutional governance in the government is well established, a transparent national system to track implementation of the NDCs would require more clarity on the process to engage civil society, academia and other relevant stakeholders.



For more information

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¹ The CAT analysis considers the 2030 target "Highly insufficient", since Singapore's climate commitments are not in line with any interpretation of the 2°C fair approach, let alone the 1.5°C limit of the Paris Agreement (Climate Action Tracker, 2020).



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