

Under2 Coalition Governance

Terms of Reference | January 2021

Background

- 1.1 The Under2 MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) is a commitment by sub-national governments to long-term deep decarbonisation and maintaining the average global temperature increase to under 2°C by 2050. Central to this is the public commitment by all signatories to reduce their GHG emissions to under 2 metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent per capita, by 2050.
- 1.2 The Under2 Coalition is a group of jurisdictions who have signed the Under2 MOU and seek to collaborate with global peers to achieve its goals.
- 1.3 The Under2 Coalition is an initiative primarily driven by state, regional and provincial governments. However, jurisdictions at all levels of government are encouraged to sign or endorse the Under2 MOU, thus committing to deep decarbonization in their jurisdictions.
- 1.4 The Under2 Coalition sets the tone for bold climate leadership and provides an effective global partnership model for parties to the UNFCCC. Under2 sends a clear signal that net-zero by 2050 is achievable, desirable and leads to greater prosperity for all.
- 1.5 To achieve the goals of the Under2 MOU, the Under2 Coalition will be governed by Co-Chairs and a Steering Group, elected biennially with the support from The Climate Group as the Secretariat.

Co-chairs

- 2.1 The role of the Co-Chairs is to serve as the high-level regional figureheads of the Under2 Coalition, representing the state and regional signatories and promoting its collective vision and goals. Together with the Steering Group, they guide the strategic direction of the Under2 Coalition.
- 2.2 The honorary Co-Chair position is held by the region, but implemented in a personal capacity by the government leader, i.e. the respective Premier, First Minister, Governor, or (Minister) President of the sub-national government.

- 2.3 Co-Chairs shall represent each of the five global regions of the Under2 Coalition (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, North America and Latin America) and are elected by the state and regional members within that global region.
- 2.4 The Co-Chairs should demonstrate climate leadership within the Coalition, be proactive in the Coalition's programmatic and governance work, be willing to communicate internationally about the Coalition's successes, as well as engage with the members in their global region.
- 2.5 As an initiative led by states and regions, state, regional and provincial government signatories are eligible to nominate themselves for candidacy of Co-Chair. City and local government signatories and national government endorsers are not eligible to nominate themselves to the position of Co-Chair.
- 2.6 The Co-Chairs will be confirmed at the Annual General Assembly of the Under2 Coalition.
- 2.7 The Co-Chairs will be elected for a minimum two-year term.
- 2.8 If a Co-Chair's situation changes, e.g. due to departure from office or change in government leadership, or they are no longer able to undertake the assigned role, the Steering Group should suggest an interim Co-Chair to fill the position until the next elections. The recommendation will be circulated to the Under2 Coalition members within the Co-Chair global region to rule out potential objections. If no suitable replacement can be found, the position responsibility will be borne by the remaining Co-Chairs until the next election.

Steering Group

- 3.1 The role of Steering Group members is to determine and oversee the strategic direction of the Under2 Coalition, including inputting on strategic decisions, approving new signatories and endorsers and taking an active role to strengthen and grow the work of the Under2 Coalition, including supporting major new initiatives.
- 3.2 The Steering Group consists of the five Co-Chair regions and a maximum of fifteen additional representatives, with preferably two members per region being represented, from the Under2 Coalition member governments. The term is for a minimum of two years.
- 3.3 Steering Group positions refer to the jurisdiction and not to individuals.
- 3.4 A high-level elected representative of each Steering Group member region acts as a formal representative in the Steering Group and is responsible for general oversight of Steering Group matters. A senior government official may be designated to represent the government in general Steering Group matters, such as consultations or meetings.
- 3.5 State, regional and provincial government signatories are eligible to nominate themselves for candidacy to the Steering Group. City and local government signatories and national government endorsers are not eligible to nominate themselves to Steering Group positions.
- 3.6 Steering Group members should represent different global regions and show leadership with their climate change objectives and measures. Their governments should play an active role in the Under2 Coalition programs, e.g. through participation in work streams and projects.

- 3.7 Criteria for selection will be geographic representation, performance on achieving climate change objectives and degree of involvement in Under2 activities over the past year.

Global Ambassador

- 4.1 The role of Global Ambassador is to be an external-facing role to raise the awareness of the Coalition's ambitions globally.
- 4.2 The Global Ambassador will encourage new signatories and endorsers to join the Coalition, advise on how the Coalition can strengthen its linkages with the formal, international process and support the expansion of the funding base for the Coalition's activities.
- 4.3 The Global Ambassador does not have an administrative role in the governance structure.
- 4.4 There is currently one Global Ambassador; however, it is envisaged that further appointments may be made on an ad hoc basis in consultation with the Steering Group.

Signatories

- 5.1 Signatories to the Under2 MOU are sub-national governments that are committed to reducing their greenhouse gas emissions by 80-95% on 1990 levels, or to 2 annual metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent per capita, by 2050.

- 5.2 Signatories are categorized as follows:

5.2.1 State and regional signatories: 'State and regional signatories' refers to jurisdictions that are one level below national governments, including states, regions and provinces.

5.2.2 City and local government signatories: 'Cities and local government signatories' refers to cities, counties and all administrative divisions below state and regional level.

- 5.3 Interested signatories shall express their intent to sign the Under2 MOU in an email and commit to annually disclose GHG emissions and climate actions to The Climate Group (i.e. through CDP's online questionnaire). This will be submitted along with an appendix that sets forth their jurisdiction's unique set of actions and plans for reaching their emissions reduction goals which will be evaluated by the Steering Group against set criteria.

- 5.4 Interested signatories whose applications are approved by the Steering Group will then submit a signature page and liaise with the Secretariat to formally join the Under2 Coalition.

Endorsers

- 6.1 Typically, Endorsers to the Under2 MOU are national governments. However, endorsement by states, regions or provinces is also considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.2 Interested governments shall express their intent to endorse the Under2 MOU in an email which will be evaluated by the Steering Group against set criteria.
- 6.3 By way of endorsing the Under2 MOU, governments may indicate a range of intentions including:
- Support the work of states, provinces and regions within its boundaries in their efforts to reach emissions targets;
 - Encourage subnational jurisdictions within its boundaries to become signatories to the Under2 MOU;
 - Commit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80 to 95% on 1990 levels, or to 2 annual metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent per capita, by 2050 within their jurisdiction;
 - Undertake direct actions within its jurisdiction to reduce emissions and support the goals of the Under2 MOU;
 - Provide funding, expertise and other resources to support the programmatic work of the Coalition. Making a financial pledge is not a requirement to endorse the Under2 MOU; however, several endorsing governments have chosen to support us in achieving the goals of the Under2 MOU by making a financial pledge.

General Meeting of the Under2 Coalition

- 7.1 The General Assembly of the Under2 Coalition will be held on an annual basis alongside the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change Conference of the Parties or other major global climate event.
- 7.2 All Coalition signatories and endorsers shall be invited to attend the General Assembly.
- 7.3 Jurisdictions who are not members of the Coalition may be invited as observers to the General Assembly, in view of signing the Under2 MOU and joining the Coalition.

Secretariat Role

8.1 The Climate Group is Secretariat to the Under2 Coalition and provides dedicated support to the Co-Chairs and Steering Group members. This includes:

8.1.1 Written briefings in advance of Co-Chair and Steering Group meetings and consultations on new initiatives related to the Under2 Coalition;

8.1.2 Background briefings, communications and other support (as appropriate) in relation to specific activities undertaken by Co-Chairs and Steering Group members on behalf of the Under2 Coalition;

8.1.3 The Secretariat will submit the composition of the Co-Chairs and Steering Group to the General Assembly for approval.

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