




## OPEN GOVERNMENT FOR CLIMATE ACTION: Argentina's Climate Change Platform, "Information for Transparency and Action"

An open government approach is instrumental to engaging non-state actors in effective and ambitious climate action. Open climate data empowers non-state actors to make informed decisions and helps mainstream climate change strategies in sectoral policymaking. Meanwhile, civil society participation in climate policymaking can strengthen the legitimacy of these policies and help mobilize support for their implementation. In its most recent Open Government Partnership (OGP) National Action Plan, Argentina committed to make climate data openly available and hold public consultations on relevant policies.

**THE OPPORTUNITY** | In December 2015, President Mauricio Macri took office in Argentina with new priorities on state modernization and climate action. In 2016, his administration created the inter-ministerial National Cabinet on Climate Change to facilitate a coordinated policy response to climate change. This Cabinet was responsible for revising Argentina's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) ahead of COP 22.

It is against this background that the preparation of a new OGP National Action Plan began. In the early stages of the process, the Open Government Coordination office carried out meetings with 34 government agencies to gather input for possible OGP commitments. The Climate Change Direction — the office responsible for coordinating climate policy — took this as an opportunity to further formalize its system for public participation and to demonstrate the transparency of its process for revising the NDC.





**THE COMMITMENT** | In its most recent National Action Plan, launched in July 2017, Argentina committed to centralizing climate-related data in a publicly accessible digital platform. The platform will include current and historical greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories as well as indicators and maps of climate impacts. Argentina also committed to holding three roundtable meetings with civil society and other stakeholders to discuss its climate policy plans, including actions to meet the country's NDC targets.

**REACTIONS AND INITIAL INSIGHTS** | Some concerns have been raised regarding the fact that these initiatives had already been planned before the OGP process began. The Climate Change Direction points out, however, that while these actions were planned, the goal of the OGP commitment was to strengthen the relationship with civil society by making a formal pledge to implement these initiatives. The civil society organizations (CSOs) that participated in the OGP roundtable events welcome that move. These organizations indicated that since both the Direction and CSOs working on climate are new to the open government space, they were uncertain about which actions they could propose in the OGP process. The most important outcome of this National Action Plan, they highlighted, is the creation of a new space for a growing collaboration on climate action.

Enrique Maurtua Konstantinidis, Climate Change Director at FARN, an Argentinian CSO, underlined that, even if parts of the commitment had already been planned, these are still very positive initiatives.

He added that the public disclosure of climate-relevant data gives civil society the opportunity to advocate for more frequent updating in the future. Similarly, Diego Adamson, Executive Director of Protágonos, points out that civil society has a role to play in implementation by promoting the platform's visibility or contributing to capacity-building efforts for data collection and project design.

Alvaro Zopatti, Mitigation of Climate Change Director at the Climate Change Direction, indicated that the Direction intends to expand the participatory approach it is currently undertaking through the National Cabinet. It was also noted, however, that expanding participation and following up on the comments received strain already limited resources and requires capacity-building for both government and participants. In this context, Mr. Zopatti highlighted the importance of integrating new OGP commitments within existing transparency or participation mechanisms.

**OUTLOOK ON IMPLEMENTATION** | On October 3, 2017, the government launched the System of Climate Change Risk Maps<sup>1</sup>, and on October 26, 2017, the National Cabinet on Climate Change held a consultative roundtable with civil society<sup>2</sup>. A beta version of the GHG inventory platform has also been published<sup>3</sup> and will be updated, along with the risk maps, by June 2019. Ultimately, the Direction believes that OGP will help formalize its engagement with civil society and build legitimacy for its work. Meanwhile, civil society sees a potential to develop more fluid communication and tighter collaboration with government on climate action.

## Endnotes

1. Sistema de Mapas de Riesgo del Cambio Climático. <http://simarcc.ambiente.gob.ar/>
2. Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development. 2017. "The Expanded National Cabinet on Climate Change Met Before COP 23" [in Spanish], October 26. <http://ambiente.gob.ar/noticias/se-reunio-el-gabinete-ampliado-de-cambio-climatico-de-cara-a-la-cop-23/>. Video of the event available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mehVOFvRmY0&feature=youtu.be>.
3. Inventario Nacional de GEI de Argentina. <https://inventariogei.ambiente.gob.ar/>



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