ICAT
Initiative for
Climate Action
Transparency

IMPACT REPORT 2025

> By supporting countries to build strong and comprehensive transparency frameworks, ICAT helps create the foundations for transformational climate action. Such transparency efforts strengthen trust and support evidence-based policy processes for implementing NDCs, enabling developing countries to engage stakeholders domestically and be empowered as actors in the multilateral process, contributing to the success of the Paris Agreement.

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Words of welcome

ICAT's approach—rooted in the active engagement of both less developed countries and emerging economies—continued to deliver transformative impact.

From the June Climate Meetings in Bonn (SB 62) to the second Global Transparency Forum in Songdo, South Korea, and finally the UN Climate Change Conference (COP30) in Belém, Brazil, one message resonated throughout 2025: delivering on the promise of the Paris Agreement requires ambitious, forward-looking climate action, grounded in robust transparency.

As countries prepared to submit the third generation of their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC 3.0) due in 2025, climate action transparency took centre stage in global climate efforts. The Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT) played a significant role in advancing the NDC process, equipping countries with the capacity, tools and resources needed to design credible climate action plans and back them with evidence-based policies. In 2025, over 40 ICAT country projects directly covered NDC updates and/or NDC tracking, with 22 countries confirming ICAT support in the development of their NDC 3.0 or explicitly mentioning ICAT in the NDC submission. The new set of NDCs submitted by the time of COP30 did not fulfill all expectations in terms of ambition, but they were certainly recognized as higher quality and hence more likely to be successfully implemented than previous generations of NDCs.

Throughout the year, demand for ICAT support was extremely high. Country engagement deepened, regional collaboration strengthened, and major advances were made across ICAT's toolbox and training programmes. During 2025, ICAT worked on 54 active country projects. This brings the total number of countries ICAT has worked with over the years through either country or regional projects to over 80.

Countries turned to ICAT to strengthen core elements of their transparency frameworks, including greenhouse gas inventories, policy impact assessment, NDC tracking, data governance, and adaptation monitoring and evaluation frameworks. ICAT's support helped lay durable institutional foundations while building technical capacity and embedding transparency within climate governance processes. ICAT's approach—rooted in the active engagement of both less developed countries and emerging economies—continued to deliver transformative impact. This approach often breaks barriers and leads to the successful replication of good practices.

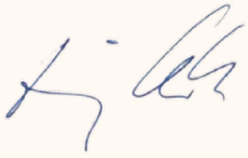
*During 2025, ICAT worked on **54** active country projects. This brings the total number of countries ICAT has worked with over the years through either country or regional projects to over **80**.*

As the year drew to a close, COP30, as usual, provided a strategic platform for advancing climate action and an invaluable opportunity to connect with many of you in person, ending the year 2025 on a high note. The conference featured engaging bilateral discussions with numerous partner countries, alongside insightful presentations from ICAT-supported countries such as El Salvador and Kyrgyzstan, as well as from the Regional Hubs. Several agreements were also concluded, including under extraordinary circumstances. A memorable moment came during the now-famous ICAT–Vanuatu project signing ceremony at COP30. When a sudden fire prompted the evacuation of the main pavilion, the delegation found an unlikely refuge to finalize their agreement: a local bakery. Yes, a bakery—complete with the scent of freshly baked pão de queijo, a lone television airing a Brazilian women's cup football match between Palmeiras and Ferroviária, and a sense of camaraderie that transcended the circumstances. The scene nicely captured the spirit of ICAT's work: adaptable, collaborative, and reflecting our desire to work with partner countries, overcoming barriers if necessary.

Against this backdrop, the 2025 ICAT Impact Report offers a snapshot of this momentous year. The lead story offers an in-depth look at ICAT's support to countries preparing their NDC 3.0 submissions. Additional stories showcase how ICAT's country-and regional hubs-led work is elevating climate ambition—one country at a time. 2025 was ICAT's 10th anniversary year, celebrated at COP30. A special anniversary gift to ICAT was an article by Prof. Adel Ben Youssef from Tunisia, presented in the next chapter, in which he offers an outsider's view on what he sees as ICAT's contribution to global climate efforts.

The year was also historic for ICAT, as it was marked by Ireland joining as a new donor partner. We extend our sincere gratitude to Ireland and to our existing donors—Austria, Canada, Germany, Italy, and the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF)—whose generous support has sustained and strengthened ICAT's work over the past decade. As ICAT enters phase 2.1—extending operations to 2030—we reaffirm our commitment to supporting and accompanying countries on their journey toward a low-carbon and climate-resilient future.

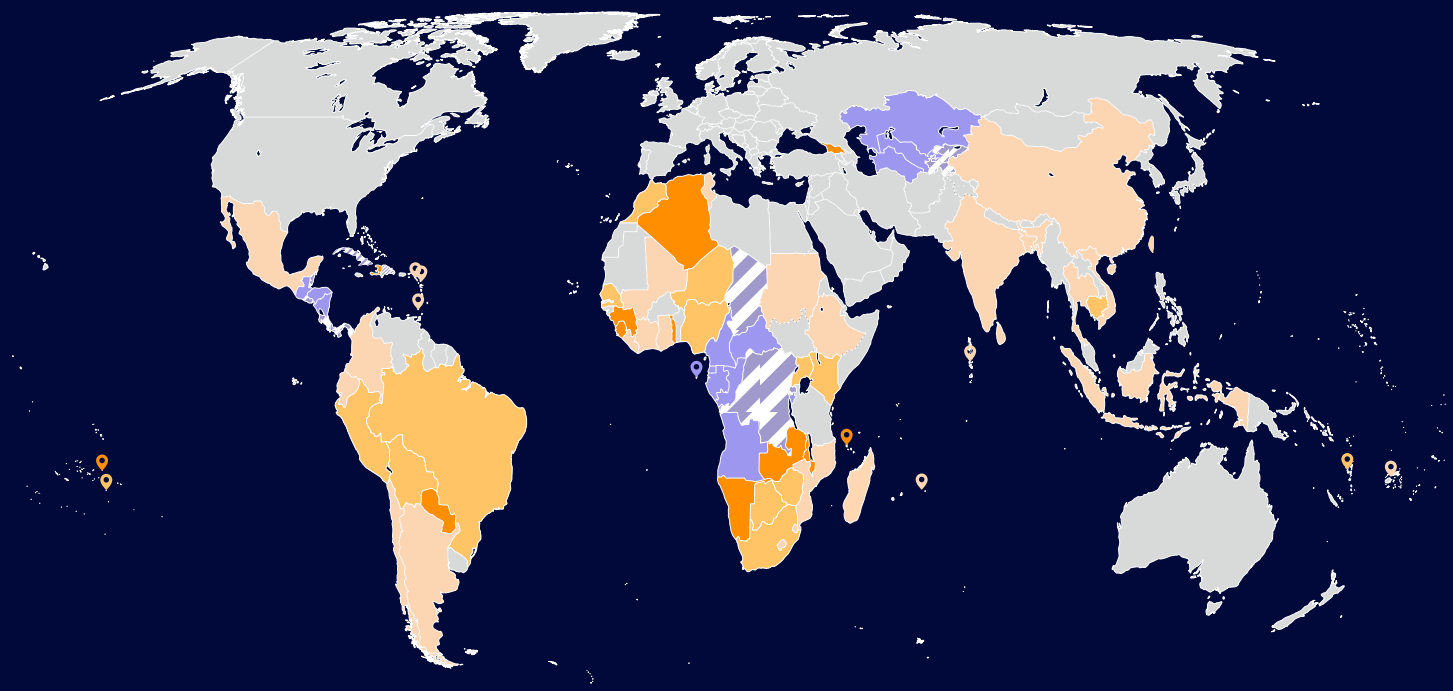
The achievements of 2025 lay a strong foundation for even greater impact in 2026 and beyond, as ICAT continues to empower countries with the knowledge, tools and other resources needed to deliver effective and ambitious climate action and participate actively in the multilateral process.



Dr. Henning Wuester
ICAT Director

Where ICAT Works

ICAT provides support to 80+ partner countries.



Status

- Country project(s) in progress
- Country project(s) completed
- Country project(s) completed with new project(s) in progress

Regional Hubs

- Country belonging to a Regional Hub
- Country belonging to a Regional Hub with separate ICAT country project(s) completed or in progress

ICAT by numbers

ICAT in 2025

15
new country projects initiated, including five in newly engaged countries

1,582
people trained (44% women)

10
new countries applied ICAT guides, tools, and methodologies

14
countries worked on establishing a greenhouse gas inventory

2
countries worked on developing monitoring frameworks for just transitions

6
countries worked on building a climate finance transparency framework

37
countries worked on establishing an NDC tracking framework

37
countries worked on establishing a Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) framework and/or data system

10
countries that submitted reports in 2025 confirmed the ICAT project resulted in improved reporting to the UNFCCC or mentioned ICAT in the submission

22
countries confirmed ICAT support in the development of their NDC 3.0 or explicitly mentioned ICAT in the NDC submission

94%
of training survey respondents (from trainings that took place in 2025) rated the training experience as 'very good' or 'good'

16
countries worked on building a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals

11
countries worked on developing the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data

30
countries worked on assessing greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies

7
countries worked on aggregating or integrating greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions

Since inception

80
countries supported

3
Regional Climate Action Transparency Hubs established

32
countries supported in the NDC update process

53
countries applied ICAT guides, tools, and methodologies

90%
of training survey respondents rated the training experience as ‘very good’ or ‘good’

5,229
people trained (44% women) since 2021

92%
of training survey respondents reported using training materials in their work, 6 months after the training

45
countries confirmed the ICAT project resulted in improved reporting to the UNFCCC or mentioned ICAT in their submission

27
countries have improved policies, developed regulations, or taken other steps to advance policies and measures as a result of ICAT-supported assessments

75
ICAT partner countries participated in ICAT-organised peer-to-peer or knowledge-sharing events

108
non-ICAT partner countries participated in ICAT-hosted/organized peer-to-peer or knowledge-sharing events

Overview of 2025 projects*

Projects initiated in 2025

Country project	Develop a greenhouse gas inventory	Develop an MRV framework and/or data system	Develop an NDC tracking framework	Assess greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies	Build a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals	Develop monitoring frameworks for just transitions	Develop the M&E of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data	Build a climate finance transparency framework	Aggregate or integrate greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions
Botswana II			●	●					
Cambodia III		●	●	●					
Chad II	●	●	●						
Cuba III		●	●	●					
DRC I		●	●						
Georgia I		●	●	●					
Haiti I		●	●	●					
Niger II								●	
Peru II	●				●				
Sierra Leone I		●	●	●	●				

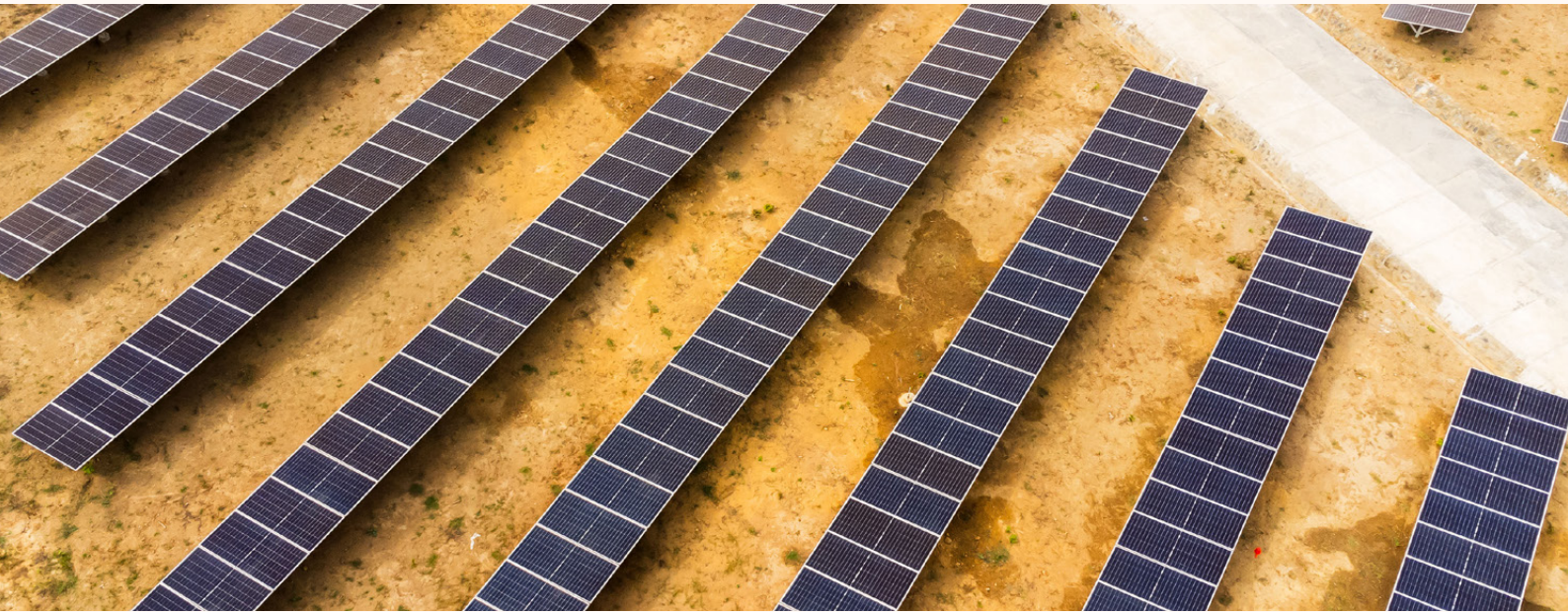
** ICAT supports countries through a phased approach, with initial projects that may be followed by subsequent phases (marked as I, II, III, etc. in the tables)*

Country project	Develop a greenhouse gas inventory	Develop an MRV framework and/or data system	Develop an NDC tracking framework	Assess greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies	Build a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals	Develop monitoring frameworks for just transitions	Develop the M&E of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data	Build a climate finance transparency framework	Aggregate or integrate greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions
South Africa IV			●			●			
Tajikistan II		●	●	●	●				
Uganda II			●		●				
Vanuatu II		●	●	●	●				
Zambia I		●	●	●	●				

Projects ongoing in 2025

Country project	Develop a greenhouse gas inventory	Develop an MRV framework and/or data system	Develop an NDC tracking framework	Assess greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies	Build a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals	Develop monitoring frameworks for just transitions	Develop the M&E of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data	Build a climate finance transparency framework	Aggregate or integrate greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions
 Algeria I	●	●	●		●				
 Brazil IV & V			●	●		●			
 Comoros I			●	●				●	
 El Salvador II		●	●						
 Guinea I	●	●	●	●					
 Kenya III		●	●	●			●		
 Kyrgyzstan I		●	●	●	●				
 Malawi I		●	●	●	●		●		
 Morocco III								●	
 Namibia I	●	●	●	●	●				

Country project	Develop a greenhouse gas inventory	Develop an MRV framework and/or data system	Develop an NDC tracking framework	Assess greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies	Build a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals	Develop monitoring frameworks for just transitions	Develop the M&E of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data	Build a climate finance transparency framework	Aggregate or integrate greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions
Nigeria II	●	●	●	●					
Panama II		●					●		●
Paraguay I		●	●	●	●				
Samoa I		●	●	●	●		●		
Senegal		●						●	
Togo I		●	●	●	●				
Tonga I	●	●	●						
Zimbabwe II							●		



Projects closed in 2025

Country project	Develop a greenhouse gas inventory	Develop an MRV framework and/or data system	Develop an NDC tracking framework	Assess greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies	Build a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals	Develop monitoring frameworks for just transitions	Develop the M&E of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data	Build a climate finance transparency framework	Aggregate or integrate greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions
 Argentina II	●		●	●			●		●
 Belize II & III		●	●					●	●
 Bolivia I		●	●	●					
 Chile II		●	●	●			●		●
 Costa Rica III		●		●					
 Côte d'Ivoire I								●	
 Ecuador I		●							
 Eswatini II		●		●			●		●
 Ghana II		●	●	●					
 Kenya II	●	●		●					

Country project	Develop a greenhouse gas inventory	Develop an MRV framework and/or data system	Develop an NDC tracking framework	Assess greenhouse gas and/or sustainable development impacts of sectoral policies	Build a framework to analyze projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals	Develop monitoring frameworks for just transitions	Develop the M&E of adaptation actions and/or loss & damage-related data	Build a climate finance transparency framework	Aggregate or integrate greenhouse gas impacts of subnational and non-state actions
 Mali I	●								
 Mauritius I		●	●	●	●		●		
 Mexico I		●	●	●					
 Morocco II	●	●	●	●	●		●		●
 Mozambique III		●	●	●			●		
 Saint Kitts and Nevis I		●	●		●				
 South Africa III	●	●	●						●
 Tajikistan I	●	●		●					
 Vanuatu I	●	●		●					

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Prof. Adel Ben Youssef at COP30, Belém, Brazil. *Credit: Réalités (online)*

Opinion piece

The power of transparency – Lessons from 10 years of ICAT support to developing countries

By Adel Ben Youssef

How can developing countries meet their transparency commitments under the Paris Agreement without being constrained by capacity limits? Using ICAT as a central case study, Prof. Adel Ben Youssef argues that Article 13 of the Paris Agreement should not be understood as a narrow reporting obligation, but as a core pillar of climate governance—one that underpins credibility, coordination, learning, and domestic policy debate. Drawing on ten years of ICAT experience across countries and regions, the commentary shows how targeted capacity building, institutional strengthening, and regional cooperation can transform transparency from a compliance exercise into an enabling infrastructure for policy alignment, access to finance, and sustainable development.

The article was originally published in French on Réalités (online) on 17 November 2025. A Tunisian, Prof. Adel Ben Youssef, is an Associate Professor of Economics at Université Côte d'Azur and a permanent member of the Research Group on Law, Economics, and Management of the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS research laboratory GREDEG, UMR 7321). He has served as a negotiator for Tunisia at seven consecutive COP summits (COP23 to COP29), reflecting his long-standing engagement in global climate diplomacy. He also acts as a scientific advisor and expert to the Ministry of Environment and various international organizations.

Article 13 of the Paris Agreement establishes the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) as an information infrastructure in support of climate action. It is not merely a reporting mechanism designed to fill in tables, but a system that structures incentives, guides public policies, and conditions the credibility of national pathways. The ETF pursues two complementary objectives: on the one hand, to enable a clear understanding of emissions, progress toward NDCs and the support provided and received; on the other hand, to strengthen trust among Parties by making announced efforts verifiable. The decisions adopted in Katowice on the modalities, procedures, and guidelines of the ETF translated these objectives into concrete obligations, in particular the regular submission of Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) and national greenhouse gas inventories.

The originality of Article 13 lies in the fact that it combines universality and differentiation. All countries are subject to the same institutional framework, but flexibilities are provided for developing countries that need them, in light of their capacities. This choice creates a constitutive tension: how can a minimum level of comparability of information be maintained while avoiding the de facto exclusion of countries with the most limited capacities?

In this context, technical support and capacity-building arrangements are not peripheral to the ETF; they are a structuring element of it. It is precisely in this space, between requirements and capacity, that ICAT has positioned itself over the past ten years.

The role of transparency in the Paris Agreement

From an analytical perspective, transparency fulfills at least four essential functions in the contemporary climate regime.

First, it is an instrument of credibility. The logic of NDCs is based on nationally determined commitments, without externally imposed quantified constraints. In this context, the only way to test whether these commitments are realistic is to observe, over several cycles, the consistency between announced objectives, policies actually implemented, and emissions trajectories. Transparency thus creates a pathway of progressive self-revelation of States' preferences and capacities, revealing over time who keeps their promises, who exceeds them, and who falls short.

Second, transparency serves as a coordination mechanism. Inventories, projections, and monitoring frameworks allow countries to position themselves in their respective trajectories, identify potential areas for cooperation—for example, under Article 6—and anticipate the lock-in effects of carbon-intensive infrastructure. Without a minimum level of methodological harmonization, this coordination role would remain limited; Article 13, by building on IPCC emission inventory guidelines, provides a common language that makes very different national realities comparable and facilitates discussions on relative efforts and possible emission transfers.

Third, transparency is a lever for learning. Experience from previous reporting cycles (national communications and biennial update reports for some countries) shows that building an inventory or an MRV framework forces the clarification of material flows, institutional responsibilities, and statistical gaps.

In many countries, the first comprehensive inventories revealed sectoral inconsistencies, grey areas of responsibility, and needs for administrative reform that go far beyond the climate agenda.

Establishing a robust transparency system thus becomes a spotlight on broader dysfunctions and an entry point for modernizing statistical systems and planning processes.

Finally, transparency contributes to the internal debate on development choices. When structured data on sectoral emissions, energy demand trajectories, or climate impact risks becomes available, it informs budgetary trade-offs, parliamentary debates, and social controversies. Article 13 does not impose this debate, but it provides the raw material for it. A detailed inventory, a policy monitoring framework, or a biennial transparency report are not, in themselves, political instruments, but they offer an information base on which societies can question the coherence between rhetoric, investment choices, and long-term strategies.

The contribution of the ICAT initiative: methodologies, capacities, and institutional "depth"

ICAT fits precisely into this shift of transparency from an essentially accounting function toward a governance function. Created in 2015, when the architecture of the Paris Agreement was taking shape, ICAT's initial mandate was to help countries assess the impact of their climate policies and strengthen their monitoring, reporting, and verification systems. Ten years later, available results show that the Initiative has gradually expanded its scope, supporting not only data production but also the structuring of institutions and the alignment of policies. Three contributions stand out in particular.

A. A toolbox linking transparency and decision-making

ICAT's series of policy assessment guides aims to bridge a typical gap in reporting systems: the distance between the data produced and the decisions actually made. These guides are not limited to the accounting of emissions, although this remains an essential foundation; they provide approaches for estimating the impacts of policies and measures on greenhouse gas emissions, systematically integrating effects on sustainable development, analyzing the potential for structural change, and taking into account the role of subnational and non-state actors. More recently, ICAT has expanded this portfolio to areas that reflect developments in the climate debate: climate finance transparency, monitoring just transitions, and the link between Article 6 cooperative mechanisms and the ETF. This expansion reflects a gradual convergence between transparency requirements and new governance challenges related to finance, social justice, and carbon markets.

B. An investment in capacities and institutional arrangements

The majority of developing countries facing the ETF requirements lack not only technical tools but also "institutional depth": clear arrangements between ministries, well-resourced focal points, and administrative routines for collecting, validating, and transmitting data. ICAT has directed a significant part of its work toward these often invisible but essential dimensions. Consolidated figures for 2024 indicate that ICAT has supported over 100 country-level projects, trained more than 5,000 people, contributed to the creation or improvement of over 50 MRV frameworks and about 30 national greenhouse gas inventories, and that at least 40 countries have improved their UNFCCC reporting thanks to this support. These results suggest a capacity-building effect that goes beyond mere minimum compliance with reporting requirements to reach the core of internal processes for planning, budgeting, and evaluating public policies.

C. Regional hubs as a bridge between the global scale and national realities

Another major innovation lies in the creation of regional hubs in Central America, Central Africa, and Central Asia. These intermediary structures play several roles: disseminating methodological tools, facilitating networks of practitioners, developing national transparency roadmaps, and engaging in political dialogue with regional organizations.

From a political economy perspective, these hubs help mitigate a classic risk of technical assistance mechanisms: dependence on external experts and the isolation of national teams. By promoting South–South dynamics and a certain amount of peer pressure at the regional level, they give transparency a more political dimension, which is no longer seen solely as an external requirement but as a shared endeavor, embedded in the agendas of regional institutions and economic communities.

Ten years of implementation: cross-cutting trends and country experiences

The first trend concerns the shift from "inventory-based" transparency to "policy-aligned" transparency.

In several countries, the initial engagement with ICAT took the form of a project centred on the national inventory, leading to improved sectoral coverage and updated time series. Very quickly, the focus shifted toward using these inventories to revisit NDCs, test the plausibility of announced trajectories, and design new policy instruments. Vanuatu illustrates this shift, with a revised NDC that explicitly builds on the results of an ICAT project centered on the inventory.

The second trend is the gradual integration of MRV systems into decision-making structures. The case of Nigeria shows that strengthening MRV systems is not limited to filling out new tables; it is accompanied by the creation of institutional arrangements in key sectors, the development of cross-sectoral guidelines, and the connection with strategic plans such as the National Energy Transition Plan or roadmaps for a just transition. Transparency thus becomes a necessary step for the design and monitoring of structural reforms, rather than a parallel exercise confined to reports submitted to the UNFCCC.

The third trend is the consolidation of a unified national MRV system from fragmented sectoral systems. The Democratic Republic of the Congo, like other forested countries, already had robust MRV arrangements in certain sectors (forestry, agriculture) linked to specific programmes. The ICAT project aims precisely to transform this mosaic into a coherent national system, capable of meeting the requirements of the ETF, supporting the preparation of future BTRs, and highlighting the country's role as a carbon sink in international negotiations. By bringing together sectoral arrangements initially designed for specific funding or mechanisms, the Initiative contributes to creating a more transparent, understandable, and sustainable national architecture.

The fourth trend is the regionalization of the demand for transparency. The Central Africa hub shows how an initial project, targeting a few countries, has progressively led to action plans for all member states of a regional community. Transparency is no longer merely a technical matter managed by a national focal point, but a topic on the agenda of ministerial councils, which review the progress of national plans and regional coherence. Taken together, these elements suggest that Article 13, through initiatives like ICAT, contributes to creating a "transparency ecosystem" in which technical instruments, human capacities, and regional dynamics are combined

The challenges toward 2030 and the possible roles of ICAT 2.1

The ETF's entry into a steady operational phase, with the first wave of BTRs and the preparation of third-generation NDCs, opens a new sequence in which the stakes are evolving and calling for an adaptation of ICAT's priorities. The first challenge concerns the shift from "producing the first BTR" to "building a sustainable reporting trajectory". In several countries, the first BTR requires an exceptional effort, sometimes concentrated within a small core of experts.

The question now is whether administrative routines, budgetary frameworks, and institutional arrangements are sufficient to ensure the regularity and improvement of future cycles. This requires integrating transparency into national statistical systems, budgetary processes, and development planning frameworks, so that it no longer depends solely on one-off projects funded with external resources.

A second challenge concerns the analytical depth of transparency frameworks. The tools developed by ICAT on finance transparency, monitoring just transitions, and the linkages with Article 6 indicate a shift toward a transparency that goes beyond the volume of emissions to shed light on the distributive, social, and financial dimensions of climate policies.

Countries' capacity to integrate these dimensions into their BTRs and national systems will be an important test of the ETF's maturation. Transparency that documents the redistributive effects of policies, impacts on employment, or social cohesion carries a different political weight than purely accounting transparency.

A third challenge lies in the link between transparency and access to finance. Increasingly, donors and climate funds require robust data to justify allocations, track results, and validate contributions to the objectives of the Paris Agreement. National transparency frameworks can thus become a comparative advantage for countries able to demonstrate coherence between their NDCs, investment plans, and achievements. ICAT 2.1 could play an important role in this regard by aligning its tools even more closely with the requirements of major funds (GCF, GEF, Adaptation Fund) and development banks, so that transparency efforts translate more directly into financing opportunities.

Finally, a cross-cutting issue is the internal legitimacy of transparency. As long as transparency remains primarily handled within the climate teams of environment ministries, its impact on national trajectories will remain limited. The future of Article 13 will largely depend on its ability to permeate sectoral ministries, planning bodies, parliaments, and, more broadly, civil society. The experience of the past ten years suggests that support of the ICAT type—combining tools, capacity building, and network facilitation—can contribute to this diffusion, but it requires time, sustained funding, and national political ownership.

Building the basis for ambition: ICAT support for NDC 3.0 submissions

NDCs lie at the core of the Paris Agreement, capturing each country's commitments to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change.

The third generation of submissions, known as NDCs 3.0, marked climate efforts in 2025. Informed by the outcomes of the first global stocktake, these NDC updates had to demonstrate clear progression and greater ambition, offering what may be one of the last opportunities to align global emissions with the 1.5°C goal.

In this context, ICAT intensified efforts to ensure countries are equipped with the data, tools and capacity needed for more ambitious, evidence-based NDCs.

Across its portfolio in 2025, ICAT supported countries at different stages of their NDC 3.0 submissions:

- 22 countries, Angola, Belize, Bolivia, Burundi, Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, El Salvador, Eswatini, Fiji, Gabon, Guinea, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Mexico, Mozambique, Panama, Tonga, Uzbekistan and Zimbabwe, referenced ICAT in their NDC 3.0 or confirmed that the ICAT project informed the submission.
- In other countries, Ghana, Mauritius, Morocco, South Africa and Saint Kitts and Nevis, the ICAT-supported work generated inputs relevant for the NDC updates.
- In many countries, including Botswana, Brazil, Chad, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia, Haiti, Mexico, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, Tajikistan, Uganda, and Zambia, ICAT is providing targeted support to advance next steps in their NDC development and implementation.

ICAT's regional Hubs complemented these efforts by equipping countries with practical tools and methodologies to use transparency for NDC 3.0 preparation. Notably, the Central African Hub provided training on the Greenhouse Gas Abatement Cost Model (GACMO) tool, enabling governments to develop emissions projection scenarios that many have since applied in their national processes in developing their NDC 3.0.

Together, these efforts strengthened transparency, institutional capacity and evidence-based planning across regions, helping to lay the groundwork for more credible and ambitious NDC 3.0 submissions. The improved quality of NDCs 3.0 was widely acknowledged, and, clearly, transparency played an important role in achieving this.

The ICAT support for NDCs in two countries, Chile and Kyrgyzstan, demonstrates how targeted action to boost transparency and strengthen institutions can directly enable more ambitious climate action.

Chile: Advancing integrated mitigation–adaptation action

In Chile, climate change has long been a matter of national policy. The country has progressively adapted its NDCs and climate policies in a drive to strengthen its approach to climate action and management.

Building on targets set in 2020, Chile's NDC 3.0 establishes a more ambitious 2030–2035 carbon budget while maintaining all existing targets. Chile now aims to reach 80 per cent renewable energy by 2030, alongside new goals for transport, methane emissions and short-lived climate pollutants. New to the NDC 3.0, Chile will require all municipalities and regions to have climate change plans that are adapted to their local realities, while the central government will strengthen their capacities. The government of Chile has also increased its ambition on adaptation and on the social pillar of a just ecological transition.

With ICAT support, Chile has strengthened the focus on integration measures—actions that simultaneously support mitigation and adaptation—in its NDC 3.0. In one valuable lesson, the project helped clarify that integration is not absolute but exists on a spectrum: from measures that only reduce emissions, to actions with some shared benefits, to projects that maximize their contribution to both mitigation and adaptation. This understanding is valuable for designing effective projects and classifying actions for international financing.

ICAT also helped to strengthen governance by clarifying how monitoring of the integration measures is carried out, who implements them and where responsibilities lie. This included identifying roles within organizations responsible for NDC implementation and improved operational planning. The initiative was notably successful in protected areas: Chile has been ambitious in expanding protected areas, but the project identified a gap in effective management. This led to a new target, strengthening both management and financing.

ICAT support has helped to enable collaboration between mitigation and adaptation teams, which traditionally operated separately. As Andrés Pica Téllez, Head of the Climate Change Division at Chile's Ministry of Environment, explained: "Creating an integration area is not enough. The work must be collaborative and integrated."

Chile's commitment to transparency underpins its entire approach. "No target is ambiguous: each one has clear indicators and means of verification," noted Pica Téllez. The country produces annual assessments of NDC progress and national climate change action reports, along with biennial transparency reports, covering 345 municipal and regional plans.

Chile's experience demonstrates how transparency tools and institutional strengthening can enable more ambitious, coherent climate action and could become a model for other countries seeking to integrate mitigation and adaptation in their climate action.

Kyrgyzstan: Enhancing mitigation transparency

Kyrgyzstan is among the countries with the lowest greenhouse gas emissions levels—its share amounts to just 0.034 per cent of global emissions. Yet the country is highly vulnerable to climate change impacts: temperatures in Central Asia are rising almost twice as fast as the global average, posing threats to food security, water resources and hydropower potential. NDC 3.0 commits Kyrgyzstan to reducing net greenhouse emissions by 18 per cent unconditionally, or by 30 per cent with international support, from projected baseline levels by 2030. By 2035, these targets become 16 per cent unconditionally and 39 per cent conditionally. Achieving these goals depends on robust transparency systems.

The ICAT project was designed to support Kyrgyzstan in developing and institutionalizing frameworks for

greenhouse gas emissions projections coupled with an NDC tracking framework in the energy sector. As a result of the project, the country now has a framework for building and regularly updating greenhouse gas emissions projections, expert and institutional capacity and tools to perform impact assessment of selected policies and measures, and an NDC tracking framework for the energy sector that is essential for tracking progress against climate targets. The project also developed recommendations for the agriculture, forestry and other land use sectors related to projections and NDC tracking.

Stakeholder engagement was central to the project's approach. Workshops brought together representatives from government agencies, the scientific community and civil society to collect data, input it into the GACMO tool, and validate results. Hands-on training enabled participants to develop skills in using GACMO for greenhouse gas emissions projections in the energy and transport sectors. This participatory approach strengthened both the quality of data and the credibility of the resulting frameworks.

The outcomes of this work directly informed Kyrgyzstan's sectoral NDC 3.0 targets, demonstrating how improved transparency systems can support the government to define more ambitious and evidence-based climate commitments.

Transparency for climate action sustainability

The experiences of Chile and Kyrgyzstan underscore a clear message: ambition is built on transparency. When governments are equipped with robust data, fit-for-purpose tools and strong support in building the capacity of institutions, they are better able to set credible targets, integrate mitigation and adaptation, and translate political will into actionable, monitorable commitments. ICAT's support demonstrates that transparency is not a reporting exercise, but a strategic enabler of ambition—one that strengthens trust, guides investment and empowers countries to raise their climate goals in line with the urgency of the 1.5°C goal.

As the world looks to NDCs 3.0 to signal a decisive shift, ICAT's work shows how targeted, country-driven support can help turn that signal into sustained and transformative climate action.

Raising the banner of transparency for NDC 3.0 at COP30

In this critical year for the NDC process, ICAT implemented strategic communications activities to embed and amplify the message that transparency is a crucial enabler of more ambitious, realistic, and actionable NDCs. These efforts culminated at COP30 in Belem, with ICAT events celebrating the advances of countries using transparency for strengthening NDCs, from design to implementation to evaluation.

More than a reporting requirement, transparency, and the data and insights that it provides, lay the strategic foundations for strengthening the quality of NDCs and their implementation. It ensures policies are based on sound data and analysis, and supports engagement of sectors, finance mobilization, and the monitoring of progress.

Throughout COP30, ICAT hosted and contributed to 15 events and held 36 bilateral meetings with countries, intergovernmental organizations, partners and donors. ICAT events at COP30 spread the central message of transparency for NDC 3.0 and provided a space for countries to discuss best practices, challenges and lessons learned.

Continued on the next page →

ICAT COP30 event "Transparency for Effective, Realistic, and Trackable NDC 3.0." Country representatives from Cambodia, Chile, El Salvador and Kyrgyzstan shared their practical experiences and lessons learned on integrating transparency into national climate planning and the preparation of NDC 3.0. *Photo: © UN Climate Change / Diego Herculano*

COP30 also marked ICAT's 10th anniversary and the launch of the next phase of the Initiative, ICAT 2.1. The new phase continues and deepens support for transformational climate action through transparency and evidence-based policymaking.

COP30 event "ICAT at 10: A Decade of Support to Climate Action Transparency and the Road Ahead to 2030." The event gathered partner countries, implementing partners and donors to celebrate ICAT's 10th anniversary and discuss the road ahead.

ICAT outreach efforts throughout the year focused on preparing countries for NDC 3.0 by raising awareness on practical solutions and opportunities and creating spaces for knowledge exchange.

> *Building on 10 years of experience, ICAT 2.1 renews our commitment to empower countries to use climate action transparency as a foundation for ambition, implementation, and accountability through 2030. Now is the opportunity to work together and use transparency to put the Paris Agreement on track.*
>
> ***- Dr. Henning Wuester, ICAT Director***

NDC tracking at the core of assessing Paris Agreement progress

Tracking the progress in implementing countries' climate action commitments is central to the Paris Agreement's architecture and essential to its success.

NDC tracking informs decision-making by identifying progress, obstacles and solutions in NDC implementation, allowing countries to course-correct when they are not on track to meet their climate targets, and to strengthen their NDCs over time based on lessons learnt from previous cycles. NDC tracking is a core element of reporting through BTRs under the Paris Agreement, which requires countries to report on progress in implementing and achieving their NDCs.

Thus, NDC tracking generates timely information on national progress, providing a foundation for evaluating collective progress in global climate action. It helps build trust among countries that commitments are being implemented, and among donors and investors that climate finance is delivering tangible impact.

Frameworks for tracking progress in implementing NDCs are a core element of strong national transparency frameworks. They encompass the regular collection and management of data on climate change mitigation and adaptation, including appropriate indicators for reporting on progress achieved.

For mitigation, they are connected to and supported by projections of greenhouse gas emissions and removals and the assessment of the impact of policies and measures, thus enabling a data-based approach to national climate action. For adaptation, they dive deep into specifics, showing that resilience at the local level, across vulnerable subsectors, is built as targeted.

*In 2025, ICAT supported **37** countries in establishing NDC tracking frameworks, including robust institutional arrangements, tailored indicators, digital tools, and capacitated personnel, to help make their climate action vision a reality.*

Belize's enhanced capacity for NDC reporting through the BTR

ICAT support in Belize was instrumental for the country's compilation and submission of its first BTR under the Paris Agreement, particularly the chapter on NDC implementation. As part of an ICAT project, Belize meticulously analyzed the information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving the NDCs, in line with BTR reporting requirements. Institutional stakeholders received training on NDC tracking, including a specific focus on reporting through the Common Tabular Formats of the BTR, enhancing national capacity for reporting on NDC implementation. This effort empowered Belize to successfully submit its first BTR by the 2024 deadline. The project also identified gaps and limitations, highlighting areas for improvement to enhance reporting for the second BTR in 2026.

Data-based monitoring at the core of El Salvador's NDC 3.0

ICAT's collaboration with El Salvador has strategically zoomed in on NDC tracking as an enabler of effective NDC implementation. The first ICAT project in the country strengthened institutional coordination, developed 55 refined indicators for the 2021 NDC, fully aligned with the ETF's requirements, and promoted a shared understanding of NDC tracking for successful implementation. The project also developed a web-based platform as a centralized digital tool for tracking NDC progress, which national stakeholders received with great enthusiasm.

The second ICAT project in El Salvador—scheduled to conclude in early 2026—built on these achievements and aligned the work with El Salvador's NDC 3.0, submitted in 2025. The indicators developed under the 2021 NDC will continue to be monitored through the national MRV Platform during the next two years, a period during which more than half of the measures included in the 2021 NDC are expected to be fully implemented. The remaining measures, along with their corresponding indicator proposals, have been incorporated into the 2025 NDC in an adjusted and updated manner, ensuring continuity and coherence between the successive NDC cycles.

Within the framework of the ICAT project, 21 indicators were developed for El Salvador's 2025 NDC to sustainably measure the impacts of mitigation and adaptation actions over time, while ensuring their applicability and comparability across the NDC cycles. Their design is also aligned with the NDC implementation plans currently under development.

The ICAT project further improved the NDC tracking framework by introducing the monitoring and evaluation of policies, actions and measures. The national digital transparency platform was enhanced with a dedicated module for centralized registration, monitoring and reporting of policies, actions and measures. Interinstitutional coordination was strengthened through the preparation of draft Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) between the Ministry of Environment and over 30 national institutions. The MoUs, currently under the process of being signed, will formalize information-sharing and the role of institutions as users in the platform, including the monitoring of their respective policies. Thus, through the transparency efforts, the sectors relevant to the implementation of NDC actions are systemically engaged, aware of their role in the national climate agenda, and able to contribute meaningfully to measuring progress.

El Salvador's NDC 3.0 explicitly references ICAT and the significance of the results achieved through the two projects. By embedding transparency at the core of its strategic climate action vision, El Salvador has built solid foundations not only for regular reporting under the BTR but, more importantly, for effective delivery of its NDC commitments. Looking forward, El Salvador plans to further expand and improve the platform, adapting it to the requirements of NDC 3.0 and integrating additional modules, such as for monitoring climate finance.

Bolivia's NDC tracking tool for the energy sector

As part of an ICAT project focusing on transparency in the energy sector, Bolivia developed a comprehensive framework for tracking the progress of its energy-related NDC goals. The framework integrates methodological, institutional, and digital components and is aligned with the ETF. An Excel-based tool with multiple interconnected sheets was designed to organize, process, and report data. The tool performs automatic calculations, organizes data flows, generates data visualizations, and produces automated reporting. It offers the flexibility to be updated with new goals, indicators, and baseline and target values for every new NDC cycle. Finally, it is designed for integration into the national climate platform once the platform becomes operational.

Advancing clean energy and electric transport in Saint Kitts and Nevis

Saint Kitts and Nevis, a small island nation in the Caribbean, has an ambitious climate vision. The country's 2021 updated NDC committed to a 61 per cent reduction in emissions by 2030 compared to 2010 levels, to be achieved through 100 per cent renewable electricity generation and promotion of electric vehicles.

Through the ICAT project, Saint Kitts and Nevis designed an NDC tracking framework to monitor the implementation of key mitigation measures in the energy sector, including renewable energy integration, efficiency improvements, and electric vehicle deployment.

This effort included:

- Ten indicators were developed to monitor greenhouse gas emissions and mitigation measures in the electricity generation and transport sectors. These included metrics related to annual renewable energy generation, installed capacity of solar and wind power, electric vehicle penetration, and transmission and distribution losses.
- A structured legal agreement was established to strengthen governance and institutional arrangements for ongoing monitoring, data management and reporting.
- Capacity-building for NDC tracking was carried out, with targeted training and engagement of key stakeholders.

This framework provides a systematic approach to data collection, indicator tracking, and reporting in line with the ETF of the Paris Agreement. Saint Kitts and Nevis can use the data for regular assessment of its NDC action to identify what has worked, what hasn't, and why, so that the necessary decisions can be made to improve effectiveness.

Thanks to the foundation built through this project, Saint Kitts and Nevis is now equipped with the tools to enhance its NDCs continuously. Broad stakeholder engagement ensured that the results were validated by key actors, strengthening national ownership. This grounds the country's ambitious vision in reality, facilitating active monitoring, refinement, and advancement of climate commitments.

> *The frameworks that were developed and the capacity that was built will help our nation in tracking and reporting progress so that we can fulfill our obligations under the Paris Agreement's ETF and also increase our access to climate finance. Through the Saint Kitts and Nevis ICAT project, we are building a credible, robust system that will allow our nation to secure a sustainable future for generations to come.*
>
> ***- Sade Hanley, Programme Officer, Saint Kitts Climate Action Unit***

Madagascar's first tool for NDC tracking

Madagascar collaborated with ICAT to evaluate its national system for NDC tracking and to develop a simple, functional tool for monitoring progress. Using the modelling tool GACMO, the country established a business-as-usual scenario and assessed the potential impact of its planned NDC actions. GACMO was then applied as a tracking tool to compare actual progress against expected trends. This approach covered 17 actions across the energy, agriculture, and Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) sectors. While significant improvements are required to achieve accurate monitoring, particularly in terms of collecting more country-specific data and clearly defining mitigation actions in the NDC, this work represents an important first step in the country's path toward evidence-based climate action.

ICAT Tools for NDC tracking

The ICAT toolbox includes many resources for designing, assessing and tracking progress toward NDC targets. Countries can freely access all tools and guides, selecting the ones most relevant to their needs and tailoring them to national contexts and priorities. Some of the most relevant resources for NDC tracking include:

- *Greenhouse gas Abatement Cost MOdel (GACMO):* A greenhouse gas emissions projection tool that supports the preparation of NDCs by allowing the analysis of options for emissions reductions and by providing assessments of future emissions in different climate action scenarios.
- *Transport and Waste Climate Action Data tools (TraCAD / WasCAD tools):* Web-based tools that streamline all aspects of the data collection process in the transport or waste sectors. They offer standard methodologies, calculations, greenhouse gas inventories and reporting in one place, facilitating the design and tracking of NDCs. **The WasCAD tool was developed in 2025, along with expanded functionalities for TraCAD.**
- *Proposed Indicators for Domestic MRV Purposes and Tracking Progress of NDCs:* A report with relevant examples of indicators, which may be used to support domestic monitoring needs as well as in reporting on progress towards implementation and achievement of countries' NDCs. An updated version of the report was prepared in 2025 and will be published in early 2026.

Discover all these resources and more on the ICAT website.

Group photo of speakers after the event "Strengthening NDCs through effective tracking frameworks," Bonn, 21 June 2025.

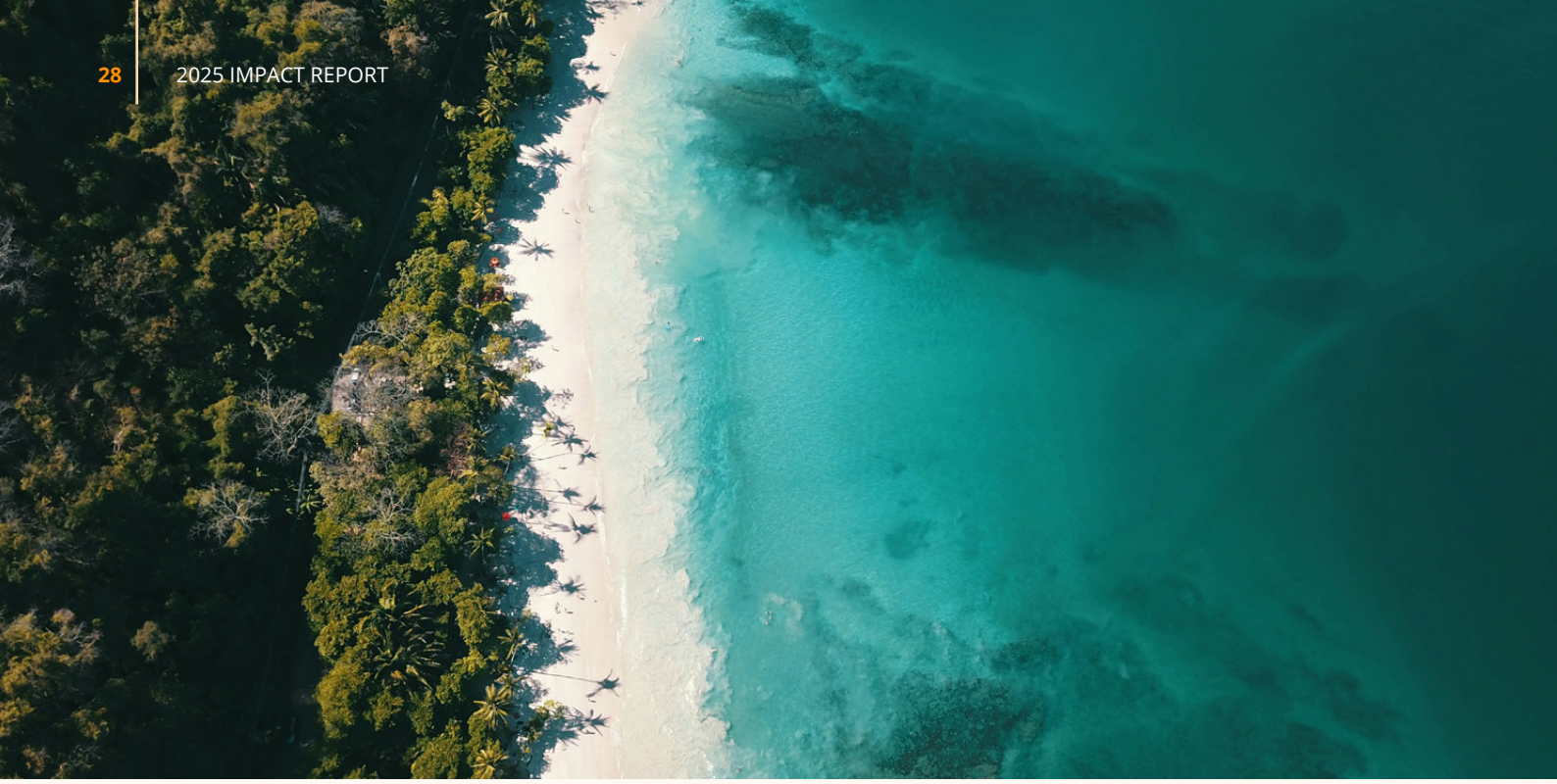
June Climate Meetings: Bridging BTRs and NDCs to strengthen NDC 3.0

During SB 62, held in Bonn, Germany, from 16 to 26 June, ICAT hosted and contributed to a range of events and activities designed to strengthen transparency efforts. After the round of first BTRs submitted in 2024 and the 2025 deadline for NDC 3.0, SB 62 offered an opportunity to showcase how countries could use the same transparency frameworks and data to support both processes.

The ICAT Secretariat actively promoted transparency as the backbone of the Paris Agreement and an enabler of ambitious and effective NDCs. Among others, ICAT organized events on sectoral climate action, NDC tracking frameworks, and a dedicated workshop on transparency as a basis for NDCs, co-organized with the NDC Partnership.

A highlight of ICAT's contribution at SB 62 was the event "Strengthening NDCs through effective tracking frameworks," co-hosted with the government of El Salvador and GHGMI. Drawing on the experiences of El Salvador, Kyrgyzstan and Chile, this event highlighted the central role of tracking frameworks in the successful implementation of NDCs. The discussion emphasized how aligning NDCs with robust transparency frameworks supports effective monitoring, enables timely course corrections, and strengthens overall implementation.

> *Measuring the progress of NDCs is key, as it provides information for timely updates of policies and programmes for emission reduction, adaptation, and climate resilience.*
>
> ***- Jessica Laguardia, Head of Ministerial Technical Unit, Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources***



Policy impact assessment for effective climate action

Ambitious NDCs deliver results only when policies are effective and their impacts measurable. ICAT supports countries in building robust systems to assess, track and strengthen the impacts of climate policies.

Experiences from ICAT country projects show how policy impact assessment can be embedded in national systems and directly inform NDC 3.0 design and implementation. Together, these experiences underscore that credible, evidence-based policy impact assessment is central to effective climate action and to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Achieving NDC targets requires climate action that is not only ambitious and transformative but also realistic and implementable. Such action is enabled by well-designed policies that translate national targets into concrete measures on the ground. To ensure this link between targets, policies and action is robust, policy impacts must be systematically assessed, monitored, evaluated and used to inform policy updates.

Impact assessments provide critical insights into whether policies are delivering the intended outcomes and how they can be strengthened. Importantly, these assessments go beyond measuring greenhouse gas emission reductions to capture broader sustainable development impacts, helping policymakers design climate strategies that deliver multiple benefits for people, economies and the environment.

ICAT supports countries at different stages of their transparency journeys to develop robust frameworks for the MRV of policy and measures, including for regular impact assessment, which enables evidence-based decision-making and ensures that targets are being met. ICAT projects in Costa Rica, Eswatini, Ghana, Guinea and Namibia illustrate how countries are building this critical capacity, with each country adopting an approach that is tailored to their national circumstances.

Costa Rica: Embedding policy assessment in national systems

With its ambitious commitments, including net-zero emissions by 2050, Costa Rica has long been recognized as a leader in climate action. The National Climate Change Metrics System (SINAMECC), an integrated platform for tracking and reporting on climate action, is key to the country's transparency efforts. ICAT has

worked closely with national institutions in Costa Rica to strengthen SINAMECC and embed policy impact assessment directly within this established system.

A primary focus has been on integrating ICAT's Sustainable Development Methodology and Transformational Change Methodology into SINAMECC, enabling Costa Rica to assess not only greenhouse gas impacts but also broader impacts of climate policies on sustainable development and transformational change. Under an ICAT project, the national registry of mitigation and adaptation actions was thus expanded to include variables to assess sustainable development and transformational change impacts, in line with the respective ICAT guides.

This effort focused on six mitigation and six adaptation measures, demonstrating the system's practical value for evidence-based policy evaluation. The project also delivered usability improvements to SINAMECC, enhanced inter-institutional coordination and targeted capacity-building through hands-on training.

The policy evaluation highlighted several strengths and challenges, as well as clear opportunities to enhance implementation. Notably, the guidelines provide a comprehensive vision that goes beyond emissions reduction by linking social, economic and environmental benefits.

However, applying mitigation, sustainable development and transformational change methodologies in parallel can place a heavy burden on technical teams, particularly when processes are lengthy. To address this, it is recommended to better integrate and plan work sessions in advance, allowing coordinated data collection across greenhouse gas, sustainable development and transformational change dimensions.

A recurring challenge is the limited availability of systematic data and well-defined baselines, which constrain the robust quantification of impacts. To overcome this, integrated monitoring systems aligned with SINAMECC—incorporating sustainable development and transformational change variables—were recommended to be embedded from the early design stages of measures. This approach supported improved data systematization and enabled consistent, long-term monitoring of impacts.

Overall, this assessment provides decision-makers, public institutions and civil society organizations with a robust technical foundation to strengthen strategic planning, accountability and the mobilization of financial and human resources, ensuring that Costa Rica's climate actions serve as catalysts for sustainable, transformational change aligned with national development priorities and climate justice goals.

Unlocking renewable energy potential in Namibia

Namibia's Renewable Energy Feed-in Tariff (REFIT) rules demonstrate how robust policy assessment can turn climate ambition into measurable results. With support from ICAT, Namibia assessed the real-world impacts of REFIT—providing credible evidence of its contribution to national climate goals and sustainable development.

Introduced in 2015 by the Electricity Control Board, REFIT rules were designed to attract private investment in renewable electricity and reduce reliance on imported, carbon-intensive power. By offering fixed, technology-specific tariffs for projects up to 5 MW—covering solar, wind, biomass, and small hydropower—the policy created a predictable environment for Independent Power Producers.

The results are tangible. The REFIT has enabled more than 180 MW of renewable energy capacity and mobilized over NAD 3 billion (USD 186 million) in private investment. This has diversified Namibia's energy mix and reduced dependence on electricity imports from the coal-dominated Southern African Power Pool.

Quantifying climate impact for NDC implementation

To determine whether REFIT rules are truly delivering on their climate and development objectives, the ICAT project in Namibia supported the country in undertaking a comprehensive policy impact assessment. Applying ICAT's Renewable Energy and Sustainable Development methodologies, the assessment moved beyond headline capacity figures to quantify for the first time greenhouse gas reductions alongside broader socioeconomic benefits.

Using GACMO, calibrated with data from Namibia's 2024 National Inventory Document, the assessment estimates that REFIT rules could deliver cumulative emission reductions of between 3.2 and 3.9 million tonnes of CO_2 equivalent by 2030. This represents approximately 35 per cent of Namibia's total mitigation potential in the energy sector under its updated NDC.

Under a realistic policy scenario that accounts for grid constraints, financing challenges, and institutional delays, renewable capacity is projected to reach 298 MW by 2030, delivering around 346 $ktCO_2e$ in annual emission reductions.

These quantified results provide policymakers with clear, evidence-based confirmation that REFIT rules offer a measurable contribution to Namibia's NDC. The findings directly inform NDC tracking, MRV system design, and feed into the preparation of Biennial

Transparency Reports under the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework.

Delivering development benefits

ICAT support also enabled Namibia to assess the REFIT rules' broader socioeconomic impacts. By 2030, REFIT-supported projects are expected to:

- Create over 5,000 direct and indirect jobs
- Increase electrification rates to 86–89 per cent
- Mobilize total renewable energy investment exceeding NAD 9 billion (USD 565 million)

These outcomes advance national development priorities and contribute to SDGs 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), 9 (Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure), and 13 (Climate Action).

Strengthening transparency and continuous improvement

A national validation workshop in October 2025 confirmed the assessment results and reinforced Namibia's commitment to transparency under the Paris Agreement. The ICAT-supported process led to the establishment of a policy MRV framework with clear indicators and institutional roles, embedding impact assessment within national systems.

Importantly, the assessment identified key constraints—including limited grid capacity and high upfront financing costs—that reduce projected outcomes to about 85 per cent of initial technical potential. By highlighting these bottlenecks, the analysis provides a roadmap for corrective action, from grid upgrades to green finance solutions.

A model for evidence-based climate governance

Namibia's REFIT experience demonstrates the value of ICAT support in moving from policy design to measurable impact. By quantifying mitigation outcomes, identifying development co-benefits, and strengthening MRV systems, ICAT has helped transform the REFIT rules into a transparent, results-driven instrument for NDC implementation.

The lesson is clear: credible climate action depends on the ability to measure what policies deliver. In Namibia, ICAT's contribution has ensured that renewable energy expansion is not only accelerating, but also accountable, evidence-based, and aligned with national development priorities.

Ghana: Demonstrating the development benefits of transport decarbonization

Transport sector climate policies often deliver benefits beyond greenhouse gas reductions, from improved air quality to reduced congestion and fuel savings. Understanding these benefits can help to strengthen the case for ambitious climate action. In Ghana, ICAT support helped in quantifying these wider impacts in the transport sector.

Globally, transport is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, responsible for nearly 30 per cent of CO_2 emissions, with urban transport systems being a key driver. In Ghana, the challenge of growing emissions intersects with congestion, air pollution and health risks, particularly affecting children and young adults under 35. Recognizing these risks, the government of Ghana has committed to ambitious climate goals through its NDC, with policies like the National Climate Change Policy and the Energy Transition Framework, which aims to gradually eliminate fossil fuel-powered vehicles.

During the project, Ghana's Environmental Agency and Ministry of Transport applied the Transport Sector Climate Action Co-Benefits Evaluation (TRACE) tool to assess the non-climate impacts of urban transport decarbonization.

TRACE assesses four types of impact: road congestion, traffic accidents, fuel savings and air pollution. For Ghana, this meant quantifying the avoided costs associated with the implementation of transport policies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions through reducing travel time, improving air quality and protecting human health. TRACE results are presented in formats designed to support communication with decision-makers. One challenge identified was data availability, highlighting the need to strengthen data collection systems.

Nevertheless, Ghana's experience shows how assessing socioeconomic benefits can provide a more comprehensive picture of the wider impacts of climate policy. The quantitative assessment of non-climate impacts has strengthened Ghana's capacity for informed development planning. Through TRACE, national experts modelled passenger transport, freight movement and fuel consumption across urban areas, revealing the scale of existing inefficiencies and the potential gains from targeted interventions.

The national data, e.g., fuel costs and consumption, and the cost of road accidents, are used as inputs to the TRACE tool to quantify the total costs avoided by implementing mitigation actions in the transport sector relative to the business-as-usual scenario. By 2040, the avoided costs can reach up to GHS 12 billion (about USD 1.1 billion) annually, providing significant benefits and contributing to national development.

The assessment also strengthened understanding of the links between transport emissions, air quality and public health. Transport-related air pollution disproportionately affects children and young adults, with more than 60 per cent of road-related fatalities occurring among people under 35—many of whom are economically active breadwinners. While the TRACE application focused on exposure trends rather than monetised health impacts, the findings reinforce the role of transport decarbonisation as a powerful public health intervention aligned with Ghana's broader social and economic development goals.

Beyond technical modeling, the ICAT project strengthened national capacity to analyze and interpret transport-sector interventions, equipping policymakers and planners with data-driven tools to make informed decisions.

By integrating TRACE into national planning, Ghana is not only addressing climate change but also improving mobility, protecting public health and promoting economic efficiency in its cities.

The ICAT project demonstrates that decarbonizing urban transport is a win-win strategy: it reduces emissions, enhances urban living and safeguards the health and productivity of Ghana's citizens. It is a critical step toward cleaner, safer, and more sustainable cities in Ghana.

Guinea: Building foundations for policy assessment and tracking

For countries at earlier stages of developing transparency frameworks, establishing strong institutional and technical foundations is critical. The ICAT project in Guinea is supporting this work by helping to build an economy-wide MRV framework and enhance national capacity for policy impact assessment.

A core element of the project has been developing institutional arrangements for data sharing and coordination. The ICAT project helped prepare a report on institutional arrangements that can underpin a

more robust national transparency system. Technical capacity-building has been equally important. Training on the GACMO tool enabled the country team to input national data, develop mitigation scenarios and document assumptions and results.

Guinea also applied some of ICAT's methodologies to assess policy impacts, including for a study to estimate the sustainable development impacts of transport policies using the TRACE tool.

Guinea applied the TRACE tool to assess a set of transport mitigation measures included in Guinea's 2021 NDC and identify and quantify potential benefits and associated costs/savings. Main findings from the assessment include:

- The transport sector is the largest consumer of fossil fuels in Guinea and was responsible for greenhouse gas emissions estimated at 2,155 $ktCO_2e$ in 2018. Therefore, transport-sector mitigation measures have significant potential benefits for the economy, environment and public health. The quantification of potential cost savings for the period 2020–2040 was estimated to reach a cumulative total of up to USD 58,800 million.
- Analysis conducted using the TRACE tool indicates that the most substantial benefits stem from fuel savings. This result is fully aligned with the assessed NDC climate action, which aims to replace fossil fuel-based road transport with electric vehicles (58 per cent electrification of light transport activity by 2040, combined with a 25 per cent modal shift of freight to rail, which can lead to a 75 per cent decrease in CO2 emissions).
- Air pollution and health benefits of the analyzed NDC measures are also significant, with a reduction in premature deaths and years of life lost due to air pollution, and associated health cost savings increasing over time. Around 70,700 premature deaths can be avoided in the period 2020–2040, and, in addition, USD 4,200 million saved.
- Congestion-related time losses and road safety improvements also show some benefits but are more moderate.

While data improvements are necessary, the quantified benefits, especially in fuel consumption, public health and associated cost savings, can be used as a basis for strengthening future NDCs and transport policies, and scaling up electric mobility initiatives.

Diverse paths to a common goal

These countries have taken diverse pathways to strengthening policy impact assessment. These efforts are united by the recognition that robust policy impact assessment strengthens countries' abilities to make evidence-based policy choices, track progress towards targets and ensure transparency in reporting. ICAT methodologies and tools provide practical frameworks that countries can adapt to their circumstances; and as countries prepare for more ambitious, transformational policies and actions, this capacity will only grow in importance.

Special feature

Driving Eswatini's bioenergy policy to advance climate and development objectives

Eswatini faces a dual challenge in its energy transition: reducing its heavy reliance on imported electricity while maintaining relatively low greenhouse gas emissions. Although the country's overall emissions remain modest, close to 70 per cent of its electricity is imported from neighbouring countries, exposing Eswatini to supply insecurity and price volatility.

In response, the government of Eswatini has articulated a clear policy objective to expand domestic electricity generation and reduce dependence on imports, with renewable energy playing a central role. Among renewable options, bioenergy stands out as a strategic opportunity. Eswatini's large sugar and forestry industries generate substantial biomass residues, offering significant potential for sustainable bioenergy production if supported by appropriate policy, planning and investment frameworks.

Harnessing this potential could simultaneously strengthen energy security, support economic development, and contribute to climate mitigation goals.

ICAT engagement in Eswatini: two complementary initiatives

Against this backdrop, ICAT supported Eswatini through two closely linked but distinct initiatives. The first was an ICAT country project focused on strengthening national capacity for climate transparency, policy assessment and implementation of Eswatini's updated NDC. This project later entered into a second phase, expanding ICAT's support to include renewable energy policy assessment, the development of a draft Bioenergy Policy, and the strengthening of MRV systems for both mitigation and adaptation.

The second initiative involved ICAT support to the University of Eswatini, enabling the application of the ICAT Renewable Energy Methodology to assess the greenhouse gas emissions impacts of Eswatini's National Energy Policy.

This academic-led assessment built on the foundations laid through the country project and provided a deeper, evidence-based analysis of renewable energy

pathways, particularly the potential for domestic electricity generation from renewable sources. Together, these two initiatives combined national policy processes with applied analytical work, ensuring that technical assessments were directly connected to decision-making and led to a significant outcome.

Application of the ICAT Renewable Energy Methodology

In 2025, the University of Eswatini received ICAT support to apply the ICAT Renewable Energy Methodology to assess the impacts of Eswatini's National Energy Policy on greenhouse gas emissions to determine the potential to generate electricity locally through renewable energy sources.

The assessment was implemented by the Center for Sustainable Energy Research (CSER) at the University of Eswatini in close collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy and the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs. The process involved extensive consultation with national energy experts, including representatives from the Energy Department, the Eswatini Energy Regulatory Authority, the Eswatini Electricity Company and Independent Power Producers. This inclusive approach ensured that the analysis reflected national realities and was directly relevant to policy decision-making.

Harnessing the power of renewable energy in Eswatini

The assessment applying the ICAT Renewable Energy Methodology showed that additional renewable energy could eliminate imports, and sufficiently meet national demand, with significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions. Under a baseline scenario, emissions were estimated at 1,350 kt CO_2e, while the introduction of renewable energy technologies could reduce these to 778–692 kt CO_2e.

The analysis further indicated that the country would meet its target of an energy mix of at least 50 per cent of grid electricity generated from renewable energy sources.

The assessment highlighted the role that renewable energy was likely to play in Eswatini's electricity mix at least up to the year 2030, demonstrating that expanding renewables could help limit greenhouse gas emissions for the country while reducing electricity imports. The results of the assessment were subsequently validated with national experts and relevant government stakeholders.

The University of Eswatini team, in consultation with national stakeholders, concluded that the assessment using the ICAT Renewable Energy Methodology provided a robust forecast of the country's potential for renewable electricity generation, particularly in terms of auctions and tenders, to inform national policy development. The methodology was also found to be a useful tool for estimating realistic projections of greenhouse gas emissions to inform the NDC update process, especially discussions on the country's minimum base load and renewable energy capacity.

Translating biomass potential into actionable bioenergy policy

In parallel, the national ICAT project with the government of Eswatini translated analytical findings from previous work under ICAT into concrete policy action through the development of a draft National

The project has created sustainable in-country capacity for regular inventory preparation, strengthened coordination between the inventory and data providers, and for the first time, fully documented national methodologies, data flows and institutional arrangements.

Bioenergy Policy. This policy is one of several policies and legislative instruments that support the implementation of Eswatini's National Energy Policy.

This work represented one strand of the broader ICAT project and was intended to provide clear direction to the biomass energy sector while supporting NDC implementation. To guide the process, a Bioenergy Task Force was established and chaired by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy, with close coordination from the Climate Change Unit of the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs. The Task Force brought together representatives of 12 key stakeholders, including from across the energy, forestry, regulatory and private sectors. Eight Task Force meetings and two national stakeholder workshops were held to develop, review and validate the draft policy.

The task force report highlighted the potential for bioenergy, pointing at the significant feedstock of biomass produced as waste from the large sugar industry in the country and from forestry.

The draft Bioenergy Policy that resulted from the work of the task force focuses on creating an enabling environment for sustainable biomass-based electricity generation, reducing reliance on imported fuels through measures such as ethanol blending, and lowering fuelwood use through the promotion of efficient cookstoves and cleaner cooking alternatives. The ICAT project also supported the development of an associated MRV implementation plan to enable systematic tracking of policy implementation and emissions impacts, aligned with national transparency requirements and future BTRs.

Policy impact and contribution to NDC ambition

The renewable energy component of the National Energy Policy, which was assessed using the ICAT Renewable Energy Methodology, was identified as an important mitigation measure in the update of Eswatini's NDCs. Members of the team involved in the assessment, together with focal points from relevant ministries confirmed that the assessment directly influenced the drafting of Eswatini's NDCs, which has since been approved by Cabinet and biomass power plants are now under development.

The ICAT country project supported Eswatini to understand the renewable energy and bio energy potential to make informed policy decisions. "We used the results of the assessment to come up with measurable goals and set targets, as well as develop realistic projections," explained Thembinkosi Ndzimandze, Senior Energy Officer at the Ministry of Natural Resources and Energy, and Chair of the Bioenergy Taskforce.

Eswatini's experience underscores the importance of policy impact assessment in bridging the gap between ambition and implementation. By combining national capacity-building with rigorous application of ICAT methodologies, the country was able to align energy policy, bioenergy potential and NDC ambition. Using transparency to engage stakeholders from both public and private sectors has helped overcome some of the barriers that have constrained bioenergy from reaching its potential for decades. This demonstrates the value of ICAT's guidance in supporting evidence-based, high-impact climate action and the value of transparency in driving informed policy processes to advance national development objectives.

Quality data to guide progress: MRV frameworks in action

Robust systems for measuring, reporting and verifying greenhouse gas emissions are essential for countries to track progress towards their climate commitments.

MRV frameworks define all relevant aspects of how data is managed, including who contributed what data at which intervals and which methodologies are followed. Setting up an MRV framework usually also entails training those that need to be part of the efforts. ICAT support in Bolivia and Vanuatu helped to establish sector-specific MRV frameworks that enable these countries to turn mitigation targets into measurable progress.

Bolivia: Strengthening institutional arrangements in the energy sector

Bolivia's NDC 2.0 sets ambitious targets for its energy sector, including increasing electricity coverage to 100 per cent of the population, expanding renewable energy capacity and piloting energy storage technologies, all by 2030. The energy sector accounts for 16 per cent of the country's greenhouse gas emissions, with transport-related fuel combustion a notable contributor to the upward trend in national emissions.

ICAT support in Bolivia focused on strengthening institutional arrangements in the energy sector and enhancing collaboration between the Plurinational Authority of Mother Earth (Autoridad Plurinacional de la Madre Tierra, the national entity leading climate action) and the Ministry of Hydrocarbons and Energy. Bolivia's NDC identifies the need for coordination mechanisms to enable intersectoral, multilevel and multi-actor collaboration, and commits to consolidating a transparent monitoring, evaluation and reporting system through the Plurinational System of Information and Integrated Monitoring of Mother Earth and Climate Change. Under the ICAT project in Bolivia, a robust set of key indicators has been established to track progress toward the country's energy-sector goals under its NDCs. These indicators span critical areas including electricity access; power generation and installed capacity; deployment of renewable and alternative energy sources; system integration; energy efficiency; transport electrification; and the implementation of pilot projects. Continuous monitoring of these indicators enables systematic assessment of mitigation policy impacts and provides a strong evidence base for informed policy adjustments. To enhance consistency and accuracy, the indicators were developed using the SMART methodology, ensuring they are specific, measurable, achievable, ambitious, relevant, and time-bound.

The first phase of developing the MRV system for the energy sector focused on analysing the sector, identifying gaps in data collection, and addressing the lack of information needed to estimate greenhouse gas emissions and develop projections.

The project strengthened Bolivia's capacity to systematically monitor progress toward its energy-sector NDC targets through the establishment of an operational NDC tracking tool populated with national data and embedded within the Ministry of Hydrocarbons and Energy. This contribution supports the institutionalization of NDC monitoring by providing a coherent framework that consolidates existing data, builds on prior results, and enables sustained tracking and reporting of mitigation progress over time.

Successfully completed in October 2025, the project achieved a major milestone by establishing a comprehensive MRV framework for the energy sector, supported by operational guidelines and institutional proposals. This provides a robust foundation for the transparent and effective tracking of energy sector-related NDC implementation in Bolivia.

Vanuatu: Boosting national capacity for climate transparency

Vanuatu, an archipelago of 83 islands in the South Pacific, has negligible greenhouse gas emissions, with its forest sector acting as a net carbon sink. Nevertheless, the government of Vanuatu is committed to the effective and transparent implementation of the Paris Agreement, demonstrating leadership in the global scene. The country's 2022 enhanced NDC sets mitigation targets across the energy, agriculture, forestry and other land use, and waste sectors. These targets are conditional on international support.

Like many Small Island Developing States (SIDS), Vanuatu faced significant challenges in accurately tracking its greenhouse gas emissions and removals. The country relied on Tier 1 IPCC methodology with default emission factors for all categories, lacked formalized data collection processes and had limited local expertise in greenhouse gas inventory preparation.

The ICAT project focused on building national capacity to work with greenhouse gas inventories, improving the national inventory system for collecting greenhouse gas-related data and introducing policy assessment tools for the agriculture sector.

The project delivered a training programme on greenhouse gas inventory analysis and methodologies to national experts, focusing on emission calculations for prioritized sectors. Four inventory instruction manuals were developed for each priority category. A two-day training on national inventory systems covered key elements including institutional arrangements, uncertainty analysis, key category analysis and archival systems. National Inventory System Guidelines were developed to document current arrangements and recommendations.

In addition, the introduction of the ICAT Agriculture Methodology in the agriculture sector demonstrated to Vanuatu's climate officials and technical experts the potential of quantitative assessment to significantly strengthen evidence-based policymaking. While current data limitations constrain its full application, the groundwork has been laid for future use. As data availability improves, the tool will enable accurate tracking and monitoring of policy impacts and support the design of policies that are both effective and economically viable.

A key impact of the project was the establishment of a core group of national consultants with a strong expertise in greenhouse gas inventory preparation. Previously, Vanuatu relied heavily on external international consultants, constraining continuity and long-term improvements to national MRV systems. The project has created sustainable in-country capacity for regular inventory preparation, strengthened coordination between the inventory and data providers, and for the first time, fully documented national methodologies, data flows and institutional arrangements. These resources, developed by the national project team, provide a lasting foundation for future experts and continued system improvement.

Data availability remains the central constraint to further advancing Vanuatu's climate MRV system. The project established that robust data collection mechanisms must be prioritized to enable the effective application of more advanced policy assessment tools. Accordingly, future priorities include improving national energy balance data, developing targeted agricultural data collection surveys for livestock, and establishing a dedicated platform for the systematic collection and management of activity data.

The project has created sustainable in-country capacity for regular inventory preparation, strengthened coordination between the inventory and data providers, and for the first time, fully documented national methodologies, data flows and institutional arrangements.

Looking ahead

The progress in both countries demonstrates how ICAT support can help nations to establish the frameworks needed for effective climate action transparency. By addressing gaps in data, modelling and NDC tracking, these projects have built institutional capacity and clarified roles for ongoing emissions reporting. The frameworks established provide not only the tools for measuring progress, but also the institutional arrangements that are needed to sustain these efforts over time. They set the basis for countries to meaningfully engage in the multilateral climate process.

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Strengthening adaptation and resilience through monitoring and evaluation

For countries on the front lines of climate change, M&E of adaptation measures is integral to enhanced resilience and reduced loss and damage.

Adaptation can only be effective when it is accompanied by systems that track progress, evaluate results and support learning over time. Once measures are in place, it is vital to understand whether they are working. This ensures that countries have the 'right' measures in place, and enables them not only to demonstrate progress to national decision-makers and international partners but to adjust adaptation measures over time.

When sound M&E systems are in place, countries can make evidence-based decisions about how to prioritize resources, learn from what is and is not working, and report progress in a transparent manner.

In 2025, ICAT supported Eswatini and Mozambique to strengthen their capacity to monitor, evaluate, and report on adaptation. While both countries face significant climate vulnerabilities, their experiences illustrate different stages of this work, from building new M&E frameworks in priority sectors to assessing whether existing local plans are achieving their intended results.

Eswatini: M&E frameworks for health and water

Eswatini is a small, landlocked country with a population of approximately 1.7 million. Around 70 per cent of the population is engaged in agriculture and livestock, making livelihoods highly vulnerable to climate fluctuations. Eswatini is not a significant emitter of greenhouse gases, but the country is disproportionately affected by climate change.

In its enhanced NDC, submitted in 2021, Eswatini outlined adaptation priorities in two key sectors: water and health. These sectors are key to the country's climate resilience, as improving access to water and addressing climate-related health risks are vital to protect vulnerable communities. To track progress against these commitments, Eswatini needed M&E frameworks that could meet both domestic planning needs and international reporting requirements.

Support in two phases

ICAT supported Eswatini to develop its M&E frameworks in two phases. The first, which concluded in 2022, focused on raising awareness about the links between climate vulnerabilities and the health and water sectors. This work resulted in a roadmap for implementing M&E systems, including a gap analysis and action plan.

The second phase, which ran from late 2023 to March 2025, built on these foundations to develop a full M&E framework for adaptation. Working closely with the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs, the ICAT project helped to design two M&E frameworks: one for health and one for water. This process included mapping the institutions responsible for collecting and reporting data, designing reporting templates and identifying indicators to track progress against NDC contributions.

Training was central to this work. ICAT supported stakeholders with guidance on using the new templates, data collection techniques and reporting adaptation in BTRs. An M&E guidance document was also produced to support ongoing implementation.

The new M&E system has strengthened Eswatini's capacity for transparency in its climate adaptation activities. The health sector, which already had data collection systems in place, now has a clearer framework for climate-related reporting, while the water sector benefited from guidance on which stakeholders to engage and what data to collect. A core group of trained stakeholders is in place to take this work forward.

Work in Eswatini will continue: the M&E frameworks have been defined, but they are not yet fully integrated into the broader national transparency system. Data collection can be time-consuming and sustaining momentum will require continued investment. However, the foundations are now in place for systematic tracking of adaptation progress in these priority sectors.

Mozambique: Strengthening adaptation monitoring

Mozambique faces some of the most severe climate risks in southern Africa. The country is vulnerable to tropical cyclones, coastal flooding and prolonged droughts, with compounding effects on human health, food security and water availability.

To address these challenges, Mozambique has been working to strengthen its climate resilience, reduce greenhouse emissions, and follow a low-carbon development pathway, aligned with its climate goals. However, how effectively the plans were being implemented, and whether they were making a difference, was unclear.

Experts from Mozambique's National Directorate on Climate Change recognized that the level of implementation was not well understood, which would pose a risk to the population if the adaptation measures were not effective and, at the same time, compromise the country's ability to report on adaptation progress in its BTRs.

Applying ICAT methodologies

ICAT helped to address this need with its third project in Mozambique in 2025. Building on two earlier phases that had focused on transparency systems for the energy sector, this project targeted climate adaptation. It began with a technical assessment of local adaptation plans in two climate-vulnerable districts, Nicoadala and Morrumbala, in the Zambezia Province. The assessment used ICAT methodologies, including the Sustainable Development Methodology, the Stakeholder Participation Guide, and the Assessment Tool and Guide for Adaptation Project Proposals.

The team worked with local communities to gather qualitative data on climate risks and adaptation experiences, including from women, youth, the elderly and people with disabilities.

The assessment revealed that implementation of the local plans was often uneven and not well documented, making it difficult to trace results or aggregate impacts at the national level. There were also gaps and inconsistencies between national guidelines and what had actually been developed and implemented on the ground.

Perhaps most significantly, the assessment found that implementation reporting had focused on documenting activities, such as training sessions or infrastructure projects, but lacked evidence of whether these actions had actually reduced vulnerability or increased adaptive capacity. This was largely due to the absence of outcome indicators and baseline data.

The project also identified challenges in stakeholder engagement. While community representatives and district officials had participated in the development of the local adaptation plans, follow-up engagement during implementation had been inconsistent. This limited opportunities for feedback from beneficiaries, which could improve future planning.

Many of these issues were a result of a lack of local implementation capacity, with district-level institutions often lacking the technical skills, human resources and financial means to properly monitor and analyse adaptation outcomes.

Based on these findings, the project developed several recommendations for strengthening adaptation monitoring in Mozambique. These include building stronger linkages between national policy and subnational implementation, scaling up digital monitoring tools and institutionalizing training programmes for district officials. The results provide a foundation for more evidence-based planning and improved adaptation reporting in the future.

Transparency can improve adaptation

The experiences of both Eswatini and Mozambique illustrate complementary, successful approaches to strengthening adaptation transparency. In Eswatini, ICAT support helped to build M&E frameworks from the ground up in priority sectors, while in Mozambique, the focus was on assessing existing local plans to understand where implementation was falling short. Both countries encountered similar challenges, highlighting that data collection and stakeholder coordination are key issues that require consistent focus.

Technical capacity at the implementing levels is often limited. And training and guidance documents, while essential, should be accompanied by clear institutional arrangements, training and ongoing support.

These projects demonstrate the clear value of transparency for adaptation. When countries can systematically track what they are doing and whether it is working, they are better placed to learn, adjust and improve. This can support both their international reporting obligations and domestic decision-making, allowing limited resources to be directed for maximum impact.

Building effective M&E systems for adaptation is a gradual process. It requires sustained investment in capacity, coordination across institutions, and commitment to using the data that is collected. With the support of ICAT in developing frameworks, assessments and trained personnel, both Eswatini and Mozambique were able to make meaningful progress in strengthening their adaptation transparency systems.

Enabling effective climate finance strategies through transparency

To develop effective strategies for mobilizing and allocating climate finance, countries need to understand the landscape, which means: to define what should be counted as climate finance; to determine how much is needed and how much is flowing; and to assess how it is used and how to direct it for maximum impact. Climate finance transparency arms countries with a systemic data-driven approach to evaluating and managing the funds required to implement effective climate policies and measures, laying the foundation for an effective strategy to mobilize finance for NDC implementation.

In 2025, Belize, Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco partnered with ICAT to implement tailored projects focused on climate finance transparency. Each one following its own path based on national context and priorities, the three countries used transparency as a strategic lever to advance their climate finance agendas.

The ICAT Climate Finance Transparency Guide

The ICAT Climate Finance Transparency Guide provides methodological guidance to support developing country policymakers in establishing and implementing national climate finance transparency frameworks. The guide's step-by-step approach covers the following five phases and offers different levels of complexity to meet the needs of countries at varying stages of readiness to track, measure, manage and report on climate finance:

1. Scoping, planning, and institutional arrangements
2. Defining and classifying climate finance
3. Ex-ante climate finance needs assessment
4. Climate finance tracking
5. Evaluation: from transparency to enhanced climate action

The guide was applied and adapted to the specific contexts and requirements of each country, enabling the implementation of the ICAT projects in Belize, Côte d'Ivoire and Morocco. In 2025, the guide and its accompanying Excel-based tool were translated into French. The guide is also available in English and Spanish.

Côte d'Ivoire's institutional reforms unlock access to international funds

Côte d'Ivoire partnered with ICAT to address the challenges caused by the lack of centralized coordination between institutions, data consistency, and systematic integration of climate-related spending into national budgets, which prevented the country from effectively mobilizing funding, and tracking and reporting on funds.

The ICAT project transformed climate finance governance in Côte d'Ivoire by providing robust tools, institutional arrangements, and digital solutions. More specifically, as a result of the project, Côte d'Ivoire:

- Established a three-tier climate finance institutional structure, which included a high-level steering committee for oversight, a technical committee for data collection and verification, and a Permanent Secretariat for system administration and reporting.
- Developed a standardized methodology for climate finance tagging using adapted markers. The methodology included guidance on estimating the cost of implementation of the NDC, and evaluation of financial needs and support. A detailed procedure manual was produced to guide data collection, verification, and archiving. This methodology will inform the country's full climate finance taxonomy once finalized. A draft Decree on Establishing Climate Markers for the Preparation of Public Investment Projects was also developed.
- Designed the technical architecture and a road map for a modular upgrade of the national climate finance platform to integrate climate finance tracking.

Through these reforms, Côte d'Ivoire fulfilled part of the requirements of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), in a clear example of how enhanced transparency aligns with finance mobilization. After implementing the full list of reforms required by the IMF, Cote d'Ivoire will be eligible to access the funds received through the RSF to support adaptation and mitigation measures in the country, particularly in the areas of agriculture, transport, infrastructure, and public financial management.

The ICAT project has provided Côte d'Ivoire with more robust tools to enhance transparency, traceability, and analysis of climate finance. These structural advances improve our national climate governance and support the reforms undertaken as part of the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility, including the development of climate markers in public investment programming and the establishment of a taxonomic framework for a green, low-emission transition. Among other things, this strengthens our ability to mobilize additional financing to accelerate the implementation of our mitigation and adaptation policies as outlined in the new NDC 3.0 for the benefit of the country's sustainable development.

- Mohamed Sanogo, National Climate Change Program Coordinator, ICAT Côte d'Ivoire Coordinator, General Coordination of Programs and Projects, Ministry of the Environment, Sustainable Development, and Ecological Transition

Morocco completes institutional framework with public enterprise engagement

The ICAT climate finance transparency project in Morocco developed a national climate finance transparency framework and enhanced capacities in tracking and reporting on climate finance, enabling the country to meet national and international reporting requirements.

The project covered several areas, including defining the institutional setting for climate finance tracking, ex-ante NDC costing, ex-post monitoring and verification of climate finance, and national and international reporting. A critical and distinguishing component of the project was that it tackled a missing puzzle piece in the county's institutional landscape: the role of public enterprises.

These entities accounted for 41 per cent of total planned public investment in 2025, with almost half of that funding directed toward sectors with strong links to climate action.

The project established a standardized methodology for identifying, classifying, and tagging climate-related investments. Climate strategies across 44 enterprises were analyzed based on their strategic relevance, financial capacity, and climate action exposure. The 10 entities most advanced in terms of climate transparency were assessed in detail, generating immediately usable information.

A total of 58 projects with climate components were identified across the 2022–2024 period, demonstrating a significant mobilization of resources towards climate action.
Key contributors included:

- Moroccan Agency for Sustainable Energy: MAD 1.42 billion climate-aligned investment in renewable energy
- National Water and Forestry Agency: Seven projects totalling approximately MAD 5.9 billion in forest adaptation, mitigation and biodiversity protection
- National Office of Electricity: Four projects, reaching MAD 13.36 billion, 69 per cent of which were directly related to climate action, particularly in strategic energy infrastructure
- OCP Group: a portfolio of 12 large-scale projects totaling more than MAD 10.39 billion, with 89 per cent of spending explicitly dedicated to climate-related components, highlighting the growing integration of sustainability issues in the mining and industrial sector.

Disparities were evident within the climate strategies of the Moroccan public enterprises. While some sectors, including energy and transport, demonstrated advanced climate plans and reporting, others, like health and tourism, lacked structured approaches for strategic action and monitoring. A centralised integrated framework, supported by digital tools and establishing regular reporting, could ensure greater coherence, transparency and effectiveness.

Overall, this specific component of the project successfully generated a first national evidence base on climate-related investments by public establishments and enterprises, validated a methodological framework, and produced actionable insights to guide future integration into Morocco's national climate-finance tracking system.

Belize's climate finance definition strengthens collaboration with development partners

By developing a common definition, establishing clear institutional arrangements, and introducing methodologies to assess needs and track both domestic and international flows, the ICAT project equipped Belize with tailored systems and tools for a national climate finance tracking framework. The framework's integration within Belize's overarching MRV framework supports long-term sustainability and alignment with Belize's NDC and national climate priorities.

The climate finance tracking framework was designed to guide Belize's efforts in identifying, classifying, and quantifying climate finance in alignment with international standards. It establishes a national definition of climate finance and sets clear parameters for tracking mitigation, adaptation, and cross-cutting activities. It classifies finance by sector, purpose, source, financial instrument, delivery channel, and recipient entity.

A key feature is a weighting system that attributes only the climate-relevant share of broader financial flows, assigning percentage weights to the components of projects or programmes and calculating total climate flows accordingly.

In Belize, establishing a commonly accepted definition of climate finance among stakeholders was a major milestone. Differences in defining climate finance sapped Belize's efficiency in resource mobilization. The common definition and understanding of climate finance developed through the ICAT project helped improve coordination among ministries, as well as with civil society and local and indigenous communities.

The Ministry of Finance has adopted and uses the same definition, strengthening coherence in the pursuit of financial partnerships to meet Belize's climate and development goals.

> *Before the ICAT project, climate finance tracking in Belize was ad hoc and dependent on individual interpretation. Now, Belize has a clear methodology that guides consistent, transparent and repeatable finance reporting.*
>
> ***- Kamil Salazar, MRV Officer, National Climate Change Office of Belize***

Making local action count: Tracking the greenhouse gas impacts of subnational climate action

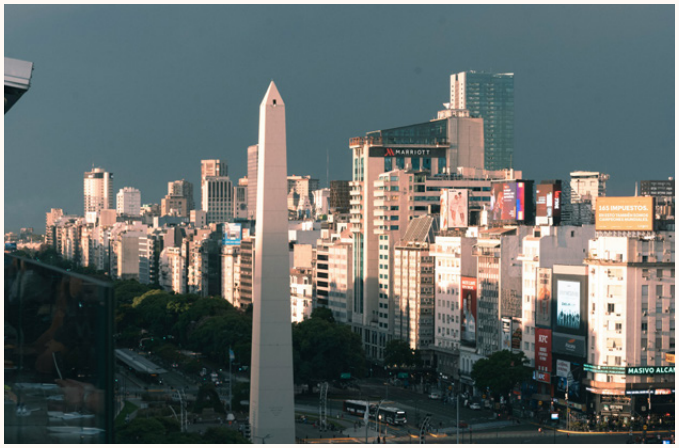
Delivering on Paris Agreement commitments requires action at every level of government and throughout society. At the subnational level, provinces, states and municipalities, and the private sector, are increasingly expected to develop their own climate response plans that are aligned with national goals. However, the necessary technical capacity, data systems and institutional frameworks to assess greenhouse gas profiles, set meaningful targets, understand the impact of policies and actions, and report progress transparently are often lacking.

This gap highlights a key challenge: how can countries properly account for subnational actions' collective contribution to national mitigation targets? And how can they ensure consistency and avoid double-counting when aggregating impacts across multiple jurisdictions? In Argentina and South Africa, ICAT has provided support to address this challenge through approaches tailored to the unique situations of each country. Both have national laws mandating subnational climate action, yet some regions lack sufficient local capacity to deliver. Their experiences offer practical lessons for other countries facing similar challenges.

ICAT toolbox resources for subnational and non-state action

The ICAT toolbox offers valuable resources for better understanding the role of non-state and subnational actors in supporting national governments to meet or exceed their climate targets and support more effective climate action planning and implementation.

- *Non-State and Subnational Action Methodology:* A practical guide that assists policymakers and analysts in determining the impact of non-state and subnational actions.
- *Climate Action Aggregation Tool (CAAT):* An Excel-based tool based on the ICAT Non-State and Subnational Action Guide that allows users to identify, quantify and aggregate the impact of non-state and subnational actions.
- *Tracking adaptation progress on the ground: Guidance and good practices*: A guide that supports governments to integrate subnational and non-state actors into the M&E systems of their national adaptation policies.
- *Aggregating the impacts of non-state and subnational climate actions: an exploration of methods*: A paper discussing methodological assumptions to estimate the collective impact of mitigation commitments and targets of non-state and subnational entities, serving as a supplement to the ICAT Non-State and Subnational Action Methodology.



Argentina: Strengthening provincial climate plans

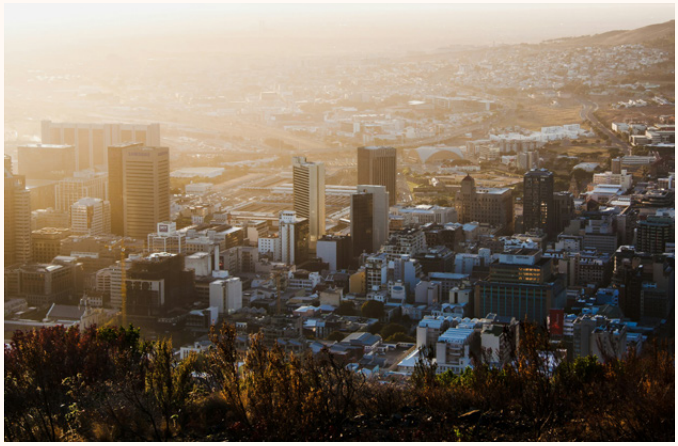
Argentina's national climate change law (Law 27,520) requires all provinces to prepare Climate Change Response Plans that are aligned with the country's NDC targets. However, a significant capacity gap existed between national requirements and what provinces could realistically deliver. There was also a need for a systematic way to assess the extent to which provincial plans collectively supported national targets, and how to identify overlaps and gaps across jurisdictions.

The second ICAT project in Argentina focused on systematizing provincial plans and applying practical tools to evaluate their aggregate impact. This involved a thorough analysis of available provincial Climate Change Response Plans and evaluating them against the National Plan for Adaptation and Mitigation to Climate Change. The aim was to understand the level of policy development at national and subnational levels, and to assess how existing actions contributed to national objectives.

ICAT's Climate Action Aggregation Tool (CAAT), alongside the ICAT Non-State and Subnational Action Guide, was essential to this project. The tool allowed the project team to identify, quantify and aggregate the impact of subnational actions, while identifying compatibility between provincial and national measures and avoiding double-counting.

The project successfully collated data from provincial plans into a systematic, accessible format. This established a robust methodology for consistently collecting and organizing information. Pre-validated CAAT analyses were completed for nine provinces, introducing 30 mitigation measures from provincial actors (14 in the energy sector and 16 in LULUCF). The work also identified common areas for improvement in provincial plans, such as addressing incomplete descriptions, weak sectoral linkages and gaps in progress indicators and financing information. These findings help to indicate where strengthened future plans and targeting capacity building are most needed.

The project also significantly enhanced transparency by updating Argentina's National Climate Change Information System (SNICC). Working with a local company, the platform was modernized to host the latest greenhouse gas inventory results from Argentina's first BTR and fifth Biennial Update Report, both submitted to the UNFCCC in 2024. The updated platform now provides accessible emission factors, inventory time series and monitoring indicators, making critical climate information available to a broader audience.



South Africa: Building subnational capacity

South Africa's Climate Change Act (Act No. 22 of 2024) requires provinces and municipalities to set and report emission reduction targets that are aligned with national objectives. Although the Act stated that local governments must develop Climate Change Response Plans within one year, widespread capacity constraints placed this target out of reach for many jurisdictions.

In South Africa, ICAT supported the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment in operationalizing the requirement of the Climate Change Act by developing a bottom-up monitoring system and building provincial capacity for greenhouse gas inventories and mitigation MRV. The targeted approach combined technical training, MRV framework development and direct hands-on support for local climate response planning.

As part of the project, ICAT provided direct assistance to Nkangala District Municipality, which has a population of around 1.6 million people across six local municipalities. This work served as a model for how other provinces and districts might build their institutional capacity to comply with the new legislation.

In Nkangala, the project supported the development of a first-generation greenhouse gas inventory using the Let's Respond Toolkit and IPCC 2006 guidelines. The inventory compiled emissions data across the Energy, Industrial Processes and Product Use (IPPU), Agriculture and Waste sectors, from sources including the South African Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reporting System and agricultural census data. Due to data limitations, the inventory provides an indication of sectoral contributions rather than accurate estimations. However, it does establish a baseline that can be refined as more comprehensive data becomes available over time.

Building on the inventory, the project helped Nkangala to develop a comprehensive Climate Change Mitigation Response Strategy. This included establishing implementation structures with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, setting action plans with timelines and risk management provisions, developing financial strategies, identifying funding sources and requirements, and identifying capacity building needs for local government staff.

Finally, the project supplied comprehensive training materials and workshops to improve provincial capacity for greenhouse gas inventories, quality assurance and quality control procedures, target-setting and MRV. It created peer-learning opportunities among provinces and strengthened institutional coordination across government levels.

Subnational action to meet national targets

Argentina and South Africa share common requirements for effective aggregation of subnational climate action. For example, standardized reporting templates can ensure consistency across jurisdictions, while training on national guidelines helps provinces and municipalities to understand what is expected of them. Dedicated local climate staff are needed to sustain implementation over time.

Data gaps and challenges persist, but both countries will continue to work on climate response planning, action and reporting at the subnational level. Argentina plans to integrate CAAT into the revision process for provincial Climate Change Response Plans and continue to improve the SNICC platform's accessibility and data coverage, while South Africa aims to expand the Nkangala model to other provinces and districts.

By developing practical methodologies and building provincial capacity, ICAT has helped both countries to make progress in aggregating and transparently reporting subnational climate action. This success demonstrates how national commitments can effectively integrate action at the subnational level, and how the collective efforts of provinces and municipalities can make a real contribution to achieving national climate targets.

Data tools to support climate action in the transport and waste sectors

The ICAT toolbox

40
tools, methodologies, and guides

5
capacity-building modules

ICAT supports the development and expansion of user-friendly, sector-specific climate action data tools that help countries translate climate commitments into implementation. The Transport Climate Action Data Tool (TraCAD) and the Waste Climate Action Data Tool (WasCAD) represent a major milestone in ICAT's toolbox for 2025, offering flexible, practical, and decision-ready platforms to strengthen climate action in two of the most complex and emissions-intensive sectors.

Transforming climate ambition into measurable action in the transport and waste sectors depends on credible, accessible, and decision-ready data. Together, these sectors account for a significant share of global greenhouse gas emissions—13.7 per cent from transport and 3.4 per cent from waste—yet they remain among the most challenging to measure, manage, and decarbonize. Strengthening data systems in these sectors is therefore essential for meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and delivering effective, long-term mitigation outcomes.

For Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States, the challenge is particularly acute. Rapid urbanization, growing demand for mobility, limited infrastructure, geographic constraints, and restricted financial and technical capacity make it difficult to plan, implement, and track effective mitigation measures in the transport sector.

In the waste sector, increasing volumes of solid waste, limited treatment options, and diffuse emission sources further complicate efforts to reduce emissions and improve environmental outcomes. However, the challenge of waste can be transformed into opportunities for climate action, through, for instance, improved data, better management practices, and investment in innovative solutions such as landfill gas capture, composting and waste-to-energy.

While ambition is high—as reflected in increasingly robust NDCs—many countries face a persistent gap between commitments on paper and measurable action on the ground. In order to achieve targets, countries need to translate their NDCs into concrete policies and measures, supported by transparent reporting and credible data. This is a daunting task, requiring access to data from a multitude of actors and sources, including multiple agencies with varying responsibilities in the transport sector, as well as numerous municipalities and agencies in the waste sector. Tools that enable the collection of data from these diverse actors are therefore essential.

Countries need practical, fit-for-purpose tools to generate, manage, and use data effectively—tools that can assess mitigation impacts, track progress over time, and inform evidence-based decision-making.

From ambition to implementation: ICAT's response

In response to these needs, ICAT is supporting the development and expansion of user-friendly, sector-specific climate action data tools that enable countries to operationalize their climate commitments. TraCAD and WasCAD provide flexible and practical platforms with the following core functionalities:

- Data collection and management;
- Greenhouse gas inventories;
- Assessment of greenhouse gas impact of policies and measures;
- Marginal abatement cost assessment; and
- Tracking climate actions.

Countries can select and apply the functionalities most relevant to their national circumstances and priorities. Countries can also choose from the wide range of methodologies integrated in the tools to assess the greenhouse gas impacts of policies and measures. TraCAD and WasCAD incorporate a comprehensive suite of internationally recognized methodologies that are widely used by developing countries—25 methodologies for the transport sector and 10 for the waste sector.

These methodologies enable countries to directly link policies and measures to greenhouse gas emission impacts. In addition, the tools support marginal abatement cost analysis, allowing countries to assess and compare mitigation options based on both their greenhouse gas impact potential and associated costs Together, the tools streamline the collection and management of a wide range of sector-based data related to both the assessment of climate actions as well as greenhouse gas inventories. They are designed to enable the direct export of data and results in formats compatible with the IPCC Inventory Software and Common Reporting Tables, thereby facilitating the reporting process.

Overall, the outputs support NDC development, tracking and reporting, helping countries to move more confidently from planning to implementation, attract climate finance, and mobilize private sector participation.

Enhanced functionality tailored to country needs

Country applications of TraCAD took place initially in Cambodia, Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Kitts and Nevis, and Belize. These early applications generated strong demand from countries to further enhance TraCAD's functionalities—particularly to integrate greenhouse gas inventory capabilities—and highlighted the need for a complementary, dedicated tool for the waste sector. This feedback directly informed the expansion of TraCAD and the development of WasCAD, ensuring that both tools respond to evolving country needs and priorities.

In 2025, ICAT reached a major milestone with the completion of prototypes for the expanded TraCAD and the newly developed WasCAD, developed by Climate SI, a Sri-Lanka based consultancy firm specializing in climate-change related solutions. The tools are designed for use independently, augmented with the necessary supporting resources. To support effective and sustained use, both tools are complemented by comprehensive capacity-building resources, including detailed user guidance and step-by-step how-to videos.

These resources are designed to enable practitioners across government agencies and partner institutions to apply the tools consistently and confidently, strengthening national ownership, facilitating knowledge transfer, and ensuring that data systems remain operational and adaptable over time.

Building lasting technical capacity

Beyond their analytical capabilities, TraCAD and WasCAD play a critical role in fostering stakeholder engagement, providing a central platform that allows different sectoral stakeholders to contribute data and input. They also have the potential for building long-term capacity to plan, manage and report on sectoral mitigation strategies.

Through hands-on applications, training workshops, and in-country technical support, the tools can strengthen national capacity, promote harmonized data and reporting approaches across institutions, and foster sustained ownership of climate data systems. This is particularly important for countries where human and institutional resources are often limited, but reporting and implementation demands under the Paris Agreement continue to grow.

As more countries adopt and adapt TraCAD and WasCAD, their contribution to transparent, effective, and data-driven climate action in the transport and waste sectors will continue to expand. Together, these tools reinforce ICAT's mission to support the implementation of NDCs through enhanced transparency, stronger evidence-based decision-making, and measurable climate action on the ground.

Expanding the use of ICAT Series of Policy Assessment Guides to strengthen policy development and NDC implementation

In 2025, NGOs, academic institutions, and research organizations in Eswatini (Renewable Energy), Indonesia (Building Efficiency), and Mexico (Non-State and Subnational Action) completed applications of the ICAT policy assessment guides. An additional application of the Renewable Energy Methodology was launched in India in 2025 and is expected to be finalized soon. These applications were carried out independently by the respective organizations, creating valuable opportunities for local capacity building and strengthening in-country analytical capabilities. The results demonstrate the potential benefits and range of uses of the ICAT guides, in particular, to inform policy development, as well as to support the updating and implementation of NDCs.

Group photo from the Global Workshop on Monitoring Just Transitions in Cape Town.
Photo credit: WRI

Workshop to launch the ICAT Just Transitions Monitoring Guide

A valuable addition to the ICAT toolbox was completed in 2025 with the Just Transitions Monitoring Guide. The guide, developed with the support of WRI, supports countries in developing frameworks for monitoring multiple targets and indicators critical to a just transition at the national, sectoral, sub-national and local levels. These targets and indicators can help monitor social, economic and environmental changes among key stakeholders to ensure that no one is left behind in the transition towards a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy.

From 17 to 19 February 2025, ICAT in collaboration with the Presidential Climate Commission of South Africa and with the support of WRI, hosted a Global Workshop on Monitoring Just Transitions in Cape Town, South Africa. The event brought together country representatives and experts from over 15 countries from all continents, including Brazil, Nigeria, and South Africa, to exchange insights on the critical task of monitoring just transitions.

Continued on the next page →

Over the course of the three-day event, participants shared their experiences, including using the ICAT Just Transitions Monitoring Guide. Discussions covered a range of topics, from defining just transition indicators and developing national priorities to applying them in practice, adapting approaches to local contexts and fostering collaborations.

Participants left the workshop feeling empowered and committed to sharing responsibility for creating effective, adaptive, and inclusive monitoring systems that ensure no one is left behind in the shift to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future.

> *This can't be the kind of transition that only a few people measure. If we're not all learning from each other, and if we're not using the data to improve systems, then we're missing the point.*
>
> ***- Country representative at the workshop (anonymized)***

In-person workshop on ICAT guides for francophone developing countries in Songdo, 2 September 2025.

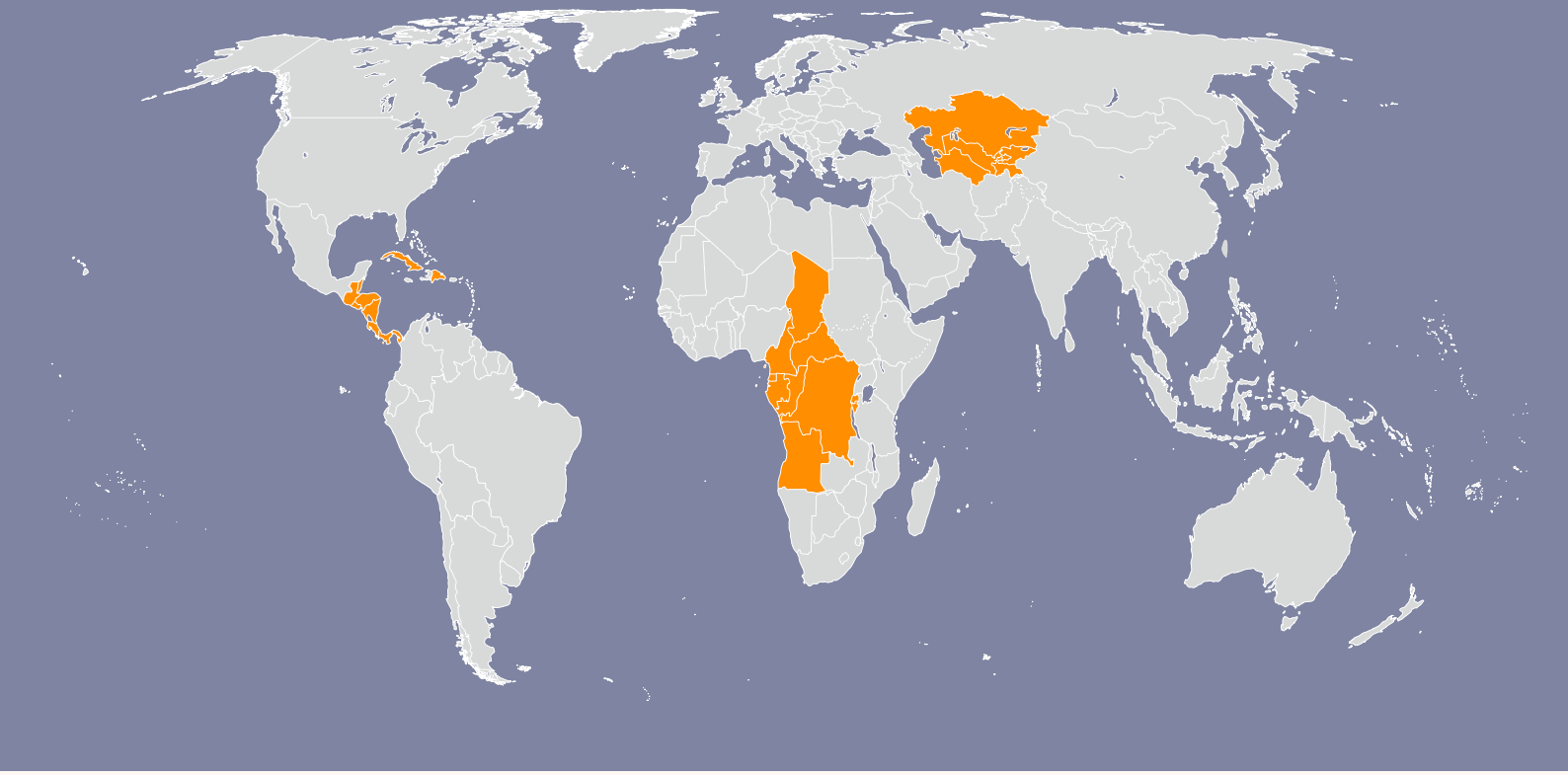
Translation of flagship ICAT methodologies into French

Responding to wide demand from French-speaking developing countries, ICAT, with support from its implementing partner Citepa, embarked on a mission to translate and promote a series of key knowledge products in the ICAT toolbox. In 2025 the following guides were translated and launched in French:

- *Climate Finance Transparency Guide*
- *Sustainable Development Methodology*
- *Stakeholder Participation Guide*
- *Just Transitions Monitoring Guide*

Webinars were organized for each guide to encourage use by climate experts and policymakers in French-speaking developing countries, giving step-by-step introductions to the use of the guide and sharing country experiences. In addition, ICAT and Citepa organized two in-person workshops in French on 2 September 2025, ahead of the Global Transparency Forum in Songdo, Republic of Korea. The sessions brought together representatives from French-speaking developing countries to strengthen capacity in climate finance transparency and sustainable development impact assessments, based on the approaches and methodologies introduced by the relevant ICAT guides.

In early 2026, the translation and outreach will conclude with the release in French of the Agriculture Methodology and Transparency for Cooperative Approaches under the Paris Agreement: A Guide to Navigating the Links Between Articles 6 and 13.



Empowering Global South expertise through Regional Climate Action Transparency Hubs

Three ICAT Regional Hubs, covering 25 countries

ICAT Regional Hub for Central Africa

Member countries: Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Rwanda and Sao Tome and Principe
Host organization: Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS)
Implementing partner: FOKABS

ICAT Regional Hub for Central America, the Dominican Republic and Cuba

Member countries: Belize, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama
Host organization: Central American Integration System (SICA)/Central American Commission on Environment and Development (CCAD)
Implementing/supporting partners: Greenhouse Gas Management Institute (GHGMI), Libélula

ICAT Regional Hub for Central Asia

Member countries: Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan
Host organization: Regional Environmental Center for Central Asia (CAREC)
Implementing partner: Greenhouse Gas Management Institute (GHGMI)

The following ICAT hub member countries also have separate ICAT country projects, completed or in progress: Chad, Cuba, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Kyrgyzstan, Panama, Rwanda, Tajikistan.

ICAT's regional hubs are dedicated to supporting climate action transparency at a regional level, closely aligned with the needs of the countries of a region. Their approach is anchored in providing local solutions, strengthening regional networks and promoting long-term expertise. Over the course of the year, ICAT's three regional hubs reaffirmed their central role in climate transparency efforts in their respective regions. The hubs are firmly anchored in the conviction that locally led solutions and regional networks of expertise are the key to achieving sustainable, long-term capacity for evidence-based climate action.

In 2025, the three hubs fostered regional collaboration and enhanced expertise according to local and regional needs and priorities. With the NDC 3.0 preparation being a core milestone in this year's national climate efforts, the hubs supported their member countries in this process, trying to cover capacity gaps, providing expert insights and facilitating peer learning. 13 out of the 25 ICAT hub member countries submitted their NDC 3.0, 10 of which acknowledged the support of ICAT and/or the hubs.

***13 out of the 25** ICAT hub member countries submitted their NDC 3.0, **10** of which acknowledged the support of ICAT and/or the hubs.*

Regional workshop in Panama, August 2025.
Photo credit: CCAD

Creating a collaborative community of experts in Central America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean

The ICAT Regional Hub for Central America and the Dominican Republic facilitated the development of national transparency road maps for each member country, which were analyzed for common needs and gaps that could then be addressed through the Hub's regional activities. During a year in which member countries focused on strengthening their NDCs through the NDC 3.0 process, the Hub coordinated activities to support these efforts.

Workshops and training covered essential areas for improving NDC design through transparency, including greenhouse gas projections and assessing climate policies and measures.

A cornerstone of the Hub's approach was an emphasis on peer learning: each country brought its experts who not only deepened their own skills but also contributed their unique knowledge, reflecting national strengths, to Hub activities dedicated to enhancing NDCs through transparency. While all countries still faced transparency gaps, each had its own valuable expertise in different areas.

As the Hub continued its efforts into the third year of its work, the sense of community between the region's experts grew, demonstrating more trust and confidence to share among peers. In this way, the Hub's peer-to-peer model enabled the region to collectively elevate capacity beyond what any country could have achieved alone.

An important milestone of the year came with Cuba's formal accession to the Hub. Cuba had already participated in various Hub initiatives during the previous years, bringing advanced experience in climate action transparency.

With Cuba officially a member, the Hub's collective expertise is enriched, while its reach now fully encompasses all countries of Central America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean.

> *There are several distinguishing elements [to the Hub]. One of them is the closeness and contact; when we need something, they respond very quickly to our calls. Another thing achieved is the creation of a network. When we participate in events, we already know and trust each other and this has created a union and integration between countries. Thirdly, this capacity building has taken place in parallel with the development of the BTRs and the updated NDCs, making the timing opportune.*
>
> **- Juan Lucero, National Transparency Platform Coordinator, Panama**

Regional training in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, October 2025.
Photo credit: CAREC.

Multiplying transparency expertise and elevating data quality in Central Asia

A major achievement of the ICAT Regional Hub for Central Asia this year was the development of an institutional and methodological framework for peer review of national greenhouse gas inventories. A series of Hub activities increased the capacity of national experts to implement structured peer review procedures, an important element of the quality assurance and control required under the ETF. Quality inventories are a foundation for effective implementation of the ETF, including consistency in tracking NDCs and engaging in cooperative activities under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement.

The Hub's member countries enhanced their capacity to conduct peer reviews of each other's inventories prior to submission to the UNFCCC, strengthening the accuracy and quality of their reports. Manuals on the process have been developed to guide reviewers, as well as workbooks and checklists to help avoid common mistakes. Country experts reviewed greenhouse gas inventories of peer countries for selected sectors, such as Kazakhstan's review of Uzbekistan's energy sector data, using the developed manuals and workbooks to institutionalize and formalize the process. The countries plan to apply this approach for the preparation of their second BTRs, intending to improve overall data quality.

The Hub has also been implementing a train-the-trainer approach, through which selected representatives are developing knowledge-transfer skills so they can provide targeted training to the teams within their respective Ministries and units, further multiplying the base of experts. Overall, the Hub's impact and aspiration lie in increasing capacity to fully leverage the benefits of transparency and the data it provides. By strengthening skills and creating networks that allow countries to rely on each other for expert support, the Hub is reducing dependence on external consultants. As a result, member countries are better positioned to take full ownership of implementing effective climate action and meeting their Paris Agreement obligations.

> *ICAT's support was critical for Kyrgyzstan's climate transparency efforts. The deployment of the GACMO tool strengthened our NDC progress assessment and supported both the preparation of our first Biennial Transparency Report and the development of sectoral targets for NDC 3.0. Equally important, the Hub facilitated networking and targeted capacity building among national experts and regional partners, which enabled timely reporting and strengthened national ownership of climate transparency processes.*
>
> ***- Aleksandr Temirbekov, Climate Change, Environment and Sustainable Development Consultant, Kyrgyzstan***

GACMO training in Burundi, October 2025.
Photo credit: FOKABS

Cultivating a maturing ecosystem for accelerated action through transparency in Central Africa

Since its origins, the ICAT Regional Hub for Central Africa has consistently built buy-in for evidence-based climate action in the region, increased national technical capacities, enabled knowledge-sharing, built confidence, and engaged decision-makers, including those at the highest political levels. In 2025, progress accelerated, revealing an undeniable contrast with the Hub's starting point in terms of technical capacity and stakeholder engagement.

In 2025, the Hub's host organization, the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), facilitated several high-level dialogues, including events with Ministerial participation at the Africa Climate Summit and at COP30. The Hub also intensified capacity-building activities, relying on its established thematic working groups and network of professionals, which include climate experts in various fields and focal points within country ministries.

The approach combined national and regional workshops, as well as thematic online webinars, covering topics such as greenhouse gas projections,

tracking NDCs, and estimating NDC implementation costs. More than 900 national experts have received training as part of the Hub's capacity-building efforts.

Another important milestone achieved this year is that all 11member States finalized national transparency action plans, with Gabon and Angola's plans as the latest additions. Countries are using these plans as a compass for prioritizing and orienting action, and approaching partners for international collaboration and support. For example, based on the gaps identified in the plans, new ICAT projects were initiated in Chad and the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2025, while preparatory discussions are underway with Equatorial Guinea, São Tomé and Príncipe, Burundi, and the Central African Republic. These advances, driven by country leadership, accelerate the region's ability to deliver more tangible and transformative impact.

Some highlights from this year's capacity-building efforts include:

- A regional workshop in Douala, Cameroon, in May, which reflected on the progress of NDC 2.0 and extracted lessons for designing and implementing NDC 3.0, covering a broad range of aspects, from assessing climate policies and actions to increasing transparency of climate finance.
- A regional workshop in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea, in December, which convened representatives from statistical offices to enhance their engagement in climate transparency processes, helped bridge serious data-quality gaps in the Central African region and revealed the availability of complementary data for reporting and decision-making.
- Regional training followed by in-country workshops on the GACMO tool, tailored to each country's specific challenges and incorporating the use of national data sources.

Structuring activities in this way has yielded timely and crucial knowledge, which directly contributed to data-driven and country-led NDCs 3.0 in Burundi and Chad. Equatorial Guinea and the Republic of Congo plan to follow the same approach to prepare their own NDCs 3.0. Angola also referenced GACMO and other ICAT tools in their NDC 3.0 submission.

Regional workshop in Cameroon, May 2025.
Photo credit: FOKABS.

Building capacity on transparency across sectors and borders

As countries work to meet their commitments under the Paris Agreement's ETF, it is clear that climate transparency is not the responsibility of any single department or institution.

Technical expertise to fulfil the ETF requirements is needed across all sectors, including those not traditionally associated with climate action and not engaged in the international climate change process. In collaboration with the Secretariat of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency Global Support Programme (CBIT-GSP), UNEP-Copenhagen Climate Centre (UNEP-CCC) and the UN Systems Staff College (UNSSC), ICAT is helping to address this need with its Blended Training Course on Climate Transparency and the ETF. This capacity-building course combines e-learning modules, virtual sessions with subject matter experts and peers, and an in-person workshop. To date, six regional rounds of training have been offered in English, French and Spanish, reaching participants across Africa, Asia-Pacific, the Balkans, the Caucasus, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East, involving 371 participants who successfully completed the training.

Expanding climate transparency expertise across national institutions.

Kathleen Asena, a technical geophysicist from Kenya's National Oil Corporation, participated in a recent round of training in the African region. Kathleen's experience highlights that climate transparency is becoming integral to sectors far beyond the traditional climate policy space and demonstrates why that matters for effective national reporting.

Kathleen's expertise is in subsurface interpretation, oil and gas exploration and resource management. While climate action is not traditionally seen as a core function of this role, she explains that "the sector operates in such a way that environmental accountability is just expected." When Kathleen learned of ICAT's ETF training, she recognized its potential value: "My case was: it's needed, and that's why I want to be part of it. I want to understand what exactly is expected from my end as someone who works within the extractives industry."

Kathleen compares the need for climate transparency awareness and skills to digital literacy—while digital skills were once seen as specialized, they are now essential for many professions. In the same way, "climate action and transparency is something that ought to be embedded across all sectors, including the one I work with—that is, the oil and gas industry—and not entirely handled by a small cocoon of people who work within the Ministry of Environment," says Kathleen.

Building connections

The training brought together participants from across Africa, including from Egypt, Gambia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, South Sudan, Sudan and Zimbabwe, with trainers from diverse international backgrounds. According to Kathleen, the broad range of participants was a great benefit of the training.

Exposure to diverse viewpoints added greater depth to the experience. "[The training] was valuable to me because of the skills that I picked up and the people that I ended up knowing," she says.

> *[The training] was valuable to me because of the skills that I picked up and the people that I ended up knowing," she says. "The ability to change your mindset over how to do things within the office... it was a mix of technical as well as the interpersonal relationships that you end up developing.*
>
> ***- Kathleen Asena, technical geophysicist from Kenya's National Oil Corporation***

"The ability to change your mindset over how to do things within the office... it was a mix of technical as well as the interpersonal relationships that you end up developing."

The trainees included people Kathleen would never have encountered in her normal line of work. Beyond the personal connections, she was able to gain practical insights relevant to her work from the peer-to-peer learning aspect of the training. For example, through the training, Kathleen connected with a participant from Egypt, where the oil sector is more mature and has already established frameworks for transparency and emissions reporting.

"Rather than designing everything from scratch, I hope to learn from their experience: what has worked, what didn't work, and how they learned to integrate operational data from companies into national reporting under the ETF," she explains. "One of the biggest takeaways for me is just peer-to-peer learning as one of the best tools that we can use as we move ahead."

Common challenges, shared solutions

For Kathleen, a particularly memorable element of the training was a skit that illustrated some of the challenges that can arise in climate reporting. The performance highlighted miscommunication, missing data, institutions working in silos and confusion about the roles of different entities. "It stayed with me because it really highlighted how common our struggles are," she says.

The recognition that challenges in climate reporting are often not unique to any one country was a valuable insight. "Wherever we are, we are working towards the same goal because we want to see our countries move forward."

The ETF training highlighted that climate reporting requires coordination across multiple institutions. "Matters related to climate change, climate action and emissions are not supposed to be handled by one institution," says Kathleen. "[The training] made us get to a point where you realize that there's a lot more coordination needed in the different institutions that work with climate reporting."

Data gaps emerged as another cross-cutting challenge. The training helped participants to understand what data is required and how to set up proper structures for data submission across institutions.

For Kathleen, the training helped to clarify the role of her own sector in national reporting. "I do have a better understanding of what exactly our role is and what data is needed," she says. "I'm starting to understand how exactly we can adjust our internal system so that we can seriously feed into the national reporting."

While Kenya has already made significant contributions to its BTRs and NDC tracking, Kathleen believes that the extractives sector is well-positioned to add sectoral data to these national efforts.

Continuous capacity-building

Along with financing, training is vital for institutions to be able to make the necessary changes to meet their responsibilities under the ETF. Kathleen emphasizes that capacity building must be continuous rather than one-off. "Capacity is everything", she says. "Continuous capacity—not just coming to sit in a workshop—and something similar to what ICAT and the ETF training are doing, [collecting] feedback from the participants, or even something as simple as a group where people can communicate together."

ICAT Partner Forum: The ICAT community shares knowledge for stronger NDCs

Centered on the timely theme "Strengthening NDC 3.0 through Transparency," this year's ICAT Partner Forum addressed how data, evaluation, and inclusive processes can enhance the quality and impact of NDCs. Key takeaways include the growing shift from data collection to the development of robust data systems, the vital role of evaluation in improving climate policies, and the importance of stronger engagement with financial institutions. The Forum also highlighted the power of transparency in fostering inclusive stakeholder participation and ensuring a just transition.

Held as a three-day virtual gathering of the ICAT community, from 25–27 March 2025, the Forum brought together nearly 300 participants from over 50 countries, creating a dynamic space for exchanging practical knowledge and lessons on climate action transparency.

Boosting the foundation of climate action through training on greenhouse gas inventory software

A robust greenhouse gas inventory sets the foundation for effective climate action. It enables evidence-based policymaking, underpins credible NDCs, and supports transparency and accountability under the Paris Agreement. Without reliable inventory data, mitigation targets cannot be meaningfully set, tracked, or achieved.

In 2025, ICAT launched a new blended training course on the IPCC Inventory Software, delivered in cooperation with the Technical Support Unit of the IPCC Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (IPCC TFI TSU). ICAT's focus on this specific software training is driven by the software's functional and broad appeal. A large majority of developing countries are currently applying it as they compile their inventories and for reporting to the UNFCCC. The software ensures that inventories are fully aligned with the IPCC greenhouse gas emission inventory guidelines, which is a requirement under the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework. It has the functionality of allowing a direct upload of the data to the UNFCCC reporter platform, greatly facilitating data submission under the Paris Agreement.

The course strengthens national capacity in using the software—a fundamental basis of robust greenhouse gas inventory systems—and supports greater transparency and more effective climate action through the production of high-quality inventories. Structured across six modules—Introduction, Energy, IPPU, Waste, Agriculture and Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry—the course commenced with an online phase combined with self-paced e-learning modules covering all IPCC inventory sectors, hands-on exercises and interactive virtual sessions with subject-matter experts.

The inaugural course targeted greenhouse gas inventory compilers from Anglophone Africa and South, East, and Southeast Asia. Demand was strong, with more than 200 applications received.

From these, 136 participants from 38 countries were selected—demonstrating the clear need for technical capacity-building in inventory development and reporting.

> *This course is a valuable addition to ICAT's training portfolio. Its blended design not only builds technical expertise, but also strengthens participants' ability to share knowledge and sustain peer learning networks over time.*
>
> ***- Dr. Hannah Swee, Climate Change Expert at the ICAT Secretariat, highlighted the strategic value of the course within ICAT's broader capacity-building efforts.***

Train-the-trainers approach for enhanced capacity building

This model seeks to facilitate an environment whereby capacity development extends beyond individual participants, fostering sustained national and regional expertise through training-of-trainers. To reinforce this approach, an in-person workshop for selected participants is planned for early 2026 to deepen practical skills, strengthen training competencies, and exchange experiences from their country contexts.

The compilation of a national greenhouse gas inventory often requires the involvement of a wide range of experts—not only from the lead ministry or agency, but also from line ministries and expert agencies, including statistical offices. Training all the experts involved from such diverse groups at a global level is not possible. To address this challenge, a defining feature of the training is its train-the-trainers approach.

Participants build not only technical proficiency in using the IPCC Inventory Software, but also the skills and confidence to translate what they have learned into their local contexts and transfer their knowledge to others.

According to Jacinth Paul Apostol, a forester by training, the course was a timely and meaningful learning experience that strengthened both her confidence and her understanding of the science underpinning national greenhouse gas reporting.

In the final training evaluation, 100 per cent of participants rated the training overall as good or very good, and 95 per cent stated that the e-learning modules helped improve their skills in using the IPCC Inventory software. The e-learning modules will be freely available for public access in 2026, facilitating replication of training at the national level.

> *The course provided a strong foundation for navigating the IPCC Inventory Software and for understanding the logic of IPCC methodologies. Beyond technical skills, the training reinforced my role and responsibility within the Climate Change Commission and, more broadly, in service of my country, the Philippines, to uphold greater transparency and accuracy in greenhouse gas reporting. This experience is particularly significant as it equips me and my colleagues with the capacity to prepare higher-quality greenhouse gas inventories and BTRs, supporting more credible climate commitments under the Paris Agreement's global transparency framework.*
>
> ***- Jacinth Paul Apostol (Forester)***

> *The ICAT training on the IPCC software has been extremely helpful for me, particularly as a new focal point for the energy sector in the national greenhouse gas inventory. The training effectively condenses the key elements of the IPCC 2006 Guidelines and clearly translates them into practical steps within the software. This approach made the process of understanding and working on the greenhouse gas inventory much more accessible and easier to grasp.*
>
> ***- Dustin S. Ignacio (Mechanical Engineer)***

> *Thank you very much for the opportunity to be part of the IPCC Software capacity-building activity, which provided a valuable platform for technical teams, particularly from the Philippines, to learn alongside other countries and share experiences in developing national greenhouse gas inventories. The modules were comprehensive, well-structured, and easy to understand, effectively guiding users through the systematic use of the software. This activity was especially useful and timely for the Philippines, as we are currently in the process of developing our national greenhouse gas inventory. As the technical lead for the Waste and IPPU Sector, this training was very appreciated as we learn a lot from IPCC experts. Looking forward to having more fruitful discussions on how the Philippines could advance its transparency effort in greenhouse gas accounting and improving our Biennial Transparency Report.*
>
> ***- Emmanuel A. Causon (Environmental and Sanitary Engineer)***

75

ICAT countries engaged in ICAT-hosted peer-to-peer or knowledge-sharing events

108

non-ICAT countries engaged in ICAT-hosted peer-to-peer or knowledge-sharing events

5229

people trained (44% women, 56% men)

Group photo from the Global Transparency Forum.
Photo credit: UNEP-CCC

Global Transparency Forum: Transparency to inform the development of NDC 3.0

ICAT collaborated with CBIT-GSP, UNDP, FAO, UNFCCC and PATPA to jointly organize the second Global Transparency Forum, in Songdo, Republic of Korea, 3–5 September 2025.

The event, which gathered more than 130 representatives from the global transparency community, contributed to strengthening the implementation of the ETF and supported the development of more ambitious and actionable NDCs 3.0 by fostering peer learning, dialogue, and collaboration among countries, experts, and partners involved in climate transparency. It provided a space to exchange experiences, reflect on lessons from the first BTR submissions, and explore how transparency efforts can effectively inform the development of NDCs 3.0. The Forum also convened a dedicated High-level Event, with contributions from ministries, multilateral development banks and the ICAT Director, creating momentum around these critical processes for climate ambition and action in the lead-up to COP30.

As a result of the Forum, countries strengthened collaboration with support providers, exchanged lessons from first BTRs, and advanced strategies for timely, high-quality reporting. They identified challenges and best practices for advancing institutional transparency frameworks and supporting more ambitious, data-based and investment-ready NDCs.

As a co-host of the Forum, ICAT played a prominent role in several sessions, with ICAT representatives and country focal points contributing valuable insights to the discussions and highlighting that transparency was at the heart of ambition and transformational action. ICAT led a session on transparency as a catalyst for NDCs, which participants recognized as the most popular session of the Forum in a post-event survey. ICAT also played a leading role in the Forum's discussions on how transparency supports unlocking climate finance and the coordination of transparency resources.

> *The Global Transparency Forum has reiterated three key themes we are working on collectively - institutional arrangements, legal frameworks, and teamwork.*
>
> ***- Suzalina Kamaruddin, Deputy Undersecretary of Malaysia's Meteorological Department***

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