Concept Note

High-Level Solutions Dialogue on Accelerating Credible Transition Planning for Net-Zero by Non-State Actors

Co-convened by UN Global Compact, UNEP - UN Environment Programme, UN Secretary-General Climate Action Team

23 September 2025

Context

As countries prepare to submit enhanced Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) at COP30, non-state actors - businesses, financial institutions, and subnational governments - play an important role in aligning global economies with a 1.5 °C pathway. Transition plans from these actors must move beyond voluntary pledges to credible, accountable, and measurable implementation.

Certain narratives suggest that accelerating climate action is detrimental to businesses, the financial sector, and subnational governments. Evidence shows the opposite. Those aligning with a 1.5 °C pathway are not only realizing gains in financial performance but also strengthening their ability to operate in the medium and long term as governments deliver on their NDCs.

Non-state actors have an unprecedented responsibility and opportunity to close the gap between commitment and delivery – accelerating global progress in these critical months ahead of COP30. The urgency of the moment demands a clear, collective signal of commitment to 1.5 °C-aligned action. The transition must be just, equitable, and supported by strong collaboration with national governments to establish enabling policies and regulatory frameworks that make compliance feasible and verifiable.

This dialogue provides a timely opportunity to reaffirm 1.5 °C as the benchmark for transition planning and to strengthen collective commitment to credible, ambitious climate action. It will convene key actors who can demonstrate that robust, 1.5 °C-aligned transition plans are beneficial for the organizations they lead – whether businesses, financial institutions, or subnational governments.

Leaders at the table will showcase progress and share the short term benefits they have experienced through climate action, the challenges they face, and the strategies they are using to overcome them. They will also discuss the public policies needed to accelerate the transition, including workforce development strategies to support workers as they move into new roles in the clean energy economy. The discussion will underscore that accelerating climate action is not a cost but the only viable pathway to ensure long-term profitability and survival as we move towards a net-zero economy.

Objectives
In this context, the dialogue aims to:

- **Demonstrate credible action**: Showcase actionable solutions and best practices of science-based transition plans that translate in real absolute emission reductions, build resilience, enhance competitiveness, and attract sustainable investment.
- **Accelerate convergence**: Mobilise corporates, financial institutions, regulators, and standard-setters to consolidate and align expectations for credible transition planning, strengthening transparency, accountability and integrity, while addressing risks of greenwashing and greenhushing and reinforcing 1.5°C alignment.
- **Make the economic case**: Highlight how ambitious transition plans deliver competitive advantage, attract capital, create jobs, and generate new growth opportunities while aligning with and supporting the implementation of NDCs.
- **Enable supportive policies**: Identify policy and regulatory enablers needed to ensure credible transition plans can be implemented, verified, and scaled, strengthening collaboration between non-state actors and national governments.

Outcome
The discussions will be presented at Secretary-General's High-level Event on Climate Action on 24 September and captured in a Chair's summary. In addition, the dialogue will provide a critical step towards COP30 by accelerating convergence around best practices, reinforcing credible transition planning, and generating momentum to scale up ambitious net-zero action across sectors and regions.

Format
90 minutes, high-level, closed-door in-person roundtable with moderated interventions.

Participation
Businesses, financial institutions, regulators, standard-setters, cities, and regions.