

PATH has developed this Active Travel NDC Template to assist all national governments to be more ambitious and impactful for walking and cycling in their Nationally Determined Contributions.

INTRODUCTION

The next round of NDCs (NDC 3.0), with an implementation timeframe of 2035, are due to be submitted in 2025 in advance of COP30 in Brazil. They will be critical to determining whether the world can get on the right path with the goals of the Paris Agreement. Urban transport accounted for 8% of global CO₂ emissions and around 40% of global transport emissions in 2020 [1].

In the absence of interventions, motorised mobility in cities could surge 94% in the next 25 years. This is unsustainable in terms of emissions, air pollution and energy demand. The 2025 NDC updates have a key role to play in reversing these trends, because that is where countries outline and communicate their post-2020 climate actions to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Now is the time to build capacity and support the adoption of active mobility to unlock the true potential of the sector. Growing evidence shows that Avoid and Shift strategies reduce emissions and improve transport access at lower costs than improve measures, particularly in rapidly urbanising developing countries.

If we double the share of energy efficient and fossil-free forms of land transport for people and goods by 2030 - focusing on shifts to walking, cycling and public transport, as well as electric vehicles - emissions from transport can be cut by half by 2030 [2] (a significant contribution towards the Paris climate goal). To achieve that, a mode share of active travel and public transport of between 40% - 80% is needed - depending on the type of city [3].

Society will benefit from every increase in modal share to active mobility and public transport through fewer road fatalities and injuries, better health, more inclusive access to opportunities, reduced congestion, improved air quality and freeing up space in our cities.

Two-thirds of the 198 countries who have joined the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have a form of active travel policy in place. The detail is published in the PATH National Policies for Walking and Cycling in all 197 UNFCCC countries 2023 report.

However, more ambition, investment, and action is necessary, especially within the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

REFERENCES

[1] SLOCAT (2023), Transport, Climate and Sustainability Global Status Report – 3rd edition: <https://tcc-gsr.com>

[2] <https://slocat.net/call-to-action-on-fossil-fuel-free-land-transport/>

[3] The Future is Public Transport: <https://thefutureispublictransport.org/>

ADOPT THIS NDC POLICY TO MAXIMISE THE POTENTIAL OF ACTIVE TRAVEL

This document provides a template for governments to use to guide and act; from setting a vision through to the development of goals, objectives, actions and measures to achieve better active travel outcomes.

1. **Vision** - Define what you want to achieve.
2. **Goals** - Explain what success looks like.
3. **Objectives** - Set specific intentions to achieve the goals.
4. **Actions** - List the planned activities to achieve the objectives.
5. **Measures** - Fix the indicators of successful actions.
6. **Outcomes** - Clarify the desired level of performance from the measures.

Governments are encouraged to cut and paste the suggestions provided on the following pages for each of the six policy sections. Please get in touch for further support with the adoption and delivery of the template.

1. VISION - DEFINE WHAT YOU WANT TO ACHIEVE.

We want everyone to have a safe, easy and enjoyable walking and cycling experience to mitigate climate change, support public transport, reduce pollution, benefit public health and create vibrant, inclusive + equitable societies.

2. GOALS - EXPLAIN WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE.

Activity - We want everyone to walk or cycle regularly.

Safety and Security – We want all people walking and cycling to be free from risk of being hurt.

Accessibility - We want everyone to be able to reach public transport and other key destinations on foot or by bike.

Comfort - We want all people walking and cycling to have space and facilities to support their needs.

Satisfaction - We want everyone to perceive walking and cycling as positive experiences.

3. OBJECTIVES - SET SPECIFIC INTENTIONS TO ACHIEVE THE GOALS.

Activity - We will increase the number of minutes walked and cycled per day.

Safety and Security – We will reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured per km walked + cycled per million inhabitants.

Accessibility - We will increase the percentage of the population that has good walking and cycling access to transport, everyday services, public spaces, bike sharing and sustainable local tourism.

Comfort - We will increase the percentage of urban roads that are 3* or better for pedestrians and cyclists.

Satisfaction - We will increase the satisfaction of people walking and cycling.

4. ACTIONS - LIST THE PLANNED ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE THE OBJECTIVES.

A. We will support and encourage people to walk and cycle

1. Encourage participation

We will promote the positive benefits and impacts of active travel as reliable, convenient, cost-effective, environmentally-friendly, and accessible to all.

2. Target campaigns towards specific audiences and needs

Campaigns to increase activity: We will target the least active groups to walk and cycle more; promote the safe and healthy journey to school for every child; and promote active travel journeys to and from workplaces, supported by employer incentive schemes.

Campaigns to create pedestrian and cycling friendly places: We will facilitate retail businesses to encourage footfall and dwell time in public space and provide cycle parking and access.

Campaigns to improve traffic safety: We will target drivers to reconsider their mode choice, reduce speed, aggressive behaviour, the use of mobile devices, and give priority to people walking and cycling, especially at crossings and when parking.

3. Celebrate walking and cycling

We will coordinate free mass-participation walking and cycling events and a regular programme of free led walks/rides; increase accessibility to bicycles and support bike shared schemes where needed.

We will celebrate walking and cycling on occasional days such as National Walking/Bicycle Day, Clean Air Day and World Health Day World Bike Day. Sustainable Transport Day, National Walking Month, etc.).

4. Prescribe walking and cycling

We will integrate walking and cycling promotion in health care services (e.g. Active Scripts) to maintain and increase physical activity levels, good mental health and reduce the negative effects and costs of traffic congestion, poor air quality, noncommunicable diseases and compromised public safety.

B. We will create safe, easy and enjoyable places to walk and cycle.

5. Prioritise walking and cycling

We will give priority to people walking, cycling and using public transport by integrating urban and transport planning frameworks at a national level. Support compact and transit-oriented development that is accessible to all, enhances neighbourhood proximity, while providing connectivity between urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and reduces car dependency.

6. Connect destinations

We will promote polycentric “communities of short distances” with mixed-use development, direct and convenient walking and cycling routes, decentralised services, and comprehensive public transport services to allow for the efficient and walk/cycle friendly combination of reasons to travel.

7. Establish priority active mobility zones

We will set national standards that enable areas near local shops, health centres, public transport hubs, green areas, workplaces, and educational facilities for daily living to be converted to pedestrian/cyclist access only or, as a minimum, give priority to pedestrians/cyclists over vehicular access through lower speed limits and infrastructure. Promote cargo bikes for the delivery of services and goods.

8. Provide networks, infrastructure and services

We will plan, implement and maintain national walking / cycling networks and provide co-funding for relevant authorities to build regional and local active mobility networks. Ensure that national co-financing leads to the creation of well-designed networks of safe, accessible, continuous, green and quality streets, sidewalks, bike lanes and paths, secure bike parking and schemes to reduce bike theft, safe crossings and junctions that are walking and cycling-friendly at the scale of the pedestrian/cyclist, supported by information and signage systems to encourage exploration.

9. Publish design standards

We will publish national design standards to provide high quality safe and accessible walking and cycling infrastructure for all. Link national investment to these standards.

10. Enable equity

We will consider the needs and concerns of people who might have increased vulnerability or challenges when walking and cycling, based on gender, age and ability to move and interact with the environment. Establish a national methodology and funding for walking and cycling audits that include all types of people walking and cycling to target and prioritise areas for improvement.

11. Protect people from traffic

We will adopt and enforce safe traffic speed limits according to WHO recommendations, and the International Road Assessment Programme star rating to assess all urban roads and streets. Link the results of these assessments to funding to prioritise interventions so that people walking and cycling are protected from risk, danger and injuries.

12. Reduce potential for crime and violence

We will provide a safe and secure environment for all pedestrians and cyclists. Adopt the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles for environment design and ensure good street lighting and active frontages. Protect the integrity of people and ensure enforcement against criminal activities, sexual harassment and/or violence.

13. Ensure quality at public transport catchments areas and stops

We will ensure public transport catchments and access routes around stations and stops are walkable and bikeable for all with safe direct access. Provide safe and secure bike parking facilities at all public transport hubs and stations.

14. Integrate public transport with walking and cycling

We will ensure public transport services provide for all trips including non-commuter trips, radial trips and multi-modal journeys for leisure and work. Provide and increase capacity on public transport rolling stock to allow for bicycle carriage at reasonable prices. Support bike-sharing as a public transport service.

C. We will embed walking and cycling into the policy process.

15. Lead the coordination

We will appoint a focal point to establish a national active travel task force engaging ministries responsible for transport, urban planning, health, social care, education, tourism, and sports and recreation, energy, finance, territorial cohesion, climate, environment, justice, and any other institutions with competences related to walking and cycling.

We will involve non-governmental stakeholders and the community and adopt the '8 Steps to an effective policy' process to steer the development, implementation and monitoring of national policy actions.

16. Build capacity

We will develop training programmes to build the capacity of policy makers, transport and road safety officers, traffic police, public health officers, urban planners and designers. Facilitate professional exchanges through events, networks and competence centres. Ensure that research, policy and programme development is inclusive of the community, adopting participatory or co-productive approaches where appropriate, to reflect that communities hold knowledge and skills necessary to implement active travel successfully.

17. Elaborate an action plan

We will publish a comprehensive action plan for walking and cycling, with the support of stakeholders, based on the data available that has specific targets and time frames, and serves as a guide for investment. Embed the plan into NDCs, national adaptation and mitigation plans for climate and energy, noncommunicable diseases strategies, policies on physical activity and active mobility and national programmes to support sustainable urban mobility plans.

18. Set the regulatory framework

We will set regulatory frameworks that include safe speed limits, pedestrian and cycle friendly road traffic regulations and codes and facilitate the implementation of low emission zones and low traffic neighbourhoods. Set mandatory minimum standards for footpaths and bike lanes, the provision of safe and accessible walking and cycling equipment and infrastructure and make it obligatory to facilitate positive walking and cycling experiences in new and existing transport infrastructures that are being built or renovated.

19. Secure finance

We will develop a dedicated and sustained financial mechanism, across ministries, to fund the implementation of policy actions nationally, regionally and at a municipal level for walking and cycling. Determine the investment needs and an appraisal methodology when setting policy objectives and priorities.

We will promote fiscal and tax incentives for walking, cycling and public transport as part of local destination travel plans to ensure walking and cycling infrastructure is planned and designed to support the whole transportation system.

20. Monitor and evaluate impact

We will adopt an active travel indicator framework and collect comprehensive and integrated national open datasets on walking and cycling activity (e.g. standardised travel surveys) and infrastructure (walkability and bikeability systematic audits) to understand the baseline data on activity, safety and security, accessibility, comfort and satisfaction. Set the regulation of data-collection and data-sharing mechanisms at national, regional and city levels and evaluate policy impacts on the environment, the economy, social cohesion, quality of life, accessibility, equity, road safety, public health and action on climate change.

5. MEASURES - FIX THE INDICATORS OF SUCCESSFUL ACTIONS.

Activity - We will measure the average minutes walked/ cycled per day per person.

Safety and Security – We will measure the number of pedestrians/cyclists killed or injured in traffic per million inhabitants.

Accessibility - We will measure the share of the population within 500m of public transport.

Comfort - We will measure the % of urban roads that are classified by IRaP as 3* or better for pedestrians and cyclists.

Satisfaction - We will measure the share of the population that perceive walking/cycling as safe, easy and enjoyable.

6. OUTCOMES - CLARIFY THE DESIRED LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE FROM THE MEASURES.

We expect this policy to deliver fewer road fatalities and injuries, better health, more inclusive access to opportunities, reduced congestion, improved air quality and freeing up space in our cities. These outcomes are also reflected in the ambitions of several sustainable development goals including:

Target 3.4: Reduce mortality from non-communicable diseases and promote mental health.

Target 3.6: Reduce road injuries and deaths.

Target 3.9: Reduce illnesses and death from hazardous chemicals and pollution.

Target 5.c: Adopt and strengthen policies and enforceable legislation for gender equality.

Target 8.9: Promote beneficial and sustainable tourism.

Target 9.1: Develop sustainable, resilient and inclusive infrastructures.

Target 10.2: Promote universal social, economic and political inclusion.

Target 11.2: Affordable and sustainable transport systems.

Target 11.3: Inclusive and sustainable urbanisation.

Target 11.6: Reduce the environmental impact of cities.

Target 11.7: Provide access to safe and inclusive green and public spaces.

Target 13.2: Integrate climate change measures into policies and planning.

Target 13.3: Build knowledge and capacity to meet climate change.

PATH is a coalition calling on governments and cities to make a real commitment to walking and cycling as a key solution to the climate, health and equity challenges which we face.

The PATH coalition seeks to unlock walking and cycling's potential to accelerate the achievement of climate goals and other sustainability benefits, through greater prioritisation and investment, including through national transport, health and environment strategies and through Nationally Determined Contributions and Voluntary National Reviews.

PATH is composed of more than 500 leading organisations in the sustainable mobility community who collaborate to promote walking and cycling. It is coordinated by a core group consisting of the FIA Foundation – who are funding the coordination work – Walk21, the European Cyclists' Federation and the UN Environment Programme.

This policy template was supported by the generous funding of The FIA Foundation. The FIA Foundation is an independent UK-registered charity, working closely with grant partners to shape projects and advocate to secure change in policy and practice. Our objective is safe and healthy journeys for all. Through partners with global reach, we are supporting safer vehicles and highways, clean air and electric cars and greater mobility access and inclusivity.

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