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26 March 2019

Strategies for countries to decarbonise based on national development objectives

Publication in *Nature Climate Change: Deep Decarbonization Pathways, a tool to design plans and country-led actions aligned with climate science and sensitive to local context*

Every country must have a long-term strategy for climate change, otherwise the Paris pledges will not be well aligned with national development objectives — the Deep Decarbonization Pathways (DDP) network proposes a handbook to build their strategies.

The DDP network published a paper in *Nature Climate Change* showing how its research can provide stakeholder debates about development and climate change across many countries, take decisions to align countries' actions with climate science, and build public support for the policies and measures needed based on their developmental benefits.

The DDP network is a group of research teams formed in 2014 to build and discuss national long-term strategies compatible with ambitious climate objectives. It operates today in almost 40 countries. The network is coordinated by the Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI.org), with the Energy Research Centre at the University of Cape Town undertaking research on deep decarbonisation in the South African case.

UCT Professor Harald Winkler said: "National models play a key role in translating national development narratives into quantified scenarios. The challenge in South Africa is to reduce poverty, inequality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The DDP work demonstrates that key steps are country-driven strategies, modelling of development pathways, aggregating scenarios in a dashboard, reporting on socio-economic indicators including poverty, unemployment and backcasting from long-term benchmarks. The 'dashboard' developed by the DDP network is key to identifying key development and

climate metrics, enabling aggregation from different, context-sensitive national modelling tools.”

Henri Waisman, lead for the DDP initiative at the IDDRI and first author of the paper, said: “In all the countries we have analysed, we have demonstrated that it is possible to achieve “deep decarbonisation” by 2050, and to do so in a way that meets each country’s socio-economic priorities. Based on lessons learnt from this scientific work, this paper describes our framework for pathway design, which could be widely adopted by countries developing their strategies to meet global climate goals.”

The DDP research responds to the new policy making agenda set out in the Paris Climate Agreement which requires countries to formulate “long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies” (cf. Art 4.19) consistent with global GHG emission neutrality as early as possible in the second half of the 21st century. The DDP pathway design framework ensures that these strategies reflect country circumstances and national development objectives and can be useful for stakeholder and policy engagement.

For Valérie Masson-Delmotte, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) co-chair, the work of the Deep Decarbonization Pathways network “complements and reinforces the assessment of the IPCC Special report on ‘Global Warming of 1.5°C’. It shows how to build concretely, in different national contexts, strategies towards zero emissions that go hand-in-hand with sustainable development.”

Access to the paper, on the *Nature Climate Change* website, is available at <https://go.nature.com/2Opf1U3>

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