



PRESS RELEASE (for immediate release, 21 September 2022)

UN-led coalition to release targets to cut carbon from public construction projects

Pittsburgh, 21 September – New international targets to cut carbon emissions from public construction projects – from new buildings to roads and bridges – will be released by a global coalition of public and private organizations led by the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

To be announced (on Friday 23 September at the 13th Clean Energy Ministerial in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania), the [Green Public Procurement Pledge](#) aims to incentivize low-carbon production and use of steel, cement and concrete. These materials currently contribute the largest share of industrial carbon emissions. Governments are among their biggest purchasers.

“All actors must accelerate progress towards net-zero goals,” said **Rana Ghoneim, Head of UNIDO’s Energy Systems and Industrial Decarbonization Unit** and coordinator of the international Industrial Deep Decarbonization Initiative (IDDI) coalition that released the pledge. “Government commitments to buy green can make a pivotal difference.”

Current members of IDDI – which is an international initiative of the Clean Energy Ministerial – include Canada, Germany, India, the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates. Private sector partners include associations of companies that make or use steel, cement and concrete.

The pledge to be announced in Pittsburgh asks member governments to start (no later than 2030) requiring that materials used in all public construction projects are low-emission – and that “signature projects” use near-zero emission materials. It will also include targets announced at last year’s COP26 in Glasgow to require (by

2025) the monitoring and disclosure of embodied carbon emissions – meaning those from the production as well as the use – of steel, cement and concrete in publicly-funded construction projects, and aim for net-zero emissions by 2050.

National and sub-national government entities (such as states, provinces, cities) will be asked to sign up to one or more pledge levels, and encouraged to be as ambitious as possible given national circumstances, and to make specific commitments following national consultations.

Tareq Emtairah, Director of UNIDO’s Decarbonization and Sustainable Energy Division

said: “Steel, cement and concrete are the building blocks of our modern world. Demand for these materials is high and rising but they are also responsible for the largest share of industrial greenhouse gas emissions. Decarbonizing these industries is challenging but it is urgent. That is why coordinated action at the global level is more than ever needed today.”

“Government leadership, including through its massive buying power, provides a crucial signal to companies and investors to commit to the clean industrial revolution,” said **Dan Dorner, the Clean Energy Ministerial’s Head of Secretariat**. “I hope others will be inspired to join these international efforts to supercharge the transition to clean industrial products.”

Matt Rogers, CEO of the Mission Possible Partnership,

said: “The imperative is to act now, to demonstrate that green procurement can drive decarbonization of carbon emissions-intensive industries. Pledges met in this decade will enable industries to adopt cleaner, greener processes and technologies.”



NOTES TO EDITORS

- Industry currently [contributes](#) about 24 per cent of annual global greenhouse gas emissions. Steel and cement account for 50 per cent of all industrial emissions. Concrete is made from cement, water and added aggregates such as sand, gravel or crushed stone.
- Public construction projects include buildings, roads, railways and other transportation infrastructure, and energy-utility sites such as hydroelectric dams and wind turbines.
- The pledge to be announced recognises that procurement of near zero carbon materials is subject to availability of technology supply and that they may come at a premium cost.
- IDDI was launched at the 2021 Clean Energy Ministerial. It is the largest and most diverse coalition of governments and private sector entities working to decarbonize heavy industries, starting with steel, cement and concrete. In particular, IDDI aims to stimulate the demand for low-carbon materials through green public procurement.
- IDDI is supported by a strong network of initiatives and organizations, including the Mission Possible Partnership, the Leadership Group for the Industry Transition, and the Climate Group. IDDI also complements initiatives including the First Movers Coalition – launched by US President Joe Biden and the World Economic Forum at COP26 to work with companies to decarbonise the heavy industry and long-distance transport sectors – and the SteelZero and ConcreteZero initiatives focused on those sectors.

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