



Climate Governance Assessment in the MENA: Methodology

BACKGROUND:

The MENA Climate Governance database project aims to evaluate the design of climate-related policies in MENA countries by assessing each country's climate governance through its national institutional, regulatory, and legal frameworks. Non-climate stressors, along with governance, have been proven to exacerbate climate-related consequences and socioeconomic vulnerabilities. Climate hazards further constrain access to services in vulnerable communities, highlighting the significance of public climate adaptation strategies and decisionmaking in shaping livelihoods, health, safety, and stability. Individual and societal capacities to cope with and adapt to climate change depend on how well government institutions and structures support people at risk.

Given this analysis's focus on the efficacy of governance in creating climate adaptation strategies, this methodology evaluates countries on two axes: (1) sound climate policies; and (2) good governance practices.

CLIMATE STRATEGY:

In terms of sound climate policy, our analysis draws on the following documents to establish criteria for assessing climate governance: the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Sixth Assessment Report, the World Bank's Reference Guide to Climate Change Framework Legislation, and the United Nations Environment Programme's Adaptation Gap Report. Per these references' findings and recommendations, the institutional tools assessed are evaluated on whether they address at least one of the following climate strategies:

- 1. Long-term targets:** The action operates in the long term, setting goals to be achieved by 2050-2060.
- 2. Immediate targets:** The action sets a short-term or immediate target to be achieved by 2030.
- 3. Foundational target:** The action integrates a structural target (such as a process by which waste is sorted) or institutional target (such as the creation of a committee that will oversee the preservation of coastal areas) meant to be deployed in the short term but continue operating in the long term.
- 4. Risk and vulnerability:** The action seeks to address at least one risk and/or vulnerability that could be exacerbated by the climate crisis, defined as follows:
 - Vulnerability refers to the impact climate events can have on social, economic, and infrastructural capacity.
 - Risks are a result of vulnerability, hazard, and exposure. They can be physical and arise following extreme weather events and/or changes in agroclimatic zones and ecosystems. They can also be economic and result from decarbonization's impacts on technology use, regulations, and market conditions.
- 5. Mitigation:** The action outlines a path to decarbonization to mitigate the scale of the climate crisis and its associated impacts. This includes setting emissions reduction or limitation targets and stimulating structural decarbonization.
- 6. Adaptation:** The action strengthens adaptive capacity and/or climate resilience, such as by

creating a disaster risk management plan, land preservation, water management, or climate-resilient buildings and infrastructure.

Given that climate is a pervasive social, economic, and political issue, this report narrows the scope of evaluation to institutions mandated to oversee: (1) the environment and ecosystem; and/or (2) high-emitting sectors identified as key in the Paris Accord documents. While climate policy can extend to other institutions, such as ministries of health or urban planning offices, these would be considered out of scope because they do not correspond to the two aforementioned criteria.

GOVERNANCE TOOLS:

In terms of good governance, our analysis evaluates each country's institutional, regulatory, and legal frameworks, since the focus is on internal policies. Although they are a vital part of developing nations' climate and governance strategies, policy programs promoted through international cooperation, agreements with foreign development organizations, and the actions of non-state or private actors are considered out of scope for the database. Since governance is a central axis of this assessment, the database includes two types of tools: (1) laws, decrees, regulations, and decisions that create a legal and regulatory framework to plan and legitimize a government's climate agenda; and (2) budgetary and financial allocations that create valuable capacity to carry out a climate agenda. The database focuses on the budgets of projects that advance either clean energy transition or environmental protections between 2016—the year of the Paris Agreement—and 2024.

These governance tools are evaluated on whether they accomplish the following objectives with the accompanying tests applied in the database:

Institutional mandate: The institutional tool creates a clear responsibility for state institutions and its officials to recognize climate rights and carry out sound climate strategies.

- **Management:** Does this law assign authority and management power to specific stakeholders (bureaucrats, organizations, or institutions)?

- **Goal:** Does this law clearly identify an actionable goal to further sound climate policy?

Political processes: The institutional tool codifies the procedure by which an institution can carry out its stated policies and programs while preserving transparency, representation, and accountability.

- **Transparency:** Does this law clearly state the stakeholders involved and the method of the policy's design, development, and/or execution?
- **Accountability:** Does this law identify pathways for redress in case of compliance issues?
- **Representation:** Does the law identify and consider the rights and needs of at least one sociopolitical stakeholder (such as civil society groups or affected citizens)?

Capacity of actors: The institutional tool increases the capacity of institutional actors to manage, execute, and oversee the implementation and enforcement of a climate strategy.

Human capacity: Does this law allocate or expand labor capacity to carry out the climate strategy?

- **Financial capacity:** Does this law include budgetary allocations or financial incentives (such as tax tariffs, subsidies, grants, or investments)?
- **Oversight:** Does this law assign a body, position, or pathway for oversight and/or enforcement responsibilities?

This database concerns itself with the state of climate governance's foundation and design and considers implementation and results out of scope. Its analysis thus does not extend to monitoring of the institutional tools catalogued. This project is meant to analyze governance systems at the national level and therefore does not consider regional or international cooperation as a factor in evaluating governance. Instead, the aim is to provide insight into the structural landscape regarding climate governance and identify both gaps and opportunities, an essential first step in creating a comprehensive and responsive system within the MENA region.