REACH Public Consultation on Singapore's Climate Ambition

5 - 26 September 2022

Respondent Name: Melissa Do

1 Singapore has stated that we intend to achieve net zero emissions by or around mid-century. Reaching net zero emissions by 2050 is:

(a) Just right
(b) Too ambitious
(c) Not sufficiently ambitious

Answer: (c) Not sufficiently ambitious

1.1 [If answered (b) or (c) above] What is a suitable year to reach net zero?

(a) Not Sure
(b) 2030-2039
(c) 2040-2049
(d) 2050-2059
(e) 2060-2069
(f) Beyond 2070

Answer: -

1.2 Please feel free to provide your thoughts on what makes a suitable net zero year.

Reaching net zero by 2050 is not sufficiently ambitious enough. 2050 is the *latest* year at which countries and companies should commit to getting to net zero. According to the scientific community, including the latest IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) as well as the SBTi Net Zero Standard, countries and companies should strive to reach net zero before 2050 if possible. A long-term net zero goal of earlier than 2050 is actually ambitious in the climate community; a net zero goal of 2050 is just standard. The Singapore government needs to explain how and why 2050 is the net zero year and not earlier in order to be transparent that Singapore has indeed evaluated earlier long-term net zero target years. Has Singapore in fact done this evaluation to determine that earlier than 2050 is not at all feasible, or was 2050 simply chosen because it is a widely accepted bare minimum and would give Singapore more time to get its affairs in order? There should be transparency on the thought processes behind this decision.

2 Should we enhance Singapore's 2030 NDC which currently pledges to peak emissions at 65 MtCO2e around 2030?

(a) Yes
(b) No
(c) Neutral/ Maybe/ Not sure

Answer: Yes

3 What should our 2030 NDC ambition be and why? (Refer to Paras 3 - 4 of Consultation Document)

Yes, you should enhance Singapore's 2030 NDC to be more ambitious and aligned with science. According to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6), "limiting warming to around 1.5°C (2.7°F) requires global greenhouse gas emissions to peak before 2025 at the latest, and be reduced by 43% by 2030". If Singapore peaks around 2030, as stated in the current NDC, this is not aligned with science to limit warming to 1.5C. Singapore needs to peak emissions at 65 MTCO2e in 2025.

4 What can the Government do to support Singapore's transition to a low carbon future?

Reconsider business arrangements with the large oil companies and regulate how banks operate their lending practices to ensure that they are divesting from large oil companies. Until the investments to oil companies are reevaluated, it will be very difficult to transition as quickly as needed to limit global temperature increases to 1.5C.

Ultimately it will be up to governments stepping in to put requirements in place to raise the bottom floor and get any lagging companies on board, ideally with supportive plans in place for businesses and communities with input from all stakeholders and rightsholders.

5 What can businesses and industries do to support Singapore's transition to a low carbon future?

Businesses and industries can preemptively take steps to align their business practices and strategies to set net zero goals aligned with science, including halving their emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero by 2050 at the latest. Businesses also need to set out clear milestones and steps for how they will get to net zero across all their Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions.

6 What can individuals and communities do to support Singapore's transition to a low carbon future?

Individuals and communities need to reevaluate their everyday life choices and reduce emissions and environmental impacts where they can, such as using less air conditioning as possible, reducing water waste, reducing plastic and styrofoam usage at hawker centers, etc.

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7 While there may be trade-offs or inconveniences, I am willing to contribute / play my part in helping Singapore realise its net zero ambition.

(a) Strongly Agree
(b) Neutral
(c) Agree
(d) Strongly Disagree
(e) Disagree

Answer: Strongly Agree

8 Do you have any other thoughts on Singapore's climate ambition that you wish to share?

In paragraph 7 of the Consultation Document, it states "7. The Paris Agreement Article 6 rulebook for international carbon markets was also finalised, which allows Singapore to access global mitigation opportunities through international carbon credits and provides an additional option for us to decarbonise."

It should be noted that carbon credits should NOT be pursued in lieu of carbon emissions reduction aligned with net zero science. Carbon credits do not count towards a net zero goal and, as part of a net zero goal, can only be used to address the remaining "residual" emissions that cannot be abated. Singapore needs to ensure that it follows the mitigation hierarchy, i.e., "prioritizes eliminating sources of emissions within the value chain over compensation or neutralization measures. Land-based climate strategies should prioritize interventions that help preserve and enhance existing terrestrial carbon stocks, within and beyond the value chain of the company." (Source: SBTi Net Zero Standard) Carbon credits need to be credible first and foremost, meaning additional, permanent, transparent, with no leakage and no net harm (see the Oxford Principles on Net Zero-Aligned Carbon Offsetting).

Beyond value chain mitigation (BVCM) is necessary, however. Businesses and countries can play a critical role in accelerating the net-zero transition and in addressing the ecological crisis by investing in mitigations actions beyond their value chains. Additional investments like these could help increase the likelihood the global community stays within a 1.5˚C carbon budget but are not a substitute for the rapid and deep reduction of a company's own value chain emissions. If Singapore is able to invest in carbon removal tech and protections for forest carbon sequestration and blue carbon IN ADDITION to addressing its net zero goal activities, then that is surely encouraged by the scientific community.