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**Eleventh meeting of the Adaptation Committee  
Bonn, Germany, 7-10 March 2017**

**Review of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements  
under the Convention in 2017**

**Background note by the secretariat**

**Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee**

The Adaptation Committee will be invited to consider the synthesis of submissions contained in this document. It will further be invited to agree on next steps in the preparation of recommendations for consideration by the CMA in 2017 on ways to enhance the coherence of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention.

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## 1. Introduction and background

1. As part of the Paris outcomes, the Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the Adaptation Committee (AC) to review, in 2017, the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention with a view to identifying ways to enhance the coherence of their work, in order to adequately respond to the needs of Parties. Based on this review, the AC will prepare recommendations for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA).<sup>1</sup>
2. The AC's response to this mandate, detailed in the terms of reference (ToRs) (see annex), has included a mapping of the core mandates of adaptation-related institutional arrangements, which was considered at the tenth meeting of the AC and further analysed in this paper. This paper could therefore be read in conjunction with the mapping of adaptation-related institutional arrangements against the needs of Parties, considered at AC 10 and contained in document AC/2016/12.
3. The AC also issued a call for submissions to Parties and non-Party stakeholders based on guiding questions. The views of Parties and non-Party stakeholders and the outcome of the analysis have served as the basis for draft recommendations (see section 6) prepared for consideration by the AC at its eleventh meeting.

## 2. Scope of the paper

4. This paper contains the following sections:
  - a) Section 3 provides a brief analysis of the current institutional landscape on adaptation based on the previous mapping of institutions;<sup>2</sup>
  - b) Sections 4 provides a summary of the views of Parties and non-Party stakeholders organized by needs, overlaps, and gaps/weaknesses in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements;
  - c) Section 5 contains possible ways for enhancing coherence in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements proposed by Parties and non-Party stakeholders; and
  - d) Section 6 contains draft recommendations based on the analysis contained in section 3 and the views submitted by Parties and non-Party stakeholders summarised in sections 4 and 5.

## 3. Current institutional landscape under the Convention

5. Taking into account the previous mapping and the submissions, this paper has grouped adaptation-related functions performed by institutional arrangements under the Convention into four main clusters, including:
  - a) Knowledge and information sharing on adaptation, which includes compiling, generating, disseminating and curating relevant information;
  - b) The provision of policy advice and recommendations to Parties and the COP on adaptation;
  - c) The provision of technical guidance and support on adaptation, including through guidelines, procedures, modalities and methodologies;

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<sup>1</sup> Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 42 (a).

<sup>2</sup> AC/2016/12.

- d) The facilitation of the mobilization and provision of means of implementation (MOI) to Parties for adaptation including on finance, capacity-building, and technology development and transfer.
6. The engagement of stakeholders is of a cross-cutting nature and is a function relevant to all four clusters outlined above.
7. Adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention consist of those whose primary mandate is to enhance adaptation action and support (including the AC, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) and the Nairobi work programme (NWP)). The Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM) has been included in the review even though some Parties stress that adaptation-related institutional arrangements should be considered to be separate and distinct from loss and damage-related institutions.
8. There are also other relevant arrangements whose mandates are broader but also include activities to enhance adaptation action and support to varying degrees (for example the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I of the Convention (CGE), the operating entities under the Financial Mechanism, the Technology Executive Committee (TEC), the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) and the Paris Committee on Capacity-Building (PCCB)).
9. Figures 1 – 5 below attempt to map the extent to which adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention are performing functions under the four clusters listed in paragraph 5 above.<sup>3</sup>

Figure 1. Knowledge management and information sharing on climate change adaptation

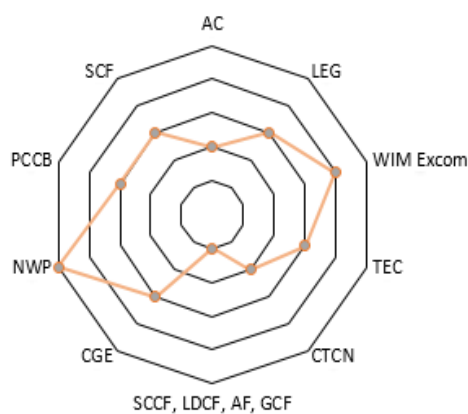
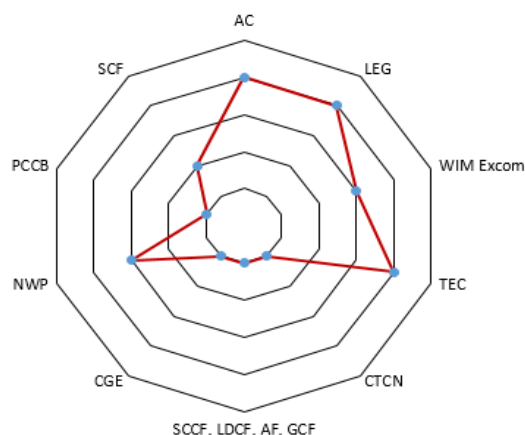


Figure 2. Provision of policy advice to Parties and the COP on climate change adaptation



<sup>3</sup> Figures 1 -5 are based on estimated rankings from 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest) used to indicate an approximate level of involvement of each institutional arrangement in performing functions under the four clusters. These are used for illustrative purposes only and are based on the current mandates of these institutional arrangements as included in the mapping for AC10.

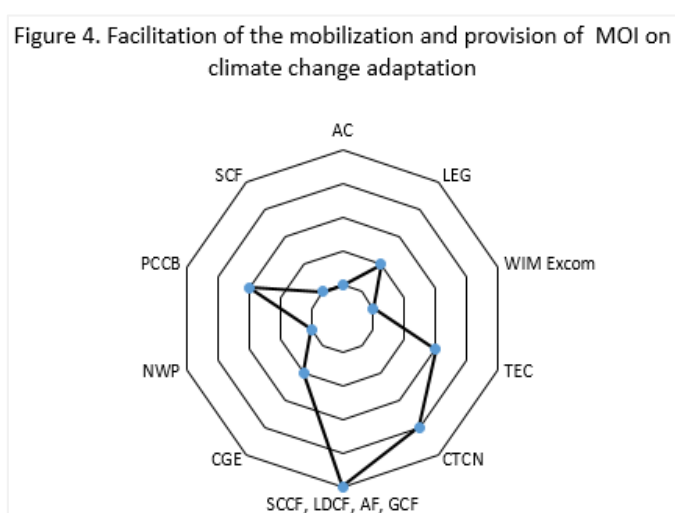
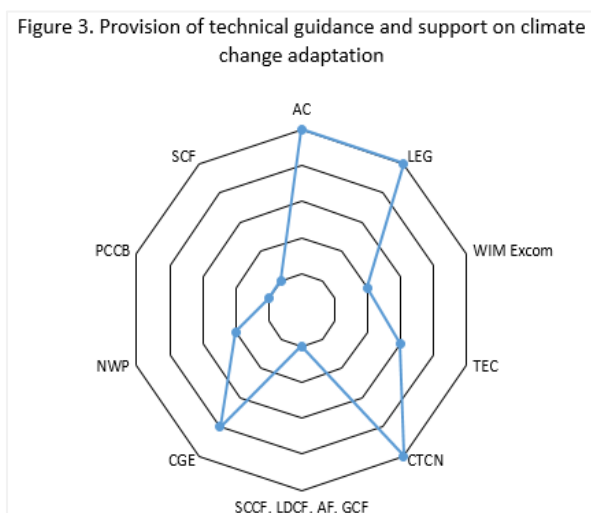
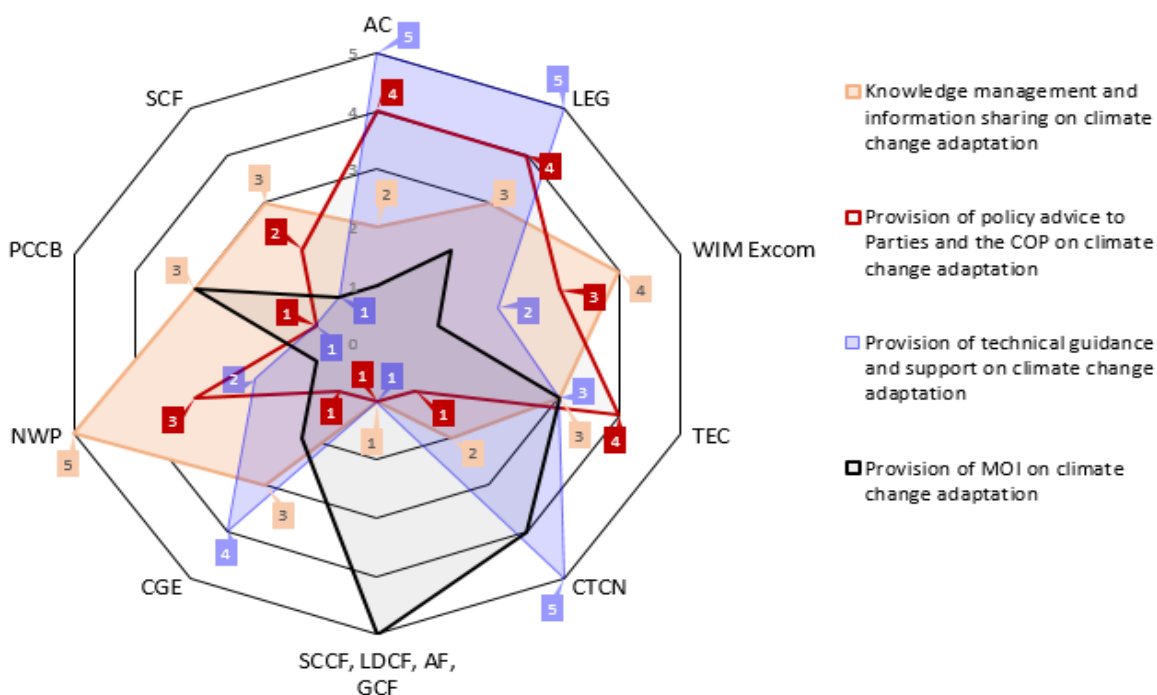


Figure 5. Overview of functions performed by adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention



10. These figures show a significant number of overlaps in the functions performed by adaptation-related institutional arrangements. The current institutional landscape has more than one arrangement with main functions in one of the four clusters. For example, the AC, LEG, CGE, and CTCN all perform core functions under the cluster provision of technical guidance and support on climate change adaptation. However, a closer look at the functions, as mandated for each arrangement, shows some differences in the nature of the function, the thematic area of focus and/or target group. For instance, the CGE focuses on providing guidance and support on how to conduct vulnerability and adaptation assessments to Parties not included in Annex I of the Convention in the context of preparing national communications, while the LEG provides guidance for assessing climate risks and vulnerability in the context of the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs).

## 4. Summary of submissions

11. The AC, as part of its response to its mandate, agreed at its tenth meeting to issue a call for submissions inviting Parties and non-Party stakeholders to provide their views, taking into consideration guiding questions available on the UNFCCC website.<sup>4</sup>

12. During the period 21 October 2016 to 18 February 2017, a total of eight submissions were received from the following Parties and groups of Parties: Ethiopia (on behalf of the LDCs); Guatemala (on behalf of the AILAC group of countries); Mali (on behalf of the African Group of Negotiators); Malta and the European Commission (on behalf of the European Union); Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the Arab group of countries); Turkey; the United States of America; and Uruguay, Argentina and Brazil. The complete submissions are available on the UNFCCC submissions portal.<sup>5</sup> Submissions were also received from three non-Party stakeholders and are available on the UNFCCC website.<sup>6</sup>

13. Largely consistent with the guiding questions, the submissions received included general observations, adaptation needs of Parties, areas of perceived overlaps and gaps/weaknesses in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements, and recommendations on how to enhance coherence in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention.

### a) Needs of Parties

14. Parties differed in their views as to what kind of needs institutional arrangements should adequately respond. For example, a group of Parties proposed that the global goal on adaptation (GGA) contained in Article 7.1 of the Paris Agreement should serve as a guide for determining the adaptation needs of Parties. The group suggested grouping the needs of Parties into needs for enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability.

15. Other Parties proposed associating the needs of Parties to four main elements of the NAP process including: 1) laying the groundwork and addressing gaps; 2) preparation; 3) implementation strategies of Parties' NAP process; 4) reporting, monitoring and review. These Parties see the Paris Agreement adding a fifth element: needs associated with conducting collective assessments and efforts to enhance cooperation. Closely related, another group of Parties proposed to tailor approaches to address adaptation needs to different steps in an adaptation cycle identified as: 1) preparing the ground for adaptation; 2) assessing risks and vulnerabilities to climate change; 3) identifying and assessing adaptation options; 4) implementation; and 5) monitoring and evaluation.

16. Some Parties see the most emergent need of Parties to be the need to support the communication, implementation and updating of the adaptation communications as a component of their NDCs or any other vehicle as appropriate. These Parties recommend that the AC assesses whether current institutional arrangements are adequate with respect to the adaptation communications and the GGA.

17. Some Parties cautioned that attempts to determine the needs of Parties must bear in mind that needs vary from one country to another and will change over time. However, most Parties agreed that the needs of Parties are generally related to finance, capacity-building, technology and access to information.

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<sup>4</sup> AC guiding questions for call for submissions: <unfccc.int/10005>.

<sup>5</sup> Submissions from Parties

<<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/SitePages/sessions.aspx?showOnlyCurrentCalls=1&populateData=1&expectedsubmissionfrom=Parties&focalBodies=Constituted%20bodies>>.

<sup>6</sup> Submissions from non-Party stakeholders (Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers and International Centre for Tropical Agriculture; Stockholm Environment Institute; World Water Council) <unfccc.int/9784>.

18. Some Parties underlined that adaptation-related institutions should enable the implementation of the Paris Agreement, and rules currently under development, and help countries' access to adequate finance; technology for adaptation and capacity/knowledge. These Parties proposed to ask Parties to help determine if current arrangements are helping Parties meet these needs.
19. Some Parties proposed to consider using ecosystems and eco-regions when tailoring support to the needs of Parties instead of using Parties groupings. They proposed to compile and monitor over time data on water quality, land degradation neutrality criteria and biological parameters specific to the regions identified under the Convention to determine the most affected instead of using Parties groupings.
20. A group of Parties urged the AC to, in addition to considering needs, also identify which institutional arrangement should support countries in communicating their needs and in ensuring that these are addressed adequately.

**b) Overlaps in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements**

21. The submissions identified a number of overlaps in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements. However, Parties felt that, in most cases, the overlaps were necessary when the context is taken into consideration as most activities are complementary.
22. Overlaps and/or duplications were identified in the following areas:
- a) Support provided to the NAP process since it is considered in three agenda items of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI): NAPs; matters relating to the least developed countries (LDCs); and the report of the Adaptation Committee; and
  - b) Vulnerability and adaptation assessments being considered in the work of the CGE, the AC and the LEG.
23. In addition, some Parties see the recent mandates on the mobilization of support, and the review of adequacy and effectiveness (decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 45) given to the AC and LEG, in collaboration with the SCF, as overlapping with other mandates of the SCF. The mandate on adequacy and effectiveness is also seen by some Parties as overlapping with the mandate on modalities for accounting by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) (decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 57).
24. The analysis conducted by the SCF in its biennial assessments is in the view of some Parties duplicative of efforts by the AC to determine how adaptation needs of Parties are being met.

**c) Perceived gaps and areas of weaknesses in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements**

25. While most Parties agreed that there are no obvious gaps in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements, some submissions identified areas of work that could be better supported and, in some cases, proposed how that could be achieved.
26. Areas include, for example, a disconnect between the needs of Parties at the local and regional levels and the institutional support available to Parties under the UNFCCC process; a lack of support for setting up monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track the progress of adaptation actions; a lack of support for identifying the best available technologies for supporting adaptation interventions and designing ways for disseminating these technologies to areas most needed at a low to no cost.
27. A group of Parties proposed various activities that could be taken to more effectively apply the principle of economic diversification. These activities include more focused work, specifically under the NWP; developing a plan to successfully operationalize the economic diversification initiative (decision

24/CP.18); sharing of best practices and lessons learned from both developed and developing country Parties on economic diversification efforts, plans, challenges, vulnerability assessments, developing institutional capacity and ways to increase economic resilience; and by requesting the AC to provide recommendations on methodologies for economic vulnerability assessment, as well as methodologies and tools for increasing economic resilience.

28. Some Parties identified an imbalance in the financial and technological support provided to Parties for mitigation and adaptation actions.

29. As an anticipatory measure in case the UNFCCC adaptation-related institutional arrangements do not meet all needs of Parties under the Paris Agreement, some Parties proposed that current arrangements could more effectively enhance their collaboration with organizations outside the process.

30. Some Parties are of the view that coherence in the work of institutions primarily responsible for adaptation is at an acceptable level but it is a challenge to bring these to work in a coherent manner with finance, technology, and capacity-building (knowledge) institutions.

31. Some submissions proposed improving the attention paid to sectoral issues such as in the water and forest sectors etc. and proposed developing approaches that are transboundary in nature for issues that cut across national borders.

#### **d) General observations**

32. Parties also provided reflections on how to enhance the institutional arrangements more generally and how the AC could go about undertaking the review. For example, some submissions advised the AC, in responding to this mandate, to offer strategic recommendations related to how the suite of institutional arrangements could best focus their engagement on adaptation, within the scope of their mandates and procedures. The recommendations should encourage two or more arrangements to work together to address a specific need.

33. The review, according to some, could greatly benefit from countries' experiences and practitioners on the ground, which could be captured using, for example, a survey to focal points and observer institutions. In addition, some Parties proposed that the secretariat could dedicate half a day/an additional day at a suitable time (e.g. during the next NAP Expo) with national focal points and adaptation experts to present the mandate and collect countries' views on institutional arrangements, including, e.g. through break-out groups.

## **5. Ways to enhance coherence in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements**

34. Some Parties proposed shifting coherence efforts by the AC from generic-based to a more targeted approach whereby efforts to enhance coherence are geared towards achieving a specific result or objective.

35. Based on the analysis of functions of institutions presented in section 3 of this paper, and further supported by the submissions received, there is no significant gap in the functions of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention, making the establishment of a new adaptation-related institutional arrangement unnecessary. As stated above, the current institutional landscape on adaptation has more than one arrangement performing functions under each of the four clusters identified in paragraph 5 above. However, some Parties noted that these perceived duplications/overlaps in the functions of these arrangements are complementary and necessary.

36. Some Parties believe coherence could be greatly enhanced by clearly defining the roles of the primary adaptation-related institutional arrangements (AC, LEG and NWP) to make them more complementary in their functions. In such an institutional landscape, the AC would focus on providing strategic political overview; the LEG on technical issues e.g. preparing guidelines for NAPs, organizing regional workshops; and the NWP would focus on scientific and technical aspects primarily producing knowledge to support and fulfil the needs of other arrangements.

*Proposals for strengthening interlinkages:*

37. Most Parties strongly recommended strengthening interlinkages between the arrangements as a way of addressing areas of perceived weaknesses in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements and made various suggestions on how to enhance collaboration and coordination in the work of these arrangements.

38. Some Parties supported the COP's practice of jointly requesting constituted bodies to work on relevant adaptation mandates drawing from lessons learned from the mandates to the LEG and the AC, in collaboration with the SCF (decision 1/CP.21, para 45). Some Parties proposed expanding this group to include the GCF to help facilitate the implementation of adaptation activities and to address project financing matters. Similarly, some Parties proposed the establishment of cross-institutional taskforces (e.g. NAP taskforce) or working groups to benefit from the expertise of other institutions.

39. Most Parties proposed that a constituted body could on its responsibility, where possible, engage other bodies/committees to collaboratively work on specific activities by that body. For example, the first meeting of the PCCB will be attended by other constituted bodies; the Excom could hold a joint forum with the SCF on financial tools; the NWP could work on monitoring and evaluation tools for the AC and the LEG; the AC could participate in brainstorming sessions of the NWP; the AC and LEG could jointly work on the NAPs process. Furthermore, there could be joint working sessions of the AC and the PCCB to address, for example, scientific and technical capacity building needs; to strengthen the capacity of adaptation decision makers; to strengthen capacity to access adaptation finance; to follow-up on the outcomes of the technical examination process on adaptation as potential inputs for consideration in the global stocktake.

40. Some Parties consider the annual GCF meetings to enhance cooperation and coherence of engagement between the GCF and Convention thematic bodies, if effective, to serve as an opportunity to bring all adaptation-related institutional arrangements to work in a coherent manner.

41. Some submissions suggested that the AC could invite members of other committees/bodies to attend their meetings and vice-versa, as well as schedule its meetings in a way that facilitates attendance by others; organize meet-and-greet sessions and exchange letters to inform each other of relevant work; hold regular meetings of co-chairs, etc.

42. Some Parties proposed that the AC, after each COP, could review the workplans of the various adaptation-related institutional arrangements together with any newly assigned mandates, with a view to identifying areas to build coherence and amplify collaboration.

43. A group of Parties proposed that constituted bodies under the Convention could seek recommendations from other bodies/committees, e.g., the SCF from AC when elaborating work plans and/or jointly request inputs from Parties.

44. Some Parties proposed that the AC could set up a regular forum, possibly online or back-to-back with NAP Expo or AC meetings, where all adaptation-related bodies could exchange information on their work plans and seek streamlining/synergies/enhanced collaboration.



45. A group of Parties encouraged constituted bodies to follow the examples of the Excom and the AC to develop workstreams focused on collaboration and coherence.

46. Some Parties proposed linking the work of the NWP with that of long-standing and recently developed institutions, including the financial mechanism. Other Parties proposed that the NWP could draw from experiences and lessons learned to regularly produce a list of concrete implementable activities for the SBI for implementation through the AC and LEG. Similarly, other Parties proposed requesting the NWP to periodically report to the AC on identified implementable activity areas and enable coordination of work with related institutional arrangements such as the TEC, the SCF and the PCCB on such implementation using existing arrangements.

47. Some Parties requested the LEG, the CGE and other bodies to identify opportunities to jointly conduct training and, where necessary, with outside institutions.

*Proposals for strengthening the Adaptation Committee:*

48. A group of Parties proposed that as the needs of developing countries change over time and new modalities, procedures and guidelines are developed for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement, the AC should periodically carry out a review of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention, with a view to identifying ways to enhance the coherence of their work, as appropriate, in order to respond adequately to the needs of Parties. The group further proposed to conduct the next review in 2024 and from then on every five years.

49. Most Parties saw a need to strengthen the AC by assigning to it the task of, on a regular basis, making recommendations on how distinct bodies might work together to address the evolving needs of Parties under the Paris Agreement. These Parties see this role including regularly reviewing adaptation-related arrangements and making recommendations to reduce any perceived duplications, to address gaps and promote synergies, especially for guiding/making recommendations on the work of existing and newly established bodies/workstreams. These Parties also proposed including in this role the authority for the AC to develop simplified guidance for accessing adaptation finance.

50. Some Parties expect the AC's responsibilities to significantly increase under the Paris Agreement to include responsibilities related to the adaptation communications, the adaptation-related outcomes of the global stocktake, such as ensuring enhanced implementation of adaptation actions, adequacy of provision of support for adaptation, assessing progress towards achieving the GGA, and an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal. With these increased responsibilities these Parties consider it imperative for the AC to be strengthened and to have the necessary resources.

*Engagement of stakeholders*

51. Most submissions encouraged all arrangements to actively engage stakeholders, including from outside the UNFCCC process, to benefit from their expertise and enhance the quality of support provided to Parties in all aspects of their work.

## **6. Draft recommendations to the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of Parties to the Paris Agreement**

52. On the basis of its review of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention, undertaken in 2017, the AC may wish to forward the following recommendations to the CMA for consideration and adoption. The CMA may wish to:

- a) Request all adaptation-related institutional arrangements to enhance and, where useful, formalize collaboration on fulfilling mandates with cross-cutting aspects;

- b) Assign any outstanding adaptation-related work necessary for the effective implementation of the Paris Agreement to existing institutional arrangements that will serve the Agreement, taking into consideration their core mandates and procedures, including requesting the AC to review the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation in support of Article 7.14(c);
- c) Request the TEC and the CTCN, as well as the institutional arrangements relating to capacity building, to ensure balance in the provision of support to Parties for adaptation and mitigation actions;
- d) Request the AC to guide the NWP in servicing the work of other adaptation-related institutional arrangements, in particular through providing relevant scientific and technical information and knowledge and serving as an interface between them and non-Party stakeholders;
- e) Request the AC to regularly review the functions, performance and effectiveness of adaptation-related institutional arrangements and make recommendations to address the evolving adaptation-related needs of Parties, to eliminate duplications, promote coherence and synergies and address gaps in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Paris Agreement.

## **7. Next Steps**

53. Based on discussions at AC11, the AC may wish to request the secretariat, under the guidance of the Co-Chairs, to finalize the recommendations and to circulate them well ahead of AC12. At AC12, the AC may wish to agree on the final recommendations for forwarding to the CMA for its consideration and adoption.

## **Annex. Terms of reference for the review of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention**

### **1. Mandate<sup>7</sup>**

1. As part of the Paris outcomes on adaptation, the Conference of the Parties requested the Adaptation Committee (AC) to review, in 2017, the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention with a view to identifying ways to enhance the coherence of their work, in order to adequately respond to the needs of Parties. Furthermore, the AC will prepare recommendations for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as a meeting of Parties to the Paris Agreement at its first session (CMA1).

### **2. Objective**

2. To review, in 2017, the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention, with a view to identifying ways to enhance the coherence of their work, as appropriate, in order to respond adequately to the needs of Parties.

### **3. Information sources**

3. Information for the review of the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements should be drawn from, inter alia:

- a) Core mandates of adaptation-related institutional arrangements taking into consideration any new mandates from COP21; and
- b) Submissions from Parties and other stakeholders in response to a call by the AC.

### **4. Modalities of the review and expected outcomes**

4. Under the guidance of the AC, the secretariat will prepare for consideration at AC11 (March 2017) an analysis of the submissions and functions of adaptation-related institutional arrangements.

5. The AC will then prepare draft recommendations on ways to enhance coherence in the work of adaptation-related institutional arrangements under the Convention and to respond to the needs of Parties under the new climate regime consideration and finalization at AC12.

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<sup>7</sup> Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 42 (a).