

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

**Synthesis of submissions from Parties and other stakeholders, and next steps for
developing recommendations on methodologies for assessing adaptation needs**

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its 11th meeting, will be invited to consider this report, including the possible elements for recommendations and agree on next steps.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Background and scope of the note	2
2.	Existing methodologies for assessing adaptation needs: current status, challenges and gaps	2
3.	Possible elements for recommendations on methodologies for assessing adaptation needs	4
	3.1. Principles guiding the consideration of methodologies	4
	3.2. Reporting on methodological gaps	5
	3.3. Recommending action to advance methodologies	5
4.	Next steps	6
Annex.	Submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders	8

1. Background and scope of the note

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 1/CP.21, requested the Adaptation Committee (AC), taking into account its mandates and its second three-year workplan, to **consider methodologies for assessing adaptation needs with a view to assisting developing country Parties, without placing an undue burden on them**, with a view to preparing recommendations for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement at its first session (CMA1).¹

2. At its 10th meeting, the AC considered a range of existing methodologies, in light of their current applications and limitations, for assessing adaptation needs, including needs for adaptation action and (finance, technology and capacity) support.² Based on discussions at its 10th meeting, the AC agreed to further consider this issue, including through the convening of a meeting and a call for submissions from Parties and other stakeholders to inform its work on this topic.³ As of 28 February 2017, 12 submissions were received and a summary of these submissions is provided in the annex to this note.

3. Based on the initial desk review of methodologies contained in the background note prepared for AC10, subsequent discussions at the meeting, and the submissions of Parties and non-Party stakeholders, this note:

- a) Summarizes existing methodologies for assessing adaptation needs, including key gaps and challenges (section 2);
- b) Elaborates possible elements that the AC may wish to consider as they develop their recommendations for consideration and adoption by CMA1 (section 3); and
- c) Outlines next steps, including a meeting to validate and refine draft recommendations (section 4).

2. Existing methodologies for assessing adaptation needs: current status, challenges and gaps

4. As the initial desk review suggested, a wide range of methodologies have been developed and applied to assess all aspects of adaptation needs, including needs for action and needs for financial, technological and capacity-building support. The submissions received also provided a rich list of examples of methodologies being used to assess adaptation needs in a variety of contexts (see annex for details). However, as these methodologies were developed and applied for assessments serving specific purposes, their application towards assessing adaptation needs Parties are expected to report on and track over time under the Paris Agreement would pose a number of challenges. Table 1 below provides a summary of existing methodologies with relation to the assessment of the different aspects of adaptation needs, as well as some of the key challenges, taking into account inputs contained in the submissions.

¹ Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 42 (b). In addition, COP 21 also requested the AC and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), in collaboration with the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) and other relevant institutions, to develop methodologies, and make recommendations for consideration and adoption by CMA1 on taking the necessary steps to facilitate the mobilization of support for adaptation in developing countries in the context of the limit to global average temperature increase referred to in Article 2, and on reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support referred to in Article 7, paragraph 14(c), of the Paris Agreement (Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 45).

² A background paper was prepared to assist the AC in discussions on this topic and is available at <bit.ly/2mhol3J>.

³ Details on the call for submissions are available at <unfccc.int/10005>.

5. As suggested in table 1, the vast majority of adaptation needs assessments to date focuses on needs for adaptation action. Work on assessing the needs for support is still at the early stage and there is wider scope to further develop and/or refine associated methodologies, methods and tools. The need for more progress on assessing the needs for adaptation support is made more acute by the reporting and review processes under the Paris Agreement, including the global stocktake, for which information on adaptation support needs would be of critical importance. Strengthening the methodologies facilitating the estimation of measurable, aggregate-able and comparable indicators and metrics for adaptation support needs would therefore represent an area of work with high priority.

Table 1. Summary of existing methodologies for assessing adaptation needs

Methodologies for assessing adaptation needs	Current status	Challenges and gaps
Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An extensive amount of adaptation action needs assessments has been carried out at sectoral, local, national, regional and international levels, following a typically top-down, scenario-driven impact assessment methodological framework as well as bottom-up vulnerability assessment approaches; • A number of methodological frameworks placing adaptation within the general development process have been developed and applied, particularly by development agencies to assess needs for adaptation action; • More recently, a risk management framework has been used to assess needs for adaptation action to better support decision making under uncertainties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavy dependence on data and information (observations and projections, for climatic and socio-economic variables) which is often unavailable or incomplete in developing country Parties; • Results on adaptation action needs are highly subjective to the selection and choice of baseline, scales, timeframe and scenarios.
Financial support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost-benefit and/or cost-effectiveness analyses have been carried out to estimate the costs of adaptation programmes and projects; • Financial flow and investment analyses have been carried out to estimate the costs for sector- and/or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largely limited to economic assessments of adaptation costs with insufficient financial assessments; • Considerable caveats associated with existing methodologies (e.g. uncertainties, discounting rates, baseline, timescale, spatial scale and boundaries etc.); • Current methodologies not yet taking into account opportunity/transaction costs hence

	economy-wide adaptation action.	underestimate the cost hence financial support needs; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current financial support need assessments lacking in transparency related to the use and documentation of the underlying costing methods.
Technology support	A step-wise methodological framework has been developed and used in Technology Needs Assessments (TNAs), including multi-criteria analysis being used for prioritizing adaptation technology options.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current methodologies and associated tools are inadequate in taking into account local context and conditions (e.g. physical and/or technical prerequisites) relevant to the feasibility and suitability of certain technology solutions; • Methodologies that consider technology needs within the broader context of needs for adaptation action are yet to be further developed.
Capacity-building support	Capacity-building support needs have been identified at individual, institutional and system levels, usually based on qualitative approaches.	Given the highly context-specific and qualitative nature of the needs identified, it is difficult to aggregate capacity-building needs across levels within a country hence makes it challenging to track and report on progress.

3. Possible elements for recommendations on methodologies for assessing adaptation needs

6. In developing its recommendations for consideration and adoption by CMA1 on methodologies for assessing adaptation needs, the AC may take into account the following elements: recommending guiding principles underlying the consideration of methodologies, reporting on gaps and challenges, and recommending action to advance methodologies.

3.1. Principles guiding the consideration of methodologies

7. As discussed in the background paper mentioned in paragraph 1 above, the AC may wish to highlight a number of guiding principles for the development, identification, selection, application and refinement of methodologies for assessing adaptation needs. These guiding principles would be informed by the relevant reporting requirements under the Paris Agreement, including adaptation communications.⁴ Possible guiding principles could include, among others:

- a) **Relevance** – Methodologies need to be capable of facilitating assessments leading to information that is meaningful to decision makers and practitioners, including at the appropriate spatial scale and for the relevant time horizon;
- b) **Flexibility** – Methodologies need to accommodate a wide range of data availability, technical and institutional capacities in developing country Parties;
- c) **Practicality** – Methodologies need to focus on indicators/metrics that are relatively easy to measure, and to aggregate and compare across scales so as to not place additional burden on developing country Parties.

⁴ For information related to possible elements of adaptation communications identified by Parties, including adaptation needs, and an overview of relevant reporting guidelines see document FCCC/APA/2017/INF.1 available at <unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/apa/eng/inf01.pdf>.

3.2. Reporting on methodological gaps

8. In its recommendations, the AC could first outline major gaps in existing methodologies, particularly within the context of the relevant information requirements under the Convention. Based on the summary of analysis on existing methodologies in section 2 above, the AC could highlight the gaps and challenges with relation to existing methodologies for assessing the different types of adaptation needs:

- a) **Gaps in accessibility** of existing methodologies (and associated methods and tools): to underline the issues related to access to commercial and non-commercial assessment tools. Examples of such issues include the need for better and more effective dissemination of existing methodologies and assessment tools, for more concessional and open access to commercial assessment tools;
- b) **Gaps in relevance and applicability** of existing methodologies: to highlight challenges related to the appropriateness of the existing methodologies in relation to the task at hand. Examples of such challenges include: the scales at which the assessments are conducted are not aligned with the scales at which adaptation planning and practices (hence adaptation needs) occur; key parameters/assumptions “hard wired” within assessment models do not necessarily apply to the location/context of interest; qualitative insights and experiences are difficult to be incorporated into quantitative methods and tools, including for vulnerability assessment, and needs for adaptation support etc.;
- c) **Gaps in essential data and information** required in existing methodologies: to underline the challenges related to obtain and process key datasets in order to make use of existing methodologies and associated modelling tools. In particular, many developing country Parties have reported on the lack of baseline data as well as projections of key climatic and socio-economic variables to develop coherent scenarios for impact and vulnerability assessments using existing assessment models;
- d) **Gaps in capacity** for applying existing methodologies: to highlight that many developing country Parties lack in the required technical and institutional capacity to effectively apply some existing methodologies. Examples in this regard may include: some economic analysis tools (e.g. computable general equilibrium models) require substantial technical expertise currently unavailable in many developing country Parties; methodological frameworks for robust vulnerability as well as adaptation support (finance, technology and capacity) needs assessment (e.g. financial flow and investment analysis) require close collaboration and coordination among institutions at different levels which remains a challenge in many countries;
- e) **Gaps in coverage** to highlight areas of adaptation needs assessments that are currently not supported by existing methodologies. Examples of areas for which methodologies that are to be developed include: indicators/metrics for different types of adaptation needs that are amenable to aggregation and comparison across sectors, geographies and governance structures, adaptation needs arising from transboundary impacts of climate change, implications of policy/opportunity cost for financial needs etc.

3.3. Recommending action to advance methodologies

9. Having outlined some of the key challenges with relation to the coverage, accessibility, relevance and applicability of existing methodologies, the AC could, in its recommendations, include a call for action to address these challenges. Depending on the extent to which the AC wish to be specific, there could be **two options for recommendations**:

- a) AC could **simply make an open call to all relevant entities in a position to do so to address the gaps and challenges as identified above** without “assigning” tasks to specific entities;

- b) AC could **be more specific and invite specific entities to address particular challenges**, for example:
- i) **Improving the accessibility of existing methodologies.** The AC may recommend that the SBSTA requests the Nairobi Work Programme, in collaboration with developers of relevant methodologies, to develop and periodically update, an inventory of relevant methodologies for assessing adaptation needs for action and support, and to make it available online at the Adaptation Knowledge Portal;
 - ii) **Refining existing methodologies.** The AC may recommend that the SBSTA invites the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to develop guidelines on practical ways to improve the relevance and applicability of existing methodologies for assessing adaptation needs including methods and tools for assessing adaptation support needs, and on the development of relevant indicators/metrics for adaptation needs that are amenable to aggregate and comparison across sectors, geographies and governance levels;
 - iii) **Filling in the data and information gaps.** The AC may recommend that the SBSTA invites the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), through its Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), to improve the availability and accessibility of comprehensive climate observational data, and to facilitate the provision and dissemination of most up to date climate model projections;
 - iv) **Addressing the capacity challenge.** The AC may recommend that the COP invites the Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB) to consider the provision of capacity building to support developing country Parties in applying methodologies for assessing adaptation needs. In addition, the AC may recommend that the SBSTA requests the Nairobi work programme, in collaboration with its partner organizations, to document and disseminate good practices and lessons learned with relation to the development and application of methodologies for assessing adaptation needs;
 - v) **Developing new methodologies.** The AC may recommend that the SBSTA invites the research community, adaptation practitioners and adaptation support providers to work together to address the current methodological gaps through the development of new methodological frameworks, methods and tools for assessing adaptation needs that would assist developing countries without placing an undue burden on them, in particular to develop measurable, aggregate-able and comparable indicators and metrics for adaptation support needs.

10. The AC may wish to consider whether to include in its recommendations some or all of the above elements. In addition, in developing its recommendations for consideration and adoption by CMA1, the AC may wish to consider the range of very specific recommendations provided by Parties and non-Party stakeholders through their submissions as summarized in table 1 of the annex to this note.

4. Next steps

11. The AC may consider the following as next steps towards concluding its work on considering methodologies for assessing adaptation needs:

- a) Requesting the AC Co-Chairs and interested AC members, with the assistance of the secretariat, to develop draft recommendations, taking into account the discussions on the possible elements at AC11 by mid-April 2017;
- b) Requesting the secretariat to organize, under the guidance of the Co-Chairs of the AC and interested AC members, a small expert meeting (10-15 participants) at the margins of SB46 (possible on Friday or Saturday, 12 or 13 May) to validate and refine the draft recommendations referred to above. The meeting could bring together representatives from

developers and users of methodologies, including from Nairobi work programme partners and interested AC members.

- c) Requesting the AC Co-Chairs and interested AC members, with the assistance of the secretariat, to revise the draft recommendations as input to the AC12 for agreement by AC12.

Annex: Submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders

1. Background

12. The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its tenth meeting held from 13 to 16 September 2017, agreed to use a variety of means, including issuing a call for submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders, to gather information relevant to these mandates, with a view for the information to enable the AC to develop a limited set of options for considerations by Parties.¹ In the call for submissions, the AC specifically requested inputs from Parties and non-Party stakeholders with relation to the following questions:

- a) How could adaptation needs be defined? What should be the goal(s) when assessing adaptation needs?
- b) What are examples of methodologies for assessing adaptation needs? What are the strengths and/or limitations of these methodologies?
- c) What barriers and gaps exist with respect to the development and application of methodologies for assessing adaptation needs? What actions are needed to address these barrier and gaps, particularly within the context of the Convention and the Paris Agreement?

2. Status of submissions

13. As at 28 February 2017, a total of 12 submissions were received from Parties and non-Party stakeholders.

- a) Eight submissions were received from the following Parties;²
 - i) Ethiopia on behalf of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Group;
 - ii) Guatemala on behalf of AILAC;
 - iii) Mali on behalf of the African Group of Negotiators (AGN);
 - iv) Malta and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its member States, with the submission supported by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia;
 - v) Saudi Arabia on behalf of The Arab Group;
 - vi) Turkey;
 - vii) United States of America; and
 - viii) Uruguay - Argentina – Brazil (ABU).
- b) Four submissions were received from the following non-Party stakeholders:³
 - i) Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centres (CGIAR System Organization) and International Centre for Tropical Agriculture;
 - ii) Stockholm Environment Institute;
 - iii) World Water Council (WWC); and

¹ Details of the call for submission are available at <<http://unfccc.int/10005.php>>.

² Details including the actual submissions are available at <<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/SitePages/sessions.aspx?showOnlyCurrentCalls=1&populateData=1&expectedsSubmissionfrom=Parties&focalBodies=Constituted%20bodies>>.

³ Details including the actual submissions are available at <<http://unfccc.int/9784.php>>.

iv) UNEP-DTU Partnership

3. Summary of inputs received through the submissions

14. Through the submissions, Parties and non-Party stakeholders contributed a wealth of inputs, experiences and insights. Table 1 of this annex below provides a summary of these, structured around the questions that were included in the AC's call for submissions

Table 1. Summary of inputs

Questions	Responses	General notes
<p>How could adaptation needs be defined?</p>	<p><u>General</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The gap between what might happen as the climate changes and what we would desire to happen”; • Needs for adaptation action, and for support (finance, technology and capacity); • Social, political, technical, financial and human resource capacities needed to support human or natural systems to adjust in response to actual or expected climate stimuli or their effects; • Core needs (finance, technology and capacity) and secondary needs (provision and exchange of information, exchange of good practices and lessons learned). <p><u>Sector/theme specific</u></p> <p>Technology needs (for adaptation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In terms of technological maturity (needs for traditional, modern and high technology), and area of efforts (innovation, diffusion and transfer). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inherently difficult to measure or quantify, due to the multi-dimensional nature of adaptation; • Adaptation needs are context-specific and dynamic. They are contingent on factors other than adaptation efforts (e.g. mitigation efforts and other socio-economic conditions); • There are constraints and limits to adaptation.
<p>What should be the goal(s) when assessing adaptation needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify needs that, if met, will most contribute to robust and sustainable development despite a changing climate; • To ensure that the adaptation needs are met and adaptation goals (and ultimately sustainable development) achieved; • To better orient required international support and focus those investments in areas, sectors and prioritized vulnerable groups; • To provide essential information for adaptation communications and the global stocktake; • To support national adaptation and development planning processes. 	

<p>What are examples of methodologies for assessing adaptation needs?</p>	<p><u>General</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methodological frameworks for national, regional and local adaptation planning process consisting of a series of steps with each supported by a set of methods and tools (e.g. those included in the NAP technical guidelines); • Climate Resilient Development Framework (CRDF) approach; • Financial flow and investment assessments (for assessing financial support needs); • « Impact' Climat » tool; • The Resilience Systems Analysis (RSA) framework; • Direct dialogue; • Survey/questionnaire; • Local adaptation planning (embedding local adaptation needs and response actions into local development planning and budgeting processes); • Climate Resilient Development Pathways (CRDP) approach; • Standardized vulnerability assessment approach; • Indicator-based monitoring of climate change impacts and progress on adaptation. <p><u>Sector/theme specific</u></p> <p>Agriculture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate smart agriculture (CSA) prioritization framework. <p>Technology needs (for adaptation)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi criteria analysis (MCA) (under the global technology needs assessments - TNAs). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For adaptation to be effective, it needs to be mainstreamed into development planning processes. Therefore, the methodologies for assessing/identifying adaptation needs should take this into consideration; • Based on best available science; • Nationally determined; • Methodologies need to be able to integrate local and traditional knowledge into more formal, scientific knowledge and modelling tools.
<p>What are the strengths and/or limitations of these methodologies</p>	<p>Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Stepwise frameworks) Tried and tested; • (Multi-criteria analysis, direct dialogue) Ability to incorporate stakeholder inputs including qualitative information; • (Financial flow and investment assessments) Action oriented and directly point to investment plans; • Needs for adaptation action, and for support (finance, technology and capacity). 	

	<p>Limitations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sector-based methodologies risk creating conflicts in adaptation approaches across sectors; • Overarching vulnerability assessments not always helpful or feasible; • Challenging to quantify (categories and subcategories of) adaptation needs; • Incapable of systematically considering non-structural, nature- or community-based approaches to adaptation; • Inadequate in considering local context and/or stakeholder inputs when identifying and prioritizing needs; • Transnational climate impacts not yet considered when assessing adaptation needs. 	
<p>What barriers and gaps exist with respect to the development and application of methodologies for assessing adaptation needs?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of (free) access to available tools; • Lack of technical capacity to use modelling tools; • Insufficient availability of and accessibility to data and information at the appropriate scales required for decision relevant adaptation needs assessments, including climate observations and projections; • Insufficient technical and institutional capacities; • Insufficient financial resources; • Lack of appropriate indicators (to measure and compare adaptation needs); • Lack of functioning systems for gathering, managing, and sharing data including strengthened observation networks and improved regional data and clearinghouses; • A combination of low levels of awareness, thin scientific evidence base, high level of technical complexity and uncertainty, and a lack of national capacity to consider “external” dimensions of adaptation leading to the lack of consideration for transnational climate impacts in adaptation needs assessments. 	
<p>What actions are needed to address these barrier and gaps, particularly within the context of the</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening knowledge & experience sharing and learning; • Support for developing country Met services, and promotion of open data access; 	<p>To harmonize the metrics being used to measure progress on SDGs with those to be used for measuring progress on the Paris</p>

<p>Convention and the Paris Agreement?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthening of regional cooperation (on transboundary issues); • Capacity building and strengthening, including in coordination with the Paris Committee for Capacity Building to develop a clear roadmap for building scientific and technical capacity for assessing adaptation needs; • Documentation and sharing of good practices and lessons learned (e.g. with related to overcoming data challenges, carrying out robust cost and benefit analysis, using indicators etc.); • Focusing (vulnerability assessments) on priority sector and targeting the appropriate spatial and temporal scales; • Enhanced efforts to improve economics evaluation of adaptation options. • The following may be helpful to strengthen the consideration of transnational climate impacts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updating the technical guidance on NAPs with information to support assessments of transnational risks; ○ Considering ways to synthesize and communicate the content of Adaptation Communications, including via the global stocktake, in ways that facilitate Parties and regional organizations to assess the relevance of climate impacts identified by other Parties within the context of transnational risks; and ○ Consider commissioning or inviting assessments of transnational climate impacts at regional scales, including efforts to better communicate relevant case studies and examples to raise awareness among key stakeholders. 	<p>Agreement, so as to minimize the burden on countries' reporting obligations.</p>
<p>Specific recommendations for the AC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AC to provide recommendations on methodologies and tools for economic vulnerability assessment; • The AC to consider examples of methodologies, case studies and guidance to improve the consideration of transnational climate impacts in adaptation planning • The AC to recommend that CMA request the Secretariat to prepare a report with two parts: <p><u>Part I</u></p> <p>Compiles information on the aggregate and the individual dimensions of efforts, including: efforts subject to recognition made by developing countries, adaptation needs of developing countries, and means of implementation provided, including those communicated by recipient</p>	

and donor countries, and those related to the technology transfer and capacity building.

Part II

- Analyses the actual provision of adaptation finance from developed country Parties to developing country Parties in relation to adaptation “financial needs” of developing countries; Assessments of the actual provision of finance to adaptation in relation to the Paris Agreement temperature goal and in comparison to the temperature scenario arising from the aggregate analysis of mitigation contributions;
- Draws a comparative assessment of the existing procedures to access finance to adaptation through the operational entities of the Financial Mechanism of the Convention and the Paris Agreement, including the Adaptation Fund, as well as other relevant multilateral funds; and
- Assesses the transparency of those entities in relation to adaptation finance and proposes alternatives to achieve greater homogeneity, simplicity and unity in the procedures designed to access finance to adaptation, including direct access to such funds so as to expand the possibilities of direct access for national entities of developing countries.
- The AC to recommend that the CMA request the Adaptation Committee (with support of the Secretariat) to periodically prepare a report as an input to the GST, including two parts:

Part I

- Synthesis of individual efforts Compilation of adaptation efforts (in order to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience, reduce vulnerability, and generate enabling conditions) that are submitted by developing countries made through their reports in their National Communication for its recognition. Compilation of priorities and needs of developing countries submitted via their Adaptation Communication.
- Compilation on the basis of both reports of: Provision of MOI by developed countries and the o Reception of MOI of developing countries.

Part II

Assessment of aggregate efforts

- Collective assessment of progress Parties have achieved towards enhancing adaptive capacity, reducing vulnerability and strengthening resilience.
- Assessment of progress Parties have achieved in enhancing adaptation action.
- Collective assessment of the provision of adaptation finance with respect to required adaptation needs according to temperature goal given the effect of aggregate mitigation contributions.
- The AC, together with the LEG, should invite submissions from Parties and admitted observer organisations on methodologies they

	<p>are using and their experience with using these methodologies, including challenges and opportunities with respect to the adaptation needs and goals, and collate that information, e.g. in a comprehensive report. In doing so, Parties should agree on the purpose of the methodologies in the context of Paris Agreement obligations and processes so as to provide guidance on how the methodologies might need to be adjusted accordingly; Then, the AC and the LEG, ideally with the support of the IPCC, should identify opportunities to adjust the different methodologies, thereby ensuring that they address all identified types of needs and different national circumstances and capacities. Further, the AC and LEG could open a window for responding for Parties specific requests for assistance on methodologies that are sector specific or region specific that could then be adjusted at the national level – this will be of great value and needed for the Global Stocktake and for assessing the Global Adaptation Goal.</p>
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