

Typologies of Loss and Damage

Insights from an analysis of 40 key stakeholder interviews
from science, policy and practice

Agenda

- 09.10 Welcome and Introduction
Prof. Richard Jones, Science Fellow, Met Office Hadley Centre
- 09.15 Research Findings
Prof. Emily Boyd, Professor of Resilience Geography, University of Reading
- 09.35 Discussion
facilitated by Dr Rachel James, Research Fellow, Oxford University
- 10.05 Summary and reflection

Aims and Objectives

Following an in depth social science research study of perceptions of L&D among key stakeholders (see attached annex), we have identified four typologies of L&D, with commonalities but subtly different implications for approaches to address L&D. This event is an opportunity to share our findings with the members of the ExCom and observers. We would like to obtain feedback from this expert community on our results, and to discuss whether and how the typologies may be useful for future progress under the WIM. We will circulate a draft policy brief with our findings, and the discussion will be used to revise this text during the week of ExCom3.

Discussion topics

Discussion points include the individual typologies, issues associated with having multiple typologies, and whether and how a policy brief and additional dialogue could contribute to the current workplan and next 5 year workplan of the WIM. The group discussion will focus primarily on the following two areas:

1. Do you think the typologies are an accurate reflection of the L&D discourse? Do they resonate with viewpoints you have encountered?
2. Are they useful conceptualisations for addressing L&D and why, or why not? Which actions might be appropriate to address L&D under each typology?



Annex: Science-Policy Session Proposal

Typologies of Loss and Damage and Associated Actions

Prof. Emily Boyd, Dr. Rachel James, Prof. Richard Jones

Background

In recent years Loss and Damage (L&D) has emerged as a key issue in the UNFCCC negotiations. Following the recent Paris Agreement L&D now firmly on the international climate change agenda, with implications for national, regional and local level stakeholders affected by the impacts of global climate change. In particular, the Paris Agreement has confirmed the continuation of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts after its review in 2016. This suggests significant implications for future climate policy and practice.

Despite substantial progress in L&D policy, there is some confusion about what L&D means and how L&D mechanisms might be distinct from adaptation. Literature on L&D contains contrasting definitions, as well as other references which highlight the ambiguity surrounding L&D. Addressing L&D will require collaboration between policy-makers, practitioners, and researchers. Whilst an official definition of L&D may not be necessary politically, conflicting perceptions could be harmful for progress on the ground. For example, it is difficult to have practical conversations about actions to address L&D and science to support these actions, if different stakeholders have contrasting perceptions and definitions in mind. Parties need not adopt a formal definition of L&D, but progress may be enhanced if they are more aware of the different ideas and views which are being held.

As part of a climate and social science collaboration between Oxford University, University of Reading and the Met Office Hadley Centre, we have been investigating perceptions, definitions and “typologies” of L&D through interviews with 40 key stakeholders from science, policy and practice. This work, part of a UK Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) project, is assessing how L&D is defined by stakeholders, key actions associated with their definitions and points of agreement and distinction. We do not seek to promote a particular typology or adoption of an official definition, but to understand how climate science, including climate attribution, may contribute to the political and practical activities on L&D. Given their potential relevance to the WIM and the work of its Executive Committee (ExCom), we propose a session to discuss and develop our findings.

Aims and objectives

The aims of the session are:

- To present and review the different typologies of loss and damage which have been identified in stakeholder interviews and in the literature;
- To discuss how these typologies might relate to actions to address L&D and science to support L&D mechanisms;
- To identify if and how this work can best support the work of the Executive Committee.

Many of our interviewees have expressed willingness to attend this workshop and we would be keen to involve members of the ExCom if they feel it would be relevant to their work. We will facilitate an hour-long session alongside the forthcoming meeting of the ExCom. Our intention would be to complete the work in time for COP22 and host a side event there to present outcomes of the ongoing discussions and continue to feed into the policy dialogue.

Outcomes

The outcome of the session will be presented in a policy-brief synthesising the current conceptual understandings of L&D and how these are relevant to the WIM and the Paris Agreement. The typologies will be shared, after revision and verification from stakeholders attending the event. The brief will include expert insights from attendees about which perspectives might be more practical and any pitfalls or inconsistencies in definitions. If possible, the brief might also comment on steps forward, including how the research might contribute to activities including the 9 action areas of the workplan of the ExCom, the work of the task-force on migration and displacement, the Forum of the Standing Committee on Finance on financial instruments that address the risks of loss and damage, and the development of the 5-year rolling workplan.