

Loss and Damage: Submission by Gambia on behalf of the Least developed Countries Group

1. Introduction

The Cancun Agreements Dec 1/CP.16) established a work programme aiming to consider approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change to enhance adaptive capacity and the Conference of the Parties requested the SBI to agree on activities to be undertaken under this work programme.

The decision 1/CP.16 on Cancun Agreements also suggests that the SBI makes recommendations on loss and damage to the Conference of the Parties for its consideration at COP18, as well as to strengthen international cooperation and expertise to understand and address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather events and slow onset events. The draft conclusions of SBI 34 took note of the importance of addressing the following thematic areas in the implementation of the work programme:

- (a) Assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change and the current knowledge on the same;
- (b) A range of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather events and slow onset events, taking into consideration experience at all levels;
- (c) The role of the Convention in enhancing the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

LDCs welcome the invitation for Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat further views and information on the above mentioned thematic areas and have laid out their view in the sections below.

2. LDCs and loss & Damage: Background for the submission

LDCs believe that it is of utmost importance to address the question of loss and damage associated with climate change impacts including those impacts that cannot be avoided through mitigation and that also go beyond and exceed the adaptive capacities of the LDCs. Severe threats of climate change expose LDCs to profound climate change impacts such as increase in frequency, intensity and heightened occurrence of extreme weather events and slow-onset impacts such as rising sea-level, coastal erosions, droughts, desertification, floods, cyclones, tornados, storm surges, biodiversity loss, landslides, loss in arable land and, glacier melt.. Many of the impacts of climate change such as land degradation and loss of biodiversity over the next few decades are unavoidable and irreversible. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that have already been released into the atmosphere will continue to affect the LDCs regardless of changes that we make today.

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These irreversible losses lead to conclusions that a high level of harm to human populations in LDCs is inevitable.

Industrialized countries are responsible for a major share of historic and current GHG emissions. However, existing commitments to mitigation feature a significant gap in emission reduction to be consistent with a 2° C let alone 1.5° C pathway. In fact, the existing targets rather lead the world towards a 2.5 to 5° C degrees world¹. Therefore, the LDCs believe that it is fundamental for Parties to address the consequences of loss and damage, in parallel with stepping up their mitigation ambition.

3. Views of LDCs on the thematic areas

a. General points

- The SBI Work Programme focuses on issues related to the implementation of measures to address loss and damage. LDCs believe that more information and capacity to address the technical issues around the concept of loss and damage is needed.
- The SBI work programme should create a common understanding of key terms, challenges and different ways to assess and address different kinds of loss and damage in the context of climate change.
- Parties should gather good examples, lessons learnt and pathways about working solutions on community, local, government, sub-national, national and regional approaches to address loss and damage.
- Proper data access, better cooperation between countries and sufficient resources for ex-ante risk management will be essential.
- Activities focusing on education and raising capacity of UNFCCC negotiators to discuss and evaluate different risk management options under the SBI Work Program on Loss and Damage must be introduced.
- More effective negotiations and decisions about implementation of appropriate measures for loss and damage are needed.
- The efforts should be ongoing and participatory.

¹ UNEP (2010): The Emission Gap Report

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b. Assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change and the current knowledge on the same

LDCs request that the work programme support LDCs to learn from their current experience on climate change with assessments of characteristics of exposure to loss and damage. Also, LDCs request that:

- Assessments on exposure of all areas including man-made, natural and social must be carried out;
- SBI Work Program on Loss and Damage should support LDCs to assess the risk of loss and damage where data are missing or less available;
- SBI work programme should support LDCs to understand what tools are needed for assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with climate change;
- SBI work programme should enable the preparation and analysis of databases to support parties in their efforts in assessing risk of loss and damage associated with climate change;
- SBI work programme should explore synergies between assessment of loss and damage and other areas under adaptation.

c. A range of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather events and slow onset events, taking into consideration experience at all levels

It is essential that parties explore different approaches to address loss and damage associated with adverse effects of climate change. LDCs view that approaches to be adopted to address loss and damage could range from risk reduction strategies (as per Hyogo Framework of Action 2005-15), social security and protection measures , risk transfer options, as well as options for rehabilitation measures to recover from severe disasters due to climate change. Also, in relation to the approaches to address loss and damage, the LDCs suggest following:

- SBI work programme on loss and damage should assist LDCs in exploring and understanding different instruments that could be used for foreseeable risks and rehabilitation at all levels (micro and meso, macro, and long-term) related to climate change;SBI work programme should assist LDCs understand and analyse different tools that are applicable in different circumstances, indicators for cost effectiveness, experiences and lessons learned;
- The work programme should compile tools and approaches to understand, reduce and

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address the specific types of loss and damage, helping the Parties articulate lessons learned good practice, challenges and analysis of relevance of various instruments and frameworks in the context of adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

d. The role of the Convention in enhancing the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

The Convention should address loss and damage as a leading priority. In addition, the role of the Convention in enhancing the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage, *inter alia*, would be the following:

- Lay out relevant principles and concepts such as equity and fairness, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities of countries, country needs and country drivenness, the reaching of poor and vulnerable people and communities etc;
- Establishing operational entity;
- Addressing governance considerations;
- Establishing institutional arrangements;
- Establishing financial arrangements;
- Introducing provisions to deal with implications of failing commitments on loss and damage;
- Addressing capacity issues of LDCs in relation to loss and damage associated with adverse effects of climate change in their countries;
- Conveying expert meeting and gathering relevant technical and policy documentation to enable Parties better understand various options and all the other issues related to loss and damage due to climate change impacts;
- Facilitating the stakeholder engagement in relation to the issue of loss and damage (including private sector, insurance companies, guarantee agencies, decentralized financial systems, scientific communities), and seek their contribution and engagement for a successful mechanism to address loss and damage in LDCs.