

## SUBMISSION BY LITHUANIA AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES

**This submission is supported by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Iceland, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia**

Vilnius, 16 September 2013

**Subject:       Adaptation in the 2015 Agreement**

### Introduction

1. In accordance with what was agreed by all Parties in Durban, the EU is committed to adopting an internationally legally binding agreement, applicable to all, by 2015 at the latest (the **2015 Agreement**).
2. This submission aims to build on the positive discussions held in May and June this year in Bonn where Parties discussed their ideas and shared their expectations for the 2015 Agreement, and also contains views to inform the elaboration of the technical paper on adaptation referred to in paragraph 8b of the ADP Co-chairs conclusions<sup>1</sup>.
3. In Bonn, we noted the need for the 2015 Agreement to be informed by science, based on equity, flexible and sensitive to national circumstances and environmentally effective; in addition it needs to enable broad and deep participation. It should be durable and dynamic, capable of evolving and facilitating strengthened action over time to enable us to limit global temperature increases to below 2°C relative to pre-industrial levels (the **below 2°C objective**) and to enable countries to adapt to the changing climate. Adapting to climate change will continue to be one of the most pressing challenges facing us all, and especially so for particularly vulnerable countries.
4. In our view, the 2015 Agreement must strengthen the continued efforts by Parties to adapt to climate change, consistent with the Convention, and to enable countries to achieve climate resilient sustainable development. The 2015 Agreement could do so by building on, and adding value to, the work ongoing in the subsidiary bodies and within existing institutional arrangements.
5. Our challenge for Warsaw is to start identifying the essential elements for adaptation in the 2015 Agreement to further advance, and add value to, the implementation of adaptation actions.

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<sup>1</sup> FCCC/ADP/2013/L.2

## Context of adaptation action

6. **Drivers of climate change impacts:** Development in all countries is a function of a multitude of factors. Economics, demographics, politics and technology are all drivers of development. Similarly, climate change risk and the extent of climate change impacts is a result of a complex interaction of factors that are determined by the vulnerability and exposure of a society, economy or ecosystem. The IPCC lists these factors as including economic, social, geographic, demographic, cultural, institutional, governance, and environmental factors and these vary significantly over temporal and spatial scales. Climate change impacts, whether at the global, regional, national or local level, interact with this vast range of factors, exacerbating the risks facing each country, region or local community now and in the future. While perturbations in the global climate system and temperature increases constitute an important factor, the ability to address the ensuing impacts will depend on the capacities of countries at different levels to respond. These capacities include elements such as governance, and institutional, technical, human and financial capacity, all of which make a significant contribution to the shape and intensity of vulnerability to which communities and nations are exposed as their climate changes.
7. **Costs, benefits, and opportunities for adaptation:** The complexity of climate change and its impacts on the ground underlines the need for all countries and communities to make development decisions that factor in the wide array of risks, including those associated with climate change. It is essential that the costs, benefits and opportunities of adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change are assessed from a systems perspective that recognises the complexity of interactions between stressors and that responses are integrated into the relevant decision making processes. Fragmentation and lack of coherence can render actions ineffective. Decisions on policies and programmes to enable adaptation should therefore be consistent with climate resilient sustainable development.
8. The global costs and benefits of adaptation have been researched and described in various reports, including in the IPCC's regular Assessment Reports, UNFCCC technical reports, publications by the World Bank and by UN agencies as well as independent reports such as the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change. Whilst overall cost estimates for adaptation contained in reports vary widely depending on the geographical and sectoral scope of the report, the raft of assumptions made and the quality of data available, the literature is consistent in identifying that best value adaptation is achieved through early, coherent, integrated planning and action at all levels. At a national level, the benefits and opportunities created by effectively integrating adaptation into national planning processes help to secure hard won development gains and provide a platform for sustainable growth in the future.

## The 2015 Agreement and wider package

9. Countries are already undertaking adaptation action pursuant to the provisions of the Convention. The 2015 Agreement will and should play a role in enhancing these actions in a dynamic and iterative manner. In line with the Convention, the 2015 Agreement should reemphasise the commitment of all countries to work towards low carbon and climate resilient development. All efforts to enhance and implement adaptation action, as mentioned in the various subsections below, follow from this overarching commitment. It will be important to consider in Warsaw how the 2015 package can strengthen the implementation of this commitment, and catalyse, stimulate and facilitate the efforts of all countries to fulfil their adaptation commitments in line with the Convention by:

- Building on and furthering the ongoing work under the Convention;
- Promoting measures to address climate impacts to secure a climate resilient and sustainable development;
- Recognising the relationship between adaptation and mitigation;
- Facilitating planning and implementation of national adaptation measures;
- Facilitating the mobilisation of means of implementation to support adaptation actions in developing countries;
- Promoting Coherence and Cooperation;
- Strengthening and promoting synergies with actors outside of the Convention; and
- Enhancing the monitoring and review of adaptation action to support informed decision making and guidance by the COP.

10. ***Building on and furthering the ongoing work under the Convention:*** The Convention has provisions to facilitate adaptation action in all countries. These can be found in Article 4, which calls on all Parties to undertake action to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change. It further includes provisions calling on Parties to promote cooperation in research and systematic observation and in the exchange of relevant information related to climate systems as well as to integrate climate consideration into social, economic scientific, technological, technical, socio-economic and environmental policies and actions.

11. To date, progress has been made to facilitate the efforts of Parties through the establishment of different bodies that serve to enhance efforts on different aspects relevant to adaptation to climate change. These institutions and processes include those parts of the Cancun Adaptation Framework – the Adaptation Committee, the National Adaptation Planning process and the work programme to consider approaches to address loss and damage – as well as the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), Nairobi Work Programme, the Durban Forum on capacity building, the LDC Expert Group (LEG) as well as various other channels for supporting adaptation implementation, such as the Technology Mechanism, the Least Developed Country Fund, the Special Climate Change Fund, the Adaptation Fund and the Green Climate Fund. These institutions and processes aim to catalyse and enable adaptation action, by focusing on, inter alia, the following types of work: adaptation planning, science and sharing knowledge, engaging stakeholders, communication, improving coherence, capacity building and financial support. The 2015 package should therefore build on, and add value to, this work.
12. ***Promoting measures to address climate impacts to secure a climate resilient and sustainable development:*** Adapting to climate change does not take place in isolation, but is aimed at addressing one part of a complex interaction of numerous stressors (climate and non-climate related) which challenge each country's development path. As such, the 2015 Agreement and wider package should be seen in the broader context of promoting climate resilient sustainable development in all countries. It should therefore build on and enhance the efforts undertaken to date to enable countries to reduce their vulnerability and to increase their readiness and preparedness, thereby building resilience and adaptive capacities consistent with national circumstances and priorities.
13. ***Recognising the relationship between adaptation and mitigation:*** The objective of the Convention is to stabilise the global greenhouse emissions to a level that avoids dangerous interference with the global climate system and to allow ecosystems to adapt in a timely manner. This means that all efforts we make to anticipate, prevent or minimise the causes of climate change have a bearing on our efforts to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. It is thus essential that the 2015 Agreement provides for early and ambitious global action to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions and ensures that provisions to facilitate adaptation are underpinned by science and informed by experience. We must also recognise that while adaptation action is not a substitute for mitigation action, these actions are complementary, and quite often, can be undertaken in an integrated manner. A well-designed single action or strategy can address the two objectives of mitigation and adaptation, while contributing to goals of climate resilient sustainable development. We should consider how the 2015 Agreement could promote an integrated approach to climate action that is well embedded in low carbon, climate resilient sustainable development processes.

14. ***Facilitating planning and implementation of national adaptation measures:*** The 2015 Agreement must further take into account that all countries need to continue to prepare, plan and implement adaptation actions that respond to their local and national context. The effectiveness of such actions is dependent on countries undertaking efforts to assess climate risks and integrate appropriate responses into long term national planning, thereby reflecting the specific development context, risk appetite and choices of each country. The Convention already recognises this broad context, highlighting both the need to take into account each country's specific national and regional development objectives, priorities and circumstances and the commitment of all countries to undertake measures to facilitate adequate adaptation.
15. ***Mobilising means of implementation to support adaptation actions in developing countries:*** The EU is committed to continuing supporting developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable countries, in their efforts to adapt to climate change including through its contribution to ambitious global mitigation efforts to reduce the risks to the global climate. In addition the provision of the means of implementation to support adaptation actions post 2020, including finance, technology, and capacity building to enhance knowledge, expertise and good governance will be among the key issues to be addressed in the 2015 package. In addition it will be important to encourage both public and private sectors globally to undertake the necessary actions and investments to stay on track for the below 2°C objective and enable adaptation to happen. Barriers for private sector investment in adaptation need to be reduced. Therefore, it will be useful to consider how the 2015 Agreement and the wider 2015 package might focus provisions on the means of implementation to facilitate the transformation to low carbon, climate resilient sustainable development.
16. ***Promoting Coherence and Cooperation:*** Some adaptation measures, such as flood risk management can have transboundary impacts, and as such the importance of cooperation between countries, communities and regions in the efforts to achieve effective adaptation should be taken into account. Promoting coherent approaches to adaptation, through effective coordination and cooperation, is key, as fragmentation can render adaptation efforts ineffective. The approach also needs to be country driven and country owned, gender sensitive, participatory and fully transparent, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems. It will be useful to consider how the 2015 Agreement and the wider package can reinforce these principles in order to inform implementation of adaptation efforts.

17. ***Strengthen and promote synergies with actors outside of the Convention:*** As noted above adaptation actions will not be planned and implemented in isolation from the broader global, national and local development contexts. It will be important that the 2015 package promotes the utilisation of synergies with adaptation relevant actors beyond the UNFCCC. Relevant actors exist at all levels, such as in local authorities, hydro-meteorological organisations, disaster risk reduction and the humanitarian communities as well as the private sector. In many cases these actors may be the most appropriate to lead action on adaptation and as such need to be engaged to achieve the most efficient and effective adaptation in all countries. Discussions in Warsaw should focus on how the 2015 Agreement could further catalyse the engagement of a broad array of actors and stakeholders within the UNFCCC as well as in other relevant processes, such as the Global Framework for Climate Services and others.
18. ***Enhance the monitoring and review of adaptation action to support informed decision making and guidance by the COP:*** The 2015 package should aim to further enable informed decision making on adaptation. Improved reporting on adaptation effectiveness and lessons learnt on building resilience through National Communications, sharing good quality data and building further knowledge on impacts, vulnerability, and best-practises of adaptation is needed. This could inform international analysis and enable a better overview of global adaptation efforts, drawing both on the information provided by Parties in their National Communications, as well as from relevant organisations and processes. These are areas that could be improved, in particular to inform the consideration of measures to further strengthen the implementation of the objectives of the Convention. In this regard, the 2015 Agreement and the wider package should include ways to enhance the monitoring and evaluation of actions by Parties. Similarly, we should consider how to continue to facilitate countries' communication and showcasing of their experiences, lessons learned, challenges and needs including in terms of observed impacts of climate change over time. This will be vital as we seek to assess our progress towards the objective of the Convention, and as countries continue through national processes to seek the most effective adaption actions for their unique circumstances.