

Submission for the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA)

Argentina, Chile and Uruguay

Views on ENHANCED ACTION ON ADAPTATION

Recalling Article 4, par. 8 of the Convention, decision 5/CP.7 and decision 1/CP.10; also recognizing that developing countries, which are generally located in highly climate vulnerable areas, require more adequate information, appropriate diagnostic and policy tools, as well as financing for adaptation, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay would like to submit their views on the need for funding for adaptation.

The economic evaluation of the impacts of climate change is a key dimension to any national plan. For coastal tourism, the most impacted countries will be those that are threatened by windstorms and projected sea-level rise: such as Argentina, Chile and Uruguay. Thus, climate change is very likely to be a major challenge for all coastal nations. (IPCC AR4).

Increases in non-eustatic factors (i.e., an increase in 'sudestadas' - a strong south-eastern wind along the Rio de la Plata coast) and freshwater flow, the latter often associated with El Niño, would accelerate sea level rise (SLR) in the Río de la Plata, having diverse environmental and societal impacts on both the Argentine and Uruguay coasts over the next few decades, i.e., coastal erosion and inundation. Low-lying areas (estuarine wetlands and sandy beaches very rich in biodiversity) will be highly vulnerable to SLR and storm surges (southern winds). Loss of land would have a major impact on the tourism industry, which accounts for 3.8% of Uruguay's GDP. (IPCC AR4)

Regarding precipitation patterns, the AR4 confirms that a declining trend in precipitation was observed in southern Chile and south-west Argentina, among others.

On the other hand, sea-level rise is very likely to affect the location of fish stocks in the south-east Pacific (e.g., in Peru and Chile).

Being agriculture a very important economic activity representing about 10% of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Latin America, studies in Argentina, Chile, Uruguay and some other Latin American countries based on General Circulation Models (GCMs) and crop models project decreased yields for numerous crops (e.g., maize, wheat, barley, and grapes) even when the direct effects of CO₂-fertilisation and implementation of moderate adaptation measures at the farm level are considered. Moreover, heat waves in central Argentina have led to reductions in milk production in Argentine Holstein dairy cattle, and the animals were not able to completely recover after these events.

Furthermore, the combined effects of climate change and land-use change on food production and food security are related to a larger degradation of lands and a change in erosion patterns. According to the World Bank, some developing countries are losing 4-8% of their GDP due to productive and capital losses related to environmental degradation. In drier areas of Latin America, such as central and northern Chile and western and north-west Argentina climate change is likely to lead to salinisation and desertification of agricultural

lands. According to the IPCC, by 2050, desertification and salinisation will affect 50% of agricultural lands in Latin America and the Caribbean zone.

Glaciers in Latin America have receded dramatically in the past decades, and many of them have disappeared completely. According to AR4, one of the most affected sub-regions is southern Chile. Moreover, this report adds that recent studies indicate that most of the South American glaciers from Colombia to Chile and Argentina, (up to 25°S) are drastically reducing their volume at an accelerated rate. Considering that one of the largest freshwater reserves of the world is located in this Region, if this trend continues, will severely threaten this vital water source.

Stress on water availability and quality has been documented where lower precipitation and/or higher temperatures occur. For example, droughts related to La Niña create severe restrictions for water supply and irrigation demands in central western Argentina and central Chile between 25°S and 40°S. Being hydropower the main electrical energy source for most countries in Latin America, it is vulnerable to large-scale and persistent rainfall anomalies due to El Niño and La Niña, that affects Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, among other LA Countries (AR4).

In Chile, recent studies confirm the potential damage to water supply and sanitation services in coastal cities, as well as groundwater contamination by saline intrusion.

In terms of health impacts, AR4 indicates that outbreaks of hantavirus pulmonary syndrome have been reported for Chile, Argentina and other Latin American countries, after prolonged droughts.

As stated before, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay are particularly vulnerable to climate change, so funding is needed from all available sources and Funds for adaptation in our countries.

National planning for adaptation is necessary to be developed in our countries. There is need to facilitate funding to develop country driven national adaptation strategies or action plans or to improve these strategies or plans when they exist. A way to achieve this could be by developing a NAPA-like process to meet the urgent and immediate needs of developing countries not covered by the LDC Work Programme.

In addition to that, there is need to facilitate funding for already identified adaptation projects, programmes or actions, such as those arising from national sustainable development strategies, poverty reduction strategies, national communications and national adaptation programmes of action and other relevant instruments.

One of the sources of this financial support is the Adaptation Fund. As per decision of the CMP 4, eligible Parties to receive funding from the Adaptation Fund are understood as developing country Parties to the Kyoto Protocol that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change including low-lying and other small island countries, countries with low-lying coastal, arid and semi-arid areas or areas liable to floods, drought and desertification, and developing countries with fragile mountainous ecosystems.

As stated before, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay are particularly vulnerable to climate change, and are expecting the Fund to be fully operational in order to submit projects for funding.