

Pre-sessional workshop on APA agenda item 4 held on 6 May 2017 in Bonn, Germany

Informal note by the Co-Chairs

I. Introduction

1. At the second part of its first session, the APA requested the secretariat to organize, under our guidance, a workshop on agenda item 4 to be held on 6 May 2017 in conjunction with the third part of the resumed first session of the APA.¹ The workshop took place in Bonn, Germany. In the conclusions adopted by APA 1.3 at its closing plenary, the APA requested us to release an informal note reflecting the views expressed at the workshop.
2. The objective of the workshop was to pave way for work during the two weeks that followed it, including by moving closer to common ground on the role of the adaptation communication vis-à-vis other components of the Paris Agreement and other communications or documents, and by identifying and prioritizing questions to be addressed during APA 1.3.
3. The workshop was opened by us, and co-facilitated by Ms. Beth Lavender and Mr. Nicolas Zambrano. It was organized in three substantive segments:
 - (a) In the morning, a plenary discussion on the five themes identified in Marrakech (purpose, elements, linkages, vehicles and flexibilities);
 - (b) In the afternoon, work in small groups on the themes that received most attention during the morning's plenary discussion, these being purpose and elements;
 - (c) Reports back from the small group discussions, followed by additional interventions by participants.
4. This informal note summarizes the discussions and work undertaken by participants. It is structured in two main sections:
 - (a) A summary of the substantive plenary discussions, structured along the five themes identified by Parties in Marrakech;
 - (b) A summary of the work on purpose and elements undertaken by the eight small groups during the afternoon, in the form of a table compiling the purposes and elements each group identified.
5. The various views introduced by the participants in the discussion on each theme have been compiled in this informal note in summary form. Views have not been attributed, and their presentation, sequencing, or formulation does not indicate any priority, preference or levels of convergence or divergence. We have sought to ensure that all views are reflected and, to the extent possible, are introduced in their proper context, while maintaining a coherent structure and logical flow of the note. This note is limited to the views expressed at the workshop, and does not necessarily reflect the full range of views of Parties.
6. We would like to express our gratitude to Ms. Lavender and Mr. Zambrano for their skilful facilitation, to Mr. Richard Muyungi for his contributions to the preparation of the workshop, to the icebreakers for their initial interventions, as well as to all the participants for their active contributions, which combined to make this workshop a success.

¹ FCCC/APA/2016/4, paragraph 22.

II. Summary of substantive discussions in plenary

General points

7. Participants made the following **general points**:
 - (a) The adaptation communication should result from country-driven processes;
 - (b) There is a range of views on how detailed the guidance needs to be;
 - (c) Participants identified different aspects on guidelines and methodologies that could be required to ensure that all understand the information submitted in the adaptation communications;
 - (d) The fact that a majority of Parties included an adaptation component in their INDCs reflects the will to ensure political parity with mitigation.

Purpose

8. Participants discussed possible purposes of an adaptation communication, building on the outcomes of the discussions in Marrakech. The importance of clarifying why Parties should communicate was highlighted, and it was noted that clarifying the purpose would give direction to other themes. Purpose was also discussed in the small groups, whose work is summarized in section IV of this note.

9. In terms of the issue of purpose, participants made the following **general suggestions**:
 - (a) To define a purpose, it is important to consider what adaptation goals need to be achieved, and how the adaptation communication contributes to those goals;
 - (b) Work under this agenda item should be aimed at identifying a common purpose, or at combining different proposals for purposes into a single purpose statement;
 - (c) The list of purposes identified in Marrakech could be streamlined, for example, by drawing on common ground in the submissions, and by identifying a main purpose;
 - (d) Defining a purpose requires understanding the co-benefits of adaptation, as well as understanding adaptation as a broad process covering all sectors, including ecosystems and food security.

10. In their interventions, participants introduced **specific purposes** for an adaptation communication. The following suggestions were made:

- (a) To inform the global stocktake, including by communicating progress towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and by taking stock of actions and reflecting on national efforts;
- (b) To enable assessment of progress towards the global goal on adaptation;
- (c) To reflect the role of adaptation in achieving the goals stipulated in Article 2 of the Paris Agreement, which cannot be achieved by mitigation only;
- (d) To ensure parity between adaptation and mitigation;
- (e) To communicate with/inform the international community clearly and concisely, and to improve the international understanding of adaptation priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions, efforts, and/or adaptation goals at a high level;
- (f) To help countries face adverse impacts of climate change by enhancing action and implementation at various levels, e.g. in relation to the global temperature goal, by increasing domestic capacity, and by informing collective efforts;
- (g) To recognize adaptation efforts of developing country Parties;
- (h) To enhance the profile and visibility of adaptation;
- (i) To catalyse and facilitate support, including as public and grant-based financial resources stipulated in Article 9, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement, for example by presenting priorities

and needs so that arrangements related to adaptation finance have sufficient information on the needs of each country;

- (j) To enhance learning, by sharing knowledge and lessons learned.

Elements

11. Participants discussed the possible elements of an adaptation communication in the plenary setting. Elements were also discussed in the small groups, whose work is summarized in section IV of this note.

12. In terms of the **overall approach to identifying the elements**, the following suggestions were made:

- (a) The submissions, the informal note from Marrakech, as well as the information note by the secretariat² outline many elements, which could be streamlined (for example, it was suggested to streamline the 12 elements contained in the information note by the secretariat into 6 as follows: (1) national circumstances; (2) impacts; (3) priorities, plans, programmes, and actions; (4) needs and support; (5) indicative levels of support; and (6) adaptation efforts for recognition);
- (b) The choice of elements should depend on the purpose;
- (c) Too many elements would make reports burdensome and create a disincentive for submitting adaptation communications;
- (d) The content of Article 7, paragraph 9, of the Paris Agreement, which instructs Parties to engage in planning and implementation, is also important for reporting, and Article 7, paragraph 10, which says “should, as appropriate”, would be a good starting point;
- (e) The intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) provide a useful precedent because they identify efforts undertaken as well as measures to address future needs.

13. In terms of **what the elements should look like in general**, the following suggestions were made by the participants:

- (a) The elements should be flexible but also robust enough to enable the operationalization of the global goal on adaptation, and to serve as an input to the global stocktake;
- (b) Guidance should outline a basic list of elements applicable to all vehicles;
- (c) Guidance should identify common elements (e.g. priority actions, support needs, and strategies) and additional elements (e.g. monitoring and evaluation, and linkages);
- (d) The elements should include forward- and backward-looking aspects. In this context, it was highlighted that it is difficult to establish strict time-barriers to divide adaptation actions into past and future efforts;
- (e) A list of elements should be non-exhaustive, and reflect: (1) collective progress; (2) national dimensions stipulated in Article 7, paragraphs 9 and 10, of the Paris Agreement; and (3) cooperative dimensions stipulated in Article 7, paragraph 7, of the Paris Agreement;
- (f) The elements could include information that is measurable over time, bearing in mind the specific challenges of adaptation;
- (g) Elements should be those contained in the guidelines for the different vehicles outlined in Article 7, paragraph 11, of the Paris Agreement.

14. Participants identified the following **specific elements** in the discussion:

- (a) Assessments of impacts, vulnerabilities, and risks, including the use of scenarios, projections, and models (such information is also reflected in Article 7, paragraph 9(c), of the Paris Agreement). The importance of distinguishing between vulnerability and adaptation was also highlighted;

² FCCC/APA/2017/INF.1.

- (b) Adaptation priorities, sectors, decision-making processes, and efforts;
- (c) Information on strengthening institutional arrangements to support the synthesis of information and knowledge;
- (d) Action taken to plan for adaptation (e.g. planning processes, implemented and planned actions, building resilience, progress and outcomes), based on Article 7, paragraph 9, of the Paris Agreement;
- (e) Information on cooperation, based on Article 7, paragraph 7, of the Paris Agreement;
- (f) Gaps and constraints;
- (g) Costs of adaptation;
- (h) Implementation and support needs;
- (i) Assistance to developing countries, provision of technical support, and support provided;
- (j) Information related to adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support;
- (k) Scientific knowledge, and research and systematic observation to inform climate services, and support provided;
- (l) Monitoring and evaluation;
- (m) Good practices, experience and lessons learned.

Linkages

15. Participants emphasized the need to advance work on linkages, particularly because that work is important for understanding how adaptation will feature in the context of the global stocktake and the transparency framework, how adaptation can be reflected at the international level, and what is reported through which process.

16. Regarding **linkages with the global stocktake**, the following suggestions were made:

- (a) The information provided in adaptation communications should enable the exercise of the global stocktake, including by reflecting on progress made, support provided, the relationship with mitigation (as articulated in Article 7, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement), and other aspects;
- (b) The information generated for an adaptation communication will help Parties understand adaptation for the global stocktake, though some aspects of an adaptation communication may be considered only domestically;
- (c) Adaptation communications cannot be the only source of information for the global stocktake due to their non-mandatory nature;
- (d) Article 2 and Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Paris Agreement provide guidance on the linkages with the global stocktake by outlining the collective intent to reduce vulnerability and enhance resilience;
- (e) It will be important to ensure the coherence of the timelines of the adaptation communication, the global stocktake and the transparency framework, while maintaining flexibility.

17. In terms of **linkages with the transparency framework**, the following suggestions were made:

- (a) The discussion on linkages is important to clarify the implications of the adaptation communication for the transparency framework;
- (b) The transparency provisions should not determine the type of information that Parties include in their adaptation communications;
- (c) Participants suggested that a division between “backward-looking” reporting on impacts and adaptation under Article 13, paragraph 8, of the Paris Agreement and the “forward-looking”

adaptation communication would be artificial. They also noted it might create an unnecessary need for two separate reports, and be incompatible with the information needs of the global stocktake.

18. Considering the linkages with the public registry stipulated by Article 7, paragraph 12, of the Paris Agreement, participants suggested that, though linked, the mitigation and adaptation registries should be separate, while others would prefer to have a single registry. It was also suggested that the registry should capture the common information in the adaptation communications.

19. On linkages with other communications and/or documents under the Convention, it was highlighted that all Parties have experience in providing information on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation through national communications (NCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs), and national adaptation programmes of action, and that it would be important to build on that experience. It was suggested that the technical guidance for NAPs developed by the least developed countries expert group (LEG) would be useful for applying methodologies.

20. With reference to linkages with other arrangements under the Convention, it was emphasized that much work has been done on adaptation, for example under the Nairobi Work Programme and the Adaptation Committee (AC). In this respect, it would be useful to review the work of the AC, the LEG, and the Standing Committee on Finance periodically to benefit from progress in the work of the APA, in particular on elements.

21. In terms of methodologies, it was suggested to identify gaps and then fill them, and to look at the materials prepared by the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from non-Annex I Parties on methodologies and guidance that could help quantify vulnerability, adaptation, plans and actions.

22. In terms of other linkages, suggestions were also made to draw on the experience of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and the Sustainable Development Goals.

Vehicles

23. In terms of the **different/overall approach to vehicles** for the adaptation communications, participants highlighted the following points:

- (a) Article 7, paragraph 11, of the Paris Agreement provides a clear set of options for vehicles (e.g. NAP, NDC, NC, or a stand-alone document). Each country can decide which vehicle they use and may also change vehicle later;
- (b) A practical option is to first define the purpose and elements of an adaptation communication and then consider what the guidance under development should say about vehicles and linkages;
- (c) An adaptation communication could be a chapter in the communication/document a Party decides to use;
- (d) The information note by the secretariat highlights that there are existing vehicles but there are also gaps that make it difficult to provide the information that is needed;
- (e) The guidance under development should be applicable to all vehicles. In this context, it was discussed what the implications of such an approach would be. For example, whether such an approach implies that the guidelines for NCs and NAPs should be amended to adapt to the guidance under development for an adaptation communication, or whether the guidance under development for an adaptation communication would not refer to specific vehicles at all;
- (f) Revising existing reporting guidelines would not be necessary;
- (g) The guidance needs to respond to communication of priorities, needs, plans and actions;
- (h) Existing guidelines provide a good basis. Any guidance should provide for some consistency across all vehicles, especially because of their role vis-à-vis the global stocktake;
- (i) Work should first focus on developing guidance for the vehicles for which no guidance exists yet and identify what would be most useful and applicable;
- (j) The guidelines for the specific vehicles were prepared with different purposes in mind and it is too early to determine how one set of guidelines might apply to other vehicles: for example,

whether the guidelines for NAPs and NCs would be applied to nationally determined contributions (NDCs). It is important to maintain coherence of existing arrangements;

(k) It is important to differentiate between reporting and communication, and to understand which vehicles already have a multilateral dimension and which do not;

(l) After there is clarity on purpose, the question of guidance for all vehicles would need to be considered. This might mean, for example, possible adjustments to the guidelines for NAPs and NCs to conform with the guidance for adaptation communications, and the development of guidance for adaptation in NDCs. The guidance should be kept general.

24. In terms of the **status of existing vehicles**, participants made the following observations:

(a) There are fairly robust guidelines for NCs and NAPs, which provide a good basis, but the same does not apply to NDCs, although a majority of those include an adaptation component;

(b) It would be important to examine where there are gaps in the guidelines for the different vehicles;

(c) NAPs and NCs are vehicles and both can also provide a basis for generating information, rather than being alternatives to each other;

(d) The information note by the secretariat provided a useful overview of the guidelines and information in NCs and NAPs in relation to elements identified by Parties. But guidelines for both NCs and NAPs are weak in terms of information on implementation and support needs, and information on support in INDCs is currently too diverse to serve the global stocktake;

(e) Much information is being communicated in NCs, biennial update reports, and NDCs, but it is not easy for small countries with low capacity to prepare these documents. Therefore, work should build on existing systems and reporting should be streamlined;

(f) NCs are reporting documents, not communication documents. They are work-intensive and it can take up to two years to develop one. Thus, only some countries have communicated after their second NC, and many are struggling to develop their third. In contrast, most countries could communicate their INDCs within one year.

25. Specifically on **NDCs**, participants suggested that:

(a) An adaptation communication must be as substantial as NDCs are, and work should focus on identifying the information and elements for adaptation in NDCs, because for that vehicle no guidance is available. In this context, it was asked how this should be done (e.g. whether NCs and NAPs be considered a starting point, or whether other starting points be appropriate);

(b) NDCs should be the main vehicles, while flexibility is important;

(c) An NDC also encompasses the information that accompanies it, making it a broader vehicle;

(d) Guidance for adaptation components of NDCs should not be developed under agenda item 4. In this context, it was asked how guidance developed under other agenda items would be applicable to an adaptation communication.

26. Specifically on **NAPs**, participants suggested that:

(a) Work should look at existing NAP guidelines and consider what further guidance is needed to operationalize the global goal on adaptation and how that guidance would also be applicable to other vehicles;

(b) NAPs are an overarching process to address adaptation issues in the least developed countries. Initial guidelines for formulation and implementation, as well as technical guidelines, are in place. Therefore, NAPs and adaptation communications have different purposes and it would be difficult to consider the relationship between the two before there is clarity on purpose and elements of adaptation communications;

(c) The LEG guidelines for NAPs provide a good starting point.

27. In terms of **other vehicles**, it was highlighted that reporting under Article 13, paragraph 8, of the Paris Agreement, could also be considered a vehicle.

Flexibility

28. Finally, participants discussed the theme of flexibility or optionality, as well as ways to avoid additional burdens. The country-driven and voluntary nature of an adaptation communication as stipulated in Article 7, paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement was emphasized. It was suggested that, in order to provide an incentive to communicate, the adaptation communication should be designed as an optional instrument that is an opportunity for Parties.

29. Regarding the flexibility/optionality of vehicles, it was highlighted that this is clearly expressed by the fact that the choice of vehicle is up to Parties, as stipulated by Article 7, paragraph 11, of the Paris Agreement.

30. It was noted that in the context of Article 13 of the Paris Agreement, the term “flexibility” applies to developing countries only, and it was suggested that a different term, such as “optionality”, should be used in item 4 discussions to avoid misunderstandings.

31. It was also noted that, while submitting and updating an adaptation communication is voluntary, the process that applies if a Party decides to communicate includes mandatory steps.

32. It was suggested that flexibility/optionality should also be expressed through the possible elements of an adaptation communication by developing a non-prescriptive list that accommodates all views.

33. Participants discussed ways to **avoid additional burdens**, highlighting that this could be achieved by:

(a) Ensuring that the guidance under development accommodates the special circumstances and lack of capacity of the most vulnerable countries;

(b) Developing high-level guidance that works for all possible vehicles, so that the guidance serves multiple objectives, in particular those relevant to Articles 7 and 13 of the Paris Agreement, without preparing multiple documents;

(c) Building on existing communications and ensuring that efforts are not duplicated;

(d) Providing support both for reporting as well as implementation of the reported efforts, for example, by establishing a mechanism for developing countries to receive funding from the Green Climate Fund and the Global Environment Facility;

(e) Ensuring that adaptation communications do not lead to evaluation or comparison of the quality of the efforts of Parties;

(f) Designing any relevant methodologies at the national level, so that they are compatible with the wide diversity of national circumstances.

III. Concluding remarks

34. In the afternoon of 6 May 2017, participants worked in eight small groups, exploring two themes in greater detail, before returning to a plenary format to report back on their group discussions. Ideas emerging from the eight groups are reflected in the final section of this informal note, below.

35. In closing the workshop, we thanked the participants for their active engagement in the discussions, and for their great support in ensuring the successful completion of the workshop. We encouraged them to consider the ideas expressed at the workshop in the work during the forthcoming session, and confirmed that we would capture the discussions in an informal summary reflecting the views expressed by participants.

IV. Summary of work in small groups on purpose and elements

36. In the afternoon, participants worked in eight small groups on the themes of purpose and elements, because it was indicated by the participants in the morning plenary session that these themes would benefit most from a focused discussion in a smaller setting. After the small group discussions, each group reported back on their work to the plenary. This section compiles the outputs of the small groups in the table below. This table was also distributed to Parties on 9 May 2017 at the first informal consultations at APA 1.3, and posted on the UNFCCC website.

Table: compiled outputs of small groups at the APA workshop on agenda item 4, 6 May 2017 with regards to possible purposes and possible relevant elements
P = Purpose, E = Element

Group	1	2	3	5	6	7	8-9-10
P1	Provide priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions (Art. 7.10 of the Paris Agreement)	Enhance the profile/visibility	Enhance the implementation of adaptation actions toward achievement of the global goal on adaptation	Provide information to measure progress (operationalize) towards the global goal on adaptation including as in input of to the global stocktake and other relevant processes.	Support the achievement of the global goal on adaptation, as stated in Art. 7.1 of the Paris Agreement	Enhance profile & visibility & balance with mitigation	Identify needs, vulnerabilities, and recognize efforts (backward)
E1	Impacts, vulnerabilities and risks (short- and long-term)	national circumstances including impacts and vulnerability	National circumstances, including impacts, vulnerabilities, and risks	Adaptation implementation and support needs	Implementation and support needs – support/ means of implementation: finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building (discussion on support received by developing and provided by developed countries)	Adaptation efforts, concrete information, success stories, lessons learned	List of past adaptation actions
E2	Priorities, plans and actions, and programmes and strategies	Information each country needs to communicate to enhance the profile	Priorities, plans, actions, programmes, and strategies	Vulnerability and risk assessments	Adaptation capacity/ resilience challenge-disaster risk reduction / vulnerability / context of the temp scenario	Monitoring and evaluation of actions and support	Vulnerability and needs assessments
E3	Implementation and support needs and adaptation needs		Support and adaptation need	Progress in implementation of adaptation actions	Impacts, vulnerability, risk assessments (temp scenario)	Vulnerabilities, impacts, adaptation strategies	Lessons learnt, good practices and knowledge

E4			Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation actions, processes used and findings		Progress in implementation of adaptation efforts		
E5			Indicative level of support to be provided				
P2	Provide input for the global stocktake so that to address the requirements embedded in Art. 7.14 of the Paris Agreement	Enhance progress/ catalyze adaptation actions and support	Facilitate cooperation and support for implementation on adaptation actions	Recognize adaptation efforts in order to raise the profile and visibility of adaptation and encourage ambitious adaptation action, with the view to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancing/ catalyzing adaptation action, support, means of implementation • Achieving parity between mitigation and adaptation 	Art. 7.10 of the Paris Agreement: Communicate priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions, without creating any additional burden for developing country Parties.	Identify and communicate priorities and support needs (Art 7.10 of the Paris Agreement)	Identify objectives and plans
E1	Indicative level and adequacy of support provided	Priorities, implementation needs, plans and actions.	Support and adaptation needs	Adaptation priorities, plans, programmes (how they advance sustainable national development strategies)	Priorities, plans and actions	Adaptation needs and costs	Adaptation plans (including costs)
E2	Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation, process used and findings	Progress in terms of adaptation results	Priorities, plans, programme and strategies	Indicative level of support for adaptation	Impacts, vulnerability, risk assessments (temp scenario)	Impact analysis, vulnerability, risk assessment, planning process	National circumstances (development priorities)

E3	Adaptation efforts for their recognition, progress in implementation of adaptation efforts and clear reflection of inputs and outputs progression	Support required	Indicative level of support to be provided	Policy frameworks and institutional arrangements	Monitoring and evaluation	Adequacy of actions and support	
E4					National circumstances		
E5					Implementation and support needs – support/ means of implementation: finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building		
P3	Raise the profile of adaptation	Understand adaptation as a long term learning process/global goal on adaptation/ collaborative dimension		Facilitating sharing of knowledge, lesson learnt, best practices etc.	Enhance profile and visibility of adaptation and recognition of adaptation efforts.	Recognize actions and efforts (past, present and future)	Enhance cooperation and support (considering the three means of implementation)
E1	Through the global stocktake, based on the "information loop" (see the purpose no. 2 above; element 3	Contribution to the global goal on adaptation		Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation (outputs and outcomes of the monitoring and evaluation process	Good practices	Monitoring and evaluation of actions and support	Regional and global cooperation (policy and institutional arrangements)

E2	provides input to the global stocktake in a manner that enables it to constantly improve the clarity of reflection with respect	Adaptation efforts (for their recognition)		Means of implementation	Adaptation efforts, (implemented adaptation measures and strategies)	Success stories, lessons learned from adaptation efforts	Domestic resources (public and private)
E3	to progression in inputs and outputs)	Monitoring and evaluation and its findings		Progress in implementation of adaptation actions	Impacts, vulnerability, risk assessments (temp scenario)	Upscaling efforts and good practices	Requirement for international resources (under the principle that implementation will not be additional burden for developing nations)
E4					Implementation and support needs – support/ means of implementation: finance, technology transfer, and capacity-building		
Other information			- Enhancing profile of adaptation: outcome - Recognition of adaptation efforts by developing countries - Link to transp. framework and to global stocktake				