



# Initial meeting of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts

25–28 March 2014

Bonn, Germany

A briefing note (as at 13 March 2014)

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## I. A brief overview of relevant negotiations to date under the UNFCCC

1. This section provides an overview of the evolution of the negotiations on approaches to address loss and damage up to COP 19 where Parties established the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage and its Executive Committee to help guide its implementation (See Annex I for key milestones of the evolution of the issue).

2. COP 13 (December 2007), by its decision 1/CP.13, decided to launch a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, up to and beyond 2012. This process, also known as the Bali Action Plan, included a pillar for, *inter alia*, enhanced action on adaptation, including the following specific provisions for climate-related risk management:

(a) Risk management and risk reduction strategies, including risk sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance;

(b) Disaster reduction strategies and means to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

3. In this context, COP 16 (December 2010), by its decision 1/CP.16, established the Cancun Adaptation Framework, which included a work programme 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 (work programme).<sup>1</sup> The COP, then, tasked the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to:

(a) Agree on the activities of the work programme; and

(b) Make recommendations on loss and damage at COP 18 (December 2012).

4. A standing SBI agenda item to consider approaches to address loss and damage was created in the context of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, at SBI 34 (June 2011).

5. In order to enable a structured discussion, Parties agreed on the following three thematic areas for the implementation of the work programme at SBI 34, and the activities of the work programme under the thematic areas at COP 17 (December 2011):<sup>2</sup>

(a) Thematic area 1: Assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change and the current knowledge on the same;

(b) Thematic area 2: 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;

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<sup>1</sup> The COP by the same decision also established the following components of the Cancun Adaptation Framework: (a) a process to enable least developed country Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans, as a means of identifying medium- and long-term adaptation needs and developing and implementing strategies and programmes to address those needs; (b) an Adaptation Committee to promote the implementation of enhanced action on adaptation in a coherent manner under the Convention.

<sup>2</sup> See decision 7/CP.17 for the mandated activities under each thematic area.



(c) Thematic area 3: The role of the Convention in enhancing the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

6. During the course of 2012, five expert meetings and one informal meeting of Parties were organized, two technical papers and one literature review were prepared, , in order to generate and synthesize information and knowledge related to assessing the risks of loss and damage, and a range of approaches to address loss and damage, with a view to considering the potential role of the Convention in addressing loss and damage (see Annex II for an overview list of outputs from the implementation of the work programme on loss and damage).<sup>3</sup>

7. COP 18 (December 2012), by decision 3/CP.18, recognizing the need for comprehensive, inclusive and strategic responses, agreed on the following three areas in which the Convention has a role in promoting the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage:

(a) Enhancing knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset impacts;

(b) Strengthening dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies among relevant stakeholders;

(c) Enhancing action and support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

8. COP 18 decided, as part of the Doha Climate Gateway, to establish, at COP 19, institutional arrangements, such as an international mechanism to address loss and damage in accordance with the role of the Convention.

9. During the course of 2013, further technical work<sup>4</sup> and a mapping of existing institutional arrangements to address loss and damage were carried out. At COP 19 (November 2013), the COP established the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts (the Mechanism), as well as an executive committee (Excom) of the Mechanism to guide its implementation.

## II. Scope of the note

10. This briefing note is intended to provide initial background information in order to support the Excom in its deliberations at its initial meeting.

## III. Functions of the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage and related provisions

11. The functions of the Mechanism replicate the role of the Convention identified at COP18. The functions are:

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<sup>3</sup> For details on the outcomes of the activities carried out under the work programme, see <http://unfccc.int/7546>.

<sup>4</sup> This included the preparation of a technical paper on non-economic losses and the organization of an expert meeting to consider future needs in the context of slow onset events.



(a) Enhancing knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset impacts (see Annex III for details);

(b) Strengthening dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies among relevant stakeholders (see Annex IV for details);

(c) Enhancing action and support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, so as to enable countries to undertake actions pursuant to decision 3/CP.18, paragraph 6 (see Annex V for details).

12. In order to exercise the functions mentioned in paragraph 11 above, the Mechanism will, *inter alia*:<sup>5</sup>

(a) Facilitate support of actions to address loss and damage;

(b) Improve coordination of the relevant work of existing bodies under the Convention;

(c) Convene meetings of relevant experts and stakeholders;

(d) Promote the development of, and compile, analyse, synthesize and review information;

(e) Provide technical guidance and support;

(f) Make recommendations, as appropriate, on how to enhance engagement, actions and coherence under and outside the Convention, including on how to mobilize resources and expertise at different levels.

#### **IV. The Executive Committee of the Warsaw international mechanism for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts**

13. The COP decided that the Excom is to function under the guidance of, and be accountable to, the COP. It is to report annually to the COP through the SBSTA and SBI and make recommendations, as appropriate.<sup>6</sup>

14. The subsidiary bodies are to jointly initiate, at SB 40 (June 2014), their consideration of the composition of, and procedures for, the Excom, with a view to making recommendations thereon for adoption by COP 20 (December 2014), in order to finalize the organization and governance of the Excom.

15. Meanwhile, in order to immediately launch the work related to the Mechanism, the COP decided that, as an interim measure, the Excom consist of two representatives from each of the following bodies under the Convention, ensuring that there is a balanced representation between developed and developing country Parties:<sup>7</sup>

(a) The Adaptation Committee (AC);

<sup>5</sup> Decision 2/CP.19, paragraph 7.

<sup>6</sup> Decision 2/CP.19, paragraph 3.

<sup>7</sup> Letters were sent out in December 2013 from the Executive Secretary to the chairs and vice chairs or co-chairs of the aforementioned constituted bodies, inviting nominations from their respective bodies to the interim Excom.



- (b) The Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE);
- (c) The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG);
- (d) The Standing Committee on Finance (SCF); and
- (e) The Technology Executive Committee (TEC).

## V. Work of the Executive Committee at its initial meeting

16. The COP invited the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the COP President, to convene an initial meeting of the Excom by March 2014.

17. The work for the Excom is set out as follows by the COP:

(a) To develop its initial two-year workplan for the implementation of the functions of the Mechanism, including the scheduling of meetings, for consideration at SBSTA 41/SBI 41 (December 2014);

(b) In developing the workplan, the Excom is to take into account the issues outlined in decision 3/CP.18, paragraphs 6 and 7. Issues outlined in decision 3/CP.18, paragraph 6 are included in subparagraphs (a)–(g) of Annex V; those outlined in paragraph 7(a) are included in Annex III, subparagraphs (a)(i)–(vi). The remaining issues that are outlined in decision 3/CP.18, paragraph 7 (b)–(f), are:

*7(b)* Strengthening and supporting the collection and management of relevant data, including gender-disaggregated data, for assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change;

*7(c)* Enhancing coordination, synergies and linkages among various organizations, institutions and frameworks, to enable the development and support of approaches to address loss and damage, including slow onset events and comprehensive climate risk management strategies, including risk transfer tools;

*7(d)* Strengthening and promoting regional collaboration, centres and networks on strategies and approaches, including to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset events, including through risk reduction, risk sharing and risk transfer initiatives;

*7(e)* Enhanced capacity-building at the national and regional levels to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change;

*7(f)* Strengthening institutional arrangements at the national, regional and international levels to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

18. In the discussion on its workplan, the Excom may also wish to keep in mind the following provisions from decision 2/CP.19:

(a) The COP also decided that the mechanism should complement, draw upon the work of and involve, as appropriate, existing bodies and expert groups under the Convention as well as on that of relevant organizations and expert bodies outside the Convention,<sup>8</sup> at all levels;<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The COP also invited relevant international and regional organizations, institutions and processes to integrate, where appropriate, measures to address the impacts of climate change and to explore and



(b) The COP will review the Warsaw international mechanism, including its structure, mandate and effectiveness, at COP 22 (December 2016).<sup>10</sup>

19. In order to facilitate the Excom's discussion and to raise overall awareness of relevant work by the relevant bodies and groups under, and that by relevant organizations outside the Convention, the Excom members are invited to share information on the relevant mandates, functions and ongoing work of the AC, CGE, LEG, SCF and TEC prior to and/or at the outset of the meeting. Inputs on relevant work will also be provided by relevant organizations.

20. The Excom may also wish to refer to the technical paper on gaps in existing institutional arrangements within and outside of the Convention to address loss and damage, including those related to slow onset events ([FCCC/TP/2013/12](#)), to gain an overview on the general features of, and emerging trends and gaps in, existing institutional arrangements to address loss and damage within and outside of the Convention, at the transboundary, regional and global levels.

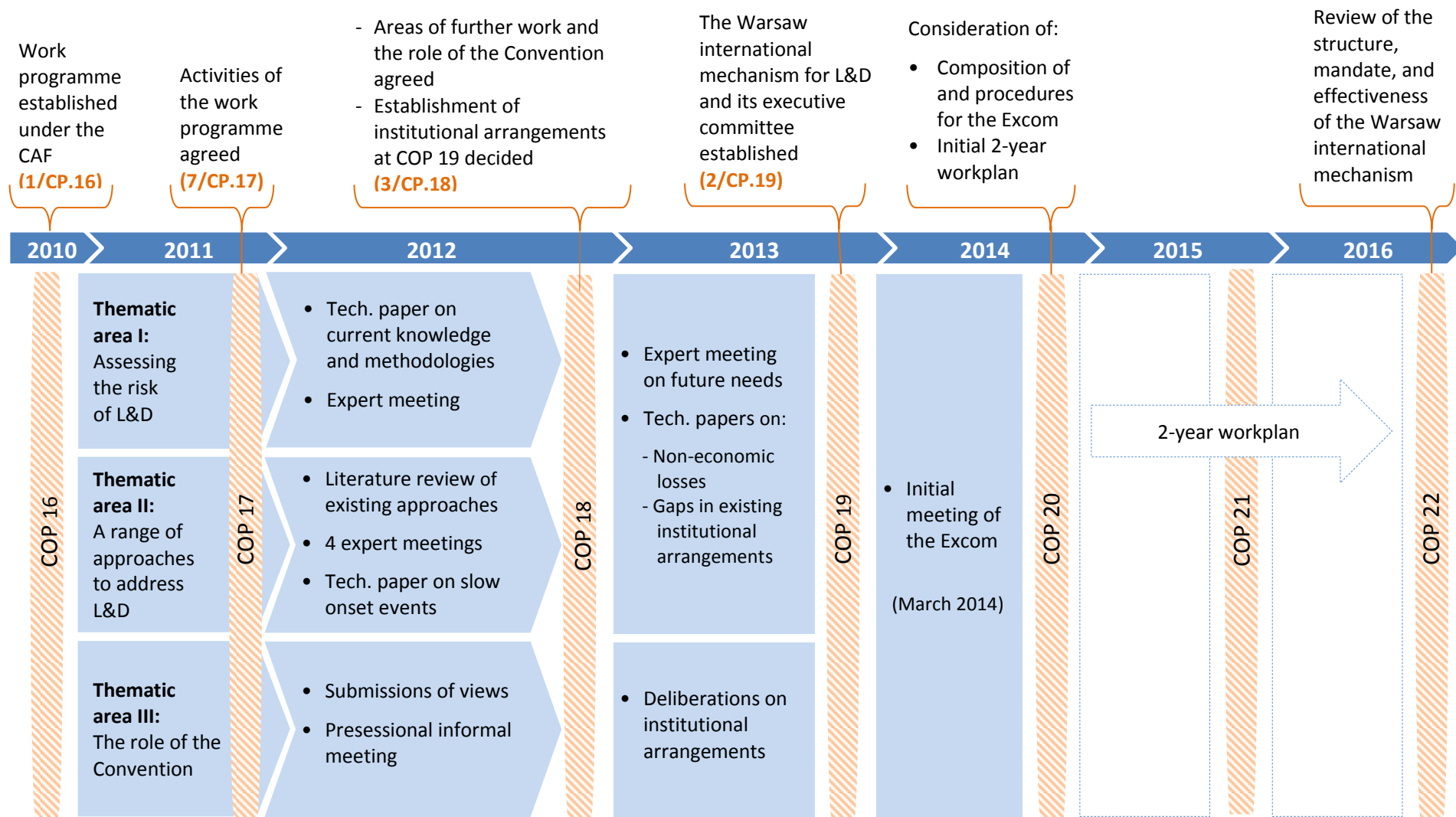
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strengthen synergies in the context of addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, especially in particularly vulnerable developing countries (decision 2/CP.19, paragraph 11).

<sup>9</sup> Decision 2/CP.19, paragraph 6.

<sup>10</sup> Decision 2/CP.19, paragraph 15.

## Annex I: Diagram on key milestones of the evolution of discussions on loss and damage under the Convention



## Annex II:

### An overview list of outputs from the implementation of the work programme on loss and damage

#### A. Work undertaken in 2013 and associated outputs

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>1. Technical paper on gaps in existing institutional arrangements within and outside of the Convention to address loss and damage, including those related to slow onset events (November 2013).</p> | <p>The technical paper provides a review of existing institutional arrangements, within and outside of the Convention and at the transboundary, regional and global levels, carrying out activities relevant to addressing loss and damage associated with climate change impacts. On the basis of that review, it also provides a preliminary analysis of some of the general features of, and emerging trends and gaps in, such existing institutional arrangements.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p>Technical paper:<br/><a href="https://www.fccc.org/publications/technical-papers/FCCC/TP/2013/12">FCCC/TP/2013/12</a></p>        |
| <p>2. Technical paper on non-economic losses in the context of the work programme on loss and damage (October 2013).</p>                                                                                | <p>The technical paper provides a literature review and critical analysis on the following aspects of non-economic losses of climate change: the conceptual background, including how non-economic losses contribute to loss and damage and the total cost of climate change; the main types of non-economic losses that might occur and the ways in which they may materialize; various assessment techniques available to estimate non-economic losses, both generically and through concrete examples of current practice; and implications of the different assessment techniques for the identification of non-economic risks and the design of practical adaptation actions to manage them.</p> | <p>Technical paper:<br/><a href="https://www.fccc.org/publications/technical-papers/FCCC/TP/2013/2">FCCC/TP/2013/2</a></p>          |
| <p>3. Expert meeting to consider future needs, including capacity needs associated with possible approaches to address slow onset events (September 2013, Fiji).</p>                                    | <p>The discussions at the meeting focused on: needs relating to data, information and knowledge aspects of addressing slow onset events; needs relating to support, including finance, technology and capacity building; and coordination needs at various levels in addressing slow onset events. Participants discussed potential responses, to be undertaken by and outside of the UNFCCC, to some of the key needs regarding slow onset events discussed at the meeting.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>Report of the meeting:<br/><a href="https://www.fccc.org/publications/reports/FCCC/SBI/2013/INF.14">FCCC/SBI/2013/INF.14</a></p> |



## B. Work undertaken in 2012 and associated outputs

### Thematic Area I of the work programme:

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

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Technical paper on current knowledge on relevant methodologies and data requirements as well as lessons learned and gaps identified at different levels (May 2012). | Drawing on existing relevant work and documents, this technical paper aims to provide an overview of existing methodologies and tools for assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. In particular, the paper assesses 18 selected approaches, methods and tools in terms of their data and information requirements, strengths, weaknesses, lessons learned, gaps at different levels and relevance for social and environmental impacts, as well as discussing capacity needs for applying risk assessment methods in developing countries. It also considers risk assessment application to decision-making. | Technical paper:<br><a href="#">FCCC/TP/2012/1</a>        |
| 5. Expert meeting on assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change (March 2012, Japan).                                  | The meeting discussions focused on the different aspects of the risk assessment process, including (a) the data and information requirements for assessing impacts and climate risks; (b) methods and tools for risk assessment, including their requirements, strengths and weaknesses; (c) capacity needs for applying risk assessment methods on the ground; and (d) linking risk assessment with decision-making.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Report of meeting:<br><a href="#">FCCC/SBI/2012/INF.3</a> |

### Thematic Area II:

#### 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 experiences at all levels

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| 6. Technical paper on slow onset events (November 2012).                                                                                                                                                                               | The technical paper aims to generate a knowledge base on slow onset events and on approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of slow onset climate change events in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. The paper takes into consideration the deliberations of the expert meetings undertaken under this thematic area, and draws some observations with regard to gaps, challenges and lessons learned.                                                                                                   | Technical paper:<br><a href="#">FCCC/TP/2012/7</a>         |
| 7. Literature review on the topics in the context of thematic area 2 of the work programme on loss and damage: a range of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change (November 2012). | The literature review presents findings from available scientific evidence and other documentation on a range of approaches employed today in four regions of the world to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. It focuses on the types of approach and their levels of application, in particular examining the foundational resource requirements and cost-effectiveness of and the lessons learned from such approaches. The review follows a regional perspective, corresponding to the expert meetings undertaken in the context of this thematic area. | Literature review:<br><a href="#">FCCC/SBI/2012/INF.14</a> |

8. Expert meetings on 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:
- Issues discussed at the four regional meetings include gaps, needs and challenges, as well as region-specific issues related to the impacts of climate change, and possible areas for further action in addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change at different levels.
- Report of the meetings: [FCCC/SBI/2012/29](http://fccc.org/sbi/2012/29)
- For small island developing States (October 2012, Barbados);
  - For Asia and Eastern Europe region (August 2012, Thailand);
  - For Latin American region (July 2012, Mexico);
  - For African region (June 2012, Ethiopia).

### **Thematic Area III:**

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

9. Views and information from Parties and relevant organizations on the possible elements to be included in the recommendations on loss and damage in accordance with decision 1/CP.16.<sup>1</sup>
10. Informal pre-session meeting of Parties to exchange further views on the possible recommendations on loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change (November 2012, Qatar).

### **C. Work undertaken prior to 2012 and associated outputs**

11. Views and information on the thematic areas in the implementation of the work programme (November 2011).
- The report synthesizes views and information submitted by Parties and relevant organizations on the three thematic areas to be addressed in the implementation of the work programme on loss and damage, and concludes with a brief summary of the main common elements identified in the submissions.<sup>2</sup>
- Synthesis report: [FCCC/SBI/2011/INF.13](http://fccc.org/sbi/2011/inf.13)
12. Views and information on elements to be included in the work programme on loss and damage (April 2011).
- The report presents views and information submitted by Parties and relevant organizations on the elements that the SBI may wish to consider for inclusion in the work programme on loss and damage. It synthesizes views on the expected outcomes, guiding principles and scope of the work programme, followed by a discussion on relevant stakeholders and processes. It also reports on different ways to structure the work. The report concludes with views on possible activities under the work programme and a brief summary on the main themes identified in the submissions.<sup>3</sup>
- Synthesis report: [FCCC/SBI/2011/3](http://fccc.org/sbi/2011/3)

<sup>1</sup> Submissions are contained in documents [FCCC/SBI/2012/MISC.14](http://fccc.org/sbi/2012/misc.14), [Add.1](http://fccc.org/sbi/2012/add.1) and [Add.2](http://fccc.org/sbi/2012/add.2).

<sup>2</sup> Submissions are contained in documents [FCCC/SBI/2011/MISC.8](http://fccc.org/sbi/2011/misc.8) and [Add.1](http://fccc.org/sbi/2011/add.1).

<sup>3</sup> Submissions are contained in document [FCCC/SBI/2011/MISC.1](http://fccc.org/sbi/2011/misc.1).



## Annex III: The first function (F1) of the Mechanism

### *Enhancing knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset impacts*

1. This function is to be undertaken by facilitating and promoting:
  - (a) Action to address gaps in the understanding of and expertise in approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including, *inter alia*:
    - (i) The risk of slow onset events, and approaches to address them;
    - (ii) Non-economic losses and damages;
    - (iii) How loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change affects those segments of the population that are already vulnerable owing to geography, gender, age, indigenous or minority status, or disability, and how the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage can benefit those segments of the population;
    - (iv) How to identify and develop appropriate approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including to address slow onset events and extreme weather events, including through risk reduction, risk sharing and risk transfer tools, and approaches to rehabilitate from loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change;
    - (v) How approaches to address loss and damage associated with the impacts of climate change may be integrated into climate-resilient development processes;
    - (vi) How impacts of climate change are affecting patterns of migration, displacement and human mobility;<sup>1</sup>
  - (b) Collection, sharing, management and use of relevant data and information, including gender-disaggregated data;
  - (c) Provision of overviews of best practices, challenges, experiences and lessons learned in undertaking approaches to address loss and damage.

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<sup>1</sup> As outlined in decision 3/CP.18, paragraph 7(a).

## **Annex IV: The second function (F2) of the Mechanism**

### *Strengthening dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies among relevant stakeholders*

1. This function is to be undertaken by:
  - (a) Providing leadership and coordination and, as and where appropriate, oversight under the Convention, on the assessment and implementation of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the impacts of climate change from extreme events and slow onset events associated with the adverse effects of climate change;
  - (b) Fostering dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies among all relevant stakeholders, institutions, bodies, processes and initiatives outside the Convention, with a view to promoting cooperation and collaboration across relevant work and activities at all levels.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> All levels refer to national, regional and international levels.



## Annex V: The third function (F3) of the Mechanism

*Enhancing action and support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, so as to enable countries to undertake the following actions<sup>1</sup>*

*(a) Assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including slow onset impacts;*

*(b) Identifying options and designing and implementing country-driven risk management strategies and approaches, including risk reduction, and risk transfer and risk-sharing mechanisms;*

*(c) The systematic observation of, and data collection on, the impacts of climate change, in particular slow onset impacts, and accounting for losses, as appropriate;*

*(d) Implementing comprehensive climate risk management approaches, including scaling up and replicating good practices and pilot initiatives;*

*(e) Promoting an enabling environment that would encourage investment and the involvement of relevant stakeholders in climate risk management;*

*(f) Involving vulnerable communities and populations, and civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, in the assessment of and response to loss and damage;*

*(g) Enhancing access to, sharing and the use of data, at the regional, national and subnational levels, such as hydrometeorological data and metadata, on a voluntary basis, to facilitate the assessment and management of climate-related risk.*

1. F3 is to be undertaken by:

(a) Provision of technical support and guidance on approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, including extreme events and slow onset events;

(b) Provision of information and recommendations for consideration by the Conference of the Parties when providing guidance relevant to reducing the risks of loss and damage, where necessary, addressing loss and damage, including to the operating entities of the financial mechanism of the Convention, as appropriate;

(c) Facilitating the mobilization and securing of expertise, and enhancement of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, to strengthen existing approaches and, where necessary, facilitate the development and implementation of additional approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, including extreme weather events and slow onset events.

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<sup>1</sup> Pursuant to decision 3/CP.18, paragraph 6.