

Submission by the Kingdom of Swaziland on behalf of African Group on work programme on 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

1. Introduction

The impacts of climate change are poised to cause extensive loss and damage, to lives, livelihoods, property and other assets as well as the environment, culture and the social fabric of societies. Floods and droughts and other climatic events and processes threaten food security and health and could cause widespread displacement as people are forced to relocate as their livelihoods become unviable and their homes uninhabitable. Against this backdrop, Africa stresses the importance of adaptation as an essential priority for the region. There is a need for urgent and immediate action to avoid further loss and damage arising from the adverse effects of climate change. Africa emphasizes the need for country driven, bottom up approaches to address loss and damage to the adverse impacts of climate change. The need for pilot programmes, increasing the availability of data, enhanced institutional capacities and financial support are further needs, which when fulfilled will enable Africa to address loss and damage associated with adverse effects of climate change.

2. Assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change and the current knowledge on the same should take into consideration:

- a) The assessment of climate-related risk is complex, involving the consideration of hazards, exposure and vulnerability, and takes into account underlying risk drivers;
- b) A range of approaches, methods and tools are available to assess the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. The selection of appropriate approaches, methods and tools depends upon regional, national and local capacity, contexts and circumstances and involves the engagement of all relevant stakeholders;
- c) Gaps in the assessment of the risk of loss and damage for vulnerable communities and populations, including women and children, can be addressed by involving these communities and populations in risk assessment processes;
- d) The use of local and indigenous knowledge and observations helps to fill gaps in information about historic exposure and vulnerability;
- e) Assessment of the risk of loss and damage is often constrained by the limited availability of data and knowledge, including, but not limited to, that on weather, climate, socioeconomic conditions and ecosystems. Risk management actions can still be taken in the absence of complete sets of data and knowledge, taking into account the national circumstances;
- f) Access to, sharing and the use of information and data, such as hydrometeorological data and metadata, on a voluntary basis is important to facilitate the assessment and management of climate-related risk;
- g) Enhanced technical and institutional capacities supported by technical and financial assistance and other resources will help developing countries to continue to

determine, prioritize and address their needs in assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change;

- h) Involvement of, and dialogue with, decision makers at all levels can strengthen the design, dissemination and delivery of information on climate risk;
- i) Numerical data are sometimes not sufficient in conveying a comprehensive range of the risks of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change since available estimates on losses typically lack numbers on non-economic losses.
- j) Need to develop a clear approach on how to address non-economic and non-quantifiable losses in the work programme (e.g. loss of biodiversity, culture, territory). This will in all likelihood require the development of new methodologies of evaluation that prioritize human benefit and the delivery of ecosystem services are proxy measurements. The loss of biodiversity and ecosystem services deserves a particular focus given the significant role that these will play in ecosystem-based disaster risk management in Africa and addressing the vulnerability of the climate vulnerable poor.
- k) The whole issue of risk reduction, risk retention and risk transfer needs to be unpacked and understood and a clear position taken on which approach is relevant under which conditions- for both extreme events and slow onset disasters. This is particularly important in developing an understanding of how an international L&D mechanism would work.

3. 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 should incorporate the following:

- a) Africa stresses the need for a combination of tools, policies and approaches to address loss and damage, which have sectoral, national and regional bearings with emphasis on the impacts of the losses and damages and little or no consideration of the impacts of response measures.
- b) Although adaptation is the priority for Africa, loss and damage refers being beyond adaptation (the extent to which depends on ambition in finance and mitigation). Compensation and rehabilitation are also key issues that should be addressed.
- c) A “bottom top” approach encourages the ownership of proactive adaptation solutions, especially those that are built locally and sectorally; and, are informed by country experiences with various risk reduction and risk management measures already put in place.
- d) There will need to be detailed review of the paper being prepared on slow onset, disasters in order to assess the relevance of its findings for Africa. There will also need to determine how best slow onset disasters can be tracked and the significance of the related impacts assessed.
- e) There is a need to develop a clear understanding of whether it is possible to reliably distinguish natural disasters from climate disasters and to attribute damage to the incremental risk of anthropogenic climate change. If not, it is necessary to understand what approach should/could be taken in assessing impact and apportioning liability. This is likely to involve both ex-ante and ex-post assessments.

- f) Taking national circumstances into consideration, individual countries must be willing and/or enabled to develop approaches that will promote effective management of losses and damages from climate change impacts. This will, of course, deal with specific sectoral and regional vulnerabilities and increase the management of their resilience.
- g) The recommended global approach for the work programme is best suited to cost-benefit analysis through a top-down study at the macro level with different policy scenarios and assumptions.
- h) Need to outline the full range of institutional and other capacity building needs that would need to be addressed under a loss and damage work programme e.g. local up skilling in risk assessment methodologies rather than bringing in international consultants, development of open access data bases. (Likely need to consultant representatives of the three spheres of government involved in risk reduction and climate change adaptation work.)
- i) Need to engage Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation experts to reach agreement on the types of risk assessment methodologies that would be appropriate to African conditions e.g. longer sighted, more context-specific approaches that address changing risk contexts and that address uncertain changes in climate and unintended consequences of development interventions. This would include a review of the existing SBI report of assessment methodologies.
- j) Need to review outcomes of the four regional workshops to understand the range of approaches available to deal with loss and damage and to determine if any of these are relevant to the African situation. There is also a need to determine what position will be taken around the issue of residual loss and damage (the loss and damage that cannot be redressed).
- k) The information collected above should be used to inform a discussion on the role of the Convention in addressing loss and damage e.g. the need for a second phase of a work programme on loss and damage to facilitate further work on some of the more difficult questions related to loss and damage; co-ordination with National Adaptation Plans and Nairobi Work Programme etc.
- l) Pilot projects/programmes are required.
- m) Further research as well as capacity building and awareness raising are needed.

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

Developing countries require systematic consideration and support from Annex I Parties in taking appropriate action on loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change. The scope of loss and damage related to the adverse effects of climate change ranges from that incurred from climate variability and intensity, climate-related extreme events, to slow-onset events – steady, incremental changes in the climate system that goes beyond the natural weather variability.

UNFCCC principles and provisions relevant to the discussion on loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change

- The UNFCCC is the relevant policy forum for discussing loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change.
- The Convention should take the lead in addressing loss and damage and coordinate work on loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change.
- An institutionalized process under the convention to address elements of loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change needs to be put in place, and consideration of the matter taken up also under the financial mechanism, technology transfer and capacity building. This can be done by the establishment of a mechanism to address issues related to loss and damage.

The UNFCCC and action at the international level

Addressing loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change will require the use of institutions and mechanisms that already exist under the Convention, the nature of the issues requires additional efforts and institutions to systematically consider and address the needs of developing countries.

Provide financial assistance, including long term financing for loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change

The Convention has established clear provisions and obligations for developed country Parties to address the impacts and special needs and concerns of developing countries, particularly vulnerable developing countries, in the areas of funding, technology and financial instruments. Hence any additional requirements for accessing support should be matched with long-term, scaled-up, predictable, new and additional financial resources, technology transfer and capacity-building, consistent with relevant provisions of the Convention, to undertake the required risk reduction measures and address irreversible loss and damage.

The financial mechanism, including the GCF, must complement the existing voluntary DRR and catastrophe aid mechanisms. Types of activities or actions required through long-term finance in developing countries might include:

- Research and development;
- Start-up funds for regional and national risk reduction;
- Financial mechanism to provide compensation for residual or unavoidable loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change and from slow-onset processes;
- Rehabilitation and compensation support to address loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change including climate-related slow onset events.¹;
- Ways to address and provide compensation for lost development opportunities.

Promote coordination and cooperation on addressing technical and other capacity needs related to adaptation action, including loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change, including:

Loss and damage can be exacerbated due to underlying vulnerabilities, but vulnerability is not the cause of climate change, manifested, inter alia, through changes in climate variability and intensity, extreme events, or slow onset events.²

¹ African Group, Submission on the outcome of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long Term Cooperative Action under the Convention, 12 December 2009 (FCCC/AWG/LCA/2009/MISC.8)

- Enhancing data collection, including tools and equipment for data collection and processing on loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change at the appropriate level (international, regional, national and community), in a manner that is sensitive to vulnerable populations including women, children, the elderly and the youth;
- Enhancing the ability of countries to conduct needs assessment and baseline assessments in order to be able to analyse and make informed decisions on various risk management policies, including methods for slow onset events at national and regional levels, including through regional cooperation and regional activities;
- Enhancing, the ability of countries to establish institutional and operational modalities at the local, national and regional level to channel support, after disasters.

Support approaches to address loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change with support by Annex I countries to developing country Parties

- supporting technical assistance relevant to adaptation, disaster risk reduction and specific approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change;
- Enhancing understanding, coordination, and cooperation on financial measures that can assist developing countries affected by extreme losses and damages;
- Enhancing understanding, coordination, and cooperation to strengthen social safety networks and resilience-building efforts as part of national and sub-national responses to loss and damage from the adverse effects of climate change, including support under the Green Climate Fund.
- Enhancing understanding, coordination and support for economic and non-economic loss.

Governance

The role of the Convention is to maintain oversight, control, and guidance of the relevant processes on loss and damage. The COP will give further consideration on the kind of framework needed at the national and international level, particularly to ensure that any arrangement is responsive to national circumstances and driven by country's needs.

² Including sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacial retreat and related impacts, salinization, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity and desertification.