Typologies of Loss and Damage

Insights from an analysis of 40 key stakeholder interviews from science, policy and practice

Prof. Emily Boyd, Dr. Rachel James, Prof. Richard Jones

with thanks to collaborators at University of Oxford and Reading, and interviewees

Plan for the next hour:

09.10	Welcome and Introduction
09.15	Research Findings
09.30	Clarifying questions
09.35	Discussion
10.05	Reflections

Introduction

Prof. Richard Jones

Our entry point: How might climate science be relevant to loss and damage policy?

Policy forums

COP19/CMP9

ClimDev-Africa

Interviews

Participatory games

ACE-Africa

eci.ox.ac.uk/research/climate/aceafrica.html

Initial findings: Not clear if Warsaw International Mechanism will refer to L&D from anthropogenic climate change only, or all climate stressors

COMMENTARY:

Characterizing loss and damage from climate change

Rachel James, Friederike Otto, Hannah Parker, Emily Boyd, Rosalind Cornforth, Daniel Mitchell and Myles Allen

Policymakers are creating mechanisms to help developing countries cope with loss and damage from climate change, but the negotiations are largely neglecting scientific questions about what the impacts of climate change actually are.

Mitigation efforts have failed to prevent the continued increase of anthropogenic greenhouse-gas emissions. Adaptation is now unlikely to be sufficient to prevent negative impacts from current and future climate change[1]. In this context, vulnerable nations argue that existing frameworks to promote mitigation and adaptation are inadequate, and have called for an international mechanism to deal with residual climate change impacts, or 'loss and damage'[2].

In 2013, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) responded to these calls and established

is currently drafting a two-year workplan comprising meetings, reports and expert groups. This aims to enhance knowledge and understanding of loss and damage, strengthen dialogue among stakeholders, and promote enhanced action and support. Issues identified as priorities for the WIM thus far include how to deal with non-economic losses — such as loss of life, livelihood and cultural heritage — and linkages between loss and damage and patterns of migration and displacement[2]. In all this, one fundamental issue still demands our attention: which losses and damages are relevant to the WIM? What counts as loss

of impacts associated with climate change in developing countries that negatively affect human and natural systems," including impacts from extreme events (for example heatwaves, flooding and drought) and slow-onset events (including sea-level rise and glacial retreat)[4]. This implies that the WIM will deal with current and future changes in the risk of loss and damage, rather than only addressing losses that have actually occurred. In addition, the definition suggests that the WIM will specifically handle changes in risk that can be attributed to climate change. In the language of the UNFCCC, which has a mandate to tackle "anthropogenic

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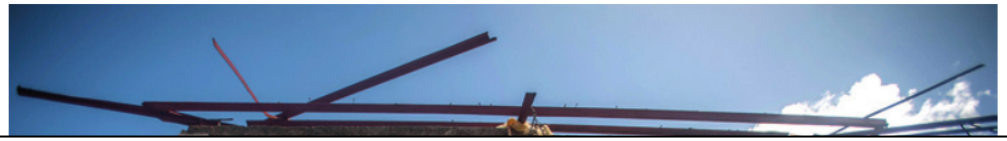
In 2013, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) responded to these calls and established the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) to address loss and damage from the impacts of climate change in developing countries[3]. An interim executive committee of party representatives has been set up and is currently drafting a two-year workplan comprising meetings, reports and expert groups. This aims to enhance knowledge and understanding of loss and damage, strengthen dialogue among stakeholders, and promote enhanced action and support. Issues identified as priorities for the WIM thus far include how to deal with non-economic losses — such as loss of life, livelihood and cultural heritage — and linkages between loss and damage and patterns of migration and displacement[2]. In all this, one fundamental issue still demands our attention: which losses and damages are relevant to the WIM? What counts as loss and damage from climate change?

Defining loss and damage

The UNFCCC defines loss and damage as "the actual and/or potential manifestation of impacts associated with climate change in developing countries that negatively affect human and natural systems," including impacts from extreme events (for example heatwaves, flooding and drought) and slow-onset events (including sea-level rise and glacial retreat)[4]. This implies that the WIM will deal with current and future changes in the risk of loss and damage, rather than only addressing losses that have actually occurred. In addition, the definition suggests that the WIM will specifically handle changes in risk that can be attributed to climate change. In the language of the UNFCCC, which has a mandate to tackle "anthropogenic interference with the climate system,"[5] this means human-induced climate change.

From a scientific perspective, therefore, the first challenge in implementing the WIM would be to estimate where and when loss and damage can be attributed to anthropogenic climate change. This would require attributing losses to weather and climate events, and attributing these weather and climate events to anthropogenic

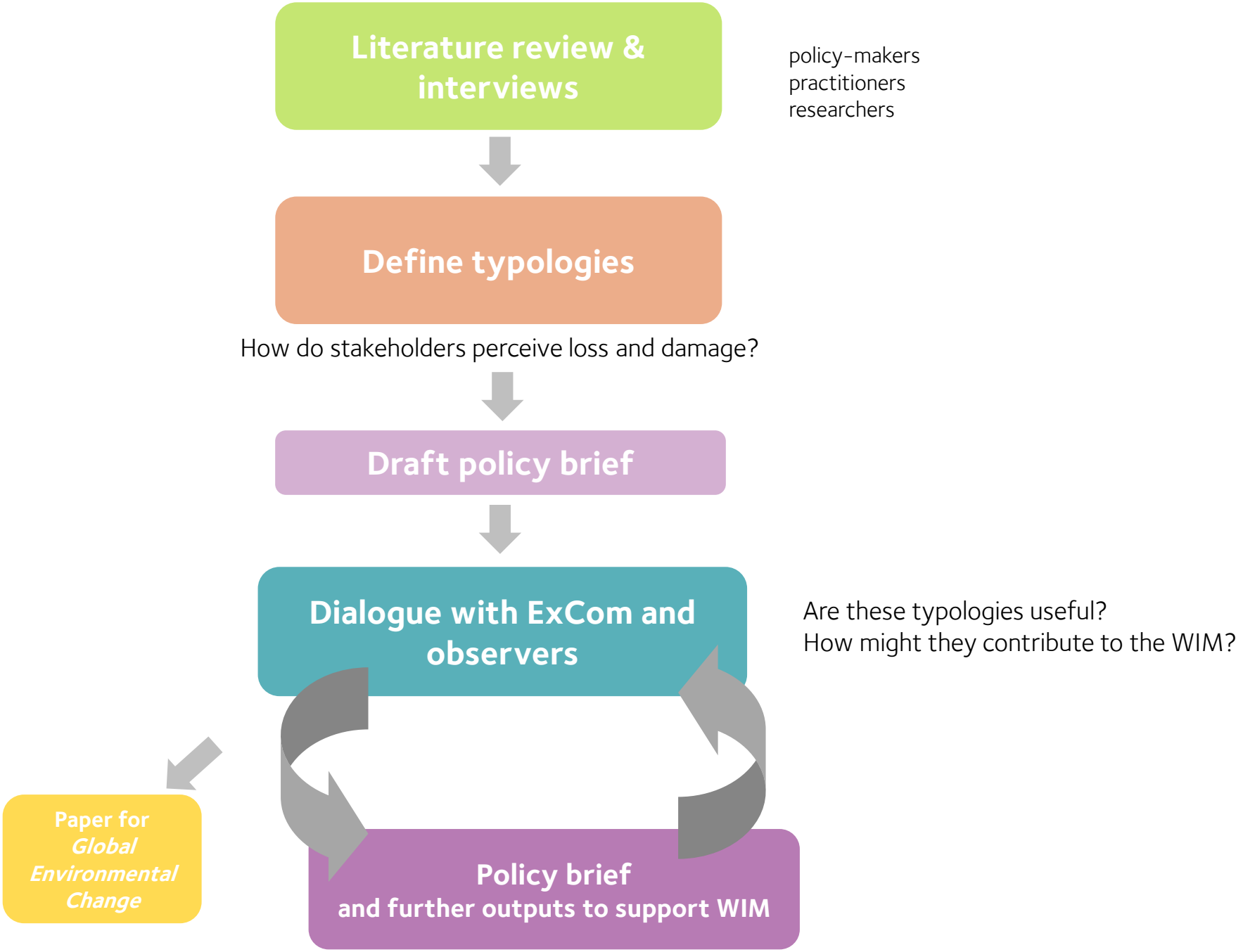


And whilst there are working definitions of L&D, "there has been no formal discussion under the UNFCCC on what the term "loss and damage" signifies."

Current project: Typologies of L&D

Rationale:

- Not to promote defining/definitions
- Instead, aim is to facilitate understanding of perspectives which are out there


Literature review & interviews
policy-makers
practitioners
researchers
Define typologies
How do stakeholders perceive loss and damage?
Draft policy brief
Dialogue with ExCom and observers
Are these typologies useful?
How might they contribute to the WIM?
Paper for Global Environmental Change
Policy brief
and further outputs to support WIM

Research Findings

Prof. Emily Boyd

Key points

- 4 typologies
- Points of agreement
- Points of distinction
- Associated actions

L&D is a debate about how to address harm done to vulnerable countries

L&D refers to climate-related impacts beyond the limits of adaptation

L&D is an additional mechanism to address risk from climate change, alongside adaptation, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian work

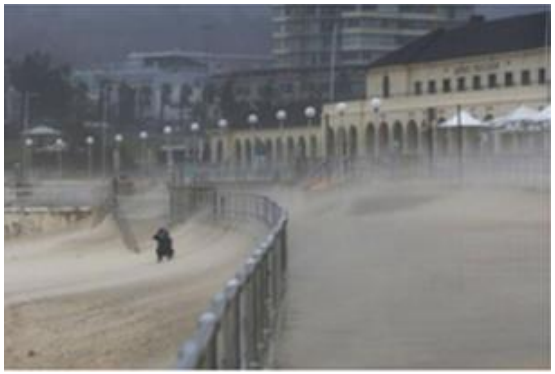
All climate change impacts are potential L&D, and these can be dealt with through mitigation and adaptation


Distance from adaptation/existing mechanisms
Existential
Limits to Adaptation
Risk Management
Adaptation and Mitigation

Points of Agreement

"Parties recognize the importance of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events"

Paris Agreement, Article 8



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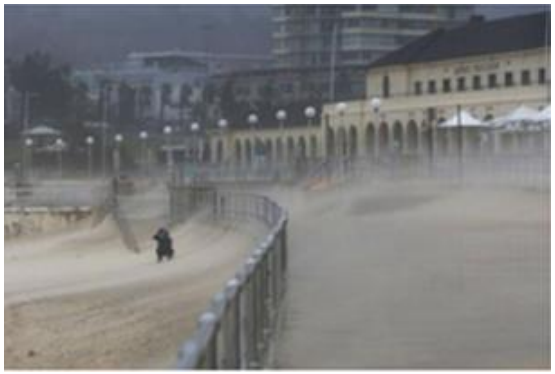

Points of Distinction

Distinction between L&D and adaptation

L&D can be addressed through adaptation ⟷ L&D occurs beyond adaptation

Relevance of climate change

L&D refers to impacts from anthropogenic climate change ⟷ L&D refers to impacts any climate-related event

Ex-ante or Ex-post

- Aim to address L&D which has already occurred
- Aim to prevent L&D which could occur in future
- Aim to address L&D which will occur in future

Emphasis on finance

Role of justice

Associated actions

Typology	Adaptation/ Mitigation	Risk Management	Limits to Adaptation	Existential
Keywords	adaptation, mitigation, Cancun Adaptation Framework, disasters	risk, insurance, risk transfer, risk retention, comprehensive risk management, extreme events	residual risk, side effects, vulnerability, resilience, on the ground, transformation, hard and soft limits	permanent, irreversible, unavoidable, compensation, justice, non-economic, responsibility, slow onset, sea level rise
Distinction from adaptation	L&D can be dealt with through mitigation and adaptation	L&D mechanisms should address impacts which can be adapted to and impacts beyond adaptation	L&D refers to impacts beyond mitigation and adaptation	Emphasis on irreversible, unavoidable L&D, which cannot be adapted to
Relevance of climate change	L&D refers to all climate change impacts (or L&D from disasters)	Emphasis on incorporating climate change risk into comprehensive risk management	L&D mechanisms should address any climate-related damage (not exclusively climate change impacts)	Focus on addressing anthropogenic climate change impacts
Ex-ante / Ex-post	Adaptation and Mitigation can be used to prevent L&D (ex-ante)	Main focus on future risk, preventing L&D (ex-ante), and insurance mechanisms to aide recovery (ex-post)	Emphasis on avoiding L&D/risk reduction (ex- ante), but also addressing unavoidable L&D (ex-post)	Emphasis on addressing unavoidable future losses (ex-post)

Typology	Associated Actions
Adaptation and Mitigation	Mitigation and adaptation
Risk management	Insurance, insurance pools, catastrophe bonds, life insurance, DRR, sovereign disaster risk rating, climate services and early warning, engineering, capacity building
Limits to adaptation	Risk transfer, social safety nets, micro insurance, innovations in livelihoods (early warning), participation
existential	Compensation, migration facilities, homeland resettlement, acknowledgement, official apologies, memorial, historical preservation, international litigation

Potential relevance to WIM

- Current workplan
- Task-force on migration and displacement
- Forum of the SCF
- 5 year workplan

Next steps

- Options:
  - Collaboration with ExCom
  - Workshop for further discussion
  - A series of workshops
  - Science-policy-practice engagement to identify actions and research questions

Any questions?

Prof. Emily Boyd

Discussion

facilitated by Dr. Rachel James

Key questions for discussion

- Are the typologies are an accurate reflection of L&D discussions? Do they resonate with viewpoints that have been encountered?

- Are they useful conceptualisations for addressing L&D and why, or why not? Which actions might be appropriate to address L&D under each typology?

Thank you!

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