

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting of ACE Implementation

The 2023 ACE Dialogue will focus on one of the priority areas of the Glasgow work programme on ACE – monitoring, evaluation and reporting (MER), which plays a critical role in ensuring accountability and progress in ACE implementation<sup>1</sup> – i.e., whether and how ACE is making a difference in addressing the causes and impacts of climate change.

Submissions from Parties and other stakeholders<sup>2</sup> have highlighted examples of MER practices and identified diverse entry points for discussing this priority area. Considering the complexities around MER of ACE implementation reflected in the submissions, this note provides background information and frames the structure of this year’s ACE Dialogue to facilitate focused discussions.

### 1. What is monitoring, evaluation and reporting and why does it matter?

The Adaptation Committee states that, in the context of adaptation, monitoring entails tracking “progress made in implementing a specific adaptation action in relation to its objectives and inputs”, while evaluation aims at “systematically and objectively determining the effectiveness of an adaptation action”<sup>3</sup> (Adaptation Committee, 2014). The same view can be applied to ACE implementation.

Monitoring and evaluation enable planners and practitioners to judge the extent to which ACE actions are effective in achieving their objectives, and together with reporting and dissemination of information generated by this process, it allows continual learning from and adjustments to the implementation of ACE.

Although usually portrayed as the last step in the cycle following the logic of the process, MER should be a core consideration throughout each step of the process, rather than being seen as only coming into play once the other steps have concluded. (see figure 1).



Figure 1. Main phases in implementing a national ACE strategy  
(modified from UNESCO & UNFCCC, 2016)

<sup>1</sup> ACE implementation refers to the development and use of the elements of ACE, including to facilitate the implementation of the Convention and Paris Agreement.

<sup>2</sup> All submissions available at: <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/submissionsstaging/Pages/Home.aspx>. Please search “Action for Climate Empowerment”.

<sup>3</sup> Adaptation Committee, 2014. Report on the workshop on the monitoring and evaluation of adaptation. Available at: [https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/ac\\_me\\_ws\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/ac_me_ws_report_final.pdf).

## 2. How to monitor, evaluate and report on ACE implementation

The ACE guidelines published in 2016 stated that a general monitoring and evaluation protocol that can be applied to all ACE activities did not exist. Instead, monitoring and evaluation should be tailored to each activity's objectives and to the country's uniqueness.<sup>4</sup> More than six years on, this is still the case – there is no one-size-fits-all approach to MER of ACE implementation, and therefore needs to be carried out according to Parties' and organizations' specific priorities, needs and circumstances.

The 2023 ACE dialogue will explore some of the methodologies currently used for MER by Parties and other stakeholders for ACE and its six elements at different levels. For instance, developing and applying indicators on ACE can enable Parties and non-Party stakeholders to benchmark and track the number of ACE activities occurring, to support the setting of increasingly ambitious ACE targets and to support other priority areas of the Glasgow work programme on ACE, such as policy coherence and coordinated action. Mapping existing ACE activities can also help establish a baseline across relevant sectors (agriculture, education, etc.) as well as different sectors of society (public, private, non-profit, etc.) to allow for tracking progress in ACE implementation.

Examples of MER methodologies identified through the submissions and desk review are compiled in the annex. Experiences shared in the submissions and at the ACE Dialogue will be captured in the annual summary report (ACE action plan, activity D.1).

Given the diverse levels of implementation and the actors involved, the participation of non-Party stakeholders in MER should be a cross-cutting consideration. Participants will be invited to discuss how a diverse range of stakeholders, including women, children, youth and Indigenous Peoples, can be involved in and contribute to MER of ACE implementation.

In addition, MER of ACE implementation shares common challenges faced by, among others, adaptation and capacity-building. Participants will be encouraged to bring in experience from other workstreams under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, as well as other international frameworks and processes that may be relevant to further enhance the understanding of MER of ACE implementation and its way forward.

## 3. How to assess the effectiveness of ACE implementation

In order to answer whether and how ACE is making a difference, one specific aspect of MER draws attention – that is the issue of assessing the *effectiveness* of ACE implementation. Submissions and the desk review revealed that there is currently a lack of assessment tools, common definition, data and capacity to monitor progress and evaluate the impact of ACE activities and initiatives holistically and systematically.

A combination of approaches may be needed to measure the effectiveness of ACE implementation. Some examples include:

- Output/process and outcome/impact-oriented targets and indicators;
- Quantitative and qualitative assessment of activities;
- Compilation and synthesis of information and data.

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<sup>4</sup> UNESCO & UNFCCC, 2016, Action for Climate Empowerment: Guidelines for accelerating solutions through education, training and public awareness. Available at: <https://unfccc.int/topics/education-and-outreach/resources/ace-guidelines>.

Discussion on the effectiveness of ACE implementation will contribute to an enhanced understanding, especially around the question of what successful ACE implementation comprises (or what is good / high-quality ACE). Previous discussions on MER of ACE implementation also noted the importance of identifying the impact of ACE activities in building the evidence base for funding of ACE activities, i.e., enhancing the fundability of ACE-related projects.

The effectiveness of ACE implementation could require different objectives and approaches depending on the implementation level. At the international or UNFCCC level, for instance, this could mean answering how we can review the collective progress made in implementing the Glasgow work programme and its action plan in 2026 (mid-term review of the work programme) and 2031 (final review of the work programme). At the national and project level, the question of how to measure the impact of individual ACE policies and measures could be raised.

#### 4. Interlinkages with other priority areas

Submissions also noted how MER and other priority areas – policy coherence, coordinated action, and tools and support – are interconnected. The table below provides examples from the submission and desk review of how other priority areas can help improve the MER of ACE implementation.

Priority areas	Examples of interlinkages with MER
Policy coherence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integration of ACE in national climate policies, plans, strategies and action, including nationally determined contributions, national adaptation plans and long-term strategies, and MER thereof;</li> <li>Integration of ACE in national and subnational climate change monitoring and evaluation systems;</li> <li>Development and implementation of national ACE strategies and MER thereof;</li> <li>MER of ACE implementation under other international frameworks and processes, such as Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and ACE-related regional conventions and agreements.</li> </ul>
Coordinated action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-country coordination and institutional arrangements at different levels for MER of ACE implementation;</li> <li>Development of multi-stakeholder networks and platforms that support MER of ACE activities at the regional, national and local levels.</li> </ul>
Tools and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishment of partnerships with other Parties, IGOs, NGOs and other stakeholders to facilitate ACE implementation, including to develop institutional and technical capacity to assess the effectiveness of ACE activities;</li> <li>Facilitation of access to MER tools, guidance and support available and peer-to-peer sharing of lessons learned on different MER approaches.</li> </ul>

#### 5. Focus of the 2023 ACE Dialogue

Given the vast scope to be covered under the topic of MER, this year's ACE Dialogue will focus on progress in MER rather than progress made in other priority areas. For instance, participants will be invited to share their experience on how their national ACE strategies are being monitored, rather than on taking stock of how many countries are developing and implementing the strategies. Similarly, participants will be encouraged to discuss tools and support needed for better MER of ACE

implementation, and not on mapping available support, including financial support, for ACE implementation in a broader sense.

The secretariat has therefore designed the agenda for the 2023 ACE Dialogue, which is now available on the [UNFCCC website](#), with this framing. Nevertheless, the secretariat has taken note of relevant inputs from the submissions on other priority areas to inform subsequent ACE Dialogues and for consideration, where appropriate, for the annual ACE summary report.

### Annex 1. Non-exhaustive examples of MER methodologies

Methodology	Level	Party/Organization	Example
Indicator	International	MECCE	Open-access research-based <a href="#">indicators</a> for climate communication and education, using non-self-reported, high-quality data sources
	National	Dominican Republic	Indicators and targets on ACE integrated into the NDC and its Action Plan 2022-2025
	National	Universidad Nacional de México	Indicators for the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean (Escazú Agreement)
Survey/ Mapping	International	UNESCO	<a href="#">Survey</a> of nearly 17,500 young people from 166 countries on their demands for quality climate change education
	International/ National	Yale Program on Climate Change Communication	<a href="#">Public opinion</a> and messaging research at the global, national, and local scales, using surveys, experiments, qualitative methods, statistical models, maps and participatory GIS, among other methods
	National	Sweden	National <a href="#">survey</a> since 2002 on public's knowledge and attitudes regarding different paths to a climate neutral society and opinions about different solutions to the climate issue over time
	National	Trinidad and Tobago	The <a href="#">ACE Space</a> as an online platform to collect information on ACE activities across all stakeholder groups in the country
	National	United States	The <a href="#">Climate Engagement and Capacity Building Interagency Group</a> and the mapping of existing climate trainings, classes and professional development opportunities provided by federal departments and agencies
	National	Zambia/FAO	Participatory baseline establishment for the upcoming Facility for Action for Climate Empowerment for achieving the Nationally Determined Contributions (FACE-NDC) in Zambia
Case Study	International	UNESCO/MECCE	<a href="#">Country profiles</a> (50 so far) on national laws and policies related to climate communication and education

	National/ Sub-national	MECCE	Funded <a href="#">case studies</a> to improve understandings of how high-quality ACE policy and practice addresses holistic, cultural and regional factors and to explore the impacts of high-quality ACE
	Sub-national	ClimeTime	<a href="#">Project profiles</a> on the successes and lessons learned in local and state-wide projects on climate change education in the State of Washington, USA.
Reporting	International	UN Economic Commission for Europe	Guidance and format for the <a href="#">reporting mechanism</a> under the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention)
	International	UNESCO	<a href="#">Reporting</a> on the implementation of the 1974 Recommendation concerning Education for International Understanding, Co-operation and Peace and Education relating to Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, including aspects relating to climate change education
	National	Various Parties	Reporting of activities and policies. Involving ACE implementation in their national communications
	National	Thailand	Annual ACE report on progress in implementing the six ACE elements at the national level
Platform	International	Climate Watch/ UNICEF	Analysis and <a href="#">presentation</a> of ACE and child-sensitive commitments in NDCs