



Co-chairs' summary of the Presidencies' consultations on adaptation 23-24 February 2021

Introduction

We held the second of our monthly multilateral consultations on 23-24 February 2021, focusing on the topic of adaptation. We were delighted by the active engagement and the fruitful substantive discussions among Parties. Parties made clear that adaptation continues to be a high priority for all countries, and that delivery on adaptation-related topics and mandates will be integral to achieving an ambitious outcome at COP 26. We were very pleased to have framing remarks by the UK International Champion on Adaptation & Resilience for COP26, Minister Anne-Marie Trevelyan, and by the Subsidiary Body Chairs; they all expressed their commitment to accelerating progress on adaptation through their respective remits.

Prior to the consultations, we issued three discussion questions to structure the conversation and solicit Parties' views on some of the areas we viewed as important to securing progress ahead of and during COP 26. These questions focused on how to enable practical progress on the global goal on adaptation, how the technical work by relevant constituted bodies can best contribute towards a successful adaptation outcome at COP 26, and how to improve the quantity, quality, accessibility, predictability, and effectiveness of adaptation finance. We welcomed Parties' interventions on these questions and on other adaptation-related issues that they wished to highlight.

Global goal on adaptation

Related to enabling practical progress on the global goal on adaptation, Parties underscored that the global goal is a cornerstone of adaptation-related work under the Paris Agreement. Some Parties emphasised that more needs to be done to ensure that the narrative around climate ambition includes adaptation and support as well as mitigation and the need to raise the political profile of adaptation. Parties' interventions highlighted that practical progress towards the global goal on adaptation encompasses progress in conceptualizing the goal, progress in understanding how best to review overall progress made, as well as progress in implementing the global goal on adaptation on the ground.

During the discussion, Parties identified potential steps that may facilitate further progress towards the global goal on adaptation. These steps could include, for example, undertaking additional work to define the goal and understand what collective progress towards it means, exchanging good practices and lessons learned from relevant country efforts, developing methodologies to translate the global goal into national-level frameworks and actions, enhancing knowledge and capacity in areas such as forecasting, and undertaking cooperative action through multilateral initiatives and partnerships with non-party stakeholders.

Parties generally agreed on the need to create further opportunities for attention on the global goal on adaptation. At the same time, Parties expressed differing views on the most appropriate approach for doing so, particularly within the formal negotiations under the UNFCCC; while some were in favour of adding a dedicated agenda item for the global goal on adaptation, others felt that the existing agenda items provided adequate opportunities for discussions on the various facets of the goal. Outside of the negotiation process, it was proposed by some Parties that there might be value in holding an event specifically focused on the global goal on adaptation – such as a technical workshop or roundtable – to enhance Parties’ understanding of related issues and provide the opportunity for discussion among Parties, as well as with experts and observers as appropriate.

Several Parties also made reference to the importance of finalizing the consideration of the public registry for adaptation communications and launching the registry, noting that this would help to both catalyze further action on adaptation as well as make visible Parties’ progress, priorities, and enduring needs related to adaptation. Indeed, we heard repeated mentions of the important role of the adaptation communications in relation to the global goal on adaptation. Specifically, Parties highlighted that the adaptation communications are indispensable tools for taking stock of countries’ progress, needs, and challenges, and that the needs identified in these communications can be a basis for understanding the support needs of developing country Parties. Some Parties suggested that the periodic enhancement of adaptation communications should be encouraged analogous to the manner in which the periodic submission of enhanced NDCs is encouraged and expected.

Work of the constituted bodies

In discussing the global goal on adaptation, Parties expressed appreciation for the work of the Adaptation Committee and other constituted bodies in advancing Parties’ consideration and understanding of key issues. Specifically, Parties welcomed the Adaptation Committee’s progress in developing a draft technical paper¹ considering approaches to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation and noted that this paper warrants further discussion and attention. Parties expressed different views on these possible approaches to assessing progress, with some emphasizing the need for developing metrics or indicators to facilitate such an assessment, while others stressed that no universal metric or indicator, or set of metrics or indicators, can adequately and appropriately capture the variety and breadth of adaptation across countries. In relation to the aforementioned technical workshop or roundtable on the global goal on adaptation proposed by Parties, some Parties noted that the Adaptation Committee could introduce their technical work during such an event and invite reflections on the methodological and other questions that this work raises. We heard from some Parties that such an event should be additional to the one that the Adaptation Committee is currently planning to hold.

More broadly on the work of the constituted bodies, Parties highlighted the range of work underway that can help contextualize and inform discussions and action on adaptation under the UNFCCC process moving forward. This includes work undertaken by the Adaptation Committee, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, the Standing Committee on Finance, the Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform, the Paris Committee on Capacity Building, the Nairobi Work Programme and more. These bodies continue to provide valuable guidance and information on adaptation, and thereby support countries as they advance their adaptation action. In

¹ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/ac18_gga.pdf

order to maximize the benefit and reach of this body of high-quality work, we heard a call for the work of the constituted bodies to be thoroughly disseminated to Parties. We also heard clear calls by some Parties to ensure that constituted bodies continue to report on the full scope of their work in their annual reports.

Parties emphasized the importance of ensuring that this adaptation-related work undertaken by the constituted bodies is complementary, coherent, collaborative, and not duplicative. Towards this end, some Parties proposed hosting joint events of the constituted bodies working on adaptation to present their work and engage in discussions with Parties with a view to preparing for and informing discussions at COP 26.

In addition to this, Parties noted that the upcoming review of some constituted bodies, particularly the Adaptation Committee and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, provides an opportunity to ensure that these bodies continue to support Parties and to align their workplans in a manner that promotes coherence and synergies.

Separate from the work of the constituted bodies, several Parties welcomed efforts which complement the UNFCCC process to advance adaptation action. This included the Global Commission on Adaptation, the Africa Adaptation Initiative, the Adaptation Action Coalition and other initiatives by the incoming COP Presidency as outlined by Minister Trevelyan.

Finance for adaptation

On the topic of finance, we heard clear recognition of the need to improve the quantity, quality, accessibility, predictability, and effectiveness of adaptation finance. Parties welcomed recent commitments to mobilize finance for adaptation. A few Parties also welcomed commitments to strive towards 50% of climate finance to go to adaptation and many stressed the importance of balance with mitigation in the allocation of climate finance, but emphasized that further work is needed to fulfil this objective as soon as possible.

Some Parties highlighted the importance of strengthening direct access from multilateral and bilateral sources, simplifying access mechanisms, increasing the development of concrete and bankable adaptation projects, developing enabling environments in recipient countries, and reducing reporting burdens, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Recognizing the critical importance of the NAP process for building medium- and long-term resilience, some Parties also highlighted the need for streamlining modalities and fast-tracking support to finance the NAP process, and supporting NAP implementation in particular, including through simplified access modalities under the Green Climate Fund. Additional specific proposals included ensuring that decision-makers have access to the latest available science to screen investments for climate resilience, facilitating the sharing of best practices in relation to regional disaster risk facilities, and enhancing capacity building support for formulating and implementing adaptation finance proposals.

Additionally, we heard Parties stress the need to mobilize adaptation finance from all sources and ensure that all financial flows contribute to climate resilient development. At the same time, we heard that public and grant-based finance must continue to hold a prominent place in the adaptation finance landscape.

Some Parties noted that the forthcoming work of the Standing Committee on Finance – particularly its fourth biennial assessment and overview of climate finance flows and its first report on the determination of the needs of developing country Parties related to implementing the Convention and the Paris Agreement – will be an important input for informing further steps taken with respect to adaptation finance.

In addition, some Parties noted that adaptation finance must be a prominent focus in discussions that take place related to a new collective climate finance goal. Specifically, this includes taking into account existing gaps and needs with respect to adaptation finance. We heard differing views on targets for mobilizing a specific amount of adaptation finance on an annual basis, although Parties generally agreed that the provision of finance must be needs-based.

Moreover, we heard concerns related to conditionalities on adaptation finance, and the possibility that some of these may exacerbate the indebtedness of countries, which has already been worsened by the pandemic, as well as concerns related to accounting of adaptation finance.

In the context of these discussions, many Parties pointed to the linkages between adaptation finance and the ongoing discussions related to Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. In particular, there were several mentions of how arrangements made with regard to levies on shares of proceeds will affect the resources available through the Adaptation Fund, which is a key source of adaptation finance for developing country Parties.

Future consultations and next steps on adaptation

As we noted during the consultations, the upcoming consultations in March will address Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, and future consultations will focus on the topic of finance, and will therefore provide Parties the space to continue these discussions as well as to address other facets related to these items. In their interventions more broadly, some Parties also made reference to linkages with loss and damage. As indicated during the virtual meeting, we plan to also provide space for further discussion in this area in the future.

Details related to these upcoming consultations will be made available shortly on the [UNFCCC website](#). We recognize that some Parties requested receiving materials for future consultations further in advance to allow more time for coordination and preparation. We will do our best to facilitate this.

Recognizing the clear appetite for further substantive discussion and intersessional work on adaptation, we remain committed to working with Parties, as well as the UNFCCC secretariat, the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies and constituted bodies, to make available time and space as appropriate for continuing this critical work.