



LOSS AND DAMAGE COLLABORATION

(L&DC): SUBMISSION TO INFORM

THE UNFCCC'S NELs TECHNICAL

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INTRODUCTION

The following submission is made on behalf of the [Loss and Damage Collaboration](#)'s Non-Economic Loss and Damage [working group](#). For any enquiries or follow up requests, please contact: NELD@lossanddamagecollaboration.org

The submission is composed of two sections. In Section 1 (pages 2-4), a list of non-economic loss and damage focused case studies provided and categorised as per the requested focus areas. In Section 2 (pages 5-10), key points and related literature relevant to the update of the UNFCCC's technical paper on non-economic losses are provided. These key points are grouped under the following headings:

- 2.1 The 'types of non-economic loss' are not reflective of on-the-ground experiences (page 5).
- 2.2 Non-economic loss (and damages) (page 6).
- 2.3 More-than-human experiences and relational aspects (page 7).
- 2.4 Disproportionate vulnerability and the need to address root causes (page 5).
- 2.5 Interconnections between economic and non-economic loss and damage.



1. CASE STUDIES FOCUSING ON NON-ECONOMIC LOSS AND DAMAGE

The extensive table below provides a list of reports focusing on non-economic loss and damage that include case studies. For each report we have listed the country or region of the case study, the focus of the report and the focus area. The reports are categorised following four focus areas*:

- A. Assessments of non-economic losses and damages
- B. NELs policies and planning for prevention and response
- C. Different levels of response on the ground to NELs
- D. NELs tools and methods for assessment

Table 1: Non-economic loss and damage case studies

CASE STUDY COUNTRY	FOCUS	FOCUS AREA*	SOURCE
Bangladesh	Assessing	A	Non-economic loss and damage caused by climatic stressors in selected coastal districts of Bangladesh (Andrei et al., 2014)
Bangladesh, Ethiopia, El Salvador, Tanzania	Assessing	A, B	Discussion paper: non-economic loss And damage, with case examples from Tanzania, Ethiopia, El Salvador and Bangladesh (Hirsch et al., 2017)
Bangladesh, Japan	Assessing, addressing	A, B, C	Climate change-related non-economic loss and damage in Bangladesh and Japan (Chiba et al., 2017)
Fiji	Assessing	A, B, C	Customary land and climate change induced relocation—a case study of Vunidogoloa village, Vanua Levu, Fiji (Charan et al., 2017)
Bangladesh, Japan	Assessing, addressing	A, B, D	Addressing non-economic loss and damage associated with climatic events: cases of Japan and Bangladesh (Chiba et al., 2019)
India	Economic valuation	A, D	Assessing the costs of droughts in rural India: a comparison of economic and non-economic loss and damage (Bahinipati, 2020)



India	Risk management strategies	B, C	Do risk management strategies prevent economic and non-economic loss and damages? Empirical evidence from drought affected households in western India (Bahinipati, 2022)
Pacific Islands	Assessing, addressing	A, B	Exploring climate-driven non-economic loss and damage in the Pacific Islands (McNamara et al., 2021)
Pacific Islands	Cascading loss	B, D	Cascading loss and loss risk multipliers amid a changing climate in the Pacific Islands (Westoby et al., 2022)
Bangladesh, Fiji, Vanuatu	Mental well-being, gender	A, B, D	Stories of loss and healing: connecting non-economic losses and damages with gendered wellbeing erosion in the Asia-Pacific region (Ayebe-Karlsson et al., 2021)
Bangladesh	Assessing	A	Economic and non-economic loss and damage to climate change: evidence from a developing country shrimp farms to cyclone Bulbul (Islam et al., 2022)
Bangladesh	Loss of wellbeing, displacement and (im)mobility	A	'When we were children we had dreams, then we came to Dhaka to survive': urban stories connecting loss of wellbeing, displacement and (im)mobility (Ayebe-Karlsson et al. 2021)
Dominica, Barbuda	Reframing, policy	A, B	Re-framing non-economic losses to non-economic impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean (Pill, 2022)
Bangladesh	Assessing, local response, gender	A, B, C	Local responses to climate-related non-economic losses and damages: a case study in Burigoalini and Gabura Union, Southwest Bangladesh (Van Schie et al., 2022)
Ghana	Assessing, farmers	A	Understanding non-economic loss and damage due to climate change in Ghana (Boafo et al., 2023)
Pacific Islands	Policy response	A, B	Climate-induced non-economic loss and damage: understanding policy responses, challenges, and future directions in Pacific Small Island Developing States (Chandra et al., 2023)



Fiji	Assessing	A, B	Addressing unavoidable climate change loss and damage: A case study from Fiji's sugar industry (Nand et al., 2023)
Fiji	Values based approach	D, C	Climate-induced non-economic loss and damage in Fiji Islands (Nand et al. 2023)
The Bahamas	Policy response	A,B	Non-economic loss and damage: lessons from displacement in the Caribbean (Adelle Thomas et al. 2019)
USA	Assessing health and mental health	A	Differences in interference processing and frontal brain function with climate trauma from California's deadliest wildfire (Grennan et al., 2023)
USA	Assessing health and mental health	A	Chronic mental health sequelae of climate change extremes: a case study of the deadliest Californian wildfire (Sarita Silveira et al. 2021)
Australia	Experiences of loss and value trade-offs in responses	A, C, D	Navigating loss and value trade-offs in a changing climate (Henrique et al. 2022)
<i>Relevant overviews of (non-economic) loss and damage</i>			
Global overview		A, B, C, D	Passed the point of no return: a non-economic loss and damage explainer (Jackson et al. 2022)
Global overview		A, B, C	One thousand ways to experience loss: A systematic analysis of climate-related intangible harm from around the world (Tschakert et al. 2019)
Global overview		A, B, D	Loss and damage from climate change: a new climate justice agenda (Boyd et al. 2021)



2. LITERATURE AND KEY POINTS RELEVANT FOR THE UPDATE OF THE UNFCCC'S TECHNICAL PAPER ON NON-ECONOMIC LOSSES

The UNFCCC's report, [Non-economic losses in the context of the work programme on loss and damage](#), is an essential contribution to the understanding of non-economic loss and damage. In particular, it raised significant awareness of the importance of non-economic losses and damages and shaped many analyses on the matter. However, various assumptions and limitations in the technical paper threaten to undermine a holistic account of non-economic losses and damages. Below, we highlight multiple points made by scholars and practitioners in case studies responding to claims made in the technical paper to raise awareness of these assumptions and limitations.

2.1 The 'types of non-economic loss' are not reflective of on-the-ground experiences

Following the technical paper of 2013 many assessments of non-economic losses and damages adopted pre-determined 'types of non-economic loss' similar to those proposed by the UNFCCC. However, evidence shows that these do not reflect the full range of non-economic losses and damages people experience. This has resulted in limited assessments that discount on-the-ground experiences. Moreover, Western researchers often determine these types of non-economic loss, leaving affected communities with no voice in assessments. Table 2 provides some examples from the literature that demonstrate the limitations of such an approach.

Table 2: Critiques of predetermined typologies of non-economic loss.

Exemplary and related quotes	Source
"Although typologies have emerged for policy and knowledge production purposes, NELD is potentially infinite, being dependent on diverse beliefs and worldviews that inform people's perceptions and experiences of loss." (p. 1366)	Loss and damage from climate change: A new climate justice agenda (Boyd et al. 2021)
"...certain NELs need to be added and thirdly, economic and non-economic losses cannot entirely be compartmentalized. In order to fulfil the third suggestion, a new category of a	Re-framing non-economic losses to non-economic



life function is proposed” (p. 776)	impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean (Pill, 2022)
“As the removal of an economic good that gives people’s life meaning is needed to maintain a livelihood and defines an individual, the notion should be taken further to that of a life function. Depriving a person of their life function results in non-economic impacts and psychological distress” (p. 777)	
“There are a thousand ways to experience loss, but we keep looking in the same places by holding onto pre-determined types specified by Western experts in a top-down manner; affected societies have little or no say in what is examined.”	The case for a values-based understanding of loss and damage (Van Schie et al., 2023)
“At the international level, the UNFCCC’s broad L&D categories do not fully capture the personal and cultural losses experienced at the local level. Any misalignment of the UNFCCC’s L&D categories and the NELD experienced at the local level could result in significant policy gaps” (p. 21)	Addressing unavoidable climate change loss and damage: A case study from Fiji’s sugar industry (Nand, 2023)

2.2 Non-economic loss (and damages)

The UNFCCC uses the terminology non-economic *loss*. Most researchers and practitioners use the term non-economic loss and damage. The exclusion of *damages* alludes to the fact that non-economic aspects of life are not repairable, which is not always the case. The difference in reparability between *losses* and *damages* is significant and these should be taken into account in the updates technical report. Table 3 provides some examples that show it is important to critically consider the limitations of only employing the term non-economic loss.

Table 3: Examples demonstrating the case for employing non-economic loss and damage.

Exemplary and related quotes	Source
“In all cases, the necessity of re-naming NELs to non-economic impacts is also supported by the assistant measures that interviewees mentioned. Non-economic losses cannot be addressed with compensation but impacts can.” (p. 776)	Re-framing non-economic losses to non-economic impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean (Pill, 2022)



<p>“Insights from stakeholders also showed that loss surprisingly, in some instances, can be repairable—and therefore doesn’t have to be an absolute given.” (p. 1242)</p>	<p>Cascading loss and loss risk multipliers amid a changing climate in the Pacific Islands (Westoby et al., 2022)</p>
<p>“While the UNFCCC adopted the terminology non-economic loss, practitioners and researchers have preferred to work on non-economic loss and damage. The inclusion of damage is important as non-economic aspects can sustain damage which can be recoverable. An ecosystem, for example, can be restored (close) to its previous state.” (p. 45)</p>	<p>Practical action for addressing loss and damage (Scottish Government, 2023)</p>
<p>“Perpetual damages to an object can lead to a loss. For example, a drought can adversely affect a plant species in a region, causing damage. Perpetual droughts over a longer period of time can cause this species to disappear from the area, causing a loss. In this example, a series of damages lead to a loss. Moreover, damages from climate change are also a severe consequence that undermines livelihoods and sustainable development and inflicts harm on vulnerable people and as such need attention in both policy and practice spheres. We therefore use the term “non-economic loss and damage” throughout this explainer” (p. 5-6).</p>	<p>Passed the point of no return: a non-economic loss and damage explainer (Jackson et al. 2022)</p>

2.3 More-than-human experiences and relational aspects

Assessments and briefs concerning non-economic loss and damage only focus on impacts incurred by humans, leaving out the more-than-human world. This anthropocentric perspective on loss and damage results in an incomplete overview of non-economic losses and damages. Table 4 provides some examples from the literature that demonstrate the need to consider non-human life beyond instrumental human values.

Table 4: More-than-human loss and damage

Exemplary and related quotes	Source
<p>“The technical paper, for example, only considers harms to people. It does so in spite of the fact that it lists ‘environment’ as an area of loss independent from ‘individuals’ and ‘social items’ (para. 69), and in spite of the fact noted above that loss and damage is officially defined as a negative impact not just on people, but also on ‘natural systems’. Other analyses do the same thing (Morrissey & Oliver-Smith, 2013; Warner et al., 2012) (p. 135)</p>	<p>Values and harms in loss and damage (McShane, 2017)</p>



<p>“The focus on NELD is still very anthropocentric and continues to obscure the losses being incurred by the more-than-human world (IPBES 2019). Although ecosystem services and biodiversity are established categories of NELD (Boyd et al. 2021), they are still framed in relation to human use values as opposed to intrinsically valuable themselves” (p. 12)</p>	<p>An emerging governmentality of climate change loss and damage (Jackson et al, 2023)</p>
<p>“Respondents were particularly concerned about bird life, and several commented on their disappearance from their everyday spaces: “You don’t see certain birds anymore, even in your own garden. We used to have red-capped parrots... but I haven’t seen them for a year now.” (A8) “I can’t remember the last time I heard a kookaburra.” (D4) The perceived effects of droughts and heatwaves on other fauna was also widespread, including concerns about pets, native species such as bandicoots, kangaroos, lizards, and bees, as well as flora, particularly trees, and the interconnections between them” (p.9).</p> <p>“The suffering of animals, both near and far, was central to many accounts and often triggered visceral emotional responses. This is perhaps in part because the interviews were conducted during or immediately following the 2019/20 bushfires in Eastern Australia, which generated disturbing media coverage of burned or killed wildlife, especially koalas and kangaroos: “I feel sorry for all the bloody koalas on Kangaroo Island.” (A5) “I think every day they must suffer as we do.” (T10) Such emotive responses draw attention to the interconnectedness between our respondents’ well-being and that of their natural surroundings, for instance: “All the plants are dying. The animals are suffering too, and some are dying. There is no food and no water for them. This affects my mental health” (M7).”</p>	<p>Navigating loss and value trade-offs in a changing climate (Henrique et al. 2022)</p>

2.4 Disproportionate vulnerability and the need to address root causes

Assessments of non-economic losses and damages rarely account for different experiences of climate change. If they do, there tends to be a singular focus on, for example, culture or gender, with no mention of intersectional vulnerabilities. These single-focus lenses leave little space to reveal and address the complex social problems connected to non-economic losses and damages. Moreover, more attention must be paid to the root sources of vulnerability, which is crucial to averting further non-economic loss and damage. Table 5 provides some examples from the literature that demonstrates this.



Table 5: Examples of the importance of addressing root causes of vulnerability.

Exemplary and related quotes	Source
<p>“It is important to point out that in all instances of non-economic impacts a gender distinction is currently missing under the UNFCCC” (p. 776)</p>	<p>Re-framing non-economic losses to non-economic impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean (Pill, 2022)</p>
<p>“Disproportionality research calls for a critical examination of the deeply rooted structural inequalities that lead to skewed distribution of burdens at a global scale” (p.14).</p> <p>“Disproportionality as a concept originates from—and is rooted in—questions of justice and responsibility. However, in loss and damage scholarship, these remain mostly conceptual, often lacking in empirical grounding. As a lens, disproportionality makes it necessary to investigate what justice and responsibility mean for those affected, conceptually and empirically” (p. 14).</p>	<p>A critical review of disproportionality in loss and damage from climate change (Dorkenoo et al. 2022)</p>
<p>“EEA [extreme event attribution] is concerned only with the probability of the hazard itself and this can, perhaps unwittingly, obscure vulnerability and its societal drivers including colonialism, class and race, extractive capitalism, land-use change, developing-country debt, austerity, population growth (i.e., more exposed people and assets), and governmental decisions and (in)actions” (p. 8).</p> <p>“Loss and damage scholars and actors must reflect on the way they are reproducing various scientific and governmental discourses that reduce the social, political, economic, and environmental processes and factors that create vulnerability to climate change being the cause of losses and damages” (p.16).</p>	<p>An emerging governmentality of climate change loss and damage (Jackson et al, 2023)</p>
<p>“While climate change stress may reveal itself in “crises,” vulnerability is a latent social condition, and the historical nature of vulnerability is that some had already experienced loss and damage through the process of colonization and development in the 20th century (O’Brien & Leichenko 2000; Pelling 2003). The suggested policy tools for addressing loss and damage (UNFCCC SBI 2012a; UNFCCC TP 2012) focus largely on biophysical hazards but contain no inherent imperative for transformational structural change.”</p>	<p>Problematising loss and damage (Wrathal et al. 2015)</p>
<p>“Examining and addressing the root causes of vulnerability is not only crucial to minimise future loss and damage, it can also be part of developing compensatory measures to achieve just, fair, and effective outcomes that reduce inequalities and vulnerabilities on a long-term basis”</p>	<p>Practical action for addressing loss and damage (Scottish Government, 2023)</p>



<p>“Previous evidence-based studies on noneconomic loss and damage have not focused on vulnerability and, instead, often take a normative perspective concerning communities or societies. Moreover, the few studies that focus on differentiated vulnerabilities do not account for intersectional experiences of non-economic loss and damage.”</p>	<p>Practical action for addressing loss and damage (Scottish Government, 2023)</p>
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2.5 Interconnections between economic and non-economic loss and damage

The compartmentalisation of different non-economic losses and damages and the strict dichotomy between economic and non-economic impacts prevents explorations of how different aspects of life are entangled. Evidence strongly suggests that few people ever fully separate economic and non-economic values, the two being fundamentally related. Table 6 provides some examples from the literature that demonstrate this crucial point.

Table 6: Examples that problematise the complete separation of economic and non-economic loss and damage

Exemplary and related quotes	Source
<p>“For them, non-economic impacts are a direct result of an economic loss and especially for men, the two seem inherently connected. Complete differentiation and compartmentalization between the two is therefore inaccurate” (p. 777)</p>	<p>Re-framing non-economic losses to non-economic impacts for effective policymaking: evidence from the Caribbean (Pill, 2022)</p>
<p>“Despite our natural tendencies to categorise and organise, it can be unhelpful to delineate clean boundaries and linear understandings for complex and messy concepts such as loss and damage.” (p. 1239)</p>	<p>Cascading loss and loss risk multipliers amid a changing climate in the Pacific Islands (Westoby et al., 2022)</p>
<p>“This dichotomization of the economic and non-economic has resulted in a disconnect between the concepts. However, at the local level the two are heavily entangled, with one frequently cascading into another. Therefore, a thorough and integrated understanding of one is needed to fully comprehend the other. However, this understanding is lacking and reports commonly only focus on economic or on non-economic impacts.”</p>	<p>The case for a values-based understanding of loss and damage (Van Schie et al., 2023)</p>