

# Input by the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts

## 1. Introduction

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 1/CP.23, decided to convene a stocktake on pre-2020 implementation and ambition at COP 24. As part of this decision, the COP noted that all Parties share the view that pre-2020 implementation and ambition are of utmost importance, and that enhanced pre-2020 ambition can lay a solid foundation for enhanced post-2020 ambition. The COP, by decision 1/CP.24 reiterated the above-mentioned decision to convene a stocktake on pre-2020 implementation and ambition at COP 25. The COP decided that the stocktake will consider, inter alia, inputs of the constituted bodies, with a view to bringing visibility to and creating a more coherent understanding of the pre-2020 work of the UNFCCC bodies.

2. In this context, as a response to the COP decision this document provides input on pre-2020 work of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (Warsaw International Mechanism), supplementing input provided on this matter in 2018.

## 2. Pre-2020 context: Increasing mitigation ambition and adaptation actions reduces risk of loss and damage; sense of urgency

3. In the broadest understanding, all efforts being taken to curb the global average temperature increase and to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change can contribute to preventing or reducing the risks of loss and damage associated with climate change borne by societies and individuals.<sup>1</sup>

4. The COP has noted the concerns raised by Parties on the increasing frequency and severity of climate-related disasters that have affected many countries, including heatwaves, drought, floods, tropical cyclones, dust storms and other extreme weather events, as well as the increasing impacts associated with slow onset events, and the urgent need to avert, minimize and address these impacts through comprehensive risk management approaches.<sup>2</sup>

## 3. The Executive Committee's foundations, relevant COP decisions

5. The Warsaw International Mechanism and its Executive Committee were established in 2013 to address loss and damage associated with the impacts of climate change in particularly vulnerable developing countries. The three functions of the Warsaw International Mechanism are:<sup>3</sup>

(a) Enhancing knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, including slow onset impacts;

(b) Strengthening dialogue, coordination and synergies among relevant stakeholders;

(c) Enhancing action and support, including finance technology and capacity-building, to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

6. The Executive Committee implements the three functions of the Warsaw International Mechanism through the implementation of its five-year rolling workplan,<sup>4</sup> which was formulated in 2017, and builds on the initial two-year work-plan approved by the COP in 2014.

7. The COP has also empowered the Executive Committee to establish task-focused, thematic technical expert groups, to assist the committee in conducting its work and supporting its efforts to enhance action and support for loss and damage.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> FCCC/TP/2019/1, para 20.

<sup>2</sup> Decision 5/CP.23, preambular para 2.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 2/CP.19, para 5.

<sup>4</sup> FCCC/SB/2017/1/Add.1, annex.

<sup>5</sup> Decision 2/CP.20, para 8.

#### 4. Progress since 2018

8. The efforts of the Executive Committee since its last submission on pre-2020 implementation and ambition in 2018 have centered around enhancing cooperation on and the facilitation of a range of thematic areas, including:

(a) Slow onset events, which the COP has recognized to include sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacial retreat and related impacts, salinization, land and forest degradation, loss of biodiversity and desertification;

(b) Non-economic losses, which encompass a broad range of items that are not economic and not commonly traded in markets, impacting individuals (e.g. life, health, human mobility), society (e.g. territory, cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge, societal/cultural identity) and environment (e.g. biodiversity, ecosystem services);

(c) Comprehensive risk management approaches, which include the assessment, reduction, transfer and retention of climate risks, with the aim of addressing and building the long-term resilience of developing countries to loss and damage, including through emergency preparedness; measures to enhance recovery, rehabilitation and build back/forward better; social protection instruments; and transformational approaches;

(d) Human mobility, which includes migration, displacement and planned relocation;

(e) Action and support, which includes finance, technology and capacity building, with the aim of addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

##### *Technical expert groups*

9. Recognizing the need to help countries to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, the COP requested the Executive Committee to establish the Task Force on Displacement by decision 1/CP.21. In accordance with this request, the Executive Committee established and operationalized the Task Force and forwarded to COP 24 an extensive set of recommendations for integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the impacts of climate change.<sup>6</sup> In turn, COP 24 invited Parties, relevant bodies, United Nations organizations and relevant stakeholders to consider these recommendations when undertaking relevant work, as appropriate. In October 2019, the Task Force launched its second phase.<sup>7</sup>

10. The Executive Committee launched the Technical Expert Group on Comprehensive Risk Management (TEG-CRM) and its plan of action during the course of 2019.<sup>8</sup> The TEG-CRM held, in collaboration with UNDRR and WMO, a workshop to bring together key stakeholders to identify ways to address capacity gaps related to climate risk observation and assessment at the global level, as well as to learn from national experience.<sup>9</sup> The workshop broadened cooperation among United Nations entities, regional organizations, academia and non-governmental organizations from different regions, as well as bodies under the Convention, such as the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, in relation to observation and risk assessment.

##### *Knowledge base*

11. The Executive Committee, in collaboration with the TEC, has been collaborating to develop a joint policy brief on technologies for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage in coastal zones, with a view to bridging the gap between technical expertise and policies.<sup>10</sup> The policy brief, planned to be completed in early 2020, will comprise chapters on technologies for coastal risk assessment, risk retention, recovery and rehabilitation.

---

<sup>6</sup> Decision 10/CP.24, annex.

<sup>7</sup> FCCC/SB/2019/5, Add. 1, annex I.

<sup>8</sup> FCCC/SB/2019/5, Add. 1, annex II.

<sup>9</sup> <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/executive-committee-of-the-warsaw-international-mechanism-for-loss-and-damage-wim-excom/stakeholder-engagement-workshop-on-strengthening-the-capacities-for-observation-and-risk-assessment>.

<sup>10</sup> The two committees also jointly convened an expert dialogue on the margins of SB 50 to further enhance the engagement of relevant experts and the inclusiveness of this joint work >>>.

12. Though several approaches to addressing loss and damage associated with slow onset events exist, there remain gaps in the understanding of the impacts associated with them and the approaches to addressing them. The Executive Committee has been collaborating with the publisher, Elsevier, of the journal *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, with a view to responding to the growing need for enhancing understanding of the negative effects of slow onset events on vulnerable populations and relevant approaches for addressing them. The special edition of the journal will be published by Elsevier in June 2021.

13. Based on over 340 approaches identified from across five geographical regions, the TEG-CRM finalized, in 2019, the compendium on comprehensive risk management approaches.<sup>11</sup> The compendium provides an overview of approaches to risk assessment, risk reduction, financial risk transfer, risk retention, and transformational approaches, as well as enabling environments for those approaches. It also contains examples of related current practices and lessons learned in a user-friendly manner. The compendium serves as a guide for practitioners and policymakers to enhancing the understanding of comprehensive risk management in building the long-term resilience of countries, vulnerable populations and communities.

14. The Fiji Clearing House for Risk Transfer, mandated at COP 21 and launched at COP 23, serves as a repository for information on insurance and risk transfer that facilitates the identification of tools, technologies, good practices and lessons learned, including with respect to policies and data standards, instruments such as insurance and social protection, and transformational approaches, to facilitate comprehensive risk management approaches.<sup>12</sup> The Executive Committee continues to maintain the knowledge facility to make available RISK TALK, an interactive part of the Fiji Clearing House for Risk Transfer, developed in collaboration with the secretariat of the InsuResilience Global Partnership. RISK TALK uses artificial intelligence technology to connect those looking for tailored solutions with the world of risk transfer expertise with the aim of assisting Parties in their efforts to develop and implement comprehensive risk management strategies.<sup>13</sup>

## 5. The Executive Committee in the post-2020 period

15. The Executive Committee will continue to make progress on its five-year rolling workplan, noting that future reviews of the Warsaw International Mechanism may enhance and strengthen the Committee's ability to confront challenges it faces and make further progress.

16. The Executive Committee, at its last meeting in 2019, noted under its agenda item on emerging and cross-cutting needs, decision 18/CMA.1, annex, paragraph 115, on information related to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with climate change impacts. At the same meeting, the Executive Committee forwarded recommendations to the Parties and decided, inter alia:

(a) To continue exploring opportunities and modalities for engaging stakeholders at the regional and national level, including national focal points and loss and damage contact points;

(b) To consider how to communicate the role of climate action in averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with climate change impacts via its products and activities.

---

<sup>11</sup>[https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/FINAL\\_AA3\\_Compndium\\_September\\_2019%28revised%29.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/FINAL_AA3_Compndium_September_2019%28revised%29.pdf).

<sup>12</sup> <http://unfccc-clearinghouse.org/>.

<sup>13</sup> <http://unfccc-clearinghouse.org/find-solution>.