

**Expert meeting on national adaptation goals/indicators and their relationship with  
the Sustainable Development Goals and  
the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction**

**24-25 July 2018, Tokyo, Japan**

**Background document**

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## 1. Introduction

1. The Adaptation Committee (AC), in its 2016-2018 workplan, agreed to convene a meeting in 2018, in collaboration with the Nairobi work programme, to exchange views on national adaptation goals/indicators and how they relate to indicators/goals for sustainable development (SDGs) and for disaster risk reduction in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030.<sup>1</sup>
2. Adapting to climate change is not only a key objective of the Paris Agreement but also necessary to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework. The 2017 technical examination process on adaptation conducted by the AC concluded that integrating adaptation with the SDGs and the Sendai Framework can be very beneficial for building resilience comprehensively across societies.<sup>2</sup> While maintaining the autonomy of each of the post-2015 frameworks, improved coherence of action to implement the three frameworks and to monitor their progress can save money and time, enhance efficiency and further enable adaptation action. The process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) was recognised as a useful entry point to take such integrated approaches.
3. As countries are translating the different global goals and targets into their national contexts (see table below), it is worthwhile to discuss how to translate the global goals and targets into national goals; what progress towards reaching those national goals and targets should be measured and how, including through indicators. While there are processes and guidelines in place for countries for reporting on national progress made towards the SDGs and the Sendai Framework, aspects of communicating/ reporting on progress made on adaptation at the national level under the Paris Agreement are still under negotiations.

**Table 1. Goals and indicators of the three post 2015 agendas**

Goals/ indicators Levels	UNFCCC and Paris Agreement	Agenda 2030 and SDGs	Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030
<b>Global</b>	Global goal on adaptation of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal of limiting temperature increase to well below 2 degrees and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5	17 global goals, with SDG 13 to take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts Several targets for each goal 232 indicators as part of the global indicator framework for the SDGs and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	Objective of substantially reducing disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries 7 targets 38 indicators were identified to measure global progress

<sup>1</sup>

[http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/cancun\\_adaptation\\_framework/adaptation\\_committee/application/pdf/20160308\\_wp\\_revised.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/cancun_adaptation_framework/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/20160308_wp_revised.pdf).

<sup>2</sup>

[http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups\\_committees/adaptation\\_committee/application/pdf/techpaper\\_adaptation.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/techpaper_adaptation.pdf).

	degrees C above pre-industrial levels No targets or indicators		
<b>National</b>	Countries have reported on progress made towards national goals and indicators through their national communications, their national adaptation plans or nationally determined contributions	Countries may define national SDG indicators (based on the global framework), set baselines and assess progress through scorecards	Countries may select national indicators from the Sendai Framework Monitoring System
<b>Sub-national/local</b>	Variety of indicators used across different sectors and funders of programmes and projects	Variety of indicators used across different sectors and funders of programmes and projects	Variety of indicators used across different sectors and funders of programmes and projects

4. The AC has been gathering knowledge and experience, and analyzing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for adaptation in order to provide technical support and guidance to the Parties, including through a workshop and a subsequent report, and inventory of M&E tools and submissions made under the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP).

5. To inform the meeting, the SBSTA invited NWP partner organizations and other relevant organizations, including the IPCC, to submit to the secretariat, by 20 September 2017, information on indicators of adaptation and resilience at the national and/or local level or for specific sectors.<sup>3</sup> Submissions were received from two Parties and 13 observers. The submissions (see Annex for a brief summary) illustrate that practitioners are facing similar difficulties, covering the following three aspects: 1) indicator design, 2) user capacity and 3) data constraints.

## 2. Indicators/goals for sustainable development

6. The SDGs are designed to enable countries to achieve sustainable and inclusive economic growth, social inclusion, environmental protection, and the eradication of poverty and hunger, while leaving no one behind, under 17 SDGs ranging from achieving no poverty, zero hunger, and clean water, to responsible consumption and production, climate action, and global partnerships. Goal 13 focuses on urgently addressing climate change and its impacts. Each SDG has several associated targets, and a set of measurable indicators used to track progress at global level, with 169 targets and 232 approved indicators in total.

7. An Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) was mandated by the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development to develop a set of global indicators to measure progress in the implementation of the SDGs. A framework of indicators was developed and adopted by the General Assembly in 2017, drawing from relevant information that countries are already reporting on through global processes, including under the UNFCCC process and Sendai Framework. A high level political forum (HLPF) conducts reviews and tracks progress towards the goals through use of country and other reports, reviewing a specific sub-set of SDGs, and sharing experiences and lessons learned. The

<sup>3</sup> FCCC/SBSTA/2016/2, paragraph 18.

UN Secretary General also reports annually on progress made in the implementation of the SDGs, based on the SDG indicator framework.<sup>4,5</sup>

8. Developed and developing countries regularly report their progress through voluntary national reviews (VNRs), which involve multiple stakeholders and review progress at the national and sub-national levels. As part of the VNRs, countries may include an annex with data, using the global SDG indicators and adding priority indicators identified at the regional and national levels where appropriate.<sup>6</sup>

### **3. Indicators/goals for disaster risk reduction in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030**

9. The Sendai Framework aims at managing current and future risks and enhancing resilience through seven specific targets including reduction of mortality, number of affected people and economic loss, development of national strategies, international support and multi-hazard early warning systems by 2030. In February 2017, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the resolution that approved the indicators specifically designed to ensure the monitoring of the progress in achieving the seven targets. Where appropriate, for consistency and coherence, the SDG indicator framework draws from those agreed in the Sendai Framework.

10. To measure global progress, UNISDR will monitor implementation and report progress at the 6th Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Geneva in 2019. The assessment of progress involves a biennial cycle and covers global trends including the related achievement of the SDGs. UNISDR has established the Sendai Framework Monitoring System, a national level M&E system.<sup>7</sup>

### **4. National adaptation goals/indicators under the Convention and the Paris Agreement**

11. The Paris Agreement features several provisions that are relevant to national adaptation goals/indicators (see figure below). First, Article 7 of the Agreement introduces the global goal on adaptation and suggests ways of achieving it without calling for national adaptation goals or indicators. Second, to promote effective implementation and build mutual trust and confidence, the Paris Agreement established a transparency framework to provide a clear understanding of climate change action in light of the objective of the UNFCCC as set out in its Article 2, and for adaptation action specifically, “Parties’ adaptation actions under Article 7, including good practices, priorities, needs and gaps, to inform the global stocktake under Article 14” (Article 13.5). Third, to enable such understanding and clarity, Articles 7 (on adaptation) and 13 (on transparency) of the Agreement foresee the communication of relevant information by Parties. Article 7.10 states that each country should, as appropriate, submit and update periodically an adaptation communication that may describe its priorities, implementation and support needs and plans and actions, without creating any additional burden for developing country Parties. In addition, Article 13 states that each Party should also provide information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7, as appropriate (Article 13.8). Finally, collective progress towards achieving the purpose and goals of the Agreement is assessed every five years through a comprehensive and facilitative global stocktake based on multiple sources of inputs and in light of best available science with a view to enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, Parties’ actions and support and international cooperation (Article.14).

<sup>4</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2017/>.

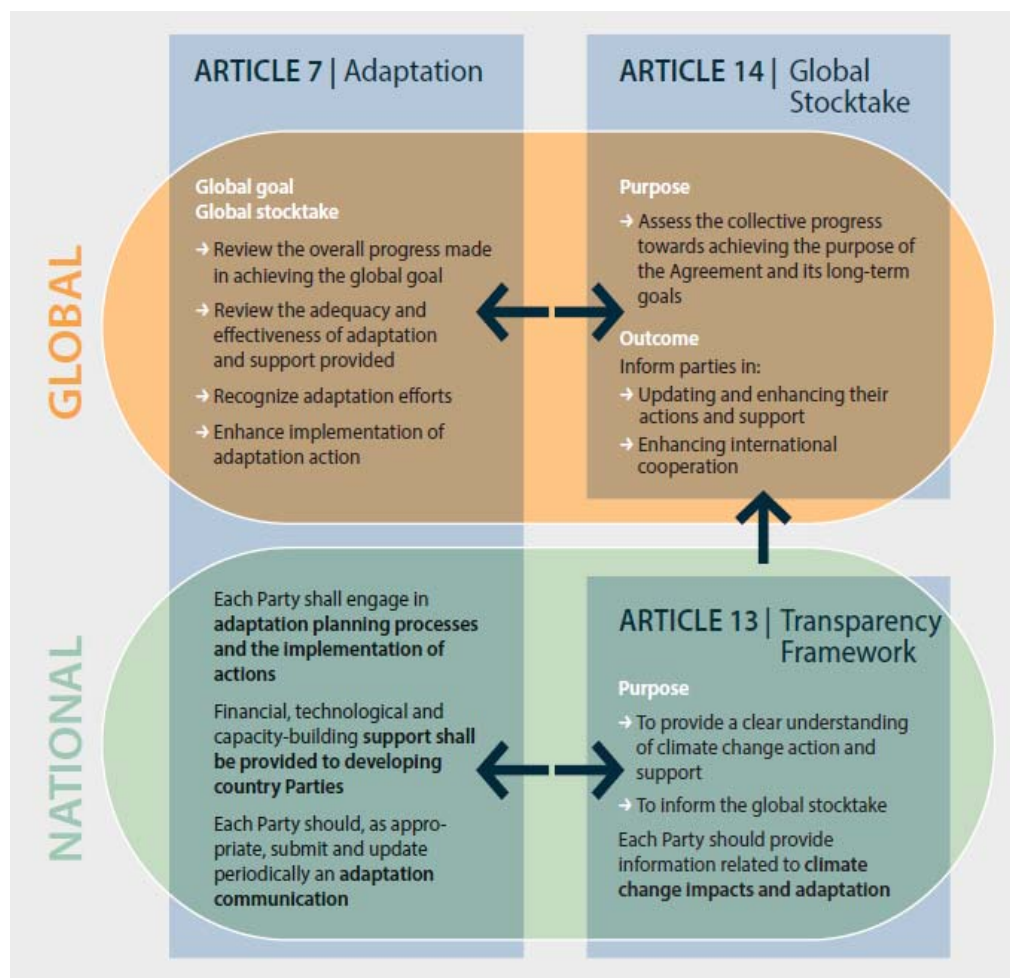
<sup>5</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/files/report/2017/secretary-general-sdg-report-2017--EN.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup>

[https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/17354VNR\\_handbook\\_DRAFT\\_UNEDITED\\_VERSION.pdf](https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/17354VNR_handbook_DRAFT_UNEDITED_VERSION.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://sendaimonitor.unisdr.org>.

Figure 1. Paris Agreement provision relevant to national adaptation goals/indicators



Source: Möhner, Leiter and Kato (2017): Chapter 2 of the UNEP Adaptation Gap Report 2017 available at <https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/report/adaptation-gap-report-2017>

12. The global goal on adaptation is outcome-oriented and qualitative without an immediate way of reviewing progress. Provisions for making the adaptation communications, the transparency framework and the global stocktake operational are currently being negotiated by Parties with a view to be concluded as part of the Paris Agreement Work Programme at COP 24 in December 2018. It is yet to be seen what will be agreed upon in regard to communicating/ reporting on national adaptation progress and reviewing progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation.

13. Despite these uncertainties, Parties are already providing information on adaptation actions and progress, including on national adaptation goals/indicators and targets, through:

- a) National communications (NCs);
- b) National adaptation plans (NAPs), and
- c) Nationally determined contributions (NDCs).<sup>8</sup>

14. The NDCs show that countries are setting different national adaptation goals and associated targets, and enact policies and undertake mainstreaming efforts and investments to reduce vulnerability

<sup>8</sup> An overview of adaptation-related information included in NDCs, NAPs and recent national communications is included in document FCCC/TP/20017/7 available at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2017/tp/07.pdf>.

and strengthen resilience. A majority of the adaptation components of the NDCs include qualitative adaptation targets, and some also introduced diverse quantitative targets.

15. In line with the fourth element of the NAP process “Reporting, monitoring and review”, some submitted NAP documents provide detailed lists of proposed goals, outputs, outcomes and respective indicators to measure progress over time, for example Brazil and Kenya, but many Parties are still at an early stage of developing outcome-focused adaptation M&E systems as part of the NAP process. Others provide a more general indication of their plans to undertake M&E, for example Sri Lanka and Sudan.

16. As evidenced in the on-going negotiations on the adaptation communications, the transparency framework and the global stocktake and the different submitted NCs, NDCs and NAPs, there are no common national adaptation indicators to measure progress towards national adaptation goals.

17. To support the M&E efforts of the NAP process, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) developed the PEG M&E tool (Monitoring and assessing progress, effectiveness and gaps under the process to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans).<sup>9</sup> The LEG recommended to make use of general metrics and indicators categorized in five areas (process, input, output, outcome and impact) to measure the overall progress, rather than focusing on specific targets in each sector. These five areas represent the different types of indicators. Considering the diversity of national adaptation goals, the indicators proposed to measure national capacity (e.g. institutional arrangements; human, financial, academic and political resources mobilized and stakeholder involvement) have process-oriented features which is crucial for successful implementation. However, countries are expected to choose indicators of all types to give a full picture, e.g. on progress in implementation as well as on results of implementation, which fit their circumstances.

## 5. Relationship between adaptation, SDGs and Sendai indicators

18. Countries are increasingly recognizing the close relationship between the three agendas and need for effective coordination in implementing them. Collaboration across climate, statistical and meteorological communities to collect relevant data and information, and shared national indicators across agendas could contribute to reducing the reporting burden of each country and enhance the effectiveness of M&E and statistical systems, e.g. using the same data set or assessment methodology to monitor progress. While some countries adjust, or begin to align the SDGs and Sendai indicator frameworks with their existing or planned adaptation frameworks, they face several challenges, including related to data type and availability; differences in mandates of lead agencies; conflicting policies; different methodologies to collect data; gaps in monitoring and reporting processes; and lack of consistent definitions for relevant terminology. Of the ten countries that have submitted a NAP by July 2018, only Brazil, Kenya and Togo have integrated the SDGs into their national adaptation policy framework.

19. Adaptation indicators employed in the NDCs or NAPs can provide information not only on national level implementation of the Paris Agreement, but also on progress made towards achieving the SDGs or the objective and targets of the Sendai Framework. For example, the number of countries with national and local disaster risk reduction strategies serves as an indicator to track progress against SDG 13 and goal E of the Sendai Framework. The NDC of Vietnam adopted the extent of integration of disaster risk management and climate change adaptation into other national planning as an indicator. Sri Lanka uses number of areas completed with finalized flood risk management plan as an indicator in its NAP. Another example is economic loss in GDP caused directly by disaster. The NAP in Kenya introduces amount of loss and damage from climate hazards in sectoral and national level as a possible indicator.

20. Other indicators are not directly related to each other but could be considered in assessing progress. For example, the Kenyan NAP includes number of people reached through public awareness

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<sup>9</sup> [http://www4.unfccc.int/nap/Documents%20NAP/50301\\_04\\_UNFCCC\\_Monitoring\\_Tool.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/nap/Documents%20NAP/50301_04_UNFCCC_Monitoring_Tool.pdf).

campaigns as a country level indicator. Under SDG 13.3, number of countries that have communicated the strengthening of institutional, systemic and individual capacity-building is used as an indicator. The Kenyan indicator could be an important component and provide essential data to assessing overall progress towards SDG 13.

21. As countries escalate the importance of understanding progress on adaptation, efforts under related UN processes are increasing. For example, regional initiatives may support countries in developing adaptation indicators, such as the initial set of climate change-related indicators,<sup>10</sup> developed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) jointly with countries and a number of international organizations. One of the five areas of the indicator set focuses on adaptation. These indicators are currently being refined to also reflect the ongoing UNFCCC and other processes related to adaptation, and to consider new data sources and methodologies. The United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) has been requested by the forty-seventh session of the UN Statistical Commission to develop a global set of climate change statistics and indicators based on the work of UNECE. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) is also working on a standard on climate change adaptation,<sup>11</sup> and in addition, the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS) is working on a set of climate change indicators, including on climate change impacts and adaptation.<sup>12</sup>

22. In addition, bilateral development agencies, such as the GIZ,<sup>13</sup> and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are developing tools and guidebooks to support countries in dealing with national adaptation goals and indicators.

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<sup>10</sup> Further information can be found at [www.unece.org/stats/climate.html](http://www.unece.org/stats/climate.html).

<sup>11</sup> Further information can be found at <https://www.iso.org/standard/68507.html>.

<sup>12</sup> Further information can be found at <https://public.wmo.int/en/resources/bulletin/using-indicators-explain-our-changing-climate-policymakers-and-public>.

<sup>13</sup> An overview of relevant policy-briefs and tools are available at [www.adaptationcommunity.net/monitoring-evaluation](http://www.adaptationcommunity.net/monitoring-evaluation).

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## Annex: Overview of NWP submissions

1. The secretariat received submissions from two Parties<sup>1</sup> and 13 observers<sup>2</sup> responding to the call for submissions. Most submissions refer to a broad range of sectors and multiple areas, including community-based adaptation, disaster risk reduction, food security, agriculture, biodiversity, gender and water management covering Africa, Asia, and Latin America to small islands countries in the Caribbean and the Pacific. Many of the indicators provided are project management M&E systems or frameworks at regional or local level. Some NWP partner organizations described their observations of indicators and approaches to aggregate adaptation efforts at national or global level. The submissions illustrate that practitioners are facing similar difficulties, covering the following three aspects: 1) indicator design, 2) user capacity and 3) data constraints.

### 1. Indicator design

2. Submissions highlight that any M&E framework should clearly define its purpose and scope before setting indicators. Indicators are part of whole M&E system and just one of the tools to measure the current status and progress on adaptation of a project or a country. Many submissions emphasize that there is no-one-size-fits-all indicator. Indicators need to be tailor-made and context-specific and designed through involving stakeholders. Simplicity and clarity were highlighted as key features for indicators to be manageable and accepted by all stakeholders (from local staff conducting resilience projects to officers organizing national level adaptation programmes).

### 2. User capacity

3. Broad needs of capacity building in project management, national and international level aggregation were expressed by many submissions. At the project level, it is necessary to facilitate the understanding of the relationship between M&E and project results, especially realizing that reporting may constitute an additional burden for local people and project staff. Making the advantages of a proper M&E system clear could contribute to broader engagement by stakeholders from community level to sub-national and national level. As pointed out by submissions, technical training for data collection and using the M&E system is demanding and resource-intensive. For example, a M&E system at a project level introduced an online platform and network to share data from project sites for monitoring purposes, however it demanded a certain level of ICT literacy of the field staff.

### 3. Data constrains

4. As emphasized by many submissions, data availability is another challenge as the lack of baseline data makes it more difficult to assess the attribution of the project to observed results. In addition, many developing countries lack basic statistical data and institutional and financial capacity to collect and generate data.

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<sup>1</sup> Uruguay and Vanuatu available at

<http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/SitePages/sessions.aspx?showOnlyCurrentCalls=1&populateData=1&expectedSubmissionfrom=Parties&focalBodies=SBSTA>.

<sup>2</sup> IGOs (IFAD, UNISDR, UN Statistics Division) and NGOs (Community Forests Pemas, Conservation International, GIZ,) available at [unfccc.int/7482.php](http://unfccc.int/7482.php).