

Adaptation in the ADP

Joint submission of AILAC, Mexico and Dominican Republic

Summary

This Submission provides an overview of AILAC, Mexico, and Dominican Republic's views on how the Paris Outcome will address the fundamental issue of adaptation. The irrefutable evidence that adaptation is a current and urgent need for all Parties is clear to us. We see the post-2020 climate regime as a unique opportunity to promote robust and determined action by all Parties, to foster climate resilient societies, economies and ecosystems, and to raise the political importance of adaptation at the national and multilateral levels. The adaptation component of the 2015 agreement needs to include the following elements:

- a) A global goal on adaptation,
- b) The collective and individual adaptation commitments,
- c) Means of implementation,
- d) Institutional arrangements.

General Considerations

1. Adaptation must be a central component of the 2015 Agreement and it should be addressed with the same level of priority as mitigation.
2. Historically, this has not been the case, e.g., funds for adaptation have been estimated to be 15 times lower than for mitigation¹. This fact demonstrates the huge imbalance amongst mitigation and adaptation, even though adaptation is a fundamental process at the core of climate change and of sustainable development that is oriented to decrease social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities and inequalities within and between countries.
3. Promoting adaptation action requires significant changes to economic practices, processes and structures at the local, national and global scales. Thus, we should seize the unique opportunity to provide the due attention to adaptation within the Convention and translate the Convention's provisions on adaptation into specific actions in the 2015 Agreement, in the form of an adaptation component that includes the following elements:
 - a) a global adaptation goal,
 - b) collective and individual adaptation commitments, and
 - c) means of implementation and institutional arrangements.
4. Although in some cases adaptation and mitigation might not go always hand in hand, often they can be carried out in synergy. The absence of adequate adaptation measures poses a major challenge to our planet. However adequate adaptation can be an opportunity. Adaptation can help raise mitigation ambition through the natural synergies that exist between mitigation and adaptation. Examples include early mitigation actions that countries have implemented and that have a vision of integrated landscape management. These synergies occur spontaneously in many cases, and may translate into economic, social and environmental co-benefits. For instance, reforestation can decrease landslide risk and at the same time increase carbon dioxide sequestration. In this sense, mitigation may also have impact on enhancing vulnerability reduction and strengthening adaptive capacity.

¹ United Nations Development Programme, 2013

5. Moreover, adaptation can only be successfully accomplished by involving those mostly impacted by climate change, therefore, it is essential to engage stakeholders in adaptation planning and implementation, including communities, the private sector, local governments and ensuring a gender perspective and recognition of the importance of local and traditional knowledge.

Global goal on adaptation

6. A global goal on adaptation provides a vision for the international community's efforts towards a climate resilient planet and provides a sense of direction to the individual adaptation actions and their global effects given that the current globalized world is deeply interconnected, and resilience of societies, economies, and ecosystems are a common global interest. The global goal on adaptation recognizes the global dimension of adaptation, i.e. that adaptation efforts' impacts and benefits go beyond local levels.
7. The global goal on adaptation must take into account the strong relationship between the level of mitigation ambition, the associated climate change impacts and the consequent adaptation needs and costs. It is clear now that there are limits to adaptation that relate both to temperature increases and to timing that require the international community to take action in order not to cross critical or irreversible thresholds to peoples and ecosystems resilience. In essence, a much higher level of mitigation ambition increases the likeliness of staying within a 2°C or 1.5°C global mean temperature increase scenario, and the related impacts and adaptation needs and costs will be lower. On the contrary, a lower level of mitigation ambition will derive in higher global mean temperature scenarios with the associated increasingly higher adaptation needs and costs.
8. Thus, we appeal for an agreement on a global adaptation goal by which all Parties, according to their respective capabilities, commit to increase efforts to adapt to climate change impacts, reduce people's situations of vulnerability and move towards resilient societies, economies and ecosystems in the context of the actual increase in global mean temperature. In this manner, we indirectly reinforce the enormous responsibility we have in keeping the temperature rise below 2°C or 1.5°C to avoid greater impacts; hence, less adaptation efforts would be required. This goal could be assessed through a set of metrics and indicators to track for example, the reduction on marginalization, reduction of settlements in situations of risk and the reduction of economic losses, as well as the increase of scientific research (technology innovation and transfer), the increase in national funding for adaptation, the strengthening of climate adaptation governance and the enactment of legislative provisions, as well as the improvement of environmental protection and restoration directly associated to climate change.
9. The global goal on adaptation should at least include:
 - a. an aspirational vision of having a resilient planet.
 - b. linkage of resilience to the actual impacts of climate change.
 - c. linkage of impacts of climate change to the temperature increase resulting from the mitigation action that has effectively been implemented.
 - d. linkage of required deployment of means of implementation to address the needs of particularly vulnerable countries.
 - e. linkages between local adaptation action and the positive effects these may have to build resilience at a regional or global scale.
10. All parties will therefore contribute towards the global goal on adaptation, through the definition of collective and country contributions on adaptation in the light of expected impacts associated to the global temperature increase.

11. A process must be launched in Lima to further develop adaptation assessment, metrics and indicators². The process and its outcomes will facilitate understanding of how individual contributions and aggregate efforts help make progress towards the decrease of vulnerability and enhance adaptation capacity. This process will also be instrumental for the understanding of progress made towards the global goal on adaptation.

Collective commitments

12. All Parties must develop and implement National Adaptation Plans, strategies to be updated as well as climate regulations that include adaptation, and ensure that adaptation is mainstreamed as part of the development planning processes occurring at national level and in coordination with local governments, as appropriate, in order to build resilience and minimize and cope with the adverse effects of climate change.
13. In devising such policy instruments, all Parties should seek consistency and coherence by, inter alia, mainstreaming considerations of adaptation to climate change in their cooperation provisions, in their corresponding roles as donors, recipients and co-executors.
14. All Parties should cooperate in adaptation efforts to develop resilient pathways through capacity building, sharing knowledge, best practices and experience.

Individual commitments

15. The new climate regime should reflect individual efforts that contribute to the global goal on adaptation, and given the particular nature of adaptation these will be carried out in a flexible, transparent and constructive manner, attending to each Party's national circumstances³.
16. Adaptation actions should be part of the intended nationally determined contributions for the 2015 Agreement, in addition to mitigation, but not in lieu of emissions reductions.
17. The inclusion of adaptation contributions as part of the INDC process in the new climate agreement should be an exercise that adds value to the current arrangements on adaptation, and helps countries in their own adaptation endeavors. It should not imply the imposition of additional or unfair burdens to the most vulnerable and should take into account each country's capabilities, enhancing collaboration and universal participation⁴.
18. At this juncture, we do not foresee mandatory minimum information requirements for INDCs on adaptation nor that they should be presented well in advance of the 2015 Agreement but as soon as possible and well before its entry into force in 2020; however, Parties can be invited to provide sufficient information on their planned adaptation actions, according to their national capacities, and information that potentially clarifies the vision towards the achievement of the global goal of adaptation, with the purpose of facilitating greater access to support and facilitating the opportunity of leveraging or catalyzing greater sectorial, national or regional adaptation actions.

² These indicators and metrics could help assess reductions of vulnerability on marginalized populations, on settlements in situation of risk and material losses, as well as progress in scientific research (including technology innovation and transfer), increases in national funding for adaptation, strengthening of climate adaptation governance and enactment of legislative provisions, as well as improvement of environmental protection and restoration.

³ For example: 1. In Costa Rica there is support for the development of resilient cities as cities make progress in measuring their carbon footprint, manage to save financial resources and measure adaptive processes. 2. In Mexico there is an Early Warning System for Tropical Cyclones since the year 2000 that has significantly reduced human losses derived from cyclones; as well as a Trust for Natural Disasters Prevention that helps local communities in addressing different hydrometeorological events. These could be examples of actions taken by countries for adaptation purposes.

⁴ AILAC has presented a separate submission on the ex ante information that countries should include when communicating their respective INDCs. In that submission further detail is given on the idea of adaptation contributions, their nature, and the facilitative process attached to it. Both submissions should be read in conjunction.

19. Having national contributions on adaptation would serve multiple purposes, including:
 - a. To provide greater balance between mitigation and adaptation at all levels.
 - b. To communicate how Parties' planned adaptation actions contribute to the global goal on adaptation to be determined under the 2015 agreement.
 - c. For the international community to further understand the actions to be undertaken by parties to facilitate cooperation amongst each other, particularly for sectorial, national or regional adaptation endeavors such as vulnerability reduction efforts in specific ecosystems or through implementation of the vision of "integrative landscape management".
 - d. To promote long-term national adaptation action that is ambitious and which could potentially also promote further mitigation action.
 - e. To recognize Parties' efforts to combat climate change.
 - f. To facilitate further potential adaptation action it is necessary to have a better understanding of the climatic physical processes, including specific climate change scenarios. In this sense, Parties would be able to distinguish adaptation contributions made with their own resources and distinct adaptation efforts they would carry out with international support.
 - g. To facilitate the mainstreaming of adaptation in national and subnational planning processes and facilitate the important implementation of NAPs.
 - h. To strengthen the vision of adaptation as part of State policies derived from an international legal instrument.
 - i. To evidence the importance of local and national adaptation actions, to build regional and global climate resilience.
20. Adaptation contributions are meant to be indicative, therefore they would not be subject to a symmetrical ex-ante assessment process as the contributions on mitigation, nor to the Protocol's compliance mechanism.
21. Information on the planned adaptation actions that Parties could provide may include the general elements of the scope of the national adaptation contribution, such as: ecosystems included that provide strategic services to people, percentage of the national population covered by adaptation strategies or plans, sectors or geographies covered, policies included, domestic funds/budgetary provisions made available to key adaptation actions and whether the country is working on a National Adaptation Plan (or segment(s) of a NAP), a Local Adaptation Plan (or segment(s) of a LAP) or a National Adaptation Programme of Action (or segment(s) of a NAPA).
22. We recognize the urgency of providing adaptation its deserved place in the UNFCCC, we believe the INDCs will catalyze adaptation actions. We foresee the need for adaptation INDCs to be developed in a progressive and gradual approach in order to help maximizing vulnerability reduction in time.
23. As there is no ex ante stage for adaptation at this first cycle, Parties would inform their adaptation contributions as soon as possible and well before the entry into force of the 2015 Agreement in 2020. If Parties have information on their adaptation contributions before Paris, they will be invited to present these to the UNFCCC.
24. The whole adaptation process should be based on enhanced knowledge systems of the physical processes that define climate impacts in the different ecosystems and regions of our countries.
25. Capacity building, observation and understanding of climate impacts and vulnerability, implementation of adaptation actions, as well as monitoring, evaluation and assessment mechanisms have to be implemented during the whole adaptation process. As this process is carried out, the ownership of key stakeholders will increase and the possibility to recognize and reproduce good practices will also increase.

26. Any potential ex-post elements of the national contributions on adaptation would be carried out in a facilitative and trust-building atmosphere to contribute with:
 - a. Further strengthening of adaptation actions.
 - b. Understanding of progress made towards the global adaptation goal.
 - c. Understanding of effectiveness of adaptation actions to identify best practices and further increase resilience.
 - d. Identifying further collaborative adaptation efforts amongst stakeholders and Parties.

Means of Implementation for Adaptation, including institutional arrangements

27. The existing institutional arrangements for adaptation under the Convention should continue to work whilst they are significantly strengthened. Particularly, finance, technology innovation, transfer and development for adaptation need to be further enhanced.
28. The adaptation component of the 2015 Agreement needs to build upon and effectively articulate existing arrangements for adaptation under the UNFCCC, including:
 - a. The urgent design and implementation of NAPs in all countries, a key instrument to facilitate prioritisation of adaptation efforts and strengthen capacities.
 - b. Effective and enhanced implementation of the Cancun Adaptation Framework.
 - c. Significant enhancement and downscaling of the Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change at national, regional and local levels.
 - d. Enhancement of the adaptation window of the GCF and of the Adaptation Fund.

Finance

29. As mentioned before, we see the need for international funds for adaptation to significantly increase in order to provide better support to developing country in addressing their adaptation needs.
30. In the same vein, we deem relevant that the private sector increases its financial contributions to adaptation provided that, in some cases, this sector receives a higher proportion of disaster public support, deriving in a heavy burden to public funding to reduce vulnerability.
31. The Adaptation Fund must be enhanced and be:
 - a. included in the Green Climate Fund as the adaptation window, and
 - b. be inscribed in the new climate regime and defined in the financing sphere of the Paris Agreement
32. Furthermore, specific financial mechanisms such as the CDM Levy must be multiplied and established. Also, any market mechanism to be approved under the Paris Agreement must include a levy for adaptation to complement funds within the Adaptation window of the GCF.
33. A comprehensive revision of all of the adaptation institutional arrangements within the Convention including those set out for financial and technical purposes should be carried out in the year 2017, in the light of ensuring that appropriate adaptation arrangements are in place to be ready to fully implement the Paris agreement in 2020 and to promote the effective delivery of the ultimate objective of the Convention. In addition, this revision should aim to ensure that:
 - a. There is coherence within the adaptation instruments and modalities adopted to date under the Convention.

- b. The new post 2020 adaptation institutional arrangements should contribute to strengthen and better structure adaptation elements within the Convention and is broader to include all Parties without prejudice of all institutional arrangements in place to support the LDCs, including the LDC Fund.

Adaptation technical and knowledge platform

34. The new agreement must include a technical and knowledge platform that works on:
 - a. Methodologies, metrics and indicators to assist parties to regularly assess impacts, vulnerability and adaptation needs in all sectors and in specific geographic conditions (i.e. coastal marine zones).
 - b. Methodologies, metrics and indicators to assist parties to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation options as an input to formulate, fund and implement effective adaptation plans and measures.
 - c. Progress in the modelling of climate change scenarios and their impacts;
 - d. Results of vulnerability assessments that are beyond a national scale;
 - e. Methodologies for the quantification of non-economic losses; monitoring and evaluating of adaptation actions for increased resilience.
 - f. Methodologies⁵ to identify the costs and benefits of adaptation actions according to different scenarios which reflect specific potential temperature increase.
 - g. Enhance the understanding of the global implications of adaptation and the interlinkages amongst local efforts, national contributions and global adaptation actions.
 - h. Enhance understanding of progress made in vulnerability reduction at a global, regional, national and local level including progress made towards the global goal on adaptation.
 - i. Ensure availability of methods and tools to evaluate impacts of climate change, vulnerability and adaptation outcomes.
 - j. Strive for a result-oriented approach facilitated by the monitoring and evaluation of adaptation outcomes.
35. In the context of the adaptation technical and knowledge platform, there is a window of opportunity to substantively enhance the Nairobi Work Programme so that it effectively becomes the reference knowledge network that builds on existing networks at subnational, national, regional and global levels and facilitates implementation of collaborative efforts with stakeholders and organizations within and beyond the Convention. Among other things, the renovated Nairobi Work Programme would have the responsibility to provide technical support as well as knowledge exchange to developing country Parties vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, in order to, inter alia:
 - a. Develop and strengthen regional, national, local capacities as well as social capacities to address adaptation concerns and metrics.
 - b. Pursue the establishment and well-functioning of external adaptation knowledge platforms and networks at all levels.
 - c. Become a means of scaling up adaptation benefits, adaptation practices and outcomes.
 - d. Aim at incorporating an approach of sustainable management of ecosystems in adaptation planning.
 - e. Facilitate socializing climate risk through insurance-type mechanisms.

⁵ For example, Costa Rica is currently studying a specific methodology to determine and prioritize adaptation measures, developed by Mexico, in order to facilitate decision making in Adaptation Plans.

36. A link to existing and enhanced arrangements should be included in the 2015 Agreement, as to make them useful and meaningful for the post 2020 regime. Once the aforementioned process, launched in Lima, to strengthen metrics and assessment has concluded in 2016, the Adaptation Committee can provide recommendations to address potential identified gaps that should be covered within the Convention in terms of metrics and assessment (i.e. assessing progress made towards the achievement of the global goal on adaptation).
37. As we further face how our interconnected nature is increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, our understanding and actions need to reflect both a strengthened bottom-up adaptation approach, through enhanced local and national adaptation efforts, and also more top-down approaches through global and supra-national efforts. The latter includes the establishment of a global goal on adaptation, resilience of supply chains, resilience of the ecosystems and the global common goods. Therefore, an adaptation technical and knowledge platform also needs to facilitate top down assessment by:
 - a. Understanding progress made towards a climate resilient planet and
 - b. Facilitate understanding of progress made on NAPs, INDCs and other national and local adaptation efforts (as a reinforcing means to strengthen further action of NAPs, INDCs, etc.).

The importance of strengthening adaptation within the UNFCCC

38. The new agreement is a unique opportunity to give adaptation its necessary political status and to promote robust and determined action by all Parties, to foster climate resilient societies, economies and ecosystems. The UNFCCC should provide a comprehensive approach to adaptation where we are able to address both bottom up and top down aspects which facilitate the urgent adaptation action required on the ground.
39. Our Parties look forward to a fruitful exchange of views on adaptation in the upcoming ADP 2-6 session and will further elaborate on this submission in that context.