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## COP28: A layered approach to the Global Goal on Adaptation Framework Technical Paper

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### A. Summary

1. With only days left until the start of COP28, much work remains to successfully agree the Global Goal on Adaptation Framework (**GGA Framework**).<sup>1</sup> To help Parties in their deliberations, this technical paper proposes that the GGA Framework could be usefully conceptualized and organized in three layers:
  - a guiding star for adaptation;
  - high-level targets, priorities, messages or signals;
  - specific targets with indicators.
2. COP28 represents an opportunity to bring adaptation to the forefront of the international political agenda by setting out actionable deliverables – clear high-level targets, priorities, messages or signals – as part of a solid GGA Framework.

### B. A guiding star for adaptation

3. As to the first layer, the Paris Agreement already sets out a guiding star for adaptation that will be at the core of the GGA Framework, comprising:
  - “Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production” (Article 2.1(b) of the Paris Agreement); and
  - The GGA: “...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” (Article 7.1 of the Paris Agreement)
4. This guiding star could, however, benefit from being further refined and developed to shine more brightly in order to drive adaptation ambition and implementation.
5. More specifically Article 2.1.(b) and the GGA in Article 7.1 could usefully be underpinned by actionable overarching or high-level targets, priorities, messages or signals.

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<sup>1</sup> ‘Workshops under the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation’, report, 16 November 2023: <https://unfccc.int/documents/631979> (the **Workshops Report**)



### C. High-level targets, priorities, messages or signals

6. Parties seem to be in agreement that high level targets, priorities, messages or signals need to be easily understood and communicated, and encourage global, regional, national and local stakeholders to come together with heightened ambition and implementation. These signals could guide Parties in their international and regional cooperation and coordination of adaptation as well as their national and local efforts in reducing vulnerability, enhancing adaptive capacity and strengthening resilience.
  
7. To be actionable, high-level targets, priorities, messages or signals could usefully:
  - facilitate communication, understanding and cooperation at the political level;
  - set a timeline and further clarify when, where and how to enhance adaptive capacity, reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience;
  - be crafted so as to advance progress related to global aspirations for common goods relevant to adaptation that have linkages with the Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**) as well as the five thematic areas that Parties have discussed in the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA (the **GGA work programme**);<sup>2</sup> and
  - include a focus on global and transboundary cooperation.
  
8. Examples of overarching or high-level targets, priorities, messages or signal include:<sup>3</sup>
  - aim for reduced vulnerability for the 3.6 billion people living in highly climate vulnerable contexts by 2030;<sup>4</sup>
  - focussing on those that are the most vulnerable to climate impacts, ensure that 50% of the global population is climate resilient by 2030, aspiring to 100% by 2050;<sup>5</sup>
  - reducing climate impacts on all communities and ecosystems by 50% by 2030 and at least 90% by 2050 compared with ‘business as usual’;<sup>6</sup>
  - by 2030, increasing the resilience and adaptive capacity of biodiversity and ecosystem services, including by protecting at least 50% of land, freshwater, marine and coastal ecosystems against climate impacts, and enhancing other ecosystem services;<sup>7</sup>
  - halting and reversing land degradation as well as biodiversity & ecosystem loss, including in particular forest loss, by 2030;<sup>8</sup> and/or
  - by 2030: (i) foster climate resilient, sustainable agriculture that increases yields by 17% and reduces farm level greenhouse gas emissions by 21% without expansion of the

<sup>2</sup> The five thematic areas include food, water, health, ecosystems and infrastructure.

<sup>3</sup> For more examples, see the Workshops Report: <https://unfccc.int/documents/631979>

<sup>4</sup> For the reference to the number of vulnerable people in the IPCC’s sixth assessment report, see para B2: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/resources/spm-headline-statements/>

<sup>5</sup> Para 31 (d) of the Workshops Report highlight the focus on vulnerable populations.

<sup>6</sup> See for example para 30 (k) of the Workshops Report.

<sup>7</sup> See para 53 (b) of the Workshops Report.

<sup>8</sup> See ‘Options for a politically salient headline for the global goal on adaptation’, C2ES and UNF, November 2023: C2ES with regards to the GST signals on adaptation: <https://www.c2es.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/cop28-global-goal-on-adaptation-headline-options.pdf> (**C2ES paper**)



agricultural frontier; and (ii) halve, relative to 2019, the share of food production lost and per capita food waste, while shifting to healthier and plant-based diets.<sup>9</sup>

9. The GGA Framework could also confirm the political relevance and importance of each country's national adaptation plan (**NAP**) process or iterative adaptation planning policy cycle by including a process-related target, priority, message or signal, such as:
- for all countries to have in place an up-to-date and good quality iterative national adaptation policy cycle, NAP process or other national adaptation policy instruments by 2030.<sup>10</sup>

#### **D. Specific targets & indicators**

10. There seems to be convergence on the importance of including specific targets and indicators related to the four phases of the adaptation policy cycle. These include: (i) impact, vulnerability and risk assessment; (ii) planning; (iii) implementation; and (iv) monitoring, evaluation and learning.
11. Parties could also flesh out targets and indicators for each of the five thematic areas discussed in the GGA work programme, so as to have the greatest impact on reducing vulnerability, enhancing adaptive capacity and strengthening resilience, such as:
- by 2030, all Parties have conducted timely assessments of climate impacts, vulnerabilities and risks including how to set up and implement early warning and climate information systems;<sup>11</sup>
  - by 2030, all Parties have established inclusive and transparent national adaptation planning processes and have mainstreamed adaptation in all relevant strategies and plans;<sup>12</sup>
  - by 2030, all Parties have implemented early warning systems, climate information services and national adaptation priorities and actions to reduce vulnerability, strengthen resilience and enhance adaptive capacity.<sup>13</sup>
12. Parties could consider how the specific targets related to the implementation of adaptation action are sufficiently flexible to be country-specific but also relevant at the global level. This consideration is equally applicable to the possible high-level targets, priorities, messages or signals above.
13. In the event that specific targets and indicators are not fully decided at COP28 (which seems a distinct possibility given the current state of play) Parties will need to consider a process to

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<sup>9</sup> See C2ES paper.

<sup>10</sup> See para 39 (a) of the Workshops Report.

<sup>11</sup> Please see para 36 (c)-(e) in the Workshops Report.

<sup>12</sup> Please see para 39 (b) in the Workshops Report.

<sup>13</sup> Please see para 42 of the Workshops Report.



develop indicators and specific targets, with a view to reaching agreement at a later date. Parties will also need to consider whether to incorporate a process to review or update the GGA Framework more widely.

## E. Enabling conditions and finance

14. The issue of finance for adaptation is a major element in the dynamic for agreeing an ambitious GGA Framework at COP28. The main differences between the Parties include: (i) whether the GGA Framework should have indicators for assessing means of implementation, including financial support, to developing countries for implementing the GGA; or (ii) whether it should focus on enabling conditions such as institutional arrangements and political and legal frameworks.
15. Options for agreeing on finance include:
- as part of the high-level signals (layer 2), such as:
    - ensuring adequate support for adaptation action in order to reduce risk of and vulnerability to climate change;<sup>14</sup>
  - as part of the specific targets relevant for each of the four dimensions of the adaptation policy cycle (layer 3), such as by 2030:
    - all countries can access climate finance through the UNFCCC Financial Mechanism to carry out climate change risk, impact and vulnerability assessments;<sup>15</sup>
    - all countries have effectively accessed climate financing through the UNFCCC Financial Mechanism to carry out NAPs or other iterative adaptation policy and planning cycles;<sup>16</sup> or
    - adaptation finance for implementing adaptation plans, projects, programs and strategies have increased by XX%,<sup>17</sup>
  - no explicit mention in decision text or the GGA Framework;
  - as part of the GGA decision text, but not the GGA Framework itself;
  - as part of the Global Stocktake (**GST**) decision text and not the GGA decision;
  - to first agree on the GGA Framework and indicators before including finance.
16. While not featured in Article 7 of the Paris Agreement, Article 2.2 states that: *“This Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in the light of different national circumstances”*. Parties will therefore have to consider how to reflect this in the GGA Framework as well as in the GST outcome on adaptation.

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<sup>14</sup> See para 30 (g) of the Workshops Report.

<sup>15</sup> See para 36 (f) in the Workshops Report.

<sup>16</sup> See for example para 40 (d) in the Workshops Report.

<sup>17</sup> See for example para 42 (d) in the Workshops Report.