
The Global Goal on Adaptation at COP28

Technical Paper

November 2023

A. Introduction

1. There is a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a livable and sustainable future for all.¹ Crucial to this is adoption of an ambitious global goal on adaptation Framework at COP28 (**GGA Framework**). At COP26 in Glasgow, CMA3² established the two-year Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA (**GGA work programme**) and at COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh, CMA4 initiated the development of the GGA Framework to be adopted by CMA5 at COP28 in Dubai. Under the GGA work programme, eight workshops were planned and the last one has just taken place from 27 to 29 September 2023.
2. Several issues of process, recent history in negotiations and wider political considerations have emerged as challenges that need to be overcome to achieve an ambitious and effective outcome on the GGA Framework. This paper considers three key areas that need to be addressed to unlock progress toward a successful outcome at COP28 on the GGA Framework:
 - How can the limited remaining time be used most effectively to agree an ambitious GGA Framework at COP28?
 - Linkages to the global stocktake (**GST**) process and political signals on adaptation from COP28
 - Means of implementation and enabling conditions.

Overarching questions for consideration:

- What has to be agreed at COP28 on the GGA framework without compromising ambition?
- What, if anything, could be further elaborated in relation to the framework after COP28?
- Do we need a guiding star emerging at COP28 for adaptation and, if so, what could it be?

¹ For more information see the synthesis report on the technical dialogue for the global stocktake (GST), UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), “Technical dialogue of the first GST. Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue”, p. 7, September 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sb2023_09E.pdf

² 3rd meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA3).

B. How can the limited remaining time be used most effectively to agree an ambitious GGA Framework at COP28?

Questions for consideration:

- What are the commonalities between the proposed targets, goals, metrics, indicators, high level messages and adaptation priorities Parties have proposed? What is the landing ground?
- What has to be agreed at COP28 without compromising ambition?
- What, if anything, could be further elaborated after COP28?

3. The GGA Framework has the potential to bring essential focus to the need to scale up ambitious and effective adaptation action locally, nationally, regionally, and internationally. Adoption of an unambitious framework at COP28 would be a lost opportunity.
4. There remains substantial work for Parties to complete in order to adopt an ambitious framework.³ In particular, Parties will need to agree on whether or not to have one or more of a combination of, *inter alia*, achievable: overarching targets; high level messages; specific targets; goals; metrics; indicators; and/or shared adaptation priorities. However, with just over a month remaining until the start of COP28 and given a number of competing priorities under the climate negotiations, there will necessarily be limited time to complete formal negotiations of the GGA Framework. This can be measured in hours rather than days.

Considerations

5. Parties have submitted a wide range of options with different suggestions and differing levels of detail regarding both the structure and the substantive content of the GGA Framework. Nevertheless, it could be helpful to categorize proposals as falling somewhere in a broad spectrum between two approaches: (i) a comprehensive framework with specific targets, indicators, and metrics across dimensions and themes; or (ii) a simplified framework with shared adaptation priorities, overarching political signals, goals and potentially overarching targets.
6. Parties could consider:
 - what would be the most desirable landing zone in the spectrum between these two general approaches, including in the context of limited remaining negotiating time?

³ See the 58th meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB58) draft decision with elements to consider: UNFCCC, “Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation refer to in decision 7/ CMA.3. Draft conclusions proposed by the Chairs”, June 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sb2023_L04E_0.pdf

- which essential elements of each approach would need to be adopted at COP28, and are there other elements that could be further elaborated or developed later, without compromising on the ambition of the outcome at COP28? Options for this could include, for example, establishing a working group and/or undertaking a review of any framework adopted at COP28 in advance of the second GST (**GST2**).

C. Linkages to the GST process and political signals on adaptation from COP28

Questions for consideration:

- What should be agreed at COP28 for the process and timeline for the GGA Framework in relation to GST2?
 - Do we need a **guiding star** emerging from the GGA framework for COP28 and, if so, what could it be?
7. In addition to issues around the structure and substantive content of the GGA Framework, there are also process issues that need to be agreed. For example, the relationship between the GGA Framework and other UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (**UNFCCC**) processes, in particular the GST2, due to culminate in 2028.
 8. It is important to acknowledge that complications have arisen because the GGA Framework mandate matures at the same time as the first GST (**GST1**). The synthesis report on the technical dialogue of GST1 acknowledges this and states that ‘a more comprehensive assessment of collective progress towards the GGA should be possible during the GST2.’⁴
 9. Nevertheless, the synthesis report also points out that discussions on collective progress towards the GGA took place within the technical assessment phase of the GST. This included efforts across the adaptation cycle, opportunities and challenges in addressing adaptation within sectors and across contexts, and opportunities and challenges related to making adaptation more transformational. It also highlighted that the GGA work programme has informed the GST1.⁵
 10. It is possible that COP28, and in particular the GST, will generate specific high level political signals. For example, in relation to mitigation, there is considerable momentum behind the notion of tripling of renewable energy capacity by 2030 (mentioned in the COP28 Presidency

⁴ UNFCCC, “Technical dialogue of the first GST. Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue”, p.7, September 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sb2023_09E.pdf

⁵ UNFCCC, “Technical dialogue of the first GST. Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue”, p. 30 and 40, September 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sb2023_09E.pdf

vision as well as the G20 leader declaration).⁶ Parties will need to consider how to ensure a ‘step change’ for adaptation, with a potential political message to accelerate efforts at all levels.

Considerations

11. On process issues and future interaction between the GGA Framework and the GST process, Parties will need to consider which aspects to focus on for agreement at COP28 and what aspects, if any, could be left to be decided later.
12. Parties will also need to consider what political signals could emerge for adaptation at COP28, and pursuant to what UNFCCC process. Options include possible political signals on adaptation to emerge through the GGA Framework or the GST decision.⁷
13. Consideration might also be usefully given to how such political signals could emerge from the implementation of the GGA Framework at future COPs.
14. There is the need, prior to the next GST2 at the latest, to further clarify the process and mandates needed to collect and synthesize the information on the GGA Framework from Parties and non-Party Stakeholders. This will be used to: (i) inform the GST process; and (ii) inform the high-level take aways deriving from the GGA Framework. Whether this is necessary to agree as part of the GGA Framework at COP28 is unclear.⁸

D. Means of implementation and enabling conditions

Questions for consideration:

- What are the key underlying concerns for wishing to include finance and enabling conditions in the GGA Framework and how can they be addressed?
- Are the current workstreams regarding finance for adaptation sufficient? If not, how could they be enhanced?
- What would finance indicators for the GGA Framework look like and how could they add value?

⁶ UNFCCC, “Letter from the President- Designate of COP28/CMP18/CMA5, and UAE Special Envoy for Climate Change”, October 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cop28_publish_letter_october_2023_enfinal.pdf

⁷ Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (C2ES), “Options for a Politically Salient Headline for the Global Goal on Adaptation”, November 2023, <https://www.c2es.org/document/options-for-a-politically-salient-headline-for-the-global-goal-on-adaptation/>

⁸ Note that adaptation communications are not to create any additional burden for developing country Parties, in particular the Small Island Developing States and the Least Developed Countries, and that review of the adaptation communication is not until 2025.

15. The issue of finance for adaptation is a major element in the dynamic for agreeing an ambitious GGA Framework at COP28.
16. One of the main areas requiring further convergence between the Parties is finance, including whether: (i) the GGA Framework should include 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.
17. To move forward on agreeing the GGA Framework, Parties could usefully focus on aligning with the delicately balanced compromise established in Article 7 of the Paris Agreement and all its paragraphs, including Article 7.1.

Considerations

18. In deciding on the issue of indicators for finance, it is important to remember that Article 7.14 (c) stipulates that the GST shall “review the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support provided for adaptation”.
19. There is ongoing work with the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (**LEG**) and the Standing Committee on Finance (**SCF**) on methods to assess adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation, which will be made public soon.⁹ In addition, finance for adaptation is being discussed as part of the new collective quantified goal on climate finance (**NCQG**).
20. The decision text for the GGA Framework could include, *inter alia*, finance aspects, such as:
 - recognizing ongoing work by the LEG and SCF, as well as the NCQG,
 - underlining the importance of support and international cooperation on adaptation efforts and the needs of developing country Parties,
 - including a reference for the need to rapidly scale up the mobilization support for climate action in developing countries to meet urgent needs, reflecting key finding 14 in the co-facilitator’s synthesis report on the GST,¹⁰
 - highlighting that capacity to recover is undermined by extreme climate events.

⁹ For more information please see: UNFCCC, “Methodologies for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support”, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/mandates-from-the-cma/methodologies-adequacy-and-effectiveness#Progress-updates-of-the-AC-and-the-LEG-in-collaboration-with-the-SCF-on-their-work-in-addressing-this-mandate-since-2020>

¹⁰ UNFCCC, “Technical dialogue of the first GST. Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue”, September 2023, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/sb2023_09E.pdf