



Policy Brief on Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs)*

PART A: INTRODUCTION

The issue of ‘intended nationally determined contributions’ (INDCs) has come to be one of the important components of the process towards the UNFCCC’s 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to be held in Paris in December 2015.

Countries have been in the process of preparing their INDCs. This Paper is intended to provide the background information on the INDCs, and a guide to developing countries on how to formulate their INDCs.

Part B of this policy brief **explains the COP21 decision which covers INDCs**. It is important to understand the decision taken by the COP on the INDCs, as this provides the context for the preparation of the INDCs.

Part C is on **Formulating the INDCs**. The objective is to provide a guide for developing countries on formulating their INDCs. It starts with a section on general points and a general framework on INDCs. This is followed by points

on INDCs relating to mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage. It also provides templates for preparing these INDCs.

Part D provides some **Conclusions**.

PART B: BACKGROUND TO THE NEGOTIATIONS AND OUTCOME ON INDCs

B1. What was agreed to in COP20 in Lima on INDCs and the Implications

Preparation by developing countries of their INDCs requires knowledge and understanding of the discussions that took place in the UNFCCC and the key decisions that were taken on the INDCs.

The most relevant developments concerning the INDCs took place at the 20th Conference of the Parties (COP20) of the UNFCCC held in Lima in December 2014. There were lengthy and sometimes contentious discussions on the nature, scope and framework of the INDCs. Eventually the COP adopted a decision (1/CP20) containing a set of para-

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graphs relating to the INDCs. The relevant paragraphs of the Lima decision (1/CP20) in relation to the preparation of INDCs are as follows:

- **Paragraph 9** “Reiterates its invitation to each Party to communicate to the secretariat its INDC towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2.”

The scope of the INDC has been left open, despite an attempt by developed countries to confine the INDCs to be related only to mitigation.

Earlier versions of the draft text made a mitigation contribution mandatory while relegating other elements to be voluntary. This approach was criticized by many developing countries who insisted that the scope of the INDCs should be comprehensive, reflecting all the elements including adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building. The formulation that was finally agreed leaves the scope of the INDC open, without a particular stress on mitigation; and it only invites Parties to communicate their INDCs without it making it a mandatory requirement.

- **Paragraph 10** states: “Agrees that each Party’s INDC towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2 will represent a progression beyond the current undertaking of that Party”;

This paragraph is to reflect the call by many developing countries to ensure that developed countries do not backslide on their commitments in the post 2020 timeframe.

- **Paragraph 12** states: “Invites all Parties to consider communicating their undertakings in adaptation planning or consider including an adaptation component in their INDCs”.

This paragraph reflects the call by many developing countries that their INDCs could also be/or include a contribution to adaptation actions, and that INDCs should not solely be about mitigation.

Developing countries could communicate their contribution to adaptation, including their efforts on loss and damage, clearly indicating that the communication is not for the purpose of making a commitment to adaptation in the post 2020 timeframe, but for the purpose of demonstrating what their priorities are given their national circumstances and needs. This could mean that adaptation and loss and damage are given higher priority than mitigation in some developing countries given their limited national resources.

Developing countries can also communicate sustainable development actions which have linkages both to mitigation and adaptation.

- **Paragraph 13** “Reiterates its invitation to all Parties to communicate their INDCs well in advance of COP 20 (by the first quarter of 2015 by those Parties ready to do so) in a manner that facilitates the clarity, transparency and understanding of the INDCs”.

This paragraph again reiterates the invitation for all Parties to communicate their INDCs well in advance of COP 20 but does not make this a mandatory obligation. It is really up to developing countries, according to their national circumstances and priorities to decide what is best for them.

There is no mandatory obligation to do so, especially given the lack of clarity on what the post 2020 commitments of developed countries will be in terms of providing finance and technology transfer support.

In fact, it is important to note that in the INDCs that have been submitted thus far by developed countries such as the EU, US, Switzerland, and Norway, no one has indicated their contribution on finance and technology transfer, and have only focussed their communication on their mitigation contribution. This clearly signals the skewed way in which developed countries view the INDCs – which to them are only about mitigation commitments of all Parties.

- **Paragraph 14** states: “Agrees that the information to be provided by Parties communicating their INDCs, in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, **may** include, **as appropriate, inter alia**, quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage, planning processes, assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals, and how the Party considers that its INDC is fair and ambitious, in light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2.” (emphasis added).

This paragraph relates to the information that is to accompany the INDCs. Given the use of the terms “may” and “as appropriate,” it is up to Parties to decide what kind of information will accompany their INDCs. The purpose of the information as per the para 13 is to facilitate the clarity, transparency and understanding of the INDC.

- **Paragraph 16** “Requests the secretariat to: (a) Publish on the UNFCCC website the INDCs as communicated; (b) Prepare by 1 November 2015 a synthesis report on the aggregate effect of the INDCs communicated by Parties by 1 October 2015.”

Other than the preparation of a synthesis report by the secretariat on the aggregate effect of the INDCs, there is no mention in the final text that relates to ex-ante assessment or review of the INDCs **prior** to the Paris agreement.

The earlier draft texts of Lima made provision for the following “ex-ante” processes (in an apparent accelerated rate) to take place in 2015 after the communication of the INDCs as follows:

- To provide opportunities for seeking clarification on the INDCs;

- For Parties to submit questions to each other and for responses to be supplied within 4 weeks;
- For a workshop in June in 2015 and at COP 21 for clarity, transparency and understanding of the INDCs communicated;
- For a technical paper by the secretariat on the existing methodologies relating to land-use and use of market mechanisms;
- Organise a workshop on methodologies in June 2015;
- Technical paper by the secretariat on the aggregate effect of the INDCs;
- For observers to publicise their analyses of the INDCs on the UNFCCC website.

Several developing countries were of the view that these matters were outside the scope of the Warsaw mandate and could prejudice the negotiations for the Paris agreement and were also imbalanced since there was no similar ex-ante process (or even information) on the financial contributions that developed countries would make to support developing countries.

B2. Relationship between the INDCs and the Paris Agreement

- There is need for clarity between the notion of INDCs and the contributions/commitments/actions being negotiated under the elements of the 2015 Paris agreement.
- The INDC discussion is not a separate process or track but is an integral part of the elements of the 2015 agreement.
- Our understanding is that “contributions” refer to contributions by Parties with respect to the various elements, consistent with the provisions of the Convention (including Art. 4 and annexes) and reflecting the principles of CBDR and equity. Hence, the contributions by developed countries must include mitigation, finance and technology transfer support to developing countries; while for developing countries, they can include action on adaptation (plus loss and damage), mitigation, capacity-building and sustainable development (integration, including food security etc.) (See Table 1)
- **For developing countries, the extent and level of these contributions will depend on the availability and extent of finance, technology and capacity-building support.** The greater the support from developed countries, the greater the contributions of developing countries. (See Table 2 linking contributions with varying levels of support).
- By the use of the term “intended” NDCs, they are meant to convey **an intention only** of the kind of commitments/contributions/actions that Parties are considering to undertake and **are not final** in the context of the 2015 agreement. In fact, it can be viewed as an ‘**initial offer**’, subject to what is agreed under the Paris

agreement.

- The Paris agreement itself, i.e. its nature, scope, legal form and details are currently under negotiations within the context of the Durban mandate (decision 1/CP.17).
- How the INDCs will become NDCs under the Paris agreement is pending resolution under the on-going negotiations. What exactly are the commitments of Parties under the new agreement is the subject of intense negotiations and relates to how NDCs should be reflected, what their scope should be and what legal form they will take.
- The Paris agreement is to come into effect and implemented from 2020, although it is to be concluded in 2015. (para 4 dec. 1/CP17).
- Whether the INDCs will be subject to an ex-ante assessment for their ratcheting up post 2015, before they are given effect and implemented post 2020 is also the subject of intense negotiations.

• It is our view that the focus of work in 2015 under the Ad hoc Working Group for Enhanced Actions under the Durban Platform (ADP) as regards workstream 1 must be on conducting negotiations for the Paris agreement, and not be digressed into discussions or workshops on INDCs this year, as this can prejudice the Paris agreement negotiations. Given the very limited time available to negotiate what is in the Geneva negotiating text for the Paris agreement, it is prudent for developing countries to ensure that the INDC preparations and process are not burdensome and onerous, such that they are ill prepared for the actual Geneva text negotiations.

PART C: FORMULATING THE INDCS: A GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

This section provides some guidance on how to prepare the INDCs of developing countries. It starts with a sub section on General key points on conceptual framework for developing countries in preparing their INDCs. There are then sub sections on mitigation-related and adaptation-related INDCs.

C1. General Key Points and Framework

The concept of “Nationally Determined Contributions”, taking into account the outcomes of both Warsaw COP19¹ and Lima COP20² on this issue, incorporates: first, its coverage is comprehensive, involving all the elements of the Convention; second, it has to reflect the principles of equity and CBDR. These two principles should be operationalized in the INDCs that both developed and developing countries prepare.

A country’s Contributions must be seen in a balanced and comprehensive context, just as the Elements of the Durban Platform (and eventually of the Paris Agreement) are balanced and comprehensive. Contributions have to include and reflect all issues (mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, transfer, capacity building) as outlined in decision 1/CP.17 and it does not refer only to mitiga-

tion.

The “contributions” that all Parties are to provide should be consistent with the Convention. “Contributions” including commitments and/or actions would refer to contributions by Parties with respect to the various elements, consistent with the provisions of the Convention (including Art. 4 and annexes) and reflecting CBDR and equity. It does not refer only to mitigation. To be consistent with the Convention, “contributions” have to be understood in a differentiated manner that distinguishes between Annex I commitments and non-Annex I actions (see Tables 1 and 2):

Table 1: Contributions by Developed and Developing Country Parties

Developed Countries	Developing Countries
Contributions	
Commitments	Actions
1. Mitigation (QELROs) from Annex I	1. Adaptation (plus loss and damage) subject to Annex II support under Art. 4.4
2. Annex II financing to developing countries to support adaptation, mitigation, sustainable development	2. Mitigation subject to Annex II support under Art. 4.3 and 4.5
3. Annex II technology transfer to developing countries to support adaptation, mitigation, sustainable development	3. Sustainable development (integration, including food security) subject to Annex II support under Art.4.3, 4.4, and 4.5

Annex I parties should have “nationally determined” economy-wide mitigation commitments (based on Art. 4.2, linked to meeting the Art. 2 objective of the Convention, and sufficient to show that they are taking the lead in reducing emissions) and Annex II parties should continue to have commitments to provide the finance and technology support (under Art. 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.7) to developing countries. Therefore, Annex II parties should submit their contributions on finance and technology support to developing countries in addition to their contributions on emission reductions.

Non-Annex I parties will be planning and undertaking a range of various climate related actions. This full range of actions can be submitted as the country’s INDCs. These comprise actions in relation to adaptation; loss and damage; mitigation; as well as other relevant sustainable development actions which have linkages to mitigation and adaptation. It is useful and indeed important for a developing country to show this

full range of intended actions that it is preparing to undertake as the country’s INDC.

The reasons for this are:

(1) To reflect the reality of the range of actions the country is planning to undertake, and not only the single dimension of mitigation actions;

(2) To therefore enable all Parties and the public to appreciate the scale of the challenge faced by the country in its overall planned actions/intended contributions (and not only mitigation actions);

(3) To also allow Parties and the public to appreciate that the country has to prioritise its intended actions, in the context of limited financial, technical and human resources, and that thus there will be a different mixture or combination of types of actions/contributions (mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, other sustainable development), depending on the level of resources available;

(4) To also show the level of external resources required if the country is to attain certain levels of actions in the various categories of actions/contributions.

It is important that developing countries have information up-front on the scale and type of financial support that is available to them, when they prepare their own INDCs. **This is especially because for Non-Annex I parties, the extent and level of these contributions will depend on the availability and extent of finance and technology support.** The greater the support, the greater the contributions of developing countries.

The points above are reflected in Table 2, which illustrates the approach as to different scenarios and levels of contributions for developing countries. Each non-Annex I Party will have its own priorities and options, and can nationally determine and choose the types of actions (adaptation, loss and damage, mitigation, other sustainable development actions such as food security) in accordance with their circumstances and specific needs as well as development priorities.

Table 2 also shows the relation between finance and technology support (originating from Annex II contributions) with the level of mitigation and adaptation actions of developing country Parties. Plan 1 shows the actions if support is low; Plan 2 are actions if support is moderate; Plan 3 if support is high; and Plan 4 if support is optimal.

The concept of “nationally determined contributions” must not be read as departing from the context and structure of commitments under the Convention, but instead should be in line with the provisions and existing commitments under the Convention:

- For Annex I Parties, the concept of “nationally determined” has to be guided by the Convention principle of developed countries taking the lead and in a comparable manner, consistent with their commitments under Art. 4.2, in order for them to reduce their emissions to aggregate levels that are comparable and consistent with what

Table 2: Developing Country Intended Contributions with Varying Levels of Support from Annex II Developed Country Parties

INDCs of Developing Countries (Developing country Parties prepare sets of national contributions (Plan 1-4) depending on the finance and technology obtained from Annex II Parties)				
Category of Actions	Plan 1 (With low external finance and low tech support)	Plan 2 (With moderate external finance and tech support)	Plan 3 (With good external finance and tech support)	Plan 4 (With optimal external finance and tech support)
Adaptation	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action
Loss and damage	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action
Mitigation	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action
Sustainable development	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action	(a) Action (b) Action (c) Action

the scientific community has indicated developed countries should do. Annex I Parties should increase their pre-2020 ambitions firstly, with a view to setting the ambitious starting point and reference level for determining their post-2020 contributions.

- For non-Annex I Parties, “national determination” of the extent of their contributions with respect to adaptation, mitigation, capacity building, and sustainable development, should reflect the diversity of their respective national development conditions and circumstances. It should also take into account that as they continue to pursue their overriding priority of socio-economic development and poverty eradication, as recognized in Art. 4.7, their emissions will most likely grow. In this context, the implementation by Annex II developed country Parties of their respective commitments relating to finance and technology transfer under Art. 4 of the Convention will be an essential condition and foundation for enhancing the actions and contributions of developing country Parties to avoid or reduce their emissions and to adapt to climate change even as they pursue sustainable development and poverty eradication.

The level and type of contributions by developing countries depends on the national priorities and conditions plus the level of external support. The country can draw up its climate plans with options according to the level of external support. It will have different combination of mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage and capacity building, with different levels of external support. For example, a country facing very

low support (Plan 1 scenario) may decide to place most of its resources on capacity building (including developing institutions and human capacity) and loss and damage, then adaptation. With higher support, significantly more actions on mitigation become possible, while additional adaptation and loss and damage are also made possible.

Thus a developing country requires information on the level and type of finance that is available, as well as technological support. Without such information, it is not possible to decide on which plan is going to be adopted. The information on finance and technology will have to be obtained from the level of finance and technology support that Annex I parties are willing to provide, and the finance and technology available from international financing from Green Climate Fund, other agencies and bilateral financing, etc.

As stated above, provision of support to developing countries for their domestic preparations for providing information and making contributions is necessary. Without such support, it is not possible for developing countries to provide submission on contributions or information. The contributions that developing countries make will to a major extent depend on the financial and technological support they can obtain. Therefore developing countries can prepare various levels of their contributions (on adaptation, mitigation, addressing loss and damage, capacity building, sustainable development) in line with the various levels of support they can anticipate.

Annex II countries should thus include their commitments on financial and technological support that they provide to developing countries, as critical components of their contributions.

Given the above analysis of linkages (elements-contributions-information-support) and sequencing, the process of making contributions requires a logical sequencing. Annex I Parties can provide information on their mitigation contributions early. However they also need to provide early information on their finance and technology support. Only with information on support can developing countries make available information on their contributions. They can however draw up tentative plans that depend on the level of external support.

There are proposals to assess whether aggregate mitigation contributions are adequate to meet the requirements of keeping global temperature rise below 2 degrees. Equally important, and indeed as a first step, there must be an assessment of the adequacy of finance and technological support. This is because the level and type of mitigation contributions of developing countries depends on the level and types of finance and technological support.

External support is a major driver of the climate actions (mitigation and adaptation and loss and damage and capacity development) of developing countries. Therefore the process of review and upgrading has to first and foremost be applied to finance and technology support.

Information on the volumes, type, source, sector-related, conditions, trends and timing of financial resources to be made available, should be a top priority for the submission of information on contributions by Annex I parties. Should the individual or aggregate level be inadequate, a process to upgrade this to the adequate level should be designed and implemented.

The information on support can be used by developing countries to determine the Category of Plan it can tentatively adopt, as the option of Plan chosen will largely depend on the level of support.

The aggregate of mitigation contributions by developing countries largely depends on the aggregate of finance and technology support. An exercise to upgrade mitigation by developing countries thus is dependent on an exercise to upgrade support provided by Annex I countries.

At the same time, each developing country has its nationally determined priority in the balance between adaptation, mitigation and loss and damage. The application made by a country for financial and technological support would also be guided by the national prioritization of climate actions across these categories of activities.

This approach to the development of developing country NDCs was flagged by the LMDC in June 2014, when it put forward a conference room paper (CRP) providing for a draft decision on INDCs for consideration in Lima.³ In that proposal, the LMDC suggested a differentiated structure consistent with Parties' reporting obligations under the UNFCCC for the kind of in-

formation that would be provided in the INDCs of Parties, as follows:

Summary of the main points:

1. **The INDCs of a developing country should contain the full range of its intended climate-related actions and thus intended of the sustainable development actions, i.e. it should be comprehensive.**

2. The developing country should prepare "scenarios" or different sets of INDCs, with each set reflecting the level of financial and technological resources available; thus linking the composition (for example as between mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage) of the INDCs and the level of ambition of the sets of INDCs with the level of financial and other resources available, from domestic and international sources.

3. Since information on how much international funds are available for the country's climate actions from 2020 onwards, it would be advisable for the country in its own domestic planning, to have a baseline scenario of actions with less external financing, and an optimal or optimistic scenario of actions with the support of significant external financing. There could be other scenarios in between the "no or little external financing" and "significant external financing."

4. With these scenarios of domestic planning available, the country could then decide on which of the scenarios to submit as its INDC. It could for example submit the most basic scenario as its only INDC, with an explanation that this is the INDC with the current state or level of financial resources and technology currently available, and state that this INDC could be revised (and hopefully upgraded) later when and if additional resources being made available to the country. It could also additionally submit more of the scenarios, and state that "these contributions are on the condition and assumption that the country will be able to obtain the sufficient level of external support for financial resources, technology and capacity building."

5. In the statements on the INDC, it should be clarified by the country at the top of the sections on Adaptation and on Loss and Damage (and on Other Sustainable Development Actions if applicable), that "these Intended Contributions are included for the purposes of Information of other Parties and the Public that these are part of the country's intended climate actions, and they do not constitute international obligations of the country." This statement need not be placed in the section on Mitigation contributions.

C2. INDCs of Developing Countries on Mitigation/Avoiding Emissions, and Finance and Technology Support

There is a differentiation between the mitigation related INDCs for developed and developing countries. Annex I countries are expected to submit economy-wide GHG emissions reduction commitments. This has been the practice and methodology in the Kyoto Protocol and also in the Cancun pledges, whereby countries committed to

reduce their overall GHG emissions by a certain percentage by a certain year, for example by 20 per cent by 2020 as compared to 1990 levels.

However, developing countries have had the flexibility to choose among various options in the mitigation actions that they have planned or pledged. Under the Bali Action Plan, developing countries agreed to take enhanced “nationally determined mitigation actions” (NAMAs) in the context of sustainable development, and supported by finance and technology. Under a decision of the Conference of Parties in Cancun in 2010, Annex I Parties submitted pledges on mitigation actions, mainly in the form of economy-wide emissions reductions, sometimes supplemented by other pledges (for example, increasing the share of renewable energy in total energy used). Those developing countries that submitted pledges did so in very diverse ways, with actions that ranged from increasing forest cover and improving energy efficiency to reducing the level of greenhouse gases per unit of GNP. Some countries decided on having one, two or more of these actions in their pledges, and most countries also mentioned that these pledges are on the condition of receiving finance and technology support.

Drawing from the practice of developing countries under the Bali Action Plan and the Cancun pledges, the developing countries also have the flexibility to choose the specific types of mitigation actions they would like to include in their INDCs. These could include actions that reduce emissions or that avoid emissions. They could be sectoral in nature and cover a specific area (for example, increase in forest cover, improving energy efficiency and increasing the use of renewable energy) or have targets that are more economy-wide (such as deviation from business as usual, reducing the GHG content per unit of GNP, or a reduction in emissions).

Developing countries have also been preparing and submitting National Communications which includes planned mitigation actions. The types of actions that are planned in these reports can be drawn upon in preparing the INDCs, keeping in mind that these INDCs are for the post-2020 period.

The UNFCCC Secretariat produced a technical paper under the ADP discussions on Workstream 2 in 2013 (Document FCCC/TP/2013/4, dated 28 May 2013). The paper included an overview regarding the Cancun pledges, which provided a listing of the types of pre 2020 mitigation actions that developing countries had pledged to undertake. However it must be noted that many developing countries also decided not to submit any NAMA pledges.

The NAMA “pledges” by developing countries as summarised by the Secretariat paper can be used as examples of the types of actions that could be submitted by a country as its mitigation INDCs.

According to the Secretariat paper, many Parties “submitted conditional and unconditional emission

reduction pledges until 2020 under the Cancun Agreements”. For developing countries, these pledges are in the form of NAMAs. Many Parties in their submissions elaborated on these pledges and their implementation. The existing emission reduction pledges can be categorized into the following types:

(a) **National quantified targets to reduce emissions** [referred to as economy-wide actions]: these targets state an end result and do not necessarily specify measures to achieve them, for example:

(i) Absolute emission reductions relative to a reference year; for example, to achieve a 20 per cent reduction in GHG emissions by 2020 compared with 2000;

(ii) Emission reductions relative to the ‘business as usual’ scenario; for example, to achieve a 30 per cent reduction below the ‘business as usual’ scenario emissions by 2020;

(iii) Emission reductions expressed relative to another indicator; for example, to reduce CO₂ emissions per unit of gross domestic product (GDP) by 30 per cent by 2020 compared with 2005;

(b) **Targets expressed in non-GHG terms:** These were expressed as absolute targets, for example “reduce net deforestation of primary forests to zero” or “achieve carbon neutrality”, or in relative terms, for example “reach a 15 per cent share of non-fossil fuels in primary energy consumption by 2020”; [These reflect sectoral initiatives that can encompass areas such as forestry, energy, industry, transport, cities etc.]

(c) **Strategies:** these encompass comprehensive plans of measures and actions undertaken by governments that aim to achieve long-term mitigation objectives. They provide the overarching framework to undertake a set of mitigation measures;

(d) **Programmes and policies:** these encompass concrete measures undertaken by governments to achieve a specific objective that are linked to public budgets and legislative processes;

(e) **Projects or portfolio of projects:** these usually refer to specific investments undertaken by the private or public sectors with fixed project boundaries, clearly defined activities and a financial investment in services, infrastructure or machinery.

Conclusion

The present INDC formulation exercise can draw lessons from this useful summary of types of mitigation actions that were pledged by some developing countries in the pre-2020 context. A developing country can choose to include in its mitigation-related INDCs from among a rich variety of actions or programmes, depending on its national priorities and conditions.

As stated in the previous section, the country can also provide a basic set of mitigation INDCs as what it is able to contribute, given the present available level of resources; and provide another set or other sets of INDCs

Table 3: Template for INDC on mitigation for developing countries

Preamble	It can be stated that the extent of implementation of the intended contribution on mitigation stated here is conditioned on the extent of financial resources and the technologies that are available to the country.
National situation and policy context	Provide brief information on the overall national context for the INDC, including how the actions fit with national plans and strategies, including with sustainable development priorities.
Type of Contribution related to mitigation/avoiding emissions	Provide a set of the type/types of mitigation actions or targets to reduce or avoid emissions. This could be sector-based, economy-wide, or programmes and projects (See types of actions mentioned in the paper). For sectors, the country could include one or more of the following, as appropriate: energy (efficiency, energy intensity of GNP, use of renewable energy); transportation; industry; buildings; other infrastructure; forest and land use; etc. The country can provide a set of actions or targets that are “basic” (possible with present available resources) and another set or sets conditioned on the receipt of certain levels of finance and technology supports.
Timeframe for implementation	The year the contribution will start and its ending date. For goals and targets, the base year and target years should be given, for example to increase forest cover in the country from 40% in 2010 to 50% in 2025 or 55% in 2030.
Scope and coverage	This can include the scope of the gases included; and the sectors/sources.
Assumptions and methodological approaches	It is up to the country to define the assumptions and what methodologies are used for accounting, e.g. IPCC GHG inventory guidelines. It is important to also note that past COP decisions have given flexibility to developing countries to develop their NAMA and REDD-plus actions. What developing countries have been communicating via their National Communications could also be a useful reference.
Planning processes	Could be a brief summary related to the contribution.
Means of implementation	Could specify available national resources, and the external support needed in terms of cost estimates of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building needs for a particular set of mitigation-related INDCs. Another estimate of the higher resources required can be given, if another set of INDCs (with higher ambition) is also provided.

on the condition it obtains a higher level of financing and technological support.

A possible template for mitigation related INDCs for developing countries is provided above.

C3. Templates for INDC on Adaptation and Loss and Damage

Adaptation usually refers to the policies and measures taken by a country to prepare for and reduce or minimise the impacts of climate change, for example to improve drainage systems or build higher river banks in anticipation of flooding. Traditionally this does not refer to the loss and damage caused by climate change and weather events, for example the loss of lives and destruction of or damage to property caused by storms, heavy rainfall and flooding. The UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Warsaw in 2013 established a mechanism on loss and damage and will elaborate on operationalizing of this mechanism. Therefore it is appropriate for

a country that so desires to also make plans for addressing “loss and damage” arising from climate change and extreme weather events.

Developing countries have been undertaking adaptation related efforts and initiatives in response to the climate impacts that they have experienced. Some countries have had to also respond to the loss and damage resulting from extreme weather events. Often, developing countries have had to respond to climate impacts with their limited domestic resources, given the imperative to meet the urgent needs of those impacted.

As climate-related risks are expected to grow, not responding to adaptation and loss and damage demands is not an option for developing countries, particularly for those which have been vulnerable to climate impacts. Hence, in some developing countries, adaptation and addressing loss and damage will have to be top priorities in the use of their national resources for climate actions.

This is why international financial support is necessary and important, firstly to assist developing countries meet their adaptation and loss and damage needs, and secondly to support their mitigation actions. So far the needed financial support has been inadequate and the support for the post 2020 period is uncertain.

It is important for developing countries to communicate what their post 2020 initiatives and actions will be in relation to adaptation and loss and damage. If only mitigation INDCs actions are included, the wrong impression may be created that the country is not doing much climate action. Inclusion of adaptation and loss and damage actions in the INDCs enables other Parties to be aware of the often immense efforts that the country is making in climate actions in these two areas. Moreover, by putting forward ambitious adaptation and loss and damage actions, the country is also able to clarify its financial needs for the whole range of climate actions. Putting forward adaptation and loss and damage INDCs is also a way for the country to highlight its overall need for financial support.

Some delegations have raised the concern that if a developing country were to include INDCs or adaptation, then the country would be making international obligations for itself, which it would then find difficult to fulfil. Therefore it is important for developing countries to clarify as a preface to its adaptation INDCs, that “these Intended Contributions on Adaptation actions are included for the purposes of Information of other Parties and the Public that these are part of the country’s intended climate actions, and they do not constitute international obligations of the country.”

Template for Adaptation

There are many ways in which climate change impact on countries. Adaptation actions in a country depend on what the impacts are for that country. The main impacts are on coastal areas (affected by sea level rise and by storms), and on water (either too much through heavy rainfall or too little because of drought), or on land, agriculture and forest, and also the effects of extreme weather events such as prolonged heavy rainfall or storms and hurricanes, or drought, etc. Adaptation can take many forms, including planting of mangroves or forests, agricultural practices that reduce the impact of heavy rain or drought, improved drainage in urban areas to reduce flooding caused by rain, strengthened roads and buildings to make them more resilient to floods, and the building of evacuation centres and establishing a programme for preparedness to cope with storms and floods.

The following are possible templates for communication by a developing country on the adaptation and loss and damage components of the INDC.

The actions on adaptation relate to the area/sector where such actions are planned, in response to the impacts and vulnerability faced. Disaster preparedness and disaster risk reduction measures and programmes

can also be included as part of adaptation plans and intended contributions.

Template for Loss and Damage

In the context of UNFCCC, the term “loss and damage” refers to the adverse impacts caused by climate change, for example the damage and loss to lives, income and property resulting from storms, rising sea level, floods and drought. The COP in Warsaw in 2013 decided to establish a loss and damage mechanism to address this set of issues. Meanwhile, countries have been taking actions, sometimes ad hoc, in response to climate impacts and extreme weather events. When an adverse weather event takes place, for example a hurricane, heavy rainfall or drought, it is not easy to determine whether or to what extent this is caused by climate change *per se*. Nevertheless it is related to the weather, and countries have to cope with these events and natural disasters as and when they take place. Therefore it is appropriate to include in the planning, and in the country’s listing of intended contributions, the actions and programmes the country is undertaking to anticipate and to address when a natural disaster and extreme weather event takes place.

In dealing with such events or disasters, many countries take actions relating to rescue, rehabilitation and recovery. Rescue refers to the urgent actions taken in the immediate period following the event, including identifying areas and persons affected, rescuing them from the adverse situation, evacuating or relocating them to temporary safe centres, and providing food, water, utilities and health care. Rehabilitation refers to the basic repair to affected houses, hospitals and clinics, schools, government and company offices, roads and railways, and agricultural lands so that there can be relocation back to homes and the re-starting of educational, governmental and commercial activities. Recovery is the longer term task of restoring the affected areas and persons to the pre-crisis levels, and the establishment of conditions for economic and social development to resume. These and other actions are normally included in governments’ plans regarding climate events and disasters, and a brief summary of these planned actions can be included in the INDC on Loss and Damage.

A possible template is as follows.

PART D: SOME CONCLUSIONS

• **FLEXIBILITY:** Though countries are expected to submit their INDCs before COP21 in Paris, there is considerable flexibility in the scope, methodology and timing of submission of the INDCs. Developing countries should be aware of this flexibility and make appropriate use of it.

• **THE MISSING FINANCE AND TECHNOLOGY CONTRIBUTIONS:** The scope of the INDCs should include the finance and technology contributions in the developed countries’ INDCs. However, they have made it clear during COP20 in Lima that they would not be doing this.

Table 4: Template for adaptation component of INDCs

Preamble	<p>It can be stated that the intended contribution on adaptation stated here is for the purposes of information so that an overview of the range of planned climate-related actions of the country are made known. It does not constitute an international obligation to the country.</p> <p>Also, the extent of implementation of the intended contribution depends on the financial resources and technologies available to the country.</p>
National situation and policy context	National Adaptation Plan or other policy framework
Area/sector (if applicable) where adaptation actions are planned	Provide information about areas/sectors where adaptation actions are planned eg. coastal and low-lying areas; food producing/farming areas; forests/mangrove areas; urban areas; management of water resources etc.
Impacts and vulnerability	Brief information of impacts and vulnerabilities faced e.g. sea-level rise; rain and floods; storms and hurricanes; drought etc.
Planned actions	<p>Summary of planned actions to address impacts/vulnerabilities. This can be by any one or more of the following categories:</p> <p>(a) geographical areas (urban, rural, coastal, mountainous areas)</p> <p>(b) sectors (forest, mangroves, agriculture, buildings, roads, drainage systems and rivers, water supply, health services, education, food systems, etc)</p> <p>(c) disaster preparedness, disaster risk reduction and disaster management plans and schemes (establishing early warning system, evacuation system, rescue and food/health system, equipment for dealing with disasters, training, human resources, etc)</p> <p>(d) Needs related to and actions in identifying and addressing limits to adaptation and associated impacts of slow onset events relevant to the country: desertification, sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacier loss and related impacts.</p>
Timeframe for implementation (if applicable)	The period for implementation
Means of implementation	<p>Estimates of costs for the planned actions; what national resources are available and what additional support is needed in terms of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building needs.</p> <p>The adaptation contributions can also be submitted as sets of adaptation actions; the first set is the “basic level”, with the actions that can be taken with limited presently available resources. Another set could be actions if there is moderate external financing, whereas a third set could have a higher level of activities, assuming there is adequate external financial resources made available.</p>

• **ADAPTATION CONTRIBUTIONS:** Developing countries can choose whether to include adaptation (and also loss and damage, within adaptation) in their INDCs. The advantage of doing so is that they can show the full range of their climate actions, which go beyond mitigation; and by doing so also indicate the requirements they have for assistance with finance and technology.

• However, developing countries that choose to include adaptation (and loss and damage) should indicate that the contributions on this is for the information of member states and the public, and do not constitute

international obligations under UNFCCC and the Paris outcomes.

• **MITIGATION:** Regarding the contribution on mitigation, the Lima COP20 decision on ADP and INDCs provides in **Paragraph 14** a list of items for member states to communicate. These are: “quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage, planning processes, assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals, and how the Party consid-

Table 5: Template for Loss and Damage

<p>Preamble</p>	<p>It can be stated that the intended contribution on loss and damage stated here is for the purposes of information so that the planned actions of the country are made known. It does not constitute an international obligation to the country.</p> <p>Also, the extent of implementation of the intended contribution depends on the financial resources and technologies available to the country.</p>
<p>National situational and policy context</p>	<p>National plan or framework for loss and damage. For several countries, there may not yet be a specific action plan on “loss and damage” arising specifically from climate change. However most countries have a plan for dealing with natural disasters. The elements of the plan for coping with disasters could be used for this section on loss and damage.</p>
<p>Description of climate events that lead to loss and damage, and impacts of these events</p>	<p>A short listing of the types of: (a) extreme weather events such as storms, heavy rainfall, floods, coastal erosion or flooding, drought etc. and the adverse effects that lead to loss and damage (b) Slow onset events relevant to the country: desertification, sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacier loss and related impacts that lead to loss and damage.</p> <p>The country may also include the impacts on society in the particular areas or eco-systems, such as reduction in food and other agricultural production, reduction or loss of income for farmers; factories, workers, small and bigger business enterprises, traders; damage to buildings, roads, other infrastructure, transport materials, etc. owned either by government agencies or by individual members of the public. These are among the victims and components of loss and damage.</p>
<p>Plans/actions to address these problems</p>	<p>In the context of “loss and damage” and weather events or natural disasters, the types of actions and plans may include: (a) Rescue operations, such as search, rescue and evacuation; relocation to evacuation centres; provision of food, water and health care; (b) Rehabilitation, including basic repair of houses, schools, buildings, clinics, roads, electricity, water and infrastructure, so that victims are able to return to homes, offices and school; (c) Recovery, which includes full restoration of housing, other buildings, utilities, infrastructure, and livelihoods and jobs, so that development and economic growth can resume together with social and environmental protection. (d) Actions to cope with loss and damage resulting from slow onset events relevant to the country: desertification, sea level rise, increasing temperatures, ocean acidification, glacier loss, etc.</p>
<p>Timeframe</p>	<p>The timeframe for implementation of the intended actions could also be provided.</p>
<p>Means of implementation: Financing, Technology, etc.</p>	<p>Estimates of costs for the planned actions; what national resources are available and what additional support is needed in terms of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building needs.</p> <p>The loss and damage contributions can also be submitted as sets of adaptation actions; the first set is the “basic level”, with the actions that can be taken with limited presently available resources. Another set could be actions if there is moderate external financing, whereas a third set could have a higher level of activities, assuming there is adequate external financial resources made available.</p>
<p>Needs Assessment</p>	<p>If the country has carried out needs assessment, including on finance and technology, this can be briefly mentioned. If not, it can mention that the INDC on loss and damage is could be modified when needs assessment is carried out.</p>

ers that its INDC is fair and ambitious, in light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2.”

- However the Paragraph explains that the information on INDCs to be provided by Parties “**may include, as appropriate, inter alia...**” the items included in the list cited above. Therefore it is up to each country to decide which among the items listed may be included in the country’s INDCs on mitigation.

• ABSENCE OF RELEVANT INFORMATION:

One disadvantage that many developing countries may have in preparing their INDCs is that several important pieces of information are not available at the time of this preparation. The following are some of the problems:

(a) Lack of information on the financial resources and technology transfer that will be made available to developing countries and specifically to the developing country preparing the INDCs.

(b) The country has not yet prepared a comprehensive (or even initial) action plans for mitigation or for adaptation (and loss and damage). Therefore putting forward the “contributions” before the plans are ready is somewhat like putting the cart before the horse.

(c) The country may also have not yet done or completed an assessment of its needs in terms of financial resources, technologies, institutions, and human resources, etc. It is thus difficult for the country to put forward what its needs are, or what are the gaps between needs and available resources and technologies.

- **INITIAL INDCS CAN LATER BE REVISED:** Because of these and other reasons, it is reasonable for developing countries to put forward their **initial** INDCs, with some contributions containing figures, while other contributions may not have figures. It should be understood that the countries can revise their initial INDCs and/or provide more information (including on needs and financial or technological resources required). There is a time period of four years between the COP21 in Paris and the start of 2020, the first year of the Paris agreement. Therefore there is ample time for a country to revise its INDCs.

- In this context, countries need not feel they have to put forward a complete set of information or the most

ambitious actions they can envisage, as this initial set of contributions can be amended during the 4-year period before 2020.

Since the information on financial resources and technology support is not yet provided, the developing countries do not yet know the level of support that will be available. They thus need not put forward what they may consider the highest level of actions, as this may have to wait for more information to be available (i.e. information on support, and on the country’s needs and gaps, as well as its post-2020 action plans).

- **INDCS CAN BE KEPT SIMPLE:** The INDCs to be submitted need not be complex or complicated. They can in fact be simple, with the items on mitigation containing the items or sectors and figures where available, as well as the items on adaptation and loss and damage which the country already has plans ready. The pledges made by most countries following the COP in Cancun were mainly simple. The INDCs already submitted by some developed countries, including the US and EU, are also relatively simple. Developing countries’ INDCs can be expected to be even simpler than those of major developed countries.

- It is not expected that the INDCs should be as detailed or comprehensive as the information the country has provided or will provide in its national communication or its biennial update reports. Also, the exercise of formulating the INDCs is not expected to be as comprehensive as preparing the country’s action plans and targets in mitigation and adaptation. The INDCs could be taken as an initial attempt to place some of the country’s planned actions in the international arena as part of its intention for achieving certain goals and targets. The country’s initial INDC is not cast in stone, and can be expected to be amended if conditions change.

End Notes

- 1 UNFCCC COP Decision 1/CP.19, para. 2(b) and (c).
- 2 UNFCCC COP Decision 1/CP.20, paras. 8 to 15.
- 3 See http://unfccc.int/files/bodies/awg/application/pdf/adp2-5_sybmission_by_lmdc_crp_20140611.pdf and http://unfccc.int/files/bodies/awg/application/pdf/adp2-5_statement_by_lmdc_on_contributions_20140611.pdf

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