

Rich exchange of views on the Global Goal on Adaptation

Penang, 27 June (Evelyn Teh) – A rich exchange of views and expectations of Parties took place at the three-day mandated event on the ‘Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the Global Goal on Adaptation’ (GLASS-GGA) at the 56th session meetings of the UNFCCC’s Subsidiary Bodies (SB 56) in Bonn, Germany.

Developing countries emphasized the global and collective nature of adaptation actions, the need for means of implementation and that the global goal on adaptation (GGA) should consider the different national circumstances, leading towards a transformative adaptation pathway.

The GLASS-GGA event comprised of an event by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) held on 7 June, and two workshops held on 8th and 9th June.

Apart from the mandated events, Parties also met in a contact group, to have informal consultations on how to capture and proceed with the GLASS-GGA, since a specific agenda item on the matter was added by consensus by Parties on the work to be done by the SBs at the start of the Bonn talks on June 6. The **Like-minded developing countries (LMDC)** had called for the GLASS-GGA to be added as an agenda item of the SBs, which was supported by the G77 and China. Informal consultations were also held with the heads of delegations (HODs)

on June 16, the final day of the Bonn session, to finalise the conclusions which were eventually adopted at the closing plenaries of the SBs. (See further details below).

IPCC Event

The IPCC event saw presentations from the authors of Working Group II (on ‘Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability’). The findings of the presentations were expected to have relevance in the review of the overall progress made in achieving the GGA by clarifying methodologies and other related elements.

At the workshops

On the 8-9 June, two GLASS-GGA workshops took place based on the theme: “Enhancing understanding of the global goal on adaptation, and relevance to the global stock take (GST)”, in line with objectives (b) and (c) of the work programme.

(Among the objectives of the work programme are: “(b) *Enhance understanding of the global goal on adaptation, including of the methodologies, indicators, data and metrics, needs and support needed for assessing progress towards it; and (c) Contribute to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation as part of the GST...*”)

The workshop kicked off with the UNFCCC’s Executive Secretary, Patricia Espinosa’s opening remarks, who emphasised the necessity

of adaptation efforts and in making progress on the global goal, especially for developing and vulnerable nations. She cited the UN data, which estimated that the annual adaptation costs in developing countries is in the range of US\$70 billion and will reach US\$300 billion by 2030. She said that while nations must boost their mitigation efforts, adaptation has been a forgotten piece of the equation, also noting that adaptation planning, and implementation can be challenging.

This was followed by an oral presentation by the secretariat, based on the 21 submissions from Parties and groupings, including on relevant previous work under the Convention and the Paris Agreement (PA). According to the secretariat, there is a desire among Parties to understand the required supporting efforts such as finance, technology and capacity building that are needed under the different mitigation outcomes, to ensure that Parties reach the right level of adaptation. It added further that Parties would also like to see that the work programme contributes substantially to enhancing adaptation action and support, which so far have not been sufficient. The secretariat also said that many Parties have also cautioned against developing top-down, prescriptive approaches as adaptation efforts are locally specific, due to countries' national circumstances.

It also said that Parties have also called for a move towards collective adaptation work away from the current incremental efforts towards transformational adaptation to address the mounting adaptation challenges. Many submissions had also pointed out that these adaptation efforts must be made based on the principles of equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDRRC), and that the GGA must be global in nature, defined both quantitatively and qualitatively; and designed in a way that allows each country's aspirations to be reflected, while guided by clearly defined global goals and common priorities.

Botswana on behalf of **G77 and China**, stated its support for the launch of the GLASS-GGA that would contribute substantially to the adaptation support and engage in operationalising the work programme with a focus on substance. It emphasised the need to reflect on overarching principles to guide

implementation, make clear linkages to the GST, track progress made in line with Article 2 of the Paris Agreement (PA) with an aim to recognise the adaptation efforts in developing countries; enhance and review the support and progress made on the GGA, and identify further action. It stressed further that adaptation and mitigation are global responsibilities which is important for both GGA and GST; and the group expects to have a substantive outcome in CMA4 (at the 4th session of the Conference of Parties to the PA to be held in Egypt in November this year) for determining the GGA. It said that the session should provide further guidance on the work programme, based on the progress achieved in 2022.

Zambia, for the **African Group (AG)**, stated that the PA has struck a very delicate balance in articulating three goals viz. the adaptation goal, the mitigation goal as articulated in the 1.5°C temperature goal, and the means of implementation goal. However, progress has been uneven so far in terms of both the political process and multilateral process under the UNFCCC, as well as in practice and that adaptation has often been treated as an afterthought. Through the work on the GGA, it said that we are bringing back and raising the political profile of adaptation and articulating the need to address it globally. The AG said that it frames the GGA as a global responsibility and as a global framework for a comprehensive adaptation regime under the PA. In order to raise global ambition, action, and support on finance, technology, and capacity building are necessary to close the adaptation needs and finance gaps identified in both the UN Environment Programme's (UNEP) Adaptation Gap Report in 2021 and the IPCC Working Group II report.

It also raised the need to not only respond to the current adaptation needs under the observed impacts at 1.1°C and 1.2°C, which put us at the moderate risk level but also to the projected risks under the 1.5°C scenario, which is considered to be ambitious; with the consideration that we are near the 3.0°C trajectory. The GGA should therefore reflect where we are, where we want to be and how we get there, it added further and that through this work programme, it wanted the GGA to be defined, articulate its elements, achieve the GGA, view and assess progress towards it through the GST process. As a proposal

to assess the progress of the GGA, the AG stated that one way forward would be to identify and agree on a set of global adaptation targets, with appropriate timelines that are aligned to the nationally determined contributions (NDCs), Adaptation Communications, National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and aligned with the GST cycles, including identifying nationally appropriate indicators for voluntary use by Parties that could follow both a bottom-up and top-down approach.

Noting from the IPCC presentations, it said that there is a gap in science-informed methodologies and guidelines in order to communicate and report consistent and comparable adaptation information, which requires further engagement with the IPCC to update on these methodologies.

Saudi Arabia, on behalf of the **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** raised a question on whether the views expressed in the workshops would be captured, adding that there was not enough time for an adequate exchange of views with interested Parties during the IPCC event. The LMDC also said that the process should develop overarching principles towards achieving the GGA, identify common substances associated with GGA, such as the concept, methodology and metrics. The LMDC stated that the work under the event should complement the work done under the dedicated agenda item related to the GLASS-GGA (in reference to work under the contact group on the item).

Maldives, for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** highlighted the importance of establishing a monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL framework) and the role that this plays in advancing national perspectives of adaptation capacity, vulnerability and resilience. It believed that frameworks and goal setting should be effective at a national level without overburdening countries, as top-down approaches have not worked in the past and rarely take into account the nature and scale of adaptation needs of small island developing states.

Angola speaking for the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**, stated that definitions around vulnerability, adaptive capacity and resilience are very vague, and they do not want to go into defining those, but the

goals would need to track the progress of countries. Climate finance may not be the only element to assess progress on, but it would need to be factored into the goal. It also said that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which have been climate-proofed, are also something that can be explored.

Colombia on behalf of **Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)**, stated that understanding the GGA is not so much about agreeing on a common definition of the concepts such as adaptive capacity, resilience and vulnerability, as these concepts may have different meaning based on context and culture. Understanding the GGA has a great part to do with understanding the global character of the GGA and its multidimensionality and understanding the linkage between the GGA and the long-term temperature goal of the PA.

Despite the global character of the GGA and of adaptation itself, adaptation action is context-specific and should follow a country-driven approach. Hence, for the review of the progress towards achieving the GGA and informing the first GST, AILAC is for choosing not a single approach but a combination of approaches that complement each other. To determine which is the most suitable approach, it is necessary to identify the desired objectives for a global adaptation assessment.

Kuwait, on behalf of **Arab Group** called to have a synthesis note prepared by the SB or the secretariat prior to engaging successfully in the next workshop and at COP27. It wanted the momentum on adaptation issues to continue towards the needs, action, and support for the developing countries, not only for the sake of defining the GGA or the GST.

Papua New Guinea for the **Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS)** said that we need to define high aspirational goals, reflect the need to move from a predominantly incremental approach to address adaptation in a systematic and transformational way, as well as reflect on the various limits of adaptation. The PSIDS also stated the need to conceptually link adaptation to global temperature as every 0.1°C increase makes it even harder to reach whatever the GGA has been agreed on and pushes us towards adaptation limits. It also mentions that a

scorecard or dashboard approach would be a useful tool for providing comparable insights on adaptation measures.

Argentina, on behalf of **Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay (ABU)**, stated that there is still a gap between the identification of needs and the implementation of actions at the current level of warming. As recognised by the IPCC, adaptation finance, or the lack of it, is the biggest barrier to implementing adaptation actions in their region. It said that Parties should not be in a position to spend the limited time available by having conceptual discussions because the three main components of the GGA have already been negotiated in the PA and defined by the IPCC. For ABU, the Adaptation Committee's technical paper is the scope of Parties' discussion on the work programme i.e. first, on the methodological challenge and how to solve them by using national, regional, transboundary and local experiences as starting points.

It also stated that the qualitative and quantitative approach could be achieved by including the financial dimension of the goal. There is need for clarity in terms of the relationship between the work programme and the negotiations on the new financial goal, and the specifics of these discussions must be organised. ABU also mentioned that the relationship of the GGA with the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF) is critical since the individual, national and collective dimensions of the PA are enlightened by the same long-term goals. While it is also possible to create collective indicators, we need to assess to what extent these indicators allow Parties to apprehend the different realities and contexts of adaptation, it said further.

India said that most of the soft limits of adaptation have been crossed, and hard limits are being rapidly broken. The GGA should have 8 guiding principles, it said viz. (1) the GGA is global in nature with overarching principles and common understanding, and terminologies like a common goal will not be acceptable; (2) achieving adaptation goals should commensurate with the rising temperature, or ideally, ahead of the climate impacts of climate change that follows the trends of rising temperature; (3) national narratives on adaptation should feed organically into the

GGA from various sources; (4) take into account different and unique national and regional circumstances and also community level of realities, urgent needs and priorities; (5) capture local climate risks and local vulnerabilities and possible adaptation options and limits of adaptation, and climate-resilient livelihoods and infrastructure; (6) evolve with consultations with various stakeholders; (7) enhance the means of implementation including finance, capacity building and technology transfer, for adaptation action and support; and (8) simple methods and metrics to capture baselines and progress made, which does not add burden to developing countries due to cumbersome procedures.

China said that it is important to have a common understanding on the definition of the GGA which should be inclusive, operational and based on scientific findings, with full consideration of some elements, including the adverse impacts of climate change, vulnerability and risks of climate change at the national, regional and global level to promote resilience. In terms of good practices for goal setting, China said that it is a good starting point to assess some current information on adaptation, including action and support at different levels. It is also important to consider the adequacy of finance and support for the developing countries and to capture their gaps and needs.

China suggested a three-layered system, which includes a sectoral approach which identifies existing standards and methods in key areas such as agriculture and water, secondly, through regional objectives where major climate change risks and physical and geographical attributes are integrated into adaptation objectives according to the five continents, and thirdly, policy actions at national level, based on regional objectives, adopting a bottom-up approach to summarise the progress and identify the support needed at both the national and regional levels.

Bangladesh stated that adaptation is a function of mitigation, where the more we mitigate, the less we need to adapt. From the creation of the Convention 30 years ago until today, Bangladesh said that we had raised the cost of adaptation because of non-adaptation over the years. Saying that adaptation is like

a moving target, it asked how we are to conceptualise the GGA when adaptation has its soft and hard limits. Bangladesh quoted that the IPCC Working Group II report which indicated that 3.6 billion people are now at risk, including the ecosystems, which are all causing a myriad of issues – all which must be captured when conceptualising the GGA, including linking the 1.5°C temperature goal for mitigation to adaptation. On top of that, conceptualising the GGA should be human-centric, it said further.

South Africa stated that the conversation should be premised on the original concept that has led to the adoption of the established goal in the Article 7.1 of the PA which is to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change, and confirms the need for a collective, international responsibility towards its implementation and assessment of progress during the GST. The workshop should not attempt to renegotiate the already agreed goal but take Parties forward towards its full implementation, it stressed, adding that national priorities and the needs communicated by developing countries could play a significant role in setting a composite of global priorities under the GGA implementation and outlining the much-needed and broader indicators or metrics that would address the elements of adaptation planning, implementation and resources needed.

Costa Rica stated that there is a need to recognise the value of a diverse forum of knowledge such as the scientific, indigenous, and local knowledge in understanding and evaluating climate adaptation processes and actions. This includes recognising that people can be differently affected even in the same location, and therefore, any effort to set targets and goals of adaptation needs to account for cultural and geographical contingent concepts of what it means to adapt.

The **United States (US)** hoped for this work programme to have a good collection of national and local examples of effective adaptation planning and implementation, as well as to have a central source for practitioners to find the tools and information needed to act on those plans. The US also stated that Parties have the capacity and resources to monitor and evaluate progress on those actions and increase

reporting of progress on adaptation to the UNFCCC through the Adaptation Communications and other sources. It also wanted to have a clear picture of the GST on what works and what does not when it comes to adaptation. With regards to the question on conceptualising the GGA, the US said that there is already a conceptual framework as outlined in PA, which is a good starting point to build on.

The US also stated that Parties might want to consider in future discussions the framing of systems transition with sectors and linkages to mitigation and development addressed holistically. It referred to the IPCC's highlight on the importance of political will and enabling conditions that must be present to achieve the GGA, and to examine specific approaches that countries have taken to mainstream adaptation across different responsibilities and levels and how that might inform our work. It also said that the Adaptation Committee's technical paper provides an overview of good practices and different systems for goal setting and encouraged Parties to review that paper.

The **European Union (EU)** reflected on the IPCC presentations stating that the key takeaways were that mitigation and adaptation interact; that we need ambitious mitigation and reducing emissions to net zero globally by mid-century to keep 1.5°C alive and adaptation feasible. The EU also stated that it is best not to consider the GGA as a global goal but as a common goal, as mentioned by one of the IPCC authors, similar to the SDGs. The EU also highlighted the important relation between the GGA and the SDGs that should be explored further; and that assessing progress on adaptation poses challenges and should pursue different approaches such as triangulation which assess not only inputs and outputs but also processes and outcomes, particularly for the poorest and most vulnerable people and countries.

The EU also said that the GGA is a common, collective goal that is characterised by its open-ended nature, which builds on the adaptation policy cycles within countries, including vulnerability assessment, planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. The EU said that as a first step, a good way forward could be a discussion on priority areas from

the assessment of collective progress towards achieving the GGA.

Norway requested for a more detailed presentation on the Adaptation Committee's recent technical paper on the assessment of approaches to review the progress and achievement of the global goal as a key input to this work programme. With regards to good practices and goal setting, it suggested looking at the SDGs, the Sendai Framework, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, which are helpful to get these goals presented during some of the GGA workshops and identify how progress is measured in these frameworks.

Australia stated that its focus is on the quality and effectiveness that can be helpful in developing a clear picture of what adaptation progress looks like. It emphasised the need to explore more the link between the SDGs and the GGA. It also highlighted that the IPCC report goes beyond simply listing impacts but also usefully includes information on the enabling conditions for effective adaptation action, which should be leveraged.

Japan said that it would be difficult to set only one uniform threshold, target, or goal for the absolute level of adaptation. Technical work by the Adaptation Committee and other bodies in the UNFCCC have identified the elements of adaptation policies necessary for each country, and Japan proposed that this GLASS GGA workshop discuss progress in these common and necessary elements across countries and regions. The GGA assessment is supposed to be based on the specific information submitted by the Parties via their Adaptation Communication or other means. Therefore, when the adaptation progress is assessed at the global level, this information will be used, such as the level of participation, regional co-operation, progress in national adaptation processes, and the status of monitoring systems of adaptation actions at the local scale; and summarise this information on a country by country basis, said Japan further.

The GGA contact group and meeting of Heads of Delegation

Following the GGA workshops, on June 9, the contact group on the GLASS-GGA was convened to

gather the views of Parties on capturing the progress of work and on the way forward on the matter. Parties worked on the draft conclusions, going back and forth in intense negotiations.

On 16th June, the Chairs of the SBs convened a Heads of Delegations (HODs) meeting to finalise the draft conclusions. Following the informal consultations, the final conclusions which were agreed to at the HODs meeting and which were later adopted at the closing plenary session of the SBs was as follows:

1. *“The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) recalled decision 7/CMA.3, including the objectives outlined in paragraph 7, and welcomed the first workshop under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA, on the theme of enhancing understanding of the goal and reviewing progress towards it, and the IPCC event informing the work programme¹ on the contribution of Working Group II to its Sixth Assessment Report, held at these sessions.*
2. *The SBSTA and the SBI noted the compilation and synthesis of submissions from Parties on how to achieve the objectives of the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme.*
3. *The SBSTA and the SBI took note of the sequence and themes of the workshops under the work programme outlined in the compilation and synthesis of submissions on the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme, and that the themes and areas of work could require further elaboration as the process progresses.*
4. *The SBSTA and the SBI invited Parties and observers to submit via the submission portal views on the subsequent workshops, including on general considerations, the topics for discussion under the themes identified in the compilation and synthesis of submissions, areas of work, expected outcomes, examples, case studies and modalities, for each workshop to be conducted in 2022, at least three weeks in advance of the workshop.*

5. *The SBSTA and the SBI requested their Chairs, with the support of the secretariat, to make available a concept note and guiding questions relating to the theme and areas of work of each workshop, well in advance of the workshop, on the basis of the submissions referred to in paragraph 4 above received*

6. *The SBSTA and the SBI also requested that subsequent workshops under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme be more interactive, and invited contributions at the subsequent workshops from practitioners and experts from relevant organizations, UNFCCC constituted bodies and the IPCC, ensuring equitable geographical representation, as appropriate.*

7. *The SBSTA and the SBI further requested the secretariat, under the guidance of their Chairs, to compile and synthesize, by August 2022, indicators, approaches, targets and metrics that could be relevant for reviewing overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation, building on the 2021 technical report by the Adaptation Committee, while also taking into account relevant reports, communications and plans under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, the United Nations Environment Programme, the IPCC, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, relevant multilateral frameworks and mechanisms, United Nations organizations and specialized agencies, and the discussions at the first workshop under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme.*

8. *The SBSTA and the SBI welcomed the guidance of their Chairs on organizing the third workshop under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme in hybrid format, taking into account the challenges of the virtual modality in relation to inclusive participation and seeking to ensure equitable geographical representation of Parties.*

9. *The SBSTA and the SBI requested the secretariat, under the guidance of their Chairs, to prepare a summary of each workshop, in the context of preparing a single annual report for consideration at the sessions of the SBs coinciding with the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (November 2022)*

as provided in paragraph 16 of decision 7/CMA.3, capturing progress made and informing subsequent consideration by Parties under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme.

10. *The SBSTA and the SBI recalled that the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme should contribute to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation as part of the global stocktake referred to in Article 7, paragraph 14, and Article 14 of the Paris Agreement with a view to informing the first and subsequent global stocktakes.*

11. *The SBSTA and the SBI agreed to take into consideration, when organizing subsequent workshops in 2022–2023, that work under the Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme should inform the review of overall progress made towards achieving the global goal on adaptation referred to in Article 7, paragraph 14, of the Paris Agreement, as referred to in paragraph 10 above.”*

Prior to agreement on the above, contention arose over paragraphs 8, 9, which were initially presented as follows:

“8. The SBSTA and the SBI welcomed the guidance of their Chairs to organize one of the workshops...in a hybrid format, taking into account challenges of the virtual modality to inclusive participation and seeking to ensure equitable geographical representation of Parties.”

The **African Group** wanted to specify that instead of one of the workshops, the third workshop should be in a hybrid format. Sources said that developed countries were not comfortable with the idea of workshops in a hybrid format, but they agreed to the third workshop to be held in a hybrid format. This was reflected in paragraph 8 as agreed and reflected above.

“9. The SBSTA and SBI requested the secretariat under the guidance of the Chairs to prepare a summary of each workshop, in the context of preparing a single annual report as contained in paragraph 16 of decision 7/CMA.3, capturing progress made and informing subsequent consideration by Parties under the work programme.”

The **G77 and China** wanted the following language inserted at the end of the paragraph: for consideration and adoption at CMA 4. Sources said the **United States (US)** objected to the approach. Following huddles and further consultations at the HODs meeting, the reference to CMA 4 was agreed to be reflected in paragraph 9 of the conclusions above.

Work on the GLASS-GGA will continue in November later this year in Egypt.