



Submission by the Republic of the Maldives on behalf of the *Alliance of Small Island States*

Further guidance in relation to the adaptation communication, including, inter alia, as a component of nationally determined contributions, referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement

4 April 2017

Title: Submissions on APA Item 4

Submission Title: Item 4, “Further guidance in relation to the adaptation communication, including, inter alia, as a component of nationally determined contributions, referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement”

Issue: Agenda item 4: Adaptation Communication FCCC/APA/2016/L.4 (para 12) further views in relation to the adaptation communication, including, inter alia, as a component of NDCs paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement, taking into account the discussions on this item at APA1-2 as well as the annex to the informal note prepared by the co-facilitators.”

CONTEXT

AOSIS submitted its first views on guidance related to adaptation communications in September 2016. As outlined at that time, the guidelines for an Adaptation Communication (Communication) should facilitate the ability of SIDS to reflect their priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions, without creating any additional reporting burdens. In a nutshell, any such guidelines should build on the flexibility recognised in the Paris Agreement Article 7 paragraphs 10 and 11, including on elements to include in the Communication as well as in the periodicity of reporting. Ideally, the process of preparing the Communication will help SIDS build and retain capacity as they contribute to achieving the global goal on adaptation.

Taking into account the discussions on this item at APA1-2 (Marrakech, November 2016) captured in the annex to the informal note prepared by the co-facilitators, AOSIS now presents further views on the Adaptation Communication, as outlined in Article 7, paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement.

In this respect, AOSIS believes it is important to reiterate the following:

- There are currently no existing guidelines for preparing an Adaptation Communication;
- Unlike for mitigation, no guidelines exist now for the inclusion of adaptation in Nationally Determined Contributions for countries choosing to do so;
- The lack of relevant guidelines creates a level of uncertainty for developing countries in the process of developing national adaptation plans and preparing their next national communications;
- There is a lack of or limited funding for enhancing the existing reporting

requirements of SIDS under the UNFCCC.

Further Guidance in relation to Adaptation Communications

On Elements: AOSIS notes that the Paris Agreement provides flexibility on the elements to be included in the adaptation communication, without creating any additional burden for developing country Parties, as per Article 7, paragraph 10. At the same time, AOSIS reaffirms that while we have no objection to a non-exhaustive list of possible elements, an agreed common set of elements that can be reflected across all possible reporting vehicles should be encouraged and would provide a good basis for developing the adaptation component of the global stocktake, as per Article 7, paragraph 14. Therefore, AOSIS can support the following common elements:

1. Nationally-determined circumstances;
2. Impacts, vulnerabilities and risks faced (short, medium, and long-term);
3. Priorities, planned actions, strategies and programmes not limited to national adaptation plans (NAPs);
4. Implementation and support needs;
5. Monitoring and evaluation (as appropriate and to the extent possible).

On Existing Guidelines: As outlined in the Secretariat's Information Note, there are already adaptation-specific guidelines which encourage developing countries to report (mostly through National Communications) on all of the above-proposed common elements, plus, including the following:

1. National circumstances;
2. Capacity development priorities and relationship to sustainable development;
3. Impacts, vulnerabilities and risks (short and long-term);
4. Legal and policy frameworks and institutional arrangements;
5. Description of decision-making processes and how and why adaptation options are prioritized;
6. Key economic sectors in which adaptation action takes place;
7. Priorities, plans and actions;
8. Programmes and strategies (not limited to NAPs);
9. Recognition of adaptation efforts;
10. Progress on implementation of adaptation actions;
11. Implementation and support needs;
12. Indicative level and adequacy of support provided;
13. Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation, process used and findings.

Therefore, it is abundantly clear that SIDS are already communicating a plethora of adaptation information, primarily through the National Communications process, which is the most rigorous of existing reporting processes. The NAPs process is fairly new but has the potential for being similarly robust.

AOSIS members are mindful of existing reporting burdens and as the Adaptation Communication must be an effective tool that provides additional value and addresses the most important aspects of adaptation efforts underway in SIDS.

Future Considerations

Taking note of the Secretariat's Information Note, AOSIS wishes to put forward the following positions:

On the role of the Adaptation Communication as one of the inputs to the global stocktake, identifying the types of information that would be most useful to include in the Adaptation Communication:

As reiterated in the AOSIS submission in September 2016, the following elements may be included in future Adaptation Communications. It should be noted that there are areas of overlap between the elements listed below and those identified above from the Secretariat's Information Note. AOSIS considers these elements to be a fair basis to discuss/propose what may be considered a common set of elements which should be encouraged for inclusion irrespective of the reporting vehicle.

- a. Impacts and vulnerability assessment;
- b. Information on resilience-building activities/actions;
- c. Information on state of adaptive capacity;
- d. Adaptation plans/strategies and priorities;
- e. Synergy with national goals/policies related to improved adaptive capacity and resilience, reduced vulnerability;
- f. Implementation and support needs;
- g. Support provided and/or received.

The role of the Adaptation Communication in supporting the global stocktake will largely be one of recognition of what developing countries, including SIDS, are doing to build resilience, as well as taking stock of the support provided to developing countries on adaptation, taking into account the needs of developing country Parties especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change. AOSIS views the global stocktake as a tool to take stock of where we are on meeting the goal of limiting global warming to well below 2 degrees Celsius and preferably below 1.5 degrees Celsius. If the target is not achieved the cost of adaptation will increase significantly, even beyond the reach of many developing countries, many of whom are already struggling to adapt at current levels of warming.

On how should the guidance in relation to the Adaptation Communication relate to the guidelines for the different vehicles mentioned in Article 7, paragraph 11, of the Paris Agreement:

As stated in the AOSIS submission of September 2016, it is imperative that the scope, frequency, and the level of reporting details be addressed. There are currently no guidelines/guidance on how to prepare an Adaptation Communication and what should be contained therein. It may be instructive to consider a common set of guidelines that can be used across all reporting vehicles. In this way, parity is brought to the process and the basic set of information can be evaluated for inclusion in the global stocktake. This general format does not prejudice the possibility of more specific guidelines being prepared for a particular reporting vehicle, noting that certain reporting vehicles (e.g. National Communications and NAPs) already have guidelines.

It is clear that various parties will wish to report on additional information. As such, a non-exhaustive list of "other" useful elements could be considered, but should not be mandatory and should not form the basis of any global assessment pursuant to the global stocktake.

In relation to the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC), as has been noted no guidelines currently exist. AOSIS reiterates its concerns on how adaptation action can be taken up in an

instrument with a reporting obligation that requires greater ambition on subsequent reporting. As such, AOSIS is of the view that a common set of elements which should be encouraged and freedom of choice in reporting vehicles is the acceptable platform on which to proceed.

On how could the Adaptation Communication build on existing types of communication; whether there are technological tools that could reduce/avoid reporting burden:

The Adaptation Communication should be viewed as an instrument that strengthens and/or highlights information in existing reporting vehicles that while technical and comprehensive may be tedious to read and difficult to understand by parties within and outside the UNFCCC. As such, the Adaptation Communication may be considered as an instrument that enhances and maintains the profile of adaptation in a manner that engenders actual adaptation support and implementation at the domestic level. The Adaptation Communication has the potential for bridging the gap with other existing processes addressing climate change adaptation issues such as the Sustainable Development Goals. It is prudent that such synergies be recognized, particularly for SIDS who have severe capacity constraints. SIDS are very interested in any available technological tools that may reduce/avoid reporting burdens.
