

Loss and damage in the Paris Agreement's Global Stocktake

Responses to a survey of researchers and government officials

The Paris Agreement provides for a “global stocktake” of progress with regard to implementing the provisions included in the various articles that make up the agreement. How the global stocktake will approach Article 8 (on loss and damage) remains unclear.

This document reports on the responses to a survey of researchers and government officials, who were asked about how the global stocktake should approach loss and damage. The document has been prepared as input to one of the activities undertaken in the European Union-funded SINCERE project (<http://www.jpi-climate.eu/sincere>).

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Table of contents

1. Key questions that need to be answered prior to conducting a global stocktake of Article 8 in the Paris Agreement	3
1.1 Determining the scope of “averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage”	4
1.2 Assessing “enhanced understanding, action and support”	4
1.3 Assessing “collective progress”	5
2. Outputs of the global stocktake that could influence future intergovernmental negotiations on loss and damage	5
3. Summing up	6
4. References	7
Annex 1: Information about the survey	8
A1.1 Selection of survey participants	8
A1.2 Questions asked	8
Annex 2: Overview of the responses obtained	9
Question 1	9
Question 2	9
Question 3	10
Question 4	10
Question 5	11
Question 6	12
Question 7	13
References	15

Loss and damage in Paris Agreement's Global Stocktake: issues that need to be considered prior to undertaking the stocktake

The Paris Agreement provides for a “global stocktake” of progress with regard to implementing the provisions included in the various articles that make up the agreement. This stocktake will be conducted along three axes: mitigation, adaptation and “means of implementation”.

Article 8 in the Paris Agreement focuses exclusively on loss and damage. How the global stocktake will approach Article 8 is unclear, not least because none of the three axes referred to above fit well with the range of issues discussed in inter-governmental negotiations about loss and damage.

This document presents key issues that need to be considered with a view to determining how the global stocktake approaches loss and damage. These issues have been identified through a survey of researchers and government officials.

The survey had a response rate of fifty percent among researchers and twenty-five percent among government officials, yielding a total of fifteen responses. As such, the survey is not representative of the views of either of these two communities. Nonetheless, survey responses offer insights on some of the key issues that have to be agreed upon prior to designing the specifics of the global stocktake.

The document has been prepared as input to one of the activities undertaken in the European Union-funded SINCERE project (<http://www.jpi-climate.eu/sincere>). It consists of a short discussion based on the responses to the survey, complemented by annexes.

1. Key questions that need to be answered prior to conducting a global stocktake of Article 8 in the Paris Agreement

As per Article 14 in the Paris Agreement, the global stocktake entails “[assessing] the collective progress [made] toward achieving [the Agreement’s] long term goals”. In turn, Article 8 refers to “the importance of averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage”, and calls for “enhance[d] understanding action and support”. Therefore, with regard to Article 8, the global stocktake shall assess the extent to which collective progress has been made toward achieving enhanced understanding, action and support to avert, minimize and address loss and damage.

Determining what the previous sentence may entail in practice requires additional research, and consensus on choices that are political in nature. Survey responses are used to identify such research gaps and political choices. The analysis is structured around three sets of issues: the scope of “averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage”; how to determine whether “understanding action and support” has been enhanced; and how to assess “collective progress”. The text in sections 1.1 to 1.3 below is drawn from an open-access article (entitled “Loss and damage in the global stocktake”) by the author.

1.1 Determining the scope of “averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage”

In its preamble, the decision that established the Warsaw International Mechanism states that “loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change includes, and in some cases involves more than, that which can be reduced by adaptation” (UNFCCC, 2014, p.6). Although this statement makes no explicit distinction between “loss” and “damage”, the distinction is integrated into the strategic workstreams of the Warsaw International Mechanism’s five-year rolling workplan.

Such a distinction is important, because the assessment methods and policy responses that are suitable for “losses” are markedly different from those that are suitable for “damages” (Serdeczny, Bauer and Huq, 2018). For this reason, and in the context of loss and damage, a first key framing question for the global stocktake may be **“should the global stocktake seek to distinguish between damages and losses?”**

A related, more fundamental matter concerns the treatment that loss and damage shall receive vis-à-vis adaptation. On the one hand, the global stocktake is intended as a review of progress with the goals laid out in the various articles in the Paris Agreement, where adaptation and loss-and-damage are treated separately. On the other hand, the limited information available about the design of the global stocktake, which will be articulated around “mitigation”, “adaptation” and “means of implementation”, suggests that the assessment concerning loss and damage will be folded into the adaptation assessment.

Doing so is significant in a political sense. More importantly, folding the loss-and-damage assessment into the adaptation assessment is potentially problematic, as it might result in some issues being overlooked and, in the worst case, confused. For this reason, a second key framing question for the global stocktake may be **“should the global stocktake include a separate assessment for loss and damage?”**

1.2 Assessing “enhanced understanding, action and support”

An assessment of our *understanding* of loss and damage should begin by acknowledging the profound epistemic injustice associated with the lack of loss-and-damage research originating in developing countries (McNamara and Jackson, 2019). Lacking this kind of evidence, our ability to conduct a global stocktake of Article 8 in the Paris Agreement is questionable at best.

Assessing *action* is equally problematic, and for similar reasons. Indeed, there is a paucity of national-level literature on policy responses in the area of loss and damage (Vanhala, Robertson and Calliari, 2020). Not least, our knowledge about how to manage non-economic losses and damages is especially limited, at all governance levels (Serdeczny, Bauer and Huq, 2018).

Support encompasses efforts such as mobilizing finance, promoting technology development and transfer, and building human and institutional capacities (UNFCCC, 2014). With regard to promoting technology development and transfer, and building capacities, the main constraint to assessing “support” relates to the limited data available (Puig et al, 2019). However, with regard to mobilizing finance, the main constraint is methodological, and involves two separate issues. First, how to measure the so-called social costs of loss and damage is unknown. Second, whether the assessment should only focus on costs, or should also include finance (even though costs are unknown and finance targets have not been set), is subject to debate.

A more fundamental issue relates to the counterfactual against which “enhanced” understanding, action and support should be assessed. Irrespective of whether such counterfactual is defined in

terms of the goals that (some) parties to the Convention chose to include in their Nationally Determined Contributions, or the global-level language in Article 8 of the Paris Agreement, data gaps and methodological challenges would hamper the assessment. In light of this, resorting to one-off projects that illustrate both the strengths and weaknesses of current approaches may be the only realistic proxy.

Given the challenges outlined in the four previous paragraphs, a third key framing question for the global stocktake may be **“with regard to loss and damage, what should the aim of the global stocktake be?”** Three options can be distinguished. First, the global stocktake omits loss and damage, due to the difficulties associated with assessing progress. Second, the global stocktake is used as an opportunity to build consensus about the types of issues raised above. Third, a tentative assessment is carried out, upon which more comprehensive assessments can be conducted in the future. It is worth noting that the second and third options are not mutually exclusive.

1.3 Assessing “collective progress”

In the Paris Agreement, the reference to “collective progress” reflects the bottom-up nature of the agreement, whereby the overall level of progress achieved is determined by the individual contributions made by the signatories to the agreement, articulated in the so-called Nationally Determined Contributions. As such, the notion of assessing “collective progress” implicitly suggests bringing together national-level assessments into a global level assessment. With regard to loss and damage, such an approach would be impracticable, not least because of data gaps, and the lack of suitable methodologies for assessing both experienced and likely-future loss and damage.

These challenges notwithstanding, in the context of assessing collecting progress three more fundamental issues deserve mentioning. First, mitigation- and adaptation-related actions contribute to “averting and minimizing” loss and damage and, therefore, these contributions should be reflected in the global stocktake of Article 8. Second, a decided effort should be undertaken, in good time, to mobilize researchers and intergovernmental organizations, with a view to supplementing the information related to loss and damage that parties to the Convention can provide. Third, the process of conducting the global stocktake can provide valuable insights with regard to coordination and oversight roles across institutions that have mandates related to loss and damage, and those insights could be reflected in the assessment.

In light of the issues raised in the two previous paragraphs, and given that loss and damage is not routinely covered in Nationally Determined Contributions, a fourth key framing question for the global stocktake may be **“with regard to loss and damage, should the global stocktake be structured around case studies?”** Such an approach would help underline the major knowledge gaps concerning loss and damage, and may thus spur action to bridge those gaps. In this regard, it seems clear that, for this approach to work, a more nuanced definition of loss and damage should be agreed upon, and researchers and other stakeholders from developing countries should play a lead role in the assessment.

2. Outputs of the global stocktake that could influence future intergovernmental negotiations on loss and damage

For each of the three axes mentioned above – mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation – the assessment will most likely be collected in one report. Presumably, a synthesis report will bring all three assessments together. Both researchers and government officials were asked about the impact that a separate assessment (and report) on loss and damage

might have with regard to (a) furthering research in the area of loss and damage, and (b) intergovernmental negotiations on loss and damage.

A potential separate report on loss and damage was perceived by most as having a positive impact on research. Arguments raised centred around the catalytic function that such report might have through both its instrumental and “symbolic” uses. Nonetheless, some respondents argued that the report may go unnoticed by certain researchers (namely, those that are not engaged in intergovernmental climate change negotiations), and may fail to convey its findings into the policy process.

There was less agreement concerning the impact that a potential separate report on loss and damage might have on intergovernmental negotiations. Positive views referred to the instrumental (pedagogical) potential value of the report. Other views ranged from sceptical to outright negative, for example stating that loss and damage was better served by prioritising the implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism’s programme of work, compared to using the global stocktake to “push the loss and damage agenda”.

A final question asked to both researchers and government officials concerned whether the global stocktake should advocate for Nationally Determined Contributions to routinely include loss and damage-related goals. The few respondents who were positive about this suggestion noted that it would help clarify both the magnitude of the problem and the extent to which governments prioritise loss and damage. Negative views referred mainly to governance issues, arguing for example that Nationally Determined Contributions should focus on mitigation. About a third of the respondents expressed mixed feelings about the suggestion, for example noting that some countries may not be interested in reflecting (their lack of progress with) loss and damage in Nationally Determined Contributions.

3. Summing up

The survey responses listed in Annex 2 help identify four questions the answers to which would help conduct the global stocktake of Article 8 in the Paris Agreement. Re-ordered, to start with the fundamental issues and end with the practical choices, the four questions identified are:

- with regard to loss and damage, what should the aim of the global stocktake be?
- should the global stocktake include a separate assessment for loss and damage?
- should the global stocktake seek to distinguish between damages and losses?
- with regard to loss and damage, should the global stocktake be structured around case studies?

Depending on how the four issues above are approached, loss and damage will be a more or less prominent issue in the context of the global stocktake. In the event that it became a prominent issue, survey respondents generally felt that such a prominence might have a positive impact on research. Opinions diverged with regard to whether or not making loss and damage a prominent issues in the context of the global stocktake might help advance inter-governmental negotiations on loss and damage. In a similar vein, few respondents were positive about the possibility of whether the global stocktake should advocate for loss and damage-related goals being included in Nationally Determined Contributions.

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Annex 1: Information about the survey

An online survey form was used to collect views from two communities. First, researchers who have published in refereed peer-reviewed journals on the topic of “climate change-driven loss and damage”. Second, national-government officials who join inter-governmental negotiations on the same topic. The responses obtained were analyzed by means of qualitative data analysis software (ATLAS.ti 8), using a mix of deductive and inductive coding categories.

A1.1 Selection of survey participants

In their 2019 review of the scientific literature on loss and damage, McNamara and Jackson identified four “major themes”. Twenty researchers, collectively forming a representative selection across these four themes, were approached by e-mail. Most of them agreed to respond to the survey, though only ten did complete the online form in the end.

Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Warsaw International Mechanism, guided by a twenty-member steering committee, is the negotiating forum on loss and damage. All members of the steering committee were approached by e-mail. Five of them responded to the survey.

A1.2 Questions asked

Questions 1 to 4 below were asked to researchers only. Questions 5 to 7 were asked to both researchers and government officials.

- Question 1: Provide a list of the three-to-five key issues around which you believe that the assessment related to loss and damage should be structured. To the extent possible, for each of your suggested key issues, provide two-to-four sub-issues.
- Question 2: For each of the three-to-five key issues referred to in [Question 1], provide the full title of one or two peer-reviewed journal articles that, in your opinion, are especially relevant in the context of the global stocktake.
- Question 3: State your view about the extent to which the peer-reviewed literature contains the information needed to conduct [an assessment of progress with regard to achieving the goals laid out in Article 8 of the Paris Agreement]. Kindly express your response as a number, ranging from 1 (insufficient information) to 10 (sufficient information).
- Question 4: For each of the three-to-five key issues referred to in [Question 1], state both (i) key information that is currently missing, and (ii) the main sources that should be engaged, other than parties to the Convention, to gradually obtain the missing information.
- Question 5: State your opinion with regard to the impact that [a global-stocktake output in the form of] a report devoted exclusively to loss and damage may have vis-à-vis furthering research in the area of loss and damage.
- Question 6: State your opinion with regard to the impact that [a global-stocktake output in the form of] a report devoted exclusively to loss and damage may have on international climate change negotiations.
- Question 7: State your view with regard to the interest (or not) of promoting, through the results of the global stocktake, that parties to the Convention routinely cover loss and damage in Nationally Determined Contributions.

Annex 2: Overview of the responses obtained

Individually for each of the questions listed in Annex 1 (see section A1.2), this annex gives a summary of the responses obtained.

Question 1

The question posed was “Provide a list of the three-to-five key issues around which you believe that the assessment related to loss and damage should be structured. To the extent possible, for each of your suggested key issues, provide two-to-four sub-issues.” The responses obtained can be divided into three classes. First, responses that sketch a number of assessment categories that span most of the issues covered in international climate-change negotiations on loss and damage. Second, responses that focus on a sub-set of issues, compared to the full range of issues covered in international climate-change negotiations on loss and damage. Third, responses that place the emphasis on the instrumental function that the global stocktake might play with regard to facilitating policy action on loss and damage.

Three responses (by respondents #2, #6 and #9) fall within the first class above – namely, the responses sketch assessment categories spanning most of the issues covered in international climate-change negotiations on loss and damage. The issues raised touch upon five sets of assessment categories: experienced and likely-future loss and damage; costs associated with loss and damage; actions taken and required (but not yet taken); support needed, received and provided; and gaps in the data needed to conduct the assessment.

Three responses (by respondents #4, #5 and #7) fall within the second class above – namely, the responses focus on a sub-set of issues, compared to the full range of issues covered in international climate-change negotiations on loss and damage. All three respondents target non-economic losses and damages. Whereas Respondent #4 leaves the door open for “other important issues” to be included, alongside non-economic losses and damages, Respondent #5 and Respondent #7 exclude any other issues (that is, they suggest that the assessment should focus exclusively on non-economic losses and damages).

Four responses (by respondents #1, #3, #8 and #10) fall within the third class above – namely, the responses place the emphasis on the instrumental function that the global stocktake might play with regard to loss and damage. Two of the respondents call for the global stocktake to catalyse a shift in the type of information that is currently used to frame the loss and damage debate. The remaining two respondents in this class call for the global stocktake to facilitate agreement about national-level approaches to manage loss and damage, and related governance issues.

Question 2

The question posed was “For each of the three-to-five key issues referred to in [Question 1], provide the full title of one or two peer-reviewed journal articles that, in your opinion, are especially relevant in the context of the global stocktake.” The responses obtained can be grouped into three classes, according to the aim of the documents suggested – explore key concepts of a global scope, report local-level experiences, or provide descriptive overviews:

- **Explore key concepts of a global scope:** Several respondents suggested scholarship on non-economic losses and damages, such as a review of the literature by Tschakert and colleagues (2019), which was cited a number of times. Other concepts referred to include ecosystem services (Zommers et al, 2016), migration (Baldwin, 2017) and human rights (Toussaint, 2018).
- **Report local-level experiences:** Three examples illustrate the breadth of the topics suggested. First, an analysis of the human-health impacts associated with sea-level rise in the Solomon

Islands, by Asugeni and colleagues (2015). Second, an assessment of the impacts of climate change on New Guinea's biocultural heritage, by Cámara-Leret and colleagues (2019). Third, a gender-sensitive analysis of a tropical cyclone's impact on the livelihoods of mud crab fishers in Fiji, by Thomas and colleagues (2019).

- **Provide descriptive overviews:** One respondent cited a book edited by Mechler and colleagues (2019), which sought to present an overview of research on loss and damage. A second respondent cited a text-mining analysis of loss and damage in the fifth assessment report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, by van der Geest and Warner (2020).

Respondent #1 stated that “[there is a] need to know more about what is happening at the national scale [because, currently, the literature] is focusing either on the international level or the very local level [both in terms of impacts and policy options].” The selection of documents reported in the previous paragraphs reflects the concern expressed by Respondent #1.

Question 3

The question posed was “State your view about the extent to which the peer-reviewed literature contains the information needed to conduct [an assessment of progress with regard to achieving the goals laid out in Article 8 of the Paris Agreement]. Kindly express your response as a number, ranging from 1 (insufficient information) to 10 (sufficient information).” Table A2.1 summarises the responses obtained.

Table A2.1: Completeness of the peer-reviewed literature, by respondent

Options offered	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Number of respondents who chose a given option	1	1	3	1	3	0	0	1	0	0

Note: the scores range from 1 (“insufficient information”) to 10 (“sufficient information”).

With one exception, the scores chosen cluster on the low end. Two observations can be made concerning the responses associated with, respectively, the lowest and highest scores:

The scores chosen by respondents #2, #6 and #9 are on the low end of all the scores reported. These are the three respondents whose views on the key issues for the global stocktake to consider span most of the issues covered in international climate-change negotiations on loss and damage (c.f. the first set of response under Question 1).

Respondent #8 chose a higher score, compared to the rest of the scores reported. The response indicates that “the literature provides a lot of crucial insights” (related to human rights, c.f. the third set of responses under Question 1), and the respondent laments that the current framing of the loss and damage debate overlooks these insights.

Question 4

The question posed was “For each of the three-to-five key issues referred to in [question 1], state both (i) key information that is currently missing, and (ii) the main sources that should be engaged, other than parties to the Convention, to gradually obtain the missing information.” Respondents were explicitly asked to consider sources other than the parties to the Convention, which are the primary information providers for the global stocktake and, therefore, will be consulted in all cases, irrespective of what the final arrangements for the assessment process might be.

With regard to the first part of the question, concerning key missing information, the responses obtained were pessimistic. Some respondents simply noted that, in the context of loss and damage, most of the information required to conduct the global stocktake is simply unavailable. For example, one respondent stated that “at most, you can find ad-hoc examples”. A number of respondents provided lists of what they perceive as key types of currently missing information. Key issues included in these lists are remote sensed and observational data; modelling estimates, notably in the context of likely-future loss and damage; and risk assessments for market and non-market goods and services. Finally, one respondent pointed to knowledge gaps that go beyond data and assessments, namely the epistemological difficulties associated with studying loss and damage (especially, non-economic loss and damage).

With regard to the second part of the question, concerning the sources that should be engaged to obtain missing information, respondents focused on two types of actors – researchers and inter-governmental organizations. Researchers were valued for their ability to provide local-level evidence pertaining to both experienced and likely-future loss and damage. Strong emphasis was placed on the need to engage researchers from multiple disciplines and all world regions, notably developing countries. Inter-governmental organizations were valued for their ability to collate national-level evidence, especially data pertaining to current needs in developing countries, drawing on the work these organizations conduct in these countries. Entities mentioned include, for example, the Global Framework for Climate Services, and a range of United Nations agencies, not least multi-lateral development banks.

Question 5

The question posed was “State your opinion with regard to the impact that [a global-stocktake output in the form of] a report devoted exclusively to loss and damage may have vis-à-vis furthering research in the area of loss and damage.” Table A2.2 summarises the responses obtained. The various points raised are listed below, by type of response.

Table A2.2: Overall perceptions on question 5, by type of respondent

	Research	Government	TOTAL
Positive impact	7	4	11
Negative impact	0	0	0
Mixed impact	3	1	4
No response	0	0	0

Positive impact (through a catalytic function)

- A report based on research outputs would stimulate further, more policy-relevant research and, indirectly, may help increase research funding budgets in this area.
- There is a need for greater understanding about loss and damage and, therefore, such a report can only help push research forward.
- A report focused specifically on loss and damage would be welcomed, as goal-led reports have played a significant role in driving scientific research on climate change.

Positive impact (through other functions)

- Such a report would provide a useful state of play with regard to research and policy, while also

highlighting gaps in research.

- By virtue of its linkage to the policy process, a report devoted specifically to loss and damage may increase the legitimacy of loss and damage research.
- From a research perspective, and in addition to the knowledge it would synthesise, such a report would have the added value of bringing together different disciplines.
- A report focused specifically on loss and damage would help increase national governments' understanding of the issue, which might prompt governments to conduct national-level assessments, thus helping highlight areas in which additional research is needed.
- Such a report could complement the work of the IPCC, especially in niche areas such as insurance or migration.
- In addition to the intrinsic scientific value such a report would have, and the impact it may or may not have in the policy process, the report could help build knowledge capacities in developing countries.

Mixed impact

- A report devoted exclusively to loss and damage may help build consensus, for example, about definitions or need for additional finance, but it may not deliver change in policy, if the experience with the Suva Dialogue is anything to go by.
- Such a report would only be useful if it came with high-level endorsement.
- A report focused exclusively on loss and damage may go unnoticed by researchers not involved in negotiations.
- The findings from such a report ought to be analysed carefully, before using them to come up with binding obligations.

Question 6

The question posed was “State your opinion with regard to the impact that [a global-stocktake output in the form of] a report devoted exclusively to loss and damage may have on international climate change negotiations.” Table A2.3 summarises the responses obtained. The various points raised are listed below, by type of response.

Table A2.3: Overall perceptions on question 6, by type of respondent

	Research	Government	TOTAL
Positive impact	4	3	7
Negative impact	0	1	1
Mixed impact	6	1	7
No response	0	0	0

Positive impact

- A report focused specifically on loss and damage would help depoliticise the issue and give it credibility, thus facilitating engagement by certain developed-country governments.

- Such a report would be useful in the context of negotiations, not least because generating knowledge about loss and damage should not be left to the Warsaw International Mechanism, especially in the context of “losses”.
- A report focused specifically on loss and damage could help developing country negotiators understand the issue better (for example, the differences between adaptation and loss and damage, and how to “avert, minimize and address” loss and damage). Many countries lack the knowledge and the capacity to develop it, and thus rely on the expertise and experience of other countries in the same negotiating group. Dealing with loss and damage under the adaptation “wing” of the Global Stocktake will make loss and damage “invisible”.
- A report focused specifically on loss and damage may carry more weight than a report by the Warsaw International Mechanism, even though its conclusions would not be different. Not least, such a report may help increase funding commitments.
- Such a report could provide a common definition for, and categorisation of, loss and damage, and help increase knowledge in the area of slow-onset events.

Negative impact

- If furthering policy on loss and damage is the goal, prioritising the implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism’s programme of work is a much better thing to do, compared to using the Global Stocktake to push the loss-and-damage agenda.

Mixed impact

- In general, a report focused specifically on loss and damage would most likely help negotiations, but it may not be welcomed by certain developing countries, because it may show that they are not doing as much as they could.
- Although such a report would have little direct influence over international negotiations, it would have a large effect on national governments and other decision-making bodies, which would positively influence intergovernmental negotiations in the long term.
- With regard to negotiations, a report focused specifically on loss and damage might have either positive or unintended negative consequences.
- Such a report may have little influence, because COVID-19 may put the focus mostly on climate-change mitigation.
- There is no guarantee that a report focused specifically on loss and damage would have an influence on negotiations.
- Such a report would not change much, because it would not «meet the expectations of non-Annex I countries, nor change the fundamental flaws and power relations of the negotiations».

Question 7

The question posed was “State your view with regard to the interest (or not) of promoting, through the results of the global stocktake, that parties to the Convention routinely cover loss and damage in Nationally Determined Contributions.” Table A2.4 summarises the responses obtained. The various points raised are listed below, by type of response.

Table A2.4: Overall perceptions on question 7, by type of respondent

	Research	Government	TOTAL
Positive impact	3	1	4
Negative impact	2	3	5
Mixed impact	3	1	4
No response	2	0	2

Positive impact

- An overview of needs in the area of loss and damage is currently missing. Including loss and damage in NDCs could help obtain such an overview.
- Inclusion of loss and damage in NDCs should go hand-in-hand with (i) increased monitoring of progress toward reaching stated goals and (ii) evaluation of policy approaches used.
- Inclusion of loss and damage in NDCs (i) would be a metric of how serious parties are about the issue, and (ii) should reflect unconditional commitments only.

Negative impact

- Some of the parties to the Convention (even SIDS) see NDCs as a planning tool mostly related to mitigation. A mandatory requirement to include loss and damage in NDCs would effectively exclude such (perfectly legitimate) view about NDCs.
- In the absence of a proper definition for “loss and damage”, any requests to governments are bound to be fruitless at best and counterproductive at worst.
- There is no need for connecting loss and damage with the NDCs. Instead, the international community should prioritise implementing the agenda of the Warsaw International Mechanism.
- Reporting on loss and damage should take place as part of the Sendai framework for disaster-risk reduction, or as part of government’s reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mixed impact

- In principle, inclusion of loss and damage in NDCs would be a positive development. Nonetheless, doing so would not necessarily amount to effective responses being put in place.
- Including loss and damage in NDCs may be one way of promoting greater understanding about the issue. However, it is only one of many possible ways (as opposed to an “obvious” mechanism).
- NDCs include both conditional and unconditional goals. To the extent that goals related to loss and damage are not interpreted as unconditional (that is, precluding international support), inclusion of loss and damage-related goals in NDCs may be useful.
- Encouraging parties to include loss and damage in NDCs should be voluntary, to prevent deadlock in negotiations. Arguably, as was the case with adaptation, there may be no need to push on this matter: countries that wish to include loss and damage in their NDCs will do so, as soon as they have enough capacity and understanding.

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