

Negotiator Briefing: Equity and the Global Goal on Adaptation

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Developed within the Equity Working Group of the independent Global Stocktake¹



+ Summary

This brief outlines the guidance for assessing progress on the Global Goal on Adaptation within the Global Stocktake, identifies core equity questions in assessing it, and articulates a set of concepts that can be used to guide this assessment in light of equity.

+ Context for the Assessment of the Global Goal on Adaptation

The Paris Agreement establishes Collective Goals in Article 2 and regarding adaptation, a Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) in Article 7.1. Article 7.14 specifies aspects of adaptation that will be assessed in the Global Stocktake (GST) including progress made in achieving the Global Goal on Adaptation. Article 7.14(d) further indicates that the Global Stocktake (GST) must include and assess the GGA in light of equity.

The GGA includes: “enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal.” The scope of adaptation assessment in the GST is not limited to the GGA, but includes



recognizing adaptation efforts of developing countries and reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation planning and support with a view of enhancing the implementation of adaptation actions.

A framework for assessing adaptation in the GST which builds on the operationalization of the GGA underway through the Glasgow-Sharm-El Sheikh Work Programme and which is conducted in light of equity can be generated by combining existing decisions with equity principles (see figure 1). Specifically, Decision 9/CMA.1 and 18/CMA outline the following elements which can provide a basis for assessment:

1. Reduction of climate risks, as such reducing vulnerability
2. Effective planning to understand and address impacts
3. Implementation of adaptation actions beyond planning
4. Support and investment in adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building.

These dimensions resonate with the best available science. They map closely onto the [2020 UNEP Adaptation Gap Report](#), and are cross-cutting elements within the [IPCC's Working Group II contribution to AR6](#).

+ Assessing the Global Goal on Adaptation *in Light of Equity*

Four equity concepts can be used to guide assessment of the GGA in light of equity when applied to the elements (risks, planning, action, support) in Decision 9/CMA.1 and 18/CMA.1. Combining the equity concepts with the four elements above allows for the identification of questions that can facilitate the examination of GGA through an equity lens. A non-exhaustive set of sample questions is provided under each equity concept below:

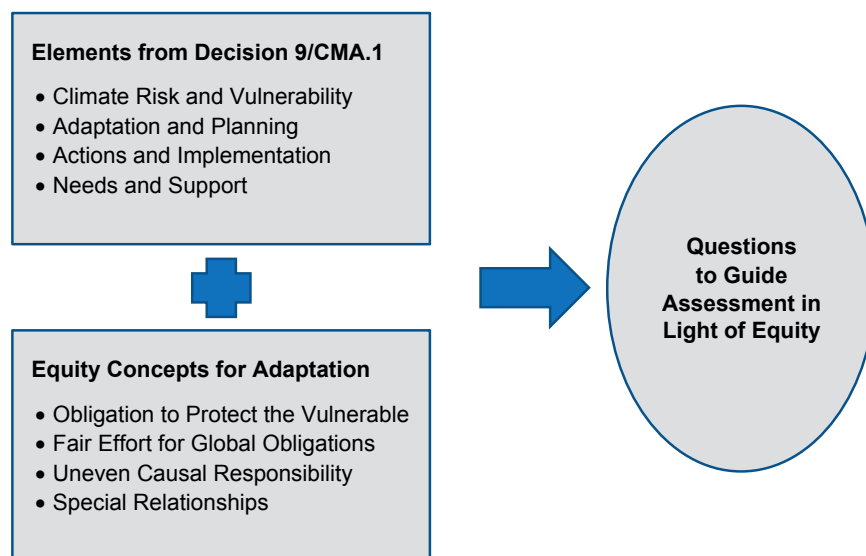


Figure 1: Combining Elements and Equity Concepts to Guide Assessment in Light of Equity



Equity Concept 1: Obligations to protect the vulnerable

Article 7 identifies the need to take “into account the urgent and immediate needs of those developing country Parties that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.” Equitable adaptation effort must start with an assessment of vulnerable populations’ exposure to climate impacts and the risks they face. A non-exhaustive set of questions includes:

- What are the risks experienced by developing countries and how do these change under scenarios varied by temperature goal (1.5°C and 2°C) and level of mitigation ambition?
- How are climate impacts shaping access to sustainable development, recognizing that focusing on the vulnerable means assessing their needs holistically?
- Where is loss and damage occurring as a demonstration of where adaptation is impossible and/or has been insufficient compared to the severity of climate impacts (see for instance 18/CMA.1 IV.F)?
- Are needs assessments adequately including those facing localized risks, those who may be marginalized, or those risks that are difficult to quantify?
- How successful have planning efforts been across countries, and how could these be enhanced across developing countries?
- What is the state of adaptation implementation across the diversity of needs experienced by those vulnerable to climate impacts?

Equity Concept 2: Fair effort in Global Obligations

The global nature of adaptation responsibility means that assessment must provide insight into fair contributions to adaptation effort, including finance and support, recognizing that “continuous and enhanced international support shall be provided to developing country Parties for the implementation of Article 7 of the Paris Agreement.” Furthermore, Article 9.4 emphasizes the importance of needs-based support. While protection of the vulnerable as an equity concept draws attention to the distribution of risk and vulnerability, fair effort focuses on the distribution of effort to address this. A non-exhaustive set of questions to assess fair effort includes:

- How is the burden of adaptation action, including through finance and support as well as concrete action, shared between developed and developing countries, noting the importance of both the recognition of efforts by developing countries and support by developed countries?
- To what extent is adaptation financed relative to the needs at 1.5°C and 2°C, and in light of mitigation ambition?
- How accessible has support for country-driven adaptation been to developing countries, both in terms of procedures and finance instruments?
- How well are transparency mechanisms working to allow for the tracking and collating of adaptation effort and support?



Equity Concept 3: Causal Responsibility

Climate impacts stem from insufficient mitigation achievements based on uneven contributions to cumulative emissions. Assessment of the GGA in light of equity requires recognition of causal responsibilities for adaptation needs and connects to other aspects of the GST. Other drivers of global inequality also shape access to sustainable development and adaptation, and so may be relevant in the assessment of the GGA. Key questions include:

- How are mitigation and adaptation efforts shared in light of diverse cumulative contributions to global emissions?
- How are adaptation needs assessments, planning efforts, and actions recognizing interlinkages between adaptation and both domestic and international drivers of inequality?

Equity Concept 4: Obligations due to Special Relationships

Special relationships based on contemporary and historical material, political, social, and economic interconnections within and across nation states and other entities such as corporations may yield additional obligations to protect vulnerable populations. These special relationships may be experienced both by Parties and by non-state actors. Central questions from this perspective may include:

- How are the responsibilities of non-state actors for financing and supporting adaptation action being accommodated in accounts of adaptation effort while avoiding any double counting (see for instance 18/CMA.1 para 121 m.ii)?
- What actions are being taken to hold non-state actors to account for adaptation obligations stemming from their cumulative emissions?
- How are non-state actors being held to account for adaptation obligations stemming from material, political, economic and social ties with vulnerable populations through adaptation planning, implementation or reporting of country action? Such action could include efforts towards building institutional arrangements or legal frameworks (see 18/CMA.1 IV.A para 106).

Contact Us:

This brief is intended to contribute to ongoing efforts to operationalize and assess the Global Goal on Adaptation. Please do not hesitate to contact us for further discussion of these ideas. All errors and omissions are the authors' responsibility.

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