



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS TO INFORM THE OPERATIONALISATION OF A FIT FOR PURPOSE SANTIAGO NETWORK FOR LOSS AND DAMAGE

Heidi White

Please contact heidimareewhite@gmail.com and colin.mcquistan@practicalaction.org.uk if you wish to provide written inputs or arrange a call to discuss this research project. We hope to ensure we capture as many views as possible.

We will also be hosting virtual discussions on Thursday 24th February at 8:30am to 9:30am UK time and a further workshop on Friday 4 March at 11:00am to 1:00pm - please reach out if you are available to join and we will send you an invite.

Ahead of us is a critical year of negotiations on loss and damage under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) which, in the short term, includes an invitation for Parties and stakeholders to send submissions on the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage to the UNFCCC secretariat by 15 March 2022.

The negotiations will occur in increasingly challenging social, political and economic contexts and in circumstances of overlapping risks as the COVID-19 pandemic deepens inequalities and mitigation and adaptation efforts fall short of averting and minimising loss and damage caused by the adverse effects of climate change. More than ever vulnerable developing countries need the international community to come together and deliver solutions to *address* loss and damage in a way that delivers climate justice for their people and communities as the adverse effects of climate change are felt disproportionately by those least responsible for the climate crisis.

Loss and damage manifests in extreme events such as Cyclone Batsirai which struck Madagascar in early February 2022 and at the time of writing had impacted more than 112,000 people and resulted in at least 92 deaths. It was the second storm to batter Madagascar this year with fears of



more flooding to come. Loss and damage also includes slow-onset events such as sea level rise in Senegal which is projected to result, by the end of the 21st century, in the disappearance of 55-86km² of the country's beaches, and by 2030, in the displacement of more than 100,000 people. Current estimates indicate financial damage of at least 290-580 billion USD by 2030 for developing countries - not including the non-economic losses of these devastating events such as loss of cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge, and unique ecosystems.

As Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados, reminded world leaders at the opening of the COP26 World Leaders Summit in Glasgow: loss and damage is measured in lives and livelihoods and the gap in action on it is immoral and it is unjust. She asked, “can there be peace and prosperity if one third of the world literally prospers and the other two thirds live under siege and face calamitous threats to our wellbeing?”

In 2013 countries established the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) to address loss and damage. It would function by enhancing knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches; strengthening dialogue, coordination, coherence and synergies among stakeholders; and enhancing action and support including finance, technology and capacity building.

By 2019 the WIM had not expanded beyond having a ‘policy arm’, the Executive Committee (ExCom), which focussed largely on the function of enhancing knowledge and understanding. At COP25 in Madrid as part of the review of the WIM, developing countries pushed for technical and financial support. This was in the context of increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, where vulnerable communities were receiving humanitarian aid at the time of the event but long-term loss and damage solutions were not being implemented to restore and rebuild their communities.

The Santiago Network for Loss and Damage was established at COP25 to fill that gap. However, it is not yet operational and it is designed only as a ‘technical implementation arm’ to catalyse technical assistance. Loss and damage finance will be negotiated separately in 2022 including discussions under the Glasgow Dialogue that developing countries demand must result in concrete progress and deliverables; and calls to establish at COP27 a Loss and Damage Finance Facility connected with the Financial Mechanism of the UNFCCC. The Santiago Network for



Loss and Damage will be a critical tool to support progress on the discussions and work on loss and damage finance including by creating a process to help developing countries to identify their needs on the ground and how to address them which will enhance understanding of the scale of finance needed to address loss and damage.

For the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage to be considered fit for purpose, the institutional architecture must be designed in a way that enables it to effectively carry out its functions, particularly the function in paragraph 9(b) of Decision -/CMA.3 which is about assisting developing countries to identify and prioritise their needs, identify the types of technical assistance available and match that assistance to their specific needs. Drawing from preliminary findings in research being undertaken to support effective negotiations that see the Santiago Network for Loss and Damage become an effective tool to enable frontline communities to receive the support they need at scale, the principles that should guide decision making include:

1. New and additional finance must be guaranteed at scale for:
 - a. The technical assistance being catalysed at the ground level; and
 - b. The operations of the coordinating entity.
2. Its primary objective must be to address loss and damage, filling the gap in action and support available beyond mitigation and adaptation measures across the full spectrum of loss and damage impacts including extreme and slow onset events and economic and non-economic losses.
3. It must empower, enhance, and create coherence between existing processes, organisations, bodies, networks and experts including the disaster risk reduction and humanitarian assistance communities and not duplicate efforts.
4. It must connect and coordinate networks of expertise across the international, regional, national, and sub-national level.
5. It must facilitate demand-driven, locally-led, sustainable and long-term solutions that are not dictated by funding limits.
6. It must be designed in a simple and accessible way that ensures that lack of capacity is not a barrier to accessing support and already overburdened systems are not further burdened.



7. It must have accountability and transparency mechanisms that ensure that its mandate and activities are party-led and controlled: the private-sector and donors should not dictate priorities.
8. It must have the capacity and flexibility to respond rapidly in real time and at the scale needed.
9. The coordinating body must have the capacity to be proactive not reactive.
10. It must be guided by climate justice principles taking into account human rights, gender-based, local and indigenous communities' perspectives.
11. It must consider and learn from the strengths and weaknesses of existing technical assistance mechanisms such as the Climate Technology Centre and Network.

References

- <https://abcnews.go.com/International/cyclone-batsirai-leaves-dozen-dead-thousands-homeless-madagascar/story?id=82719663>
- <https://www.germanwatch.org/en/19796>
- <https://us.boell.org/en/unpacking-finance-loss-and-damage>
- <https://youtu.be/PN6THYZ4ngM>