

Information note on progress of negotiations under the UNFCCC process to operationalize the Paris Agreement, in relation to advancing SDG 13 indicators

Introduction

This note has been prepared by the UN Climate Change secretariat (UNFCCC secretariat), in collaboration and consultation with WMO, UN Environment, UNESCO UIS, OECD, and IMO towards updating the IAEG-SDGs of Parties' negotiations under the UNFCCC process to operationalize the Paris Agreement.

UNFCCC process and next steps

Negotiations to operationalize the Paris Agreement are planned to conclude at the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties, COP 24, to be held in Katowice in December 2018.¹ This outcome is expected to provide modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) which, building on the reporting and data requirements under the UNFCCC, will define the new data and reporting requirements for countries to report on their progress in addressing climate change. This outcome is expected to establish definitions, methodologies, modalities, procedures and guidelines for countries' reporting on climate action and support, and will therefore serve as direct framing input for revision of tier III indicators under SDG 13. A full overview of progress to operationalize the Paris Agreement is available at unfccc.int²³

Allowing for relevant agencies to consult, it is expected that advice on revised indicators and relevant materials will be prepared in advance of the spring 2019 IAEG-SDGs meeting, as well as in line with the IAEG's timeline for their 2020 review of their SDG indicator framework.

Background

Under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), all Parties shall formulate, implement, publish and regularly update national/regional programmes containing measures to mitigate climate change and to facilitate adequate adaptation, while taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances. These policies and measures should be appropriate for the specific conditions of each Party and should be integrated with national development programmes.

The Convention established several processes to foster transparency and accountability of countries' actions to address climate change. Under Article 12, all Parties are asked to submit national inventories and national communications (NCs) to report on the implementation of the Convention. This reporting is required at different levels of stringency and with varying frequency for different Parties.

The Paris Agreement⁴ builds upon the Convention and brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so, charting a new course in the global climate effort. The Paris Agreement's central aim is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius. Additionally, the agreement aims to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with the impacts of climate change.

¹ <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/cma1/eng/03a01.pdf#page=2>

² <https://unfccc.int/node/28798/#eq-3>

³ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/PA_Progress%20tracker%203%20July.pdf

⁴ The Paris Agreement entered into force on 4 November 2016. Further information about the Paris Agreement may be found at http://unfccc.int/paris_agreement/items/9485.php

Nationally determined contributions, long term strategies, and advancing adaptation action

The Paris Agreement requires each Party to prepare, communicate and maintain successive nationally determined contributions (NDCs)⁵ including mitigation, adaptation and support measures.

All Parties should further strive to formulate and communicate long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies to provide a context and integrated long-term view to their NDCs.

Also, each Party should, as appropriate, submit and update periodically an adaptation communication,⁶ which may include its priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions. The adaptation communications will be recorded in a public registry maintained by the secretariat.

The process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs) also enables Parties to identify medium- and long-term adaptation needs and develop and implement strategies and programmes to address those needs. It is a continuous, progressive and iterative process which follows a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, supported by technical guidelines and up to USD 3 million per developing country through the Green Climate Fund Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, intended to support the formulation of NAPs.

To reach these ambitious goals, appropriate financial flows, a new technology framework and an enhanced capacity building framework will be put in place, thus supporting action by developing countries and the most vulnerable countries, in line with their own national objectives.

Enhanced transparency framework

The Paris Agreement also provides for enhanced transparency of action and support through a more robust transparency framework to provide a clear understanding of climate change action and tracking of progress towards achieving Parties' individual NDCs and adaptation actions.⁷ This will build on and enhance the existing measurement, reporting and verification arrangements under the Convention. The MPGs for the transparency framework will address three key components, including reporting, technical expert review and facilitative, multilateral consideration of progress. Details of negotiations and progress on the modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support referred to in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement are available at <unfccc.int>.⁸

Global stocktake

In addition, Parties will periodically (every five years starting in 2023) take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and its long-term goals through a global stocktake.

Negotiations are also ongoing to develop the modalities for and identify the sources of input to the global stocktake. An illustration of mandates and provisions relevant to the global stocktake is shown below. Details of negotiations and progress on the global stocktake referred to in Article 14 of the Paris Agreement are available at <unfccc.int>.⁹

⁵ Negotiations are ongoing under the APA process to develop further guidance on features, information and accounting for NDCs.

⁶ Negotiations are ongoing under the APA process to develop further guidance in relation to the adaptation communication.

⁷ Negotiations are ongoing under the APA process to develop the modalities, procedures and guidelines for the enhanced transparency framework.

⁸ <<https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/102a1.pdf?download#page=54>>

⁹ <<https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/102a1.pdf?download#page=121>>