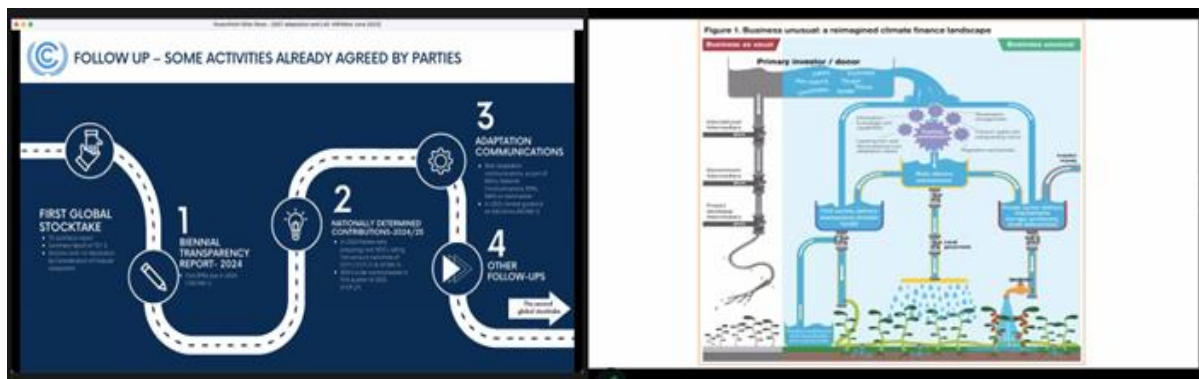


Second Adaptation Network Policy Engagement Space

27 June 2023 via Zoom

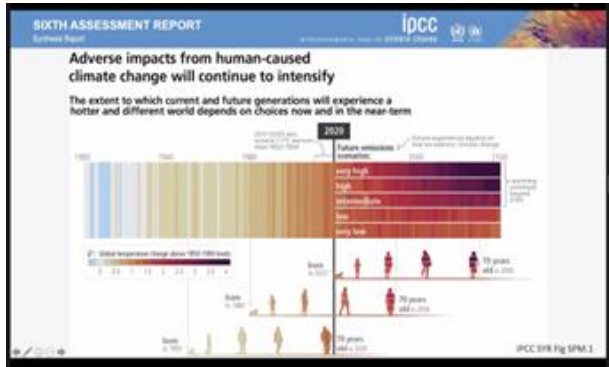
By Sinovuyo Mbobo

Following the success of the first online Policy Engagement Space on 9 May 2023, the AN's Policy Working Group hosted a second online series of topical presentations and discussions on 27 June 2023. The objective of this event was to provide members with updates on current international climate change adaptation policy processes and their relevance to South Africa.



The discussion was facilitated by the AN Policy and Climate Finance Working Group chair, Dr Darlington Sibanda, Researcher at the African Climate and Development Group (ACDI). Attended by over 20 network members from various sectors, the programme comprised presentations by speakers from complementary fields of expertise, followed by brief discussions after every presentation where participants could provide feedback or ask questions.

The IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report and Key Messages for Adaptation



Kicking off the morning's proceedings, Dr Chris Trisos, a Senior Researcher at ACIDI, gave key adaptation messages from the IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report. The report, published in March, collates the results of the last seven years of IPCC assessments. It shows that adverse impacts from human-caused climate change will continue to

intensify, and global warming will increase in all scenarios. The report highlights the complexity of climate risks and the importance of near-term action for both mitigation and adaptation. Feasible options for scaling up climate action exist, but there is limited research on their effectiveness beyond 1.5° Celsius.

Some of the barriers to adaptation include lack of information, financing, and capacity. Chris also highlighted the need for clear goals, coordination across governance levels, and inclusive processes for effective climate action. Financing was also identified as being crucial, especially in low-income communities where adaptations have insufficient cash returns for private sector investment. The importance of equity considerations when prioritising adaptation actions for marginalised groups was also mentioned.

Opportunities for engagement

Participants were encouraged to read through the brief and easy-to-comprehend IPCC Summary for Policymakers. Civil society organisations in South Africa can engage in these processes to emphasise the Global Goal of Adaptation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) of increasing awareness of and funding towards meeting countries' adaptation needs and highlight the need for integrated solutions and working across sectors at sub-national levels to avoid maladaptive approaches.

Adaptation and Loss and Damage in the Technical Dialogue of the First Global Stocktake (GST)

Professor Harald Winkler from UCT explained that the GST was a mechanism to assess collective progress towards achieving climate goals, including mitigation, adaptation, support, and loss and damage. It aimed to increase ambition and inform the enhancement of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

In the recent technical dialogue on the GST, Harald mentioned the following adaptation messages that emerged:

1. Climate change poses a threat to all communities, highlighting the urgency of addressing climate change, particularly for those who are least prepared.
2. There has been collectively increasing ambition in adaptation plans and commitments for adaptation, but there is still a significant implementation gap.
3. When adaptation action is informed and driven by local contexts and priorities, the adequacy and effectiveness of support can be enhanced.
4. Support for adaptation and funding for averting, minimising, and addressing loss and damage can be rapidly scaled up from various sources and financial flows aligned with climate resilience development.

However, there were also challenges identified in how to assess collective progress towards a globally defined goal for adaptation due to the limited understanding of what exactly constituted this goal, as the framework, indicators and metrics were still being developed, as questions remained about what fair national contributions to this goal should look like and considerations of equity and who should pay, in what form for adaptation, loss and damage.

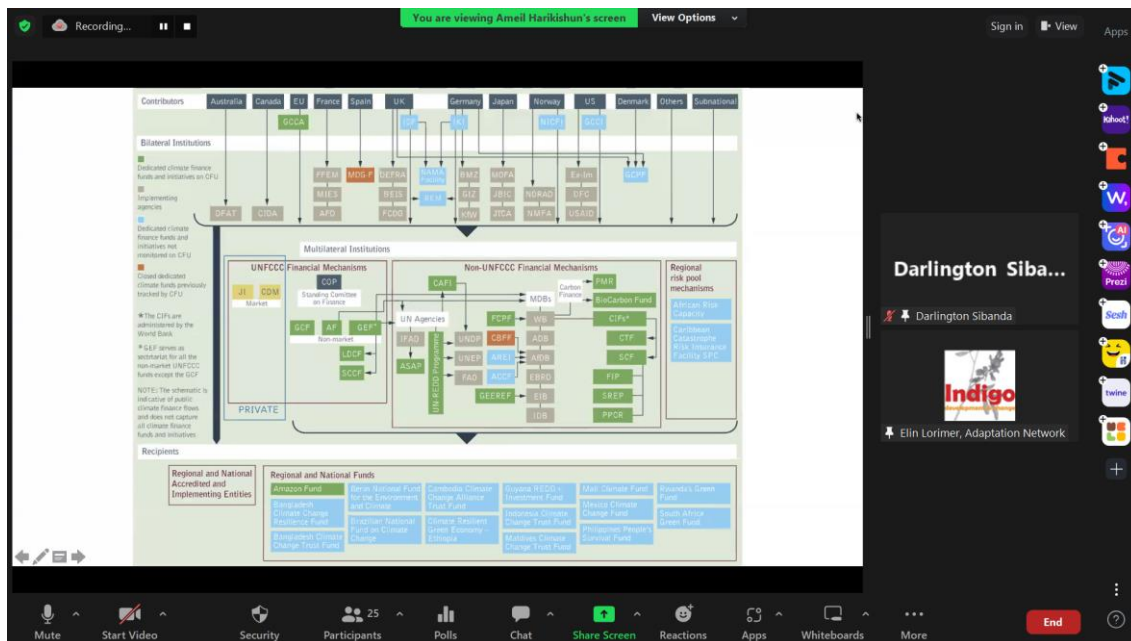
Opportunities for engagement

The next NDC will be developed in 2024-25 and South Africa will shift to biennial reporting from 2024, and adaptation reporting will be reviewed in 2025.

Funding Adaptation in the Context of the International Climate Finance Landscape

SouthSouthNorth's Climate Finance Technical Advisor, Ameil Harikishun emphasised the importance of a local context and local actors driving adaptation, as well as the need for equitable access to climate finance, particularly as it pertains to the work done by civil society.

Ameil presented a simplified figure of the current global climate finance landscape and architecture, which included the main climate finance contributors from bilateral and international institutions. Acknowledging that there is no one clear definition of climate finance, Ameil noted that such finance originated from various sources, generally from contributor countries directly through bilateral funding institutions or through multilateral funds, and was directed towards mitigation and adaptation actions, and must be in addition to development finance that had already been committed. Climate finance could also be mobilised within national and subnational budgets.



Ameil provided an overview of the various financial mechanisms that drive climate finance for specific areas of climate action. These include bilateral institutions such as GIZ or USAID, and multilateral institutions, which are split into UNFCCC Financial Mechanisms and those outside of the UNFCCC system. The UNFCCC Financial Mechanisms have three operating entities, namely the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Adaptation Fund (AF), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Meanwhile, the non-UNFCCC Financial Mechanisms include several UN agencies and multilateral development banks like the World Bank and African Development Bank.

Opportunities for engagement

Ameil emphasised the importance of having a supportive enabling environment to improve access to regional and national funds channelled through accredited entities or implementing entities, such as South Africa National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI), particularly for non-government organisations (NGOs) and civil society organisations (CSOs). This relied on transforming the current approach to accessing climate finance to a more patient, flexible, and inclusive process. This further required the involvement of CBOs, supporting NGOs, and local and subnational governments to drive and lead the adaptation action.

Ameil concluded by emphasising the importance of the concept of resilience when addressing climate risks, as the terms “adaptation” and “resilience” are often used interchangeably. To better understand this transition, Ameil encouraged participants to read up on a publication recently published in [Nature Sustainability](#).

An NGO Perspective on Perspective on the UN Negotiations on Adaptation



Sharing with participants the perception of NGOs at these negotiations, Climate and Resilience Officer at Practical Action, Dr Demet Intepe, started by explaining the development of the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) process, which started with an offer by the African Negotiators Group in 2013 to

establish a work program on adaptation, to ensure that the issue of adaptation received sufficient attention to bring it on par with mitigation.

The GGA was established by the Paris Agreement in 2015, with the stated goals of building adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change. The Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation was established as a two-year work program to be concluded at COP 26 in 2021. Six workshops have been held as part of this work program, but while these workshops provided good discussions, they did not translate into fruitful negotiations, with only a skeleton framework developed and no clarity on whether this would include issues of finance.

Demet provided an overview of the progress made in establishing a framework for the GGA at the recent COP27. This process paralleled negotiations on the development of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), and there remained huge gaps in the formulation and implementation of these plans alongside increasing demands for financial promises to support such processes to be fulfilled.

Opportunities for engagement

Demet highlighted the following changes NGOs were calling for in the UNFCCC negotiations:

1. Restructuring of adaptation architecture under the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) to a permanent agenda item on GGA so that there can be coherence and breaking of the siloed approach.
2. An ambitious approach towards NAPs ahead of their review in 2024, with a clear programme to double adaptation finance by 2025 and address barriers to access to finance and technology and lack of capacity.

