Report from the 7th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage
Tuesday 13 March – Friday 15 March 2018
Bonn, Germany

Attending on behalf of RINGOS: Idil Boran, Erin Roberts, Michai Robertson, Doreen Stabinsky

We divided our reporting work according to agenda items. Thus, the narrative below is a compilation of four different authors, each with different reporting styles, rather than a uniform synthesis.

Provisional agenda

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Organizational matters:
    (a) Election of officers;
    (b) Organization of the work of the meeting;
    (c) Designation of liaison members with other bodies under the Convention;
    (d) Vacant seat of the Excom in the Task Force on Displacement.
4. Report from the Task Force on Displacement.
5. Intersessional work related to slow onset events.
6. Collaboration with the Technology Executive Committee.
7. Establishment of expert groups of the Executive Committee:
    (a) Technical expert panel/group on slow onset events organizations, centres and networks;
    (b) Technical expert group on comprehensive risk management approaches;
    (c) Expert group on non-economic losses.
8. Communication strategy of the Executive Committee, including engagement with the IPCC.
9. Emerging needs and cross-cutting issues.
10. ~~Organization of intersessional work.~~
11. Any other matters.
12. Closure of the meeting

The summary of decisions taken at the meeting can be found here.

Agenda item 3: Organizational matters

The ExCom meeting began the afternoon of March 13th with an introduction of the new members: Sumaya Zakieldeen from Sudan, Nedal Katbehbader from Palestine, Farhan Akhtar from the US and Ekaterine Mikadze from Georgia. After the formal adoption of the agenda the new co-chairs were elected, Vhalinavho (Vhali) Khavhagali from South Africa and Erling Kvernevik from Norway. Under the guidance of the new co-chairs the ExCom discussed which members would act as liaisons between the ExCom and various constituted bodies under the Convention as well as the IPCC. For each body one member representing NA1 and one member

from A1 was designated. The seat on the Task Force on Displacement vacated by Idy Niang of Senegal was filled by Sumaya Zakieldeen from Sudan. With organizational matters concluded the substantive discussion began with a discussion on emerging needs and cross-cutting issues arising from the decision at COP 23, specifically the Suva Expert Dialogue.

Agenda item 4: Report from the TFD

The discussion on the Task Force on Displacement took place on the last day of the ExCom meeting to accommodate members of the Task Force. The TFD is comprised of four members of the ExCom as well as representatives of the Adaptation Committee, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group and several experts working in the field of migration, human mobility and displacement. The TFD met for the first time in May 2017 and developed a workplan to cover the next 18 months with various tasks allocated to different individuals and institutions. In addition, the secretariat has produced several communication products. The work of the TFD is also linking to broader work in other global fora including the Global Compact on Migration.

Following the overview of the TFD the floor was given to members of the TFD to provide updates on the activities they have undertaken as part of the workplan. A representative of IOM spoke about the IOM-led activities, including a mapping of national and global policies and processes on migration. The preliminary findings of the national mapping is that very few countries have comprehensive migration policies or climate change policies that integrate climate-related migration. The international mapping found that migration, environment and climate change (MECC) is increasingly considered in global policy but there is still significant work to do. A representative of the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC) presented the work that they are doing to synthesize knowledge, particularly on slow onset events, including through a literature review. One of the preliminary findings is that risk assessments can only meaningfully be undertaken at the local level, not at the global level, though datasets are improving. Currently IDMC is thinking about how to best present the recommendations that have arisen from this work. Next, the Platform for Disaster Displacement presented the progress of a study it has undertaken to contribute to the workplan of the TFD. The study has four outputs: an overview of how climate change has been dealt with within the UN system, how human mobility has been taken up within the UNFCCC, how the UN system has taken up the two issues together and finally, the coordination issues of bringing the two policies together.

The TFD will meet again in May of 2018.

Agenda item 5: Intersessional work related to slow onset events

DAY 1 – Tues 13th March 2018

This agenda item was not discussed.

DAY 2 – Wed 14th March 2018

The Co-Chairs proposed that the Executive Committee ('ExCom') **takes note** of: the update on the database of organizations working on slow onset events ('SOEs'), and the short assessment document on the scope of work being undertaken on SOEs as reported by organizations of the

SOEs database. Also, the ExCom **looks forward** to the establishment of an expert group on SOEs.

ExCom Members:

- inquired on the usefulness of the database of SOEs organizations. Another stated that the database is useful and requested that the ExCom educates the organizations on the different types of SOEs;
- proposed that there should be a specific section in the database where States can share impacts of SOEs they have faced via case studies; and
- rose concerns that information can be inputted into the database without it being verified.

Observers:

- (ActionAid) asked the ExCom to share the compendium on SOEs with the public for its general knowledge and awareness on this area; and
- (UNSIDR) acknowledged the synergies with the work of the ExCom on this topic and that of UNSIDR.

DAY 3 – Thurs 15th March 2018

This agenda item was not discussed.

DAY 4 – Fri 15th March 2018

ExCom established an *Expert Group On SOEs* with the following ExCom Members: Antonio Canas (SLV), Farhan Akhtar (USA), and Malcolm Ridout (GBR)

DECISION(S)

Took note of the update of the database of organisations working on the SOEs, and of the initial assessment of the scope of work being undertaken on SOEs as reported by organizations of the online database.

Reaffirmed that further steps on the strategic work workstream on SOEs, including on the draft SOEs compendium, will be guided by the expert group on SOEs.

Agenda item 6: Collaboration with the Technology Executive Committee

DAY 1 – Tues 13th March 2018

This agenda item was not discussed.

DAY 2 – Wed 14th March 2018

The Co-Chairs proposed that ExCom **decides** on the focus of the joint-policy brief (specifically on its value as an addition to the body of literature on coastal zone technologies), and the target audience for the brief. The Co-Chairs decided that this item should be deliberated on by a working group.

ExCom Working Group on Agenda Item 6: Members clarified that the topic of coastal zone technologies was selected primarily because this was a gap the Technology Executive Committeee (TEC) identified in their work programme which could be filled by the joint-policy brief. It was suggested that it clarify the scope of the brief with the TEC in their joint discussion on Day 4.

DAY 3 – Thurs 15th March 2018

ExCom Work Group on Agenda Item 6 presented their suggestions to the ExCom plenary.

DAY 4 – Fri 16th March 2018

Joint Discussion with TEC:

TEC members:

- rose concerns about the scope of proposed joint-policy brief and the possibility of it being too broad;
- questioned technology being used to remedy permanent and irreversible damage given its inherent terminal nature;
- outlined the limits of technology in the response to climate change; and
- rose concerns of there not being a clear definition of 'loss and damage' under the UNFCCC regime particularly in relation to its overlapping with the tenets of 'adaptation'. This is relevant because the TEC already has a taskforce on adaptation and wanted to delegate their work accordingly.

ExCom members:

- clarified that the technology would not only be used for permanent and irreversible damage (e.g. sea level rise) but also desertification, loss of biodiversity, etc which have the potential to be minimize or reverse via technology;
- acknowledged that there is around three (3) working definitions of 'loss and damage' under the UNFCCC regime;
- inquired on whether the TEC via its operational arm, Climate Technology Centre & Network ('CTCN'), can undertake capacity building on a regional level; and
- visualized a 'spectrum' in relation to the relationship between 'loss and damage' and 'adaptation' as opposed to a standalone distinction between the two responses to climate change.

Observers:

- (ODI) drew the TEC's attention to the technical papers of the WIM on SOEs, etc. to assist with the greater understanding of its needs for technological solutions to loss and damage;
- (IOM) outlined displacement is a form of loss, and planned displacement via technology helps to reduce this loss; and

- (CTCN) offered its assistance to this collaboration and responded to the ExCom's capacity building question by stating that it does undertake such activities and is 'interested' in possible collaborations with the WIM.

TEC summarized the scope of the joint-policy brief as developed in the joint discussion to be limited to coastal zone technological solutions (in the form of hardware, software, and orgware) particularly to SOEs which focusses on identifying technological gaps and involving risk assessments, and not insurance solutions.

ExCom agreed on an *Intersessional Group of Champions* for this agenda item: Nedal Katbehbader (PSE), Kimio Takeya (JPN), and from the TEC, Adelle Thomas (BHS).

DECISION(S)

Agreed on the general scope of the joint policy brief with the TEC and on the way forward, including establishing a joint intersessional group comprising the ExCom Liaison Members and the TEC Liaison Member and showing the progress of the Collaboration at COP24.

Agenda Item 7: Establishment of expert groups of the Executive Committee

Background

> *22. The Excom, in its workplan, agreed to start at Excom 7 activities to establish the following substructures:*
>
> > *a) Technical expert panel/group to improve the knowledge base on and develop recommendations for approaches to addressing SOEs, with a view to converting this knowledge base into products that support efforts at the regional and national levels;*
> >
> > *b) Technical expert group to enhance knowledge and understanding of comprehensive risk management approaches, including issues related to finance, data, technology, regulatory environments and capacity-building;*
> >
> > *c) Expert group to develop inputs and recommendations to enhance data on and knowledge of reducing the risk of and addressing NELs*
>
> *23. An overview of the wide range of expertise that each of these groups are required to possess and a variety of mandated tasks for each group is contained in document Excom/2018/7/3. The document also presents a possible modality for forming fit-for-purpose expert groups. (excerpt from Excom 7 provisional agenda, p. 4)*

Meeting notes

The five-year rolling work plan of the Excom includes three types of activities concerning expert groups:

(a) Technical expert panel/group on slow onset events;

(b) Technical expert group on comprehensive risk management approaches;

(c) Expert group on non-economic losses.

On March 14, when working on agenda item 9, Excom had proposed to take a flexible approach to engaging technical experts is to assist in implementation of the Excom's workplan in order to have a balanced representation of appropriate and relevant expert groups (it was mentioned that this can be discussed under Agenda item 7, the establishment of expert groups).

On March 15, in its morning session, the committee proposed to establish the Task Force on Displacement and the expert groups at this meeting, to take into account the issues of relevance to regional and national context, as listed in Annex I of the document Excom/2018/7/4 or information contained in the submissions, where relevant, when making progress reports at regular meetings of the Excom.

So to ensure that Excom does not go beyond the COP decisions, suggestions were made to make this proposal more in line with paragr. 6. The Excom noted that work done by sub-groups may be of relevance and, therefore, be included. A short discussion ensued. Paragr. 19 includes a request from the COP to the Excom: to consider cross-cutting issues as well as current, urgent, and emerging needs regarding extreme events and slow onset events. The committee agreed to take no action on this request at this meeting, and noted that this request will be addressed at a later time.

Agenda item 7, establishment of expert groups, continued after the mid-morning break. The committee worked on agreeing on terms of reference for the establishment of expert groups. There was a discussion following a remark that the committee is working on three expert groups because the Excom has approval from the COP for these three. A discussion followed where the possibility to invite extra expert groups was noted, which would have the advantage of adding more flexibility to the work of the three expert groups. Following this discussion, the Excom agreed on the terms of reference concerning the establishment of expert groups.

The Excom then moved to the second part of the agenda item 7. It was noted that members will be selected from the Excom. The Co-chairs invited Excom members to make expressions of interest:

- for the expert group on slow onset events;
- for the expert group on non-economic losses;
- for the expert group on CRM (comprehensive risk management).

Nominations were taken in.

The meeting proceeded to the next agenda item (Item 6 – collaboration with TEC)

On March 16, The Excom announced the decision about the composition of expert groups

- Expert group on slow onset events (3 members)
  The Excom took note of the database of organizations working on slow onset. It reaffirmed that further work will be guided by the expert group.
- Expert group on non-economic losses (3 members)
- Expert group on CRM (4 members)

With regards to the formation of expert groups on communication strategy (including collaboration with IPPC), it was noted that work on this continues. This group will work on designating group champions and delegating liaising members to liaise with IPPC.

The Co-Chair concluded this agenda item and the meeting.

Agenda Item 8: Communication strategy of the Executive Committee, including engagement with the IPCC

Background

> *25. Noting the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of Excom's outreach and communication, Excom 5 initiated discussion on this matter and agreed to continue the work intersessionally. During the same intersessional period, the Excom exchanged views on issues related to its engagement with the IPCC. Excom 6 agreed to consider, at Excom 7, these two matters together. It established working groups to advance work intersessionally (excerpt from Excom 7 provisional agenda, p. 5)*

Meeting notes

Agenda Item 8 (Communication Strategy) was taken up on March 14 in the morning session.

One of the remarks from observer organizations highlighted that not enough space is devoted to loss and damage in SBs. This remark underscored the importance of giving more space during SBs, as well as prioritizing the visibility of the expert dialogue.

Another point that was made by observer organizations was the importance of enhancing participatory engagement, urging less presentations and more dialogue and sharing of stories.

There was a response from SBI Chair, who remarked that after Paris, time is for action and working together. The issue of prioritization is often sensitive. It leads to intractable disagreements over what should be prioritized over what. It may be more effective to keep working on the issues, in such a way that everyone does its part, without getting into the prioritization issue.

Discussions about the development of a communication strategy raised the issue of organizing a WIM side-event. The question of whether the side event is to be jointly organized with IPCC was raised. This suggestion opened a discussion. Some in the Excom expressed caution in organizing with IPCC. The reason that was voiced was that WIM Excom is a political body tasked to make recommendations, whereas IPCC is a neutral body. In the ensuring discussion it was suggested that some thinking is needed to gain a clearer understanding of the relationship between WIM Excom and IPCC, and how to approach collaboration between these bodies. With regards to the possibility of a side event, one member highlighted that the purpose would be to disseminate the work done by WIM Excom. The rationale that was provided to support this view was that there is much information on the website, but this information needs to be communicated effectively. There are calls for the Excom to engage with the scientific community in a neutral way. This view received support by some members of the Excom, highlighting that providing sound information in light of best available science is the mandate of this body. As discussion proceeded, the need to make the collaboration between the two

bodies work was highlighted. It was remarked that the Excom has to use scientific information in its work. It is therefore important to understand the relationship between and the two bodies and reflect this in reports and other communications from Excom. After all, one of the functions of the WIM is to enhance knowledge. The Co-chair concluded this discussion by suggesting that there are opportunities for collaborating with IPCC.

Observers highlighted the importance of the UNFCCC website as a key communications platform, and urged more accessible and user-friendly presence on the website. In particular, making the information accessible to people with disabilities was emphasized. The committee acknowledged the importance of accessibility and took note. The co-chair concluded this agenda item (item 8) and proceeded into item 9 (Emerging needs and cross-cutting issues).

On March 15, observers did a short presentation on the importance of accessibility of WIM information on the UNFCCC website, and making it more user-friendly.

The committee underlined the request from the COP (FCCC/CP/2017/11/Add.1, paragraph 19) to enhance efforts in ensuring that information generated from the work of the Excom be converted into user-friendly products (methods, material for training modules). The purpose is to enhance the coherence and effectiveness of relevant efforts by regional and national levels, as appropriate.

In keeping with paragraph 19, the committee proposed that a working group on communication be formed to develop a draft communication strategy. A brief discussion ensued. When observers took the floor, concerns were raised about the Suva Expert dialogue. In particular, concerns were raised about why there had been a decision that all the afternoon sessions to be closed sessions. The co-chair clarified that this is a technical discussion to be held in closed session. After lunch break, the Co-chairs announced that the afternoon breakout sessions were going to be open to observers. The exception to this was the breakout session on the Suva Dialogue.

The afternoon session saw the forming of working groups (Suva, TEC, Communications Strategies) to work in breakout sessions in the afternoon. (The break out sessions of the TEC and Communication Strategies working groups were open to observers, whereas the Suva working group was closed).

Following the breakout sessions, working groups reported back on their work.

<u>Reporting back of the Communication group:</u>

Co-chair invited observer organizations to report. It was reported that the work done during the break out session was twofold:

1. Pertaining to overarching strategy: The objective is not just promotion and visibility, but result-based effectiveness. The report highlighted the importance to receive feedback from stakeholders.

2. Developing a specific table outlining activities under work-streams. This component will be done intersessionally. The report underlined the importance of accessibility, with special emphasis on using lay language and avoiding acronyms in communicating information.

Agenda item 9. Emerging needs and cross-cutting issues.

Agenda item 9 was a complex agenda item with 5 elements, all deriving from decision 5/CP.23:

a) On the Suva expert dialogue (paragraph 9 of decision 5/CP.23)
b) On paragraph 6 of decision 5/CP.23
c) On paragraph 18 of decision 5/CP.23
d) On paragraph 19 of decision 5/CP.23
e) On paragraph 20 of decision 5/CP.23

The background document for the discussion can be found here.

The agenda item was considered in open session:

- On the afternoon of Tuesday 13 March (Suva expert dialogue)
- On the morning of Wednesday 14 March (in a session with the SBI chair on the Suva expert dialogue, followed by a session on paragraphs 18 and 20 of decision 5/CP.23)
- On the morning of Thursday 15 March (report back from a closed Excom breakout group on the Suva dialogue, followed by a session on paragraphs 6 and 19 of decision 5/CP.23)
- On the afternoon of Thursday 15 March (open discussion on the Suva dialogue)
- On the afternoon of Friday 16 March for decision-making on all the elements of item 9.

In addition, the organization of the Suva expert dialogue was considered in a number of closed Excom sessions and breakout groups throughout the week.

Summary of the main discussions and conclusions:

a) On the Suva expert dialogue (paragraph 9, 5/CP.23)

The Excom began consideration of this agenda item in its closed session on Tuesday morning, before the formal opening of the Excom. In that session, members considered what questions/issues would need to be considered during Excom7, the duration and modality of the dialogue, and the optimal level of engagement of experts.

In the afternoon of day 1, the Excom considered the Suva dialogue in open session, posing the questions: how can the dialogue best deliver on the mandate? And what are the outcomes of the dialogue?

The Excom then returned to a closed session in the afternoon to continue consideration of the dialogue, guided by the following questions:

- Objectives/goals and/or expected outcomes of the dialogue
- Structure of the dialogue – what are the key topics that need to be reflected?
- Facilitation and chairing arrangements of the dialogue – jointly with the SBI chair throughout? Facilitator?

At some point on the first day, one Excom member tabled a document that served as a basis for discussions and was modified/updated as the conversations continued. The document was never shared publicly.

The document contained possible modalities and structure of the dialogue; possible content and topics; criteria for selection of experts; guiding questions for the round-table discussions; outcomes expected; and a table that could be used to capture the outcomes of round-table discussions.

Discussions continued during the week through a number of closed breakout groups and open plenary sessions.

In the decision discussion on Friday afternoon, one member of the Excom breakout group provided a summary of agreements to date. The small breakout group (Sumaya, Dawn, Pepe, Christoph, Russell, Farhan) would continue to guide the process and advise the Secretariat and the SBI chair in preparations for the dialogue. Agreements included:

- The SED must be inclusive, open, noting importance of including people with disabilities, and other vulnerable populations and groups
- Interventions will be short, on topic, avoiding prepared statements, with a balance of views across a wide range of party and non-party stakeholders. Invited speakers could have posters with their presentations, along with work of the Excom.
- There would be two 3-hr sessions, spread across two days. Day 1 would be a normal open plenary with co-chairs and an interactive activity where participants would share initial thoughts and ideas on typologies.
- This would be followed by round table discussions in two rooms. Room 1 on risk assessment and risk transfer and room 2 on risk reduction and risk retention.
- There would be a report back of day 1 happening on day 2.
- Following the report back there would be roundtables in succession on two topics: 1) managing risks comprehensively for extreme events and 2) managing risks comprehensively for slow onset processes.
- There will be facilitators and rapporteurs.
- There will be a process to capture inputs being made.
- There would be a common set of overarching guiding questions.
    - Ways for facilitating actions that require expertise and support.
    - What are available and emerging approaches.
    - Design, implementation.
    - Gaps, challenges.
    - Solutions, opportunities.
    - Scaling up of approaches to meet needs.
    - Sources of support.
    - Are these sources available inside or outside.
    - What organizations can help in scaling up.
    - Crosscutting institutional and framing environments.
- Outcomes: a table matching actions to address loss and damage requiring finance with the potential sources of finance; report to inform the discussions around scoping the technical

paper; outreach to a wider audience than the one usually at COP; better understanding of challenged faced by developing countries; financial support which is available and how it might be accessed.

Decisions taken:

- Agreed that the secretariat initiates preparatory work on the basis of the document;
- Established a small group of champions who will join the co-chairs and secretariat in intersessional work.

b) On paragraph 6 of decision 5/CP.23

To include in its annual reports, as appropriate, more detailed information on the work undertaken by its expert groups, subcommittees, panels, thematic advisory groups and task-focused ad hoc working groups on, to the extent possible, issues of relevance to the regional and national context as identified by Parties in their submissions

Decisions taken:

- Requested the Task Force on Displacement and the expert groups established at this meeting, to take into account, to the extent possible, the issues of relevance to the regional and national context, as listed in the submissions when making progress reports at regular meetings of the Excom;
- The Excom noted that there is a wealth of information on issues of relevance to the regional and national context that can inform, as appropriate, the work of the Task Force on Displacement and the expert groups established.

c) On paragraph 18 of decision 5/CP.23

To seek further ways to enhance its responsiveness, effectiveness and performance by improving the planning and organization of its work, including in the context of operations of its expert groups, subcommittees, panels, thematic advisory groups and task-focused ad hoc working groups, such as appropriate balanced representation, expertise of membership in accordance with the tasks, and the duration of the mandates of those expert groups, subcommittees, panels, thematic advisory groups and task-focused ad hoc working groups

Decision taken:

- Noted COP guidance, and decided to adopt a more flexible approach to engaging experts through expert groups.

d) On paragraph 19 of decision 5/CP.23

In accordance with its mandate (Decision 2/CP.19, para 2 and 5) and the 2017 report of the Excom to the COP2:

(a) To consider, when updating its five-year rolling workplan, cross-cutting issues and current, urgent and emerging needs related to extreme weather events and slow onset events, including but not limited to drought and floods, in developing countries that

are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, vulnerable populations and the ecosystems that they depend on

(b) To enhance its efforts in ensuring that information generated from its work is converted into user-friendly products, such as tools and methods, and material for training modules, with a view to enhancing the coherence and effectiveness of relevant efforts undertaken at the regional and national levels, as appropriate

(c) To consider, through collaboration and partnerships, the development and the dissemination at all levels of user-friendly information and communication products on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage issues of relevance to the regional and national context

Decisions taken:

19 (a)

• Took note of the request of the COP to consider cross-cutting issues and current, urgent and emerging needs related to extreme weather events and slow onset events when updating its five-year rolling workplan.

19 (b) and (c)

• Noted that these provisions apply to all workstreams;

• The working group on communication to take into consideration these provisions in developing the draft communication strategy of the Excom;

• Encouraged the secretariat, when supporting relevant work of the Excom, to identify and engage potential partners, as appropriate.

e) On paragraph 20 of decision 5/CP.23

To collaborate with other bodies under the Convention and the Paris Agreement within the scope of their respective mandates and to continue considering ways for facilitating the mobilization and securing of expertise, and enhancement of support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, including its work on enhancing action and support, and when considering the composition and mandates of its expert groups and those it may establish

Decision taken:

• Established liaison members to different bodies to enhance communication.

Agenda item 10. Organization of intersessional work.

Under this agenda item, the members agreed on the division of responsibilities intersessionally. Groups of champions were formed on each task taken forward, liaison members were identified for all the relevant constituted bodies and outside organizations (such as the IPCC and the GCF), and members took places on each of the ongoing technical expert groups and the task force on displacement. The roles that each member took on can be found in the decisions of the meeting, found here.