

Global Stocktake GST Intersessional

Abu Dhabi, 12 – 14 October 2023

Succinct Report to RINGO

(by the 3 participants selected by RINGO)

At the invitation by the incoming COP28 presidency, the United Arab Emirates, and under the chairmanship of Harry Vreuls (SBSTA Chair) and Nabeel Munir (SBI Chair), Parties united for three days to prepare COP28 and its negotiations, under the CMA¹, on the Global Stocktake.

The Global Stocktake is a key component of the Paris Agreement ambition cycle. Its results shall inform the Parties in their preparation of the next round of Nationally Determined Contributions, NDCs, which Parties shall submit by 2025 and reflect their greater ambition for the period from 2030 to 2035.

(The need to aggressively increase ambition, and in particular mitigation efforts, still in this decade, is addressed in the Mitigation Work Programme, which held another one of its meetings immediately after the GST Intersessional.)

Early on in the proceedings, many Parties/Party groupings rejected a proposal by the Chairs, to break up into subgroups, which would likely have allowed to start work on specific draft decision text. Parties then engaged in exchanges in a plenary setting, addressing the various components of the GST. Interventions varied between general political statements, at times lengthy, and more specific statements that very much referenced the earlier Party submissions on the matter, including the proposed focus of the GST CMA decision.

In this regard, and not unexpectedly, the interventions reflected very much the report on Party and Non-Party submissions by the UNFCCC secretariat². In line with this, many interventions echoed the need to limit global warming to 1.5°C, a point Parties and Non-Parties had strongly made in their submissions. (For a broader reflection on the Technical Dialogue of the GST, i.e. its science-policy interface, see also the report of its co-facilitators³.)

At the end of the Intersessional, the Environmental Integrity Group EIG conveyed an excellent summary of the proceedings, identifying areas of convergence and divergency. They kindly shared their summary and with their agreement, we are very happy to pass their assessment on to you.

¹ CMA: Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement

² Synthesis Report: Views on the elements for the consideration of outputs component of the first global stocktake; <https://unfccc.int/documents/632292>

³ Technical dialogue of the first global stocktake. Synthesis report by the co-facilitators on the technical dialogue: <https://unfccc.int/documents/631600>

Reflections on convergence and divergence by the EIG:

Context in cross cutting consideration:

- Convergence around the need for a strong message on the urgency and the need for unity in our common fight against climate change.
We need a high-level recognition that while the Paris Agreement has successfully mobilized climate action, but that we are not on track to reach our objectives. Reaching the Paris Agreement will require everyone at the table.
- We see also good convergence around the centrality of best available science.
- Divergence: we were concerned to see some of us backtrack in attempts to rewrite the Paris Agreement and its relation to the Convention. This includes the treatment of differentiation.
- Another central area where further discussions are needed is the **treatment of Pre2020, and the reflection of historical emissions**. The EIG is a group of developed and developing countries. EIG remains of the view that Pre2020 is outside of the scope of the GST, as it does not relate to the Paris Agreement. However we welcome a reflection on the evolution of emissions as part of the GST outcome, that is rooted in science and evidence based. We believe our technical discussions have shown that the reality is much more complex, and that the world is much more complex, than a bifurcated view, as some of the interventions we have heard would portray. We need to reflect accurately past, current, as well as future emissions. We were concerned to see some interventions attempting to finger point as a way of getting out of obligations, and to move us back to an annexed world. Under the Paris Agreement, we all have to contribute to the highest possible ambition, reflecting CBDR-RC, but with a view to all bringing our highest possible ambition. We will not be able to avoid overshoot 1.5 without the full engagement of all in this room. this is the spirit with which EIG engages in this process.
- We would encourage ministerial consultations and further exchange to work out a narrative that is conducive to us as a global community, rising up to the challenge and presenting our best efforts to avoid overshoot of 1.5, in line with the best available science.
- Similarly, EIG is strongly in favor of reflecting **equity** in the GST outcome, we need more work to reflect equity in a way that captures the variety of views and concepts

In Chapter C in general, we are pleased to see convergence on having concrete, actionable recommendations throughout, that we can track, and on having a general balance between chapters.

Mitigation

- Convergence: Interest to work further on guidance for NDCs. We also see a strong interest in sending high-level signals that speak to the system transformations needed.
- Divergence: More discussions are needed to identify those **high-level recommendations**, and to identify those that work for all and most importantly, help all of us increase our ambition and implementation domestically. And we need to build a common understanding on how such recommendations can help galvanize investments.
- We saw some interventions taking us back to longstanding discussions on the **scope of NDCs**.

Adaptation

- Convergence: we were pleased to see a joint interest in raising the political profile of adaptation

- Divergence: we need more work to **identify actionable recommendations**, including integration of scientific data and information for strengthening adaptation actions, and in general, suggest treating questions related to **support** as part of the finance chapter.

C3 (Finance)

- Convergence: we are enthusiastic that this chapter can bring us forward in a lot of issues, including review of financial architecture, pointing to the business case of climate action and the cost of inaction, how to redirect investments away from areas that disserve us in the long term, like fossil fuel subsidies, and how to improve financial access for all developing countries towards areas that benefit all.
- Divergence: we would welcome further ministerial and heads of delegation engagement on how to solve our conceptual difference related to the title of this chapter: **2.1.c versus Mol/Article 9**. It is concerning to see attempts to reinterpret the Paris Agreement, on one hand. But even more concerning is that we will not be able to shift from the millions to the trillions unless we make sure that all our actions serve our objectives. And it is a matter of safeguarding the credibility of the UNFCCC process. Non-party stakeholders, in particular financial actors, are already moving in this space. So we would welcome further engagement at high level, to be able to have a Finance chapter that is truly transformative.

Efforts related to Loss and Damage

- Convergence: We see good convergence around pointing to alarming rise in impacts across the world, and need for urgent action in response, including a call for support. We also can speak to how the UNFCCC process has evolved.
- Divergence: A key point in that chapter will be ensuring that the discussions taking place in the Transitional Committee inform our decision, an issue which is transversal to all our chapters: how to deal with ongoing discussions.

Efforts related to Response Measures

- Convergence: we have heard a willingness to make sure that the GST decision speaks to the benefits of climate action, while addressing challenges that are associated with the transition. We are looking forward to engaging in this chapter to come up with concrete recommendations on how to accompany the transition in a whole of society approach.

International cooperation

- Convergence: the international cooperation chapter is likewise a key opportunity to reflect on how we engage with each other and with non-state actors to mutually support each other. There was interest in building visibility on the number of initiatives and partnerships and building in more accountability into the system.
- Divergence: we hear some divergence around the formats of cooperation under the international economic system / trade / unilateral vs multilateral measures.

Guidance and way forward

- Divergence: We need a **high-level engagement to rally around the call that the GST does not end at COP28** and making sure that it serves its purpose of informing Parties in updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support, as well as in enhancing international cooperation for climate action.
- Convergence: we have sensed interest in adding more flesh to the bone of our way forward section, speaking to what needs to happen after the conclusion of our first GST, on thinking of what process, what spaces are necessary for NDC preparation, as well as work to follow-up on the GST recommendations and informing the next GST. Also sensed interest in dedicating a space to speak to the science and the scientific community.

The PreCOP, which will unite ministers from a considerable number of countries from 30 to 31 October in Abu Dhabi, as well as the HoDs (heads of delegations) meeting immediately following, will further deal with the matter. Repeatedly, the exchanges at the GST Intersessional showed that there is a need for political involvement, as the exchanges at the level of negotiators, who are customarily held to strict negotiation mandates, can only go so far.

To what extent the Heads of State and Government meeting at the beginning of COP28 will look into the matter, is not quite clear, but we do as of now not expect any specific declaration regarding the GST by Heads of State and Government.

It is at the same time extremely likely that the GST will be one of the crunch topics in Dubai, which will hardly be solved at the level of the delegations, but will have to be addressed by the COP28 Presidency and ministerial negotiations, likely lasting to the end of COP/CMA. The COP28 Presidency United Arab Emirates has entrusted South Africa and Denmark to lead the ministerial consultations, and they have already fostered exchanges at the occasion of the recent climate week at the UN in New York.

We suggest that RINGO stay involved and share its wealth of insights also in the remaining phases and negotiations on the GST – to the extent that it remains possible to do so.

We attach the interventions made by us. A point to take into account when reading: We were tasked to reflect on the ongoing negotiations.

For the report:

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20 October 2023, Bern, Woods Hole, London