

Submission on experience and lessons learned in relation to conducting the first global stocktake

The EIG is pleased to answer the call from the Decision on the first global stocktake, Decision 4/CMA.5 paragraph 193, which invites Parties and non-Party stakeholders to submit via the submission portal by 1 March 2024 information on experience and lessons learned in relation to conducting the first global stocktake. The EIG thus hopes to contribute to refining the procedural and logistical elements of the overall global stocktake process on the basis of experience gained from the first global stocktake.

As the ambition mechanism of the Paris Agreement, the global stocktake is a fundamental pillar of the Paris Agreement. The EIG is dedicated to ensuring its efficiency in the long term, as well as the implementation and follow-up of its decisions. In particular, the second global stocktake will be key to maintaining a chance to achieve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement.

Relationship with Decision 19/CMA.1

In sharing experience and lessons learned in relation to conducting the first global stocktake, the EIG underscores the importance of not renegotiating decision 19/CMA.1 on the modalities of the global stocktake, but rather to complement and improve the implementation of decision 19/CMA.1.

In particular, it is important to maintain the balance achieved in Decision 19/CMA.1, namely between backward and forward-looking components of the global stocktake, as well as between topics to be considered under the global stocktake. It is equally important to consider “equity and the best available science” jointly and in a balanced way.

Experiences and lessons learned

The EIG would like to suggest the following 11 lessons learned following the conclusion of the first global stocktake:

1) Ensure the timely contribution of the IPCC seventh assessment report, as well as subsequent IPCC reports

According to Decision 19/CMA.1, “*the assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change should be considered in an effective and balanced manner, taking into account lessons learned from past experience*”. The EIG is concerned that the current IPCC cycle is not adequately aligned with the global stocktake cycle. To ensure a meaningful technical assessment phase, it is paramount that the IPCC delivers its seventh assessment report, and subsequent reports, in time for the start of the technical assessment phase, or at the latest of the political consideration of outputs phase of the global stocktake.

The EIG underscores that any potential delays in the publication of IPCC reports should not be used as an excuse to delay the reaching of a decision on the global stocktake. If necessary, the Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies should seek alternative ways to integrate the expertise of the IPCC into the global stocktake discussions, for example by holding presentations by international organizations such as WMO or oral presentations by IPCC’s lead authors during the technical dialogue.

This is in line with the mandate of Decision 19/CMA.1: “*a dialogue between Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change experts and Parties through Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice–Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change special events should be used to enable a focused scientific and technical exchange of information on the findings in Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change products in an open and transparent manner and that the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice–Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Joint Working Group should continue to be used to enhance communication and coordination between the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in the context of the global stocktake.*”

Further, decision 19/CMA.1 clarifies the length of the technical assessment phase: *“Decides that the information collection and preparation component of the global stocktake will commence one session before the start of the technical assessment, which will take place during the two (or depending on the timing of the publication of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports, three) successive sessions of the subsidiary bodies preceding the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (November 2023), during which the consideration of outputs will take place, with the cycle repeating every five years thereafter;”*

The EIG underlines the importance of upholding this mandate, and suggests organizing the technical assessment phase in a manner that maximizes alignment with the IPCC cycle.

2) Make best use of the information provided by the Biennial Transparency Reports under the Enhanced Transparency Framework and other relevant reports and communications

Contrary to the first global stocktake, the second global stocktake will be able to benefit from the first Biennial Transparency Reports, submitted under the Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement.

Decision 19/CMA.1, paragraph 36 a) stipulates:

“Also decides that the sources of input for the global stocktake will consider information at a collective level on:

- (a) The state of greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks and mitigation efforts undertaken by Parties, including the information referred to in Article 13, paragraph 7(a), and Article 4, paragraphs 7, 15 and 19, of the Paris Agreement;”

Paragraph 23 further “requests the secretariat, under the guidance of the co-facilitators [...] to prepare for the technical assessment:

- (a) A synthesis report on the information identified in paragraph 36(a) below, taking into account previous experience in preparing such reports”

The EIG suggests making best use of the information contained in the Biennial Transparency Reports during the technical assessment phase.

Also, the EIG recommends strengthening actions to comply with paragraph 37 of decision 19/CMA.1 (a), which indicates that the sources of input for the global stocktake include Reports and communications from Parties, in particular those submitted under the Paris Agreement and the Convention. On this regard we call for consideration of the information shared in the National Communications and Adaptation Communications that are available during the collection of information during the preparation of the global stocktake, considering their alignment with the Paris Agreement long-term goals.

3) Avoid reinterpretations of the mandate of the global stocktake around the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement

According to the Paris Agreement, the global stocktake is to periodically 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. This includes Article 2.1 a, b and c of the Paris Agreement.

During the first global stocktake, significant time was spent in discussing the relationship between the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement and the areas of focus mentioned in Decision 19/CMA.1. These discussions could be avoided by all Parties upholding the agreeing that the mandate of the global stocktake should not be renegotiated. The EIG notes that the headers agreed under the first decision of the global stocktake are not predetermining the structure of the second and subsequent decisions on the global stocktake.

4) Maintain the variety of formats of engagement during the technical assessment phase

The EIG would like to commend the co-facilitators of the technical dialogue of the first global stocktake, Harald Winkler and Farhan Akhtar, for their leadership in conducting the technical dialogue. The EIG

particularly appreciated the co-facilitators' efforts to consult with Parties, to engage with non-party stakeholders, and to integrate the comments received. Such forms of engagement should be maintained in future iterations of the global stocktake. The EIG further appreciated the facilitators' efforts to test out new and innovative formats to conduct the technical dialogues of the Global Stocktake. Such room for creativity should be maintained in subsequent global stocktakes. It is equally important to maintain flexibility for facilitators to select facilitators and rapporteurs for the technical dialogue discussions in advance.

It would also be important to consider opening regional spaces where experiences and inputs can be shared to contribute to the collection of information for the technical assessment. These spaces should be carried out in coordination with the co-facilitators and be conducted in the different official languages of the United Nations, taking into account that in this way the knowledge and experiences of indigenous peoples and other relevant actors who are not fluent in English are also considered in the global stocktake. This will make it possible to meet its objective of assess the progress of the achievement of the long –term goals of the Paris Agreement.

5) Improve the transition between the technical assessment phase and the consideration of outputs phase

Decision 19/CMA.1 determines that the global stocktake will consist of the following components:

- (a) Information collection and preparation;
- (b) Technical assessment;
- (c) Consideration of outputs.

During the first global stocktake, Parties and non-party stakeholders showed considerable engagement through all three phases. The information collection and preparation phase saw hundreds of submissions from Parties and non-party stakeholders. The technical assessment phase led to meaningful discussions among Parties and non-party stakeholders in various formats. The wealth of these inputs was captured aptly by the co-facilitators in their summary reports and an overarching factual synthesis of these reports.

However, several groups and parties regretted that the consideration of outputs phase felt somewhat disconnected from the work done under the technical assessment phase, and did not provide for sufficient time for meaningful engagement on the draft outcome. The limited time allocated for the consideration of outputs phase did not always do justice to the wealth of substance produced by the two previous phases. Namely, the conclusion of the first global stocktake left somewhat open how the overarching factual report of the technical assessment phase will be used moving forward.

While the sequencing of each phase must be preserved, the transition from the technical assessment phase to the consideration of outputs phase therefore could be improved in subsequent global stocktakes. For the second and subsequent global stocktakes, it would be beneficial to anticipate how the products developed during the technical assessment phase will be used during the consideration of outputs phase. In particular, the technical assessment phase could be better used to identify the elements that will be included in the global stocktake outcome.

Importantly, the synthesis report of the technical assessment phase must be given due consideration throughout the consideration of outputs phase, and be taken up in the global stocktake outcome document. A workshop could be organized towards the end of the technical assessment phase to give experts the possibility to consider and discuss the content of the synthesis report.

6) Provide more time for Parties and non-party stakeholders to engage with draft negotiation text, by making better use of intersessional work

During the first global stocktake, the time allocated for the consideration of outputs phase was short compared to the first two phases. During the SBs in June, six months prior to COP28, Parties barely agreed on a draft structure for the decision text. At the intersessional workshop in October, Parties discussed in broad terms possible elements for the outcome. They then received a first draft of the decision only at COP28 itself. Consequently, there were limited opportunities for Parties and non-party stakeholders to engage with the draft decision text, build ownership of the outcome, and to engage with

one another to find solutions on specific language elements of the text, leaving much of the diplomatic outreach work to the COP presidency and the facilitators of the joint contact group. Though COP28 led to a strong outcome for the first global stocktake, the lack of time for Parties to engage with decision text is partially reflected in the decision, with important elements of the text being crafted in the last hours of the COP (ex: the follow-up section). Other elements of the text, such as new commitments and objectives, were discussed in general terms throughout the year, but were only translated into concrete language at the COP itself, leading to lack of clarity in some areas (ex: the energy paragraphs). These commitments would have benefitted from more engagement between Parties to work on finding solutions with one another.

In the future, one would benefit from conducting several rounds of intersessional workshops, to allow Parties more time to engage with one another. It would also be beneficial to work on several iterations of draft elements, or draft decision text. One could envision focusing on specific chapters, or considering the text in its entirety at each round. This would help build ownership among Parties for the decision.

7) Improve representation within the High-Level Committee

Decision 19/CMA.1 does not specify which presidencies are to be represented in the High-Level Committee, leaving room for interpretation. According to the decision, *“events will be chaired by a high-level committee consisting of the Presidencies of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement and the Chairs of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation”*. During the first global stocktake, both presidencies represented in the High-Level Committee by chance came from the same region and were in part members of the same negotiation groups. For the second and subsequent global stocktake, it would be welcome to ensure that the high-level committee benefits from representation from a variety of regions and negotiation groups: This could be achieved for example by inviting the participation from the troika of presidencies in the High-Level Committee.

8) Explore ways to make ministerial engagement more meaningful

In view of its political weight, it is important to build ownership of the global stocktake outcome at a high political level, early in the process. Despite high interest and participation from high-level representatives during the first global stocktake, the products of the High-Level Events were not meaningfully used.

Further formats of engagement for ministers and high-level representatives could be explored. In particular, one could envision a dialogue around the 1.5°C objective, focused on how to keep this objective alive and ensure that all upcoming NDCs contribute to this objective (see next suggestion). Likewise, ministerial engagement could help raise the profile of adaptation domestically and could help launch discussions on how to implement adaptation objectives at the domestic level.

9) Strengthen the global stocktake’s role in informing the next round of NDCs

The window of opportunity to keep the 1.5°C objective is rapidly closing, therefore it is paramount that Parties submit NDCs that are consistent with this objective. The second global stocktake will be key in informing these contributions.

The Paris Agreement provides a clear mandate for the global stocktake to inform NDCs. According to Article 4.9, *“Each Party shall communicate a nationally determined contribution every five years in accordance with decision 1/CP.21 and any relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement and be informed by the outcomes of the global stocktake referred to in Article 14.”*

The decision of the first global stocktake succeeded in providing clear guidance towards the next round of NDCs. It namely *“encourages Parties to come forward in their next nationally determined contributions with ambitious, economy-wide emission reduction targets, covering all greenhouse gases, sectors and categories and aligned with limiting global warming to 1.5 °C, as informed by the latest science, in the light of different national circumstances”*. The decision also *“Invites all Parties to put in place new or intensify existing domestic arrangements for preparing and implementing their successive nationally determined contributions”*.

However, ministerial engagement throughout the global stocktake process could help Parties anticipate which steps they will take in preparing their next NDCs, as well as how they will prepare new or intensify existing domestic arrangements for preparing and implementing their next NDCs. The first global stocktake could have benefitted from a political moment where countries are asked to share preliminary plans for their NDC targets, offering a chance for positive momentum to prepare upcoming NDCs. This could be foreseen in the second and subsequent global stocktakes. The second and subsequent global stocktakes could further explore innovative ways to provide guidance towards the next round of NDCs, and encourage Parties to elaborate further on their plans. It would be helpful to provide further spaces for Parties to coordinate and ensure that they collectively succeed in keeping the 1.5°C objective alive. One could foresee for example a dedicated dialogue among those countries that are most consequential for keeping the 1.5°C objective within reach.

10) To the extent possible, clarify the expected formats of the outcome early in the process

During the negotiations of the first global stocktake, many groups and parties regretted the lack of clarity about the expected format of the global stocktake outcome. This made it difficult for Parties and non-party stakeholders to work on concrete proposals for possible recommendations or commitments to come out of the global stocktake.

For example, some groups and parties supported the preparation of a technical annex, to accompany the global stocktake decision text. Such an annex could include a menu of concrete actions that countries could take to achieve the objectives of the Paris Agreement, possibly through a sectoral lens. Such an outcome would have been fit for purpose to support countries in the implementation of the global stocktake outcome.

To the extent possible, reaching clarity about the format of the global stocktake outcome will contribute to the quality of the outcome.

11) Dedicate sufficient time, throughout the process, to agree on the follow-up to the global stocktake outcome

A global stocktake outcome is only as strong as its implementation. During the first global stocktake, Parties and non-party stakeholders in large part concentrated their discussions on the content of the global stocktake outcome, however less time was allocated to discuss how to implement the outcome following its adoption.

For this reason, future co-facilitators of the technical dialogue, future Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies, and co-facilitators of the joint contact group should be encouraged to provide sufficient space and time for discussions on the follow-up and implementation of the global stocktake. Parties may wish to clarify early the role of upcoming presidencies in accompanying NDC submissions. Parties should be given sufficient time to reflect on how they will implement the global stocktake recommendations and objectives, at the domestic level. And, sufficient thought should be given to how to track these recommendations and objectives at the global level. If desired, for example, Parties may wish to agree on common indicators or resources that will help track the implementation and achievement of objectives contained in the global stocktake outcome. The second and subsequent global stocktakes would be greatly improved by ensuring that the implementation side of the process is in place from the beginning of the process. Importantly, sufficient time must be allocated for these discussions.

12) Maintain and strengthen non-party stakeholder engagement throughout the process

Decision 19/CMA.1 underscores the importance of engaging non-party stakeholders in the global stocktake. It namely decides that the technical dialogues will be “open, inclusive, transparent and facilitative”.

The EIG would like to thank stakeholders for their engagement in the first global stocktake and for the hundreds of submissions that were transmitted to the Secretariat. Despite the wealth of information contained in those submissions, it is not always clear how the submissions were used in the process. In

addition to written submissions, it would be helpful to consider further ways in which non-party stakeholders could meaningfully engage in the global stocktake process.

The EIG encourages future co-facilitators of the technical dialogue, future Chairs of the Subsidiary Bodies, and co-facilitators of the joint contact group to provide sufficient space for non-party stakeholders to engage meaningfully in the global stocktake process. Further, capacity-building should be provided to non-party stakeholders to help them provide targeted inputs to the global stocktake, in a most useful format.