

DRAFT EIG Submission on the 2024 review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts

The EIG is pleased to submit its views in accordance with the terms of reference for the 2024 review of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (FCCC/SB/2024/L.4, paragraph 3). This submission does not aim to exhaustively present views on the matter but focusses on a limited number of important points.

The WIM at a crossroads

The WIM has played a key role in promoting understanding, approaches, solutions and good practices to deal with climate related loss and damage. Doing so it has engaged a high and diverse number of leading experts from government, academia, civil society, international organizations and the private sector, producing high quality knowledge products and sharing expertise with numerous stakeholders. The WIM's convening power and efforts have been instrumental in establishing the necessary substantive basis and political impetus for further advancing in-country support, culminating in the establishment of the Santiago network and the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FLD). The EIG thanks the members of the WIM Executive Committee (ExCom) engaged over the years and other stakeholders, such as members of the WIM expert groups and the UNFCCC Secretariat, for their hard and fruitful labor.

With the Santiago network and the FLD now in motion, and their intersections with the work of the ExCom and its mandated expert groups, it is crucial this UNFCCC landscape is coherent amongst itself and with the broader mosaic of stakeholders working on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage with no one left behind. In line with the increasingly severe impacts of climate change and the necessarily rising interest in this problem, the WIM has an opportunity to reinvigorate its work, recalibrating it to the evolving landscape and addressing L&D related matters for all regions of our planet.

Views on challenges and suggestions

The basic strengths and achievements having been briefly sketched above, forthcoming are some challenges, opportunities and potential improvements the EIG identifies (some suggestions might be subject to the availability of budget):

- **Ensure complementarity, coherence and cooperation in knowledge creation and management:** knowledge is at the heart of the ExCom's and the expert groups work. Facilitating the development, provision and dissemination of, and access to, knowledge and information on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage is also part of the Santiago network's functions. The network and the Fund will generate enormous amounts of "ground-tested" knowledge through their technical assistance and investments. The WIM's knowledge work can help underpin both the Fund's and network's activities. It is indispensable that these various parts of the UNFCCC L&D landscape liaise to avoid duplication and harness synergies.
- **Reaching beyond UNFCCC:** while the ExCom groups engage experts from a wide variety of organizations, WIM events and meetings mostly take place within UNFCCC with limited active stakeholder engagements beyond. The WIM's local and regional presence is limited and there is a risk of an "UNFCCC bubble dynamic". While the ExCom is aware of this challenge, with the help of its experts and the national focal points more can be done through communication and events in trying to reach stakeholders in developing countries particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.
- **Reaching developing countries particularly vulnerable and segments of the population that are already vulnerable owing to other factors:** loss and damage does not affect all people equally. Some developing countries are particularly vulnerable and so are some population segments "owing to geography, socioeconomic status, livelihood, gender, age, indigenous or minority status or disability; and the ecosystems that they depend on". The same applies to people living in zones of conflict, with the weakening of institutions by war and insecurity. Looking at the list of the 56 loss and damage contact points (as of 11 July 2024¹),

¹ <https://unfccc.int/loss-and-damage-contact-points>

only 8 of a total of 39 SIDS² have a contact point, and only 14 out of 45 LDCs³. If these contact points are to serve as the crucial interface between the UNFCCC's L&D work and realities of affected developing countries, this list must expand. Also, engagement with countries should not stop with governmental interlocutors, but include civil society, academia and the private sector, and include the population segments particularly vulnerable and already affected by climate change. An approach that can potentially help localization is structuring national focal points as multi-stakeholder committees.

- **Step up on gender:** as mandated, ExCom has undertaken efforts to better integrate gender approach in WIM's work. This remains work in process. While rarely any work is gender-transformative, little is truly gender-responsive while some is hardly gender-sensitive. For a step change consistent gender integration is required, starting with gender-disaggregating data and bringing in more gender specialists into working groups.
- **Better present WIM and its wealth of knowledge products online:** the WIM's website contains an enormous amount of useful information (studies, technical guides, etc.). It is however not presented in a visually attractive fashion. The website is difficult to navigate and somewhat labyrinthine with some important information not easy to find. While natural design limitations apply given it is hosted by unfccc.int, an effort should be made to better present the website.
- **Further enhance the user-friendliness of products:** this varies from product to product. It is important that ExCom continues its efforts to make technical guides and other products as target audience friendly as possible. A helpful measure might be including more practitioners from institutions involved in operations, e.g. from government, civil society, communities, the UN and other agencies. Operational institutions with wide in-country presences are used to engage with national and local audiences. While some groups such as the one on displacement have a good number of such experts, others have less so. In this regard, it is notable, that multilateral/regional development banks are largely absent in the expert groups. Given their wide efforts to avert, minimize and address loss and damage, they should be brought in higher numbers. Also, representatives of the Santiago and FLD Secretariats might want to be part of the groups henceforth. In addition, it is important to have technical information in the 6 official UN languages, as it facilitates the socialization of WIM's work for national experts, as well as for the general public to access this information.
- **ExCom roster of experts and Santiago network OBNEs:** instead of advancing two parallel networks, ways to combine or at least liaise the ExCom expert roster and the Santiago network of Organisations, Bodies, Networks and Experts (OBNEs) should be contemplated and consider a regional balance in this list. A suggested concrete task is to make available the WIM expert roster online. No up to date list can be found on the web.
- **Common understanding on "AMA L&D":** while the WIM has decisively contributed to enhance understanding on loss and damage, there are still differing views on what averting, minimizing and addressing (AMA) entails, and how AMA L&D overlaps or relates with adaptation, disaster risk reduction and humanitarian aid. Similarly, there is no consensual view on "developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change". While this has not hindered progress per se, e.g. in setting up the Santiago network or the FLD, it continues to make discussions at CMA/CP and the boards cumbersome. Unfinished business the WIM might want to help address.

² <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/list-sids>

³ <https://www.un.org/ohrlls/content/list-ldcs>