

Submission by the Republic of Mali on behalf of the African Group of Negotiators

on

Further Guidance in Relation to the Adaptation Communication

30 September 2016

This submission responds to the invitation from the first session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA), to make submissions on further guidance in relation to the adaptation communication, including, inter alia, as a component of nationally determined contributions, referred to in Article 7, paragraphs 10 and 11, of the Paris Agreement.

This submission should be read alongside the submissions made by the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) to the APA on agenda item 5, “Modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support referred to in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement”, on item 6, “Matters relating to the global stocktake referred to in Article 14 of the Paris Agreement”, as well as on the AGN’s submission to the call made by the Adaptation Committee and the Least Developed Countries Group of Experts (LEG) on the mandates stemming from decision 1/CP.21.

The context of the submission is contained in previous submissions by the AGN to the ADP on adaptation in the 2015 Agreement.

1. Background

The AGN sees the adoption of the Paris Agreement as a critical milestone in achieving the objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and addressing climate change. As such, for the AGN, the Paris Agreement is guided by the principles of the Convention, including equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, as well as the objectives of the Convention. It is therefore our view that, the commitments outlined in Article 4 of the Convention continue to apply in the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

With the adoption of the Paris Agreement, Parties have made progress towards achieving material parity between mitigation and adaptation, including by integrating adaptation as a component of Nationally Determined Contributions (a-NDCs), and ensuring the provision of enhanced means of implementation to developing countries that meets their needs and priorities.

The Paris Agreement further establishes the global goal for adaptation (GGA) “to enhance adaptive capacity, strengthen resilience and reduce vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal referred to in Article 2” (Article 7.1),

thereby recognising the intrinsic relationship between the global temperature goal, the required adaptation action and the necessary means of implementation to enable adequate adaptation action.

As such, for the AGN it is imperative to ensure that balance between adaptation and mitigation continues to be pursued in the implementation of the Paris Agreement, including the operationalization of the GGA, to enhance adaptation action and support, which is a priority for Africa. This is particularly important given that the mitigation contributions Parties put forward in their intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) translate into an average of 2.8°C rise over pre-industrial temperatures by end of the century.

The Paris Agreement addresses various aspects of the GGA in its different articles, therefore operationalising the adaptation provisions and the GGA requires a holistic approach¹.

2. Further Guidance on Adaptation Communications

Vehicle

The AGN recognises that Articles 3 and 7.11 of the Paris Agreement provide the framework for using NDCs as means for communicating adaptation undertakings, whilst providing flexibility to use other vehicles such as National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) or National Communications.

It is our view that an adaptation component of an NDC² provides the primary tool for Parties to articulate their contributions as these are forward looking, as such adaptation is also referred to as a-NDC. Such contributions are towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement in strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty (Article 2) and the objective of the Convention.

Periodicity

Articles 4.9 and 7.11 provide for NDCs to be communicated every five years. While countries are provided with flexibilities to use different vehicles and hence less stringent timeframes, it is important that the adaptation communications are submitted in a timely manner that provides a `snapshot in time` prior to the global stocktake.

The adaptation information contained in a-NDCs need to be communicated prior to the publication of the synthesis report to be prepared by the UNFCCC secretariat such that the envisaged state of adaptation action and support can be understood. The aggregate of `communicated information` from a-NDCs, and `reported information` from the transparency mechanism are essential inputs for the global stocktake.

¹ See annex 1 for a reference of all adaptation-relevant Articles and their relationships.

² See also paragraph 12 of decision 1.CP/20

Consideration

The AGN further recognises that Article 7.5 of the Paris Agreement confirms that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems.

This means that guidance in relation to the adaptation communications must be sufficiently flexible to accommodate national circumstances and be sufficiently clear to enable an assessment of the contribution to the GGA and adequate adaptation action and support. This requires, as a minimum, a set of minimum agreed information and defined modalities for adaptation communications to evaluate the aggregate effect of the a-NDCs at the global stocktake and tracking progress towards achieving the objective of the Convention and the purpose of the Paris Agreement as outlined in Article 7.14 as well as Article 14.3.

Minimum Information

Although more than two-thirds of the countries had an adaptation component in their INDCs (a-INDCs), the synthesis report of INDCs that was prepared by the UNFCCC secretariat was unable to evaluate the aggregate effect of the a-INDCs due to the lack of guidelines and upfront information contained in the Lima decision. As such, COP 22 in Marrakech needs to make progress on further guidance on the a-NDCs, including agreeing on minimum information requirements.

The adaptation communications referred to in Articles 7.10 and 7.11 of the Paris Agreement apply to all Parties, both developing and developed countries. The AGN is of the view that in order to ensure progress towards the GGA, the adaptation communications should include five elements/features as outlined in Articles 7.10, namely:

- vulnerability and priorities;
- plans and actions;
- implementation and support needs;
- recognition of adaptation efforts of developing countries; and
- Indicative levels of support provided to developing countries from developed countries³.

These features of the communication will therefore contribute to operationalising and tracking progress of the GGA as these features address adaptive capacity, resilience, and vulnerability. As such, these are central to a meaningful tracking progress towards an adequate adaptation response.

³ As provided in Article 9.5, with provision in paragraph 56 of decision 1.CP/21 to initiate a process at COP 22 to identify the information to be provided by developed countries in the context of the biennial communications of indicative support.

3. Features and the Associated Minimum Information

Vulnerability and Priorities

In order to track progress on reducing vulnerability, a-NDCs should include an assessment of vulnerability, not with a view to develop a common metric against which different countries can be compared, rather at the exposure different countries face. Such exposure could be based on populations exposed to certain stresses, sectors of the economy vulnerable to climate change, and geographic areas that are most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change.

Such exposure could be quantified through risk assessments, such as percentage of population vulnerable to droughts, percentage of the agricultural sector at risk, or percentage of coastline vulnerable to storm surges. Such risk can be aggregated by the secretariat to get an idea of the global level of vulnerability. Such risk can further be expressed in the context of different temperature scenarios. This will contribute to establishing a baseline of vulnerability which will help assess progress towards the achievement of the GGA, as the global community can collectively assess progress in reducing such vulnerability. At the global stocktake the aggregation of a-NDCs could be compared to a global Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Report.

However, it is important to have methodological guidance for a suite of such metrics that Parties can choose from as appropriate to their national circumstances. Therefore, the IPCC should be tasked with developing or improving existing guidelines for vulnerability assessments, including those metrics, to enable standardisation and enable aggregation. The IPCC could as well publish reports every five years to provide a global picture of vulnerability based on both top-down and bottom-up assessments of vulnerability, including those metrics.

Building on their vulnerability assessments and national development plans and actions, countries should indicate their adaptation priorities, including prioritised sectors and geographies in their adaptation communications as well as options for climate adaptation response.

Plans and Actions

It is our view that in a-NDCs countries should also indicate what plans and actions they intend to undertake given the provision of means of implementation. This could include planning objectives for adaptation in the context of national development priorities and country programmes as developed under the readiness programme of the Green Climate Fund, or outlining how resilience considerations are taken into account in national development planning, and, where appropriate, into sectoral plans.

This could also include the development of national and sub-national policies, institutional frameworks as well as programs and projects, including those targeted at specific sectors. The identified plans and actions could be linked to the vulnerabilities identified and

expected outcomes in the context of addressing those vulnerabilities through plans and actions.

This feature of adaptation communications would also outline how plans and actions will contribute to the achievement of the GGA, including enhancing adaptive capacity, reducing vulnerability and building resilience - all in the context of sustainable development. In addition, this feature could also include good practices and lessons learned at different sectoral and geographical levels, progress of which will be considered at the global stocktake.

Implementation and Support Needs

Adaptation communications should also include the means of implementation - including finance, technology development and transfer and capacity building - that countries' require to implement adaptation actions in respect of the global temperature goal. This feature of the adaptation communication could also include information about loss and damage. There is a need for agreed methodologies for estimating the cost of adaptation and other adaptation needs.

This work is being undertaken by the Adaptation Committee in response to the request made in paragraph 42(b) of decision 1/CP.21 and further information on how the AGN foresees this work can be undertaken will be communicated in its submission to the call for submissions by the Adaptation Committee and the LEG. The outcome of this work will contribute to the aggregation of adaptation costs and needs to assess progress towards the GGA, and will contribute to assessing the adequacy of adaptation support provided to developing countries in respect of their needs as part of the global stocktake (Article 7.14(c)).

Having recognised the relationship between global temperature increases and the necessary adaptation action and means of implementation needed to adequately adapt to temperature increases both in the three goals as formulated in the purpose of the Agreement (Article 2.1) as well as in Article 7.4, the information on implementation and support needs should be based on, and informed by temperature scenarios, outlining needs associated with the implementation of the plans for an upcoming commitment cycle, be it at the national level of analysis, or with specific needs per sector as appropriate, including the national use of approaches.

In determining and communicating their needs, as well as in reporting the actual means of implementation, including finance, received under the transparency framework (Articles 13.10 and 11) it is important that developing countries require capacity-building support. This constitutes important information where the `communicated needs` be assessed against indicative support provided by developed countries in the context of Article 9.5. As such, the global stocktake can assess how delivered finance compares to needs, and how pledged finance compares to needed finance.

Recognition of Adaptation Efforts

Adaptation communications should also recognize the adaptation efforts of developing countries. Developing countries are already making significant investments in adaptation as it is imperative that they act now in order to avoid further loss and damage and setbacks to sustainable development. This information could provide details of actions in a preceding five-year-period, outlining information on the types of programmes/projects undertaken, and national adaptation investments made per sector for a previous period of implementing NDCs.

This assessment of adaptation efforts should include information about national climate change policies and plans as well as those that might not be included in national climate change strategies and actions but which are adaptation nonetheless. This could be reflected as a percentage of GDP or absolute figures, as appropriate. Further information about how we see the process of recognition of developing countries' adaptation efforts will be provided in the AGN's response to the call for submission by the Adaptation Committee and the LEG.

Indicative Adaptation Support (developed countries)

The Paris Agreement also includes commitments for developed countries to continue providing financial resources to developing countries (Article 9.1). In doing so, developed countries are further obliged to provide information on the finance provided and mobilised on a biennially basis (Article 9.7) and indicative quantitative and qualitative information of levels of support they intend to provide to developing countries (Article 9.5), both on a biennial basis.

In doing so, developed country Parties should provide information regarding sectors, geographies/regions targeted, and type of support in terms of grant/loan components. From a transparency perspective, it is important that developed countries report on the type of information outlined in the indicative adaptation support to assess the adequacy of support provided to developing countries against their needs at the global stocktake (Article 7.14(c)) building from the agreed tabular format in decision 9.CP/21. Given that the indicative support will be communicated by developed countries on a biennial basis, the UNFCCC secretariat could produce a synthesis report of the last two biennial communications that are provided in the 5-year cycle to serve as an input to the global stocktake.

4. Conclusion

Adaptation communications are an important tool for countries to communicate their adaptation needs and priorities, plans and actions as well as indicative levels of support for developed countries and for recognising the adaptation efforts of developing countries. In adopting the Paris Agreement Parties took a significant step towards achieving material parity between mitigation and adaptation which is also reflected in Nationally Determined

Contributions encompassing all elements, including adaptation. Recognising capacity constraints many developing countries are facing, the Paris Agreement provides flexibilities for countries that need it in light of their national circumstances to use other vehicles to communicate their adaptation communications such as through National Adaptations Plans or National Communications. The Paris Agreement provides a general framework on the features of information Parties will communicate in their adaptation communications, i.e. vulnerability and priorities, plans and actions, implementation and support needs, recognition of efforts for developing countries, and indicative support and support provided in the case of developed countries. These features, however, require further clarity on the type of information for each features and the modalities for operationalising the concept of NDCs and to enable Parties to evaluate the aggregate effect of the adaptation communications at the global stocktake, which is important to track the progress made in achieving the purpose of the Agreement, including its three global goals.

In Marrakesh, at COP 22, it is imperative for Parties to conclude on the features of the adaptation communications and to give further mandates to Convention bodies and other bodies such as the IPCC to make progress in operationalising the adaptation provisions of the Agreement. These mandates should also build upon and support the work that the Convention bodies, such as the Adaptation Committee, the LEG and the Standing Committee on Finance, have received on developing methodologies and guidelines to operationalise the global goal for adaptation and the different elements that will be considered at the global stocktake.

Annex 1: List of Adaptation-relevant Provisions in the Paris Agreement

- **Article 2.1: Formulates and reiterates the links between the three global goals related to temperature increases and mitigation action, adaptation and the need for finance to enable both mitigation and adaptations.**

This Agreement, in enhancing the implementation of the Convention, including its objective, aims to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change, in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty, including by:

- (a) Holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change;
 - (b) Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production; and
 - (c) Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.
- **Article 3: Sets the context for NDCs and provides that NDCs cover all elements including mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building and transparency of action and support.**

As nationally determined contributions to the global response to climate change, all Parties are to undertake and communicate ambitious efforts as defined in Articles 4, 7, 9, 10, 11 and 13 with the view to achieving the purpose of this Agreement as set out in Article 2. The efforts of all Parties will represent a progression over time, while recognizing the need to support developing country Parties for the effective implementation of this Agreement.

- **Article 7.1: Formulates the global goal for adaptation, its assessment towards achieving it constitutes part of the global stocktake.**

Parties hereby establish the global goal on adaptation of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal referred to in Article 2.

- **Article 7.3: Provides for the recognition of adaptation efforts made by developing countries, which will also be considered at the global stocktake.**

The adaptation efforts of developing country Parties shall be recognized, in accordance with the modalities to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement at its first session.

- **Article 7.4: Recognises the link between mitigation (in) action, adaptation needs and costs.**

Parties recognize that the current need for adaptation is significant and that greater levels of mitigation can reduce the need for additional adaptation efforts, and that greater adaptation needs can involve greater adaptation costs.

- **Article 7.10: Introduces the adaptation communications and the type of information Parties should communicate through them.**

Each Party should, as appropriate, submit and update periodically an adaptation communication, which may include its priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions, without creating any additional burden for developing country Parties.

- **Article 7.11: Provides flexibility for developing countries in using different vehicles to communicate adaptation communications.**

The adaptation communication referred to in paragraph 10 of this Article shall be, as appropriate, submitted and updated periodically, as a component of or in conjunction with other communications

or documents, including a national adaptation plan, a nationally determined contribution as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 2, and/or a national communication.

- **Article. 7.12: Provides for all adaptation communications, e.g. regardless of the vehicle used, to be recorded in a public registry.**

The adaptation communications referred to in paragraph 10 of this Article shall be recorded in a public registry maintained by the secretariat.

- **Article. 7.14: Provides for the adaptation-related aspects that will be considered at the global stocktake.**

The global stocktake referred to in Article 14 shall, inter alia:

- (a) Recognize adaptation efforts of developing country Parties;
- (b) Enhance the implementation of adaptation action taking into account the adaptation communication referred to in paragraph 10 of this Article;
- (c) Review the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support provided for adaptation; and
- (d) Review the overall progress made in achieving the global goal on adaptation referred to in paragraph 1 of this Article.

- **Article 9.1: Provides for developed countries to provide financial resources for adaptation and mitigation to developing countries**

Developed country Parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties with respect to both mitigation and adaptation in continuation of their existing obligations under the Convention.

- **Article 9.5: Provides for developed countries to provide qualitative and quantitative information on indicative finance to be provided to developing countries on a biennial basis.**

Developed country Parties shall biennially communicate indicative quantitative and qualitative information related to paragraphs 1 and 3 of this Article, as applicable, including, as available, projected levels of public financial resources to be provided to developing country Parties. Other Parties providing resources are encouraged to communicate biennially such information on a voluntary basis.

- **Article 9.7: Provides for developed countries to provide information on support provided and mobilized for developing countries on a biennial basis.**

Developed country Parties shall provide transparent and consistent information on support for developing country Parties provided and mobilized through public interventions biennially in accordance with the modalities, procedures and guidelines to be adopted by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement, at its first session, as stipulated in Article 13, paragraph 13. Other Parties are encouraged to do so.

- **Article 13.5: Provides information about the type of information that will be considered in the framework for transparency of action, including adaptation.**

The purpose of the framework for transparency of action is to provide a clear understanding of climate change action in the light of the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2, including clarity and tracking of progress towards achieving Parties' individual nationally determined contributions under Article 4, and Parties' adaptation actions under Article 7, including good practices, priorities, needs and gaps, to inform the global stocktake under Article 14.

- **Article 13.6: Provides information about the type of information that will be considered in the framework for transparency of support, including adaptation.**

The purpose of the framework for transparency of support is to provide clarity on support provided and received by relevant individual Parties in the context of climate change actions under Articles 4, 7, 9, 10 and 11, and, to the extent possible, to provide a full overview of aggregate financial support provided, to inform the global stocktake under Article 14.

- **Articles 13.8: Provides for the information Parties should provide on adaptation under the transparency framework of action and support.**

Each Party should also provide information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7, as appropriate.

- **Article 13.9: Provides for developed countries to provide information on the means of implementation provided to developing countries.**

Developed country Parties shall, and other Parties that provide support should, provide information on financial, technology transfer and capacity-building support provided to developing country Parties under Articles 9, 10 and 11.

- **Article 13.10: Provides for the type of information developing countries should provide on the means of implementation needed and received.**

Developing country Parties should provide information on financial, technology transfer and capacity-building support needed and received under Articles 9, 10 and 11.

- **Article 13.11: Introduces the technical expert review that Parties have to undergo and the need for capacity-building for developing countries in meeting their reporting obligations.**

Information submitted by each Party under paragraphs 7 and 9 of this Article shall undergo a technical expert review, in accordance with decision 1/CP.21. For those developing country Parties that need it in the light of their capacities, the review process shall include assistance in identifying capacity-building needs. In addition, each Party shall participate in a facilitative, multilateral consideration of progress with respect to efforts under Article 9, and its respective implementation and achievement of its nationally determined contribution.

- **Article 14.1: Establishes the global stocktake and provides for its consideration of all elements, including mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation, as well as equity and science.**

The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement shall periodically take stock of the implementation of this Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of this Agreement and its long-term goals (referred to as the “global stocktake”). It shall do so in a comprehensive and facilitative manner, considering mitigation, adaptation and the means of implementation and support, and in the light of equity and the best available science.

- **Article 14.3: Provides for the outcome of the global stocktake to inform Parties in updating and enhancing their actions and support**

The outcome of the global stocktake shall inform Parties in updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support in accordance with the relevant provisions of this Agreement, as well as in enhancing international cooperation for climate action.