

Submission by the Republic of Vanuatu
To the
Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement
UNFCCC
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[APA FCCC/APA/2016/L.3:](#)

According to conclusion #8 in the Draft conclusions proposed by the Co - Chairs (FCCC /AP A /201 6 /L. 3). The APA has invited Parties to submit, by 30 September 2016, their views on the following items on the APA agenda, in order to focus the work of the APA: Item 4, “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.

The Republic of Vanuatu *submits* that reporting on adaptation is as essential to the achievement of the overall objectives of the convention as detailed reporting on emissions reductions. The benefits of comprehensive national adaptation reporting include:

- communicating priorities to stakeholders
- evaluating progress towards national goals
- identifying existing capacity, resources and support for adaptation
- attracting international support for proposed adaptation actions and plans
- identifying and disseminating best practice in planning, implementing and funding adaptation

Vanuatu *notes with concern* that the current UNFCCC transparency framework does not require reporting of information needed to fulfil the purposes of the global stocktake (Article 7.14) which is to include adaptation-related components (including adequacy, effectiveness and support for adaptation).

Vanuatu *notes* the Paris Agreement’s non-mandatory wording that Parties “should”, as appropriate, submit and update an “adaptation communication” (Article 7.10).

Vanuatu *expects* that as Parties are not explicitly asked to report on adaptation effectiveness (nor provided support for objective measurement), it will be difficult to use existing reporting mechanisms to develop a robust global stocktake.

Vanuatu *notes and supports* the important principle in the Paris Agreement stressing that adaptation reporting needs to avoid creating any additional burden for developing country Parties (Article 7.10), particularly as regular reporting on adaptation is already done under the UNFCCC, including via national communications (NCs).

Vanuatu therefore proposes that achieving comprehensive global information on adaptation while minimizing reporting burdens will require:

1. Parties to report adaptation communications as part of existing reporting tools (e.g. NCs);

and to

2. Maximize, through non-prescriptive content guidance, the overlap between what is included in these reports and information needed for efficient national adaptation planning and implementation.

1. Reporting Adaptation Via Existing Reporting Tools

The Republic of Vanuatu, like many other SIDS and LDCs, is extremely limited in its financial, technical and human resource capacity to cope with the increasing impacts of climate change as well as the ability to report on these actions. The resources required to identify and collate the relevant adaptation information for national reporting purposes is currently beyond our national capacity. As an example, Vanuatu has only just released its Second National Communication (SNC) to the UNFCCC in 2016.

For this reason, Decision 1/CP.21 states that this adaptation information “shall” be submitted biennially for all countries other than Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (paragraph 90). Accordingly, if analyses of adaptation adequacy and effectiveness were to be requested from Vanuatu, it would contradict the need to avoid any additional reporting burden for our developing country context.

Strongly supporting the significant flexibility provided in the Paris Agreement regarding the form, content and timing of adaptation communications, Vanuatu also notes in the decision that modalities will be developed in order to “recognize the adaptation efforts of developing country Parties”. Provided with additional support to participate in these specialized and targeted modalities, Vanuatu feels confident that it would be able to improve upon the consistency and comparability of information currently included in its reports to the UNFCCC including through its National Communications and National Adaptation Plans as well as other reporting for topical issues like Loss and Damage.

In Vanuatu’s view, the most critical modality for more comparable and consistent reporting on adaptation will be better use of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at the national and regional levels as a means to learn from actions taken and support provided and received. For example, adaptation communications should be linked and aligned with specific international aims including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the objectives of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030; regional policies, for example the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific - An Integrated Approach to Address Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management (FRDP) 2017 – 2030¹; and even national frameworks like Vanuatu’s National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP).

New and additional support (financial and technical) should be provided to Parties in order to link existing reporting processes to comparable and robust indicators for climate change adaptation.

2. Ensure Reporting Also Supports Efficient National Adaptation Planning and Implementation

¹ <http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/embeds/file/Annex 1 - Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific.pdf>

Vanuatu has important domestic adaptation aspirations. It is therefore both practical and realistic to expect that adaptation reporting modalities will help Vanuatu to fill knowledge gaps in order to enhance domestic actions and coordination (and attract international support for its plans), as well as identify progress towards our national goals and adaptation targets.

With the new additional financial and technical support justified above, the content of adaptation communications could, while left open and flexible on specific types of information used, include at least some qualitative and quantitative assessment of the following components of adaptation action:

1. Climate impacts and vulnerability/resilience and adaptive capacity

Collecting and presenting this information is also suggested part of in NAP process, and already included in many LDC National Communications. While information on adaptive capacity is not explicitly requested in National Communications, countries are asked to report information on capacity gaps. Science information, including that collected and compiled by the IPCC will be especially relevant to reporting of this content.

2. Adaptation actions and their relative priorities

This is a critical information gap for national adaptation planning in order to balance large adaptation needs with limited resources, and effectively allocating support for adaptation at the sectoral and sub-national level. The NAP process will help Vanuatu to define nationally-relevant criteria for prioritizing implementation of adaptation.

3. Adaptation plans and processes

This information will summarize how domestic adaptation planning is evolving in a continuous, progressive and iterative process which keeps in step with Vanuatu's changing social, environmental and economic contexts. In this section, Vanuatu would be able to highlight its reforms to the Governance of climate change adaptation, specifically through the strengthening of the National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB)² and the National Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction Policy³. While not required currently, this information will provide while provide Vanuatu with an opportunity to have its planning efforts recognized and to highlight lessons learned.

4. Adaptation-related goals and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of progress

While setting ambitious adaptation goals, Vanuatu is not yet able to effectively monitor progress. As in other SIDS and LDCs, in Vanuatu there are significant challenges in monitoring and evaluating national adaptation policy priorities, especially as our adaptation outcomes are a result multiple actions at an aggregated level (no single indicator is appropriate) nor do we have reliable "baselines" against which effects can be measured. For countries like Vanuatu, additional financial and technical support will be required to establish globally comparable and consistent M&E processes for adaptation likely including both qualitative and quantitative assessments, including both process indicators, as well as outcome indicators.

² www.nab.vu

³ <http://www.nab.vu/vanuatu-climate-change-and-disaster-risk-reduction-policy-2016-2030>

5. Adaptation support

Currently Vanuatu is unable to report accurately on the climate adaptation support it receives, because much of these resources is channeled outside of government's official ODA channels. Technical assistance, in-kind support, and support channeled directly to Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other non-government organizations is often under-represented in the official figures of climate finance. Vanuatu seeks a commitment from partners that ALL adaptation support, including that which comes from modalities other than direct access or budget support, must be clearly and succinctly reported as new and additional climate adaptation finance. Provided this information, Vanuatu would be in a position to report the levels and target beneficiaries of adaptation support it receives, and also to quantify its total needs for future adaptation finance or other support.

In summary, Vanuatu submits that while it is important to maintain flexibility in adaptation-related reporting, it will be useful to provide non-prescriptive guidance on what such reporting could contain.

The global stocktake agreed to in the Paris Agreement includes four adaptation-specific components. These are: recognising the adaptation efforts of developing country Parties; enhancing the implementation of "adaptation action" taking into account adaptation communications; review the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support; review the overall progress in achieving the global adaptation goal. There is generally a good match between global stocktake information needs and the information that countries are already requested to report to the UNFCCC via National Communications or NAPs (although new and additional financial and technical support is required). Accordingly, the information that may be needed to satisfy national aims could also be used as input to the global stocktake; albeit with the collection of some additional information.

If this extra information needs to be reported by Parties, it could considerably increase the level of time and resources needed for adaptation reporting, which is not consistent with the agreement to avoiding additional burden for developing country Parties.

Vanuatu expects that in order to comprehensively, comparably and consistently report on adaptation efforts, it will be necessary to utilize existing reporting channels, provide non-prescriptive guidance on the content of adaptation communication as well as collect information from 3rd party sources.

Overall, Vanuatu stands ready to meet its adaptation communication obligations under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement and thereby share with the world its outstanding adaptation actions despite its severely limited financial and technical capacities.