



NEW ZEALAND

Submission to the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts

Financial support for planning and implementation of integrated approaches to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change

March 2019

1. New Zealand is pleased to respond to the request from the Executive Committee of Parties and relevant organisations to share information “on the sources of financial support they are providing for planning and implementation of integrated approaches to avert, minimise and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change.” New Zealand understands inputs provided will inform the development of the technical paper referred to in paragraph 2 (f) of decision 4/CP.22.

Background

2. The various approaches outlined in submissions will both inform the content of the paper and enable Parties to learn from one another’s experiences. New Zealand welcomes the chance to provide input to help ensure the Secretariat’s technical paper provides a full and balanced overview of the sources of financial support for addressing loss and damage as described in relevant decisions.

3. New Zealand’s approach to the issue of climate change-related human mobility[†] is centred on our own region, the Pacific. New Zealand is embarking on a process of seeking to avert, delay and prepare for climate change-related human mobility, including displacement and planned relocation in the region, including through the use of official development assistance. This is an ongoing workstream; we do not have fully-formed answers to many of the complex questions surrounding this issue. We value the opportunity to share our approach however, in the hope it may inform and assist not just the Secretariat’s technical paper but the responses of other Parties to this important issue.

[†] The five-year rolling workplan of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism uses “human mobility” as an umbrella term, that is, “including migration, displacement and planned relocation”: FCCC/SB/2017/1/Add.1 at 1(f) and annex 1, Strategic Workstream (d).

4. New Zealand remains mindful that climate change-related human mobility – and efforts to avert, minimize and address this – cannot be viewed in isolation from the broader global climate change response. Ambitious mitigation action to ‘bend the curve’ and achieve the Paris Agreement’s temperature goal is critical to giving communities in the most vulnerable countries, including low-lying atoll nations of the Pacific, the best chance of being able to remain *in situ*. Adaptation to help these nations respond to the impacts of climate change will build more resilient and societies, better able to cope with a changing external environment, and more likely to be able to remain *in situ*.

New Zealand’s approach - regional

5. Climate change-related human mobility is a global issue. The effects of climate change are undermining conditions necessary for some communities to remain *in situ*, in many regions around the world, including the Pacific and perhaps also New Zealand, where some communities are already affected or threatened by the possibility of internal relocation. Each country and region faces a unique set of issues and circumstances when it comes to climate change-related human mobility, or the threat thereof, and responses will necessarily be tailored to those circumstances.

6. New Zealand has recognised that it can most effectively support its own region in the short-term, by assisting Pacific Island countries to adapt to the impacts of climate change and avert or delay relocation. Accordingly, New Zealand recently adopted an action plan on Pacific climate change-related human mobility. The action plan is underpinned by a set of core values:

- a. Honour Pacific Leaders’ recognition of “the importance of retaining the Pacific’s social and cultural identity, and the desire of Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries, where possible”. (Pacific Islands Forum Leaders’ Niue Declaration on Climate Change, 2008.)
- b. Respect and uphold Pacific Island countries’ sovereignty and the right to self-determination.
- c. Encourage transparent, inclusive dialogue on Pacific climate change-related human mobility domestically, regionally and internationally, advocating for Pacific priorities.

7. New Zealand has committed to utilising official development assistance to avert and delay climate change-related relocation and displacement. New Zealand will deliver at least NZ\$300 million in climate-related support from 2019 to 2022, and at least two-thirds of that commitment is expected to support Pacific Island countries. Our scaled up commitment (a 50% increase on the previous period) demonstrates the importance to New Zealand of supporting developing countries to address the impacts of climate change, in particular our Pacific neighbours.

8. The majority of New Zealand’s total climate-related support will be invested in adaptation over the coming period. As noted above, climate change adaptation activities have the benefit of, among other things, supporting Pacific communities to remain *in situ*.

Investments will also be made in supporting communities already relocating within their countries due to the effects of climate change, and those for whom relocation is planned or a likely prospect.

9. In preparing for the future, the action plan also commits New Zealand to commissioning robust research to enable Pacific Island countries to better plan and prioritise responses to climate change, including anticipating and responding to climate change-related human mobility. Lack of reliable data impedes the abilities of governments and others in the Pacific to adequately prepare for and respond to the needs of people affected by climate-related mobility. More work is needed to map hazards and vulnerabilities. New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade plans to commission research to better understand patterns of future Pacific climate change-related human mobility, as well as social and economic impacts on New Zealand and Pacific Island countries.

10. As part of our regional discussions on this topic, New Zealand co-hosted, with the United Kingdom and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, a forum in 2018, "Navigating Pacific Futures: Climate Change and Resilience". Discussions amongst leaders, officials, academics and practitioners helped progress the conversation on this issue. The report from that forum is available online.[‡]

New Zealand's approach - domestic

11. New Zealand is aware that there are vulnerabilities to natural hazards and climate change within our domestic jurisdiction. Some local communities are currently considering their risks and options, and the possibility of relocation away from vulnerable areas is one of the options. Whilst there is currently no settled national policy, work is under way to examine this subject. New Zealand's domestic experience with these issues will inform our international response, and vice versa.

Conclusion

12. This is a valuable opportunity to share experiences and the technical paper will form an important input into the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage at COP 25. The Paris Agreement establishes the WIM as the key forum to enhance understanding, action and support on a cooperative and facilitative basis with respect to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. That includes climate change-related human mobility. New Zealand looks forward to the WIM's work continuing on all aspects of this important and evolving area to facilitate the sharing of lessons learned and improved collective understanding.

[‡] <https://www.wiltonpark.org.uk/event/wp1631/>