

**Submission by the Republic of Mali on behalf of the African Group of
Negotiators**
on
Further Guidance in Relation to the Mitigation Section of Decision 1/CP.21
30 September 2016

Following the invitation from the first session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA 1) to Parties to make submissions on further guidance in relation to features, information and accounting methodologies of nationally determined contributions (NDCs), as specified in the mitigation section, paragraphs 26, 28 and 31 of decision 1/CP.21, the African Group of Negotiators (AGN) presents this submission in order to advance the discussions under the APA on this matter.

a) Features of Nationally Determined Contributions, as specified in paragraph 26 of decision 1/CP.21

Firstly, we acknowledge the different opinions on the usefulness of the discussion on features in light of the nationally determined aspect of the NDCs.

Our understanding is that features are characteristics of the NDCs, and that the minimum characteristics of NDCs submitted by Parties are defined in Article 4 and other related Articles of the Paris Agreement. Therefore, such features should:

- Respect the nationally determined nature of NDCs;
- Contain all elements including mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation;
- Reflect common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities in light of different national circumstances;
- Reflect the highest possible ambition;
- Contain economy-wide absolute emission reduction targets for developed countries and enhanced mitigation efforts for developing countries, with further flexibilities for Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States to submit strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emissions development;
- Represent a progression beyond the Party's then current nationally determined contribution; and
- Ensure enhanced support for developing countries' NDCs.

Building on the provisions of the Paris Agreement, including the above characteristics, and in light of the difficulties expressed by the Secretariat and the various research organizations in aggregating the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions submitted by Parties, it may therefore be necessary to revisit the discussion on features of NDCs and the

information to be submitted by Parties necessary for credible transparency and global stocktake processes.

In our view, features (3a) and information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding of NDCs (3c) are linked and need to be discussed together. While features provide for the general characteristics of NDCs, the information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding provide for specific information required to promote the corresponding features of the NDCs.

Our view is that all NDCs in relation to mitigation should, at a minimum, contain the following **features**:

- Be quantified/ quantifiable;
- Indicate how the NDC is a progression from last NDC/over time;
- Indicate how the NDC achieves "highest possible ambition";
- State how the NDC takes equity considerations into account;
- Indicate the support required by developing countries;
- Indicate how the outcome of the global stocktake has been taken into account in the NDC;
- Indicate the Party's long-term strategy;
- Provide information on methodologies and assumptions that underpin the NDC;
- Indicate the methodologies and information the Party intends to use to track progress towards achieving its NDC;
- Indicate whether and how the Party intends to use mechanisms to achieve its NDC; and
- Reflect common timeframes for all NDCs based on 5-year-cycles.

b) Information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding of nationally determined contributions as specified in paragraph 28 of decision 1/CP.21

In our view it is important for Parties to agree on what type of information would be critical in ensuring clarity, transparency and understanding of the NDCs. In addition, the information in NDCs should be consistent with the features identified by Parties as critical to be included in all NDCs without interfering with the diverse and nationally determined nature of the NDCs, and provide a sufficient basis for credible transparency and the global stocktake processes.

Taking note of paragraph 27 of decision 1/CP.21, in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, the information to be provided by Parties when communicating their NDCs, may include, as appropriate, *inter alia*,

- Quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year);
- Time frames and/or periods for implementation;

- Scope and coverage;
- Planning processes;
- Assumptions and methodological approaches, including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals; and
- How the Party considers that its NDCs is fair and ambitious, in the light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2.

In our view, the type of information to be provided by Parties corresponding to the features above should include:

- Quantified information on the NDC and information on methodologies and assumptions that underpin the NDC, including any reference points, baselines etc. and, as applicable, coverage (sectors and gases etc.);
- Information on how the current NDC is a progression of the previous NDC, including any relevant assumptions and methodologies;
- Information on how the NDC is of the "highest possible ambition", including any relevant assumptions and methodologies;
- Information on how the NDC takes equity into consideration;
- Information on which and how much support (finance, technology and capacity-building needs), as appropriate, will be required by the developing country Party to achieve its NDC, including any relevant assumptions and methodologies;
- Information on how the outcome of the previous global stocktake has been taken into account in the NDC, including any relevant assumptions and methodologies;
- Quantified information on the Party's long-term mitigation and adaptation strategy, including any assumptions and methodologies;
- Information on how the Party intends to account for its NDC, including relevant assumptions and methodologies, and identification of all relevant information sources and indicators; and
- Information on whether and how the Party intends to use mechanisms in addition to domestic efforts to achieve its NDC.

c) Accounting for Parties' nationally determined contributions, as specified in paragraph 31

As mandated by decision 1/CP.21, the APA should seek to elaborate guidance for accounting for Parties' NDCs, as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 13 of the Paris Agreement for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris (CMA). It is our view that guidance for accounting of NDCs is essential to enhance understanding of the mitigation contributions and deliver an assessment of the aggregate mitigation efforts.

The development of guidance for accounting should build on lessons learnt with the existing accounting approaches under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. It is, however, important to note that the existing accounting guidance under the Kyoto Protocol is not adequate to address the diversity of NDCs that have been submitted by Parties. Therefore, guidance for NDCs' accounting under the Paris Agreement should be fit for purpose so that the accounting takes into account the different types of NDCs to meet the purpose of the principles described in the Paris Agreement in Article 4.13.

Accounting guidance should take into account national circumstances and development priorities and objectives, seek to be descriptive not prescriptive, be flexible and promote progression. Flexibility of application of accounting guidance is needed, particularly for developing countries, taking into account Parties' capacities.

Paragraph 31 of decision 1/CP.21 outlines a broad scope of accounting guidance in relation to progress towards NDCs. This includes:

- Use of a common set of inventory guidelines and a common set of metrics as reviewed by the IPCC; and
- Methodological consistencies including baselines during the implementation of the NDCs.

In our view, it is important to provide clear guidance on accounting for internationally transferred mitigation outcomes (*detailed accounting rules to be developed under SBSTA*).