From Roadmap to Reality: Delivering on Adaptation

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Recommendations to the Dutch Government leading up to SB64 and COP31

This position paper has been endorsed by: CARE Nederland, Cordaid, Hivos, Jonge Klimaatbeweging, Latin American Youth Climate Scholarship, Mercy Corps, WaterAid and We Are Tomorrow Global Partnership.

Introduction

COP30 was widely framed as the "adaptation COP", marking a pivotal moment for strengthening the global response to climate impacts. Though there are mixed feelings about the outcomes of COP30, important steps have been taken in regards to the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) as well as adaptation finance. However, important challenges remain in ensuring that the broader adaptation architecture effectively supports the implementation, monitoring and financing of adaptation efforts. Maintaining momentum will therefore be key for upcoming negotiations, particularly leading up to COP31 and strengthening the framework for COP32 engagement. The aim of this position paper is to support the operationalisation of the GGA under the UNFCCC. It reflects on key elements of the evolving adaptation architecture, including the Baku Adaptation Roadmap (BAR), Belém-Addis Vision, GGA indicators and adaptation finance, while also emphasising the importance of intersectionality as a cross-cutting principle across these processes. In doing so, the paper identifies key challenges and priorities for advancing effective, equitable and measurable global adaptation efforts.

Baku Adaptation Roadmap

The BAR presents a critical opportunity to strengthen and streamline adaptation architecture. The BAR should enhance coherence across adaptation-related processes, while accelerating the implementation of the GGA. The EU submission[1] on the BAR also underscores this point. This includes ensuring that the roadmap supports adaptation planning, finance, implementation, and accountability, in line with the targets of the GGA, as well as with NAPs and NDCs. A central priority should be to improve the quality, accessibility, and scale of adaptation finance for climate-vulnerable countries and communities, in accordance with Article 9.1, as stated in paragraph 28(d) of the CMA7 GGA decision. The BAR should facilitate discussions on the goal to triple adaptation finance, and promote stronger use of multilateral climate funds. Finance should also be more accessible, people-centred, and supportive of locally-led adaptation. To ensure that the agreed adaptation indicators translate into meaningful action, the BAR should also prioritise knowledge sharing, capacity building, and monitoring systems that enable Parties to operationalise the targets and indicators within national contexts. This includes facilitating exchanges of best practices, strengthening technical and institutional capacity, and developing robust monitoring and reporting frameworks.

[1] UNFCCC (2025) Submission by Poland and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its Member States

Finally, the BAR should place equity, inclusion, and accountability at the heart of global adaptation efforts. This includes ensuring meaningful participation of civil society, local communities, grassroots populations, Indigenous Peoples, people of African descent, women, children and youth, people with disabilities and other underrepresented groups in adaptation processes. These groups should not merely be consulted, but rather occupy the center of decision-making, countering the selective exclusion of themes such as intergenerational equity and the fight against environmental racism. Intersectionality is crucial in climate adaptation because vulnerability to climate impacts is shaped by the interaction of multiple, overlapping social identities and positions within social hierarchies. Even within marginalised groups, climate risks and adaptation challenges are experienced in various ways. Recognising this diversity is essential for designing effective and equitable adaptation interventions. Strengthening transparency and accountability will be essential to ensure that adaptation finance and implementation efforts reach the people most affected by climate change.

By focusing on these priority areas, the BAR can help close the persistent implementation gap between the adoption of adaptation indicators and their practical application. This should be accompanied by a structured, time-bound action plan that would ensure that the GGA is not only developed but also actively used to guide, measure, and strengthen adaptation efforts across Parties.

Lessons from the Gender Action Plan

To ensure that the GGA translates into meaningful action, useful lessons can be drawn from the UNFCCC Gender Action Plan (GAP). The GAP operationalises broad commitments by outlining concrete activities for different actors, including the UNFCCC secretariat and Parties, and by specifying responsibilities, timelines, and expected outcomes. It is structured around clearly defined priority areas, which helps organise activities and makes implementation easier to monitor. The GAP also includes periodic review and progress reporting, allowing Parties to track implementation and assess progress over time. In practice, it supports implementation through activities such as workshops, technical exchanges, and capacity-building initiatives that help Parties integrate gender considerations into climate policy. These features provide useful insights for strengthening implementation under the GGA.

Indicators & Bélem-Addis Vision

At COP30 Parties discussed the set of indicators that had been developed by experts to make the GGA more concrete. Of the original list of 100 indicators 59 were agreed. According to many Parties, including the EU, the Brazilian package had merged diverse concepts into single statements that would be difficult to fashion into new and realistic indicators. The big question is whether countries will already begin implementing the indicators that have been agreed, including the indicators on water and sanitation. Moreover, the decision emphasises that the indicators do not create new financial obligations or commitments (..), which will make it more difficult to link the indicators to the tripling goal. Adaptation without finance will not work.

The Bélem-Addis Vision on adaptation, which was initiated during COP30 comprises a two-year policy alignment process to test and socialise the newly adopted indicators in adaptation communications, bi-annual transparency reports, NAPs and NDCs. Inclusive participation of various marginalised groups and consideration of gender, Human Rights, intergenerational justice and social justice are crucial in the implementation. However, no clear outcome has been mandated for this process. The Netherlands should ensure that this process now shifts from monitoring to implementation, on how adaptation is financed, coordinated and delivered. The other process under the Bélem-Addis Vision is a more technical process to refine the indicators in the coming two years before COP32. The Water for Climate Pavilion has written detailed recommendations for the setup of the workshops and technical papers. Their main point is that the indicators will need to translate into tangible, equitable adaptation outcomes on the ground.

Adaptation Finance

Adaptation finance remains a critical enabler of effective climate resilience and must be addressed both in terms of quantity and quality. Scaling up finance is essential to deliver on the commitment to triple adaptation finance, but increased volumes alone will not be sufficient. Finance must be predictable, accessible, and primarily grant-based, ensuring that it is non-debt inducing for climate-vulnerable countries already facing high debt burdens. In line with the goal to triple the outflows of multilateral climate funds, the Netherlands should increase its provision of finance to these funds, including the Adaptation Fund and the LDCF. In addition, resources must reach the communities most affected by climate change and support locally-led adaptation, empowering local actors, civil society, and frontline communities to design and implement context-appropriate solutions. Ensuring both the scale and effectiveness of adaptation finance should therefore be a central topic of discussion across both adaptation and finance negotiation tracks. This includes the Work Programme on Article 9 and discussions under Article 2.1(c), aligning financial flows with climate-resilient development. Strengthening these discussions alongside the BAR can help ensure that adaptation finance commitments translate into accessible, equitable, and impactful support for those on the frontlines of climate change.

Conclusion

The agreement on the adaptation indicators represents an important first step towards establishing a framework to measure progress towards the GGA. The BAR will play a key role in strengthening coherence across adaptation-related processes and accelerating the implementation of the GGA, including by supporting adaptation planning, finance, implementation and accountability in connection with NAPs and NDCs. Ultimately, the success of the GGA will depend on mobilising adequate finance, strengthening knowledge sharing and ensuring the inclusion of various vulnerable and marginalised groups. Leading up to COP31, it will be crucial for the Netherlands to demonstrate that these commitments can be translated into concrete and meaningful action.