

Assessing loss and damage: methodological challenges and prospects

3rd December 2023, 11.00-12.30pm

Location: Africa Pavilion, Opportunity Petal, Dubai Expo Centre

Organized by: Economic Commission for Africa and African Union
Development Agency-NEPAD (AUDA-NEPAD), UN Regional
Commissions?

Concept Note

Background

“Loss and damage”, the harms inflicted by climate change that go beyond what people can adapt to, refers to a range of impacts including lost lives; monetary costs from the destruction of infrastructure, buildings, crops and other property; loss of ecosystems and cultures, and so on. Causes of losses and damages include rapid and slow onset extremes of temperature and precipitation such as floods, droughts, cyclones, sea level rise, ocean acidification and so on. Such events are becoming more frequent and intense in Africa.

While no country is immune from loss and damage, the concern with addressing the irreversible climate impacts is most pronounced in low-income countries. Because Africa has contributed the least GHG emissions, is most vulnerable to the impacts of anthropogenic climate change and has the least resources to adapt to climate impacts, loss and damage is framed as a climate justice issue in the continent.

After nearly 3 decades of negotiation, COP27 reached an historic agreement to create and operationalize a fund to help lower-income countries respond to and recover from climate change induced losses and damages. The Cop mandated a transitional committee to make recommendations to COP28 on the size of the fund, modalities for payments into the fund, modalities for assessing and compensating loss and damage, and related practicalities. However, the measurement of loss and damage will entail valuations of property damage, livelihood loss, ecosystem alteration as well as non-economic losses such as loss of life, cultural, spiritual and historical damages. Valuation of loss and damage is also further complicated by the inadequacies of attribution science, and the need to address climate change disasters that may have multiple causes. The minimization of losses and damages through appropriate, timely and well-designed adaptation and mitigation actions is also a key consideration in the operationalization of the fund. How will loss and damage valuation be related to support for adaptation will therefore be a crucial issue.

Objective

This event seeks to contribute African perspectives to the development of globally valid methods of assessing loss and damage, modalities for compensating losses and damages, and linkages between early warning systems and other climate response measures and loss and damage. The session will bring together a panel of African climate scientists, climate finance experts, policy analysts, negotiators and civil society leaders to review progress in the global loss and damage discourse; discuss best approaches to the operationalization of the loss and damage fund; modalities for inclusive participation of African institutions and experts in the fund; linkages between the fund and

other investments in climate action such as climate resilient infrastructure and early warning systems and other ways of minimizing losses and damages.

Agenda

Moderator: James Murombedzi ACPC

Panellists

H.E. Josefa Sacko	Commissioner ARBE, AUC (TBC)
Akinwumi Adesina	President AfDB (TBC)
Claver Gatete	ES UNECA
Ephraim Shitima	Chair, AGN
Yusuf Daya	Director, AU/AfCFTA Relations and Trade Policy, Afreximbank
Joseph Instiful	GCF

Alternative Panel

Nasim Ouleman	UNECA/TCND
Joseph Instiful	GCF
Ernest Affiesimama	WMO
Ephraim Shitima	AGN
Mithika Mwenda	PACJA