



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA



LLDC3
3rd United Nations
Conference on the
Landlocked Developing
Countries



High-level Meeting of the Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs) on “Addressing unique climate vulnerability of LLDCs through partnerships“

Convened by the Republic of Botswana in its capacity as the Chair of LLDCs, jointly with UN-OHRLLS

Date and Time: 2 December 2023; 10:00-11:30am

**Venue: Venue: Meeting Room: MR7
Expo City, Dubai, United Arab Emirates**

On the margins of the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference or Conference of the Parties of the UNFCCC (COP28)

Draft Concept note.

Introduction and background

The 32 landlocked developing countries (16 of which are in Africa, and 17 of which are also LDCs) have a combined population of more than 570 million, representing around 7 per cent of the global population. They are estimated to account for only about 2% of total world CO₂ emissions in 2021 and their per capita CO₂ emissions are less than a third of the world average. However, they are on the frontline of the climate crisis.

The landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) are facing heightened exposure to an increasing number of climate-related disasters, such as droughts, desertification, floods, cyclones, and landslides. Between 2012 and 2022, 447 climate-related disasters affected 170 million people across the LLDCs—double the global average across the same time period. Droughts and floods have affected tens of millions of people annually in the LLDCs in recent years, as many as 46 million people in 2022 alone.

Far from oceans, the LLDCs are disproportionately situated in internal dry regions where hyper-arid, semi-arid and arid conditions prevail. Approximately 54 per cent of LLDCs' land is classified as dryland and 60 per cent of their total population is located in these drylands with largest population living in dryland is found in the Sahel region. These conditions are set to worsen as a result of climate change.

LLDCs face the common challenge of land degradation. Degraded land is less able to support the health and livelihoods of rural communities, smallholder farmers and poor populations who depend on it, leading to rising poverty, food insecurity and even forced or managed displacement.

The LLDCs are also among the most water-stressed countries and face continuing desertification. In 2020 (the latest year for which data is available), the per capita availability of renewable internal freshwater resources in the LLDCs was only 60 per cent of the world average.¹ Many LLDCs are forecast to face high-to-extremely-high water stress and are projected to be among the most water-stressed countries in the world by 2050.

The LLDCs are dependent upon climate-sensitive resources – such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, water, and fisheries – for the livelihoods of their population. More than 55% of their labour force works in agriculture, with farmers predominantly engaging in rain-fed agriculture. Desertification and recurrent droughts undermine these activities, affecting food security, productivity, livelihoods, and the economy.

All the LLDCs depend upon complex transit routes for their access to international markets. These transit systems are put under duress by extreme weather events -- for instance, the stress of heat, water, flood or snow can seriously damage road surfaces. When transport infrastructure is impacted, transit trade is slowed or halted, putting further constraints on the ability of these countries to compete in global markets.

Many LLDCs also face distinct climate-related challenges associated with their geographical location in internal mountainous regions. Rising temperatures are causing rapid deglaciation, resulting in landslides, flash floods, which negatively impacts water resources. Over the long term, threats from this melting include stressed water supplies – impacting agricultural irrigation, fisheries, and navigation.

In its Special Report on Climate Change and Land, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) highlighted that since the pre-industrial period, land surface air temperatures have risen nearly twice as much as the global average. These challenges have far-reaching consequences, especially for LLDCs, as they trigger a vicious circle of food-water-energy insecurity, worsening poverty and increased risk of conflicts.

These structural vulnerabilities, high exposure to climate related natural disasters, combined with the lack of resilience and adaptive capacity, and limited fiscal space expose the LLDCs disproportionately to the effects of climate change. These effects are worsening, as LLDCs are confronted with more frequent extreme weather events, such as storms, cyclones, and flooding. Added to this is an increased frequency of prolonged heat waves and disturbances in rainfall patterns.

With continued failures at the global level to meet the promises made in Paris at COP21, the latest information tells us that the world is heading for a 2.7 degree rise in temperature, not 1.5. For the LLDCs, that 1.2-degree difference has become an existential threat to long-term prospects for economic development.

¹ FAOSTAT, 2023

It is vital to act now by investing in adaptation and mitigation in order to ultimately reverse the effects of climate change.

The 6th Assessment Report of the IPCC suggests that limiting warming to 1.5°C requires rapid and thorough GHG emissions reductions across all sectors, with global GHG emissions peaking before 2025, reducing 43% of emissions by 2030 and reaching net zero CO₂ emissions by 2050. Thus, significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions is indisputable and urgent.

Achieving this transition to a 1.5 °C world requires the urgent mobilization of trillions of dollars. Studies estimate the cost to be between \$1.5 trillion and \$5.9 trillion annually through 2030.

The LLDCs have limited institutional, human capacity and financial resources to tackle the challenges arising from the climate crisis. Impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the geopolitical tensions have further stressed their fiscal space and reduced their climate change adaptation capacity.

The LLDCs urgently require access to adequate, predictable, and concessional resources from the international community. The long-awaited promise to raise at least US\$100 billion every year in climate finance to support developing countries' transition to low carbon and climate resilient development pathways is urgently needed.

A 50:50 balance between adaptation and mitigation is critically important for LLDCs and doubling adaptation finance to LLDCs must be delivered by 2025. LLDCs also need increased access to concessional and grants-based financing. The Global Commission on Adaptation estimates that investing \$1.8 trillion between 2020 and 2030 could generate \$7.1 trillion in total net benefits².

The Loss and Damage Fund must be operationalized promptly and adequately capitalized to help LLDCs address their persistent vulnerability to climate change. The loss and damage need for developing countries are estimated to be up to \$580 billion annually by 2030, and \$1.7 trillion annually by 2050.³ This Fund must be operationalized with adequate funding at COP28.

LLDCs also require affordable technologies to strengthen adaptation in agriculture and water sectors; build resilient infrastructure in particular roads; and accelerate energy transition. They also need capacity building support to identify and prepare bankable projects to secure financial resources for climate change adaptation and mitigation needs and national capacities to monitor progress that they are making on climate action.

Objectives

This event will deliberate on the impacts of climate challenge faced by LLDCs and identify their needs to adapt and mitigate the impacts. Representatives of the LLDCs, transit countries, development partners and other stakeholders will share their experiences, good practices and recommendations to accelerate climate change adaptation and mitigation action to foster sustainable development in LLDCs.

² <https://www.wri.org/technical-perspectives/actions-vulnerable-countries-need-un-climate-summit>

³ Integrated Assessment for Identifying Climate Finance Needs for Loss and Damage: A Critical Review

Participants

Heads of State and Government, Ministers, Heads of Delegation, and climate experts from 32 LLDCs, transit countries, development partners and other stakeholders at the COP28.

Outcome

The outcome of this meeting will be the agreed common position of the Group of LLDCs on climate change issues. The event will also make important contributions to the next ten-year Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries to be adopted at the Third United Nations Conference on the Landlocked Developing Countries to in Kigali, Rwanda from 18-21 June 2024.

For further information, please contact Ms. Lorato L. Motsumi loratolm@gmail.com and Mr. Abdul Alim alim1@un.org.