

UNDERSTANDING THE GLOBAL GOAL ON ADAPTATION: THE ROAD FROM DUBAI TO BELÉM

The **Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA)** was established by the Paris Agreement ([1/CP.21, Article 7](#)) as a global goal of enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience, and reducing vulnerability to climate change, with a view to contributing to sustainable development and ensuring an adequate adaptation response in the context of the temperature goal.

Operationalization of the GGA began with a two-year Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme launched at COP26 ([7/CMA.3](#)). It continued with the adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience at COP28 and the launch of another two-year work programme, the UAE-Belém work programme 2024-2025 ([2/CMA.5](#)).

ADAPTATION IS A KEY GLOBAL CHALLENGE FACED BY ALL

In November 2024, at the midpoint of this new work programme, **Parties came together at COP29/CMA6 in Baku, Azerbaijan, to negotiate important elements for 2025 and beyond**. Key areas of the negotiations included the following:

- The process of indicator development and timeline for the work up to COP30/CMA7
- Guidance to the Chairs of the SBs and experts on methodologies, approaches, and criteria
- Experts' mandate to develop new indicators
- Transparency of the work of the experts
- Expected outcome and outputs of UAE-Belém work programme (size and nature of indicator list, mode and scope of indicator aggregation, any additional outputs)
- Collaboration between experts groups and linkages or synergies across targets
- Representation of regions and groups as well as gender balance among the expert groups



This technical briefing offers a concise overview of the current state of GGA negotiations after COP29 in November 2024, including summarized information on how Parties, experts, and other actors are working to develop indicators and address a range of cross-cutting and emerging issues.

Operationalizing the GGA is a technical as well as political task, and different actors are playing different roles towards accomplishing it. Parties drive the negotiation process, but the convened experts as well as constituted bodies, especially the Adaptation Committee (AC), have supported or are supporting the technical work.

As a **standing agenda item**, the GGA will continue to be negotiated beyond CMA7 in Belém, including at SB64, CMA8, and subsequent sessions.

COP: Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC

CMA: Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement

SBs: Subsidiary Bodies, including the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI)

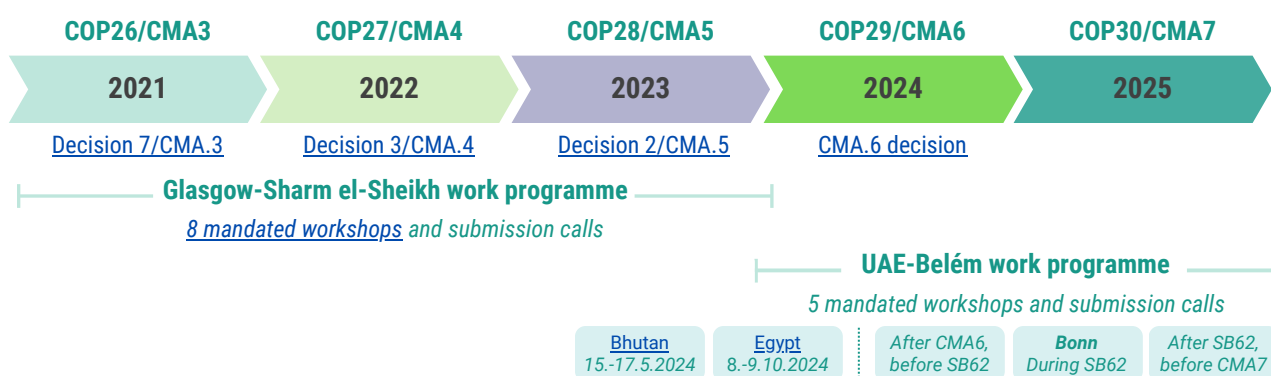
Defining the concept of adaptation

Adaptation describes the process of “**adjustment to actual or expected climate change** and its effects in order to moderate harm or take advantage of beneficial opportunities” (IPCC AR6 WGII) as well as the outcome of said process. It can pertain to biophysical, economic, socio-cultural, or environmental practices, methods, or assets, and take place in an **incremental or a transformational** manner. Other characteristics of adaptation action include timing (anticipatory, concurrent, reactive), intent (autonomous or planned), scope (local, national, regional, global), and ownership (public, private).

I. The state of play: After Baku, before Belém

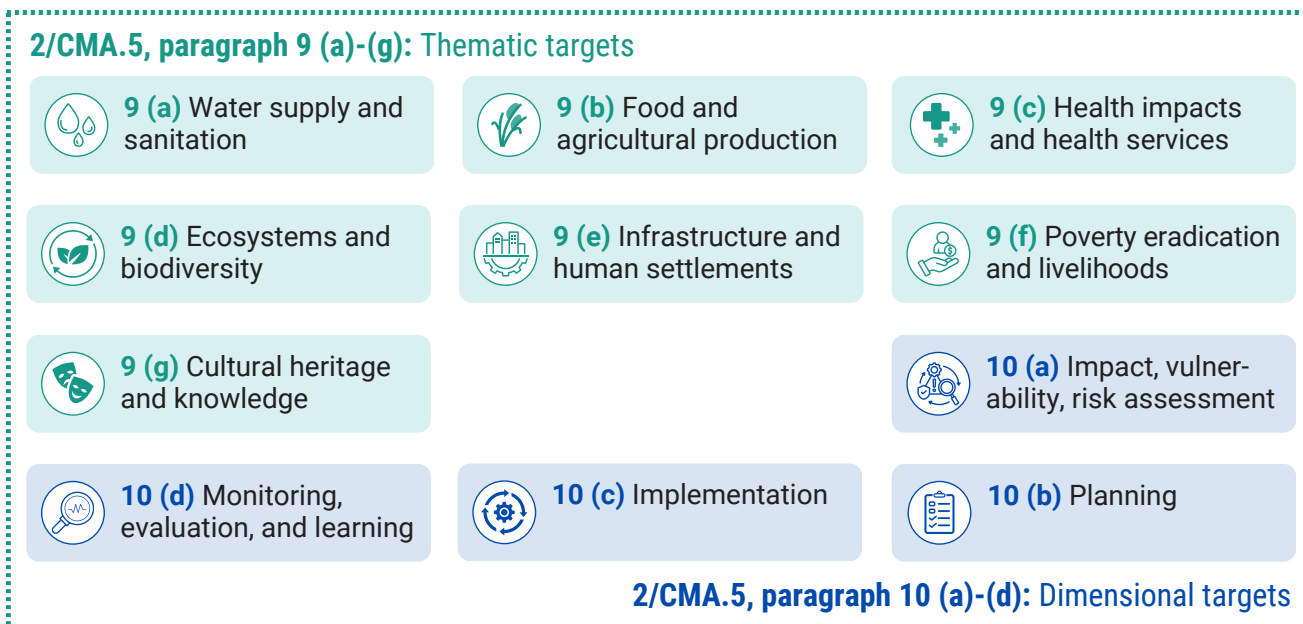
COP28 saw the adoption of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience (hereinafter referred to as “GGA Framework”), which gives shape to the GGA through the establishment of **seven thematic and four dimensional targets**. As outlined above, a second work programme on the GGA was launched by Parties as part of the GGA Framework. After initial workshops in Bhutan and Egypt in 2024 and SB60 in June 2024, Parties have now agreed on the **timeline for the remainder of the UAE-Belém work programme in 2025 up to CMA7**, which will take place in Belém, Brazil, in November 2025.

Figure 1: Timeline of the GGA work programmes



As per the CMA6 decision, the GGA Framework is due for **review after the second Global Stocktake** in 2028, allowing Parties to include learnings from the application of indicators and assessment of progress towards the targets. The terms of reference for the review are yet to be developed, and Parties decided to initiate deliberations on this after the completion of the UAE-Belém work programme, including through the Baku high-level dialogue on adaptation.

Figure 2: Targets under the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience



II. Developing indicators for the GGA



78 experts convened



Compilation of **≈ 10,000 indicators**

The UAE-Belém work programme on indicators aims to identify (and, as needed, develop) **indicators and potential quantified elements "for measuring progress achieved towards the targets."** After SB60, a mapping and compilation of existing indicators was conducted based on [submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders](#) (5,304 indicators) and [indicators reported in Parties' national reports and communications](#) compiled by the AC (4,639 indicators).

The SB Chairs [convened 78 experts](#) across all targets to assist in the technical work, including reviewing and refining this compilation and mapping of indicators. The experts reviewed and evaluated the indicators based on the criteria agreed on at SB60, followed by an October 2024 workshop that connected experts and Parties.

Based on the [refined indicator mapping published after the October workshop](#), experts will work to further refine and develop indicators immediately following CMA6. They will produce a consolidated list of indicator options for Parties and submit technical reports, including recommendations on the use of the indicators, to be issued no later than four weeks prior to SB62 (i.e., May 18, 2025).

Expected final outcome in Belém

As decided at CMA6, **the final outcome of this work programme may include the following:**

- A **manageable set of no more than 100 indicators** that (a) are globally applicable, (b) constitute a menu that captures various contexts of adaptation action, and (c) enable assessment of progress towards the targets and their different components.
- Information on the **intended purpose of and potential data sources** for the indicators.
- A **source of input** for the technical phase of future Global Stocktakes.

Figure 3: Criteria for the refinement of GGA indicators

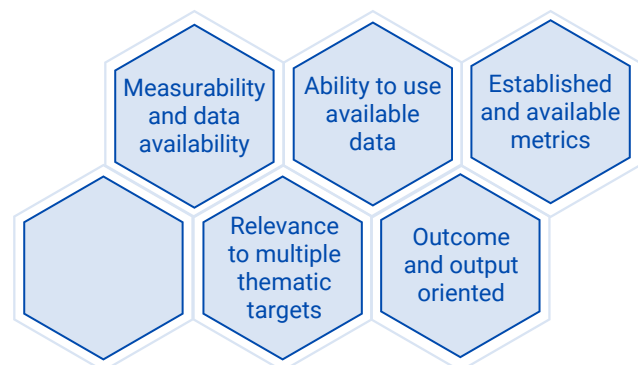
SB60 criteria for indicator mapping

(FCCC/SBSTA/2024/7, para. 41, and FCCC/SBI/2024/13, para 79)

- Relevance to measuring progress
- Specific relevance to adaptation
- Quantitative or qualitative
- Data availability
- Ability to reflect regional, national, and local circumstances
- Applicability across different contexts
- Ease of interpretation
- Clarity of associated methodologies across different contexts
- Ability to be aggregated and disaggregated
- Basis on best available science
- Basis on traditional, Indigenous, and local knowledge

Additional criteria for possible consideration

(CMA.6 decision, paragraph 17)



Parties agreed that the **key criteria for the indicators is their specific relevance to adaptation**. However, they also invited the experts to consider the other criteria presented here.

III. Cross-cutting and emerging aspects

While targets and indicators are at the core of the GGA framework, the negotiations and technical discussions have also focused on a range of cross-cutting aspects. This includes, inter alia, means of implementation; linkages to other processes, particularly the Global Stocktake (GST) and National Adaptation Plans (NAPs); the role of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC); and a range of cross-cutting considerations relevant to several or all of the targets.

In addition, emerging concepts such as transformational and transboundary adaptation could be explored by Parties and through the work of the Secretariat, constituted bodies, and experts.

Mol Means of implementation

Developing country Parties have highlighted the **need for elevating adaptation and the inadequacy of current adaptation finance in terms of scale and scope**. CMA5 recognized the crucial role of means of implementation for the implementation of the GGA Framework, and CMA6 decided that the final outcome of the UAE-Belém work programme should include, where applicable, **quantitative as well as qualitative indicators for enabling factors for the implementation of adaptation action, including means of implementation** (comprising finance, technology transfer, capacity-building). These indicators for enabling factors are to be developed, as needed, or identified from the compilation and mapping.

GST Global Stocktake

CMA6 decided that the final outcome of the UAE-Belém work programme should constitute **a source of input to the technical phase of the GST**, by specifying a way to structure and inform the assessment of progress in adaptation. The second GST is scheduled for 2028, followed by future GSTs every five years thereafter to assess collective progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement.

NAPs National Adaptation Plans

As noted in the CMA6 decision, **NAPs are one of the important channels via which the targets could be achieved**. However, there is a need to provide guidance to Parties on how to integrate the targets and indicators into their NAPs and particularly the monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) components, which would be especially relevant for targets 10 (b) and (d). The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) is currently in the process of revising its NAP technical guidelines, which were originally developed in 2012, and intends to structure the MEL section of the revised technical guidelines to align with the GGA targets.

IPCC Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

As the **United Nations body for assessing science related to climate change**, the IPCC has been invited to collaborate with the SBSTA Chair to organize a special event at SB62 to provide an update on the work of IPCC Working Group II, which assesses climate impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation options. The CMA6 decision also references the upcoming revision of the “IPCC Technical Guidelines for Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Adaptations” including adaptation indicators, metrics, and methodologies, which will be published as a separate product in the IPCC’s seventh assessment cycle.

In addition to the specific elements and processes listed above, there are also **broader cross-cutting considerations relevant to several or all of the targets**, as well as a need to enhance collaboration and synergies across the thematic as well as dimensional targets. The CMA5 and CMA6 decisions outline a wide range of such considerations:

- Gender (2/CMA.5, para 13, CMA6, para 21)
- Participatory and fully transparent approaches (2/CMA.5, para 13; CMA6, para 21)
- Human rights approaches (2/CMA.5, para 13; CMA6, para 21)
- Intergenerational equity (2/CMA.5, para 13)
- Social justice (2/CMA.5, para 13)
- Vulnerable ecosystems, groups, and communities (2/CMA.5, para 13)
- Children, youth, and persons with disabilities (2/CMA.5, para 13; CMA6, para 21)
- Education and empowerment (2/CMA.5, para 23; CMA6, para 21)
- Indigenous, local, and traditional knowledge systems (2/CMA.5, para 14; CMA6, para 15)
- Science-based and guided by best available science (2/CMA.5, para 14; CMA6, para 35)
- Social inclusion (CMA6, para 21)
- Indigenous Peoples (CMA6, para 21)
- Migrants (CMA6, para 21)
- Health of children and young people (CMA6, para 21)

Other cross-cutting areas for consideration could include the **role of constituted bodies and other entities**, including the AC, the LEG, the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP), and the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP); the **potential role of non-Party stakeholders** and other actors, such as official statistical bodies; **dialogue between Parties, experts, and other stakeholders**; and the **exchange of knowledge, experience, information, and best practices** pertaining to the targets (for example, at adaptation forums or regional climate weeks).

Figure 4: Emerging concepts related to the GGA

Transboundary adaptation

While transboundary adaptation is not explicitly referred to in the CMA6 decision, Parties at CMA5 recognized that **climate change impacts are often transboundary in nature** and may involve complex, cascading risks. Due to this transboundary nature of impacts, there is also a need to consider transboundary adaptation actions (such as climate-informed transboundary management approaches) as well as knowledge-sharing and international cooperation.

Transboundary adaptation was discussed to an extent [during the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme](#) in connection to transformational adaptation and the related question of **global commons** (high seas, outer space, atmosphere, and Antarctica). However, these discussions remained open-ended and have so far not been explicitly incorporated into the GGA Framework.

Transformational adaptation

The concept of transformational adaptation has been a topic of discussions related to the GGA at least since the beginning of the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme in 2022.

The 2024 [technical paper on transformational adaptation](#) prepared by the Secretariat outlines the **fundamental dimensions of transformational change** as “depth of deliberate change, limits of change, scope/scale of deliberate change, speed of change, and adaptive sustainability,” with relevance as a additional dimension specific to MEL and/or implementation.

At CMA6, Parties decided to take note of the technical paper and continue considerations of it at SB62, while also requesting the Secretariat to prepare a reader-friendly summary in all six official languages by April 2025.

IV. The path ahead: 2025 and beyond

The CMA6 decision at the midpoint of the UAE-Belém work programme presents **a step forward towards fully operationalizing and implementing the GGA framework**, providing a timeline and structure for work to be conducted in 2025.

Beyond the work of the experts ahead of SB62, the three workshops, and the submission call for Parties on paragraph 38 of 2/CMA.5, the CMA6 decision also established the **Baku high-level dialogue on adaptation**, which will be convened on the margins of each CMA session by the Presidents of that session and of the previous session, starting with CMA7.

The decision also invites the **organization of regular dialogues and workshops**, as needed, throughout 2025 to review the progress of the refinement and development of the indicators, including for means of implementation.

With SB62 and CMA7 on the horizon, **the political and technical work of implementing the GGA Framework** and giving life to the GGA and its targets is set to continue over the next months, involving Parties, experts, and other actors.

Key areas of negotiation and technical work for 2025 could include the following:

Finalization of indicators: As outlined above, the refinement and development of indicators will continue throughout 2025, with a final list of indicators to be adopted at CMA7. The experts are invited to ensure that they apply common approaches and/or methodologies, collaborate across the targets to identify synergies, and prioritize global indicators that reflect overarching trends and common challenges. Additional dialogues and workshops might take place in 2025 to review progress on this work.

2/CMA.5 paragraph 38 (a-e): Parties at CMA6 launched the Baku Adaptation Road Map, which will support the implementation of elements in this paragraph, and requested the Subsidiary Bodies to continue considerations at SB62 as well as to develop modalities for work under the Road Map. Parties are also invited to submit their views on paragraph 38 by March 31, 2025.

Reporting on progress towards the targets: The CMA6 decision reiterates that no additional reporting burden should be placed on Parties through implementing the GGA Framework, and that reporting on the indicators is voluntary. It also calls on Parties to update their adaptation communications and their biennial transparency reports taking into account the GGA Framework.

Organizational profile

SLYCAN Trust is a non-profit think tank working on climate change, sustainable development, climate finance, risk management, entrepreneurship, biodiversity and ecosystem conservation, animal welfare, and social justice including gender and youth empowerment. Our work spans the national, regional, and global level from policy analysis and evidence-based research to capacity-building, technical support provision, and on-the-ground implementation.



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