

Loss and damage issues at COP29: Parties to continue consideration in 2025

Kuala Lumpur, 3 Dec (TWN): Loss and damage-related issues at the Baku climate talks were not politically significant at COP29 compared to previous COPs in Madrid (2019), Glasgow (2021), Sharm El Sheikh (2022), and Dubai (2023).

Parties agreed to continue consideration of loss and damage issues next year, in 2025.

This is largely because the major effort undertaken by developing countries beginning in 2013 in Warsaw to establish loss and damage as a major pillar of work in the multilateral climate regime by creating various constituted bodies had largely succeeded: between 2013-2016, the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) with its Executive Committee was established and operationalized; between 2019-2023, the Santiago network with its Advisory Board and secretariat was established and institutionalized; and between 2021-2023, the Loss and Damage Fund (LDF) with its Board and secretariat was established and set up.

The focus for developing countries in Baku relating to loss and damage was to shift to supporting the implementation by these bodies of their respective mandates and functions and to ensure that they act in a coordinated and complementary manner.

There were two main agenda items related to loss and damage at COP29: (1) the consideration of the 2024 joint annual report of the WIM Executive Committee and the Santiago network Advisory Board; and (2) the third WIM Review. During the negotiations in the first week of COP29, these two agenda items were discussed together because of their close connection with each other.

The **Group of 77 (G77)** and **China** had put forward some proposals relating to enhancing implementation, coordination and complementarity, accessibility and outreach, as well as finance and other support entering into the negotiations at COP29. These included, for example, mandating the WIM Executive Committee to produce a global report on the state of play of loss and damage, and enhance the accessibility of its knowledge products through language translations; enhancing the role of national loss and damage contact points; ensuring that the Santiago network secretariat will have regional offices; requesting the loss and damage-related institutions (the WIM ExCom, the Santiago network, and the LDF) to coordinate and work together, and having strengthened language on loss and damage financing.

The developed countries mainly wanted the conversation to focus on coordination and complementarity, and on accessibility and outreach.

However, the Parties were not able to have substantive negotiations on these issues and were not able to conclude their substantive consideration of actions to be taken under these agenda items.

A key issue that could not be resolved was the push by the **African Group** for any decision coming out of the consideration of these agenda items to include a request from the COP and the CMA (Conference of Parties to the Paris Agreement) to the Santiago network Advisory Board to reassess its decision taken at its first meeting in March 2024, to select Geneva to be the host city for the secretariat of the Santiago network and for the Advisory Board to then report to the COP/CMA at COP30 on its reconsideration of such decision.

The African Group argued that the Advisory Board did not comply with the mandate that was given to it by the COP/CMA at COP28 to make such decision based on a cost-benefit analysis to be provided by the Santiago network's host agencies (United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDDDR) and United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) on where the secretariat should be located, such that on procedural and accountability grounds, the Advisory Board should hence be asked to reassess its decision.

Other Parties and groups of Parties argued that the

COP/CMA should not reopen the Advisory Board's decision as it had fulfilled its delegated authority to duly consider the cost-benefit analysis when making its decision.

[At its first meeting in Geneva in March 2024, the Advisory Board members had critiqued the host agencies' cost-benefit analysis as being methodologically flawed as it did not comply with the mandate provided by the COP/CMA because the report incorporated criteria that were not referred to by the COP/CMA (such as time zones and ease of access) that in effect virtually automatically ruled out Latin American and Asia-Pacific cities from being considered as host cities. The Advisory Board then considered that the host agencies' cost-benefit analysis was not useful for their discussion and decided instead to consider whether there were other factors that they could look at in order to make their decision. Switzerland had officially put forward their offer to host the Santiago network secretariat in Geneva, pledging as part of such offer approximately more than US\$2 million to cover the costs of hosting the secretariat. As there were no other offers on the table, the Advisory Board took a consensus decision to accept the Swiss offer and decided to select Geneva to be the host city for the Santiago network secretariat.]

Since no major substantive issues under these agenda items could be negotiated nor resolved in the course of the first week and the beginning of the second week, the Parties [decided](#) to continue their consideration of these agenda items at the subsidiary bodies' session in Bonn in June 2025.