

**Submission by the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)  
on the Global Stocktake (Agenda item 6 of the APA)**

30 September, 2017

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The Global Stocktake (hereinafter referred to as “GST”) is a periodical opportunity to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Paris Agreement and its long-term goals. The outcome of the GST should lead to enhanced actions and support by Parties, and international cooperation for climate action.

We are submitting our views on agenda item 6 of the Ad-Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA), “Matters relating to the global stocktake referred to in Article 14 of the Paris Agreement”, focusing on the *development of the modalities* of the GST. The modalities of the GST, including the framework, timeline and output, should be developed in a manner that helps to ensure the scientific integrity of the process and outcome of the Paris Agreement. In this regard, we are of the view that the experiences and lessons learned from the 2013–2015 review<sup>1</sup> could aid in designing the modality of the GST, with its facilitative, open and inclusive nature. The review, with its scope to examine the overall progress towards the long-term global goal, in effect, covers adaptation and means of implementation, in addition to mitigation<sup>2</sup>. Similarly, the GST will assess the collective progress towards the long-term goals on mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation and support. In designing the modalities of the GST, the key difference between the review and the GST should be taken into account, namely that the mandate of the GST was to inform Parties in updating and enhancing their actions, while the review had no specific mandate to provide information for individual actions.

**1. Overall Framework: Two Processes**

The GST should be conducted in a **technical process** and a **political process**. These two processes should be bridged by a **SBSTA and SBI joint contact group (JCG hereafter)**, which provides a negotiating space under the political process, as well as guiding an expert dialogue under the technical process (see Figure 1). The primary aim of the technical process is to improve the scientific and technical understanding of the collective progress, and that of the political

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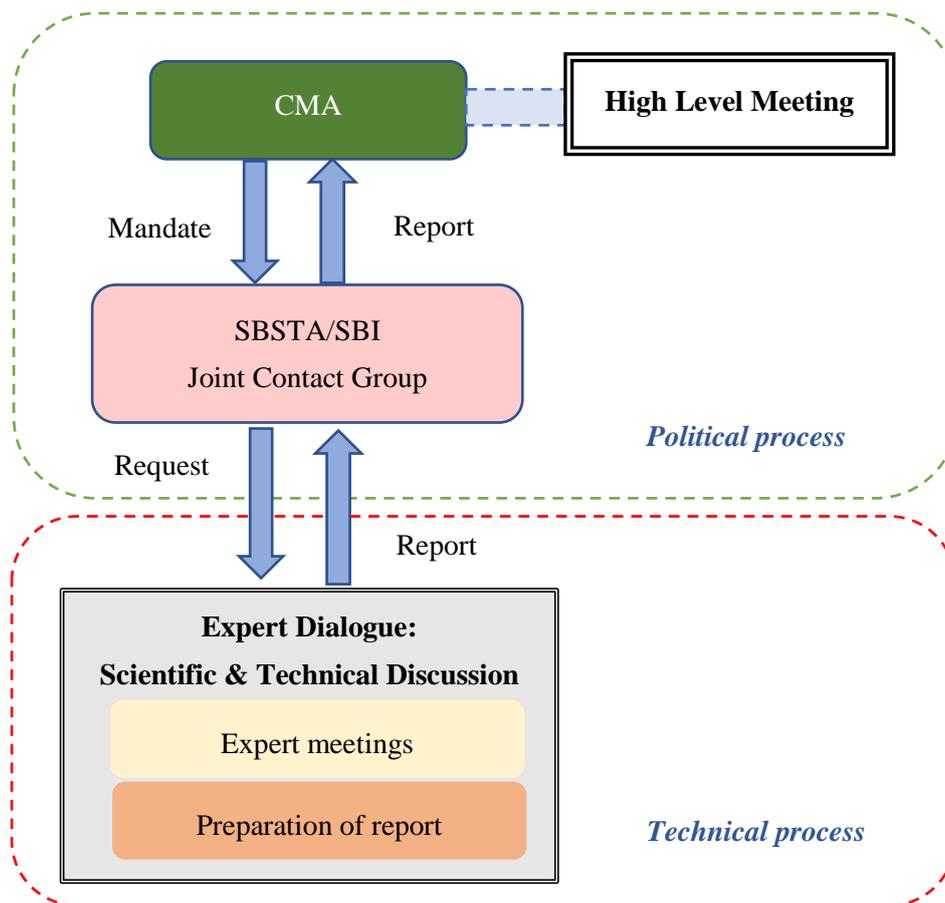
<sup>1</sup> See the advice by the SBSTA at its 45<sup>th</sup> session on how the assessments of the IPCC can inform the GST, Paragraph 9 (a)-(e) of FCCC/SBSTA/2016/L.24. <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/sbsta/eng/l24.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> The scope of the review included 1) the adequacy of the long-term global goal in the light of the ultimate objective of the Convention and 2) the overall progress towards achieving the long-term global goal, including a consideration of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention. Progress on mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation were considered under the second scope. The IPCC provided major inputs but bodies including the Adaptation Committee, Green Climate Fund, Standing Committee on Finance, Technology Executive Committee, Climate Technology Centre and Network and other international and regional organizations provided inputs.

process is to increase awareness, enhance momentum, and boost political engagement on the outcome of the GST, leading to enhanced commitments and actions by the Parties. Throughout the entire GST cycle, general support from the UNFCCC secretariat and observers will also be essential.

- **Technical process: The expert dialogue**, which should be a similar structure as the Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) on the 2013–2015 review (see the Box 1 below), guided by the **JCG** and facilitated by co-facilitators, provides a forum for scientific, objective and technical discussions on the GST. While granting co-facilitators discretion over the selection of the experts, experts mainly from IPCC, UNFCCC bodies, and other international organisations should make presentations and answer questions from Parties. A technical report should be developed as a critical output from the technical process for the subsequent political process.
- **Political process**: In conjunction with the COP/CMA, the CMA should convene a high-level meeting with the attendance of ministers and heads of delegations. Prior to the high-level meeting, the JCG should consider the technical report from the expert dialogue (see details in section 6 below), compile the potential/key discussion points and develop a draft CMA decision. Based on these outputs from the JCG and delegated by the CMA, the discussion at the high-level meeting will aim to enhance in-depth understanding of the current collective progress and to pull out political commitments toward collective and individual actions of Parties. CMA should consider the technical report and the summary of the high-level meeting and adopt a decision.

**Figure 1: Overall Structure**



**Box 1 Lessons learnt from the 2013–2015 review:**

**Separation of technical discussions and negotiations**

In the review, a SED was established where experts were invited to make presentations and answer questions from Parties. The JCG provided the space for negotiations, assisted the COP in conducting the review, gave guidance to the SED and considered the outcome of the review, based on the reports from the SED. This separation of technical discussions from negotiation led the SED to be scientific, technical and objective, serving as an interface between science and policy.

**2. Being Facilitative and Inclusive:** As with the SED, the expert dialogue of the GST should also be held *in-session* with SBs, open to Parties, observers and those outside the venue using a webcast, for inclusive, open and transparent discussions. Providing an opportunity for Parties and observers to make additional inputs through submissions, as appropriate, will increase the Parties' ownership of the work and outputs.

**3. Adequacy of Discussion Time:** Ensuring the selection of two co-facilitators prior to the start of the technical process will help early preparation and securing of adequate time for presentations and discussions. **A cut-off date for inputs should be set to ensure adequate time to consider them, and prepare and consider the report before the high-level meeting.** Any inputs that cannot be considered adequately due to timing of availability should be taken up in the following cycle of the GST as necessary. The expert dialogue could take up inputs as they become available<sup>3</sup>, with consideration given to the effective organisation of the dialogue, and flexibility given to the co-facilitators and secretariat in organising when and which inputs are taken up in the expert dialogue.

**4. Focused discussions:** The co-facilitators of the expert dialogue are expected to work closely with presiding officers of the relevant bodies so that quality and timely inputs are provided, leading to focused discussions. Similar to the SED, guiding questions should be developed and shared on-line prior to the meetings. Experts should be invited to make focused and tailored presentations on their inputs relevant to the GST. Parties would then ask questions to the experts to enhance their understanding.

## **5. Timeline**

While the efficiency of the entire GST process should be taken into consideration, **securing enough time for each cycle of the GST is important** to ensure that all essential inputs are considered without the pressure of holding additional meetings outside the regular UNFCCC sessions, and so that Parties gain ownership to the process.

The publication of the IPCC assessment report should be the indication of kicking off the GST process, following the positive experience of the 2013–2015 review.<sup>4</sup> Thus, **for the first GST in 2023, the process should start in 2021** after the expected release of the IPCC 6<sup>th</sup> assessment reports. As for the following cycles of the GST, although it is recommended to start at least two SB sessions before the conclusion of each GST cycle, the timing of launching the process could vary subject to availability of information, such as the publication of reports from the IPCC.<sup>5</sup> The expert dialogues are expected to take place twice a year until 2023 during the regular sessions of the SBs. The JCG could take place as necessary, once or twice a year to prepare and observe the

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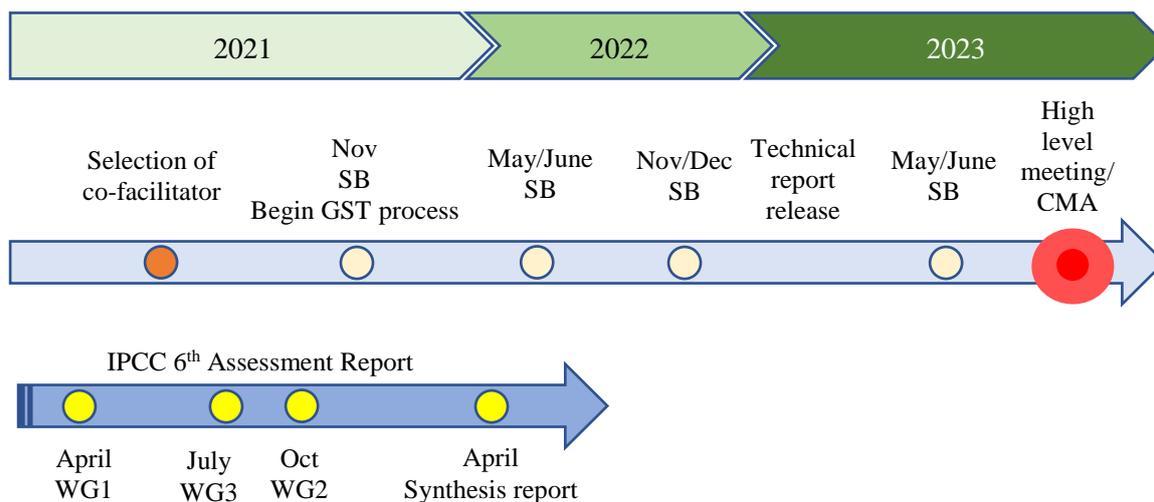
<sup>3</sup> An information note containing list of relevant inputs and the timing of their availability could be useful to efficiently plan and organise the GST.

<sup>4</sup> Reports of the IPCC 5<sup>th</sup> assessment cycle were published in 2013 and 2014, coinciding with the period of the 2013–2015 review and feeding in the best available science to the process.

<sup>5</sup> IPCC has responded to the request from UNFCCC to align their sixth assessment cycle with the GST process and decided to consider proposals for aligning their work in the seventh assessment cycle. Future cycles have not been fixed.

GST. A technical report should be produced by the May/June SB session in 2023, to give time for consideration prior to the high-level meeting and the CMA in 2023. A draft CMA decision should be prepared by the JCG and a political declaration and/or a summary on the discussion from the high-level meeting should be prepared during the CMA by the CMA presidencies<sup>6</sup> in 2023.

**Figure 2: Timeline**



## 6. Outputs

Before the beginning of the GST process, outputs from each cycle should be clarified, at least in part.

One of the first major outputs from the GST cycle should be **a final report based on the discussions and findings from the expert dialogue** during the technical process, which could be prepared by the co-facilitators, with support from the secretariat. To inform Parties, leaders and actors both inside and outside the process, the final report should include technical information on the process, sources of input, discussions, results of the assessment, key points, and a list of good and promising practices for both collective and individual actions. The report should avoid being negotiated *line-by-line* and should be developed prior to the first SB session of the year the GST is completed. In light of enhancing individual NDCs, Parties, at the JCG, should discuss concrete outcomes including the best practices and actions to be taken based on the findings from the expert dialogue so that the leaders are prepared for their discussions at the high-level meeting and conclusion of the GST later that year. During the technical process, a

<sup>6</sup> CMA President and the President-Designate could co-chair the high-level meeting.

report after each meeting could help Parties and observers to reflect on the discussions and prepare for the following meeting. A **political declaration and/or a summary on the discussion of the high-level meeting** should be prepared by the CMA presidencies to reflect the political momentum and commitments from leaders.

**A CMA decision should be another major output, which encourages Parties in enhancing their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).** The JCG should provide the report of the expert dialogue as well as key discussion points and a political recommendation. The outputs should provide useful information for Parties in enhancing their actions and support as well as international cooperation for climate action. It should also identify gaps and opportunities, good practices, and available measures to enhance individual and global response to climate change.

**Box 2 Lesson learnt from the 2013-2015 review: Clarity on outputs**

In the 2013-2015 review, the SED co-facilitators prepared reports after each meeting, helping Parties and observers reflect on the discussions and prepare for the following meeting. The final report, published seven months before the conclusion of the review, summarised the process in a technical and factual way and contained ten key messages which helped to inform Parties of the outcome of the review. This report was not negotiated, which saved Parties from long negotiations on the report and politicising it. Following the conclusion of the SED, many hours were spent negotiating whether a COP decision was needed or not. It was not clear what actions were supposed to be taken based on the outputs of the review, or what the outputs were. Due to its political stake, the review could not be concluded in SB and was brought up to the COP presidency and then dealt with at the ministerial meetings.