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UNPACKING THE UNFCCC GLOBAL STOCKTAKE for Ocean-Climate Action



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UNPACKING THE UNFCCC GLOBAL STOCKTAKE for Ocean-Climate Action

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1. Introduction

In 2015, the adoption of the UNFCCC’s Paris Agreement set in motion a series of national-level commitments – known as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) – in which countries communicate the flexible but ambitious actions that they plan to take to meet the goal to limit global warming to well below 2°C and pursue efforts to limit it to 1.5°C. The Paris Agreement sets out, among other actions, mitigation, adaptation and finance goals.

The Paris Agreement relies on the ambition mechanism or the concept of “ratcheting up” every five years with revised, increasingly ambitious commitments defined at a national level based on country context, capacity, and flexibility through the NDCs. The ambition mechanism is the tool defined to assess progress towards meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and to inform the next round of NDCs. The Global Stocktake (GST) is an avenue for informing and raising the ambition of countries’ NDCs. It could trigger additional public support and action on the ground. Understanding where ocean issues can be adequately included within the GST and then integrating them into this process will be critical factors to ensure the ocean’s contribution to achieving the goals of the Paris

Agreement is reflected, understood, and prioritized. Further, the IPCC SROCC (2019) indicates that over the 21st century, the ocean is projected to transition to unprecedented conditions with increased temperatures, greater upper ocean stratification, further acidification, oxygen decline and altered net primary production. Clear understanding and integration of the ocean’s role can encourage and leverage its widespread inclusion in domestic and international climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience policies.

The mitigation and adaptation potential of ocean and coastal ecosystems is ingrained in the Paris Agreement (Article 5.1¹ and Article 7.5², respectively). As the Earth’s largest long-term natural carbon sink, the ocean is the primary regulator of the global climate in a healthy system. Ocean-climate actions can serve as a part of the solution for climate change mitigation (protecting blue carbon ecosystems, ocean-based renewables, etc.) and climate change adaptation (sustainable fisheries for food security, etc.).³ Despite the clear interrelationship between climate change and the ocean, the ocean-climate nexus is still hardly accounted for in many UNFCCC discussions⁴,

1 **Article 5.1:** “Parties should take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1(d), of the Convention, including forests.” **Art 4, 1(d):** “promote sustainable management, and promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement, as appropriate, of sinks and reservoirs of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, including biomass, forests and oceans as well as other terrestrial, coastal and marine ecosystems.”

2 **Article 7.5:** “Parties acknowledge that adaptation action should follow a country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant socioeconomic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate.

3 Northrup, E., et al. 2021. Enhancing Nationally Determined Contributions: Opportunities for Ocean-Based Climate Action. <https://doi.org/10.46830/wriwp.20.00054>

4 UNFCCC Information Note: SBSTA Ocean and Climate Dialogue to Consider How to Strengthen Adaptation and Mitigation Action. https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/OD_InformationNote.pdf

even related to marine and coastal areas within national jurisdictions. The key driver for the Paris Agreement's ambition mechanism, the GST, is no exception. While the scope of the GST, like the Paris Agreement, relates to areas within the boundaries of national jurisdictions, it is crucial that ocean and coastal adaptation and mitigation measures in these areas are adequately reflected while assessing collective progress towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement under the GST. A broader understanding, however, of the whole ocean as part of the climate system and its role as climate regulator is indispensable when assessing the global carbon systems.

To that end, the paper intends to provide a broader understanding of this crucial interlinkage focusing on ocean and coastal and marine Nature-based Solutions (NbS) as part of the GST. The paper achieves this through the following sections:

- providing an overview of the Global Stocktake and Ambition Mechanism of the Paris Agreement,
- mapping the current GST structural decisions with how the ocean and coastal ecosystems can be reflected in each (type of reports that serve as inputs as well as the type of actions in the reports), and
- finally a detailed list of possible actions for those looking to do more on ensuring representation and reflection in the GST of ocean and coastal zone action and progress.

The paper purposefully does not address and include any discussion on the use of coastal and marine geoengineering activities as climate mitigation actions. It primarily reflects on the inclusion of NbS in the GST, and briefly mentions other mitigation actions such as renewable energy and emission reductions from the shipping sector.



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2. Understanding the Global Stocktake

a. The importance of the Global Stocktake

As a key part of the ambition cycle, the GST, together with NDCs and the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF), forms the ratcheting mechanism. The GST provides a global checkpoint between the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement and the short-term climate actions and commitments presented in NDCs. Article 14⁵ of the Paris Agreement established the GST, noting that it is to be undertaken in a comprehensive and facilitative manner on a 5-year cycle. Parties are expected to submit more ambitious NDCs every five years after the completion of each GST. The outcomes of the GST should support Parties in informing the enhancement of their current efforts at the national level as well as in enhancing international cooperation.

A robust and effective GST is crucial. The Paris Agreement entered into force in 2016, Parties will reflect on their experience in preparing and updating their first (and in some cases, their second) NDCs from 2015 and 2020/2021 ahead of the first GST to occur in 2023. That experience of NDC formulation and implementation will be valuable

for the GST to provide a basis for Parties to enhance and improve the next iteration of NDCs in 2025. The GST will serve as a moment of reflection to first understand where we are in terms of meeting the temperature goals and using the information provided to inform a way forward. Given the importance of the ocean-climate nexus to mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as informing risk and mobilizing finance, this relationship should be clearly articulated to ensure ocean-climate actions are prioritized and understood as a viable and critical option for countries and other stakeholders to contribute towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement.

While the first GST and consideration of its outputs will occur in 2023, the work to inform the GST will begin at the end of 2021. The UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies negotiations in June 2021 will also inform the GST inputs and modalities. Other processes, like the Second Periodic Review,⁶ which will feed into the GST process (see Figure 1), are already underway. The timeline associated with the GST is divided into **three components** (see Figure 2):

⁵ **Article 14:** "1. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement shall periodically take stock of the implementation of this Agreement to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of this Agreement and its long-term goals (referred to as the "global stocktake"). It shall do so in a comprehensive and facilitative manner, considering mitigation, adaptation and the means of implementation and support, and in the light of equity and the best available science. 2. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement shall undertake its first global stocktake in 2023 and every five years thereafter unless otherwise decided by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to this Agreement. 3. The outcome of the global stocktake shall inform Parties in updating and enhancing, in a nationally determined manner, their actions and support in accordance with the relevant provisions of this Agreement, as well as in enhancing international cooperation for climate action."

⁶ Periodic Review Information: <https://unfccc.int/topics/science/workstreams/periodic-review>

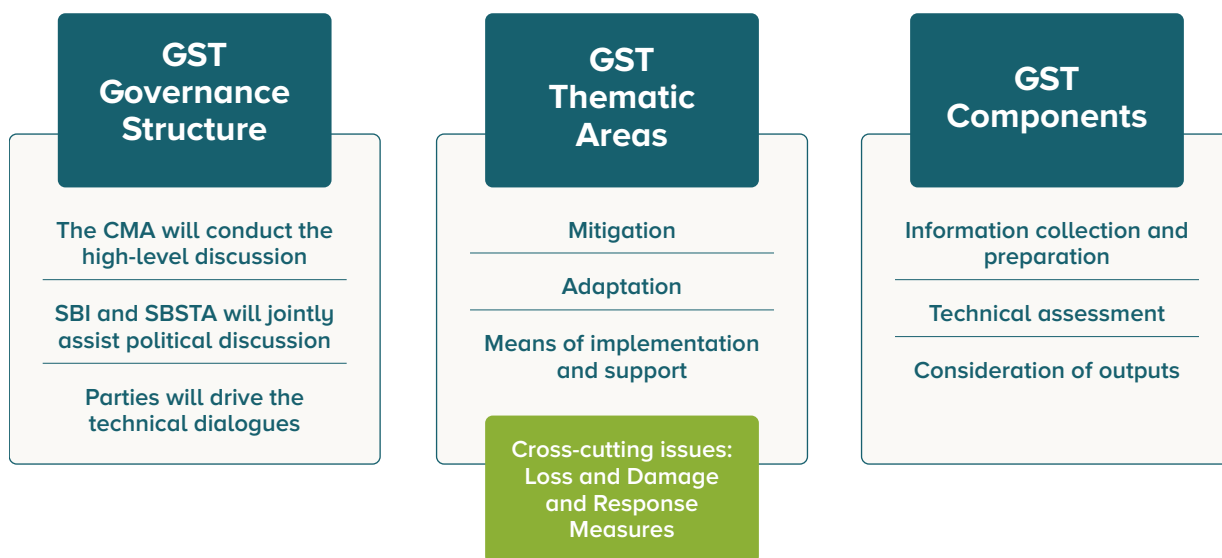


Figure 1: Global Stocktake structure (Climate Focus)

- the information collection and preparation phase (component 1);
- the technical assessment phase (component 2); and
- the consideration of outputs in a high-level event (component 3).

To inform the GST process, the Chairs of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) are requested to develop guiding questions to inform each of the components starting at SB52 for the 2023 GST.⁷ The guiding questions will be specific for each of the components above. These questions will be the anchor for how to guide the discussion, inputs, and decisions associated with how to present the GST outcomes. The GST is further structured by **thematic category 1. Mitigation, 2. Adaptation and 3. Means of implementation and support** (see section 3 for details) as well as for cross-cutting issues like loss & damage and response measures.

A SBSTA/SBI joint contact group (JCG) will be established, likely similar to the Periodic Review mechanism, to support the different components of the GST process and serve as a vehicle for Parties' more formal negotiations on the outcomes of the GST. The three thematic areas are considered within the **three respective Components** that make up the GST, and are governed by the SBSTA and SBI Chairs in the JCG:

Component 1: Information collection and preparation:

this Component focuses on gathering, compiling and synthesizing information as well as preparing for the technical assessment. The inputs for Component 1 are to be collected starting one negotiation session prior to technical assessment and end six months before the consideration of outputs. Acceptable inputs are identified in the non-exhaustive list of inputs,⁸ including but not limited to NDCs (and related Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs)) as well as IPCC reports. Acknowledging that current available information may not cover all relevant sectors, SBSTA and SBI were also requested to identify potential information gaps and make requests for additional input noting the cut-off date for the collection period.

Component 2: Technical assessment:

this Component will take stock of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and will assess the information collected in Component 1, as well as opportunities to enhance climate action and support the continued achievement of the Agreement. Component 2 includes the establishment of technical dialogues (TD), which will be transparent and inclusive and will likely entail in-session workshops and roundtables that will occur when the Subsidiary Bodies ("SBs") are in session. The technical assessment aims to appraise the three thematic areas in a balanced manner while taking into account equity and the best available science.⁵

⁷ Decision 19/CMA.1 FCCC/PA/CMA/2018/3/ADD.2 (para 7)

⁸ Decision 19/CMA.1 FCCC/PA/CMA/2018/3/ADD.2, Matters relating to Article 14 of the Paris Agreement and paragraphs 99–101 of decision 1/CP.21 (para 36)

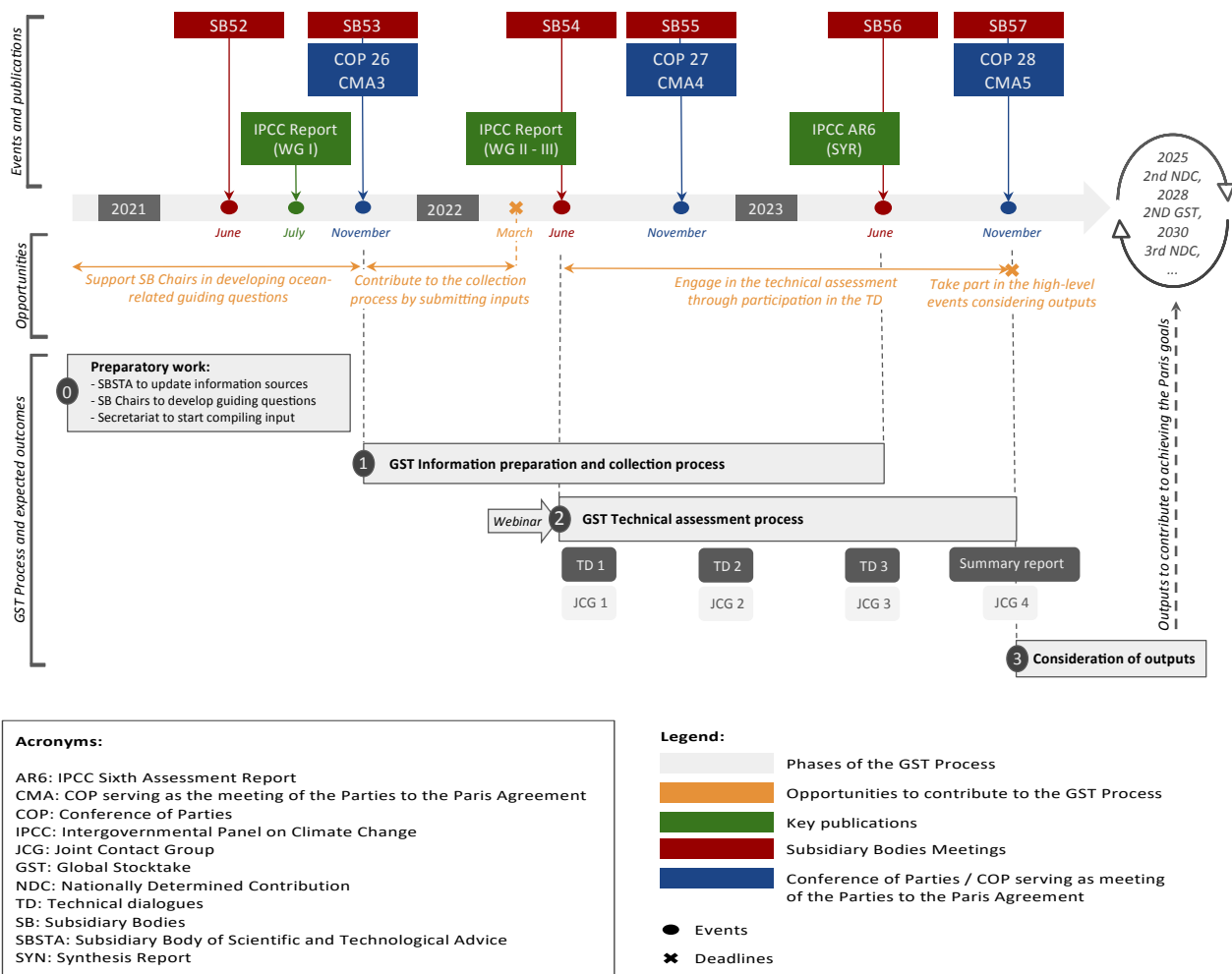


Figure 2. Timeline of the GST process

Component 3: Consideration of outputs: The final Component will focus on showcasing and discussing the implications of the findings of the GST with the view to achieving the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement, as well as informing Parties to update and enhance their NDCs and accelerate climate action. Component 3 will consist of high-level events and summarize important political messages and avenues to enhance climate action, as well as international cooperation and support. The consideration of outputs could potentially end with a CMA decision or declaration outlining the findings.

b. Sources of input to the Global Stocktake

In 2018, the Katowice climate package was adopted at the COP24 Climate Conference as a set of CMA decisions that comprise the “Paris Rulebook,” or the rules to implement the Paris Agreement. The sources of input and the modalities for the GST were part of that negotiation package. The GST will consider information that informs

the thematic areas and considers information on a collective level regarding:

- a) GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks and mitigation efforts undertaken by Parties;
- b) overall effect of Parties’ NDC including information from the ETF;
- c) adaptation efforts, support, experience and priorities;
- d) finance flows, including information from the latest biennial assessment and overview of climate finance flows of the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF),
- e) efforts to enhance understanding, action and support, on a cooperative and facilitative basis, related to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change;
- f) barriers and challenges (finance, technology, capacity);
- g) good practices, experience and potential opportunities to enhance international cooperation; and
- h) fairness considerations, including equity.

The decision also included **a non-exhaustive list of sources for input** that serves as a basis for how to collect this information. It further invited SBSTA to complement this list at the session prior to the information collection and preparation phase. The first period would be the upcoming SB52 in 2021. While the non-exhaustive list of sources of input is described below, by definition it is not limited to these reports. Countries further noted the need

to reflect on and complement the sources of information for the stocktake in the future at a session ahead of the information collection and preparation component, as appropriate.⁹

Below is a table with the non-exhaustive list of sources of input, and examples of sources of input with relevant ocean information (Table 1):

Table 1: Sources of Input as outlined in the non-exhaustive list

Sources of Input as outlined in the non-exhaustive list	Examples of sources of inputs with relevant ocean information
Reports and communications from Parties (PA/UNFCCC)	NDCs, BTR, or National Communications that clearly articulate the ocean elements, whether that's coastal/marine protection for adaptation or mitigation or ocean-based renewable energy as part of its energy efficiency plans, will support a clearer understanding of ocean relevance to the GST
Latest IPCC reports	The 6 th Assessment Report of the IPCC will include a section on ocean and coastal systems for adaptation, among other relevant science-based chapters ¹⁰ ; 2019 IPCC Special Report on Oceans and the Cryosphere (part of the AR6) ¹¹
Reports of the SBs	The SBSTA and SBI Chair reports will include relevant information from the work under these subsidiary bodies. For example, the SBSTA Chair could include relevant outcomes from the NWP Expert Group on Oceans and the meetings of the Research Dialogue.
Reports from relevant constituted bodies (CB) and forums and other institutional arrangements (PA/UNFCCC)	CBs and relevant UNFCCC arrangements could increase their focus on ocean-specific activities, action and reporting. Many parties at the 2020 UNFCCC SBSTA Ocean Climate Dialogue ¹² encouraged relevant CBs to consider the dialogue outcomes and include action on ocean in their respective work and annual reports at the COP and SBs, such as, but not limited to, the Adaptation Committee, the Least Developed Country Expert Group, and the Technology Executive Committee.
Synthesis reports by the Secretariat generated for the technical assessments including on past experience, adaptation efforts, and overall effect of NDCs	Mandated reports such as 1) state of GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks and information in the ETF, which could include coastal blue carbon ecosystems; 2) NDC Synthesis report including coastal and marine NbS; 3) State of adaptation efforts; and 4) finance flows, including overview of climate from the SCF which may include coastal ecosystems particularly following the 2021 SCF Forum on NbS Financing. The clearer ocean-climate actions, commitments, policies, and measures are within and comparable across NDCs, the clearer these can be assessed in the synthesis reports prepared by the Secretariat
Relevant UN agency and other international organization reports supportive of UNFCCC process	IMO could prepare a submission that encourages the use of the IMO indicators in the GST, or relevant CBD and SDG indicators, as appropriate; IOC State of Ocean Report; Formal Outputs from the UN Decade of Ocean Science
Voluntary submissions from Parties, including inputs to inform equity	Parties could prepare submissions beyond the scope of the submissions above that also integrate relevant political constraints in "light of the equity" (e.g. coastal communities facing inequity as, they are more subjected to erosion or sea-level rise)
Relevant reports from regional groups and institutions	Negotiating groups, like AOSIS, could submit a report specifying the importance of ocean-climate indicators to their region
Submissions from Non-Party Stakeholders and UNFCCC Observers	NGOs focused on the ocean-climate nexus, specifically those focused on ocean-climate indicators should consider developing a joint submission to ensure comparability, collaboration and comprehensiveness. This could be a synthesis report of all relevant actions providing a framing of aggregate, global information and recommendations, and could be in collaboration with other relevant UN organizations.

9 Decision 19/CMA.1, para 38. FCCC/PA/CMA/2018/3/Add.2

10 Chapter Outline of The Working Group II Contribution To The IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) As Adopted at the 46th Session of the IPCC https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/03/AR6_WGII_outlines_P46.pdf

11 IPCC Special Report on Oceans and the Cryosphere, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2020/05/2020-AC6_en.pdfhttps://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2020/05/2020-AC6_en.pdf

12 Informal summary report by the Chair of SBSTA on the Ocean and Climate Change dialogue to consider how to strengthen adaptation and mitigation action, https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/SBSTA_Ocean_Dialogue_SummaryReport.pdf



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3. Ocean topics in the GST thematic areas

The tables in the sections below details ocean and coastal based mitigation and adaptation actions focusing on NbS and indicating other relevant ocean-based efforts, as well as means of implementation and support for ocean-climate action. The tables further detail the measures and activity information for each respective action and its corresponding report that this activity would be included in. Essentially, the table maps how to find the type of ocean actions that are most relevant to you and where these actions might be included in the sources of input to the GST.

a. Thematic Area 1: Mitigation

The first thematic area of the GST will consider the state of GHG emissions and removals and mitigation efforts of Parties, including information on the overall effects of NDCs, information on global and sectoral GHG emissions, as well as relevant information from the ETF (Article 13), low emissions development strategies (LEDS) and developing country circumstances. The IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) and its related outputs to be published in 2022 will be an input to the whole of the GST, in addition to a UNFCCC Special Event¹³ dedicated to detailing the key messages related to the GST. Mitigation approaches for ocean climate action will primarily be focused on Parties'

efforts in coastal regions, within national jurisdictions, that are captured by their reporting under the IPCC's 2013 Wetlands Supplement and in the related National GHG Inventory. Activities outside of national jurisdictions (ie, international waters), are generally outside of the scope of the Paris Agreement.

While it is unclear what the GST's technical assessment on mitigation will specifically entail at this time, draft deliberations in 2018 on the GST, as captured in the APA Joint Reflections Note¹⁴ suggested preliminary guiding questions concerning the long-term temperature and mitigation goals of the Paris Agreement. These questions are listed below as initial reference noting they come from a temporary non-status document (APA Joint Reflections Note) used to capture ideas and may not reflect the views of all Parties. The guiding questions for the GST are still to be developed in 2021 by the SB Chairs. Recommendations for when these guiding questions will be developed and by whom are demonstrated in Figure 2: Timeline.

- *How far are we in achieving the balance between anthropogenic emissions sources and removals?*
- *To what extent are we seeing a rapid reduction of emissions and enhancement of removals?*
- *How do we best achieve the long-term goal on mitigation on the basis of equity and in the*

¹³ Decision 19/CMA.1 para 29

¹⁴ Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA). (2018, August 2). Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement: Additional tool under item 6 of the agenda (APA16.Informal1.Add_4). Retrieved October 12, 2020, from https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/APA16.Informal1.Add_4.pdf.

context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty?

- What are the opportunities, good practices and challenges for enhanced climate action; and

- What can Parties do to enhance climate action to reach the Paris Agreement's mitigation goals?

i. Ocean mitigation actions

Addressing GHG sinks and sources from coastal and ocean-based activities	Relevant measures and activities to be considered by Parties	Indicative type of input where this measure/action could be reflected
Nature-based Solutions		
Nature-based solutions to reduce GHG emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce emissions from the destruction of coastal blue carbon ecosystems by conserving and protecting them • Support REDD+ programs (for mangroves) and related investment in a robust MRV system, as appropriate • Launching a PES scheme for protecting mangroves and/or seagrasses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National GHG Inventory or NIR (LULUCF); LEDS, and NDCs; AR6 and World Ocean Assessment for global input • REDD+ Strategies and REDD+ MRV Reporting • NIR (LULUCF)
Nature-based solutions to increase GHG sinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase carbon sequestration by restoring coastal blue carbon ecosystems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National GHG Inventory or NIR (LULUCF)
Other ocean-based efforts		
Other ocean-based efforts to reduce GHG emissions (<i>within scope of GST</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop ocean-based renewable energy (offshore wind (fixed and floating technology), wave, tidal and floating solar) • Reduce emissions from fisheries and aquaculture activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National GHG Inventory or NIR (Energy) • NIR (Transport; domestic shipping); (energy efficiency in storage?)
Other ocean-based efforts to reduce GHG emissions (<i>outside of scope of GST, or limited accounting approaches</i>)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support seaweed aquaculture that can be used for fuel, food and feed • Reduce emissions from ocean transport and related atmospheric pollution through energy efficiency and new sources of fuels (hydrogen, ammonia and some biofuel)¹⁵ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not yet accounted for in a comparable way. Needs more research. • IMO Indicators

Other processes to maximise the ocean's carbon sequestration potential are under discussion in the scientific community. These include efforts such as enhancing weathering and alkalinity, i.e., dissolving rocks and minerals to enhance CO₂ uptake and enhance open-ocean productivity by adding nutrients and cultivating marine plants (e.g., iron fertilization). Given the current understanding of inherent negative risks and unclear legal and monitoring frameworks, these efforts are not recommended to be included in the GST at this time. However, we acknowledge that as the science develops, those emerging areas may become relevant assuming that equity concerns are addressed and that the precautionary principle is followed to ensure environmental and social

integrity. The role and impacts of deep-sea activities such as bottom trawling and mining on the ocean, and ultimately the atmospheric carbon balance, are currently also unclear.

b. Thematic Area 2: Adaptation

Assessing overall progress on achieving the Paris Agreement's global goal on adaptation will be notably more flexible and qualitative than for mitigation. To recall, the global goal on adaptation is not quantitatively defined. The qualitative approach for the global goal on adaptation reflects the views that the diversity of adaptation actions,

¹⁵ Note: Emissions from international shipping and air transport are outside the scope of national inventories and thus out of scope of Paris commitments and the Global Stocktake

metrics and national circumstances make quantitative goals challenging. Thus, the global adaptation goal describes the intent to: 1) enhance adaptive capacity and resilience, and 2) reduce vulnerability, with a view to contributing to sustainable development. The non-status initial guiding questions for adaptation are noted below, but will also be developed ahead of Component 1:

- How can we most effectively and adequately increase the ability to adapt to the adverse

impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience without threatening food production?

- What is our progress towards addressing the information outlined in Parties' adaptation communications, including adaptation planning, vulnerabilities, implementing priority programs and projects, as well as financial investments for adaptation?

i. Ocean adaptation actions

Supporting climate adaptation through coastal and ocean-based activities	Relevant activities to be considered by Parties	Indicative type of input where this measure could be reflected
Nature-based Solutions for adaptation and/or Disaster Risk Reduction		
Coastal and marine ecosystem-based adaptation ¹⁶	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support ecosystem-based measures to reduce coastal flooding, buffer against extreme events, and enhance food security • Increase conservation and restoration of mangroves and coral reefs to alleviate coastal storm energy and reduce coastal erosion • Support ecosystem-based measures to protect and restore biodiversity to build ecosystem resilience to the impacts of climate change and boost productivity • Mainstream NbS or ecosystem based approaches in fisheries and/ or aquaculture management plans through behavior-centered solutions for sustainable resource management • Develop hybrid green-grey approach to coastal infrastructure, such as through coral reef restoration or mangrove buffers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Adaptation Communication (AC), or NDC (if applicable) • NAP, AC, National development plans, or NDC; relevant sections from NBSAPs; or CBD 6th National Reports, and at a global level the IPCC AR6 and 2nd WOA • NAP, AC, NDC, or NBSAP • NAP, AC, or National Fisheries Plan • NAP or AC
Reducing the impact of climate change risks		
Actions to reduce climate change hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen early warning systems and evacuation protocols • Plan for coastal retreat and resettlement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Disaster Risk Management Plans, Regional Tsunami warning systems reports¹⁷
Enhancing societal adaptation		
Reducing vulnerability of coastal communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve community-based approaches for a sustainable blue economy including introduction of alternative livelihood schemes • Hazard-resistant housing and infrastructure along coasts • Community plans and infrastructure development that includes consideration of sea level rise and increased coastal flood risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAP • Housing Development Plans • NAP, National infrastructure plans

¹⁶ Ocean & Climate. (2019). Policy recommendations: A healthy ocean, a protected climate. Retrieved October 22, 2020, from <https://ocean-climate.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/mep-plaidoyer-ENG-WEB-1.pdf>.

¹⁷ Tsunami Warning System Regional Reports: <https://ioc.unesco.org/index.php/our-work/global-tsunami-early-warning-and-mitigation-programme>

Develop low-carbon, sustainable blue economies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider marine spatial planning (MSP) / Integrated Ocean management (IOM) to manage marine and coastal ecosystems¹⁸ Include Indigenous peoples and local communities and their knowledge and techniques in the design and implementation of adaptation measures Support and invest in green-gray infrastructure approaches over hard engineering (e.g. concrete walls) Promote sustainable fishing practices and explore low-carbon alternatives e.g. seaweed production for food and fuel¹⁹ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NBSAPs (relevant sections and as aligned with CBD Post 2020 GBF Indicators) NAP or AC NAP NAP or AC, specifically related to agriculture/fishing and food security
Research and promote innovative adaptation strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invest in and support research that develops alternative restoration approaches (e.g. coral reef gardening) for reef restoration to enhance resilience, while ensuring policies to address and limit reef stressors (ocean acidification and warming, and other anthropogenic stressors).²⁰ Invest in and support research that identifies aquaculture and fisheries tolerance to changing conditions Invest in and implement solutions to support vulnerable regions facing rising sea levels, ocean acidification, ocean warming. e.g. small island developing states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAP, AC, or other global biodiversity or restoration commitments cross-referenced in the NDC NAP, AC and other relevant sections of the NDC Investment commitments in NDC or relevant regional reports to the UN

c. Thematic Area 3: Means of implementation and support

The third thematic area of the GST refers to finance flows, financial support, technology transfer and capacity building. On this basis, the GST will consider progress on finance flows and mobilizing support consistent with a low-emissions pathway balanced between adaptation and mitigation. It will also include relevant information from the Enhanced Transparency Framework (Article 13) and the Standing Committee on Finance, among others. The guiding questions from the non-status APA Joint Reflections Note relates to the overall progress made towards making financial flows align with a pathway for low GHG emissions and climate-resilient development and will be developed

further ahead of Component 1 along with the other thematic areas:

- To what extent are we on track to making finance flows consistent with this low emissions and resilient development goal and what can Parties do to enhance this
- How are we progressing on the long-term technology goal under Article 10.1 PA?
- What opportunities, good practices and challenges exist to enhance financial flows; and
- What are lessons learned and practices in place that are relevant for mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support?

¹⁸ Ehler, C., & Douvère, F. (2009). *Marine spatial planning: a step-by-step approach toward ecosystem-based management* - UNESCO Digital Library. Retrieved November 4, 2020, from <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000186559>. Further, MSP and ecosystem-based marine spatial planning can be implemented to provide a broader frame for decisions on whether and how proposed ocean-climate solutions can take place in a sustainable and coherent manner and be reflected in the NDCs/NAPs as well as other processes like the CBD and BBNJ.

¹⁹ Hoegh-Guldberg, O. et al. (2019).

²⁰ IPCC. (2019c). *Technical Summary*. In: *IPCC Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate*. Retrieved November 16, 2020, from https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/3/2019/11/04_SROCC_TS_FINAL.pdf.

i. Ocean relevant actions

Oceans-related means of implementation and support themes	Relevant activities to be considered by Parties	Indicative type of input this measure could be reflected
Finance		
Adequately fund ocean-related mitigation and adaptation actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial instruments which are specific to the needs of ocean-based mitigation and adaptation projects Case studies from the insurance sector to develop insurance products for coastal settlements and regions (for example the Zurich Flood Resilience Alliance) Number/amount of \$ from Multilateral-development banks (MDBs)? Case studies on environmental impact and sustainability bonds for coastal resilience and nature-based infrastructure that can deliver cash up front and could include performance-based components would allow risk sharing and faster delivery²¹ Case studies on public-private trust funds for coastal and small-island conservation, such as the Seychelles' Conservation and Climate Adaptation Trust (SeyCCAT)²² Share data and information on financial risk tools to assess the risk of various ocean investments²³ Align implementation efforts with socially and environmental sound efforts like the Sustainable Blue Economy Finance Principles from UNFI, or Ocean Risk and Resilience Action Alliance²⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International commitments in NDC or reports from the SCF, IOC Capacity Development Reports²⁵ Empirical information from case studies (Note: <i>While the GST might not assess case studies directly, empirical information developed by Parties to aid in identification of where and what type of action and support is needed, what works and in which contexts, and how action and support can be delivered would have a better chance of being incorporated into the GST, and further provides critical reflection points throughout all stages of the GST with tangible examples and experiences</i>)
Climate finance options for ocean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support REDD+ RBF programs and MRV, as appropriate for mangrove protection and restoration Develop Article 6.2 pilots under the PA Case studies/data on blue carbon projects under the voluntary market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National REDD+ Strategy; GCF reports for ocean/coastal-relevant programs UNFCCC Registry for the transfer, use, cancellation and holding of ITMOs, domestic registries, Article 6 relevant information in the BTR and NDC

21 LSE (2020) Thorsten Thiele, Adding "Blue" to Climate Finance, p. 14. <https://www.lse.ac.uk/iga/assets/documents/global-policy-lab/From-Green-to-Blue-Finance.pdf>

22 Ibid, Angelique Pouponneau, How Financing Climate-Smart Development is Key to Island Survival?, p. 16, 17.

23 Ibid, Nishna Degnarain, The Case for Agile Regional Ocean Sustainability Banks, 28,29.

24 UNFI Turning the Tide Sustainable Finance principles: <https://www.unepfi.org/publications/turning-the-tide>; ORRAA Information: <https://www.oceanriskalliance.org/about/orraa/>

25 UNESCO IOC Capacity Development Reports: https://www.ioc-cd.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewDocumentRecord&docID=27723

Enhancing the position of ocean within existing climate finance channels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize ocean-based projects as legitimate recipients of climate finance Inform on partnerships, like the Bangladesh Delta Plan²⁶ for regional adaptation measures & resilience planning Prepare funding proposals under Article 6.8's framework for non-market approaches for blue carbon mitigation and coastal adaptation measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing Committee on Finance or other financing bodies reports to UNFCCC
Technology		
Developing and transferring ocean-related mitigation and adaptation technology to developing countries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inform on the transfer and deployment of technology for resilience of coastal communities and infrastructure Inform on low-emissions fishing and shipping technologies Develop risk management models and tools for ocean-based and coastal infrastructure, such as parametric insurance and blended ocean finance Dedicate resources and build coalitions under the Climate Technology Centre & Network (CTCN) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CTCN reports to UNFCCC
Capacity building		
Carbon accounting capacity building and training for reporting mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train experts on implementing IPCC Wetlands Supplement Train experts on the use of Natural Capital Accounting for coastal ecosystems and climate action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National GHG Inventory National Reports to the UN Statistical Commission

d. Reflection on ocean targets and indicators for the GST

It is crucial that ocean-related information feeds into the GST. As indicated above, there are a number of actions and related inputs that could be considered and developed in a way that clearly integrates ocean and coastal elements in the outcomes of the GST. All component phases of the GST should be inclusive of cross-cutting issues, such as how the ocean is reflected.

Aligning international agendas

The GST mandate is to assess countries' collective efforts to achieve the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement. However, elements of these goals, and climate change in general, are related to sustainability and environmental issues currently addressed under other international policy agreements, all equally concerning the ocean. The

Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, among others, are examples of other international forums that could provide insights and synergies with the related reporting efforts for this cross-cutting issue.

The narrative on the margins of the GST process could provide an opportunity to enhance synergies for assessing progress towards the goals of the Paris Agreement through better understanding of the different ocean-related targets and indicators, including those across different conventions. The interest in being able to refine monitoring and tracking progress on ocean-related indicators related to climate change like oceanic temperature rise and ocean acidification could use these discussions to make progress in providing clear approaches. To remain true to the scope and intent of the GST (to track implementation of the Paris Agreement and progress towards its goals) conventions

26 A CDKN overview article, 2020: https://cdkn.org/2020/02/feature-bangladeshs-delta-plan-offers-major-opportunity-for-climate-compatible-development/?loclang=en_gb

outside of the UNFCCC should consider only targeted input directly aligned with the GST’s purpose to avoid potential confusion or delay.

Global targets established under other Agreements and national commitments/targets and their accompanying reports, could be considered as other sources of inputs, in the form of voluntary submissions from Parties or a concerted effort by the different “conventions liaison

groups” to provide the relevant information. Similarly, Non-Party Stakeholders’ initiatives working to integrate oceans-related measures and indicators into NDCs and UN agendas, such as the Global Mangrove Alliance, and Save Our Mangroves Now! could be considered in the GST with a coordinated effort for comparability and transparency.

Some of the relevant ocean-relevant targets include:

Convention / Agreement	Target	Relevance	Relevant Report that could be submitted as an input to GST by Parties
Sustainable Development Goals	SDG 14 and related targets	Maintaining ocean integrity will ensure ocean-climate regulatory functions; Enhance resilience to climate without threatening food production; and Increase the economic benefits from sustainable use of marine resources	Voluntary National Reviews ²⁷ Community of Ocean Action Voluntary Commitments
CBD post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework (Still under negotiation)	Proposed target 7 - By 2030, increase contributions to climate change mitigation, adaptation and disaster risk reduction from NbS and ecosystem-based approaches, ensuring resilience and minimizing any negative impacts on biodiversity.	Contribution of blue carbon ecosystems to mitigation, adaptation and among others) climate change-related disaster risk reduction	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP)
Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	Target 12 - Restoration is in progress in degraded wetlands, with priority to wetlands that are relevant for biodiversity conservation, disaster risk reduction, livelihoods and/or climate change mitigation and adaptation.	Climate mitigation and adaptation potential of coastal wetlands in current and future protected UNESCO Ramsar sites	National Report on Implementation to Ramsar

Other examples include targets for outcomes set by member countries of the High-Level Panel for Sustainable Ocean Economy to raise momentum towards a sustainable ocean economy, as well as upcoming UN negotiations. One such example is the UN Statistical Division who are working on a Global Set of Climate Change Indicators and Statistics to be considered under the Enhanced Transparency Framework as well as the GST, expected to be adopted in 2022.

The use of indicators in the GST process

Robust, high-quality data will be critical for a comprehensive and accurate global assessment of collective progress in the GST. Common indicators will be needed during the technical assessment component to benchmark data and assess progress against targets

to produce outputs that are relevant and comparable for the third component. The selection of those indicators, and the indicators themselves, will be crucial to make the GST accurately inform the next round of NDCs so as to increase their level of ambition and to evaluate the need for enhanced action and support.²⁸ In other words, the indicators will help make sense of all the information compiled and tell the story of the progress made and in what areas.

In relation to the ocean, a starting point will be to identify existing efforts by different international bodies and scientific communities that develop methodologies to collect and measure relevant ocean-related data. For instance, methodological advancements have been made for the SDG 14 indicators, namely indicators on ocean acidification (SDG 14.3)²⁹ and more can be expected

27 Note: The set of global indicators, including those for SDG14, support the annual report by the Secretary-General and the 4-yearly review by the High-level Political Forum which is included in the Voluntary National Reviews.

28 Dagnet, Y, N. Leprince-Ringuet, J. Mendoza, J. Thwaites. (2020) "A Vision for a Robust Global Stocktake." World Resources Institute. Part of the iGST Designing a Robust Stocktake Discussion Series. https://www.climateworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/iGST_A-Vision-for-a-Robust-Global-Stocktake_FINAL-1.pdf

29 IOC-UNESCO. (2018, June). Update on IOC custodianship role in relation to SDG 14 indicators. Retrieved November 5, 2020, from http://legacy.ioc-unesco.org/index.php?option=com_oe&task=viewDocumentRecord&docID=21938.

from the UN Decades of Ocean Science and Ecosystem Restoration.

Similarly, the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) and Global Climate Observing System's (GCOS) seven Global Climate Indicators have been identified by scientists and experts and provide insights on the state of the global climate system. Of the seven indicators, four are specifically relevant to oceans: ocean heat, sea level, ocean acidification, and Arctic and Antarctic sea level extent.³⁰ While not directly aligned with the thematic categories of the GST, including scientific information on ocean health could contribute to a more effective GST, if done with caution and appropriate framing on how ocean-related evidence contributes to the GST's established goals. This approach could provide a broader understanding of the overall health of the carbon cycle which is reliant on a healthy ocean.

In addition to identifying and incorporating biophysical indicators that will be important to track and monitor the impacts of climate change on the ocean, other important categories of indicators to consider are those related to: mitigation, adaptation, finance, and governance. In that regard, the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP), the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) are working on measures and actions to account for increased resilience of the most vulnerable to extreme weather, climate and water events by 2030³¹, and the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which aims to establish an equal balance between mitigation and adaptation funding over time.³² Other conventions and agreements could also contribute with their respective global indicators and monitoring frameworks, like the CBD or the Sendai Framework Monitor.³³



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30 https://climatedata-catalogue.wmo.int/climate_indicators#:~:text=WMO%20uses%20a%20list%20of%20Arctic%20and%20Antarctic%20sea%20ice

31 World Meteorological Organization (2020) "Vision, Mission, Strategic Planning" Retrieved December 21 2020 from <https://public.wmo.int/en/about-us/vision-and-mission>.

32 Green Climate Fund (2020) "Overview" Balanced portfolio Retrieved December 21 2020 from <https://www.greenclimate.fund/about#:~:text=The%20Fund%20aims%20for%20a,SIDS%2C%20and%20African%20States>

33 Indicators for the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets - <https://www.cbd.int/doc/decisions/cop-13/cop-13-dec-28-en.pdf> or the Sendai Framework Monitor <https://www.preventionweb.net/sendai-framework/sendai-framework-monitor/indicators>



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4. What can you do?

As the process of the GST has started (Figure 2) it is crucial that the various actors engage actively into providing relevant input, and further supporting efforts that can shape and influence the outcome of this exercise. Below we outlined examples of stakeholder groups and the types

of actions and interventions that could be considered as a government department, research institute, non-governmental organizations including civil society and UN agencies, and the finance sector. The actions are divided by thematic areas of the GST and are non-exhaustive.

a. Governments

	Support and champion Party requests for ocean/coastal-relevant guiding questions to be adopted as part of the GST process
	Allocate delegation support to cover relevant SBSTA items throughout all components, including ensuring ocean-topics are integrated appropriately
General	Continue to include coastal and marine ecosystems and NbS as well as ocean related vulnerabilities into the NDC 5-year increased ambition cycle
	Increase and enhance cross-departmental collaboration to break down silos
	Incentivize and account for the benefits of establishing effective networks of marine protected areas, to help build ecosystem resilience
	Include ocean and coastal elements in the revised NDC (now or future), and clarify/refine metrics to ensure comparability of the relevant element, as the GST is about collective progress
Thematic area 1 Mitigation	Integrate relevant coastal wetland carbon accounting in the BTR or National GHG inventory (note: the first BTR is due AFTER the GST, in 2024)
	Promote NbS related indicators that can help countries report across a multitude of international commitments and actions

	Include ocean and coastal elements in the revised NDC (now or future), NAP and adaptation communication
	Clarify/refine metrics in the NAP or Adaptation Communication to ensure comparability of the relevant element, as the GST is about collective progress
Thematic area 2 Adaptation	Promote NbS related indicators that can help countries report across a multitude of international commitments and actions
	Submit national biodiversity report with climate adaptation metrics from the CBD post-2020 global biodiversity framework
	Apply a seascape approach to ensure the relevant ecosystem service provision while maintaining or even increasing resilience
	Fund scientific research that will be assessed and reviewed by the IPCC
	Clearly communicate the financial support needed to include, measure, report, etc. ocean climate actions – via NDCs and other means of communications to the UNFCCC
	Clearly communicate the needs for capacity building and technology transfer
Thematic area 3 MOI	Support the implementation and development of targeted funding and finance streams and mechanisms for coastal and marine NbS
	Support and develop ocean-climate proposals to the GCF
	Call for free, open and accessible data to increase the transparency and utility of the scientific inputs.
	Build a thoroughly participatory process to engage key stakeholders (including from the ocean community) that will help strengthen the political momentum within the GST, thus triggering nationally enhanced ambition

b. Research institutes

	Publish relevant studies and submit for inclusion ahead of the deadline for AR6 ³⁴
	Engage in the SBSTA Research Dialogue, and other ocean-climate working groups like through the Ocean Decade challenges and relevant GESAMP working group
General	Sponsor a joint assessment or workshop between IPCC and IPBES on ocean and climate change
	Present new findings relevant for raising additional awareness on ocean and climate issues, including via the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development, and UN Decade of Ecosystem Restoration, ahead of COP28 or at relevant sessions of the Technical Dialogues.
	Advance understanding through revised assessments on climate resilience indicators of MPA networks; and consider the application of climate change vulnerability criteria in network design
	Consolidate scientific knowledge on the role of the ocean in climate mitigation
	Document, understand and predict the evolution of the ocean heat and circulation, as well as their influence on weather, climate variability and climate change
Thematic area 1 Mitigation	Better understand, qualitatively and quantitatively, the role of the ocean in climate regulation through the sequestration of anthropogenic carbon, or of other climate-active gases
	Analyze the interactions between marine biodiversity and climate regulation, in particular by better identifying feedback loops between the ecological impacts of different pressures (e.g. overfishing, pollutions, climate change) and CO2 storage mechanisms
	Deepen knowledge on the adaptive capacity of coastal and marine organisms,
Thematic area 2 Adaptation	Advance studies and understanding on interdependent social and natural resilience and adaptation processes
	Further study the cumulative and interacting effects of climatic /environmental ocean stressors (e.g. ocean warming, ocean deoxygenation, ocean acidification) and anthropogenic pressures (e.g. overfishing, pollution, habitat destruction) on the coastal and marine biosphere, carbon cycle and socio-economic systems

34 IPCC AR6 Timeline: https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2020/06/WG2AR6_Timeline_update.pdf

Thematic area 3 MOI	Engage in, and report on relevant research around capacity building success, challenges and needs as well as financing opportunities for coastal and marine NbS
	Contribute to global monitoring networks that are supporting the relevant indicators as established by UN Sustainable Development Goal 14

c. NGOs/Civil society

General	Support Parties in preparing their submissions to the GST
	Support governments in translating scientific outputs into effective outcomes, especially at the national level (i.e., working to further develop, collect, and synthesise country-specific, actionable recommendations)
	Continue to support the design and implementation of Parties ocean mitigation and adaptation activities
	Continue to support and encourage Parties to formulate timely and ambitious communications to the UNFCCC, including via NDCs, BTRs and NAPs, on their relevant ocean climate actions
	Support development of comprehensive post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework monitoring framework and adoption of smart indicators that allow for reporting synergies with the GST
	Support countries in NAP and NBSAP-related reporting and revision processes
	Engage with the GST process including, for example, through the independent Global Stocktake (iGST)
	Joint submissions highlighting important case studies and evidence on the importance of and benefits of coastal and marine NbS for climate adaptation, mitigation, and resilience.
	Present new findings relevant for raising additional awareness on ocean and climate issues, including via the UN Decades on of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development and Ecosystem Restoration, ahead of COP28 or at relevant sessions of the Technical Dialogues.
	Be active observer participants in the technical assessment phase (component 2)
Provide technical and knowledge capacity to Parties using tools such as the Global Mangrove Watch	
Thematic area 1 Mitigation	Engage with the Global Climate Action Agenda (GCA) under the Marrakech Partnership and their work to enhance ocean in NDCs and country reporting
Thematic area 2 Adaptation	Provide support and technical capacity for countries in NAP and NBSAP-related reporting and revision processes
	Engage with relevant UN constituted bodies and forums such as the Adaptation Committee (AC), and the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage (WIM), and the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP) on their synthesis reports to the GST.
Thematic area 3 MOI	Engage with relevant UN constituted bodies and forums such as the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) and their synthesis reports to the GST.

d. Finance sector

General	Fund oceanic observation and research to help understand ocean and climate change linkages and solutions
	Support work to better understand and consider the potential of ocean risks on future business activities, and report on relevant action
	Support submissions/information to assess where we are and where we need to be to finance oceans/BC action to be consistent with 1.5 goal.
	Report on actions taken on NbS for adaptation and mitigation, as well as other ocean-based activities including shipping and renewable energy
	Present and promote ocean and climate win-win solutions at upcoming COPs
	Consider how to ensure finance can be more targeted and accessible on various scales to allow ease of access and finance management and reduce the administrative burden to support smaller-scale projects as well as large-scale and invests in such projects

Thematic area 1 Mitigation	Report on measures taken to reduce any negative impacts from climate mitigation efforts and related infrastructure on coastal and marine biodiversity
	Report on measures looking at green-grey opportunities for climate mitigation
Thematic area 2 Adaptation	Report on measures taken to reduce any negative impacts from climate adaptation efforts and related infrastructure on coastal and marine biodiversity or on vulnerable communities
	Report on measures looking at green-grey opportunities for climate adaptation
Thematic area 3 MOI	Identify, promote and scale-up key opportunities to leverage more finance to increase ambition in NDCs, including via NbS projects for adaptation and mitigation and report to the GST
	Fund developing country Parties to support technical capacity building and training on basic measurement, reporting and verification capacities, including to implement the IPCC's 2013 Wetland Supplement
	Establish a favourable investment climate, providing a legal basis for investment, ease of doing business, and liquidity, as well as a consistent tracking mechanism



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5. Conclusion

The Global Stocktake is a critical point to collectively come together to assess progress towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement for mitigation, adaptation, and finance, as well as to inform future action to enhance the necessary ambition. Within the current GST framework, it is clear that ocean science, actions and needs have the opening to be engrained in each of the thematic areas and can be further articulated and strengthened to clarify that linkage. To be comprehensive and provide a realistic outlook, the GST will also need to go beyond presenting the emissions gaps but also include the insights and guidance for how to close the

gap for all thematic areas.³⁵ While the majority of actions and commitments to reduce emissions needs to be driven and be implemented by national and local governments, civil society plays an important role as well. Civil society's engagement could serve as a complementary force to the scientific bodies already engrained in the process through the Global Climate Action Agenda's Marrakesh Partnership or by supporting the clarification of ocean actions for mitigation, adaptation and finance as well as identifying the gaps necessary for enhanced ambition.

35 Mark Roelfsema et al., 2020. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-020-15414-6.pdf>



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6. Acronym List

AC	Adaptation Communications
BTR	Biennial Transparency Report (for the Paris Agreement)
CBD	UN Convention of Biological Diversity
CMA	Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement
ETF	Enhanced Transparency Framework
GST	Global Stocktake
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change
JCG	Joint Contact Group
LEDS	Low Emissions Development Strategy
MOI	Means of Implementation and Support
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NbS	Nature-based Solution
NBSAPs	National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (for CBD)
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
PA	Paris Agreement
PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation (for the UNFCCC)
SBSTA	Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (for the UNFCCC)
TD	Technical Dialogue

