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Global Stocktake Explainer*

1) What is the Global Stocktake?

The **Global Stocktake (“GST”)** is a process mandated by the **Paris Agreement**.¹ It assesses the collective progress of the Parties to that Agreement towards the achievement of its purpose and its long-term goals, namely limiting the rise in global temperature, building resilience and aligning financial flows with low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development.

It is one of three key pillars of accountability and compliance² that provide scrutiny of Parties’ actions and support on a global scale to ensure that they are on track to fulfil their climate obligations within an otherwise largely nationally determined regime. It is also intended as a catalyst to galvanise increasingly ambitious action by the Parties and other stakeholders in respect of climate action over time. In this way, it is both backward and forward looking.

The key thematic areas in respect of climate action that it should address, as specified in article 14 of the Paris Agreement, are mitigation, adaptation and means of implementation and support. In addition, **Decision 19/CMA.1** - which regulates further the process - stipulates that the GST may also

consider efforts made by the Parties that address the impacts of response measures and loss and damage incurred.³

COP28 will be the final stage of the first GST (“GST1”), but the 18-month long process of carrying out the GST will be repeated every five years. The timing of this first GST – two years before the Parties are required to update or provide new submissions of **Nationally Determined Contributions (“NDCs”)** in 2025 – will allow it to inform the domestic preparation of new NDCs. In this way, the GST aims to enhance the collective ambition of the Parties together over time.

2) GST Cycle and Components

The GST is conducted by the **CMA** (the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement) with the assistance of the **Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technical Advice (“SBSTA”)** and the **Subsidiary Body for Implementation (“SBI”)** and it is split into three phases:⁴ (1) information collection and preparation, (2) technical assessment and (3) consideration of outputs. Each phase is described in turn below.

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¹Paris Agreement 2015, Article 14(1)

²In addition to the Transparency Framework (art 13) and the Compliance Committee (art 15).

³Decision 19/CMA.1, para 6b.

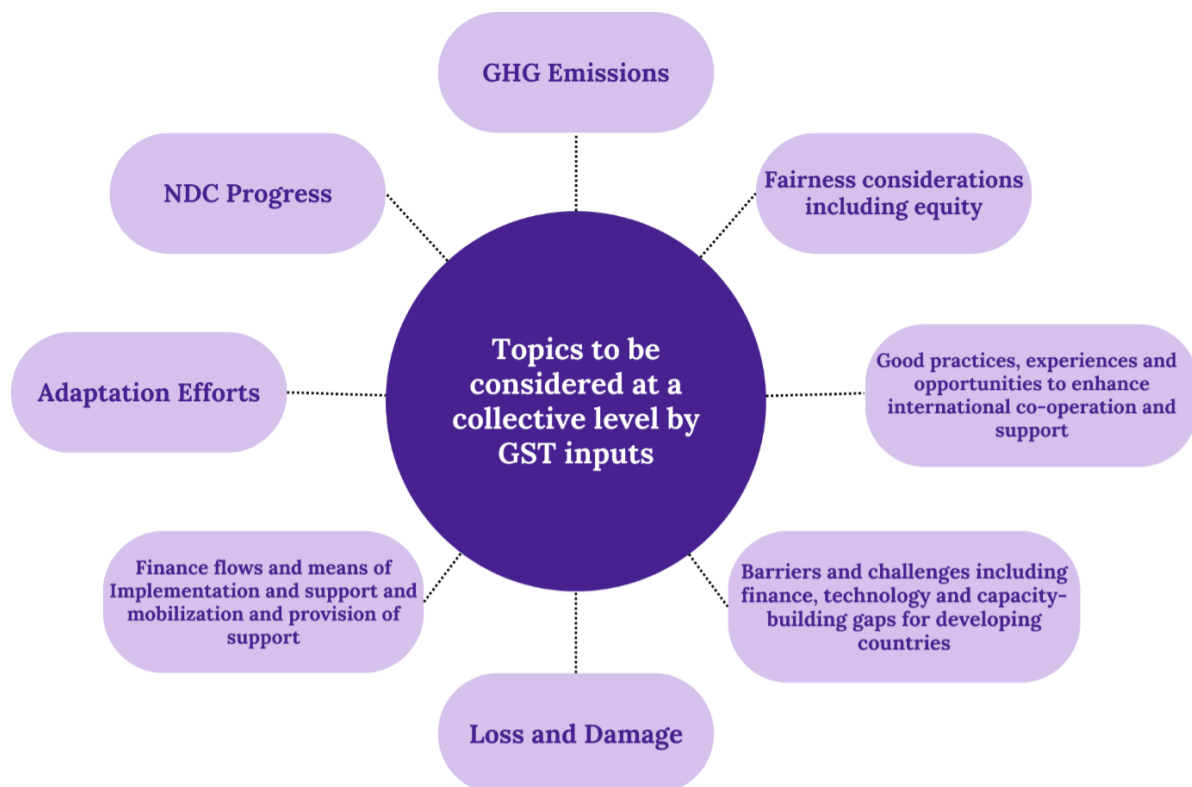
⁴Following Decision 19/CMA.1 (paras.19 to 34),

Phase One: Information Collection and Preparation

The first phase of the GST involves the creation of an SBI and SBSTA joint contact group to assist with the process. It begins one CMA session before the start of the second phase and ends six months before the start of the third phase. With GST1, phase one began in November 2021 (CMA3), one CMA session before the start of the second phase and concluded at SB 58 in June 2023.

During this stage, the joint contact group compiles and synthesises the relevant

information from a wide range of sources including mandated and voluntary communications from the Parties, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (“IPCC”), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (“UNFCCC”) reports from regional groups and scientific institutions and other non-Party stakeholders according to the GST themes.⁵ The topics to be considered, based on these sources, are listed in the below diagram.



Source: Louisa Dassow

All inputs are made available on the GST information portal.

⁵Decision 19/CMA.1, para 37.

Phase Two: Technical Assessment

The gathered information informs the analysis and discussions carried out by the Parties, experts and a range of stakeholders during the Technical Assessment phase. This phase consists of a series of focussed exchanges of views, information and ideas in roundtables, as well as workshops and other activities that should be carried out on an open, inclusive, transparent, and facilitative basis.⁶

The co-facilitators appointed to lead these sessions then prepare summary reports of the dialogues which are now available on the GST portal for GST I.⁷

Phase Three: Consideration of Outputs

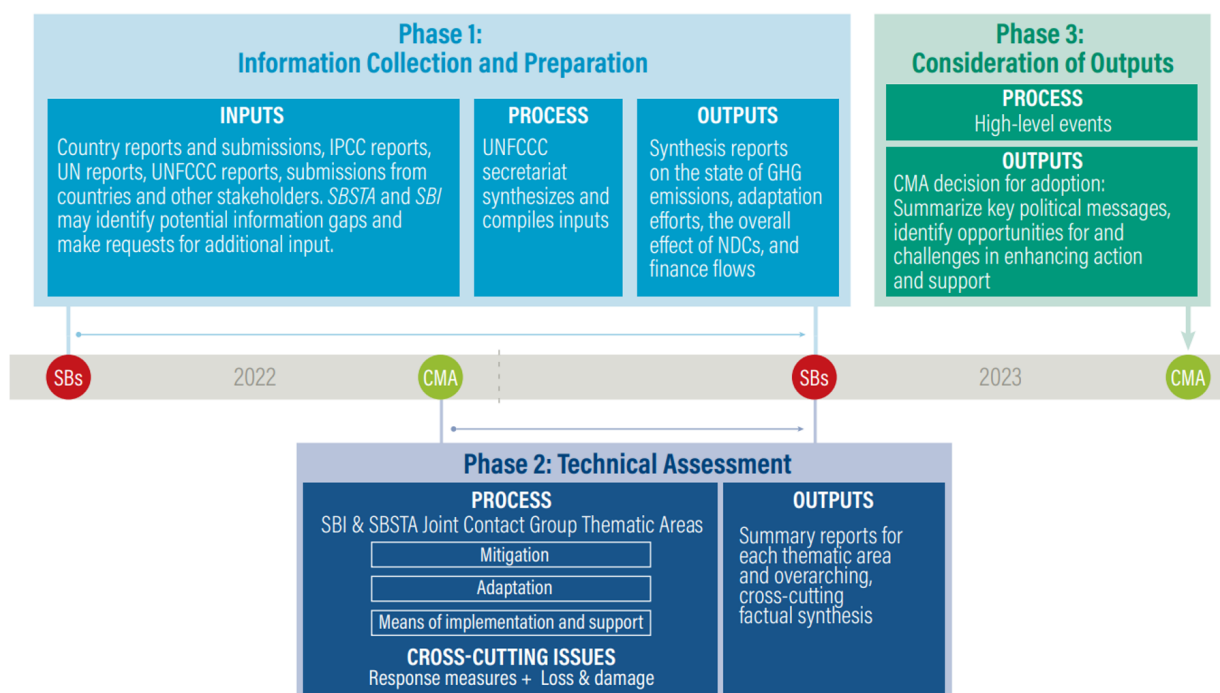
Finally, the political phase begins. This consists of a series of events at which the findings of the Technical Assessment are presented and discussed by Parties.

The focus of this phase and the outputs that are produced here is on taking stock of

collective progress towards achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement. It should not have an individual focus on any specific Party. Instead, it should include “non-policy prescriptive consideration of collective progress” that Parties can use to inform the updating of their NDCs.⁸ The outputs should identify opportunities and challenges in enhancing action and support, lessons learnt and good practices and summarise key political messages arising from the findings of the Technical Assessment, including recommendations for strengthening action and support.

There is no requirement to formally integrate these messages in a decision: Decision 19/CMA.1 only requires them to be referenced in a decision by the CMA and/or a declaration. Therefore, the outcome of the GST will be reflected in the decision text that will be negotiated and agreed at CMA 5 in November 2023.

UNPACKING THE COMPONENTS OF THE GST



Source: Cogswell and Dagnet (2019).

⁶Decision 19/CMA.1, para 30.

⁷Decision 19/CMA.1, para 31.

⁸Decision 19/CMA.1, para 14.

3) Features of the GST

The GST is an exercise akin to taking an inventory of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and should be done “in the light of equity and the best available science.”⁹

There is no agreed definition of what “equity” means. Decision 19/CMA.1 makes several references to the principle of equity, by for example, specifying that equity will be considered in a Party-driven and cross-cutting manner throughout the GST. But how it should be integrated within the three phases has attracted debate as guidance in the Agreement and Decision is limited. Varying definitions of equity have been put forward in roundtable discussions, with the common thread being that equity should “align with an upward spiral of ambition in implementing the Paris Agreement.”¹⁰

The need to have regard to the best available science is also made clear in Decision 19/CMA.1, which states that it will be considered in a Party-driven and cross cutting manner throughout the GST. IPCC reports are to be a key source of input, and the report of the second meeting of the Technical Dialogue draws extensively on information from the sixth assessment report of the IPCC (IPCC AR6).

In addition, the Paris Agreement requires¹¹ the GST to be comprehensive and facilitative and conducted in a way that is conducive to encouraging ambition of the Parties. It should send clear signals not only on how much more needs to be done collectively to reach the long-term goals, but also how to get there, by highlighting specific concerns or needs, concrete options and opportunities.

See separate LRI handout about the process of the first GST (GST1)

⁹Article 14 (1) Paris Agreement

¹⁰TD Synthesis report, para.132.

¹¹Article 14 (1) Paris Agreement

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