

The Effectiveness of the GST Process in Facilitating the Evaluation and Documentation of Concrete Adaptation Interventions (Support and Finance) in SIDS

Carlton Mendoza, Ibrahim Muhammad Shamsuddin,
Joan Pauline Talubo, Lei Ma

The Effectiveness of the GST Process in Facilitating the Evaluation and Documentation of Concrete Adaptation Interventions (Support and Finance) in SIDS



Carlton Mendoza¹, Ibrahim Muhammad Shamsuddin^{2,3}, Joan Pauline Talubo⁴, Lei Ma⁵

December 2023

1. Climate Analytics Caribbean, Trinidad and Tobago.
2. Department of Geography, Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna, Nigeria.
3. Climate Alaramma Sustainable Development Initiative (CASDI), Nigeria.
4. Department of Community and Environmental Resource Planning, College of Human Ecology, University of the Philippines Los Baños, Philippines.
5. Department of Geographical Sciences, University of Maryland College Park, U.S.

Cite as: Mendoza, C., Ibrahim, M. S., Talubo, J., Ma, L. (2023). The Effectiveness of the GST Process in Facilitating the Evaluation and Documentation of Concrete Adaptation Interventions (Support and Finance) in SIDS. Working Paper. College Park, MD: Center for Global Sustainability, School of Public Policy, University of Maryland. 23 pp.



Download the report

<https://cgs.umd.edu/research-impact/publications/effectiveness-gst-process-facilitating-evaluation-and-documentation>

About the independent Global Stocktake (iGST), the working paper series

The Independent Global Stocktake (iGST) is a consortium of civil society actors working together to support the Global Stocktake (GST), the formal process established under the Paris Agreement to periodically take stock of collective progress toward its long-term goals. The iGST aligns the independent community — from modelers and analysts, to campaigners and advocates — so we can push together for a robust GST that empowers countries to take greater climate action. www.independentgst.org

The Early Career Scholars for an Inclusive Stocktake (ECSIS) program recognizes the importance of GST research and seeks to create opportunities for its advancement by providing a supportive environment for these endeavors. Additionally, the program places a strong emphasis on promoting diversity and inclusiveness among early-career scholars. This not only enriches the research landscape but also helps to ensure that the GST reflects a broad range of perspectives and experiences, thereby improving its relevance and effectiveness.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to acknowledge the team at CGS and the wider iGST community particularly Dr. JingJing Gao and the mentors from the sessions.



Contents

+ Abstract	5
+ 1. Introduction	6
+ 2. Methodology	8
Literature and Document Review	8
Key Informant Interviews	8
+ 3. Results	10
Literature and Document Review	10
Key Informant Interviews	15
+ 4. Discussion	18
+ 5. Conclusion and Recommendation	19
+ Reference	21
+ Appendix	23
Interview Questionnaire	23





+ Abstract



The importance of documentation of adaptation (finance and support) interventions in SIDS is extremely necessary in this critical decade for climate action. The Paris Agreement establishes the importance of achieving a balance between adaptation and mitigation as well as introduces opportunities for Parties to input adaptation-related activities into the Global stocktake in order to facilitate the advancement of resilience building efforts and adequate financing for adaptation, among other goals. This working paper explored the extent a stocktake/documentated adaptation interventions (support and finance) effectively and sustainably reduce SIDS' vulnerability and increase their resilience. It also assessed to what extent the GST process prioritizes ease of access to adaptation finance for SIDS. Furthermore, the paper will evaluate how the loss and damage fund will assist in reducing vulnerability and building resilience and adaptive capacity in SIDS.



+ 1. Introduction



Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face unique and significant challenges due to their vulnerability to climate change impacts like rising sea levels, extreme weather events, and coastal erosion. These challenges, arising from their small size, limited resources, geographic isolation, and environmental sensitivities, critically threaten their economic stability, environmental integrity, and social well-being. To effectively combat these issues and enhance their resilience, SIDS urgently need adequate and accessible adaptation finance. This support is vital for implementing effective climate adaptation strategies, strengthening infrastructural resilience, protecting vital ecosystems, and ensuring the safety and prosperity of their communities. Achieving these financial objectives is not only crucial for SIDS but also pivotal for fulfilling the broader aims of the Paris Agreement

One of the main objectives of the Paris Agreement (PA), as stated in Article 2.1(b), is achieved with the support of Article 7. An important goal for developing countries in the context of the PA discussions is to improve the balance between addressing adaptation and mitigation in the global climate change regime. The “global goal on adaptation” (GGA), which positions the Article’s objectives within the context of the PA’s overall temperature goal, the emphasis on the country-driven nature of adaptation action, and the recognition of the significance of support and international cooperation for adaptation are some of the key components of Article 7. Along with other adaptation-related inputs from Parties and other players, Article 7 also introduces the adaptation communications, which will feed into the Global Stocktake (GST) under Article 14. As such, Article 7 establishes an adaptation cycle of sorts whereby the information gathering and reporting envisaged under Article 7 may provide a helpful context to formulate plans, needs, and objectives for a country’s specific national circumstances.

Article 9.6 makes it clear that information on finance from developed countries will be an integral part of the GST. The modalities and sources of input for the GST were agreed upon in Katowice. The sources of input on finance, as defined in Decision 19/CMA.1, include information at “a collective level” on finance flows; balance and prioritization (Article 9.4); the support for technology development and transfer and capacity building provided (Articles 10.6, 11.3, 13.9); as well as on the financial, technology transfer, and capacity building support needed and received under Articles 9, 10, and 11 (Articles 13.6 and 13.10). According to s. 7 of Katowice Decision 12/CMA.1, the secretariat’s compilation and synthesis of the biennial communications on ex ante finance is also a source of input for the GST.

Through this cycle and the varying sources of information, developing countries are provided with the opportunity to improve the procedures for determining the effects of climate change and the need for adaptation, as well as for documenting, tracking, and evaluating adaptation actions across all spheres of activity and at all (national and sub-national) levels of



government. This should make it simpler to take advantage of any prospective financial and technical assistance provided by the Agreement and to efficiently contribute to the GST.

In this context, our research aims to explore several critical questions:

- To what extent do stocktakes and documented adaptation activities effectively and sustainably reduce SIDS' vulnerability and increase their resilience?
- To what extent has or could the GST process prioritized ease of access to adaptation finance for SIDS?
- How does the loss and damage fund help in reducing vulnerability and building resilience and adaptive capacity in SIDS?

Our research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Determining whether the GST process has evaluated and critically assessed adaptation efforts in SIDS, moving beyond a simple recognition of adaptation efforts by developing countries (Article 7, Paragraph 14 of the Paris Agreement).
- Determining whether the GST process has or can support ease of access to adaptation finance for SIDS
- Loss and Damage relationship with Resilience, Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity of SIDS



+ 2. Methodology



This research employed a qualitative approach, combining an in-depth exploration of literature and document review with key informant interviews, to comprehensively investigate adaptation challenges and strategies in Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The qualitative methodology provides a nuanced understanding of the subject matter by incorporating both theoretical insights and practical perspectives.

Literature and Document Review

A thorough review of scholarly literature pertaining to SIDS, Global Stocktake (GST), and adaptation forms the foundational aspect of this research. By delving into academic sources, the study aims to uncover insights into the challenges, strategies, and dynamics associated with adaptation efforts in SIDS. This literature review provides a theoretical framework for the subsequent analysis. Furthermore, the research extends beyond academic sources to include a comprehensive review of technical documents related to the GST process. This step is crucial in gaining an in-depth understanding of the technical aspects of the GST process and its implications for adaptation in SIDS. The integration of both academic and technical perspectives ensures a well-rounded exploration of the subject.

Key Informant Interviews

The qualitative approach is augmented by key informant interviews, a method designed to capture valuable insights and perspectives from individuals actively engaged in adaptation efforts within SIDS. The selection of key informants is diverse, encompassing academia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), UNFCCC observer constituencies, and government agencies. This diversity ensures a broad and holistic perspective on the challenges and strategies associated with adaptation in SIDS. The chosen key informants, drawn from various sectors, bring forth their expertise and experiences to enrich the depth and richness of the research findings. Through these interviews, the research aims to not only validate and contextualize the theoretical insights gained from the literature review but also to uncover practical considerations and real-world implications. The designed questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

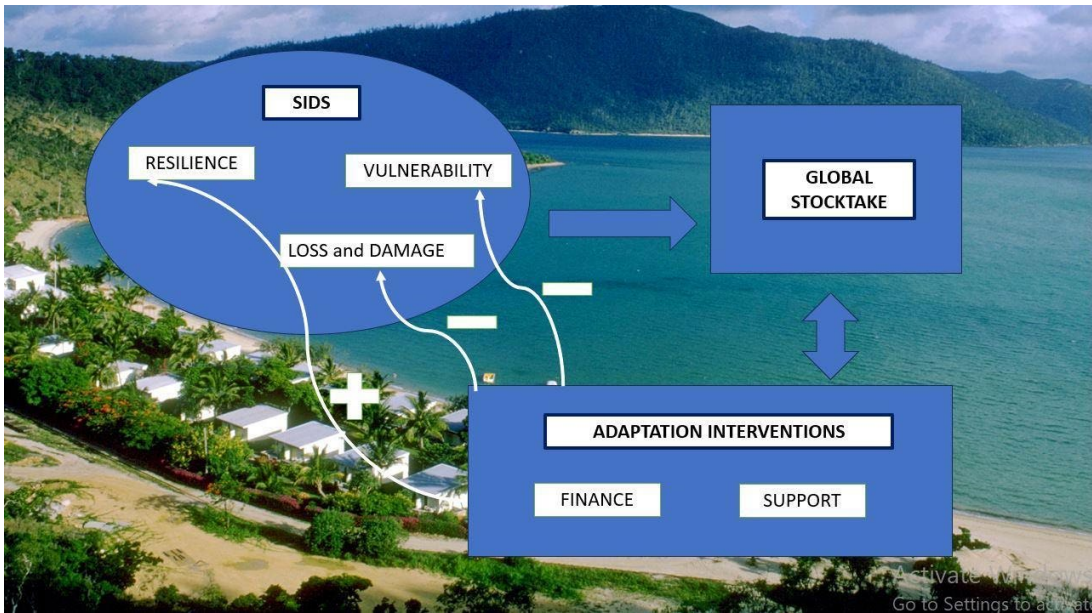


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for the research.



+ 3. Results



Literature and Document Review

(1) Review of GST Documentation

The five-year cycle of the GST exercise allows for all Parties to implement the lessons learned. In relation to the GST mandate on adaptation, as data availability improves, the provision for learning-by-doing offers a chance for continual development in the process as well as in the techniques and methodologies implemented over time. The outputs of the GST should include “non-policy prescriptive consideration of collective progress” that Parties can use to inform the updating of their actions and support and enhance international cooperation for climate action.

Additionally, the GST offers a significant chance to improve efforts to strengthen global resilience and mitigate losses and damages brought on by climate change. It can reveal the egregiously insufficient funds for adaptation and the ongoing delay in action. As a result of the GST’s findings, industrialized and large economies must reassure developing countries that they will follow through on their commitment to double the amount of readily available adaptation financing by 2025 in order to help those who have made the smallest contributions to the climate issue but are bearing the worst burden.

Moreover, the GST should facilitate the full gathering of trustworthy data that can be used for decision-making, filling in any gaps in data quality and quantity related to finance, adaptation, loss and damage, just transition, and improving transparency. Without this credible information, combating climate change may result in a blind operation.

Instances of Adaptation documentation in the GST process:

- Forty-seven submissions addressed adaptation, indicating the urgent need for more ambitious action. Community-driven local adaptation initiatives, the use of Nature-based Solutions (NbS) and Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA), the involvement of NPS, as well as international cooperation, were cited as significant enablers in several submissions. According to many submissions, the primary obstacles to the implementation of adaptation actions are the difficulties of monitoring the progress of adaptation as well as the sufficiency and efficacy of adaptation techniques.
- Increased funding from both public and private sources is essential for both adaptation and averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage at all scales. Parties and NPS acknowledged that access to finance is a significant challenge in terms of both magnitude and availability. Given the balance between mitigation and adaptation, as



well as the requirement for an increase in political commitment from 2019 levels to 2025, there is a need for novel sources and instruments.

- Other obstacles to effective adaptation action were institutional arrangements, the inadequate quality of current monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems, a lack of climate services and data that were appropriate for their intended use, and the need to build the ability to use them.

The Technical Dialogues so far have revealed the following:

- Countries are making modest progress on enhancing adaptive capacity, strengthening resilience and reducing vulnerability.
- The capacity of some governments to recover from recent events has been exceeded, and the compounding impacts of repeated events leave very limited residual response capacity.
- International cooperation can help share experiences in realizing opportunities and overcoming barriers and challenges to the implementation of adaptation plans (including NAPs in developing countries) and promote learning from good practices in various contexts.
- The GST should concentrate on ways to define and track adaptation finance, acknowledge the soft and hard limits to adaptation, and mainstream adaptation into domestic and international adaptation planning and assistance.

The GST, in its collection of submissions from Parties and NPS also expressed worry about the inadequate scope of action and acknowledged that capacity, financial, and technology limitations are the main causes of implementation and goal gaps in relation to adaptation in SIDS. The majority of Parties underlined that the GST conclusion should also highlight the fact that adaptation efforts continue to be uneven, sector-specific, modest, and dispersed across regions. The report also called for all countries to have and update NAPs which address the country specific key risks of climate change by 2030 and submit Adaptation Communications and further encourage Parties' adaptation plans to be inclusive, informed, long-term and with sustainable development and mitigation co-benefits and synergies. This update will lend support to the notion of documented adaptation strategies and efforts which can now be tangibly measured across SIDS.

Finally, UNFCCC admonishes Parties to increase resilience and adaptive capacity and to reduce climate risks through implementing and strengthening their domestic adaptation policy cycles, and by enhanced ambition on adaptation documented in adaptation plans and strategies, including in updated Adaptation Communications published at least every five years.



(2) Challenges and Adaptation Finance in SIDS

SIDS face unique challenges due to their small size, limited resources, geographical isolation, and vulnerability to climate change and other environmental hazards (UNEP, 2014; Sjöstedt & Povitkina, 2017). Geographically, many SIDS are exposed directly to climate change impacts, facing amplified risks from rising sea levels, stronger cyclonic activities, and frequent extreme weather events. Their low elevation makes them prone to inundation, coastal erosion, and habitat loss. Economically, SIDS often depend on a few sectors like tourism, fisheries, and agriculture. These sectors are particularly vulnerable to climate variability (Barnett et al., 2016; Scandurra et al., 2018). A single severe weather event or a gradual shift in climate patterns can devastate an entire year's GDP, erode infrastructure, and place immense strains on already limited resources.

This vulnerability places them at a higher risk of experiencing negative impacts on their economy, environment, and social well-being (Wisner et al., 2004, 2012; World Bank, 2013; IMF, 2014). According to UNCTAD's Productive Capacity Index (2021), Despite some strengths in sectors like transportation and human capital (UNCTAD, 2021), deficiencies in areas such as ICT and energy underscore the urgent need for adaptation strategies.

Investments in resilient infrastructure are critical for SIDS to withstand these extreme weather events (UNDP, 2015). This can include constructing robust buildings, implementing early warning systems, developing coastal protection measures, and improving water and sanitation systems. Additionally, diversifying the economy can help reduce this vulnerability (ADB, 2014). This can involve developing other sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, renewable energy, and creative industries. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has produced a publication called "Enhancing Economic Resilience of Small Island Developing States: Towards a Policy Framework" that explores strategies for economic diversification in SIDS.

Enhancing disaster risk management is also key for SIDS, given the increasing frequency and intensity of climate-related disasters. This involves strengthening early warning systems, improving emergency response capabilities, conducting risk assessments, and implementing community-level preparedness measures (OECD, 2014). Adopting sustainable development practices is essential for balancing economic growth with environmental conservation and social well-being. This includes integrating sustainability into policies and plans, promoting renewable energy, protecting ecosystems, and engaging in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts (IPCC, 2014).

Adaptation finance, necessary for these initiatives, requires billions of dollars over the next few decades for these states collectively. These costs consider immediate infrastructure needs, ecosystem restoration, community relocation, capacity-building, and resilience measures. It's worth noting that these are conservative figures; the actual costs, when



factoring in unforeseen extreme events and long-term socio-economic implications, could be much higher.

Adaptation finance for SIDS primarily comes from international entities such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Adaptation Fund (Watson et al., 2022). The GCF, anchored in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), is designed to support climate action in developing nations. Similarly, the Adaptation Fund focuses on aiding countries within the Kyoto Protocol framework. Bilateral aid offers both financial support and a platform for technical exchange, while innovative mechanisms like blue bonds are emerging, targeting marine and coastal projects vital for SIDS. Additionally, private investments, philanthropic grants, and regional funds contribute to adaptation financing.

To access adaptation finance, SIDS typically navigate complex application procedures requiring detailed project proposals (Robinson et al., 2017; Chase et al., 2020; Qiu et al., 2021). Such proposals not only need to outline the project's objectives and expected outcomes but also its sustainability and alignment with broader national and regional climate strategies. Community involvement is emphasized, as proposals with strong stakeholder engagement and local community backing often stand a better chance. Beyond this, there's a requirement for rigorous data collection, impact assessments, and sometimes even pilot phases to demonstrate project viability. To ensure transparency and accountability, many funding entities also demand that applying nations have in place robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks to track project progress and outcomes and ensure effective fund utilization.

However, accessing adaptation finance remains challenging for SIDS due to complex administrative steps, strict compliance requirements, and a shortage of expertise in proposal development (Chase et al., 2020; United Nations, 2022). As a result, many of these island nations are unable to secure adequate funding to address their pressing climate vulnerabilities. The consequence of insufficient adaptation finance is heightened susceptibility to climate impacts, risking socio-economic disruptions and potentially rendering some regions uninhabitable. The challenges SIDS encounter in accessing and utilizing these funds include:

- **Limited Access to International Climate Funds:** SIDS often face difficulties in accessing international climate funds due to complex application procedures, limited institutional capacity, and strict eligibility criteria. SIDS approved projects only represent about 4% of total Green Climate Fund (Climate Analytics 2021).
- **Insufficient Financial Resources:** The existing funding mechanisms and resources are inadequate to meet the adaptation needs of SIDS. The available funds fall short of the actual requirements for implementing comprehensive adaptation strategies. The 40 SIDS nations have received USD 2.1 billion in multilateral climate funds for 388 projects from 2003 to 2020, but this growing funding only meets a fraction of their actual needs (climatefundsupdate.org).



- **High Transaction Costs:** The administrative and technical requirements associated with accessing and managing adaptation finance can be burdensome for SIDS, leading to high transaction costs that hinder the efficient utilization of available funds.
- **Lack of Data, Information, and Capacity:** Inadequate data and information on climate change impacts, vulnerability assessments, and cost-effective adaptation measures pose challenges for SIDS in developing robust project proposals and attracting finance. There is a scarcity of substantial and specific data, including historical climatological, environmental, and socioeconomic information, as well as a lack of human resources to analyze and interpret this data (GCF IEU, 2021).

(3) SIDS Loss and Damage

Loss and Damage (L&D) in the context of SIDS refers to the adverse impacts and costs that these vulnerable nations experience as a result of climate change. SIDS are particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change due to their small land areas, limited resources, and exposure to extreme weather events and rising sea levels. A total of 17 submissions addressed loss and damage, highlighting the fact that current mitigation commitments are insufficient to prevent uncontrollable climate impacts, that action addressing disaster risks and climate change can be coordinated through a comprehensive risk management approach, and the need for more financial and technical support. Loss and Damage can manifest in various ways in SIDS:

1. **Sea-Level Rise:** Many SIDS are low-lying island nations, and they face the risk of inundation and coastal erosion due to rising sea levels caused by climate change. This can result in the loss of land, infrastructure, and livelihoods.
2. **Extreme Weather Events:** SIDS are prone to hurricanes, typhoons, and other extreme weather events that are becoming more frequent and severe due to climate change. These events can cause extensive damage to infrastructure, agriculture, and homes.
3. **Loss of Biodiversity:** Climate change can disrupt ecosystems in SIDS, leading to the loss of biodiversity and the livelihoods of those dependent on natural resources like fisheries and agriculture.
4. **Economic Loss:** The impacts of climate change in SIDS can lead to significant economic losses, affecting industries such as tourism, agriculture, and fisheries, which are vital to their economies.
5. **Displacement and Relocation:** In some cases, the loss and damage caused by climate change can force people in SIDS to relocate due to the unlivable conditions in their home areas.



To address the issue of Loss and Damage in SIDS and other vulnerable regions, the international community has recognized the need for support and mechanisms to assist these nations in coping with the impacts of climate change. The Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM) was established as part of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to address this issue. The WIM aims to enhance understanding, coordination, and support for Loss and Damage, including financial support for adaptation and compensation for irreversible losses.

Efforts to address Loss and Damage in SIDS are ongoing, and they involve both adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerability and mitigation actions to combat climate change. Additionally, discussions on financing and support mechanisms for Loss and Damage are central to international climate negotiations, with the aim of ensuring that SIDS receive the assistance they need to cope with the impacts of climate change.

Key Informant Interviews

The interview collects insights regarding the expected outcome of the first GST, GST process of adaptation evaluation, and Loss and Damage Fund for reducing vulnerability in SIDS. These insights are summarized as follows:

- **Expected outcome of the first GST:** Some express concerns about potentially weak political decisions, fearing inadequate reporting obligations and a lack of inclusivity for local communities, indigenous peoples, and gender perspectives; others focus on the GST's role in assessing emission reduction progress, adaptation efforts, and the provision of financial and technological support by developed nations. Meanwhile, some highlight discussions on equity and fairness in climate response, as well as the identification of gaps and challenges in current climate efforts. There are also apprehensions about slow implementation due to financial constraints and weakened commitments resulting from geopolitical tensions.
- **GST process of evaluating adaptation in SIDS:** Some informants express concern that the needs of SIDS for more adaptation support were only partially reflected in the GST's summary report and inadequately addressed in the political process. Others describe the GST as a thorough assessment of the financial and technical assistance provided to SIDS, focusing on the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and the Paris Agreement's commitments to adaptation. However, there is an acknowledgment of the limited time and attention given to SIDS-specific issues during the technical dialogues, suggesting a possible gap in effectively addressing the unique challenges faced by these vulnerable regions.
- **Adequacy of recording and documenting feedback and recommendations in GST:** Some argue that the reports lacked detail, particularly regarding the human, social, and financial aspects of inadequate adaptation efforts. Others suggest improvements like strengthening review mechanisms, capacity building, standardizing



reporting templates, and increasing public engagement. One informant believes the brevity of the GST reports, a response to party requests for concise documents, limited the depth of information they could cover. Discussions about a ‘technical annex’ to detail specific adaptation interventions and needs did not progress and were not implemented. While there’s a slim possibility of introducing such an annex at future Conferences of the Parties (COP), it’s likely too late for the current GST. The informant also notes the GST’s collective nature as a challenge, which potentially overlooks specific regional or national actions in the broader context of global progress. They suggest that countries with unique challenges, like SIDS, should be allowed to have their specific circumstances evaluated within the GST framework.

- **Benefits of evaluating and documenting adaptation interventions for SIDS:** The key informants highlight several benefits for SIDS from evaluating and documenting adaptation interventions. These benefits include increased political and financial priority, facilitating evidence-based decision-making, improved resource allocation, and fostering learning, knowledge sharing, and enhanced accountability. Adaptive management, policy advocacy support, and better community and stakeholder engagement are also seen as key outcomes, alongside improved monitoring and reporting. The importance of documenting data to assess and project risks and vulnerabilities is emphasized, with such information being crucial for informed climate response strategies in SIDS. Additionally, documenting effective and ineffective practices and understanding support needs are vital for building resilience and adaptive capacity. While the Global Stocktake offers a high-level view, other mechanisms like domestic reviews and the Enhanced Transparency Framework provide more detailed evaluations, contributing to a comprehensive adaptation approach for SIDS.
- **Current state of adaptation support and finance in SIDS:** The informants suggest a consensus on its insufficiency. They highlight a range of challenges: vulnerability to climate change, significant financing gaps, dependence on external support, high transaction costs, heavy debt burdens, limited access to technology, and a need for capacity building. Additionally, there’s a call for making finance more readily available. The overall consensus is that the level of adaptation support and finance currently available to SIDS falls far short of what is needed for these countries to adapt effectively and safely to climate change.
- **Role of loss and damage fund in reducing the vulnerability and building resilience and adaptive capacity of SIDS and role of GST:** The key informants highlight the critical role of the loss and damage fund in aiding SIDS to recover from climate disasters, emphasizing the need for adequate and targeted assistance to rebuild and implement effective adaptation strategies. The GST is viewed as a vital platform for SIDS to showcase their unique vulnerabilities to climate change and to advocate for greater international support to enhance resilience and reduce



vulnerability. The GST's role in evaluating collective climate action progress and identifying gaps, particularly in support provided to climate-vulnerable countries, is noted as essential. Informants also stress the importance of ensuring that the loss and damage fund is well-funded and accessible, even at local levels, and suggest that future GSTs could play a role in reviewing and recommending improvements to this fund to better support SIDS in building resilience and adaptive capacity.

- **How the Loss and Damage Fund specifically targets vulnerability reduction in SIDS:** While some are uncertain about the specific mechanisms, others outline that the Fund provides financial assistance for recovery, risk management through climate insurance and risk reduction, and capacity development to better handle climate challenges. Additionally, it supports the transfer of climate-resilient technologies and advocates for SIDS in international climate forums. Another view suggests incorporating urban adaptation measures like flood gates, but there's a consensus that the full impact of the Fund will only be discernible once its design is finalized, indicating ongoing uncertainty about its effectiveness in addressing SIDS' unique challenges.



+ 4. Discussion



In this study, we found that, from the summary reports of the GST, the process may prove beneficial for assessing and reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation (support and finance). The GST process helps in identifying information gaps and demands, which are essential for evaluating the sufficiency and effectiveness of adaptation measures on a regular and comparable basis. It also enhances the understanding of available tools and methodologies for assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation actions, applicable across various scales and contexts. Additionally, the GST facilitates the sharing of good practices and lessons learned, contributing to the improvement of adaptation action effectiveness.

There are concerns, based on the informant interviews, regarding whether the GST process effectively facilitated the evaluation and documentation of concrete adaptation (finance and support) interventions in SIDS. The first Global Stocktake (GST) has elicited varied expectations, with concerns about weak political decisions, inadequate reporting, and insufficient inclusivity, contrasting with hopes for its effective assessment of emission reductions, adaptation efforts, and support from developed nations. Opinions on the GST's evaluation of adaptation in SIDS range from concerns over insufficient focus on SIDS' needs to recognition of its thorough assessment of financial and technical assistance. The adequacy of documentation in GST reports is debated, with some citing a need for more detailed and comprehensive reporting, especially in addressing SIDS' specific challenges. The benefits of evaluating and documenting adaptation interventions for SIDS include increased political and financial prioritization, improved decision-making, and enhanced learning and accountability.

However, there's a consensus that the current state of adaptation support and finance in SIDS is insufficient, with several challenges such as financing gaps and high transaction costs highlighted. Regarding the role of the Loss and Damage Fund, it's seen as crucial for aiding SIDS in recovery and resilience-building, but its full impact remains uncertain until the final design is established. The GST is viewed as a potential platform for SIDS to advocate for their needs and ensure their unique challenges are addressed in future climate action strategies.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation actions and summarizes the current challenges SIDS face when accessing adaptation finances. However, the evaluation of adaptation effectiveness is inherently complex due to several factors. These include the absence of a clearly defined goal for effective adaptation, varied conceptual framings and metrics used to assess effectiveness, and low empirical evidence on the effectiveness of implemented adaptation actions" (IPCC, 2022). Furthermore, as Parties are not required to report on adaptation effectiveness and not all adaptation-related information is submitted to the UNFCCC, it is difficult to rely only on NDCs, NAPs, adaptation communications, and other documents to develop a robust assessment of adequacy and effectiveness to inform the GST. Moreover, while this study provides an overarching view of the adaptation finance landscape in SIDS, it does not explore specific examples or case studies of SIDS that have effectively managed adaptation finance. Nor does the paper present detailed solutions or strategies to tackle the identified challenges.



+ 5. Conclusion and Recommendation



Following a methodical examination of the research, reports, and submissions to the UNFCCC, it is determined where adaptation research takes place in SIDS, what actions are documented, and how successful they are deemed to be. As with prior meta-studies of vulnerability and adaptation in SIDS (Duvat, 2018; Duvat et al., 2017; Hay, 2013; Robinson, 2017), our research should be seen as a snapshot of documented adaptation rather than a comprehensive assessment of adaptation across SIDS. There are significant gaps in our understanding of adaptability in SIDS, as our thorough literature study has shown. Additionally, although a wide range of adaptation strategies has been documented by research, there are still gaps about specific implications of climate change and specific types of adaptation. The documentation within the UNFCCC also fails to clearly demarcate adaptation information in relation to SIDS and leaves it general and broad to “developing states”. Compared to structural, physical, and social adaptation, remarkably little information about institutional adaptation has been published. Lastly, our knowledge of the sustainability and long-term efficacy of adaptation measures in SIDS is still quite restricted. Long-term monitoring and assessment is desperately needed to guide future adaptation decisions, even if determining the success of an adaptation is difficult and dependent on temporal and spatial scales. There are important lessons to be learned from the experiences of others, even while there isn’t a single answer to climate change that works for everyone and every adaptation needs to be tailored to the political, social, economic, and cultural context in which it is implemented. Therefore, research must record and broadly disseminate adaptation efforts, even in less explored places.

To address the challenges faced by SIDS in accessing adaptation finance, the study recommends several key actions. Firstly, international climate funds should simplify and streamline their application processes, making them more SIDS-friendly with flexible eligibility criteria and a streamlined review process. Secondly, there is a call for increased financial support from developed countries and financial institutions, including scaling up contributions to existing funds and establishing new dedicated funds for SIDS, alongside promoting private sector co-financing. Thirdly, enhancing capacity building in SIDS is crucial, focusing on project development, proposal writing, financial management, and implementation of adaptation actions. This includes providing technical assistance and establishing knowledge-sharing platforms. Additionally, improving data collection and analysis on climate impacts and vulnerabilities in SIDS will support more compelling funding proposals and evidence-based decision-making. The study also suggests that the Global Stocktake (GST) should focus on defining and tracking adaptation finance, recognizing the limits to adaptation, mainstreaming adaptation into planning, and supporting more ambitious adaptation actions in future Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Strengthening SIDS’ financial resilience is



essential for sustainable development, reducing vulnerability, and protecting these vital ecosystems and communities.



+ Reference



Asian Development Bank. (2014). *Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management in Small Island Developing States*. Manila: ADB.

Barnett, J., & Waters, E. (2016). Rethinking the vulnerability of small island states: climate change and development in the Pacific Islands. *The Palgrave handbook of international development*, 731-748.

Chase, V., Huang, D., Kim, N., Kyle, J., Marano, H., Pfeiffer, L., ... & Weston, P. (2020). *Independent Evaluation of the Relevance and Effectiveness of the Green Climate Fund's Investments in Small Island Developing States*. Green Climate Fund

Jeudy-Hugo S., Errendal S., and Kotani I. (2022) *Adaptation in the global stocktake: Options to deliver on its mandate*, OECD/IEA Climate Change Expert Group Papers, No. 2022/4, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/396b5224-en>

International Monetary Fund (IMF). (2014). *Building Resilience in Small Island Developing States*. Washington, DC: IMF.

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). (2014). *Fifth Assessment Report*. Geneva: IPCC

IPCC (2022), *Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Contribution of Working Group II to the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*, Cambridge University Press, https://report.ipcc.ch/ar6wg2/pdf/IPCC_AR6_WGII_FinalDraft_FullReport.pdf.

Nurse, L. A., McLean, R. F., Agard, J., Briguglio, L. P., Duvat-Magnan, V., Pelesikoti, N., ... & Webb, A. (2014). *Small islands*.

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2014). *Climate Change Adaptation in Small Island Developing States*. Paris: OECD.

Qiu, K., Melkie, M., Narvaez, R., Ossess, F. (2021). *SIDS access to the Green Climate Fund: understanding the GCF portfolio in small island developing states*

Robinson, S. A., & Dornan, M. (2017). International financing for climate change adaptation in small island developing states. *Regional Environmental Change*, 17, 1103-1115.

Scandurra, G., Romano, A. A., Ronghi, M., & Carfora, A. (2018). On the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States: A dynamic analysis. *Ecological Indicators*, 84, 382-392.



Sjöstedt, M., & Povitkina, M. (2017). Vulnerability of Small Island Developing States to Natural Disasters: How Much Difference Can Effective Governments Make? *The Journal of Environment & Development*, 26(1), 82–105. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1070496516682339>

Thomas, A., Baptiste, A., Martyr-Koller, R., Pringle, P., & Rhiney, K. (2020). Climate change and small island developing states. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 45, 1-27.

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). (2014). *The Impacts of Climate Change on Small Island Developing States*. Nairobi: UNEP.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2015). *Sustainable Development in Small Island Developing States*. New York: UNDP.

United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. (2022). *Accessing Climate Finance: Challenges and Opportunities for Small Island Developing States*

UNFCCC (2005): *Climate Change, Small Island Developing States*

United Nations Conference On Trade And Development (2021), *Building Resilience in small island developing States A compendium of research prepared by the UNCTAD Division for Africa, Least Developed Countries and Special Programmes*. Retrieved from; https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/aldcinf2021d3_en.pdf

Watson, C., Schalatek, L., Evéquo, A. (2022). *Climate Finance Regional Briefing: Small Island Developing States*. Climate Fund Update.

Wisner B, Gaillard JC, and Kelman I., eds. (2012), *Handbook of Hazards and Disaster Risk Reduction*, Routledge, Abingdon

World Bank. (2013). *Assessing the Vulnerability of Small Island Developing States to Climate Change*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

Wisner B, Blaikie P, Cannon T, and Davis I (2004). *At Risk: Natural Hazards, People's Vulnerability and Disasters*, 2nd ed Routledge, London



Interview Questionnaire

1. General Questions (Title/Age/Gender/Affiliation/SIDS, Citizen) (Anything else??)
2. Are you familiar with the GST Process?
3. Briefly give your opinion on the expected outcome of the first GST.
4. Have you participated in the GST process? If yes, in what role or capacity, and what was your contribution?
5. Briefly describe how the technical dialogues and the entire GST process have evaluated adaptation (finance and support) in SIDS?
6. Did SIDS receive specific attention in the process?
7. Were the feedback/recommendations sufficiently recorded/documentated in the GST reports? If not, what more could have been done?
8. What do you think is the benefit to SIDS of having adaptation interventions evaluated and documented?
9. What is your opinion of the current state of adaptation support and finance in SIDS?
10. How do you think or see the GST process increasing access to adaptation support and finance in SIDS?
11. How does the loss and damage fund help in reducing the vulnerability and building resilience and adaptive capacity in SIDS, and how could GST facilitate this contribution?
12. How does the Loss and Damage Fund specifically target the reduction of vulnerability in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) when it comes to the impacts of climate change?

