

UN-OHRLLS contribution to the SG report on oceans and the law of the sea, on the theme “sea-level rise and its impacts

SIDS

ii/ Observed and projected environmental, social and economic impacts and resulting challenges

Small Island Developing states (SIDS) are home to 65 million people, 11 to 15 per cent of whom are living on land with an elevation of 5 meters or lower¹. This figure is over 5 per cent in such

owing to their relatively small land mass, urbanization, and dependence on coastal ecosystems for food and livelihood security and protection from extreme events.

including establishing an expert group to provide technical support to the Executive Committee and the Santiago Network to catalyze technical support for developing countries. The expert group was tasked to assess inter alia the impact of slow onset events, such as sea level rise, and how to account for non-economic losses.

LDCs also organized an expert group meeting at the end of 2019 on the new SIDS Determined Contributions (DCs) to the Paris Climate Agreement. The member states of LDCs have committed to submitting upgraded DCs in line with the 1.5 degree target, in combination with a range of ambitious initiatives as part of the SIDS Package presented to the Secretary-General at this year's Climate Action Summit in New York. The level of ambition among SIDS is therefore vastly above most other countries. While mitigation efforts for LDCs is essential to reach zero emissions globally, the overall share of LDC emissions is only about 1%. The past DCs from SIDS have therefore been focused primarily on adaptation, with a particular focus on sea level rise, which remains a major component of the upcoming DCs.

LDCs

10 countries included in the LDC category are among the most vulnerable nations to the adverse impacts of climate change. They include both coastal and small island developing states and are

Due to the impact of global warming some of the landlocked developing countries including ; Nepal and Bhutan are experiencing rapid melting of glaciers. The significant ice loss from glaciers contributes to sea level rise. It is therefore imperative that SIDS facing significant melting glaciers which also have impact on the availability of water resources are supported to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Due to the rising sea levels the coastal communities will be forced to relocate inland including to some landlocked Developing Countries. Many of the SIDS are already grappling with the impact of climate change including drought and desertification as well as water management and growth issues. The influx of coastal migrants could further put undue burden in these places. Enhance support to effectively address migration in climate change adaptation and development strategies and improve preparedness and response capacities in line with the objectives of the 2015 Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration is therefore fundamental. Increasing the participation of SIDS in relevant regional and global intergovernmental and multilateral discussions on climate change and migration to ensure inclusion of their specific issues.

ii) Opportunities in responding to those challenges, including through coordination and cooperation at all levels, scientific, technical, technological, financial and capacity building!

The availability of data remains a huge challenge for SIDS, LDCs and SIDS, as the lack of technical capacity, remoteness and limited funding often means there is no data on for example historical water levels in storm surges and social indicators for vulnerability to sea level rise. Furthermore, without this data it can be problematic to design effective adaptation measures and to prove prior conditions to secure compensation for loss and damage.

Support for improving access to climate finance and strengthening innovative financing instruments and mechanisms to address inherent challenges SIDS face in accessing sufficient and affordable financing for resilience building and sustainable development.

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