



*Creating a community of practice across the Asia Pacific*

Asia Pacific Forum on  
**Loss and Damage**

*The objective of the forum is to disseminate knowledge and new research on loss and damage in the Asia Pacific region so as to create a community of practice among researchers.*

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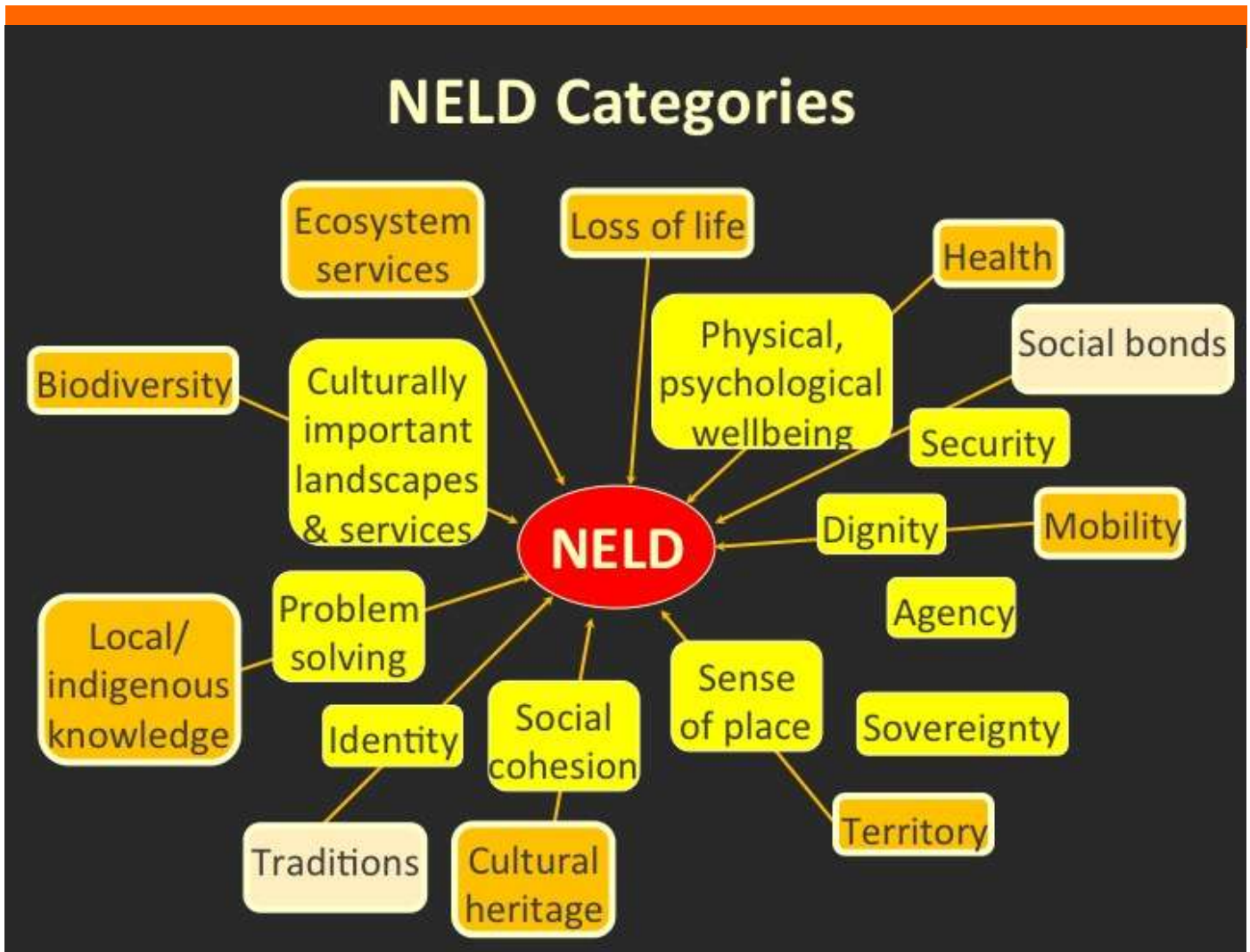
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Aerial view of lake Sentani. Papua, Indonesia.



**Figure 1.** NELD Categories as published in the literature. Yellow: Morrissey and Oliver-Smith, 2013; Orange: Fankhauser et al., 2014; Beige: Andrei, S., Rabbani G., & Khan, H., 2015. (Adapted slide from presentation by Petra Tschakert at NELD Workshop DIE, 2015)

## NELD what? – A quick note from the Expert Workshop on Non-Economic Loss and Damage

By: Olivia Serdeczny, Climate Analytics

On the 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> of August more than 40 researchers and stakeholders met to discuss the concept of non-economic loss and damage (NELD) in the context of the UNFCCC. The workshop was hosted by the German Development Institute (DIE) together with Climate Analytics and the United Nations University-Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS).

It was the first time a meeting was held on the subject. Many participants had heard about NELD, and only around a quarter of participants had explicitly worked on it. Other participants all were engaging in subjects relevant to the issue and, as one participant put it, “have worked on NELD for years without knowing it was NELD”. Disciplines represented included anthropologists, geographers and environmental economists. Four members of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanisms (WIM) were also present.

So what was discussed? The first obvious and yet important question is: What is NELD? The still scarce literature has produced a number of categories, which are summarized in the picture above.

What we also understood is that NELD is about value: You only consider something a loss or damaged if it means something to you.

But we do not all care about the same things. Some people or communities may place greater value on their social bonds than others; not everybody cares about biodiversity. In other words: Value is context-dependent.

What also emerged from the workshop discussions were three different ways in which NELD was used when talking about climate change:

**1. An argument for more stringent mitigation action**

This argument was based on the observation that NELD is currently not prized into the cost of climate change. Correcting for this omission would result in higher climate damages avoided when keeping warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and below.

**2. An assessment framework for avoiding NELD**

Much of the work around understanding NELD is motivated to learn how to avoid future NELD from occurring. Accordingly, mainstreaming an assessment of potential NELD into adaptation planning was called for.

**3. An assessment framework for responding to NELD**

Not all potential NELD can be avoided. The final "budget" of actual NELD will be composed of residual losses and damages, which could not be adapted to, and the negative side-effects of adaptation measures themselves. Estimating this budget needs careful research.

**4. An outlook: So much more to learn and understand!**


It is far from clear where political developments around loss and damage will eventually lead to, and this topic was also not discussed at the

workshop. But it merits some thoughts: How can NELD be handled in concrete decision-making? If there are tough decisions to be made as to whether to embark on expensive adaption actions to guard against sea level rise or to give up on that piece of land called home? How will NELD factor in that decision? Who will decide what is important enough to count as NELD? And who would decide over their value, how much they weigh compared to "hard facts"?

We not only need to understand NELD. We need to understand how to put that understanding to action. Much remains to be learnt and discussed. The NELD expert workshop was merely the beginning. For those who would like to join in, please visit the website [www.climate-neld.com](http://www.climate-neld.com) or <http://climate-neld.com/neld-workshop-2015/> where you will also find a summary of the workshop outcomes.

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## Developments on loss and damage leading to Paris

By: M. Hafijul Islam Khan, ICCCAD

Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) are currently negotiating the text for a new agreement to be adopted at the Twenty First Conference of the Parties (COP 21) to be held at the end of 2015 in Paris, France. Since the beginning, loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, has become an issue of much discussion in the negotiations. Much has happened on the issue since then and developing country Parties, led by the G-77 and China, are now proposing for approaches to address irreversible and permanent damage resulting from climate impacts to be incorporated into the Paris Agreement.

Developing country Parties have proposed for a separate stream for loss and damage in the negotiating text highlighting the limits of adaptation and the need for approaches to address loss and damage, or the impacts of climate change that cannot be avoided by adaptation. However, mitigation commitments and adaptation measures are recognized in their proposal as pro-active responses to loss and damage outlining the clear linkages among mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage. In terms of institutional arrangements, an international mechanism to address loss and damage is proposed by the developing countries to be defined under the Paris Agreement based on the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC.

Some of the Parties from developed countries have proposed for a COP decision related to loss and damage instead of incorporating loss and damage in the Paris Agreement. They proposed that, the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for loss and damage established at COP 19 would

continue to serve as the mechanism for loss and damage. The WIM is subject to review at COP 22 and taking into account the permanency of institutional arrangements for loss and damage, developing country Parties proposed for an international mechanism, which would be defined in the Paris Agreement and thereafter shall draw upon, further develop and elaborate on the work of the WIM following relevant COP decisions. The WIM is an institution established under the Convention subject to the authority of the COP, whereas, the proposed international mechanism would be under the new agreement subject to the authority of the governing body of the new agreement.

Developing country Parties proposed to establish a Climate Change Displacement Coordination Facility to coordinate efforts to deal with displaced people from the impacts of climate change. In particular, the intention of establishing the Facility is to assist in providing support for organized migration and planned relocation along with other related measures to deal with forced displaced people due to climate impacts. Related to financial support for addressing loss and damage, the G-77 and China, proposed that, the governing body of the new agreement shall provide adequate financial support to the international mechanism to address loss and damage including irreversible and permanent damage resulting from human-induced climate change.

The 136 countries of the G-77 and China are united and agreed on a common position for establishing an international mechanism for loss and damage under the new agreement and hope it would lead to developing a comprehensive loss and damage regime under the Paris Agreement. Nevertheless, challenges remain for the developing countries to articulate their proposal technically and to put it forward with due political processes at COP 21. A significant amount of work and research on this issue needs to be done and important in this process will be to create a community of practice amongst stakeholders.



Figure 2. Loss and damage within the UNFCCC. Word cloud created by Masroora Haque

## Warsaw International Mechanism Supporters Group formed

By: Saleemul Huq, ICCCAD

At the nineteenth conference of parties (COP19) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) held in Warsaw, Poland in December 2013, a landmark decision agreement was made to set up the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) on Loss and Damage (L&D). This decision effectively "un-tabooed" what was, until then a taboo topic from the perspective of Annex 1 countries.

A year later at COP20 in Lima, Peru further decisions were made on a two-year workplan with [nine Action Areas](#) with the results to be presented to COP22 in December 2016 in Morocco and also with putting in place a [twenty member Executive Committee](#) (ExCom) to deliver the workplan.

The WIM ExCom [met for the first time in Bonn from September 24-26](#) to start to deliver a very ambitious [two-year workplan](#) in only 15 months left to them.

To help the ExCom deliver its ambitious workplan, a number of research organisations and NGOs came together in Bonn on September 23 to form the WIM Supporters Group (WIMSG). The first meeting of the WIMSG was followed by an informal dinner with all the members of the ExCom so that everyone could get to know each other.

The aim of the Supporters Group is to provide research and technical support to help the ExCom fulfill its two-year workplan. The Supporters Group welcomes the ExCom to send requests for information and publications. We hope to maintain regular contact with the ExCom members through the dissemination of a monthly digest and hold workshops and meetings on pertinent issues regarding loss and damage.

One way member organisations and individual researchers of the WIMSG can organise themselves is by creating sub-groups on each of the nine action areas. We have produced an easy guide to the nine work areas of the Ex Com which can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).



**Figure 3.** Multilogue in Dhaka on Climate Induced Loss and Damage. From left to right: Dr. Atiq Rahman, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, Dr. Saleemul Huq, ICCCAD, Shamima Nargis, Economic Relations Division, Ministry of Finance, Government of Bangladesh and Dr. Nurul Quadir, WIM Executive Member at the multilogue on loss and damage in Dhaka, July 30, 2015.

## High-level multilogue on loss and damage from climate change in Bangladesh

(Adapted from workshop report by Liam Upson, ICCCAD and Jack Bolland, ActionAid)

Ahead of the UN climate negotiations in Paris at the end of 2015, it is imperative that countries collaborate to establish clear agenda items which influence the direction of international climate action and define the trajectory of national resiliency strategies. With this spirit in mind, ActionAid Bangladesh (AAB) launched a series of dialogues to engage key stakeholders on emerging disaster management and climate change issues, coined 'Multilogues'.

[The 2<sup>nd</sup> Multilogue held on July 30, 2015](#), on Climate Induced Loss & Damage in Bangladesh, sponsored by Asian-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN), was hosted in

partnership with International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD), AAB, Global Network of Civil Society Organizations' for Disaster Reduction (GNDR) and Climate Action Network South Asia (CANSAs). The dialogue event brought together 75+ experts from various government ministries, multilaterals, I/NGOs, academia, banks, chambers of commerce and the media.

Below are highlights of the discussion from key figures present at the event. For the full workshop report please [click here](#).

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Jack Bolland, Research Fellow and Regional Coordinator from ActionAid, began the multilogue by describing the resiliency space where loss and damage (L&D) interacts with mitigation and adaptation while providing evidence of the impact on the Bangladesh economy and society.

*"Loss and damage will occur if we do things badly. We have a cyclone happening in July in Bangladesh. Climate change is going to make things more erratic."*

*- Dr. Saleemul Huq*

There is currently no internationally agreed definition of L&D. According to Dr. Saleemul Huq, to operationalize L&D, a definition is required and it is up to the 20 members of the L&D executive committee to decide upon that definition. For this to progress, civil society must lobby the executive committee and offer potential definitions for L&D. On finance, Dr. Huq also stated that if Bangladesh wants to open the door to future investors and billions, not millions, of dollars then it requires a system that is open and transparent.

Shamima Nargis, Additional Secretary for Economic Relations Division (ERD), the NDA for the GCF, highlighted that any definition on L&D has to be cross-cutting, inclusive of all sectors, yet remain free from vested interests. She proceeded to guide the conversation through the area of climate finance by stating the difficulties countries face in the accreditation process of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), such as the high international standards and constant evolving requirements of conditions to access funds.

Dr. Nurul Quadir, member of the WIM Executive Committee, expressed his enthusiasm towards the multilogue series as it provides a wonderful opportunity for the different actors (civil society and private sector alike) to raise their opinions about L&D whilst providing a grassroots perspective of the issue through the lens of the most vulnerable communities. According to Dr. Quadir, the Executive Committee serves as an ambassador, of sorts, to voice the concerns of Bangladeshis and he is committed to "push this issue of loss and damage harder and [the executive committee] needs input from all [agents]."

A unique component of this event was the diversity of guests, reaching beyond the climate community into the business sectors of the economy. It was understood, across the room, the far-reaching nature and corresponding affects of climate change have impactful relevance for multiple key aspects of the country.

Ms Farzana Rahman, guest panelist on behalf of the private sector, shared the work of the Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL) in installing almost 4 million solar home systems and solar irrigation pumps.

Farah Kabir, Country Director of ActionAid Bangladesh emphasized the essential role stories from the ground in Bangladesh play in raising awareness for action at the international level. Civil society organizations, along with private sector business, have an equally important duty to assist L&D Executive Committee in the affirmation of L&D as a legitimate resiliency approach ahead of the forthcoming meetings in September and negotiation in Paris.

Dr Atiq Rahman (BCAS) grounded the discussion with the call for a more comprehensive understanding of technical issues surrounding L&D. It is vital to establish a commonly agreed methodology of what we determine as 'loss' and what we categorize as 'damage,' and how to quantify and scale that. There are ongoing initiatives by ICCCAD, UN University, and ActionAid Bangladesh that study L&D, but there needs to be more support and contribution to the literature and studies on conceptualizing L&D.

The conversation cannot afford to end or fade. No countries, rich or less developed, and no aspect of a given society will be fully protected from climate change and the prevailing losses and damages.

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Climate financing and attribution does place a pivotal role in the practical implementation of resiliency strategies, but equally does the local context's ability to efficiently and holistically deploy resources. In order to achieve this, support in the form of advocacy, evidence and resources must be supplied to both the national government as well as the local communities whose exposure to L&D is most severe. Therefore, it is in everyone best interest to recognize the threat and actively engage in the creation of sustainable solutions and comprehensive resiliency strategies.

countries came to attend the Academy this year. The knowledge and evidence generated from the Academy is targeted at policymakers attending the meetings and negotiations to help them understand and make better decisions to tackle climate change.


More than 20 publications are to be generated from this group by next year which will be a direct input to the WIM ExCom for COP22.

The participants meet once in Bangladesh to shape the main points of research papers that captures these rich discussions and perspectives. After working on the issue the next few months, the participants will reconvene in Germany next year where the publications will be finalized. These research outputs form a significant body of work that will create new knowledge, synthesize existing best practices and shape a global idea on enhancing resilience to minimize losses and damages from climate change.

The Resilience Academy is a collaboration between ICCCAD, United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) and the Munich Re Foundation. This Academy is the third in a series that started in 2013. The first Resilience Academy held in 2013 explored livelihood resilience amidst global transitions. In 2014, the same group of participants reconvened to generate knowledge on the transformations, forced and managed transitions and abrupt changes of livelihoods.

This cohort published a paper titled "Livelihood resilience in the face of climate change", in the prestigious publication *Nature Climate Change* last year. A set of working papers from different perspectives have also been published which examine livelihood resilience in the face of environmental threats and concepts that foster resilience. These papers are available online at <http://www.icccad.net/gibika/>.

For this year, a new group of participants have been selected and the Academy in Bangladesh recently took place from September 6-12, 2015.



## Resilience Academy - A platform that shapes ideas to tackle loss and damage

By: Abu Bakar Siddique, Dhaka Tribune & Masroora Haque, ICCCAD

It might look like a usual workshop on development, but as an observer, one would be surprised to see the depth, direction of discussion and dedication of participants attending this intense week-long programme called the 'Resilience Academy.'

The Academy is meant to provide a platform for connecting communities of expertise (early phase practitioners, academics researchers and policy analysts) examining a specific development issue. The Academy provokes participants to think independently, critically, conceptually, practically and draw from their experiences, all the while challenging them to question what they know. This year they gathered to generate ideas and solutions for loss and damage caused by climate change and to better understand what will enhance the resilience of systems to minimize such impacts. Some of the top researchers, academics and practitioners from 22 different

## Objective of the Forum

The objective of the Forum is to disseminate knowledge on loss and damage research in the Asia Pacific region, to create a community of practice and to ensure that research is targeted to those who need it most. By providing a platform for discussion, the Forum also hopes to shed light on the challenges and potential solutions to assessing and addressing loss and damage. Researchers are encouraged to send us links to their literature to be included on the website and to participate in the monthly Q&A sessions that will be available on LinkedIn as well as on the website (<http://lossanddamageforum.org>).

For more research on loss and damage please visit: [www.lossanddamageforum.org](http://www.lossanddamageforum.org)  
Alternatively, if you would like to submit your research please use the online form on our website.

If you haven't already, check out our video on  
here: <https://vimeo.com/118702620>



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If you have any further comments/inquiries or if you would like to sign-up to become a member, please send us an email at:  
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