SDG 13 on Taking Action on Climate Change and its Impacts: Contributions of International Law, Policy and Governance

Katherine Lofts, M.A. (McGill), LL.B. / B.C.L. (McGill), B.A. (Victoria), CISDL
Sharowat Shamin, LL.M. (Oslo), LL.M. (Dhaka), LL.B. (Dhaka), BRAC University (Dhaka, Bangladesh)
Sharaban Tahura Zaman, LL.M. (Dhaka), LL.B. (Dhaka), Chittagong University of Bangladesh
Dr. Robert Kibugi, LL.D. (Ottawa), LL.M. (Nairobi), LL.B. (Nairobi), University of Nairobi
I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable Development Goal 13 (SDG 13 Climate) commits to take “urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts”, emphasizing globally agreed need to mitigate anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to the damages caused by climate change, while acknowledging that the “United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change.”

This Issues Brief provides a succinct analysis of selected international law, policy and governance instruments, obstacles and issues for achieving this ambitious SDG. After a brief outline of the legal sources that support SDG 13, certain legal obstacles that the international community and individual States may face in their efforts to combat climate change and its impacts are highlighted, followed by a discussion of innovative international law, policy and governance mechanisms which could help to achieve SDG 13, as illustrated by a hypothetical example of national-level coordination and engagement provided prior to the conclusion. The connections between SDG 13 and the other proposed SDGs are also discussed, and initial conclusions drawn, building on the scoping and analysis provided.

II. CONTRIBUTION OF INTERNATIONAL LAW, POLICY AND GOVERNANCE TO SDG 13 TO COMBAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

The key international law instruments in support of the SDG to combat climate change and its impacts are the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), its 1997 Kyoto Protocol and its 2015 Paris Agreement.

The UNFCCC acknowledges that “the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions.” The “ultimate objective” of the UNFCCC echoes the overall sustainability aim of the proposed SDG 13, particularly the priority placed on
integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning. A body of governance mechanisms, including subsequent practice and policy, has built up surrounding decisions of Conference/Meeting of Parties that are either binding or constitute soft law, and contribute to the interpretation of international law on climate change.

The UNFCCC reiterates the responsibility of Parties to “protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities.” Accordingly, it recognizes that developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof. This principle is reiterated in the 2015 Paris Agreement, and its Adoption Decision. With respect to the protection of the climate system, and to the stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations, both the UNFCCC and SDG13 find a common interface within the goal to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity. Indeed, many of the outputs required by developing countries in pursuit of sustainable development include framing and implementing climate change interventions, such as enhancing resilience and building adaptive capacity, which may require both financial and technological inputs. In this respect, reinforced collaboration to support developing countries in special circumstances may be assisted by the now-global recognition of formal policy linkages between climate change and sustainable development, as evident in both the UNFCCC and SDG 13.

In support of SDG 13.2 regarding integration, Article 4.1(f) of the UNFCCC urges all Parties to the Convention to mainstream climate change considerations in their policies, laws and institutions. Corresponding guidelines and plans have been developed through UNFCCC

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2 Ibid. at Art. 2. To achieve “stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.”

3 Ibid. at Art. 3.1

4 UNFCCC, “Decision CP21: Adoption of the Paris Agreement” FCCC/CP/2015/L.9/Rev.1, at: https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/09r01.pdf [Paris Agreement]; UNEP, etc, including literature cited in March 2016 MC Cordonier Segger “Understanding the New Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Prospects for “Climate Justice” and Sustainable Development”

5 UNFCCC. at Art. 4.1(f), which calls for States to “[t]ake climate change considerations into account, to the extent feasible, in their relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, and employ appropriate methods, for example impact assessments, formulated and determined nationally, with a view to minimizing adverse effects on the economy, on public health and on the quality
Conference of the Parties (CoP) Resolutions, and related provisions are found in the Paris Agreement.\(^6\) As such, for example, review procedures which track efforts to reduce carbon footprints or save energy across economic sectors, will support both UNFCCC implementation, and SDG 13.2. UNFCCC Article 4.2 commits to national mitigation policies and measures.\(^7\) In this respect, SDG 13.2 is underpinned by international legal principles, such as the “general obligation of States to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction and control respect the environment of other States or of areas beyond national control” that was confirmed by the International Court of Justice in the Nuclear Weapons and Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros opinions.\(^8\) This obligation highlights the need to integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning.

Further, UNFCCC Article 4.3 on climate finance\(^9\) links directly to SDG Goal 13.a, and corresponding guidelines and plans have been developed through UNFCCC CoP Resolutions for the Green Climate Fund and other international instruments, with related provisions found in the Paris Agreement.\(^10\) As such, the law, policy and governance mechanisms already established to secure and distribute this climate finance equitably can contribute directly to the attainment of SDG 13.a. For instance, reports on the growth of national climate funds and insurance schemes, or public-private partnerships which invest in retrofitting infrastructure, established to comply with UNFCCC climate finance commitments, can communicate a country’s contributions to meeting SDG 13.a.

Supporting the engagement priorities of SDG 13.3, UNFCCC Article 4.1(i) also encourages education, training and awareness on climate change.\(^11\) Corresponding guidelines and plans have been developed through UNFCCC CoP Resolutions, and related provisions are found in the Paris Agreement.\(^12\) International and domestic, policy and governance mechanisms established under Article 4.1(i) of the UNFCCC could be harnessed to directly support the implementation of SDG 13.3. For instance, existing international and national systems to review and promote inclusion of climate change teaching modules in school curriculums, or to support climate awareness training programs for sub-national government authorities, directly assist in meeting SDG 13.3 commitments. Indeed, international legal obligations in the 1992 UNFCCC, the 1997 Kyoto Protocol and the 2015 Paris Agreement that touch on the issues above, and other important mechanisms such as incentivizing clean technology, reducing emissions from deforestation and land degradation, promoting adaptation and resilience, and securing transparency, can contribute to the delivery of SDG 13. Governance systems and benchmarks already in place to monitor this progress could be immensely helpful, even at national levels, for efforts to report on progress towards SDG 13.

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\(^6\) Paris Agreement, supra note 4.

\(^7\) UNFCCC, at Art. 4.2, states that “each Annex I Party shall adopt national policies and take corresponding measures on the mitigation of climate change, by limiting its anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases and protecting and enhancing its greenhouse gas sinks and reservoirs. These policies and measures will demonstrate that developed countries are taking the lead in modifying longer-term trends in anthropogenic emissions consistent with the objective of the Convention.”


\(^9\) UNFCCC, supra note 1 at Art. 4.3, which states that developed country Parties and others included in Annex II “shall provide new and additional financial resources to meet the agreed full costs incurred by developing country Parties in complying with their obligations under Article 12, paragraph 1. They shall also provide such financial resources, including for the transfer of technology, needed by the developing country Parties to meet the agreed full incremental costs of implementing measures that are covered by paragraph 1 of this Article and that are agreed between a developing country Party and the international entity or entities referred to in Article 11, in accordance with that Article. The implementation of these commitments shall take into account the need for adequacy and predictability in the flow of funds and the importance of appropriate burden sharing among the developed country Parties.”

\(^10\) Paris Agreement, supra note 4.

\(^11\) Ibid. at Art. 4.1(i), which encourages States to “[p]romote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organizations.”

\(^12\) Paris Agreement, supra note 4.
Climate change affects a wide range of environmental, social, cultural and economic development challenges, and other international instruments contribute to implementation of SDG 13. For example, through the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 194 Parties seek to ensure the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, among other objectives. Given the potential contributions of biodiversity, such as tropical forests or oceans ecosystems, to climate change mitigation and adaptation, existing CBD obligations and reporting mechanisms may be leveraged to deliver SDG 13, particularly 13.2 and 13.a.

The Ramsar Convention\(^\text{14}\) provides a framework for national action and international cooperation for the conservation and wise use of internationally significant wetlands and their resources. As many wetland environments such as lakes, rivers, swamps and marshes, mangroves and coral reefs are under increasing threat from climate change, certain obligations and mechanisms enshrined in the Ramsar Convention may support the implementation of SDG 13, as evidenced by Resolution XII.11 on the protection and sustainable use of peatlands for climate mitigation, which built upon Resolutions XI.14 and X.24 from previous CoPs, and was decided by the Parties to the Ramsar Convention in their 12\(^\text{th}\) CoP.\(^\text{15}\) Similarly, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD) calls upon national governments, NGOs, and local populations to cooperate to combat desertification and mitigate the effects of drought and dryland degradation.\(^\text{16}\) As desertification, drought and dryland degradation may be exacerbated by changing climates, the policy, governance and other instruments adopted by the UNCCD to achieve its goals can also support the implementation of SDG 13.

Further, as a governance mechanism rather than treaty rule, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 (SFDRR) recognizes the important interrelationship between climate change, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction.\(^\text{17}\) The Framework acknowledges climate change as a disaster risk driver, and recognizes the need for cross-sectoral approaches to address the relationship between climate change and disaster risk reduction. In addition, the SFDRR emphasizes implementation measures, such as the need to “[i]ncorporate disaster risk reduction measures into multilateral and bilateral development assistance programmes within and across all sectors, as appropriate, related to poverty reduction, sustainable development, natural resource management, environment, urban development and adaptation to climate change.”\(^\text{18}\)

Efforts to implement adaption and resilience commitments under this Framework, among others focused specially on Small Islands Developing States and others, can support the achievement of SDG 13.1 and 13.b.

Climate change will also affect a wide range of human rights, including the rights to life, health, an adequate standard of living, housing, food and water, culture, education, and self-determination. The enjoyment of these rights will be affected not only by the effects of climate change itself, but also by States’ mitigation and adaptation actions. Given these significant impacts, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) provides


\(^{14}\) Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat, 2 February 1971, 996 UNTS 245 (entry into force 21 December 1975) ["Ramsar Convention"].


\(^{18}\) Ibid. at para. 47(d).
an important legal justification for the implementation of SDG 13. Effective climate change-related planning and management, as well as strengthened resilience and adaptive capacity, are crucial for respecting, protecting and fulfilling the rights enshrined in ICESCR. As the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights has stated, “in accordance with Articles 55 and 56 of the Charter of the United Nations, with well-established principles of international law, and with the provisions of the Covenant itself, international cooperation for development and thus for the realization of economic, social and cultural rights is an obligation of all States,”¹⁹ and would continue to apply in the context of climate change. As Professor John Knox, UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment, noted in his reports,²⁰ and in his interventions during the UNFCCC CoP21 Climate Law and Governance Day in Paris in 2015, there are both substantive and procedural rights which are directly relevant to climate change, and can contribute to the implementation of the SDG 13, while the effectiveness of the global response to climate change critically determines whether human rights can be realised in the future. Many regional human rights instruments and their respective governance systems are also relevant to, and provide support for, the implementation of SDG 13. These include environmental instruments such as the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources,²¹ as well as human rights instruments such as the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, which provides in Article 8 on the human right to family life, a provision which has been interpreted by the European Courts to include aspects of the right to a clean environment.²²

In certain selected Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs), Parties have also included provisions that favor climate change measures, helping to ensure that trade and investment do not impede effective climate change adaptation and mitigation actions.²³ For example, Parties to the EU-Columbia-Peru RTA “reaffirm their commitment to effectively implement in their laws and practices” their obligations under the Kyoto Protocol, providing that any measures taken are not disguised trade restrictions.²⁴ Similarly, under the EU - Republic of Korea Free Trade Agreement, the parties “reaffirm their commitment to reaching the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol.”²⁵

Various RTAs also attempt explicitly to prevent the weakening of environmental protection in domestic law, or to strengthen enforcement of domestic environmental and human rights laws, including those related to climate change. In addition, exceptions and reservations can serve as “windows” within trade regimes, to the extent that they are interpreted “to preserve the flexibility of a regulator responding to new challenges, such as climate change,”²⁶ RTAs might event promote cooperation on climate change issues and encourage trade and investment liberalization for adaptation and mitigation response measures, by promoting the adoption of new policies and governance mechanisms. These include commitments to strengthen laws to address climate

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²⁴ EU Economic Partnership Agreement at Art. 270(2)
²⁵ EU - South Korea Free Trade Agreement at Art. 13.5(3)
²⁶ Ibid. at 16.
change, the promotion of climate finance instruments and carbon markets, the promotion of climate change technologies, and the inclusion of provisions on disaster risk reduction.

III. LEGAL OBSTACLES FACING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 13 ON COMBATING CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

As acknowledged in the SDG 13, the UNFCCC is recognized as the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change, in a manner that some experts explain as “separat[e] the UN’s legal process to address climate change from the UN’s voluntary process to address sustainable development.” While the UNFCCC itself has certain constraints as a framework convention, Parties are bound not to undermine efforts made under its guidance, including efforts to negotiate for binding agreements. Furthermore, the Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC legally binds developed countries to emissions reduction targets, and the 2015 Paris Agreement, as “an agreed outcome with legal force” is applicable to all the Parties which ratify or otherwise accept it. The Paris Agreement reinforces each of the SDG 13 targets, and its success hinges on the design of effective policy, governance and other measures for implementation on all levels.

SDG 13 is strengthened by harmonizing cooperation among the international community and related stakeholders, including through the provision of adequate financial resources to developing countries. New, additional, adequate and predictable climate finance, as recognized in the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement and the SDG 13, will be critical to ensuring that the most vulnerable countries can adapt to the effects of changing climates. Enhanced mobilization of resources, including through redirection of investments and funding towards climate finance, for instance to the various new climate funds, including the Green Climate Fund and the Adaptation Fund, or through instruments such as REDD+ and the new 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change Sustainable Development Mechanism, offers an important way forward, as noted in the new 2015 Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Governments and businesses may also be called upon by public opinion to leave valuable fossil fuels in the ground to ensure that the global “carbon budget” is not exceeded, triggering dangerous levels of climate change. The need to stay within this budget raises issues of equity, including

27 See, e.g., EU - South Korea Free Trade Agreement at Art. 13.5(2); Canada – Chile Free Trade Agreement at Art. A-04 (referencing the requirements of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal); Canada – Costa Rica Free Trade Agreement at Art.I.4; Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement at Annex 103; and Dominican Republic-Central America-United States Free Trade Agreement at Ch. 17.
28 See, e.g., Mexico-Japan Free Trade Agreement at Art. 147; EU-Columbia-Peru Agreement at Art. 271 (relating to trade favouring sustainable development).
29 See, e.g., Agreement on the Environment between Canada and the Republic of Peru at Preamble; EU-Central America Association Agreement at Article 50, 65; CARIFORUM-EU Economic Partnership Agreement at Art. 83.26; EU-South Africa Trade, Development and Cooperation Agreement (TDCA) at Art. 57; EU - South Korea Free Trade Agreement at Art. 13.6; Mexico – EU Free Trade Agreement at Art. 23.
30 See, e.g., EU-Central America Association Agreement at Art. 51.
34 Paris Agreement, supra note 4.
35 Paris Agreement, supra note 4.
questions of how to fairly allocate the rights to exploit remaining fossil fuel reserves.\textsuperscript{37} Hydrocarbon fuels are politically sensitive, especially since many economic models are heavily reliant on fossil fuel revenues, and recent discoveries of new oil and gas are being found in developing countries where governments expect these revenues to bolster budgets for socio-economic development.\textsuperscript{38}

In some cases, the effective implementation of SDG 13 and any new climate change agreement may stimulate changes to domestic laws, policies and institutional arrangements at both national and sub-national levels, with related demands for effective national and local policy and governance mechanisms, increasingly detailed technical standards, and public participation, alongside other priorities. For example, States may decide to cut subsidies and preferential tax treatments for fossil fuel industries, while also incentivizing the use of renewable energies and the development of renewable energy technologies. Removal of subsidies may have the immediate impact of increasing retail fuel prices for households, posing immediate challenges to livelihoods if not handled carefully alongside incentives. Difficulties could further arise where States seek to review (and possibly raise) income, value added (sales) tax, and property tax to refinance national and subnational budgets without diminishing necessary public services.\textsuperscript{39}

\section*{IV. INTERNATIONAL POLICY, INSTITUTIONAL AND GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS TO COORDINATE DELIVERY OF SDG 13 ON CLIMATE CHANGE}

This section briefly discusses existing policies, institutional and governance arrangements that are in place, at international levels, to coordinate the delivery of key targets for the SDG 13 on Climate Change. It reviews how these policy and governance arrangements could be strengthened or improved, particularly to promote coherence, achieve synergies and mobilize additional resources for action. It also discusses how, internationally, transparency can be strengthened for communicating, monitoring and reporting efforts towards achieving this SDG globally, with particular reference to the new Paris Agreement transparency mechanisms.

The principal forum for addressing SDG 13 is the UNFCCC. The SDGs take the form of aspirational targets. Unless their contents are already reflected in a binding treaty, these commitments may be viewed in a different sense than traditional legal obligations, although they may be more likely to be implemented.\textsuperscript{40} While contextual interpretation is common, there is a risk of differing interpretation which could affect the reliability of subsequent cooperative, assessment and verification governance mechanisms. However, approaches adopted at the national level may crystallize SDG 13 into common strategic planning instruments used by States, or Parties to treaties mentioned above supporting the normative content from the SDGs to interpret their ‘hard law’ obligations.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{40} Legal and international relations literature is divided on the point of whether ‘soft law’ is correctly characterized as non-binding or quasi-binding. Leading international experts have noted, for instance, that the Biodiversity Strategic Plan with its Aichi Targets, which is followed by the review and updating of NBSAPs (spell out) that certain countries adopt in Parliament, and others internally endorse for implementation, may be better enforced and implemented than certain binding instruments which have been signed and ratified or acceded to.
Domestic interpretation and internalization is required to provide normative content for SDG 13 operationalization under national, regional and broader international instruments.

Importantly, convergence must be sought when designing implementation approaches for SDG13 to harness the diverse complementarities that arise from the various international law instruments. As an illustration, the interpretation of SDG 13 can consider not only how the UNFCCC system provides and sustains norms, for instance any pledges or review mechanisms adopted under the new COP agreement in Paris, but also how constructive linkages between sustainable development and climate change can be attained by drawing from other relevant conventions such as the CBD. This should be done bearing in mind that the SDGs can be considered ‘soft law’ which would be recognized as customary if supported, over time, by sufficient opinio juris and the general practice of States. Emphasis should be on transitioning these soft law instruments into mutually supportive domestic measures.

V. SDG 13 GUIDING DOMESTIC ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ITS IMPACTS

As climate change cuts across many different jurisdictions, and affects many aspects of sustainable development, SDG 13 is closely linked to other SDGs. In particular, taking urgent action on climate change and its impacts is critical to achieving food security and promoting sustainable agriculture (SDG 2); ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water (SDG 6); building resilient infrastructure (SDG 9); reducing inequality within and among countries (SDG 10); making cities and human settlements

**BOX 2: NATIONAL IMPLEMENTATION**

States have been committed to combat climate change and its effects, collaborating to address mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, transparency, capacity and public engagement challenges for over 25 years. Many countries have established national institutions and bodies that provide a sensible starting point for organizing national cooperation to achieve SDG 13, and to report on their efforts to implement the UNFCCC and its Paris Agreement.

In designing Climate Action Plans as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreements, a State may engage stakeholders such as climate mitigation, adaptation and finance institutions, environment, health, transport, agricultural, energy and other natural resources, industrial, and other sectors and their national authorities, also central finance, investment and trade ministries, civil society organizations and academic institutions working on climate change, private sector representatives such as business councils or associations, and major group / stakeholder representatives such as women, youth and indigenous peoples. Depending on the constitutional structure of the country, diverse sub-national entities may also play very important roles, including local and regional governments.

The national body tasked with implementing the measures necessary to achieve SDG 13 may monitor and advise regularly on progress towards implementation of the SDG and report to the country’s presidential office, the finance or national development department, and the authority in charge of climate change. This report could draw upon the same data as the report that is provided to relevant treaty secretariat bodies and international agencies, particularly in the national communications on NDC achievement under the Paris Agreement transparency mechanisms. It is important that these reports and experiences can be shared internationally, so that best practice examples can influence the ongoing development of national level strategy, and the peer review process can be effective.

As noted earlier in this brief, climate change cuts across many different jurisdictions, and affects many aspects of sustainable development. Measures necessary to achieve the SDGs may therefore need to be incorporated into each country’s growth and development strategy. This strategy may require support from a sufficient budget and priority, buy-in and engagement from the finance ministry and the office of the head of state, as well as broad networks of scientific, educational and awareness-raising institutions across the private sector and civil society.
inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable (SDG 11); conserving and sustainably using the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (SDG 14); protecting, restoring and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably managing forests, combating desertification, halting and reversing land degradation, and halting biodiversity loss (SDG 15); and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development (SDG 16).

In addition to the international treaties, backed by their respective governance mechanisms and domestic policy measures, which are mentioned in this brief, many aspects of the other SDGs will contribute to the realization of SDG 13. The measures necessary to achieve the SDGs may, therefore, need be incorporated into each country’s growth and development strategy. Leadership at the national level may be crucial to create a clear roadmap for implementing, monitoring and coordinating action. While discussion of national-level measures is beyond the scope of this initial Issue Brief, as it requires investigation of case studies and success stories in different contexts, an illustrative example can be included (see Box 2).

VI. CONCLUSION

Climate change is no longer a risk; it is a reality. In policy, law and governance, “the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, with a view to accelerating the reduction of global greenhouse gas emissions.”

Notwithstanding the international community’s support for the SDG to combat climate change and its impacts, the policy and governance implications of the UNFCCC and its COP decisions, and the commitments taken by States in many other treaties with further instruments that can be activated, for the effective implementation of the SDG 13, much hinges on the effectiveness of the new Paris Agreement. The SDG to combat climate change and its impacts can be realized, and intensive efforts are underway to persuade States, individually and collectively, to turn their stated goals into a practical reality. The examples of existing mechanisms summarized briefly in this review present diverse ways and methods such a development can be achieved.

Finally, research, awareness and collaboration at all levels, especially amongst the legal research academic community, policy and decision makers and international organizations, to mention but few will be needed in order to strengthen solutions and provide further innovations on climate change mitigation and adaptation to avert its impacts and ecosystems, and environmental sustainability can only be achieved where there are fair, effective and transparent national governance arrangements and the rule of law. Effective legal and policy regimes are essential, as are effective implementation, accessible legal procedures and collective access to justice, and a supporting legal and institutional framework and principles. An independent judiciary and judicial process can also prove vital for the implementation, development and enforcement of sound environmental laws.

Members of the judiciary, as well as those contributing to the judicial process at the national, regional and global levels, are crucial partners for promoting compliance with, and the implementation and enforcement of, international and national environmental law. International

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research and implementation collaboration at all levels, especially among the legal research community, law schools, and international organizations can also strengthen and further support innovative initiatives and solutions to promote and protect biodiversity. By building and supporting the capacity of courts and tribunals, as well as prosecutors, law enforcement officials and other related stakeholders at national, regional and local levels to implement the aforementioned legal instruments, and by facilitating exchanges of best practices through continued knowledge transfer and research, States have great potential to actualize the full potential of the SDG 1c on climate change.\textsuperscript{43}
Authors and Acknowledgements

**Ms. Katherine Lofts** (Canada) is a Legal Research Fellow and Programme Manager for Climate Change Law with the CISDL.

**Ms. Sharowat Shamin** (Bangladesh) is a member of the CISDL’s Legal Research Group, and also works as a lecturer in law at the BRAC University in Dhaka, Bangladeshi. Ms. Shamin was previously Assistant Commissioner and Executive Magistrate to the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh.

**Ms. Sharaban Tahura Zaman** (Bangladesh) is a Lecturer in the Department of Law at Daffodil International University, as well as a Research Assistant with the Centre for Climate Justice – Bangladesh, and a member of the CISDL Legal Research Group.

**Dr. Robert Kibugi** is the CISDL Climate Change Programme Lead Counsel, and a Lecturer in Law at the University of Nairobi Faculty of Law Centre for Advanced Studies in Environmental Law and Policy (CASELAP).

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