Workshop Report

Technical Dialogue on Article 2.1(c) of the Paris Agreement: Shaping Africa's Priorities for COP30

1–2 October 2025, President Hotel, Cape Town, South Africa

Hosted by SouthSouthNorth (SSN) through its Programme on *Aligning Financial Flows with the Paris Agreement in Africa*

Executive Summary

The Technical Dialogue on Article 2.1(c) of the Paris Agreement convened African stakeholders from government, finance, academia, civil society, and the private sector to build a shared understanding of what aligning finance flows with Article 2.1(c) means for Africa.

Held just weeks after the final workshop under the Sharm el-Sheikh Dialogues on Article 2.1 (c) in Rome, the workshop provided a strategic space to shape Africa's priorities ahead of COP30 in Belém, where critical decisions on finance alignment are expected.

Participants agreed that Africa must define "consistency" for itself, grounded in justice, equity, and sustainable development, and ensure that Article 2.1(c) implementation strengthens, rather than substitutes, developed countries' obligations under Article 9.

Key outcomes included:

- Consensus on an African definition of consistency in finance flows.
- Concrete negotiation inputs and safeguards for COP30.
- Governance recommendations to strengthen domestic and regional coordination.
- Capacity-building priorities focused on data, finance readiness, and institutional systems.

The dialogue reaffirmed Africa's agency in shaping global finance reform, emphasising that the continent is not only a recipient of climate finance but a source of solutions for resilience, adaptation, and equitable growth.

> *Africa must lead in defining what consistency means — not have it defined for us.*
> *— Participant, Technical Dialogue on Article 2.1(c)*

1. Purpose and Objectives

The Technical Dialogue aimed to clarify the implications of Article 2.1(c) for Africa's finance and development priorities and to co-develop actionable strategies that connect global commitments to local realities.

Specifically, the dialogue sought to:

- Clarify the scope and implications of Article 2.1(c) in Africa's context.
- Explore how Article 2.1(c) complements Article 9.
- Identify Africa's priorities for aligning finance with low-emission, climate-resilient development.
- Develop negotiation asks, safeguards, and governance recommendations for COP30.
- Ground Africa's positions in justice, equity, and the Addis Ababa Declaration.

2. Key Themes and Insights

2.1. Complementarity of Articles 2.1(c) and 9

Participants reaffirmed that Article 2.1(c) underpins the Paris Agreement's financial architecture, ensuring that all finance flows — public and private — align with low-emission, climate-resilient development. Africa stressed that implementation of Article 2.1(c) must not weaken the Article 9 obligation for developed countries to provide predictable, concessional finance.

Several participants warned against conflating the two articles, noting that some developed countries are attempting to count mobilised private finance as Article 9 fulfilment under the NCQG, which risks shifting responsibility away from public finance providers.

2.2. Fragmentation, Governance, and Power Asymmetries

Africa faces a fragmented climate finance architecture, with over 90 funds and increasing bilateralism. This complexity undermines coordination and weakens country ownership. Many participants pointed to an erosion of multilateralism, where geopolitical competition has replaced cooperation, leaving African priorities marginalised.

They called for reforming international financial institutions to enhance African representation, transparency, and participation in decision-making.

2.3. Defining "Consistency" for Africa

Africa's definition of "consistency" must reflect its development pathways, not externally imposed metrics. Delegates proposed developing African Principles of Consistency, with criteria grounded in:

- Alignment with NDCs, NAPs, and LTSs.
- Predictable and accessible finance.
- Long-term orientation and development coherence.
- Safeguards against greenwashing and maladaptation.

2.4. Adaptation Finance and Resilience Pathways

Adaptation finance remains insufficient despite being Africa's foremost priority. Participants called for a quantified adaptation finance goal within the NCQG and emphasised adaptation as a strategic investment that prevents loss and damage.

Innovative approaches discussed included:

- Debt-for-resilience swaps
- Parametric insurance
- Blended finance models that de-risk adaptation investment while promoting social protection and local resilience

2.5. Just Transitions and Development-Centred Alignment

African just transitions must balance decarbonisation with economic diversification, energy access, and decent work. Participants noted that current Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JETPs) overemphasise mitigation while neglecting adaptation and inclusion.

They called for transition frameworks that integrate social equity, protect vulnerable groups, and support small enterprises and community-led initiatives across multiple sectors.

2.6. Capacity, Data, and Institutional Readiness

Participants identified widespread institutional and data-related capacity gaps, particularly within central banks, ministries of finance, and local financial institutions. Strengthening adaptation modelling, data systems, and climate disclosure frameworks was seen as critical.

Capacity building should be integral to finance flows, with tailored support for financial regulators and budget authorities to integrate climate risk assessment and fiscal planning into national systems.

2.7. Private Sector Engagement and Investment Mobilisation

The private sector's role in alignment remains limited due to weak engagement in NDC and adaptation processes. Participants urged governments to create enabling environments — clear policy signals, investment platforms, and risk-sharing mechanisms — to guide private capital toward climate-resilient investments.

There was broad agreement that leaving alignment to market forces alone risks exacerbating inequities and maladaptation.

2.8. Debt and the Politics of Finance

Debt sustainability emerged as a defining concern. Participants questioned whether debt-based instruments can be classified as climate finance, given their potential to increase fiscal vulnerability.

They advocated for non-debt-creating instruments, such as grants and concessional loans, and for greater accountability of export credit agencies and sovereign wealth funds. Domestic resource mobilisation and transparent debt management were identified as essential for financial sovereignty.

> *Debt cannot be the price of climate action.*
> *— Workshop participant*

3. Key Outcomes and Takeaways

3.1. Africa's Narrative

Consensus emerged around a unified African narrative on Article 2.1(c), grounded in justice, equity, and self-determination. This narrative positions alignment as a tool to strengthen, not substitute, climate finance commitments.

3.2. Negotiation Inputs for COP30

Participants developed actionable inputs and safeguards for the African Group of Negotiators (AGN):

- Operationalise an African definition of "consistency".
- Embed alignment within national development and just transition frameworks.
- Advocate for a quantified adaptation finance goal.
- Ensure complementarity between Articles 2.1(c) and 9.
- Incorporate safeguards to prevent greenwashing and uphold equity.

3.3. Governance Recommendations

- Strengthen coordination between ministries of finance, environment, and planning.
- Engage central banks and regulators in alignment strategies.
- Promote regional collaboration through African financial institutions and platforms to amplify African influence in global financial governance.

3.4. Capacity Building Priorities

- Develop climate finance data systems and modelling hubs.
- Establish African-aligned disclosure standards and taxonomies.
- Enhance institutional capacity for climate budgeting and risk assessment.

4. Closing Reflections

The Technical Dialogue reaffirmed Africa's commitment to leading on climate finance reform through a justice-centred, proactive agenda. Participants emphasised Africa's dual role as both a vulnerable region and a generator of solutions in adaptation, resilience, and sustainable finance.

As COP30 approaches, the outcomes of this Dialogue will feed into Africa's collective positioning, ensuring that Article 2.1(c) supports equitable development and long-term resilience.

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