ECO has done some more research on the human brain and psychology. How do we approach solving complex problems? How are our brains wired, when we are, again and again confronted with ... the same old, complicated challenge such as finding solutions to common timeframes, market mechanisms or how to fulfill a 10-year old commitment? And how do we ensure progress rather than getting stuck in detail or old solutions that do not work?

ECO is relieved to report that there is hope! Our brain muscles are flexible! Hurray! ECO was fearing our brains are rigid and only work on autopilot! This is not the case. You can come up with new discussions and new solutions. Going forward you don’t need to repeat the same agenda items, but you can add new ones to improve the balance and open up the game to all players. Which reminds ECO of the fact that not all of the sessions are open to observers yet - parts of the game are still not transparent! Good job on all those that supported observer calls on this.

But ECO would like to bring you back to finding a way forward - out of the detail and into the serious business of preparing for the way forward - the road to COP26. ECO and all her friends need clarity on what will happen after we leave Bonn the Matrix. ECO is sure the UK Presidency has thought outside the box, and investigated options. Like ECO many parties must have also thought about possible options, so ECO encourages the Presidency to put scenarios on the table by the end of this session. ECO understands it's too early for making decisions - but not knowing what decisions are being considered will only create more random speculation.

And ECO is here to help: To get your creativity and brain muscles going, ECO is challenging you to solve this puzzle: Connect all nine dots by drawing four straight, continuous lines without lifting your pencils or retracing a line! Go on - you can do it, ECO holds high hopes in your abilities (solution to be provided in the next ECO). Oh and just to be clear on the rules: you can solve this jointly by engaging in dialogue with your fellow negotiators. Civil society also stands ready to provide best practices and solutions that work!

Once you have cracked this one, ECO would encourage you to turn your attention back to the SB sessions. Time is ticking. Only 5 days left to come up with results that will effectively prepare the world for COP26 - entering the decisive decade for turning the climate emergency.

On that higher level note ECO is also eagerly awaiting the results of the G7 leaders meeting - once again an opportunity for world leaders to show true global solidarity by looking beyond narrow national interests and take the necessary steps to ensure vaccine equity and finally, finally deliver on their finance commitments!
Article 6

ECO knows how the Parties can connect the dots to avoid double-counting and to begin the Article 6.4 mechanism taking account of lessons learned from the Kyoto Protocol. Direct the Secretariat to quantify the emission and temperature impacts of any options for a so-called “opt-out period” from corresponding adjustments or carryover of Kyoto Protocol units. By drawing a line between a seemingly convenient political “solution” and the non-negotiable atmospheric science, we expect that the Parties will find that line is actually one they should not cross - in order to uphold the environmental integrity of the Paris Agreement.

Global Stocktake (GST):

ECO is in awe! Here is why: observer organisations have been asked for substantive inputs on the future of the GST. ECO is therefore busy at work defining how ECO can most effectively contribute to the stocktake with locally based best practices, brilliant ideas, experiences, and all the knowledge about climate action and ambition that is socially just and environmentally sustainable! ECO takes collaborative approaches extremely seriously and is therefore drafting suggestions and distilling the very best recommendations! Stay tuned for details coming up!

Transparency

ECO is still wondering how you’re managing in the discussions on transparency. ECO is grateful for the updates from the ENB team and has also managed to get updates from the virtual corridors! So ECO is scratching her head, how will Co-facilitators be able to include all the technical submissions from parties to bring together divergent views on content of the summary tables and inclusion of Loss and Damage separately in the tables? ECO urges parties to advance discussions on the same. We hope to see improvements in the upcoming iterations - one week left to go! And there's no time to start from scratch!

Common Timeframes

ECO was unable to intervene in Thursday’s session on common time frames, due to a lack of time. So ECO is bringing the intervention here!

For ECO, reaching agreement on a common time frame for NDCs is essential to ensuring the robustness of the Paris Agreement. Hence, ECO’s response to the guiding questions is as follows:

Q1: NDCs communicated by 2025 should include a time frame to 2035. We see this as being consistent with a single five-year common time frame, to be implemented from 2031 onwards. A single, five-year implementation time frame allows Parties to adapt and align their domestic climate actions with the five-year heartbeat of the Paris Agreement.
Q2: We note that decision 6/CMA.1, paragraph 2 notes that Parties SHALL apply common time frames, and the outcome needs to be consistent with that.

Q3: The NDC communicated in 2030 should have a time frame to 2040. The guidance can specify that the end of commitment period should advance in 5 year intervals. ECO agrees with Switzerland that the final language in the decision can reflect this pattern continuing forward and avoid the need to renegotiate this issue.

Q4: The call to review and update NDCs may not be necessary, but can be welcomed. In line with Article 4.11, a Party may at any time adjust its NDC with a view of enhancing its ambition. The decision could invite or encourage Parties to adjust targets or elements of its existing NDC. That is, in 2025, Parties could be invited to adjust their 2030 targets while putting forward its 2035 target, especially in response to the GST and in the event that the aggregate effect of NDCs is not in line with trajectories compatible with staying below 1.5 degrees.

Parties should leave this session with a refined, consolidated, and streamlined set of options and ECO urges Parties and co-facilitators to move toward that outcome. Between now and Glasgow, negotiators and Ministers will need a clear and concise set of options in order to reach an agreement that reflects climate ambition.

Clear Science messages

During Week 1 ECO spent 5 days listening to and digesting the newest climate science. ECO regrets that a lot of the new science is rather harsh: the WMO reported that 2019 was a record year in global greenhouse gas emissions, temperature and sea level rise. Predictions are that global warming leads to regions becoming uninhabitable for humans. The FAO reported that forest areas are decreasing and we are falling short of achieving zero hunger by 2030 and one in five hectar of land is degraded. ECO was further saddened by the IPCC reporting that almost all glaciers are losing mass.

If countries accelerate climate ambition and action radically - ECO was pleased to learn that the long term Paris goal is still within reach. This needs to be coupled with much more progress on adaptation efforts which are falling short. ECO was also struck by the health impacts of climate change presented by the WHO - more on this next week!

Adaptation and Loss and Damage

Finance issues permeate every room where adaptation is discussed, the Nairobi Work Programme, National Adaptation Plans and of course the Adaptation Fund. Everybody accepts that there is a shortfall in international climate finance for adaptation action around the world and the need to protect finance as a critical enabler of adaptation efforts and leverage economic stimulus for accelerating adaptation. So are delegates looking to reform climate finance institutions to improve direct access?
Are Parties exploring mechanisms for giving local institutions and communities more direct access to finance and decision-making? Are they looking for ways participatory approaches can be rewarded and for gender balance? Well no! Up to half of the precious time allocated is being frittered away on procedural quibbling. Please Parties, you know who you are, consider what Extinction Rebellion or Fridays for the Future will make of your efforts. Consider whether you can look a fellow human that has lost everything to a climate disaster in the eye and tell them what you are doing is your very best. The house is on fire. Next door is screaming for help. Replying with comments on Line 37 sub section 12 doesn’t cut it. ECO is calling for progress!