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## **Subsidiary Body for Implementation**

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**National adaptation plans<sup>1</sup>**

# **Synthesis report on experiences with the application of the guidelines for the national adaptation plan process in the least developed country Parties**

**Note by the secretariat\***

## *Summary*

This report synthesizes the views submitted by Parties and relevant organizations on experiences with the application of the guidelines for the national adaptation plan (NAP) process in least developed country (LDC) Parties. It reports on the following: views on the priority and urgency of the NAP process; the application of the guidelines for the NAP process; experience gained under other adaptation planning processes and programmes; and support needs for the application of the NAP guidelines in LDCs. The report concludes with a summary of proposals for next steps.

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<sup>1</sup> Decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 15–18.

\* This document was submitted after the due date in order to include views which were received after the official submission date.

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Mandate**

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), at its seventeenth session, invited Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 13 February 2013, information on their experiences with the application of the guidelines for the national adaptation plan (NAP) process for least developed country (LDC) Parties.<sup>2</sup>
2. At the same session, the COP requested the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report on this topic, taking into account the submissions referred to in paragraph 1 above and other relevant sources of information, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) at its thirty-eighth session.<sup>3</sup>

### **B. Scope of the note**

3. This report synthesizes the information received by the secretariat in submissions as presented in document FCCC/SBI/2013/MISC.2 and Add.1.
4. It begins by providing brief background information on the initial guidelines for the formulation of NAPs, adopted by the COP at its seventeenth session,<sup>4</sup> and the preparation of technical guidelines, based on the initial guidelines, by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). The report then synthesizes the information submitted by Parties and relevant organizations on the priority and urgency of the NAP process and the application of the guidelines. A synthesis of lessons learned from other adaptation planning processes, and of information on support needs for the application of the NAP guidelines, follows.
5. The report closes with a summary of proposals for next steps.

### **C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation**

6. The SBI may wish to consider the information contained in this document in its consideration of NAPs at its thirty-eighth session.

## **II. Background**

7. At its sixteenth session, the COP established the Cancun Adaptation Framework, and, under it, a process to enable LDCs to formulate and implement NAPs, building upon their experience gained in preparing and implementing national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs).<sup>5</sup>
8. At its seventeenth session, the COP adopted initial guidelines for the NAP process, as referred to in paragraph 4 above, and set out a process for the consideration of guidance on policies and programmes to enable support for the NAP process for LDCs.<sup>6</sup> It also requested the LEG to provide technical guidance and support to the NAP process.<sup>7</sup> In

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<sup>2</sup> Decision 5/CP.17, paragraph 7.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 5/CP.17, paragraph 8.

<sup>4</sup> Decision 5/CP.17, annex.

<sup>5</sup> Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 15.

<sup>6</sup> Decision 5/CP.17, paragraph 27.

<sup>7</sup> Decision 5/CP.17, paragraph 13.

response, the LEG produced technical guidelines for the NAP process, as referred to in paragraph 4 above.<sup>8</sup>

### **III. Synthesis of experiences**

#### **A. Introduction**

9. This chapter contains a summary of the information provided by Parties and relevant organizations on their experiences with the application of the guidelines for the NAP process, as referred to in paragraph 1 above. The information is organized into sections on the themes that were commonly addressed in the submissions.

#### **B. Priority and urgency of the national adaptation plan process**

10. In their submissions, Parties stated that adaptation is a priority for them. In addition, some Parties emphasized the importance of the NAP process for LDCs. One Party noted the urgent need to embark on the process, with two others mentioning that they have already initiated the NAP process based on the initial guidelines (see chapter III.C.1).

11. One Party mentioned that the NAP process functions on two levels: at the international level, where discussion continues under the COP and the SBI, and at the national level, where Parties stand ready to undertake the NAP process.

12. A number of Parties highlighted that the NAP process will build upon the experiences of LDC Parties in preparing and implementing NAPAs. The same Parties mentioned that they have adequate and useful experience in the preparation and implementation of NAPAs, which would be valuable in the formulation of NAPs. One LDC Party emphasized that the NAPA process helped to build national capacity and awareness of climate change through providing a platform for information sharing between different stakeholders.

#### **C. Application of the guidelines for the national adaptation plan process**

13. A group of Parties mentioned that it is too early for LDCs to share experiences in using the guidelines for the formulation of NAPs owing to the small amount of information available to date and lack of clarity on how the NAP process will be funded. The group felt that once fully fledged funding and capacity-building support is in place, LDCs will be able to share more of their experiences in using the guidelines (see chapter III.E).

##### **1. Experiences with the application of the initial guidelines**

14. An LDC Party emphasized that the initial guidelines are a first step, which should be followed by further guidelines for other components of the NAP process, such as implementation and monitoring and evaluation (see para. 41 below). It added that it views the guidance to the GEF on the provision of financial support to LDCs as set out in decision 12/CP.18 as a further elaboration of guidelines for the NAP process.

15. A non-LDC Party discussed its experience in using the initial guidelines, given that it has already embarked on the NAP process. It remarked that the initial guidelines are relevant and applicable for the preparation of its NAP; however, additional support and

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<sup>8</sup> Available in English at <<http://unfccc.int/NAP>>. French and Portuguese versions will be made available as soon as possible.

guidance is needed, including technical assistance, information databases and financing (see chapter III.E). The country has thus far used its pre-existing climate change policy and strategy in the preparation of the NAPs, and it indicated that it needs to include in its NAP subnational assessments for different climatic regions within the country to identify the adaptation needs.

16. An LDC Party shared information on the initial guidelines during its national workshop to brief stakeholders on the decisions adopted at COP 17, and initiated a national discussion on the NAP process.

## **2. Experiences with the application of the technical guidelines**

17. At the national level, Parties noted that the technical guidelines will be used as a guiding document, and will assist in the formulation of NAPs. Furthermore, it was noted that the technical guidelines are expected to help to establish a country-driven process to formulate NAPs according to specific national circumstances, and that there is a need for more sophisticated medium- and longer-term strategic responses on adaptation.

18. An LDC Party mentioned that the overview publication on the technical guidelines<sup>9</sup> will be very useful in its efforts to brief policymakers as part of the process to establish its national framework and road map for the NAP process.

19. Another LDC Party discussed how it has selected steps and activities from the LEG technical guidelines for an effective NAP process. It has decided that the NAP process will be led by the Vice President's Office, Division of Environment, and is expected to produce outputs that will include various study reports and plans at the national and sectoral levels. It added that the NAP will be produced every five years, and will be the main national instrument for guiding work on adaptation. Draft plans will be shared with the LEG for comments and feedback. Furthermore, a NAP team has devised a road map for the preparation of the NAP in order to ensure the successful completion of a comprehensive and participatory NAP. Based on the technical guidelines, the Party has elaborated:

- (a) Objectives;
- (b) Elements and steps to be undertaken, showing indicative activities;
- (c) Scope;
- (d) Methodological approach;
- (e) Tasks to be undertaken;
- (f) Expected outputs and deliverables.

20. A third LDC Party indicated that the country strengthened its understanding of the NAP process and the application of the technical guidelines through the participation of its representatives at both the twenty-third meeting of the LEG and the LEG regional training workshop on adaptation for Francophone LDCs, held on 18–22 March 2013 in Lomé, Togo. This country has started to use the technical guidelines and is in the process of developing a road map, which includes briefing policymakers and other governmental and non-governmental stakeholders about the NAP process. It intends to develop, as a first phase of the operationalization of the NAP process, adequate institutional arrangements and a communication strategy. It also intends to take stock of, and analyse, the country's experience in the design, formulation and implementation of national or sectoral plans and programmes. Furthermore, it recognizes the important task of assessing the country's financial needs for the NAP process through in-depth analysis.

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<sup>9</sup> <[http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/application/pdf/nap\\_overview.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/application/pdf/nap_overview.pdf)>.

## **D. Experience gained under other adaptation planning processes and programmes**

21. All Parties noted that some adaptation planning processes, both related to and similar to the NAP process, are already under way. One Party noted that developed countries, as well as some developing countries, have produced several outputs already. These include national, sectoral and subnational adaptation plans. Many of the submissions noted that information on the experiences of the LDCs and other countries that are planning adaptation and participating in other programmes would be helpful. These included experiences from the design and the implementation of NAPA projects through the LDCF and sectoral planning approaches, such as for the health sector, through the World Health Organization (WHO) health national adaptation plan process. The submissions also made reference to the Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) and the Africa Adaptation Programme.

22. A non-governmental organization (NGO) noted that its experience in adaptation planning thus far has also generated lessons learned in terms of integrating gender into adaptation, and that these can be useful for mainstreaming gender in the NAP process.

23. As reported through a joint submission, a non-LDC developing country has taken a development-focused approach to integrating adaptation and mitigation efforts into its national development plan and vision for 2030. Through a number of participatory activities, it has identified those aspects of the vision that would be affected by climate change and has proposed interventions that would make these aspects more resilient and which could be undertaken as part of its upcoming climate change policy framework. It addresses climate change as a national development issue of high priority, and not just as an environmental issue. In that submission, steps that have been or will be undertaken in the NAP process are described.

24. An LDC Party elaborated on how it is developing a national climate change policy and is planning to develop a related strategy, with the assistance of a bilateral partner, to take a coordinated and comprehensive approach to addressing adaptation, which will subsequently lay the groundwork for the NAP process. This will further elevate the issue of climate change into national development plans and will provide a platform for the country to effectively manage its NAP process.

25. Another LDC Party stated that its national environmental policy recognizes the environment as a cross-cutting issue that requires a holistic approach and multilevel management, integrating different sectors, local government authorities and stakeholders. The Environmental Management Act serves as a legal framework for such matters and covers the issue of adaptation planning and NAPs. Other adaptation initiatives through which the LDC has gained experience include the National Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan, the National Climate Change Strategy, Guidelines for Integrating Climate Change Adaptation into Policies, Plans and Programmes, and the National Climate Change Communication Strategy.

26. Two LDC Parties elaborated on the valuable lessons learned from the preparation and implementation of NAPAs that can inform the NAP process. One mentioned that these lessons include the consideration of climate change adaptation at the highest political level and the establishment of institutional arrangements. Regarding the latter, the Party mentioned its Thematic Group on Environment and Climate Change, which serves as a platform for the consideration and exchange of views between the government, the private sector, civil society and the technical and financial partners. The other LDC Party mentioned that one NAPA project is under implementation, and that this will assist the country to better prepare for the challenges brought by climate change through establishing

an early warning system. It will also lead to improvements to the weather station network, the computational capabilities and the communication channels. It is also generating public awareness campaigns.

## **E. Support needs for the application of the national adaptation plan guidelines in least developed countries**

27. Parties emphasized the importance of various forms of support for the NAP process, including financial and technical support, information and databases to assist in identifying adaptation and capacity-building needs. An LDC Party mentioned that its technical and financial support needs will become clearer when it embarks on the NAP process.

28. Most of the submissions stressed the importance of financial support. Some Parties urged developed country Parties, as well as development partners, United Nations organizations and international organizations to provide, in 2013, support that is adequate, easily accessed and with flexible procedures. This would allow LDCs to start the process of NAP formulation without delay.

29. Reference was made to decision 12/CP.18, mentioned in paragraph 9 above, regarding the guidance given to the GEF for the operation of the LDCF in providing funding to the NAP process in LDC Parties. Some Parties mentioned that they looked forward to a timely response from the GEF on how it has responded to the guidance from the COP contained in this decision, including details of how LDCs can access the funding. One LDC Party stressed that this funding will enable the scaling up of adaptation, complementing existing efforts, as a way to subsequently create a framework for an effective NAP process.

30. One group of Parties, in its submission, also addressed support through the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and reaffirmed the decision<sup>10</sup> that a significant share of new multilateral funding for adaptation should flow through the Fund. The group voiced a request that the GCF Board balance the allocation of funds between adaptation and mitigation activities.

31. In terms of technical and other forms of support, some Parties took note of the existing initiatives of various development partners and NGOs related to the NAP process, whereby support is provided in terms of generating awareness; developing ideas; building capacity for adaptation planning; and promoting the NAP process in some countries. Channels of support that have already been utilized include side events and training.

32. Another LDC Party emphasized the need to support LDCs in conducting financial needs assessments for the NAP process.

33. Several Parties noted their appreciation for the work of the LEG in developing and sharing the NAP technical guidelines referred to in paragraph 4 above, and the overview publication referred to in paragraph 18 above.

34. An LDC Party wished to encourage the LEG to consider producing additional outreach material that would facilitate the work of the Party by further communicating information about:

- (a) The NAP process in general;
- (b) The opportunities and benefits that the NAP process offers;
- (c) Specific topics from the guidelines.

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<sup>10</sup> Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 100.

35. The Party also mentioned a desire for the LEG to assist in compiling examples, outputs, products and lessons learned from other adaptation planning processes (see chapter III.D), so that LDCs can learn from each other. It added that the LEG should provide guidance and support on how best to present outputs and adaptation plans, as selected by the country for its NAP process. The same Party mentioned that it will be communicating information on progress made to the LEG through the surveys that the LEG conducts at each SBI session. This sharing of information can also allow the LDCs to hear about, and learn from, each other's experiences.

36. WHO highlighted its support for the NAP process in the health sector, which includes, inter alia, technical support, awareness-raising, policy support and information sharing.

## **F. Summary of proposals for next steps**

37. An LDC Party, in reference to the ongoing discussions on the NAP process at the international level, advocated that the COP define a road map for the foreseeable future, taking a medium- and long-term approach. It also proposed the establishment of a timetable for assessing the progress of NAP preparation in LDCs.

38. The same Party mentioned that it would welcome any opportunity to communicate technical and financial support needs to the SBI and the COP, and added that these could be considered at SBI 38. This timing would allow the LEG and the GEF to take the communicated needs into account in designing their support, and any relevant support modalities.

39. A group of Parties, in its submission, called for a forum to help LDCs and other countries to share their experiences of the NAP process, noting that LDCs are at different stages of the process; programmes such as PPCR were also mentioned in this context.

40. An LDC Party proposed that countries' progress reports be posted on the UNFCCC website in order to promote the sharing of experiences.

41. Another LDC Party called for further guidelines for the components of the NAP process, to be developed by the COP and based on the initial guidelines. It added that, in the spirit of decision 1/CP.16, the next set of guidelines should be for the implementation of NAPs. It also felt that the SBI and the COP should decide on further guidelines regarding how the SBI can successfully monitor and evaluate progress made on the NAP process at SBI 42.<sup>11</sup> It added that the work of the LEG on monitoring and evaluation should be used by the SBI in evaluating the NAP process, and that countries should fully support the LEG in making good progress on this topic.

42. A call for submissions was proposed, with a deadline in early 2014, on how the NAPs can be implemented, taking into account that NAPs will contain policies, projects and programmes. This would be followed by consideration by the SBI at its fortieth session and adoption of a decision by the COP at its twentieth session on how NAPs should be implemented. The Party also mentioned that this should be a broad discussion covering many channels that could be used to implement NAPs.

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<sup>11</sup> See decision 5/CP.17, paragraph 37.