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Matters relating to the least developed countries

**Synthesis report on the national adaptation programme of
action process, including operation of the Least Developed
Countries Fund**

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

This report synthesizes the information provided by Parties and relevant organizations on the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), including on accessing funds from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF). It provides a review of the status of implementation of the least developed countries work programme, NAPAs and the operation of the LDCF. It includes experiences gained and lessons learned in the preparation and implementation of NAPAs and on accessing funds from the LDCF, as well as challenges, barriers and possible areas for improvement. In total, 13 submissions were received from Parties and two from United Nations organizations.

* This document was submitted after the due date as a result of the timing of the meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), at its fourteenth session, invited Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 17 August 2010, information on the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), including on accessing funds from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF). At the same session, the COP requested the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report on the NAPA process including preparation and implementation, taking into account information from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its agencies, the submissions from Parties and relevant organizations, reports of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) and other relevant sources of information, for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) at its thirty-third session.¹

B. Scope of the note

2. This report synthesizes information on the preparation and implementation of NAPAs, including on accessing funds from the LDCF, based on information contained in submissions received from 13 Parties (Belgium and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its member States, Benin, Chad, Guinea, Haiti, Kiribati, Lesotho on behalf of the least developed countries (LDCs), Malawi, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Timor-Leste and Togo) representing the views of 84 Parties in total,² reports of the LEG on its seventeenth and eighteenth meetings,³ the *Report of the Global Environment Facility to the Conference of the Parties*,⁴ and two submissions from United Nations organizations.⁵

3. In addition, the report takes into consideration information collected and analysed based on the approach developed by the LEG at its sixteenth meeting.⁶ The information includes: relevant COP decisions and GEF Council documents; NAPAs submitted to the secretariat;⁷ NAPA project proposals to access funding under the LDCF;⁸ the LEG survey of LDC Parties on NAPA preparation and implementation initiated at the twenty-eighth session of the SBI; LEG documents on the preparation and implementation of NAPAs;⁹ LEG country case studies conducted in 2010 (Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Central African Republic, Haiti, Kiribati, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Uganda and Zambia); and information from external sources, in particular the results of the evaluation of the LDCF by the Danish International Development Assistance and the GEF Evaluation Office¹⁰ and the terminal evaluation by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) of the UNEP-GEF projects.¹¹

¹ Decision 5/CP.14, paragraph 5.

² FCCC/SBI/2010/MISC.9.

³ FCCC/SBI/2010/5 and FCCC/SBI/2010/26.

⁴ FCCC/CP/2010/5.

⁵ <<http://unfccc.int/3714.php>>.

⁶ FCCC/SBI/2009/13, annex III.

⁷ <<http://unfccc.int/4585.php>>.

⁸ <<http://www.thegef.org/gef/ldcffsp>>.

⁹ <<http://unfccc.int/4727.php>>.

¹⁰ <<http://www.um.dk/NR/rdonlyres/697DBFF2-4FE4-4C0E-AD35-0DB6E3E6A624/0/LDCFmedforfatteretilwww.pdf>>.

¹¹ <http://www.unep.org/eou/Portals/52/Reports/NAPA_Final_Report.pdf>.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

4. The SBI may wish to consider the information contained in this document when making recommendations to the COP on guidance for the operation of the LDCF and on matters relating to the LDCs.

II. Background

A. The least developed countries work programme

1. Elements of the least developed countries work programme

5. At its seventh session, the COP acknowledged the specific needs and special situations of LDCs, in that they are least capable of dealing with the adverse effects of climate change, and adopted a package of decisions for the implementation of Article 4, paragraph 9, of the Convention.

6. Through its decision 5/CP.7, the COP established the least developed countries work programme, which comprises the following activities:

(a) Strengthening existing and, where needed, establishing national climate change secretariats and/or focal points to enable the effective implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol in the LDCs;

(b) Providing training, on an ongoing basis, in negotiating skills and language, where needed, to develop the capacity of negotiators from the LDCs to participate effectively in the climate change process;

(c) Supporting the preparation and implementation of NAPAs;

(d) Promotion of public-awareness programmes to ensure the dissemination of information on climate change issues;

(e) Development and transfer of technology, particularly adaptation technology (in accordance with decision 4/CP.7);

(f) Strengthening the capacity of meteorological and hydrological services to collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate weather and climate information to support the implementation of NAPAs.

7. Out of the six elements of the LDC work programme, priority for funding from the LDCF was given to the preparation of NAPAs from 2001 and to the implementation of NAPAs from 2005. At its fourteenth session in 2008, the COP requested the GEF, in parallel to supporting the ongoing implementation of the NAPAs, to facilitate the implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme.¹²

8. Following the request by the COP for the GEF to facilitate the implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme, the GEF requested the LEG, at its sixteenth meeting, to provide ideas on how the implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme could be supported. The LEG, in its report to the SBI on its seventeenth meeting,¹³ proposed an approach that provides funding, through the enabling activity window, to all LDCs to implement priority activities from the remaining elements of the LDC work programme, based on national needs, through a global project that expedites access to resources. In addition, to ensure continuity of support, the LEG

¹² Decision 5/CP.14, paragraph 2.

¹³ FCCC/SBI/2010/5.

proposed that each LDCF project set aside a percentage of its budget towards supporting the remaining elements of the LDC work programme, and for project reports to include explicit reporting on the support provided as part of regular project monitoring and reporting. Furthermore, the LEG proposed that the GEF consider developing a data policy for GEF-funded projects to ensure that the data collected contributes to national data collection efforts and is shared freely and openly with national entities in a reasonable time soon after the data is collected and processed. To this end, the LEG also proposed that all GEF adaptation projects make special efforts to collect climate data in order to improve observational networks in LDCs, in support of the assessment and implementation of adaptation activities.

2. Preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

9. The COP, at its seventh session, in establishing the LDC work programme, also adopted the guidelines for the preparation of NAPAs by its decision 28/CP.7. This was in recognition of the fact that many LDCs do not have the capacity to prepare and submit national communications in the foreseeable future, or to convey their urgent and immediate needs in respect of their vulnerability and adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change. According to these guidelines, NAPAs should be based on the following principles:

(a) They should provide a process for LDCs to identify priority activities that respond to national urgent and immediate needs relating to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change;

(b) The rationale for developing NAPAs should be based on the limited ability of LDCs to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change;

(c) There should be a focus on activities to address urgent and immediate needs in relation to the adverse effects of climate change for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs at a later stage;

(d) NAPAs should use existing information, requiring no new research;

(e) They should be action-oriented, country-driven, flexible and based on national circumstances;

(f) NAPAs should be presented in a simple format that can be easily understood both by policy-level decision makers and by the public.

3. The Least Developed Countries Expert Group

10. The COP established the LEG, by its decision 29/CP.7, with the primary objective of advising LDC Parties on the preparation of and implementation strategy for NAPAs. This included the provision of technical advice relating to the identification of relevant data and information to be synthesized as part of an integrated assessment. In addition, the LEG was mandated to provide advice on capacity-building needs for LDCs in support of the preparation and implementation of NAPAs, and to coordinate and collaborate with other relevant efforts relating to adaptation activities for LDCs, including within the greater development context. To this end, the LEG has provided support through the following activities;

(a) The development of methods and tools for the preparation and implementation of NAPAs;

(b) The training of LDC experts on the preparation and implementation of NAPAs;

(c) The provision of specific advice to LDC Parties upon request;

- (d) Monitoring the preparation and implementation of NAPAs;
- (e) Cooperation with other expert groups under the Convention;
- (f) Cooperation with relevant international agencies and other multilateral environmental agreements on the preparation and implementation of NAPAs;
- (g) The promotion of awareness of climate change and the integration of climate change considerations into policymaking and development planning.

11. Since its establishment in 2001, the LEG has served four mandates. The initial mandate of the LEG was for two years, from 2002 to 2003. The second mandate covered the two-year period 2004–2005; the third mandate also covered two years during the period 2006–2007; and the fourth and latest mandate covers the three-year period 2008–2010.

4. The Least Developed Countries Fund

12. By its decision 7/CP.7, the COP established the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) to support the implementation of the LDC work programme. By its decision 27/CP.7, the COP entrusted the GEF, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention, to operate the LDCF and provided initial guidance to the GEF to focus on providing support for the preparation of NAPAs. The COP, at its eleventh session, agreed on the provisions for operationalizing the LDCF to support the implementation of NAPAs.¹⁴ At its fourteenth session, the COP requested the GEF to facilitate the implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme through its operation of the LDCF.¹⁵

B. Status of implementation of the least developed countries work programme

1. Preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action¹⁶

13. As at 12 November 2010, 45 NAPAs had been prepared and submitted to the secretariat, and three (Angola, Myanmar and Timor-Leste) of the 48 LDCs that had received funding for the preparation of NAPAs were yet to submit their completed NAPAs.¹⁷ Timor-Leste is at an advanced stage of NAPA preparation and is expected to submit its NAPA to the secretariat by the end of 2010. Equatorial Guinea and Somalia are yet to access funding for the preparation of their NAPAs.

14. On the status of implementation of NAPAs, the GEF reported on NAPA projects under its consideration at the eighteenth meeting of the LEG. As at 15 October 2010, 38 countries had officially submitted one or more NAPA projects to the GEF. A total of 19 projects in Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Eritrea, Liberia, Maldives, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Sudan, Tuvalu and Zambia had received endorsement by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the GEF, and at least four projects in Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Malawi are expected to be endorsed by the CEO of the GEF before the end of 2010. A total of 19 project identification forms (PIFs) have been approved by the CEO of the GEF and the GEF Council from Afghanistan, Burundi, Cambodia, Ethiopia, Gambia, Haiti, Kiribati, Lesotho, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania,

¹⁴ Decision 3/CP.11.

¹⁵ Decision 5/CP.14, paragraph 2.

¹⁶ This information is reproduced from the LEG report contained in document FCCC/SBI/2010/26.

¹⁷ Cape Verde received funds to prepare a NAPA but has since graduated from the LDC Group. The current total number of LDC Parties to the UNFCCC is 49.

Mozambique, Samoa, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra Leone, United Republic of Tanzania, Vanuatu and Yemen, and five more PIFs from Central African Republic, Haiti, Sao Tome and Principe, Solomon Islands and Togo are pending clearance by the CEO and approval by the GEF Council.

15. To date, the following GEF agencies are currently supporting the implementation of NAPA projects: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (supporting the implementation of 29 NAPA projects), the World Bank (four), UNEP (11), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (two), the African Development Bank (three), UNDP and UNEP jointly (two) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (three).

16. In terms of the regional distribution of the projects submitted to the LDCF, the vast majority of projects are in Africa, followed by Asia and, to a lesser extent, the Pacific and Caribbean regions.

17. As of 4 August 2010, 22 donors had pledged USD 290 million to the LDCF.¹⁸ As of 31 May 2010, cumulative net funding allocated, committed or disbursed by the GEF Council and the CEO amounted to USD 135 million.¹⁹ The balance of these sums indicates the level of available funds in the LDCF, that is, USD 155 million.

2. Strengthening existing and, where needed, establishing national climate change secretariats and/or focal points to enable the effective implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol in the least developed countries

18. In 2003, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), in partnership with the GEF and UNDP, implemented a project on building the human and institutional capacity of the climate change focal points in 46 LDC Parties. The aim of the project was to equip and train, with information and communication technologies, LDC UNFCCC focal points and to assist them in planning for sustained activities to enhance their negotiating and language skills in the context of the UNFCCC. An immediate result expected from this project was improved communication between LDC Parties and the UNFCCC and GEF secretariats. The project also aimed at improving the understanding of the UNFCCC and GEF secretariats and the involved agencies of the needs of LDCs and for LDCs to have a better understanding of GEF interventions.

3. Providing training, on an ongoing basis, in negotiating skills and language, where needed, to develop the capacity of negotiators from the least developed countries to participate effectively in the climate change process

19. UNEP, in collaboration with the secretariat, has supported LDCs in holding preparatory workshops prior to the sessions of the COP and those of its subsidiary bodies since 2007. The workshops are attended by climate change negotiators from the LDCs, most of whom are national focal points and delegates who are new to the process, so that they can gain experience in negotiations.

20. The European Capacity Building Initiative (ECBI) organized regional workshops for South/Southeast Asia, West sub-Saharan Africa, East and Southern Africa and Latin America to foster collaboration as well as to mainstream climate change issues by involving officials from line ministries.²⁰ These workshops target LDCs as well as non-LDC countries. In addition, the ECBI conducts pre-COP workshops designed to support selected negotiators from LDCs in gaining a better understanding of the issues discussed at the

¹⁸ FCCC/CP/2010/5.

¹⁹ FCCC/CP/2010/5.

²⁰ <<http://www.eurocapacity.org/public/workshops.shtml>>.

sessions of the COP as well as to enable them to act more effectively as a group. The workshops also help to build negotiating skills through role playing and practice sessions.

4. Promotion of public-awareness programmes to ensure the dissemination of information on climate change issues

21. The LEG, in the implementation of its work, has facilitated the exchange of information on NAPAs. The LEG has promoted regional synergies, as well as synergies with other multilateral environmental conventions, in the preparation of and implementation strategy for NAPAs through guidance documents and annotations to the NAPA guidelines. These documents have been disseminated in English, French and Portuguese.

22. The LEG has provided inputs to the efforts of the secretariats of the UNFCCC and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) in promoting synergies in the implementation of national action plans under the UNCCD and NAPAs. The LEG has also contributed to the review of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001–2010. In the review, the United Nations General Assembly intends to: undertake a comprehensive appraisal of the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action; identify effective international and domestic policies; reaffirm the global commitment aimed at eradicating poverty in the LDCs and integrating them beneficially into the global economy; and adopt a renewed partnership in favour of the LDCs.

23. At the national level, the LEG has developed options for scaling up adaptation efforts and ways of fostering synergies with national development planning processes in LDCs as part of its guidance on the implementation of NAPAs.

24. In order to maximize outreach to all LDCs, the LEG adopted internally a system of rapporteurs – one for anglophone LDCs, one for francophone LDCs and another for lusophone LDCs. The rapporteurs actively liaised with LDCs during intergovernmental meetings and other events and kept records at meetings. In addition, the francophone and lusophone rapporteurs were also involved in accessing relevant literature in French or Portuguese for use by the LEG and in addressing specific requests made by the LDCs in their respective language groups.

25. The LEG increased its efforts to target Portuguese-speaking countries by translating into Portuguese and disseminating selected products to support the preparation and implementation of NAPAs and by conducting, in September 2010 in Sao Tome and Principe, a regional NAPA implementation workshop for these countries in Portuguese.

26. Events organized by the LEG have provided a platform for LDCs to interact with each other, share best practices and lessons learned in the preparation and implementation of NAPAs and enhance their networking. For instance, at a NAPA implementation training workshop for French-speaking LDCs held in February 2010, participants formed an adaptation network for francophone LDCs.

5. Development and transfer of technology, particularly adaptation technology (in accordance with decision 4/CP.7)

27. The secretariat organized a workshop²¹ on preparing technology transfer projects for financing for the Africa region, on 2–4 September 2009, in Gaborone, Botswana, on behalf of the Expert Group on Technology Transfer. The workshop included many participants from African LDCs. The objective of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of project developers in African countries in preparing project proposals that will meet the standards

²¹ <<http://unfccc.int/ttclear/jsp/TrnDetails.jsp?EN=TrainingWorkshop>>.

of international financial providers. The workshop aimed to support efforts to implement the results of technology needs assessments that have been or are being carried out by developing countries within the UNFCCC process, with a view to scaling up the level of investment for technology transfer to help developing countries address their needs for environmentally sound technologies both for mitigation and for adaptation to climate change.

28. At the time of compiling the information contained in this report, there were no additional specific sources indicating implementation of the transfer of technology for the LDCs.

6. Strengthening the capacity of meteorological and hydrological services to collect, analyse, interpret and disseminate weather and climate information to support the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

29. The LEG proposed that the GEF consider developing a data policy for GEF-funded projects to ensure that the data collected contributes to national data collection efforts and is shared freely and openly with national entities in a reasonable time soon after the data is collected and processed. To this end, the LEG also proposed that all GEF adaptation projects make special efforts to collect climate data in order to improve observational networks in LDCs.

30. In May 2003, the World Meteorological Organization established a Programme for LDCs to enhance the capacity of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services to contribute effectively to the socio-economic development of these countries.²² The Programme was established as a contribution to the implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action,²³ which was adopted in May 2001 by the third United Nations Conference on LDCs.

C. Analysis of the implementation of the national adaptation programmes of action

1. Definition of urgent and immediate needs

31. Urgent and immediate needs are characterized as those measures that are required to address current and projected adverse effects of climate change for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs. The design of NAPAs was based on this rationale, in recognition of the fact that many LDCs do not have the capacity to prepare and submit national communications in the foreseeable future, or to convey their urgent and immediate needs in respect of their vulnerability and adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change. NAPAs were therefore designed to identify urgent and immediate needs for adaptation, especially those that could enhance coping abilities and build capacity to adapt to further and future climate change. The concept of NAPAs recognized that countries would still need to design their medium- and long-term adaptation plans through a comprehensive vulnerability and adaptation assessment.

2. Analysis of supported projects and activities

32. Analysis of the LDCF portfolio suggests that agriculture and water management have been, by far, the most important project components funded to date. This reflects the crucial importance of the two sectors in most LDCs; these sectors are often especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and variability. However, other sectors, such as

²² <http://www.wmo.int/pages/themes/lcds/index_en.html>.

²³ <<http://www.unohrrls.org/UserFiles/File/Publications/bpoa.pdf>>.

disaster preparedness, coastal zone management, health and infrastructure, have also been targeted in the GEF adaptation portfolio.

D. Operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund

1. Guidelines and procedures for accessing funds for the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action

33. In responding to COP guidance on the operation of the LDCF, the GEF developed the Operational Guidelines for Expedited Funding for the Preparation of National Adaptation Programs of Action by Least Developed Countries.²⁴ These guidelines were intended to assist LDCs in preparing proposals for accessing funds from the LDCF through an expedited process. The guidelines contain the following operational issues to guide LDCs in accessing funds for the preparation of their NAPAs:

- (a) The preparation of NAPAs would be funded on a full agreed cost basis as is applicable to enabling activities;
- (b) The GEF would provide assistance for the preparation of NAPAs through one of its implementing agencies in the form of enabling activities;
- (c) Proposals would need to be endorsed by the GEF operational focal point to confirm country ownership. The national climate change focal point has been given a central role in establishing the NAPA team and guiding the process;
- (d) Proposals for assistance to prepare NAPAs would be reviewed by the GEF secretariat in accordance with expedited approval procedures for enabling activities. Proposals that do not exceed USD 200,000 may be approved by the CEO of the GEF using these expedited procedures, subject to the availability of funds in the LDCF. Individual country proposals that exceed this amount would be processed for submission to the GEF Council as regular GEF projects;
- (e) On the basis of previous experience with enabling activities, it was expected that 12-month projects would typically be in the range of USD 100,000 while 18-month or longer projects in countries with special circumstances may approach the higher range of USD 200,000.

2. Guidelines and procedures for accessing funds for the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

34. The GEF, following guidance from the COP on the implementation of NAPAs,²⁵ developed a *Programming Paper for Funding the Implementation of NAPAs under the LDC Trust Fund*.²⁶ In the programming paper, the GEF provides information on how LDCs can access funding for the implementation of NAPAs:

- (a) The first step in accessing NAPA implementation funding through the LDCF is to identify one (or more) implementing agency(ies) in order to assist in the submission of a project proposal to the LDCF in a process that must not exceed 22 months;
- (b) The LDCF support will normally build upon the foundation provided by national development budgets, including in-kind contributions, and can be viewed as cost-sharing to the pre-existing sources of development financing;

²⁴ GEF/C.19/Inf.7.

²⁵ Decision 3/CP.11.

²⁶ GEF/C.28/18.

(c) Additionally, the guidelines explain that the costs of the adaptation scenario constitute the total project costs and will normally exceed the costs of the baseline scenario. The additional costs associated with meeting these extra adaptation needs imposed on the country by the effects of climate change will be supported by the LDCF. The costs of the baseline activities are expected to be met through normal development expenditures, such as government budgets, bilateral aid, contributions from the private sector, non-governmental organization resources, and loans from international financial institutions, including the International Development Association. Baseline financing will normally serve as co-financing for the additional costs of financing adaptation projects provided through the LDCF;

(d) To simplify the calculation of the additional costs, a sliding scale or proportional scale may be used which takes into account the size and nature of projects. If the project's financing structure fits within the limits set by this scale, the project's requested funding shall be considered an acceptable approximation of the project's additional cost. The sliding scale or proportional scale shall serve as a short cut or a proxy to simplify the estimation of additional costs. It focuses on reasonable cost-sharing ratios for projects of a specific size. This rationale builds upon the assumption that smaller LDCF projects typically focus on "soft" activities, such as capacity-building and training. Because virtually no capacity-building for adaptation would be required in the absence of climate change, the additional costs of the proposed activities are expected to constitute a very large fraction of the total project costs. In contrast, larger projects are typically focused on infrastructure investments wherein the adaptation elements comprise a smaller share of total costs. As a result, the additional costs of these larger projects would normally be expected to constitute a smaller fraction of the total project costs.

35. The GEF also developed guidance on GEF Comparative Advantages of the GEF Agencies,²⁷ and a Results-Based Management Framework for the LDCF and the Special Climate Change Fund.²⁸

3. Guidelines and procedures for the implementation of the remaining elements of the least developed countries work programme

36. The COP, at its fourteenth session, requested the GEF, in parallel to supporting the ongoing implementation of the NAPAs, to facilitate the implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme. The GEF is yet to provide a response to the COP on how this guidance will be implemented.

III. Synthesis of information provided by Parties and relevant organizations on the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action, including on accessing funds from the Least Developed Countries Fund

A. Introduction

37. In most of their submissions, Parties share in-country experiences on the preparation and implementation of NAPAs, as well as on the national status of implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme. Other submissions summarize the lessons learned, challenges, gaps and best practices for a group of LDC countries. One submission presents the technical support received by LDCs for the preparation of NAPAs

²⁷ GEF/C.31/5 Rev.1.

²⁸ GEF/LDCF.SCCF.6/Inf.3.

and outlines possible areas of support for the implementation of NAPAs. Another provides a sectoral analysis of the priority activities contained in NAPAs.

38. This section of the report contains a summary of the views of Parties and relevant organizations on the NAPA process, including preparation and implementation. It also includes a summary of their views on accessing funds from the LDCF and their experiences in implementing the remaining elements of the LDC work programme.

B. The national adaptation programme of action process

1. Overall assessment

39. The submissions received from Parties emphasized the country-driven approach of NAPAs, which is viewed as the key driver of the process. As a result, it is believed that choices made by LDCs in pursuing their urgent adaptation needs should be given the highest priority (LDC Group, Kiribati).

40. In noting that the majority of proposed NAPA projects are in the areas of agriculture, forestry and fisheries, followed by water resources and disaster risk reduction activities related to extreme events, it was acknowledged that those sectors corresponded to the key priorities identified in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (LDC Group).

41. In their submissions, Parties considered that the NAPA process had gained a high level of political recognition as well as the support of a wide range of stakeholders, including local communities and grass-roots organizations (all LDCs, European Union).

42. LDC Parties regret that separate COP decisions are made on the provision of guidelines for the preparation and implementation of NAPAs. They claim that, in some instances, it has prevented multilateral and bilateral partners from viewing the process in a holistic manner with the main objective of responding to the immediate and urgent needs of vulnerable communities through the implementation of on-the-ground adaptation projects (LDC Group). Furthermore, it was observed that the above-mentioned delinking has resulted in very few NAPA documents actually containing a comprehensive implementation strategy (LDC Group, Benin).

43. LDCs have suggested that a mechanism could be established to maintain national NAPA preparation teams beyond the preparation of NAPAs; the teams could serve as a catalyst to mainstream climate change issues into national development plans by engaging line ministries. The NAPA teams could also assist in the mobilization of resources for the implementation of NAPAs, including supporting the understanding, appreciation and reasoning for co-financing, if it has to be provided (LDC Group).

44. One submission encouraged LDCs to report on their NAPAs in their national communications as a means of recording the measures taken as a result of the NAPA preparation and implementation process (European Union).

45. It is expected that, as a result, greater value would be derived from the implementation of NAPAs because this would provide experience of concrete adaptation activities (LDC Group).

2. Priorities and support activities for the least developed countries for the next five years

46. In their submissions, LDC Parties identified the following priority activities (LDC Group):

- (a) An extension of the LEG mandate;

- (b) The full implementation of NAPAs;
- (c) The revision and update of NAPAs;
- (d) The establishment of a technical support programme for implementing adaptation in LDCs (equivalent to the National Communications Support Programme) funded under the LDCF;
- (e) The establishment and/or strengthening of regional centres to coordinate adaptation programmes in LDCs;
- (f) The establishment of a process for LDCs to formulate and implement national adaptation plans building upon the experiences of the NAPAs to identify medium- and long-term adaptation needs and develop strategies and programmes to address those needs.

47. LDC Parties also proposed the following five support activities for LDCs for the next five years:

- (a) Regional workshops to share experiences and lessons learned on the implementation of NAPAs;
- (b) Training on national adaptation plans that builds on the current NAPA implementation workshops and the initial NAPA preparation workshops;
- (c) The development of project templates for common priority projects;
- (d) Guidance and training on developing a programmatic approach for the implementation of adaptation activities;
- (e) A revision of the LDC work programme.

48. The need for a capacity-building programme with a longer time frame which builds on the experience of the NAPAs was also raised (UNITAR).

C. Preparation of national adaptation programmes of action

1. Factors that influence the effectiveness of the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action

49. The preparation of NAPAs has provided valuable experience to the climate change process. In many LDCs, this was the first opportunity to undertake different climate change related studies and to align adaptation projects with national development priorities. Furthermore, the participatory approach and consultation conducted during the NAPA preparation process were a key mechanism for interaction with vulnerable communities and allowed for a better understanding of vulnerability issues related to climate change and development (all Parties). LDC Parties attribute the high number of completed and submitted NAPAs to:

- (a) The commitment of LDC Parties to develop their NAPAs;
- (b) The technical support provided by the LEG, in particular through the annotated guidelines for the preparation of NAPAs²⁹ and the training workshops organized by UNITAR in close collaboration with the LEG and with the support of the GEF and UNDP (Benin, Guinea, Haiti, LDC Group);

²⁹ <http://unfccc.int/files/cooperation_and_support/ldc/application/pdf/annguide.pdf>.

(c) The procedures to access funding for the preparation of NAPAs under the LDCF which was streamlined in comparison with GEF requirements under other funds (LDC Group).

50. In many LDCs, the NAPA has become a strategic document used to raise awareness and mobilize resources at the national and international levels on adaptation issues. The preparation of NAPAs has attracted a lot of interest from non-LDC developing countries. These countries have shown interest in preparing a NAPA-like plan to guide them in the implementation of immediate adaptation activities (LDC Group).

51. In all LDCs, the preparation of NAPAs involved the active engagement of a wide range of stakeholders at the national and subnational levels, including local communities. Following this, many LDCs submitted their completed NAPAs to various stakeholders involved in the preparation process (all LDCs).

52. One Party warned that while NAPAs have raised the awareness of many stakeholders, in particular the most vulnerable communities, they have also raised their expectations; managing those expectations can become challenging, especially when the implementation of the NAPA is delayed, as is the case in Haiti.

2. Challenges, barriers and possible areas for improvement

53. As highlighted by a great number of submissions, the major challenges and barriers in preparing NAPAs arose in the early stages of the process and were of the following nature:

(a) Little understanding at the national level of climate change issues in general and adaptation in particular (Nepal);

(b) A lack of human resource capacities and a weak institutional framework to address climate change issues (most submissions);

(c) In some instances, a lack of a common understanding between the country and the GEF implementing agency of the modality to be put in place (e.g. the hiring of consultants and project staff, fund transfer procedures, roles and responsibilities, etc.) (Nepal);

(d) Difficulties in accessing relevant data and information and, sometimes, a lack of them (a majority of LDC Parties) and/or a lack of relevant information available in languages other than English (Mali);

(e) Challenges in coordination at the national level when a multiplicity of focal points are involved (e.g. the UNFCCC focal point, the UNDP focal point, the GEF focal point, etc.) (Chad);

(f) Limited financial resources, especially for the larger LDCs, to fully assess and address the needs of all sectors and all vulnerable regions of the country (LDC Group).

54. Some submissions also identified other areas for improvement such as:

(a) An increase in exchanges on experiences and best practices among LDCs through the visits of neighbouring LDC countries (Togo);

(b) A greater emphasis on gender in the NAPA process (European Union).

55. It was noted that the establishment of an implementation framework for adaptation activities to involve a wide range of stakeholders, including donors, during the NAPA preparation process is likely to facilitate the efficient channelling of financial resources and technical expertise for adaptation actions to the local level (Nepal).

3. Revision and update of national adaptation programmes of action

56. In the majority of submissions, the revision and update of NAPAs are identified as important activities that LDC Parties could undertake, if they so wish, in particular to address the following issues:

- (a) Obsolete data and information after major natural disasters have occurred, whereby the vulnerability assessment no longer reflects the national circumstances (Haiti);
- (b) The need to integrate in-depth sectoral studies. For example, the revision and update could be an opportunity to strengthen the health components of NAPAs, especially if technical and financial mechanisms specific to health are established to facilitate the achievement of resilience and adaptation objectives and targets for public health (World Health Organization).

57. It was also mentioned that the revision or update of NAPAs, as well as UNFCCC enabling activities such as national communications, should aim to gradually fill the information and capacity gaps identified in the NAPAs and the national capacity self-assessments.

D. Implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

1. Factors that influence the effectiveness of the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

58. In their submissions, Parties and relevant organizations have identified the following factors that influence the effectiveness of the implementation of NAPAs:

- (a) Continuous technical support, in particular from the LEG;
- (b) The design of a comprehensive implementation strategy, preferably at the NAPA preparation stage;
- (c) The engagement of national experts/consultants and continuous collaboration with all relevant stakeholders across sectors;
- (d) Simplified GEF procedures and guidelines to access funds from the LDCF and the mobilization of resources from other sources of funding;
- (e) The opportunity to revise and update NAPAs (LDC Group, Niger, Haiti);
- (f) The identification of milestones to address urgent and immediate needs;
- (g) The establishment of a clear reporting and monitoring system at the project and global levels;
- (h) An understanding of the issue at the political level coupled with political will (Nepal, Niger).

2. Stakeholder engagement in the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action at different levels

59. Similarly to NAPA preparation, information shared by Parties and relevant organizations indicated that the cohesion of the NAPA implementation team is important for the successful implementation of NAPA projects. Countries that have maintained continuity in the institutional framework between NAPA preparation and implementation tend to be more effective in the implementation of their NAPA. The need for institutional continuity is perceived to be necessary not only to bridge the NAPA preparation and implementation phases, but also to link the NAPA process to the implementation of the

remaining elements of the LDC work programme, the other multilateral environmental agreements and the preparation of national communications.

60. Furthermore, the majority of LDC Parties that have started to implement their NAPA seek the effective coordination of all adaptation-related activities with the support of bilateral and/or multilateral partners. The degree of success encountered depends on national circumstances, including the quality of the relationship with the international partners.

61. In some instances, the implementation of NAPAs has fostered South–South cooperation. For example, some African LDCs in West Africa organized several meetings and workshops at the subregional level with the aim of strengthening the capacity of their NAPA teams. Experts regularly exchange information with counterparts in other countries, including through the 2010 established adaptation network for francophone LDCs (Benin, Guinea, Mali).

62. Through the NAPA process, an increasing number of LDC Parties have managed to raise political awareness at the highest level on climate change issues and on adaptation needs in particular. At the same time, LDCs are in favour of ensuring that the implementation of NAPAs, similarly to the preparation process, follows a bottom-up approach with the active involvement of the local level.

3. Challenges, barriers and possible areas for improvement

63. There is a recognition that since clear guidance on policy and project design was not provided at the early stages of NAPA preparation, most LDCs were not able to develop an implementation strategy at the NAPA preparation phase that matched subsequent guidance on the implementation of NAPAs under the LDCF.

64. Some LDCs have felt that the absence of early guidelines for the implementation of NAPAs has prohibited the development of a comprehensive implementation strategy during the NAPA preparation phase. In fact, many LDCs adopted a single project approach and would have favoured a programmatic approach if clear guidelines to develop such an approach had been made available to them (Benin).

65. The LDCs indicated that countries which are ready should be allowed to access the LDCF through direct access modalities (LDC Group, Malawi, Mali, Nepal).

66. Some submissions raised the issue of GEF agencies hiring international consultants instead of national ones. It was recommended that, where national experts are available, they should be selected as a priority since they have a much better understanding of the local situation. Promoting local expertise is seen by many as a means of ensuring stronger national ownership of NAPA projects (Benin, LDC Group, Mali).

67. Some submissions also identified other areas for improvement during the implementation phase, such as:

- (a) Greater consideration of gender issues (European Union);
- (b) The establishment of a mechanism that would allow for the internalization of the NAPA process at the national level and facilitate the mobilization of resources (financial and technical) for the implementation of NAPA projects (Niger);
- (c) Different adaptation programmes, such as NAPAs and some by other agencies, should not be merged during the implementation phase but should instead be implemented separately through a common national coordination body (Kiribati).

E. Access to the Least Developed Countries Fund

1. Guidelines and procedures

68. In LDCs, the active involvement of government officers in the NAPA process resulted in greater country ownership as the influence of the GEF implementing agencies on the design of NAPA projects decreased.

69. In general, LDCs, which have the lowest adaptive capacity and weak institutional arrangements, have limited success in accessing funds from the LDCF.

70. One LDC Party noted with satisfaction the presence and assistance of the GEF through the GEF Pacific Alliance for Sustainability project and GEF representatives based at the Secretariat of the Regional Pacific Environment Programme. It suggested increasing the role of GEF regional representatives to improve access to GEF funding and, in particular, access to the LDCF (Kiribati).

71. In addition, the efforts of the GEF to streamline the LDCF project cycle were acknowledged, and it was noted that the project cycle was now limited to between 18 and 22 months (European Union, Malawi).

72. However, many Parties felt that the evolution over time of the GEF guidelines and the need for LDCs to adjust to those changes were still a source of delay in the implementation of NAPA projects. It was noted that, for example, the initial project templates based on the project development funds and full-size project had been replaced by the project identification form (PIF), the project preparation grant and full project development (PRODOC), and LDCs that were in the implementation phase during these changes had their project cancelled and had to resubmit their project proposal using the new formats (Malawi). Furthermore, all LDCs believed that the purpose of the PIF and the guidelines to develop it are unclear and that an equal amount of work is required from the team at the PIF stage as at the PRODOC stage. The LDCs further proposed merging the PIF and full PRODOC stages (all LDC Parties).

73. The grasp of certain terminologies, such as co-financing, baseline and additionality in the GEF projects and requirements were also highlighted as a cause of delay in the implementation of NAPAs. It was suggested that explicit clarification of those terms could be offered through, inter alia, a clear set of examples from current NAPA projects. Further, LDCs should be supported to openly discuss and decide how some of these principles may be applied to their projects (Timor-Leste).

74. It was proposed that LDCs should be encouraged and supported financially and technically to adopt a programmatic approach in the implementation of their NAPAs (Benin).

2. Resources available and disbursement of funds

75. The level of funds available in the LDCF was considered by all LDC Parties to be insufficient with regard to the needs of LDCs in the implementation of NAPAs. It was recalled that the LEG had indicated that at least USD 2 billion would be required for the full implementation of NAPAs based on the NAPAs completed at the time of the analysis³⁰ (LDC Group).

76. Some submissions advocated for predictability of funds in the LDCF in line with the GEF replenishment cycle (LDC Group, Malawi).

³⁰ FCCC/GEN/253 E.

77. To compensate for the low level of funding in the LDCF and meet the co-financing requirements, LDCs are actively seeking other sources of funding, either bilaterally or through other multilateral programmes (most submissions). Some submissions pointed out that bilateral support and multilateral sources of financing other than the LDCF were also available to assist LDCs in the implementation of their NAPAs (European Union, UNITAR).

78. In addition, many submissions highlighted the slowness in the disbursement of the funds. Many indicated that it was due to the internal procedures of the implementing agencies. One submission mentioned that the implementing agencies had been asked to streamline their project cycle (European Union).

79. It was mentioned that the LEG has a key role to play as a mediator to encourage the GEF agencies to streamline their internal procedures, including with regard to the disbursement of funds, and to enhance their responsiveness to a country's needs and priorities (Nepal).

3. Relationship with the Global Environment Facility and its agencies

80. In most cases, LDCs do not have a direct relationship with the GEF. They liaise with the GEF through the GEF implementing agencies and the national GEF focal points. Some submissions highlighted the very good relationship between the country and its implementing agency(ies), while others pointed out the difficulties encountered when working with the agency(ies) in the implementation of their NAPAs. Diverse reasons were given, although in many cases they were dependent on national circumstances.

81. One submission acknowledged the active collaboration of the GEF and its agencies with the LEG, while many others made suggestions for improved relationships between countries, the GEF and its agencies through, for example:

(a) The development of clear terms of reference between the implementing agency(ies) and the recipient country to strengthen the country-driven process and clarify the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder (Timor-Leste);

(b) A requirement that countries provide only basic information in the PIF, such as the background, rationale, objectives, methodology, outputs, and outcomes so that the bureaucratic justifications and reasoning for co-financing become the responsibility of the implementing agency(ies) and the GEF (LDC Group);

(c) The need to allow NAPA implementation through national execution modalities (Timor-Leste);

(d) The need for a separate NAPA desk in each GEF agency with personnel possessing, inter alia, technical and managerial knowledge and skills concerning the NAPA process and UNFCCC decisions and formats in order to expedite high-quality and timely support to countries (Nepal);

(e) The need for decentralized governance so as to improve outreach to countries situated at a remote distance from the GEF secretariat (Kiribati).

4. Challenges, barriers and possible areas for improvement

82. The LDCs have identified the following challenges and barriers that cause delay in accessing funding from the LDCF:

(a) The co-financing requirements. LDCs indicated that although they fully comprehend the concept of co-financing they consider its application to be a major cause of delay in the implementation of their NAPA projects. Many submissions advocated for the removal of co-financing requirements (as defined in decision 3/CP.11);

- (b) The level of funding in the LDCF, which is considered to be insufficient;
- (c) The difficult procedures and guidelines from the GEF;
- (d) The key steps and processes in developing LDCF projects, which are considered to be lengthy despite efforts made by the GEF to streamline the process;
- (e) The language barrier. The preparation of GEF project documents in English only was seen as posing a great challenge by non-anglophone LDCs. It was suggested that the GEF should make project documents available in French and that guidelines should also be developed to allow LDCs to submit their project documents in French (Mali).

83. A number of submissions put forward some suggestions to facilitate access to funding under the LDCF:

- (a) Countries that have submitted a project to the LDCF but have a difficult working relationship with the GEF agency should be allowed to switch to another agency without having to restart and resubmit their project (Malawi);
- (b) A mechanism should be developed to inform the national GEF and UNFCCC focal points about the GEF procedures, guidelines and level of funds available. Such a mechanism would facilitate the work of the national focal points and would allow for better utilization of the LDCF (Nepal);
- (c) Some submissions recommended that countries should, where possible, access the LDCF directly as a means of avoiding problems and delays that may arise with the agencies during project development. Direct access is considered adequate for adaptation projects, many of which are similar to development projects currently being implemented by governments (LDC Group, Malawi, Mali, Nepal);
- (d) One submission recommended that in the event that funds for a project have been approved, but the country subsequently enters a period of turbulence, a mechanism should be established to ensure that the project goes ahead regardless, as the beneficiaries of the project (i.e. vulnerable communities) are not usually involved in the instability (Guinea).

84. The great majority of Parties wish to see a continuation of the LDCF. In addition, LDCs hope that their suggestions for the enhancement of expedited access to the LDCF as well as their request for additional financial and technical support will be taken into consideration.

F. Remaining elements of the least developed countries work programme

1. Status of implementation

85. Most submissions from Parties emphasized the need for LDCs to receive financial and technical support to implement the remaining elements of the LDC work programme.

86. Some Parties reported on national initiatives undertaken to implement some of these elements. Benin, for example, in pursuing activities to disseminate information on climate change issues, thereby promoting public awareness, produced a CD-ROM to share its experiences on the NAPA process.

2. Needs and expectations

87. All submissions that referred to the remaining elements of the LDC work programme highlighted the need to provide financial and technical support to LDCs for the implementation of those remaining elements. In addition, the majority of these submissions identified as an urgent need the establishment and or strengthening of national climate

change secretariats (LDC Group, Haiti, Kiribati) and support for the national focal points (Kiribati).

88. The submissions also indicated that LDCs were seeking to receive training, on an ongoing basis, in negotiation skills and language to develop the capacity of negotiators from LDCs, especially those from francophone and lusophone LDCs.

89. One LDC Party, in its submission, sought assistance from relevant organizations to expand existing national sectoral studies to other sectors with a view to gaining a better understanding of the needs for local adaptation technologies (Kiribati).

IV. Findings and conclusions

A. The national adaptation programme of action process

90. NAPAs were designed to focus on urgent and immediate needs for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs at a later stage. Despite the length of time it took for LDCs to move from NAPA preparation to implementation, the preparation process has built enormous capacity and awareness at the national level for many LDCs; this is a positive step towards the development of tools to reduce vulnerability to climate change.

91. In addition, many lessons have been learned in the NAPA process; these lessons could form a concrete basis to accelerate the implementation of the urgent and immediate needs identified by LDCs in their NAPAs, as well as to inform processes for LDCs in developing medium- and long-term adaptation plans.

92. Since LDCs have only just begun to implement their NAPA projects, a comprehensive assessment of the effectiveness of NAPAs in reducing the vulnerability of LDCs to climate change will be possible when the first set of NAPA projects currently being implemented moves to the advanced stages of implementation and completion.

93. In these early stages of the implementation of NAPAs, a lot of learning-by-doing will need to be undertaken to ensure the differentiation of urgent and immediate needs from regular projects. The time it takes to build the projects versus the urgency and immediacy of needs, due to the threat of climate change, should be adequately taken into consideration.

94. Parties, the LEG and relevant organizations have identified the following factors that influence the effectiveness of the implementation of NAPAs:

- (a) The commitment of LDCs in preparing and implementing their NAPAs;
- (b) Continuous technical support, in particular from the LEG in close collaboration with the GEF and its agencies;
- (c) The design of a comprehensive implementation strategy, preferably at the NAPA preparation stage or, if later, through, inter alia, an update to the NAPA;
- (d) The engagement of national experts/consultants and continuous collaboration with all relevant stakeholders across all sectors;
- (e) Simplified GEF procedures and guidelines to access funds from the LDCF and the mobilization of resources from other sources of funding;
- (f) The opportunity to revise and update NAPAs;
- (g) The identification of milestones to address urgent and immediate needs;

(h) The establishment of a clear reporting and monitoring system at the project and global levels.

B. Accessing funds from the Least Developed Countries Fund

95. NAPAs remain as relevant today as they were when they came into being in 2001, perhaps even more so. LDCs have invested a great deal in the preparation of their NAPAs, and many vulnerable communities are hopeful that the implementation of the NAPAs will address their urgent and immediate adaptation needs and pave the way for more comprehensive efforts to address climate change in LDCs. The LDCs view the NAPA process as a tangible outcome of the UNFCCC process that directly benefits their country and, for many, it forms the cornerstone of their climate change activities at the national level.

96. When the LDCs started to implement their NAPAs, there were concerns about the time it took to access funds from the LDCF. After a lot of dialogue between the GEF and its agencies with LDC Parties, as well as training conducted by the LEG in close collaboration with the GEF and its agencies, many of the bottlenecks have been addressed and access to funding appears to be much smoother. The time taken to obtain GEF CEO endorsement for projects has been reduced and many more GEF agencies are becoming involved in NAPA implementation.

97. The level of interaction between the GEF and its agencies with LDC Parties has improved and everyone is focused on the successful implementation of NAPAs. The exchange of experiences, such as through the regional training workshops and through side events during the sessions of the UNFCCC, is seen as a very valuable process, and many countries are displaying a deep interest in concrete adaptation, versus capacity-building and awareness-raising efforts.

98. The LDCs request that the GEF formalize communication to LDC Parties and convey, through official channels, information related to:

(a) The amount of funding available at a given time in the LDCF. The amount is revised every time there are significant contributions to the LDCF, increasing the amount that each country can equitably access;

(b) The correct application of co-financing for LDCF projects including to GEF agencies, such as through the provision of examples of its successful application in approved LDCF projects;

(c) The impact of changes in project templates on projects currently in the LDCF pipeline and on future requirements for the preparation of new proposals to the LDCF;

(d) Revised information on the comparative advantage of the GEF agencies;

(e) Modalities for supporting the preparation and implementation of NAPAs using a programmatic approach;

(f) Modalities to support the implementation of the remaining elements of the LDC work programme in response to decision 5/CP.14.

99. As LDC Parties embark on the implementation of their second and subsequent projects from their NAPAs, the following questions are being raised:

(a) How to successfully develop a programmatic or sector-wide approach for the whole NAPA in order to ensure more effective implementation and full integration into national plans and programmes;

- (b) How to access funding for updating the NAPA without interfering with the process of implementation;
 - (c) How to build lasting institutional and human capacity at the national level to fully manage project design and implementation without relying too heavily on international consultants;
 - (d) How to access multiple funds under the GEF, the Adaptation Fund and other adaptation programmes to support the implementation of NAPAs and other adaptation projects;
 - (e) How best to take advantage of a regional approach in the design and implementation of projects to address vulnerabilities of a regional nature and promote the sharing of experiences at the regional level;
 - (f) How to scale up activities in existing projects being funded under the LDCF to cover a greater number of target communities and regions without having to develop new projects for submission, which would take the usual 18 to 22 months or longer to obtain approval;
 - (g) How to easily demonstrate baseline and co-financing for projects, especially when developing a programmatic approach in the implementation strategy;
 - (h) How to identify and work with multiple GEF agencies and how to manage expectations when delays are caused by the agency.
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