

Sixth meeting of the Adaptation Committee

Bonn, Germany, 29 September to 1 October 2014

Summary report on the special event organized by the Adaptation Committee

Promoting synergy and strengthening engagement with national, regional and international organizations, centres and networks

Note by the co-chairs

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its 6th meeting, may wish to consider the information contained in this note and recommend next steps, taking into account the information presented in section “Possible follow up”.

Introduction

The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 16/CP.19, requested the AC to organize a special event during the 40th sessions of the subsidiary bodies (SB 40) to showcase its activities and engage in a dialogue with Parties and other relevant stakeholders.

At its 5th meeting, the AC agreed to:

- Focus the event on *Promoting synergy and strengthening engagement with national, regional and international organizations, centres and networks*;
- Invite representatives of the Technology Executive Committee (TEC), the Least Developed Country Expert Group (LEG) and the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) to participate;
- Request the secretariat, in collaboration with the AC’s communications group, to prepare the agenda and list of speakers, and initiate the organization of the special event.

The objective of the event was to showcase AC activities and to engage in a dialogue with Parties and other relevant stakeholders. The specific objectives included to:

- Provide input into ongoing processes of engaging stakeholders in supporting Parties in their efforts on adaptation; and
- Help the AC to further sharpen the focus of its work in this area.

Proceedings

The special event took place in the Maritim Hotel, Bonn, on 6 June 2014, during the SB 40. It was open to all conference participants. Notifications were sent out to United Nations (UN) agencies, international and regional organizations, Nairobi work programme (NWP) partners and National Focal Points.

The event was chaired by the Co-Chairs of the AC (Mr. Juan Hoffmaister and Ms. Christina Chan). In accordance with the agenda¹ the meeting began with a welcome to participants and an orientation presentation by the Co-Chairs highlighting the work of the AC, particularly focusing on its work on coherence, outreach and collaboration with UN agencies, international and regional organizations, centres and networks. The event was then run in two parts. Each part was structured around a main guide question in order to focus the discussion.

The first part of the event broadly addressed **how international and regional organizations, centres and networks are engaging with, and supporting adaptation action by, national governments and**

¹ All materials from the event can be found at <<http://unfccc.int/8246.php>>.

organizations. The second part of the discussion focused more on **the role of the AC in promoting synergy and strengthening engagement with regional and international organizations, centres and networks so as to improve the ability of countries to gain assistance from UN and regional agencies in support of national adaptation action.**

The original intention of the event was also to further focus the discussion through more detailed points related to the broad questions above (please see the agenda for more details).

The meeting ended with brief closing remarks by the Co-Chairs.

Scope of the report

This report highlights the main outcomes of the rich discussion and question and answer session (Q&A) at the special event. Although discussion sometimes veered away from the detailed questions proposed on the agenda, all discussion was very useful to further advance the work of the AC and coherence on adaptation under the Convention. For the first time on this scale, the event provided an opportunity for all the major adaptation-related constituted bodies under the Convention to come together and share with Parties and observers their work as it relates to enhancing adaptation action.

This report ends with a brief overview of possible follow-up actions and next steps that could be considered by the AC.

Summary of the discussion

Part I. How are international and regional organizations, centres and networks engaging with, and supporting adaptation action by, national governments and organizations?

The discussion on **different models of engagement and the types of support needed and/or implemented** primarily focused on participating organizations sharing information on how they are engaging with, and supporting adaptation action by, national governments.

A representative each from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment (SPREP) and the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) highlighted how they are working directly with governments within their regions. SPREP are regionally coordinating the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change project, funded through the Special Climate Change Fund and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which is implemented nationally by local teams. A major initiative of CCCCC is the regional strategy on climate change and its implementation plan, which has become the basis of interacting with the international community. It constitutes one plan, one institution to implement (CARICOM) and one monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system.

A representative from the African Development Bank (AfDB) highlighted their work in providing regional focus, for example working with ClimDev-Africa, to develop a strong foundation to respond to climate change in African countries through establishment of solid science and observational infrastructure; creation of strong working partnerships between government institutions, private sector, civil society and vulnerable communities; and creating and strengthening of knowledge frameworks.

A representative from the Arctic Council highlighted the common issues and common resources in the region and pointed out that Joint Vulnerability Assessment has been a common platform for policy development between countries for prioritizing issues. Joint activities have proved cost effective and have built bridges between countries working on the same issues.

A representative from UNEP provided an overview of the Global Support Programme for National Adaptation Plans (NAP-GSP), which has been running for one year and is currently supporting least developed countries (LDCs) to advance NAPs. The programme has implemented support at regional level to train over 140 policy officers in national ministries from over 40 countries.

A representative from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) discussed the work of the organization with different member countries. FAO engages strongly with all stakeholders, including women, indigenous people and youth and provides effective support by working with public authorities, private sector and civil society. Current projects under development include expansion of existing community-based (Farmer Field School) networks to introduce a suite of integrated adaptive management practices, including the Agro-Pastoral Field School method.

A representative from the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) highlighted the Global Framework for Climate Services as a useful tool for countries to support effective adaptation.

A representative from Brazil indicated that there is only one project on adaptation in their country that is implemented through a regional agency (Inter-American Bank). This project supports the training of government officials to manage budget planning in regards to adaptation to climate change. The project established a web-based platform, which is hoped will be a heritage to other projects and countries that wish to replicate the work.

There was also some discussion on **lessons learned** and the following are examples of the lessons learned in providing support to national governments. Due to time constraints there was no dialogue on whether the activities of various agencies could be considered as best practice.

Several participants noted that in order to plan and implement adaptation it is important to engage local expertise and work through relevant regional, national and sub-national organizations and systems. This fosters understanding and ownership of the adaptation issues and sustains adaptation efforts over the long term. Adaptation is best undertaken when tapping into available expertise in relevant organizations that operate within the regions or sectors and with good knowledge of the context in which the strategies would be implemented.

It was also noted that it is important for regional strategies and implementation plans to be driven by countries, as well as for countries to take ownership and control over implementation. Participants highlighted that regional organizations are well placed to work directly with countries and support a country driven approach, taking into account the diverse needs and capacity levels of different countries. Staff of regional organizations come from member countries, and thus have a strong understanding of the national situations in a region.

Several participants noted that regional organizations/agencies are in a very good position to link member countries to international support, including financial support. For example CCCCC is the implementation arm of adaptation in the region. It links to regional agencies in different sectors and has Memoranda of Understanding with international bodies including the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Funding agencies find it useful to have a coordination point for the region, even if it is simply to kick start a relevant project. One participant also noted that funding needs to prioritize actions in-country rather than administration fees, and that management costs taken on by regional agencies and national counterparts need to be realistic and fair.

One participant highlighted that regional organizations/agencies can distil or adapt the tools and products from international organizations, and that these tools are more accessible when in-country training is provided.

It was noted that problems arise when donor countries pre-select whom they wish to work with in a region and pre-select the focus areas for the intended work. This is then not country driven and undermines regional coordination. Problems also arise when international agencies "re-invent the wheel" by undertaking non-complementary activities.

One participant highlighted that often countries need support to coordinate different projects from different funding sources, bilateral, unilateral and UN agencies. Optimization and coherence of resources at regional level (e.g. through designated institutions) would improve the impact of adaptation measures without raising the level of resources required.

Presenters and participants also highlighted the need to expand technical support further, based around the work already being undertaken. Needs raised in regards to the support that can be offered by international and regional organizations include:

- The need for improved access to funding. It was highlighted by one participant that when funders see that support is carried out in a coordinated matter, e.g. as with NAP-GSP, it improves capacity restraint;
- The need to support and strengthen North-South and especially South-South cooperation to provide useful platforms for exchange, facilitated by UN and regional organizations and networks;
- The need for support to improve awareness and engage stakeholders, this is particularly important for shared regional resources;
- One participant raised the need to improve the access of some Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to UN agencies as direct access is currently lacking.

Following the guiding questions for focusing discussion, participants further devoted time to exchanging views on **the modalities, including through outreach and raising awareness, to enhance synergy**

and coherent provision of support. Participants highlighted a number of important means to this end, as follows.

Support for the development of NAPs is an important move towards coherence of efforts of individual countries to plan and implement adaptation and gain international funding support. For example, UNEP reported that most LDCs agree that NAPs involve building on an existing system of planning; FAO considers the NAP process as key to facilitating the integration of climate change and food security concerns; and SPREP highlighted the importance of engaging with regional centres in development of NAPs to build on work that is already going on within regions.

Several participants highlighted the importance of a regional strategy and implementation plan for regional support for adaptation that is country-driven. This should include long-term support for building the capacity of countries. Country ownership and country driven implementation of the regional adaptation strategy was highlighted by participants as an important aspect.

Several participants stressed the importance of building appropriate mechanisms to facilitate collective multi-stakeholder engagement, and that adaptation success requires appropriate institutional arrangements to engage numerous and diverse stakeholders at all scales. This should be based on a proper assessment of options and trade-offs, taking into account the overall policy environment.

In regards to knowledge sharing, relevant modalities include: information platforms to share experiences and lessons learned, including indigenous and local knowledge, events promoting dialogue, e.g. the NAP Expo, regional workshops, training, in-house experts, expert groups, extension services, expert panels, technical and synthesis papers and publications.

Part II. How can the AC promote synergy and strengthen engagement with regional and international organizations, centres and networks so as to improve the ability of countries to gain assistance from UN and regional agencies in support of national adaptation action?

This session started with representatives from the relevant constituted bodies under the Convention (the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), TEC, LEG, and NWP process) sharing information on how they support national adaptation action under the Convention.

A representative from the CTCN stated the importance of working closely with the AC to enable collaboration, look for synergies under the Convention and avoid duplication. The CTCN is tasked to respond to national governments and their support needs and has a network of organizations, companies and centres of excellence within regions to which it can turn to for support in regards to mitigation. The CTCN representative highlighted that the CTCN have limited contacts with regards to being able to provide technical support for adaptation. So far, eight requests for technical assistance have been submitted to the CTCN, half of which were in regards to adaptation, for example strengthening coastal zones. The CTCN representative stated the need for support via the AC to identify experts in order to respond effectively to these requests.

A representative from the TEC commented on the importance of M&E to support implementation of adaptation and enquired how this was being addressed by the AC. The AC Co-Chairs noted that the AC are engaging with international and regional organization on the issue of M&E and work includes a workshop in 2013.² Discussions so far have highlighted that although a global M&E standard for adaptation would make no sense, there is a role for the AC to support a shared understanding of adaptation success as well as national level monitoring, alongside the need for qualitative learning.

The LEG highlighted their role in providing technical support and advice to LDCs on NAPAs and the LDC work programme, and to provide technical guidance and support to the NAP process. Their engagement with regional organizations, centres and networks includes at: regional workshops, technical meetings on NAPs and the NAP Expo.

The SBI Vice-Chair, speaking on the work of the NWP, highlighted that NWP activities provide direct interaction between the UNFCCC process and an extensive network of organizations and experts (over 285 partner organizations) catalysing targeted adaptation actions, and promoting knowledge sharing and learning on adaptation. Activities include: action pledges (almost 200 so far), a diverse range of modalities for engaging stakeholders,³ and liaison through the annual focal point forum (over 85 participants and organizations) as a way to enhance partnerships.

² <<http://unfccc.int/7744>>

³ <<http://unfccc.int/5137>>

With regard to **how the AC can promote synergy and strengthen engagement**, many participants highlighted that the AC needs to be seen as the key institution to continue improving communication and collaboration between UN constituted bodies and international and regional organizations to avoid duplication and identify synergies to respond to priorities defined by the UNFCCC mandates.

Several participants noted that the value of the work being undertaken by regional and international organizations can be added to through facilitating the visibility of their efforts in order to promote regional and local exchange of experience. Using knowledge management tools, such as existing clearing houses and other web based tools, has also potential to support the work of the AC.

Participants stated that the AC could further enhance work on capturing some of the key aspects of adaptation action, best practices and tools that support adaptation planning and implementation in different regions and countries, through a number of modalities. This could include preparation of publications; convening events to promote the exchange of local, national and regional experiences and strengthen the interaction between regional bodies and regional sectoral organizations and support; and promoting South-South cooperation approaches on relevant issues to enhance coherence at the national level.

Specific suggestions for actions by the AC put forward at the event include:

- Leading engagement with the UNFCCC constituted bodies on adaptation, including linking such bodies as the CTCN to adaptation-oriented institutions in order to support response to requests from developing countries;
- Enhancing the convening power of the AC to organize focused events, promoting exchange and strengthening the interaction between regional bodies, regional sectoral organizations and Parties;
- Facilitating the visibility of adaptation efforts at the regional level and global distribution of good practices;
- Improving collaboration between regional organizations and the AC, including on guidance on international requirements, bearing in mind that these must be adapted to regional use;
- Supporting the NAP-GSP, along with the LEG, to aid design of the next steps of this programme for engagement with non-LDC developing countries;
- Engaging with regional centres for guidance towards the AC's own efforts, and supporting the efforts of regional centres in promoting, disseminating and replicating good practices globally;
- Providing, under the UNFCCC, a platform for regional and national organizations, for example through the adaptation forum, to exchange experiences and build capacity, in particular to better support Parties in their adaptation activities, including those directly relevant to adaptation under the UNFCCC.

Possible follow up

Through this event the AC was able to engage Parties and organizations in an in-depth discussion on one of the critical areas of its work, i.e. the objectives and strategies for enhancing collaboration with stakeholders. The event helped to further affirm the convening role of the AC with regard to coherent collaboration and engagement between Parties, UN entities and organizations, in particular as relates to the UNFCCC work on adaptation. The AC wish to build on such events to develop a regular platform for structured and focused exchange and identification of key areas and concrete next steps.

To this end the next steps that could be considered in the context of the AC work programme could include:

- Consider whether any further specific AC action is needed in order to:
 - Enhance engagement and facilitating networking with representatives of constituted bodies and processes under the Convention, including LEG, CTCN, NWP, TEC, NAP process and CGE, to build coherence on adaptation through constructive information exchange;
 - Strengthen engagement with international and regional organizations, centres and networks to promote their coherent action towards support of national adaptation action.
- Consider the possibility of focusing the adaptation forum on providing an action-oriented platform for advancing coherence. This could involve regional dialogues to further understand the best set-up for regional plans. Within the proposed regional dialogues, the AC could build

upon the issues and opportunities that arose at the special event and in other ongoing work with regards to international and regional support for national adaptation action.
