

**Submission of the United States of America
On Support for the National Adaptation Plan Process in Least Developed Countries
6 March 2012**

The United States welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission, pursuant to paragraph 24 of the COP 17 decision on national adaptation plans (NAPs), on support to the national adaptation plan process in the least developed countries.

General approach

It is the view of the United States that the process to enable least developed country (LDC) Parties to identify medium and long-term adaptation needs, and develop and implement strategies and programs to address those needs (hereby referred to as “NAPs process”), should:

- 1) enable LDCs to maintain the flexibility to organize their adaptation planning processes to best fit their individual contexts, circumstances, and development plans;
- 2) provide LDCs with the opportunity to consult and engage with a broad range of actors to diversify available support for the NAPs process; and
- 3) take account of, and build from, existing and future climate change and/or adaptation strategies and development plans.

Support for the NAPs process should recognize that LDCs are at different stages of addressing climate risks in their development planning, budgeting, and implementation. Some countries, for example, are already beginning to integrate short- and long-term climate risks into national development and sector-based planning and policymaking. Some countries have barely started planning, while others have already moved beyond planning to implementation. The institutional arrangements of different sources of support may be more readily applied to either the formulation elements of the NAPs process (e.g. impact and/or vulnerability assessments, stakeholder consultations, institutional capacity building and coordination, etc.) or the implementation elements of that process (defining programmatic approaches to address priority adaptation needs, creating regulatory frameworks, etc.) For example, private sector finance may be available for implementing NAPs priority actions, while it is unlikely that private sector finance would play a significant role in the formulation elements of the NAPs. Guidance on support for the NAPs process should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate LDCs in different stages of adaptation planning.

The NAPs process should encourage broad stakeholder engagement and diverse partnerships. The NAPs process should integrate into the larger development strategy in each country, including Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, thereby enabling good adaptation planning to form the basis for broad support through multiple sources and across sectors. An explicit determination of sources of support for the NAPs process may limit both the integration of adaptation planning into national development strategies and the possible avenues by which LDCs can seek that support.

Support for the NAPs process should take account of, and build from, existing climate change and/or adaptation strategies, such as National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and the Climate Investment Fund’s Pilot Program on Climate Resilience (PPCR). LDCs may be able to use the analyses of impacts and vulnerability from the NAPAs as a solid foundation for

medium- and long-term planning. The PPCR process of building capacity for inter-ministerial decision making platforms, stakeholder consultations, priority setting, and investment plans is an important model for the desired elements of the NAPs process. Bilateral programs, such as support for developing Low Emissions Development Strategies (LEDs), also provide excellent models for the economy-wide, cross-sector adaptation planning and implementation we envision as the outcome of a successful NAPs process.

Parties should give due consideration to prioritizing support under the NAPs process to LDCs that have not benefited from the PPCR, given that the PPCR is intended to provide participating countries with the basis for addressing short, medium and long term actions on climate adaptation as part of national development strategies, policies and plans. LDCs that are benefiting from the PPCR could come into the NAP process at a later stage. In those PPCR countries, it is critical that the NAP process not replicate or undermine ongoing efforts, but rather build upon the work underway.

Clarification on the NAPs process

Parties defined initial guidelines for the NAPs process in Durban, but they remain fairly broad. The COP17 NAPs decision requests the Least Developed Countries Experts Group (LEG) to:

- a. prepare technical guidelines for the NAPs process;
- b. arrange for a review of these guidelines; and
- c. identify support needs for the process of formulating and implementing NAPs.

Guidance on support for the NAPs process in LDCs should flow from the work of the LEG on technical guidelines, while maintaining flexibility and a country-driven focus. The United States believes discussions at SBI 36 should focus on defining a timeline for these outcomes. The LEG should collaborate with multilateral and bilateral partners to develop these guidelines, and to ensure an effective process for review.

U.S. views on support for the NAPs process

It is the view of the United States that the LEG should complete those tasks critical to clarifying the NAPs process before Parties provide detailed guidance on effective means of support for that process. However, we are open to a discussion of possible existing and future opportunities for scientific, technical, financial, or capacity building support. We reiterate, as Parties have agreed, that the NAPs process should be continuous, progressive, and iterative. The distinction between formulation and implementation activities does not imply that the completion of one aspect is a prerequisite to beginning activities under the other. While some sources of support may be more readily applied to either the formulation or implementation elements of the NAPs process, others may be applicable to both.

The Adaptation Committee and the Nairobi Work Program (NWP) can provide scientific and technical support relevant to all elements of the NAPs process. The Adaptation Committee will be drafting a three-year work plan over the next year, which may include considering technical support and guidance for the NAPs process. The NWP is well suited to identifying tools and resources to support adaptation so that LDCs can more effectively design plans that are robust

under multiple climate scenarios. The NWP's inclusive partnership model, that includes a database of calls for action to which a wide variety of partners can respond, can connect the diverse needs and interests of LDCs with those partners best-suited to provide support. For example, the Adaptation Partnership is a NWP partner whose work on mapping the landscape of adaptation activities underway around the world, regional workshops on issues including mainstreaming of adaptation into development plans and projects, and support for communities of adaptation practice can provide a range of technical guidance and data for the NAPs process.

The mandate of the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) includes both the formulation and implementation of the NAPAs. As of September 2011, the United States was the third largest contributor to this fund. Many of the projects we have reviewed as part of the LDCF Council combine the implementation of adaptation action with the stakeholder coordination and institutional capacity building that would constitute part of the formulation element of the NAPs process. Noteworthy examples of this integration of formulation and implementation activities include a project in Liberia to mainstream adaptation into agricultural sector development, and a coastal afforestation project in Bangladesh that will introduce new ecosystem-based adaptation techniques and build capacity for adaptation planning on the district and local level. The LDCF has valuable experience to apply to supporting many aspects of the NAPs process, particularly once that process is clarified by the LEG. Multilateral and bilateral assistance can also support both the formulation and implementation elements of NAPs process, as the LEADS program and USAID support for adaptation planning in countries like Barbados demonstrate¹.

Finally, support for reporting back on effective strategies for both the formulation and implementation elements of the NAPs process will help track progress in adaptation action and allow for the exchange of knowledge, lessons learned and good practices. The Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) helps non-Annex 1 Parties in the preparation of their national communications, including the elements on adaptation and vulnerability assessment and reporting. National communications guidelines on adaptation can be improved so that they reflect and support the NAPs process, and LDCs could report on progress made in the NAPs process every four years through their national communications. The CGE has made recommendations for revision of the adaptation chapter and may continue to provide further recommendations in line with the NAPs process, possibly in coordination with the Adaptation Committee, once it is up and running.

¹ For more information on the USAID-supported adaptation planning work in Barbados, see the Barbados Fact Sheet in "Meeting the Fast Start Commitment" (<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/177750.pdf>)