

Oral intervention by the Chair of the LEG, Mr. Batu Uprety

at the SBSTA in-session workshop on the assessment of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios at regional, national and local levels, including but not limited to pests and diseases

Bonn, Wednesday 3 June 2015

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), I would like to thank you warmly for giving me the opportunity today to present to you briefly the work of the LEG related to the discussions at this important workshop.

The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), in its current term (2011–2015), is mandated to provide technical support and advice to the least developed countries (LDCs) on national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) and the LDC work programme, and to provide technical guidance and support to the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs).

The rationale for developing NAPAs rests on the high level of vulnerability and low adaptive capacity of the LDCs. Any delay in addressing vulnerabilities means increased vulnerability and/or increased adaptation costs at a later stage. NAPA has offered an approach that would allow the urgent adaptation needs of the LDCs to be reported so that support could be provided for their implementation.

The process to formulate and implement NAPs encourages countries to advance from NAPA and other individual adaptation experiences to comprehensive, medium- and long-term planning for adaptation that is driven by a country-owned NAP framework, strategy or roadmap.

By the nature of its functions and its close interaction with the LDCs, the LEG has had the privilege to witness not only the challenges faced by the LDCs, but their progress and achievements in addressing their adaptation needs through the NAPA process. Almost all LDCs have completed preparation of their NAPAs, and are now in different stages of implementing projects identified therein. The GEF reported that, as at 2 March 2015, the majority of the projects submitted are on agriculture (31%). All LDCs have conducted vulnerability assessments when preparing their NAPAs.

Several countries have embarked on the process to formulate and implement NAPs and some of them have already started to undertake comprehensive risk and vulnerability assessments. LDCs have reported that they can build on results from the assessments they have undertaken for their NAPAs. For example, one country sampled pilot areas that are identified as chronic vulnerability areas during the NAPA process, and developed more comprehensive vulnerability maps under its process to formulate and implement NAPs based on that. In some cases some countries had not undertaken in-depth vulnerability assessments owing to the unavailability of downscaled data at the time.

Dear colleagues,

The LEG developed essential functions for the process to formulate and implement NAPs. The essential functions are essential characteristics of the process to formulate and implement to NAPs to ensure that it is useful at the national level, and leads to desired outcomes. One of the 10 essential functions is about analyzing climate data and assessing vulnerabilities to climate change and identifying adaptation options at the sector, subnational, national and other appropriate levels.

The LEG technical guidelines for the NAP process also provide a set of references for countries to assess climate risks and vulnerabilities and identify adaptation options in the agriculture sector.

As part of its work programme for 2014–2015, the LEG is conducting regional training workshops on NAPs. The workshops are designed and tailored for each region and feature modules on vulnerability and risk assessments. These modules provide information about relevant approaches, methods and tools for risk, vulnerability and adaptation assessments.

The LEG collaborates with relevant organizations such as WMO or IFAD and FAO, including in conducting its training workshops. These organizations provide expert information on available tools and methodologies on climate analysis and vulnerability and risk assessments.

Dear colleagues,

The LEG is of the view that to conduct vulnerability assessment, including in the agriculture sector, countries should:

- Identify specific themes/issues/places for vulnerability assessment (at different

levels and scales)

- Assess risks and vulnerabilities based on appropriate frameworks and use of specific metrics to support decision-making
- Identify common steps for conducting a risk and vulnerability assessment
- Build on existing knowledge to identify strategies to manage climate risks and key vulnerabilities

Some specific questions to think about when undertaking risk and vulnerability assessments could include:

- How much time is available for the assessment?
- On which planning areas do you want to focus the assessment?
- Who will perform the assessment?
- Do you have the technical capacity to perform it in-house?
- What questions do you want the assessment to answer?
- Which specific decisions do you want the assessment to support?

Dear colleagues

[Concluding remarks]

The LEG recognized the value of addressing some of the adaptation issues in an integrated manner. One of the best opportunities to do so, is when looking at the water/energy/food nexus, recognizing that actions in one area more often than not have impacts in one or both of the others. The LEG is fully engaged, with other organizations in the work on ensuring coherence and integrated approaches and methods to effectively support the process to formulate and implement NAPs in LDCs.

Those were some of the thoughts I wanted to share with you.

Thank you all for your attention.