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**Implementation of Article 4, paragraphs 8 and 9, of the Convention**

**Matters relating to the least developed countries**

**Progress report of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group**

**Note by the secretariat\***

*Summary*

The sixth meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group was held at Banjul, Gambia, on 24 and 25 September 2004. During the meeting members of the group reviewed intersessional progress in the implementation of the work programme for the biennium 2004–2005, revised working papers and other publications, and assigned tasks for the next intersessional period.

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\* This document was submitted late because the meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group was held in late September.

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Mandate**

1. The Conference of the Parties, by its decision 7/CP.9, extended the mandate of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) under the terms of reference adopted by decision 29/CP.7, which stipulate that the LEG shall meet twice each year.
2. The work programme for the second term of the LEG (2004–2005) was developed at the fifth meeting of the group, and was endorsed by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) at its twentieth session.

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

3. In response to an offer by the Government of the Gambia, the sixth meeting of the group was held at Banjul, Gambia, on 24 and 25 September 2004. This note summarizes the proceedings and outcome of the sixth meeting of the LEG.

### **C. Proceedings of the meeting**

4. The meeting included a series of closed sessions followed by open sessions; one of these included the participation of a representative from the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the other included the participation of the team entrusted with the preparation of the national adaptation programme of action (NAPA) of the Gambia. This multistakeholder NAPA team exchanged information with LEG members on their process of NAPA preparation and on the challenges faced thereon. LEG members provided feedback and advice to the questions posed by the team.

## **II. Operational issues**

5. The Chair of the LEG (Mr. Laavasa Malua) informed the group of the nomination of two new members by the Annex II group of countries, in accordance with paragraph 2 of the terms of reference of the LEG which stipulates that the LEG shall include three experts from Annex II Parties. These nominations were for Ms. Elizabeth Harvey from Canada and Mr. Erwin Künzi from Austria. Ms. Harvey was nominated to a vacant Annex II position (previously filled by Ms. Liza Leclerc from Canada), and Mr. Künzi was nominated to replace Mr. Klaus Broersma from the Netherlands.
6. The group also welcomed the participation in this meeting of Ms. Tina Guthrie (Canada) and Mr. Klaus Broersma (Netherlands) as two additional experts invited in accordance with paragraph 2 of the LEG terms of reference which states that “the group may draw upon additional expertise as deemed necessary”. Other additional experts who were invited to attend an open session included Ms. Funke Oyewole from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) at the request of the GEF, and the members of the NAPA team of the Gambia.
7. Consistent with the conclusions of the fifth meeting of the LEG, the following working papers were prepared by the LEG and the secretariat for consideration at this meeting:
  - (a) Working paper 1: Synergy between multilateral environmental agreements in the context of the NAPA process (see section IV.A)
  - (b) Working paper 2: Regional synergy in the context of the NAPA process (see section IV.B)
  - (c) Working paper 3: Strategy for implementation of NAPAs (see section IV.F)

- (d) Working paper 4: Recommendations by the LDC Expert Group on capacity-building needs (see section IV.E)
- (e) Working paper 5: Guidance on synthesis of available information in the NAPA preparation process (see section IV.C).

8. The group was updated on efforts towards coordination among the different expert groups in the UNFCCC intergovernmental process, namely the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE), the Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT), and the LEG. In accordance with decision 10/CP.8, the chairs of the subsidiary bodies held a meeting with the chairs of these expert groups, during which the chairs of the expert groups agreed to enhance the exchange of information among the groups, and to identify possible longer-term areas of collaboration among them. To this end, the Chair of the LEG participated in the special meeting of the EGTT and the Workshop on Innovative Options for Financing the Development and Transfer of Technologies, which were held in Montreal on 27–29 and 29–30 September 2004, respectively. Further opportunities will be identified in the future for enhancing cooperation between the LEG and the other expert groups.

9. On the status of financial resources in support of the LEG, the Chair informed the group that, to date, financial support for the second term of the LEG had been received from only one country (Ireland), and that the implementation of the LEG work programme will require substantial additional funding. If such funding is not received, the LEG may need to amend some elements of its agreed work programme.

### **III. Feedback from the least developed countries on the national adaptation programme of action process and on support from the Least Developed Countries Expert Group**

10. At the fifth meeting of the LEG, the group had decided that feedback would be sought from the least developed countries (LDCs) on their NAPA preparation process, particularly in order to identify any difficulties encountered in the use of the NAPA guidelines and to direct LEG efforts towards meeting their needs thereon.

11. Following an initiative of the coordinator of the LDC group, Mr. Richard Muyungi, at SBI 20 the representatives of the LDCs filled out a questionnaire prepared by the secretariat on the NAPA preparation process in their countries.

12. The questionnaire was completed by 41 LDC representatives. Responses revealed that the problems encountered by countries in preparing their NAPAs were mostly logistical, in particular relating to the timely provision of funding. The main areas identified by respondents in which additional capacities could be enhanced to improve the NAPA preparation process included technical training, funding, vulnerability assessment, information exchange, information technology equipment, criteria development for ranking and prioritization of projects, and project formulation.

13. On the specific question of what technical guidance was required from the LEG, responses ranged from the need for general technical support through training and guidance to national experts, and enhancement of information exchange, to specific issues such as support on ranking and prioritization of adaptation needs. The results of the questionnaire in this regard were broadly consistent with the questionnaires that the LEG had conducted following the regional NAPA training workshops organized in 2003.

14. The questionnaire also revealed which sectors are emerging as priority areas of focus in the NAPA projects to be proposed. The most cited sectors were agriculture and water resources, followed by coastal zone/marine resources, health, energy and forests.

15. The LEG decided that it will take into account the responses to this questionnaire in tailoring the implementation of its current work programme, in order to ensure that the technical needs of the LDCs in the preparation and implementation strategy of NAPAs are being met effectively through LEG support.

16. The LEG also highlighted the importance of this type of feedback mechanism in order to identify the needs of the LDCs and to assess progress being made in the NAPA process as well as any barriers and needs that should be addressed in a timely manner to ensure a sound and useful result. In this light, the group highlighted that it would be very helpful to repeat this questionnaire at each session of the SBI in order to measure progress in meeting the needs and in solving problems encountered in the NAPA process.

## **IV. Elements of the work programme**

### **A. Promoting synergy among multilateral environmental agreements**

17. Paragraph 9 (d) of the LEG terms of reference mandates the group to promote synergy among multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). Building upon a previous paper prepared by the LEG on this issue, which was included as appendix A of the LEG publication “Annotated guidelines for the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action”, the LEG discussed a working paper on the promotion of synergy in the context of the work programme of the LEG.

18. The paper addressed information on synergy among MEAs as included in NAPA proposals, national action programmes (NAPs) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, national biodiversity strategies and action plans (NBSAPs) under the Convention on Biological Diversity, and poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), as well as efforts by the GEF and its implementing agencies to promote synergy. It also examined barriers to synergy among MEAs within the NAPA process, and possible action by the LEG to promote synergy in accordance with the COP mandate within the LEG terms of reference.

19. The group proposed amendments to the paper and requested that the secretariat produce it as a technical paper for dissemination to the LDC group and other interested Parties and agencies which may be willing to support efforts by the LEG in this regard.

20. The group also decided to request feedback from the LDCs, possibly through the above-mentioned regular questionnaire, on existing projects that build upon synergy among MEAs, that could serve to identify successful examples of synergistic implementation at the national level and be relevant to the NAPA implementation phase.

### **B. Promoting regional synergy**

21. Paragraph 9 (d) of the LEG terms of reference also mandates the LEG to promote regional synergy. In response to a decision by the group at its fifth meeting, a paper was prepared on regional synergy in the context of the NAPA process. The paper addressed information on regional synergy based on the inclusion of this issue in a limited number of NAPA proposals. It also covered opportunities and barriers to regional synergy, the different actors that contribute to the promotion of regional synergy, and possible action by the LEG to promote regional synergy in response to the COP mandate under the LEG terms of reference. The group agreed to disseminate the document as a technical paper for reference by the LDCs and other Parties and agencies.

### **C. Support for synthesis of available information**

22. At the fifth meeting of the LEG, the group had decided to develop a training manual to support national workshops on the NAPA step of synthesis of available information. A working paper on this matter was discussed at the sixth meeting of the LEG. The paper focused on the different steps for the collection of information on national priorities, programmes and action plans to facilitate identification of a development framework for the NAPA, and for the synthesis of past assessment studies on potential climate change at local, national or regional levels as well as broader studies at the global level. Building on this information, the paper also addressed the identification of major climate hazards and associated risks from past experience, and the documentation of place-, time-, and situation-specific coping strategies, including indigenous technologies, applied in response to given climatic hazards.

23. The group decided that the paper be revised, produced as a technical paper, and published for dissemination to the LDC NAPA teams prior to the seventh meeting of the LEG.

### **D. Support for ranking and prioritization**

24. In line with the above-mentioned efforts for supporting the NAPA step on synthesis of available information, the group had also decided at its fifth meeting to develop a training manual to support national workshops on the NAPA step of ranking and prioritisation; and to develop a list of experts on ranking and prioritization, as well as other steps in the NAPA preparation process, in each region for dissemination to the LDCs.

25. The training material that could be used as a basis for national workshops on ranking and prioritization has been included in a LEG publication containing examples and exercises drawn from the NAPA workshops (see chapter XI). The LEG will continue to monitor progress on the fulfilment of this important step in the NAPA process and to respond to requests for support and guidance thereon.

26. The list of experts is still under preparation and currently has 30 names. Further nominations will be sought and the resulting list will be made available on the UNFCCC LDC web page for access by any LDC or implementing agency which seeks technical support from regional experts in the area of ranking and prioritization, as well as other steps in the NAPA process.

### **E. Recommendations on capacity-building needs for preparation of national adaptation programmes of action**

27. The LEG terms of reference mandated the group to advise on capacity-building needs for LDCs for the preparation of NAPAs, and to provide recommendations thereon (paragraphs 1 and 9 (c) of the LEG terms of reference).

28. Building upon previous efforts by the LEG to identify capacity-building needs for NAPA preparation (through interaction with NAPA teams, questionnaires at the regional workshops and a questionnaire at SBI 20), and completed and ongoing capacity-building activities by the LEG to support the NAPA teams (e.g. annotated guidelines for the preparation of NAPAs, global NAPA launch workshop, regional NAPA preparation workshops, and LEG publications), the LEG identified a number of capacity-building needs for NAPA preparation for consideration by the SBI. These include:

- (a) Capacity-building (including hands-on training through targeted national workshops for NAPA technical teams, and dissemination of appropriate tools) should be provided on ranking/prioritization tools and on the "logframe method", vulnerability assessment, project development and synthesis of available information on the adverse effects of climate change

- (b) Institutional capacity-building is needed, including for national focal points, especially for the implementation phase of NAPAs
- (c) Data accessibility, collection, assessment and management and dissemination should be improved, particularly in relation to meteorological information and data on climate impacts, and information exchange should be promoted
- (d) Capacity-building is needed to ensure the effectiveness of the participatory/consultative process, including for the facilitation of multidisciplinary teams
- (e) Some LDCs should be given particular help to meet their capacity-building needs, such as those countries that have only recently become Parties or those facing unique socio-economic or political difficulties that render them in need of special support before they can initiate and complete their NAPAs
- (f) Information from national capacity self-assessments (NCSAs), and climate change “top-ups” may be very useful in assessing capacity-building needs for the promotion of synergy, although this information may not directly address the focus of NAPAs on urgent and immediate adaptation needs
- (g) The GEF and other bilateral and multilateral agencies should be invited to enhance funding for capacity-building needs.

#### **F. Strategy for implementation of national adaptation programmes of action**

29. In response to the LEG terms of reference, the group had decided at its fifth meeting to prepare a scoping paper to lay out elements of relevance to the NAPA implementation strategy. The paper was presented and considered at the sixth meeting of the group. A revised version of the paper will be prepared and released by the LEG. The paper covers aspects relating to securing financial resources, institutional arrangements, further prioritization, monitoring and impact measurement of proposed activities, and mainstreaming.

30. Through this paper, the LEG is proposing further annotations to the NAPA guidelines to include how countries may present their final list of activities and embark on raising funds to implement their NAPAs. This implementation strategy would include:

- (a) Identification of groups that would execute/implement proposed projects and activities, including institutions, agencies, non-governmental organizations and local groups
- (b) A statement on the timing requirement for implementation of each activity based on urgency, besides having already gone through a ranking based on the prioritization criteria in paragraphs 15 and 16 of the NAPA guidelines (annexed to decision 28/CP.7)
- (c) A list of potential funding sources including the LDC Fund, and other multilateral and bilateral sources for each activity, guided by the level of input and the nature of activities expected to achieve the desired outputs
- (d) Information about risks and barriers to implementation, including ideas for evaluating and monitoring outputs and outcomes.

31. The paper will also discuss the issue of integrating NAPA activities into national development plans and programmes (mainstreaming). NAPA activities will be fully mainstreamed into national development at all stages of the NAPA process, through directly coupling proposed activities with

national development plans and programmes such as poverty alleviation programmes. Because many countries are already engaged in the long-term integration of climate change in their national planning process as part of their comprehensive national adaptation planning, they may not be likely to rank this as an urgent need under the NAPA process.

32. In the same context, the LEG was requested to provide feedback, through a representative from the GEF, on GEF proposals to operationalize decision 6/CP.9 on funding the implementation of NAPAs. The LEG provided such feedback, highlighting the importance of avoiding delays in implementation once a NAPA has been completed.

#### **G. Documentation of existing coping strategies**

33. At its fifth meeting, the LEG had noted the importance of disseminating information on experience in using local coping strategies and indigenous knowledge to support the identification of adaptation options among LDCs which share similar climatic conditions. The LEG had decided that, following its sixth meeting, efforts would be initiated to develop a database for that purpose. In the mean-time, the secretariat started work on the collection of information that could be included in this database, and the LEG agreed to continue this effort and to include coping strategies identified in NAPAs as they become available. Strategies included in this database will help countries identify different adaptation options in the implementation phase of NAPAs, and will also serve as an important input into the identification of opportunities for regional synergy in the NAPA implementation phase.

### **V. Publications of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group**

34. Two additional LEG publications were discussed and reviewed. One of them, titled "Selection of examples and exercises drawn from the regional NAPA preparation workshops", was prepared in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, and includes a synthesis of the training material that was provided during the four LEG regional NAPA workshops held during 2003. Dissemination of this publication to the NAPA teams in LDCs is under way.

35. The second publication is the "NAPA primer" which provides background information on the concept of NAPAs, in particular within the broader framework of adaptation, and provides examples of simulated NAPAs in order to illustrate the application of the different NAPA steps leading to the identification of project profiles for the urgent and immediate adaptation needs of the country. This publication was prepared during the first term of the LEG, with support from the Canadian International Development Agency, and is now undergoing a final revision prior to printing and dissemination.

### **VI. Activities to be initiated following the seventh meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group**

36. At its fifth meeting the LEG had discussed the possibility of developing a database of costs and benefits of project ideas identified in NAPAs, and had decided that this activity should be initiated by the time of the seventh meeting of the LEG. The group, however, agreed that given that there are no completed NAPAs yet, this task should be delayed until after the seventh meeting of the LEG when the first set of NAPAs will have been submitted.

37. Similarly, consideration of LEG recommendations on capacity-building needs for NAPA implementation was deferred until after the seventh meeting of the LEG, in order to be able to take into account relevant information in the first set of completed NAPAs.

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