



A submission to UNFCCC Secretariat on processes to support the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans in answer to the invitation of paragraph 7 of Decision FCCC/SBI/2011/L.16

In response to the invitation of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) to submit views on (a) the process to enable least developed country Parties to formulate and implement national adaptation plans, building upon their experience in preparing and implementing National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs); and (b) the modalities and guidelines for least developed country Parties and other developing country Parties to employ the modalities formulated to support national adaptation plans, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) herein submits its views on processes to support the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans.

FAO would first like to stress the importance of the agricultural sectors - agriculture, forestry and fisheries – for national adaptation plans. Climate change has strong impacts on the agricultural sectors, both by modifying or degrading productive capacities and the underlying natural resource base and by directly and indirectly increasing the risks associated with production and environmental sustainability. It is important to note that developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change are in that situation often because of their dependence on the agricultural sectors for their contributions to national economies and food security. Climate change-induced losses and damages in the agricultural sectors will be spread into the rest of the economy because of their importance to livelihoods, economic development and food security of the population in developing countries.

Bearing this in mind, FAO recommends that the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans includes (1) the full incorporation of regional issues and perspectives, (2) adequate means of engaging stakeholders from all sectors, (3) the definition of clear principles, methodologies and tools for vulnerability assessment, (4) assistance from a collaborative team of national and international organisations, and (5) appropriate and dedicated funding sources.

1. FAO recommends that regional issues and perspectives be fully incorporated in the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans

National adaptation plans must take into account broader perspectives at regional and sub-regional levels. Addressing food security and ecosystems concerns in the medium to long term will require that national adaptation plans consider larger space scales than previously included in the NAPAs. This is first because some issues cannot be addressed solely at national level, for instance trans-boundary issues, spread of diseases and migratory species. In addition, countries are likely to share increasingly similar concerns with their regional neighbours in relation to climate change adaptation.

2. FAO recommends the use and development of adequate means of engaging stakeholders from all sectors in the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans

NAPAs have demonstrated the importance of ensuring a strong engagement of national stakeholders from all sectors in the process of identifying priority actions. Experience has, however, shown that some sectors were better prepared than others to actively and effectively take part in climate change adaptation planning. Underlying governance issues (e.g. insufficient cooperation and coordination among line agencies) have also constrained the development of NAPAs. Sector-specific plans are needed to ensure that traditionally under-represented systems/communities do not remain under-represented in adaptation plans.

Further, the difficulties encountered in engaging stakeholders are likely to increase in the context of national adaptation plans. NAPAs have essentially been addressing immediate concerns that stakeholders could easily grasp and on which they could have a clear position. Ensuring the same level of stakeholder involvement in national adaptation plans - and enabling the development of medium to long term plans that are soundly linked to and building on short term climate change adaptation planning and actions - will require providing stakeholders with “a vision of the future” or a range of plausible futures. Possible means of achieving this include the provision of projections at local level of future impacts and vulnerabilities, clear and understandable explanations of the concept of uncertainty and ways to manage it for decision-making.

3. FAO recognises the importance of impact and vulnerability assessments for national adaptation plans and recommends the development of clear principles, tools and methodologies

Identifying priority actions for national adaptation plans is likely to prove more difficult than in the context of NAPAs, due both to the longer timeframe and the need for considering uncertainties inherent in future projections of climate change. Impact and vulnerability assessments will thus be even more important and should address appropriate temporal and spatial scales. There is a need for more integrated assessments that are better linked to policy and institutional needs for adaptation actions. Such assessments in turn will require the development of clear methodologies (including a commonly agreed definition or framework of vulnerability) and of clear guidance on good practices and available tools adapted to the various sectors and sub-sectors including agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

4. FAO recommends that the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans be supported by a collaborative team of national and international organisations

The formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans will also require the involvement of all relevant national and international organisations in a collaborative manner. The Least Developed Country (LDC) expert group has played an important role in the development of NAPAs and has contributed to strengthening the links between LDCs and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans should be supported by a similar body involving specialised UN agencies and regional networks.

5. FAO recommends the development of appropriate and dedicated sources of funding for the formulation and implementation of national adaptation plans

Appropriate and dedicated funding sources, such as the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), will be needed to support both the formulation and the implementation of national adaptation plans. Integrating regional perspectives and supporting regional

cooperative actions will also require additional funding for the development and implementation of a parallel and concurrent system of regional adaptation plans and ensuing actions.