



Submission by CAN-International on the Nairobi Work Programme

28 March 2011

Climate Action Network – International is a coalition of 550 environmental and development non-governmental organizations worldwide committed to limiting human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels.

1.0 Submission on behalf of Climate Action Network

- 1.1. The SBSTA at its thirty third session invited Parties and relevant organisations to submit to the secretariat, by 28th March 2011, further views on **progress made and gaps, as well as views on new activities that may be needed to achieve the objective and expected outcomes of the work programme.** This invitation is contained in paragraph 10 of document CCC/SBSTA/2010/L.6.
- 1.2. CAN, a network of over 550 environment and development organisations, welcomes the invitation to submit views. This submission has been prepared by member organisations of CAN's adaptation group, several of whom are partners in the NWP and are supporting the NWP through action pledges, and have attended some of the workshops organised under the NWP.
- 1.3. CAN made a submission in August 2010 as part of the review of the Nairobi Work Programme, and this submission will not repeat the points made in the earlier document.¹ The emphasis in the current submission will be on suggestions for new activities that we think are needed for the NWP to achieve its objectives more effectively.

2.0 Brief Review of the Nairobi Work Programme's Achievements with suggestions for strengthening

- 2.1. The information-sharing function of the NWP has been a useful foundation for catalyzing action on adaptation, and the NWP's 'calls for action' represent a useful second step in this. Rather than simply invite pledges, the Programme could identify some key areas where support is requested by particular Parties, and try to match offers of expertise from partner organisations. Parties should then be encouraged to be more active in reporting back on how they used the expertise and how useful it was to facilitate shared learning. Thus, the NWP could in future play more of a broker/facilitator role than hitherto.
- 2.2. Where there are gaps, or new issues that will arise, then new 'calls for action or support' will be needed, and a regular review/synthesis of prioritized needs will be required.
- 2.3. The NWP is unique globally, given the breadth and diversity of Parties and partners who participate and share their actions. In future, the catalytic function of the NWP needs to be linked closely to the roles and modalities (when they are finalized) of the Adaptation Committee, and of regional centres (which are likely to comprise a range of institution types), and to the adaptation activities of other relevant international frameworks such as the UNCBD, UNCCD and the Hyogo Framework for Action. The UNFCCC Secretariat need not in future be the leader in all activities, but should be mandated to call upon other bodies including partners and UN bodies.
- 2.4. The review of the NWP should consider alternative institutional arrangements which can best support the multiple functions of the NWP: capacity-development, an information-sharing platform, and a vehicle for channeling on-the-ground priorities and practical adaptation experience into the negotiations.

¹ Download available at: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/smsn/ngo/188.pdf>

3.0 Future Lessons on effectiveness of the NWP

- 3.1 Vital to future effective knowledge generation and management on vulnerability and adaptation is that recommendations on good practice are made both to the COP and to governments.
- 3.2 For this to happen, there need to be mechanisms whereby the results of the NWP can more effectively provide recommendations for the negotiations. This will require to go beyond synthesizing the inputs received from Parties, whether written submissions or presentations made at workshops, to lesson learning and analysis for policy which could involve review of issues in the negotiations.
- 3.3 In this context it is important to highlight that in our view (which we have expressed in our recent submission on the Adaptation Committee)² the new Adaptation Committee's roles should include oversight of both the NWP and overview of the work of regional networks and institutions. The Adaptation Committee could provide an objective overview to the COP of achievements and gaps in knowledge development, management and dissemination, and therefore can request the NWP to feed-in clear recommendations. In this connection, and possibly going beyond the scope of this submission, we would like to see a mechanism that enabled governments at all levels and civil society organizations to draw on expertise within these centres and networks, through a kind of clearing house of requests for information, matching with potential suppliers (who could be UN organisations, NGOs, research institutions or governments), who quote for providing the information. Prioritisation for the most vulnerable would be needed, given the limited financial resources for meeting all needs, and oversight and review of the process.
- 3.3 Additional support needs to be provided, possibly through a future NWP, to assist LDCs, SIDS and African countries to articulate their needs and share their experiences. To date, submissions from these groups of countries have been very few, and so NWP outputs to date have not reflected a wide range of experiences.
- 3.5 While the NWP has only been mandated to synthesize the submissions it receives, at the same time many Parties have looked to the NWP to deliver clear prescriptions of how to do adaptation and for certainty and detail in future climate predictions. Since the nature of future climate change is shrouded in uncertainty because of the complexity of factors shaping it, adaptation essentially involves living with and making decisions under conditions of, uncertainty. A number of implications follow from this:
 - 3.5.1 Because the Nairobi Work Programme has been purely advisory capacity, it has been unable to provide clarity on the nature of adaptation and adaptive capacity. Therefore, this fundamental principle of adaptation – living with uncertainty – has not been effectively communicated to Parties, and methodologies and processes for building adaptive capacity have not been part of the Programme. A new programme should place this as a priority.
 - 3.5.2 It is CAN's view that the absence of an expert group with a mandate to guide the execution of the NWP, shape its outputs and make recommendations to the COP that are powerful, practical, and accessible to users outside of the UNFCCC, has been a key factor limiting the achievements of the NWP. The existing roster of experts, to which a number of CAN members belong, has, to our knowledge, not been used effectively (or at all) as a resource.
 - 3.5.3 From our experience as NGOs in contact with governments in the countries where we work, we are well aware of governments' inexperience and lack of confidence in the area of adaptation planning. We consider that the very broad scope of work of the NWP (under nine themes) together with limited resources has been a factor limiting its reach and impact. We are aware of the tension between Parties' requests for extra themes to be addressed in future, and the need to offer greater depth of technical support on many themes.

² Download available at: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2011/smsn/ngo/243.pdf>

3.5.4 As NGOs, our concern is for the impacts on, and vulnerabilities of, the poorest communities in the most vulnerable countries. Any future programme, or mechanism for knowledge flow that is to meet the need of vulnerable people and communities needs to focus more on developing guidance for adaptation planning, including consideration of (in no particular order):

- i. Conceptual frameworks for adaptation – particularly looking at concept of adaptive capacity; a number of NGOs and academics have quite advanced work and experience in this area that is ready for scaling up at national level
- ii. Capacity building for better understanding and integration of natural systems and processes, their vulnerabilities and contribution to adaptation
- iii. Building resilience of the natural resource base, ecological systems, their functions and the goods and services they provide
- iv. Economic diversification for building resilience to climate change impacts
- v. Vulnerability and impact assessment
- vi. Broad stakeholder engagement in planning
- vii. Institution building at the sub-national level for assuring effectiveness in allocation of adaptation funding,
- viii. The integration of adaptation into sustainable development agendas and disaster-reduction strategies aimed at the most vulnerable communities
- ix. Support for cross-sector and inter-departmental approaches aiming at coherent adaptation plans and strategies
- x. Improving the synergies between the adaptation work of the Rio Conventions (UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD)
- xi. Adaptation in an urban context
- xii. More capacity building on using the adaptation tools developed/used by NWP partners and the lessons learnt from their use

3.5.5 There needs to be a mechanism within the future NWP that continually updates knowledge and ensures that governments and civil society groups in vulnerable countries can readily access information and expertise on adaptation to support implementation activities. This requires resources, and creative use of different accessible media for dissemination, including networks of ‘infomediaries’ or local knowledge brokers. The nature of these will differ between countries, and there is rich scope for NWP partners sharing experience on different options.

3.5.7 There are many gaps in case study material on the NWP website. This is because its content depends on the willingness and ability of Parties and NGOs to submit material. Preparation of material takes time and resources, and none has been available for enabling this by Parties and observer organizations. The rich vein of knowledge and experience held by southern NGOs working on adaptation has not been tapped in a way that can inform

developing country governments. This problem would be partly overcome if the NWP had sufficient budget to support information sharing.

- 3.6 While adaptation is a key concern of governments, it is the most vulnerable people and communities who are most in need of support for adaptation, and for information on how to adapt. It is the methods and means of sharing knowledge that is critical if these most vulnerable communities are to be reached. In the future, the NWP should place emphasis on identifying the knowledge gaps and ways of knowledge sharing that are relevant for the local level, both local governments and communities:
 - 3.6.1 The NWP needs resources or the mandate to develop an easily navigable web portal usable in countries with slow and low capacity internet connections. Alternatively, this web-based aspect of NWP could or should be passed over to an existing experienced institution already running a web based compendium on adaptation (e.g. Eldis, WeAdapt, AfricaAdapt) after conducting a survey of them to identify which one is the most effective.
 - 3.6.2 While an efficient and easily navigable adaptation knowledge portal is vital, for the majority of people needing support for local level adaptation, knowledge needs to be transformed into accessible media and translated to make it accessible, for example as podcasts in local languages that can be downloaded to a mobile phone or broadcast on local radio or short visual presentations available as DVDs.
- 3.7 The NWP reports to the SBSTA, the Adaptation Committee and the COP should highlight the gaps in its services and how these could be plugged, for example by commissioning of services from organisations or institutions able to plug these gaps.