

Submission by the Global Environment Facility: Enabling Activities as Part of the National Adaptation Plan Process

2012-02-13

I Introduction

1. At its seventeenth session, the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 17) adopted a decision on national adaptation plans (NAPs). With respect to financial arrangements for the formulation and implementation of NAPs, the decision:

22. *Requests* the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism, through the Least Developed Countries Fund, to *consider how to enable activities for the preparation of the national adaptation plan process for the least developed countries* Parties, while maintaining progress for the least developed countries work programme, which includes the national adaptation programmes of action;

23. *Also invites* United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and other relevant organizations, as well as bilateral and multilateral agencies, to *support the national adaptation plan process in the least developed countries and, where possible, to consider establishing support programmes* for the national adaptation plan process within their mandates, as appropriate, which could facilitate financial and technical support to least developed countries; and to submit to the secretariat, by 13 February 2012, information on how they have responded to this invitation;

24. *Invites* Parties and relevant organizations as well as bilateral and multilateral agencies, to submit to the secretariat, by 13 February 2012, information on support to the national adaptation plan process in the least developed countries;

25. *Also invites* the Global Environment Facility, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism for the operation of the Least Developed Countries Fund, to *submit information to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, through the secretariat, by 13 February 2012, on how they could enable activities undertaken as part of the national adaptation plan process in the least developed*

countries, for compilation by the secretariat into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its thirty-sixth session;

(Draft decision -/CP.17, National Adaptation Plans, hereinafter referred to as the NAP Decision)

2. In response to this request and invitation by the COP, the present submission outlines how the Global Environment Facility (GEF), through the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), could enable activities as part of the NAP process in least developed countries (LDCs). Drawing on the initial objectives, principles, guidelines and modalities presented in the NAP Decision, this submission considers how these align with the mandate, operational policies and financing modalities of the LDCF.

II Background and context

3. COP 16 decided to establish a process to enable LDCs to formulate and implement NAPs. This process would build upon their experience in preparing and implementing national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), as a means of identifying and addressing medium- and long-term adaptation needs. Other developing country Parties were also invited to employ the modalities formulated to support the national adaptation plans. (Decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 15-16)

4. At its thirty-fifth session, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) considered modalities and guidelines for the NAP process, based on the outcomes of an expert meeting (FCCC/SBI/2011/12), submissions from parties and intergovernmental organizations (FCCC/SBI/2011/MISC.7), and a technical paper on the identification and implementation of medium and long-term adaptation activities in LDCs (FCCC/TP/2011/7). Based on the conclusions of SBI 35, COP 17 adopted the NAP Decision.

5. The Decision frames NAPs; provides initial guidelines for NAPs in LDCs; presents the modalities to support and enable the NAP process in LDCs; outlines financial arrangements for the formulation and implementation of NAPs; and describes the relevant modalities for reporting, monitoring and evaluation. While the decision refers specifically to LDC Parties, it also invites non-LDCs to employ the modalities elaborated.

III Rationale

6. NAPs have been designed as a means to identify and address medium and long-term adaptation needs. NAPs will, thus, complement and build upon the experience of LDCs in preparing and implementing NAPAs, which in turn focus on urgent and immediate needs. As a medium and long-term process, NAPs will allow countries to scale up their adaptation policies and measures and to fully incorporate considerations of climate change in their national development planning processes. As a

result, the NAP process will enable improved coordination of adaptation financing and development assistance, and allow countries to assume full ownership of their climate-resilient development agendas.

7. The GEF, as an operating entity of the financial mechanism and as the entity entrusted with the management of the LDCF, holds the mandate, the modalities and the experience required to enable activities in support of the NAP process in LDCs. Through the LDCF, the GEF has financed the preparation of NAPAs in 48 LDCs and approved financing for 55 NAPA implementation projects and programs to date. Consequently, the GEF and its Agencies are well placed to ensure that NAPs build on and are fully coordinated with the NAPA experience as well as ongoing and future efforts towards NAPA implementation.

IV Objectives

8. As per the NAP Decision, the objectives of the NAP process are:

(a) To reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change, by building adaptive capacity and resilience; and

(b) To facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation, in a coherent manner, into relevant new and existing policies, programmes and activities, in particular development planning processes and strategies, within all relevant sectors and at different levels, as appropriate.

(NAP Decision, para 1)

9. These objectives are consistent with the strategic objectives of the LDCF, which are to (i) reduce vulnerability to the adverse impacts of climate change; (ii) increase adaptive capacity to respond to the impacts of climate change; and (iii) promote the transfer and adoption of adaptation technology. As a means to achieve its first objective, the LDCF seeks, *inter alia*, to mainstream adaptation in broader development frameworks at a country level. (*LDCF/SCCF Programming Strategy for Adaptation*, GEF/LDCF.SCCF.9/4/Rev.1) By supporting the preparation and implementation of NAPAs, the GEF, through the LDCF, has enabled LDCs to take important initial steps towards the objectives of the NAP process.

10. The LDCF was established to address the special needs of LDCs as presented in the LDC work programme, with a priority to support the preparation and implementation of NAPAs (5/CP.7; 3/CP.11; 4/CP.11). The GEF welcomes further guidance from the COP to clarify whether enabling activities in support of NAPs are to be adopted in the LDC work programme and whether such activities are to be prioritized for financing under the LDCF.

V Guiding principles

11. In the NAP Decision, Parties agree on the following guiding principles for the NAP process:

2. *Also agrees* that planning for adaptation at the national level is a continuous, progressive and iterative process, the implementation of which should be based on nationally identified priorities, including those reflected in the relevant national documents, plans and strategies, and coordinated with national sustainable development objectives, plans, policies and programmes;

3. *Further agrees* that enhanced action on adaptation should be undertaken in accordance with the Convention, should follow a country-driven, gender-sensitive, participatory and fully transparent approach, taking into consideration vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems, and should be based on and guided by the best available science and, as appropriate, traditional and indigenous knowledge, and by gender-sensitive approaches, with a view to integrating adaptation into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions, where appropriate;

4. *Agrees* that the national adaptation plan process should not be prescriptive, nor result in the duplication of efforts undertaken in-country, but should rather facilitate country-owned, country-driven action;

(NAP Decision, paras 2-4)

12. The guiding principles are fully aligned with the operational policies and procedures of the GEF, as well as the policies applied specifically in the management of the LDCF. GEF policies on public involvement (*Public Involvement in GEF Projects*, GEF/C.7/6), gender mainstreaming, as well as social and environmental safeguards provide a strong baseline to enable activities in support of the NAP process (*GEF Policies on Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards and Gender Mainstreaming*, GEF/C.40/10/Rev.1; *GEF Policy on Agency Minimum Standards on Environmental and Social Safeguards*, GEF.C.41.10.Rev.01). The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP), as well as the GEF Agencies, help ensure that activities supported by the GEF are guided by the best available science and apply best-practices. Thanks to the successful experience of NAPA preparation and implementation, the GEF has established a proven approach to identifying and addressing adaptation needs in LDCs in a country-owned and country-driven manner.

VI Modalities and guidelines

13. The NAP Decision (para 12) provides an initial set of modalities to support and enable LDC Parties to formulate and implement NAPs. The Decision provides flexibility for LDCs to match their needs and circumstances with the appropriate modalities to achieve the objectives of the NAP process.

14. The GEF, through the LDCF, could support the NAP process in LDCs in a manner consistent with its support to other enabling activities under the conventions it serves; such as NAPAs, National Communications, National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans, and National Implementation Plans under the Stockholm Convention.

15. The GEF welcomes the initial guidelines for the formulation of NAPs by LDCs (NAP Decision, Annex). The phased approach outlined in these guidelines is in many respects consistent with the manner in which the GEF has supported the preparation of NAPAs and National Communications. The GEF is available to work with the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) to prepare technical guidelines for the NAP process.

VII Financing

16. The NAP Decision specifically requests the GEF to consider ways to support the NAP process through the LDCF, “while maintaining progress” towards implementing NAPAs. Given the continued, high demand for resources for NAPA implementation, additional contributions to the LDCF would be necessary to allow the GEF to meet this request by the COP. This is in part recognized in the NAP Decision itself:

21. Urges developed country Parties to mobilize financial support for the national adaptation plan process for least developed country Parties through bilateral and multilateral channels, including through the Least Developed Countries Fund, in accordance with decision 1/CP.16; (NAP Decision, para 21)

VIII Next steps

17. The GEF stands ready to address further guidance by SBI and COP 18 in cooperation with LEG and its Agencies.

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