

Sixth meeting of the Adaptation Committee Bonn, Germany, 29 September – 1 October 2014

Concept note

Possible next steps and recommendations on monitoring and evaluation of adaptation

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The AC, at its sixth meeting, may wish to consider the information on next steps on monitoring and evaluation of adaptation contained in this concept note, with a view to providing technical support and guidance to the Parties in order to facilitate the enhanced implementation of adaptation actions.

The AC may further wish to elaborate and adopt draft recommendations and guidance on this matter for consideration by COP 20.

1. Introduction

The Adaptation Committee (AC) as part of its three-year work plan, conducted a workshop on the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of adaptation in September 2013, building on, and contributing to, existing related processes. A draft report on this workshop was considered by the AC at its fifth meeting. The AC agreed to revise the draft report based on inputs by AC members. The final workshop report is available at unfccc.int/7744. The AC also agreed that the Co-Chairs, assisted by the secretariat, would prepare a concept note outlining possible next steps and recommendations to the COP, for consideration by the AC and adoption at AC6.

2. Background

This section summarizes key messages of the workshop on M&E organized by the AC as well as related work and discussions by the AC and other bodies under the Convention to provide a basis for the formulation of next steps and recommendations.

Key messages from the M&E workshop

The outcomes of the workshop, as contained in its report, can be summarized into the following key messages:

Policy Question 1: How can we build a common understanding of success?

- M&E has multiple purposes and benefits, including raising awareness, learning, accountability etc., it is a tool not an end in itself;
- Planning and allocation of resources, both technical and financial, are key for effective M&E systems;
- M&E frameworks need to be appropriate and relevant to the needs and tailored to country-circumstances, there is no one-size fits all framework and not just one measure of success for adaptation – clearly formulated goals, objectives, and output measures are essential for good M&E frameworks;
- Indicators are useful, but not the only means to monitor progress – if used, indicators should not only be used to monitor the process, but also outcomes and impacts; a common set of indicators that can be applied to monitor any adaptation action is not useful due to the context-specific nature of adaptation.

Policy Question 2: How can a framework be created that links individual assessments with national level assessments?

- Adding up indicators from local level to get an aggregate number is neither necessarily possible nor desirable. Rather than creating a framework that links the two levels, experts suggested that the Adaptation Committee consider that national level assessments measure different aspects of adaptive capacity than subnational/project-based assessments. National level assessments could, for example, seek to measure the degree of coordination and integration of adaptation into national priorities.

Policy Question 3: How can results from M&E feed back into the adaptation process and be shared?

- Formal and informal learning is a key part of M&E and should be encouraged, including through creating the necessary enabling environment, drawing from different sources of knowledge, establishing respective communication channels and incentives, building in and budgeting for learning and involving all relevant stakeholders including communities and civil society;
- Peer-to-peer learning and participatory approaches can be effective and help to reveal underlying inequality/rights/ structural causes for vulnerability;
- Learning should also include sharing of negative experience and challenging of fundamental assumptions.

Discussion on M&E by the AC with members of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) during SB 40

During SB 40 the AC convened a special event in collaboration with the IPCC – WGII, during which M&E was touched upon briefly. It was discussed that M&E of adaptation is useful in order to establish which adaptation action works well, and why. One IPCC member asked whether a global M&E system would be possible and useful. The AC shared the finding of last year’s workshop that a common set of indicators would not be desirable or useful. In response to a question raised by an AC member, one IPCC scientist saw the merits of developing a common set of core global indicators and noted that this is technically feasible, and that since different regions need different criteria, local indicators could potentially be used to complement the core set.

M&E of the NAP process - work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)

The LEG is working on a tool for monitoring and evaluating progress, effectiveness and gaps in the NAP process (the PEG M&E tool). It is designed to assist in monitoring and evaluating the process, not the actual adaptation outcomes. However, it is expected that deliberate implementation of the process, ensured through effective process monitoring, is an important foundation for effective adaptation outcomes. The monitoring and evaluation of those outcomes, which will often become visible only in the long-term, could be undertaken in parallel monitoring processes using, for example, vulnerability indicators.

Countries may apply the PEG M&E tool in managing their NAP process to ensure activities undertaken are complete and complement each other towards achieving the overall goals and objectives of the NAPs.

3. Next steps

The AC may wish to consider the following possible next steps in further developing its work on the monitoring and evaluation of adaptation over the next year and/or in its next work plan period. It may further wish to use the suggested next steps in its elaboration of draft recommendations and guidance on this matter for consideration by COP 20:

- Highlight key messages from the workshop and other relevant events and work of the AC (ie IPCC event, SB 40 Special Event) in the Adaptation Committee's 2014 report to the COP.
 - Develop information sources on:
 - M&E tools and methodologies, such as the use of scorecards for qualitative indicators, to measure adaptation processes and outcomes at the national level, including information on methodological challenges and ways to overcome them;
 - Barriers to measuring and evaluating adaptation processes and outcomes at the national level, such as insufficient data and capacity to use data, and ways of overcoming them;
 - Approaches and examples where countries, particularly developing countries, are using existing national M&E systems, rather than creating new adaptation-specific M&E systems; and
 - The use of M&E systems, including how to integrate diverse forms of knowledge and multi-stakeholder participatory approaches, pulling lessons and key messages from the joint workshop with NWP on local and traditional knowledge, as appropriate;
 - Explore collaboration with the LEG in the further development of the PEG M&E tool.
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