

United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Review of progress made in addressing the BPoA commitment on reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment, and identifying major constraints

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Review of progress

The Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA) Commitment 6

- Commitment 6 calls for reducing vulnerability to natural shocks and protecting the environment
- The BPOA seeks to engage LDCs and developed countries in partnerships *to accelerate sustained economic growth and sustainable development in LDCs, to end marginalization by eradicating poverty, inequality and deprivation in these countries, and to enable them to integrate beneficially into the global economy*
- The text explains that:
the LDCs are acutely vulnerable to a variety of natural shocks, including natural disasters, and severe structural handicaps, and are susceptible to global environmental phenomena such as the loss of biological diversity and adverse effects of climate change which inter alia exacerbates drought, desertification and sea level rise.



Review of progress

The Brussels Programme of Action (BPoA) Commitment 6 (continued)

- At the time of its adoption, the BPoA did not set any quantifiable goals and targets for reducing vulnerability and protecting the environment, but instead drew that LDC specific objectives defined in Agenda 21 and Rio + 5, as well as commitments from multilateral environmental agreements, must be the basis for actions.
- Reports on the regional review processes from Africa and Asia-Pacific LDCs on progress in implementing the BPoA indicate that climate change is a serious challenge that threatens to wipe out development gains in many LDCs, in a number of cases posing a threat to their physical existence



Review of progress

Disproportionate Impacts in LDCs

- LDCs are disproportionately exposed to the adverse consequences of climate change, loss of biodiversity, desertification and other forms of environmental degradation
- With less than 1 percent of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions, LDCs have contributed the least to climate change, but they are among the most exposed and vulnerable to its impacts.
- The human impacts of climate change and environmental degradation are experienced in LDCs in multiple ways: in human lives; as threats to livelihood; in prevalence and severity of disease; as constraints and shocks to economic development; as floods, droughts, famines and other disasters; as human displacement; and as disruptions to social and political systems.



Review of progress

Disproportionate Impacts in LDCs (continued)

- LDCs have the largest existing burdens of climate-sensitive diseases and the least effective public health systems. They suffer 34% of the global human deaths linked to climate change, the largest causes being the spread of malaria and water borne diseases, and this number is expected to rise to 41% by the year 2030.
 - A 2010 report from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) found that the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events in LDCs (e.g. droughts, extreme temperature and floods) have been increasing, with five times as many such incidents occurring during the period 2000–2010 as during the period 1970–1979.
 - The number of people in LDCs affected by these extreme events has almost doubled, rising from 100 million during the period 1970–1979 to 193 million over the period 2000–2010.
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Review of progress

Disproportionate Impacts in LDCs (continued)

- In the context of a globalized economy, a lack of economic diversity and reliance on climate-sensitive commodities for export, such as agricultural products, expose LDCs to the double threat of economic and environmental shocks.
 - It is estimated, for example, that for every 1 degree Celsius rise in average global temperatures, average annual growth in poor countries could drop by 2–3 percentage points, with no change in the growth performance of the developed countries.
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Review of progress

Lack of Adaptive Capacity

- As the countries with the lowest indicators of socioeconomic development, LDCs lack many of the key elements to adaptive capacity to climate change and other environmental crises, including a stable and prosperous economy, a high degree of access to technology, clearly delineated roles and responsibilities for implementation of adaptation activities, robust information dissemination systems, and equitable access to resources
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- LDCs are extremely vulnerable and to these impacts and their consequences, and have no means to cope or deal with them given their structural handicaps.



United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

- The UNFCCC established a special programme for LDCs, that focuses on implementing adaptation, capacity building and awareness in LDCs.
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- Provided special support to LDCs to engage in a wide range of regional and global intergovernmental initiatives to tackle climate change.
- 45 LDC countries have prepared and submitted national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) to the secretariat of the UNFCCC for funding identified projects under the LDC Fund.
- The NAPAs provide a process for LDCs to identify urgent and immediate needs to respond to the adverse effects of climate change for which further delay could increase vulnerability or increase costs at a later stage.
- They provide the main avenue for translating global commitments for vulnerability reduction under the UNFCCC into tangible planning and action on the ground in the LDCs



United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)

- At least 44 LDCs had also prepared national biodiversity strategies and action plans or equivalent instruments (NBSAPS) under the UNCBD
- These plans enable the identification of national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity
- The CBD has supported the countries in preparing these plans through: guidelines and online training modules; regional capacity building workshops to strengthen national capacity for the development, implementation, review and update of NBSAPS and the integration of biodiversity concerns into relevant sectors and cross-sectoral strategies, such as poverty eradication strategies; funding through the Global Environment Facility.



United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

- Under the UNCCD, countries have been guided to prepare national action programmes (NAPs) to spell out practical steps and measures to be taken to combat desertification in specific ecosystems
- 23 LDCs from Africa and 5 from the Asia and Pacific have prepared and submitted their NAPs. These NAPs have also been strengthened by the Action Programmes on Sub-regional (SRAP) and Regional (RAP) levels
- The UNCCD has also put in place a 10-year strategic plan and framework to enhance the implementation of the Convention (2008–2018). The overall aim for the strategy is to forge a global partnership to reverse and prevent desertification/land degradation and to mitigate the effects of drought in affected areas in order to support poverty reduction and environmental sustainability.



The World Meteorological Organization (WMO)

- The WMO in 2003, established a Programme for LDCs with the objective of enhancing the capabilities of national institutions to provide relevant and timely weather, water and climate information and services to decision makers and all other users concerned
- Their activities have supported strengthening human and institutional capacities, supporting data and informational capacities, formulating national environmental plans, developing strategies for implementing the plans, accessing financial and technical support in implementing the plans, and in strengthening and supporting participation in relevant intergovernmental and multilateral processes relating to the environment
- They also supported promotion of public-private sector partnerships in addressing environmental problems. A special WMO Trust Fund for the LDCs was also established to support the implementation of the Programme.



Progress to reduce LDC vulnerability has been weak

- Despite these efforts, LDCs continue to be exposed to the environmental shocks
- Despite achieving the economic growth targets BPOA, the number of people living on less than \$US 1.25 a day increased by over 3 million per year from 2001-2007
- This period also saw a declining share of manufacturing in 27 LDCs, limited transfers in technology, and increased dependence on food imports and on the export of primary commodities
- Progress on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has been weak
- Programmes in three Rio Conventions produced some positive outcomes; however, several obstacles have made progress slow



Obstacles to Progress: Institutional Capacity

- Most institutions in LDCs have been hampered by weak infrastructures, the inability to provide basic services and an overall lack of resources to meet these development objectives
- The lack of data at the local and national levels does not allow an accurate assessment of the potential effects of climate change and hence, the adoption of adaptation and mitigation strategies in LDCs



Obstacles to Progress: Finance

- Studies point to amounts of financing required in the range of hundreds of billions of US dollars for meeting adaptation needs
- Only between 11-16% of funds pledged to developing countries during the *fast-start* 2010-2012 period have been designated for adaptation. This amounts to a meagre 3 billion US dollars for the entire period
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- The Least Developed Country Fund disbursed a meagre US\$ 4 million per LDC (in 32 countries) to support climate change adaptation projects between 2001 and 2010



Obstacles to Progress: Access to Technology

- LDCs are often left behind in technology development and transfer, and their level of development of technological capabilities is very weak
- For most LDCs basic activities are performed using manual labour, with rudimentary tools and equipment, little education and training, weak access to financial services, and poor infrastructure



Obstacles to Progress: Participation in Intergovernmental Processes

- Inequality in negotiation capacity between nations is exacerbated by language inequalities. In many cases negotiated texts are only available in English
- LDCs often lack logistical support, have limited capacity to engage in negotiations

