

Oral intervention by the LEG, Mr. Jan Verhagen

at the SBSTA in-session workshop on the development of early warning systems and contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events and its effects such as desertification, drought, floods, landslides, storm surge, soil erosion, and saline water intrusion

Bonn, Tuesday 2 June 2015

Dear colleagues,

On behalf of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), I would like to thank you warmly for giving me the opportunity today to present to you briefly the work of the LEG related to the discussions at this important workshop.

[The LEG]

The LEG was established in 2001 as part of the package to support least developed countries (LDCs) in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change. Since that time, the LEG, in accordance with its original mandate, has provided technical guidance and advice to LDCs on the preparation and implementation of their national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs) and the LDC work programme. The mandate of the LEG was extended at COP 16 for a period of five years (2011–2015).

At COP 17, the LEG was also mandated to provide technical guidance and support on the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs). This process was established under the Cancun Adaptation Framework. It encourages countries to advance from NAPA and other individual adaptation experiences, to comprehensive, medium- and long-term planning for adaptation that is driven by country-owned NAP framework, strategy or roadmap.

The LEG provides its support through a variety of modalities. I would like to highlight some of them to you:

- Developing guidelines available in multiple languages;
- Organizing regional training workshops to build national capacity on NAPAs and the process to formulate and implement NAPs in collaboration with relevant organizations. For example, recently, FAO and CGIAR-CCAFs facilitated sessions during the regional training workshop on NAPs for Eastern and Southern

Africa which was held in February in Livingstone, Zambia. FAO facilitated the session on identification and appraisal of adaptation options in agriculture and food security, and CCAFS on climate change and food security in Eastern and Southern Africa.

- Developing NAP Central, a web-based central repository and hub for information on the process to formulate and implement NAPs; Information is being classified according to sectors and themes, including agriculture (unfccc.int/nap);
- Promoting South-South cooperation by offering forums for LDCs and developing countries that are not LDCs to meet, share experiences and learn from one another on ways to address adaptation, e.g. NAP Expo.

Dear colleagues,

[NAPAs]

By the nature of its functions and close interaction with the LDCs, the LEG has had the privilege to witness not only the challenges faced by the LDCs, but their progress and achievements in addressing their adaptation needs through the NAPA process. NAPAs have raised awareness on climate change, provided hands-on experience in implementing concrete adaptation projects on the ground, and increased the collective knowledge on adaptation to climate change at the national and international levels.

Almost all LDCs have completed preparation of their NAPAs, and are now in different stages of implementing projects identified therein. The GEF reported that, as at 2 March 2015, the majority of the projects submitted are on agriculture (31%) and disaster risk management (19%).

At least five NAPA projects have been completed. One of them is from Samoa, a country that recently graduated from the LDC group. The project is concerned with the integration of climate change risks in the agriculture and health sectors in Samoa. As part of this project, Samoa revised its agricultural management plans and strategies to incorporate climate risk forecasting and adaptive planning. In addition, national soil and crop maps were updated and enhanced with functionalities for climate risk and productivity modeling under different climate conditions.

Dear colleagues,

[LEG work on NAPAs – focus on EWS in the context of agriculture]

The assessment of climate risk is a critical process in the adaptation planning process as countries need to determine the level of risk they seek to adapt to and coordinate the required support. Through its support to LDCs for the process to formulate and implement NAPs, the LEG accompany countries in understanding hazards, exposure and vulnerability, which are components of risk. For this, the LEG collaborates with relevant organizations such as WMO or IFAD and FAO that provide information on available tools and methodologies. The LEG technical guidelines for the NAP process also provide a set of references for countries to assess climate risks and vulnerabilities and identify adaptation options, including early warning system, in the agriculture sector.

Dear colleagues

[Concluding remarks]

The LEG is aware, that the access to and analysis of climate information and data is one of the major challenges faced by LDCs in regards to managing risk and therefore being able to establish early warning system and contingency plans. There is still a need to continue to put efforts to strengthen meteorological and hydrological services, which is one of the elements of the LDC work programme and provide platforms for countries to share data, information and experiences.

Those were some of the thoughts I wanted to share with you.

Finally, on behalf of the LEG, I would like to invite all interested Parties and organizations to a LEG side event, this evening at 6:30pm in room Berlin (112).

Thank you all for your attention.