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**Elements for implementation strategies for national adaptation
programmes of action**

Technical paper

Summary

This technical paper prepared by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group provides elements for implementation strategies for national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs). It responds to a need identified by Parties and NAPA teams for further guidance on ranking for urgency, funding sources, institutional frameworks for NAPA implementation, mainstreaming, and monitoring and evaluation of NAPA activities.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. Decision 28/CP.7 provides guidelines for the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs). The decision states that the goal of the NAPAs is to “communicate priority activities addressing the urgent and immediate needs and concerns of the least developed countries ... relating to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change”.
2. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), at its twenty-second session, decided to recommend a draft decision¹ for adoption by the Conference of the Parties (COP) that includes a number of elements to be taken into consideration in funding the implementation of NAPAs through the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDC Fund).
3. The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) was mandated by decision 29/CP.7 to provide technical guidance and advice in support of NAPA implementation. This technical paper constitutes a first step towards fulfilling this mandate.

B. Core elements of national adaptation programmes of action

4. In accordance with the guidelines annexed to decision 28/CP.7, NAPA activities include “projects, integration into other activities, capacity-building and policy reform”. These should reflect priority activities that address urgent and immediate adaptation needs, which could help countries cope with current climate variability and extremes in a way that could promote capacity to adapt to future climate change.
5. The guidelines also stress that NAPAs should be easy to understand, action-oriented and country-driven, and set clear priorities for urgent and immediate adaptation activities as identified through a national consultative process. Activities should be those “whose further delay could increase vulnerability, or lead to increased costs at a later stage”.
6. The NAPA preparation process culminates in the development of project profiles of priority activities. These profiles include information that can serve, in part, as a basis for developing a NAPA implementation strategy, covering, inter alia, the sectors concerned, inputs, short-term outputs, potential long-term outcomes, institutional arrangements, risks and barriers, evaluation and monitoring, and financial resources.

C. Why further guidance is needed

7. As countries complete their NAPAs containing urgent activities ranked using their prioritization criteria, further ranking for urgency may be useful. Given constraints of funding, LDCs may also wish to develop a funding strategy as part of their implementation strategy in order to secure needed support, whether from within the framework of the financial mechanism of the UNFCCC (of which the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is an operating entity) or from other multilateral and bilateral sources. Arrangements at the national level to engage specific stakeholders, institutions and agencies that are relevant to the implementation of particular activities and projects may also be needed. Given that, for many LDCs, NAPAs will constitute an important first step in implementing adaptation activities, benchmarking and monitoring/evaluation procedures might be important and could feed into future adaptation action.

¹ FCCC/SBI/2005/10/Add.1.

II. Key issues for the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

8. The LEG has discussed issues for consideration in developing NAPA implementation strategies. An overview of these discussions can be found in progress reports of the LEG.² Following are some of the questions that need to be addressed in developing implementation strategies for NAPAs at the international, regional and national level:

- (a) How should NAPAs be considered after completion? Should they be subject to further review and re-evaluation in the context of enhancing funding opportunities, and if so by whom? Should they be evaluated or critiqued to improve effectiveness?
- (b) What is the most effective way to build on the use of existing ranking criteria in order to re-prioritize activities based on urgency?
- (c) NAPAs reflect urgent needs, but these will change over time. How should future urgent needs be addressed, and should there be periodic monitoring and updating of key vulnerabilities and re-evaluation of priorities?
- (d) What level of funding is likely to be available from the LDC Fund and other UNFCCC-related funds for implementing NAPAs?
- (e) How can funding needs be effectively communicated to multilateral and bilateral funding sources such that complementary donor funding can be organized and coordinated?
- (f) What is the most effective strategy for countries to adopt to secure co-financing? How can LDCs effectively handle limitations in their capacity to successfully secure co-financing?
- (g) How should a NAPA implementation strategy achieve equitable distribution of resources across regions, communities and groups?
- (h) In the context of maximizing regional synergy, how should similar projects be implemented jointly at the regional level, including those that involve non-LDCs?
- (i) How can the implementation of activities in a NAPA be sequenced to maximize benefits?
- (j) What further guidance is needed to enable countries to plan and present their NAPA implementation strategies?

III. Adaptation in the context of national adaptation programmes of action

9. According to the Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, adaptation is an adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Adaptation projects are carried out in direct response to the impacts of climate change, or in anticipation of them, and can include the following activities:

- (a) Avoiding or reducing damage
- (b) Increasing coping ability or resilience

² See, for example, documents FCCC/SBI/2003/6, FCCC/SBI/2003/16, FCCC/SBI/2004/3 and FCCC/SBI/2004/17.

- (c) Building capacity to deal with new climatic conditions and situations
- (d) Reforming policies in order to remove barriers to the activities mentioned above
- (e) Increasing awareness of climate change and integrating climate change considerations into policy-making.

10. The determination of whether an activity is an adaptation project has more to do with to what the activity seeks to respond than to the nature of the activity. An adaptation activity in one region may be a maladaptation activity in another, and may have no relevance to climate change in yet a third region. In many cases, activities to be carried out as adaptations to climate change may also be categorized as poverty-reduction activities or as conventional development activities, because these strive to improve the socio-economic situation of individuals and communities, hence enhancing their adaptive capacity.

11. NAPA activities can be classified into four broad types:

- (a) Concrete projects
- (b) Capacity-building/training
- (c) Awareness raising
- (d) Policy reform and activities to enable further implementation of adaptation activities.

12. NAPA activities can also be classified based on target areas and regions as follows:

- (a) Selected communities
- (b) Entire nation
- (c) Special cohort of the population, e.g. children, policy makers.

IV. Further ranking for urgency

13. A NAPA is intended to convey urgent and immediate adaptation needs of a country. Based on feedback from LDCs, there is need for further elaboration by the LEG on how ranking for urgency can be carried out. The LEG discussed this during its meetings, and the following ideas emerged:

- (a) The NAPA guidelines proposed a national process to identify locally driven criteria that would be used to select and rank priority adaptation activities. Following those guidelines has resulted in prioritization based more on needs and effectiveness than on urgency of implementation
- (b) There will be many priority activities identified for each country, given the numerous development challenges facing LDCs and their low adaptive capacity
- (c) Funding under the Convention process is unlikely to adequately address all the critical adaptation needs for all LDCs
- (d) NAPA activities and projects are action-oriented and are identified with specific subregions, communities and stakeholders in mind. These activities are unlikely to benefit the whole population of any given country at one time, given the level of resources available

- (e) Sequencing the implementation of projects may be based on the NAPA prioritization criteria, on urgency, on other factors such as funding availability, or on a combination of the above, depending on each country's circumstances.

14. The LEG proposes that special emphasis be put on the ranking of activities based on urgency, either as part of the ranking exercise or as an additional step, without prejudice to the existing ranking process as defined in the NAPA guidelines, and with the objective of ensuring that the ranking of the NAPA projects is consistent with the country's urgent and immediate adaptation needs. The LEG recommends that the following be considered when ranking for urgency:

- (a) Likelihood of increase in costs, including in terms of human impact (and loss of life), if a reduction in key vulnerabilities is not addressed immediately
- (b) Likelihood of irreversible change and damage
- (c) Imminence of the threat on critical components of livelihood security
- (d) Activities that are essential to ensure sustainable development under climate change, e.g. through removal of triggers for environmental, social and economic deterioration and degradation
- (e) Activities which, if implemented early, would be beneficial to, or would facilitate, effective implementation of other adaptation activities.

V. Funding strategy

15. Based on decision 6/CP.9 and the conclusions of the SBI at its twenty-second session, the implementation of NAPAs should ensure cost effectiveness; complementarity between funding sources; response to urgency and immediacy and to the prioritization of activities; enhancement of resilience and adaptive capacity; integration of adaptation measures in national development and poverty reduction strategies, plans or policies; and support for a learning-by-doing approach. This guidance essentially addresses the GEF's funding modalities for NAPA implementation, but it also provides a useful starting point for the elaboration of funding strategies in the context of NAPA implementation strategies.

16. Although the LDC Fund was specifically created to support the LDC work programme identified in decision 5/CP.7, including the preparation and implementation of NAPAs, LDCs will also have access to other adaptation-related funds under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, including the GEF Trust Fund, in particular the GEF's Strategic Priority on Adaptation, the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF) and the Adaptation Fund. Decision 6/CP.9 outlines the framework for funding NAPA implementation through the LDC Fund. Paragraph 2 of Decision 5/CP.9 mandates support for adaptation activities under the SCCF, taking into account information provided in NAPAs. The GEF Trust Fund supports adaptation activities based on COP mandates in paragraph 1 (a) of decision 2/CP.4³ and paragraph 1 of decision 6/CP.7. For each of these mandates the GEF has formulated specific operational modalities, based on incrementality of global benefits, of costs to sustainable development, or of adaptation needs. LDCs therefore need to target their funding requests to the source of funding that is most suited to the nature of the NAPA activity.

17. According to the draft decision recommended by the SBI in its twenty-second session for adoption by the COP, contained in document FCCC/SBI/2005/10/Add.1, funding the implementation of NAPAs under the LDC Fund will be based on full-cost support to meet the additional costs of activities

³ These cover Stage II adaptation activities, which comprise measures, including further capacity-building, which may be taken to prepare for adaptation, as envisaged by Article 4.1(e) of the Convention.

to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change as identified and prioritized in the NAPAs. Countries need to be able to assess the magnitude of the “adaptation” portion of the activity. The LEG expects to provide guidance and advice in this regard. In those cases where it is difficult or impossible to make the distinction between an adaptation portion and a non-adaptation portion of a project, the amount of co-financing will be calculated based on a “sliding scale” to be developed by the GEF.

18. In addition to funding sources under the UNFCCC, LDCs will need to explore bilateral donors as potential sources of funding for some NAPA activities, including cases where an activity builds on an existing project or programme, in which case funding would be sought as an add-on to the existing project or programme.

19. To help implement the funding strategy, the LEG proposes the organization of round-table discussions between NAPA teams and donors during the final stages of NAPA preparation to identify funding interest. Although donors are making increased efforts to align and harmonize their assistance procedures with the national procedures of partner countries and amongst themselves, each donor will probably have specific modalities for providing access to funding. The NAPA teams may wish to prepare their project profiles taking into account the requirements of potential funding sources. In cases where donor funding is normally coordinated at the regional level, countries may explore regional round-table discussions with donors, as appropriate.

20. LDCs may also pursue other funding sources, including domestic funding, in particular through in-kind contributions. Such arrangements are best done at the stage of devising the funding strategy of the entire NAPA rather than on a project-by-project basis.

VI. Integration with national development and poverty reduction strategies

21. The LEG was mandated, by decision 29/CP.7, to advise LDC Parties on the mainstreaming of NAPAs into regular development planning in the context of national strategies for sustainable development.

22. The integration of national development priorities and goals into the NAPA preparation process is already mandated by the NAPA guidelines. This is achieved through careful review of existing national development goals and programmes during the preparation of the NAPA, and through action taken to ensure that the NAPA complements existing development activities and priorities. The NAPA is prepared through a consultative process involving diverse stakeholders, with appropriate public input in identifying key vulnerabilities and adaptation responses, and in the ranking of priorities and identification of urgent needs. At the end, the NAPA is formally approved and endorsed by a national process, either through parliament, or the same process that is used for national plans. These steps in the NAPA preparation process guarantee that, upon completion, a NAPA is fully mainstreamed in the broader national development strategy.

23. The integration of climate change considerations in national development planning and programming is another context for mainstreaming. National development planning is a process that has traditionally taken into account core issues of poverty, health, land use, agriculture, etc., in the identification of priorities and implementation of development projects. If climate change is considered as an additional core issue along with those mentioned above, then it should be mainstreamed using appropriate steps to ensure its integration in development planning.

VII. Institutional issues in national adaptation programmes of action implementation

24. Each country has its own procedures and requirements for implementing externally funded projects, including approval processes, and links to national investment authorities, etc.

25. In some cases, when NAPA preparation is completed, the various committees created to produce the NAPA may cease to exist due to a lack of funding, and a bridge to the implementation phase is needed. Some countries have a climate committee that can oversee NAPA implementation. The representation of finance and planning ministries on the national climate committees could provide a mechanism to ensure the NAPA is implemented effectively. The LEG recommends that the NAPA explicitly identify the institutions or groups that will implement each activity identified therein.

26. Countries may therefore wish to strategize carefully on how they place NAPA issues within national institutional frameworks. For example, by placing them within high-priority sectors, this may increase their chances of being accorded a high priority in national planning processes.

27. In addition to the institutional arrangements for project implementation, there may be additional legal requirements, such as for a review of projects and contracts to ensure there are no compromising legal implications arising from how projects are funded and implemented. In such cases, countries must also indicate the critical legal steps that must be taken during the implementation phase to ensure there are no unnecessary delays.

VIII. Benchmarking, monitoring and evaluation

28. To ensure effective implementation of NAPA activities, and of future adaptation initiatives that build upon them, it is desirable to develop methods and tools for monitoring, evaluating and benchmarking⁴ adaptation activities in NAPAs. To this end, the LEG is developing benchmarking methods for the NAPAs. Initial recommendations include the definition of appropriate metrics for achieving this, including for defining characteristics of NAPAs, such as:

- (a) Urgency
- (b) Emphasis on vulnerable communities and social groups
- (c) Enhancement of adaptive capacity.

29. The LEG has been soliciting feedback from LDCs on the NAPA preparation phase, and will continue to solicit feedback during implementation, with the objective of using the information collected to benchmark the NAPA process. One objective of this benchmarking is to contribute to mid-term adjustments. Information from surveys in the preparation phase has helped target LEG assistance, and has helped the GEF and its implementing agencies to identify and respond to emerging problems.

30. The LEG also plans to collect and collate data on costs and benefits of adaptation projects and activities being implemented as a result of NAPA programmes, to assist in the future evolution of methods relating to adaptation assessment.

31. There is also added interest in devising a process to continuously monitor key vulnerabilities in order to facilitate rapid revisions of urgency and priorities over time. It would be important to integrate this into the process of NAPA monitoring and evaluation.

⁴ Benchmarking refers to determining a reference point or standard against which performance or achievements can be assessed.

32. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP)⁵ process has developed monitoring and evaluation protocols, and these may offer useful lessons in defining metrics for the evaluation of NAPA programmes and projects.

IX. Regional synergy

33. The LEG was mandated, by paragraph 9 (d) of the annex to decision 29/CP.7, to promote regional synergy in the implementation strategy of NAPAs. Document FCCC/TP/2005/4, developed by the LEG, presents a synthesis of information relating to regional synergy in the context of adaptation to climate change, insofar as it applies to the NAPA process.

34. There are many lessons to be learned from experiences and approaches taken by different communities and countries to address similar climatic hazards. For example, there are communities and regions that have adapted to persistent drought or flood conditions by developing local coping strategies and endogenous technologies unique to their circumstances. Regions in which several countries share large river basins, have similar environmental conditions or depend on each other for critical resources, such as food or trade, also present opportunities for regional synergy. There are now many places that are beginning to experience new hazards, or more severe hazards than previously encountered, such as an increased frequency and intensity of floods or droughts. Existing local coping strategies, methods, processes and technologies can be readily adopted from other communities or regions.

35. A UNFCCC workshop on local coping strategies and indigenous technologies, held in New Delhi, India, in November 2003, explored experiences from different regions and demonstrated that there are ample opportunities for exchanging information on coping strategies among vulnerable communities.⁶ In January 2005, an international workshop on community-level adaptation to climate change was organized in Dhaka, Bangladesh, by the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, in cooperation with a number of other entities. This workshop reinforced the opinion that endogenous adaptation measures are an important component of community response to climate change, and the need to strengthen partnerships with local communities to take advantage of and build upon indigenous knowledge on adaptation.

36. The implementation strategy for NAPAs can include discussions on whether joint implementation of adaptation activities across nations would be beneficial. In cases where the countries cooperating are not all LDCs, financing arrangements from sources other than the LDC Fund would have to be pursued.

37. It is likely that the opportunities for regional synergy will become clearer after countries in a region finalize their NAPA activities and projects. The LEG can assist such countries in identifying any regional synergy that could be pursued.

X. Further guidance on national adaptation programmes of action implementation strategies

A. Suggested steps in defining an implementation strategy at the national level

38. The LEG proposes that NAPA teams in LDCs pay special attention in preparing their final list of urgent and priority projects to ensure that:

⁵ PRSPs describe a country's macroeconomic, structural and social policies and programmes to promote growth and reduce poverty, as well as associated external financing needs. PRSPs are prepared by governments through a participatory process involving civil society and development partners, including the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

⁶ The workshop report is included in document FCCC/SB/2003/INF.2.

- (a) The unique character of the NAPA is self-evident;
- (b) All key steps of the NAPA are described, and sections are concise yet complete;
- (c) Ranking has been properly justified;
- (d) Projects listed as urgent are justified as such by applying criteria referred to in paragraph 14 above;
- (e) Opportunities for synergy with the implementation of other multilateral environmental agreements,⁷ or at the regional level, are elaborated as appropriate;
- (f) Documentation is adequate on how the NAPA is complementary to and consistent with the broader framework of national development priorities;
- (g) Opportunities for NAPA implementation within existing development frameworks (such as PRSPs) are explored as appropriate.

39. The LEG also proposes that each country consider organizing a funding round-table discussion to explore interest by donors in funding specific activities and projects identified as high priority.

B. Suggested steps in defining an implementation strategy at the regional and international level

40. Many LDCs have limited capacity (human as well as economic) to devote to ensuring that NAPAs are implemented. It is likely that after funding for NAPA preparation has expired it will be difficult for countries to sustain a national effort to get NAPA activities fully funded, especially when no programme or activity leader has been designated. An entity dedicated to implementing the NAPA could provide a bridge between NAPA completion and funding for implementation. Countries should consider the establishment of such an entity.

41. To further assist LDCs in realizing their NAPAs, the GEF and its implementing agencies, as well as interested donors, could consider organizing regional/international meetings to explore funding NAPA activities. These meetings could complement national funding round-table discussions where necessary.

C. Suggested structure for developing an implementation strategy during final stages of national adaptation programmes of action preparation

42. It is proposed that for those countries that have yet to complete their NAPAs, their implementation strategy could be presented more explicitly as follows:

- (a) Provide, along with the project profiles of NAPA activities, basic maps of the country showing districts and other standard features referenced in the project profiles. These could include details about population distribution, targeted or affected populations for each project, and other related information to assist in justifying project parameters
- (b) Identify barriers to implementation of NAPA activities, and if appropriate, translate these into activities designed to remove these barriers
- (c) Re-prioritize the NAPA activities based on urgency, using criteria referred to in paragraph 14 above

⁷ See document FCCC/TP/2005/3 on synergy among multilateral environmental agreements in the context of national adaptation programmes of action.

- (d) Describe any funding round-table discussions and steps taken to secure funding, as appropriate
- (e) Initiate the preparation of full project proposals in light of the outcome of the funding discussions.
