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Implementation of Article 4, paragraphs 8 and 9, of the Convention

Matters relating to the least developed countries

**Report on the twelfth meeting of the
Least Developed Countries Expert Group**

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

This document reports on the twelfth meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 6 to 8 September 2007, and also provides an update on the efforts of the LEG to implement its work programme for 2006–2007. This report also includes an update on the LEG meeting that was held in Bangkok, from 3 to 5 September, to take stock of the progress made by Parties in the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action.

* This document was submitted after the due date as a result of the timing of the meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group.

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I. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 29/CP.7, established the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) to advise least developed country (LDC) Parties on the preparation and implementation strategy for national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), and adopted the terms of reference of the LEG. According to these terms of reference, the LEG is to convene its meeting twice each year, and report on its work to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI).
2. By its decision 4/CP.11, the COP decided to extend the mandate of the LEG until 2007, under its original terms of reference and to review the progress, need for continuation and terms of reference of the group, and to adopt a decision thereon, at its thirteenth session. At its ninth meeting, the LEG developed a work programme for 2006–2007, in accordance with its mandate to continue providing technical guidance and advice to LDC Parties, on the preparation and implementation of NAPAs.
3. At its twenty-fifth session,¹ the SBI requested the LEG to convene a meeting, with the assistance of the secretariat and subject to the availability of resources, to take stock of the progress made by LDC Parties in NAPA preparation and implementation; and to consult, through the secretariat, on input for this meeting, from the secretariat of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its implementing agencies, and to report on the outcomes of the meeting to the SBI at its twenty-seventh session.

II. Summary of the twelfth meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

4. The twelfth meeting of the LEG was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from 6 to 8 September 2007. The Governments of Belgium, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand and Norway provided financial support for the meeting as well as for the ongoing work of the LEG.
5. The LEG meeting was preceded by the stocktaking meeting mentioned in paragraph 3 above, which was held in Bangkok from 3 to 5 September 2007.² The LEG acknowledged the valuable logistical support provided by the Government of Thailand for this meeting.
6. Several LEG members played an active role in the stocktaking meeting, by providing inputs through the preparation of a background paper, by making presentations on various issues during the meeting and by chairing sessions and serving as rapporteurs to the discussions. A list of the current membership of the LEG is given in annex I.
7. At its twelfth meeting, the LEG structured its discussion on the outputs of the stocktaking meeting, as its involvement in that meeting enabled it to reflect on the feedback from participants on the status of NAPA preparation and implementation, through the presentations by Parties on their experiences.

A. Update on the stocktaking meeting on the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action

1. Status of preparation

8. The stocktaking meeting involved 86 participants from 40 LDC Parties, eight representatives of

¹ FCCC/SBI/2006/28, paragraph 84.

² The report of the stocktaking meeting is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2007/32.

the GEF and its implementing³ and executing⁴ agencies, representatives from United Nations specialized agencies, and resource persons. The GEF and its agencies also provided valuable input to the stocktaking meeting.

9. The information available to the LEG indicates that 44 NAPA preparation proposals have been approved for funding by the GEF and that a further two NAPAs (from Angola and Timor-Leste) are in the pipeline for approval. Of these, 22 have been completed and submitted to the UNFCCC secretariat as at 30 September 2007 and a further 13 are described as well advanced in the preparation process. The submitted NAPAs are available on the UNFCCC website.⁵

10. During the stocktaking meeting, participants identified several issues relating to NAPA preparation, which were discussed on the first day. On the basis of the issues raised, the LEG proposed possible solutions and follow-up actions, and identified who can address them. A compilation of these issues and possible actions is presented in annex II.

11. Based on the information presented by participants from LDCs and the GEF and its agencies, the LEG noted that countries are at various stages of preparation of their NAPAs. Although many countries are in the final stages of preparation of their NAPAs, some are still making technical refinements based on new vulnerabilities that have been identified and a few are continuing with national consultations and/or are seeking political endorsement prior to submission.

12. The LEG further noted that LDC Parties continue to require technical assistance, and the group therefore expects to receive more requests for technical feedback on draft NAPAs. Additionally, the LEG was informed of the status of new requests for funding to the GEF by Angola and Timor-Leste for the preparation of their NAPAs. Representatives from these countries pointed out that targeted support would be needed to assist LDC Parties that have recently started the NAPA process, and in particular those that are lusophone countries. The LEG also identified follow-up actions by the GEF and its agencies in this regard.

2. Status of implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

13. On the status of implementation of NAPAs, the GEF secretariat reported that 10 of the submitted NAPAs (from Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Malawi, Mauritania, Niger, Samoa and Sudan) are progressing through the operational stages that will lead to implementation. The GEF secretariat also reported on the support and operational modalities it has introduced recently. These modalities are designed to expedite the submission and approval processes to obtain funding for projects and activities from the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF).

14. The LEG noted the efforts of the GEF and its agencies, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with technical support from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), to provide technical advice on implementing projects and activities mentioned in submitted NAPAs. It also noted the support from the GEF and its agencies under the GEF expanded opportunities to support LDCs in NAPA implementation.

³ The United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Bank.

⁴ The African Development Bank, the Asian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Inter-American Development Bank, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization.

⁵ <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/napa/items/2719.php>.

15. The LEG also took note of the general experiences of LDC Parties in the use of the new modalities for accessing resources from the LDCF, and of the experiences of Parties in interacting with the GEF and its agencies in the initial stages of preparing for implementation.
16. The LEG noted that several Parties, including Bangladesh, Bhutan and Malawi, are well advanced in initiating implementation activities using the new modalities and, in particular, in the preparation of project proposals for funding.
17. Of particular interest to LDC Parties were issues related to the co-financing of projects, the experiences of LDCs in preparing proposals for funding from the LDCF, and the experiences of the GEF and its agencies in supporting NAPA implementation with resources from the LDCF as well as from other sources. The comparative advantages of different GEF agencies in supporting project implementation were described,⁶ and Parties were encouraged to request assistance from these agencies according to their competencies and areas of specialization.
18. With respect to accessing resources from the LDCF, some participants noted that there is a need for more information to be given to LDC Parties on the new procedures being employed by the GEF and its agencies, which could assist NAPA teams in designing their follow-up to completed NAPAs. Several details were considered relating to the programmatic and project-based approaches to NAPA implementation and the possibility of developing regional projects for funding under the LDCF. The use of baseline and additional cost approaches for estimating the costs associated with implementation, full-cost funding and the linking of adaptation activities identified in NAPAs to national development activities were also raised as issues for which further clarity is needed, possibly through strengthened guidance as well as targeted training workshops to assist LDC Parties to further develop their priority NAPA projects.
19. Many country representatives mentioned that the process of selecting agencies remains a challenge. This, coupled with the need to establish a national donor coordination mechanism in leveraging, at the national level, the additional financial and technical support required for implementation was seen as one of the bottlenecks that may determine success of the implementation of NAPAs.
20. United Nations specialized agencies present at the meeting, such as the United Nations regional economic commissions, as well as the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), provided information on their support for NAPA implementation and on initiatives that could support national efforts. The ISDR, for example, described its ability to support implementation by way of technical assistance and capacity-building to strengthen early warning systems and disaster risk reduction activities in NAPAs.
21. The LEG considered the various issues which emerged from the stocktaking meeting related to NAPA implementation, including: implementation strategy; integration of adaptation into national development planning; the LDCF funding modalities and other opportunities for funding adaptation; and assistance by the GEF agencies as well as other agencies.
22. The scope of the LEG to provide technical advice on NAPA implementation in the future was discussed and the possible interventions are described in annex III. These include:
- (a) The provision of technical guidance and advice:

⁶ <http://www.gefweb.org/uploadedFiles/Projects/Templates_and_Guidelines/GEF-C-31-5%20rev%201-June%2018-2007.pdf>.

- (i) The LEG considered the need to describe in detail in its comments on draft NAPAs additional responses on the need to develop, as part of the efforts to complete NAPAs, a more robust NAPA implementation strategy, building upon technical paper FCCC/TP/2005/5;
 - (ii) The LEG agreed to further consider the technical issues related to the communication of information in NAPAs in order to resolve the identified deficiencies related to steps 2 (synthesis of available information on impact assessments) and 8 (development of projects profiles) in the NAPA annotated guidelines;
 - (iii) The LEG also considered developing sectoral issues drawing on information contained in submitted NAPAs, so as to exchange information among Parties on projects proposed for NAPA implementation;
- (b) The exchange of information: the LEG agreed to communicate to the GEF secretariat the need for, and possible means of, communicating more comprehensive information to LDC Parties related to NAPA implementation and on its new modalities for accessing resources from the LDCF in the languages used by the Parties accessing the resources;
- (c) The dissemination of information:
- (i) The LEG agreed to disseminate more information on NAPA implementation through the UNFCCC website, in order to facilitate the sharing of national experiences, and build capacity of LDC Parties in the process;
 - (ii) The LEG also considered strengthening efforts to provide training to LDC Parties on the use of the Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT) publication *Preparing and presenting proposals: A guidebook on preparing technology transfer projects for financing*.

B. Further needs identified in support of the preparation and implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

23. During the exchange of information at the stocktaking meeting, LDC Parties and the GEF and its agencies also identified needs for technical assistance from the LEG for NAPA preparation and implementation.

24. The request for assistance from the LEG can be grouped into four broad categories:

- (a) Support to address issues related to lusophone and francophone LDC Parties, as well as the support described in the LDC work programme (decision 5/CP.7);
- (b) Continued efforts to monitor bottlenecks in NAPA preparation;
- (c) Efforts to identify and communicate information through public outreach activities;
- (d) Provide more detailed information on a thematic basis on areas identified in submitted NAPAs proposed for implementation.

C. Consideration of the work programme of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group and its expected outcomes

25. In implementing its mandate, as contained in decision 29/CP.7, annex, paragraphs 9 (a)–(e), in particular activities and actions related to its work programme for 2006–2007,⁷ and responding to a request from the SBI at its twenty-sixth session, the LEG has, through activities undertaken during the period, achieved the following:

- (a) Prepared a synthesis of information contained in submitted NAPAs and of information on the extent to which LDC Parties employed the NAPA guidelines in the preparation of their NAPAs. The synthesis of information served as one of the inputs to the LEG stocktaking meeting;
- (b) Provided advice to LDC Parties during the final phase of NAPA preparation by providing technical advice on the draft NAPA. Of the 22 NAPAs that have been submitted to the UNFCCC secretariat, the majority have benefited from technical feedback from the LEG;
- (c) Provided support and input to training workshops and advised LDCs to consider the inclusion of a NAPA implementation strategy in their final NAPAs. Workshops were conducted during 2006–2007 in Nairobi (Kenya), Dakar (Senegal) and Honiara (Solomon Islands), to which the LEG provided support and technical input;
- (d) Periodically updated information on the status of NAPA preparation, through questionnaires and interaction with LDC Parties that were preparing their NAPA, and identified problems and constraints as well as capacity-building needs for the implementation of activities and projects identified as urgent and immediate in NAPAs. The LEG provided support for the GEF consultations with LDC Parties that were held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on the draft programming paper on the LDCF;⁸
- (e) Interacted with the NAPA teams of Bangladesh, Maldives, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Uganda and Vanuatu during LEG meetings;
- (f) Collaborated with other actors engaged in providing technical support to LDCs and disseminated information on financial and technical support for NAPA implementation;
- (g) Identified technical needs in relation to access to, and management of, NAPA-related data and information, and explored solutions with relevant actors;
- (h) Cooperated with the other constituted bodies under the Convention, in particular with the EGTT on the adaptation technology and project preparation training and with the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) on the integration of information contained in NAPAs into second national communications;
- (i) Examined submitted NAPAs in order to determine the efforts made by LDCs in integrating NAPAs into development planning and national strategies for sustainable development.

26. In assessing progress in the implementation of its work programme for 2006–2007 and in reflecting on the information presented at the stocktaking meeting, the LEG notes that many LDC Parties

⁷ FCCC/SBI/2006/9, annex I.

⁸ <http://www.thegef.org/Documents/Council_Documents/GEF_C28/documents/C.28.18LDCTrustFund_000.pdf>.

(almost 50 per cent of LDCs) have submitted their NAPAs and several have yet to start NAPA preparation. Most of the LDCs that have yet to submit their NAPAs expressed their intention to submit these documents in 2008. This highlights the need for continued support for NAPAs in the future.

27. In response to the issues arising from the stocktaking on NAPA preparation, continued technical advice and support is needed for Parties that have yet to submit NAPAs. The LEG agreed that, in accordance with the group's mandate, the main task would be to continue to provide technical advice to NAPA teams, especially by reviewing the draft NAPA, upon request. The LEG will continue, in its review of draft NAPA documents, to remind NAPA teams to use agreed documentation in preparing NAPAs, including the NAPA annotated guidelines, and UNITAR NAPA information sheets, as applicable.

28. Based on the input and experiences shared on NAPA implementation, the LEG also considered that, as more NAPAs are being implemented, there is an immediate need to provide information and guidance on project development and implementation. The need to assist LDCs in the development of a NAPA implementation strategy also remains relevant.

29. The LEG also noted that NAPA experts require more information on GEF procedures for accessing funding and suggests that the GEF secretariat prepare a user manual on how to access GEF funding for adaptation – through the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), LDCF and the Strategic Priority to Adaptation (SPA) – that would provide guidance to GEF focal points, GEF agencies and NAPA teams, and ensure a consistent approach and common understanding of the steps relating to project funding.

30. LEG outreach activities intended to further the information exchange and build capacities for LDCs to implement NAPAs were discussed. In addition, the process of facilitating training in project preparation, drawing upon the work of the EGTT, had progressed, but further work was needed to disseminate information on the project preparation process and provide training on this issue to LDC Parties.

31. The LEG also noted its continued cooperation and active involvement on adaptation issues with other expert groups (the CGE and the EGTT). Exploring additional synergies with other expert groups in this regard was discussed, in particular, the efforts of the CGE to provide guidance on the integration of information contained in NAPAs into the second national communications.

32. Other issues addressed that would require follow-up by the LEG for NAPA preparation and implementation included support to francophone and lusophone NAPA teams to overcome language barriers (e.g. by making information relevant to the NAPA process available in other languages and by providing interpretation services at LDC events), and provision of feedback on the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.

33. The LEG also observed that resources from Parties included in Annex II to the Convention to support the work of the LEG and the NAPA process at country level have been maintained at a high level and were important for, and instrumental in, the implementation of the LEG work programme for 2006–2007.

Annex I**Members of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group
as at 31 August 2007**

Mr. Erwin Kuenzi	Austria
Mr. Shawkat Ali Mirza	Bangladesh
Mr. Karma L. Rapten	Bhutan
Mr. Bubu Pateh Jallow	Gambia
Mr. Samuel Raboqha	Lesotho
Mr. Benjamin S. Karmorh	Liberia
Mr. Ahmed Jameel	Maldives
Mr. Adrianus Jan Verhagen	The Netherlands
Ms. Madeleine Rose Diouf-Sarr ¹	Senegal
Mr. Chanel Iroi	Solomon Islands
Mr. Fred Machulu Onduri	Uganda
Vacant ²	NN

In memory of Ms. Elizabeth Harvey

At its twelfth meeting, the members of the Least Developed Countries Expert group paid tribute to a widely appreciated, dedicated and hard-working member of the group, Ms. Elizabeth Harvey from Canada. Ms. Harvey passed away on 17 August 2007.

¹ Also a member of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

² This position should be filled by an expert from a Party included in Annex II to the Convention.

Annex II

Summary of issues on the preparation of national adaptation programmes of action

NAPA preparation	Solutions/actions	Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In keeping with NAPA guidelines, inclusion of information on climate change risk in the projects or activities proposed for implementation. • Possible inclusion of climate indicators, where information is available, to demonstrate the impacts of climate change on economic development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind LDC Parties of elements in the technical review of draft NAPAs. • In reviewing draft NAPAs, the LEG could guide Parties in the application of the NAPA annotated guidelines. • LEG to advise countries to identify the climatic factors that affect climate vulnerability when providing technical comments on draft NAPAs. 	LEG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The alignment and prioritization of NAPAs with other national development plans (such as PRSPs and MDGs) is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAPA document should include an implementation strategy. • LDC Parties should be advised on the integration of NAPAs into national development plans (e.g. PRSP, MDGs). 	LEG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure projects are eligible for funding under the LDCF. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When providing technical comments on draft NAPAs, LEG to advise NAPA teams to describe how the implementation of the activity would increase the infrastructure resilience to climate change. 	LEG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to have scientific/technical data and information on local communities and circumstances as well as information on climate impacts on the economy for policymakers and other stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If this information is missing in the draft NAPA, LEG to remind NAPA team to include it as part of its feedback during NAPA review. 	LEG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for feedback mechanism on NAPA status; work with GEF agencies and countries to monitor bottlenecks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation of a common strategy for all relevant institutions. • Use of questionnaires and targeted interviews for monitoring. 	LEG and UNFCCC secretariat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to include better vulnerability (hot-spots) maps for policymakers to be able to understand magnitude of climate impacts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with agencies on needs for, and provision of, training material/information on sourcing data/maps (UNOSAT, FAO, etc). 	LEG, NAPA teams, and GEF and its agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from agencies to explain how the implementation of the activity would increase the resilience of infrastructure to climate change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEG to communicate with the GEF and its agencies on a case-by-case basis, upon request. 	LEG and GEF and its agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated and detailed information needed from GEF and its agencies at the country level on funding modalities for NAPA preparation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEG to communicate with the GEF and its agencies on the need to provide training for agencies' country offices and provide information to NAPA teams. 	GEF and its agencies

NAPA preparation	Solutions/actions	Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expedited feedback/comments from agencies on projects status. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Countries should have direct access to NAPA focal points at the GEF and its agencies. 	GEF and its agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to form sectoral working groups at country level that draft sectoral chapters as part of NAPA team-building exercise. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LEG to advise NAPA teams upon request. 	LEG
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language support for all LDC Parties and especially for lusophone countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LDC work programme (decision 5/CP.7). • Provide support to francophone and lusophone LDC Parties. • Consider having a lusophone expert on the LEG. • Explore which agencies could provide support on an on-going or ad-hoc basis. • For the translation of completed NAPAs, LDC Party should contact the GEF and its agencies on a case-by-case basis. 	LEG, LDC Parties and GEF and its agencies

Abbreviations: FAO = Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, GEF = Global Environment Facility, LDC = least developed country, LEG = Least Developed Countries Expert Group, MDGs = Millennium Development Goals, NAPA = national adaptation programme of action, PRSP = Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, UNOSAT = United Nations Operations Satellite Applications Programme.

Annex III

Summary of issues on the implementation of national adaptation programmes of action

NAPA implementation	Solutions/actions	Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need stronger political will for NAPA implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find champions, for example ministries of finance and planning, members of parliament, the media and other relevant actors to advance NAPA implementation. • Task the NAPA team with responsibility for integrating NAPA into national plans and strategies. 	LEG and NAPA teams
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen institutional arrangements to promote implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacities of NAPA teams to manage the project preparation process, including the provision of financial reports during implementation. 	LEG, NAPA teams and GEF and its agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise the NAPA team of the utility of clustering related projects and activities for submission for funding (e.g. coastal zone management activities, disaster preparedness and early warning systems). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide information on the utility of clustering as part of advice on preparing a national NAPA implementation strategy. 	LEG and GEF and its agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of thematic issues contained in NAPAs, for example water, health, coastal zones and agriculture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize and disseminate thematic information contained in submitted NAPAs. • Prepare a summary of success stories on preparing and implementing NAPAs. 	LEG and UNFCCC secretariat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the preparation of project proposal/detailing project costs at the initial stage (PIF) to expedite implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIFs to be prepared, upon request by countries, only after submission of NAPA documents to the UNFCCC secretariat. • Advise GEF and its agencies to start preparing PIF and PPG in full collaboration with the NAPA team. 	LEG and GEF and its agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the process of identifying additional technical and financial resources for implementation, countries could establish forum/existing donor coordination mechanisms (e.g. ministry responsible for planning or finance) involving a broad stakeholder base, to select partners for project or activity implementation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify institutions that are able to fund or provide technical support and that can be involved directly in a project or an activity implementation. 	LEG, NAPA teams and GEF and its agencies

NAPA implementation	Solutions/actions	Actors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated and detailed information needed from GEF and its agencies at the country level on funding modalities for GEF operational procedures and LDCF modalities and on the GEF agencies comparative advantages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LEG to communicate with the GEF and its agencies on the need to provide training for agencies' country offices and provide information to NAPA teams. Dissemination of information on the UNFCCC website. 	LEG and UNFCCC secretariat

Abbreviations: GEF = Global Environment Facility, LDCF = Least Developed Countries Fund, LEG = Least Developed Countries Expert Group, NAPA = national adaptation programme of action, PIF = GEF project identification form, PPG = GEF project preparation grant.
