

**Fifteenth meeting of the Adaptation Committee
Bonn, Germany, 19 to 21 March 2019**

Event for sharing existing knowledge on and tools for monitoring and evaluation

Concept note

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its 15th meeting, will be invited to consider the concept note and agree on next steps in the organization of the event, including possible collaboration with the Nairobi work programme.

1. Introduction and background

1. One of the objectives noted in the AC's 2019-2021 workplan is to share experience and lessons learned from developing and implementing monitoring and evaluation systems. Activities to support this objective include organizing, in the second half of 2019, an event for sharing existing knowledge on, and tools for, monitoring and evaluation (M&E). This will be followed up in 2020 through the preparation of a technical paper featuring case studies on the development and application of monitoring and evaluation systems at the national and subnational level, including consideration of the value of monitoring and evaluation systems, existing barriers and opportunities to overcome them.

2. Previous work undertaken by the Adaptation Committee and other bodies and work programmes under the Convention

2. The AC has long been gathering knowledge and experience and analyzing M&E systems in order to provide technical support and guidance to the Parties, including through workshops, expert meetings and reports, and working in partnership with the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP). This includes the AC's workshop on the M&E of adaptation in Fiji 2013¹ and its expert meeting on national adaptation goals/indicators and their relationship with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction in Tokyo 2018.² Additionally, the AC has engaged experts in the field of adaptation M&E throughout its regular, biannual meetings, to present and discuss the topic among AC members and observers.³

3. The AC's partnership with the NWP and its partner network has greatly contributed to developing technical work on M&E issues. For example, the NWP prepared an inventory of ongoing monitoring and evaluation work of adaptation,⁴ which highlighted the challenges emerging in the national level practice,

¹ <https://unfccc.int/node/63381>

² <https://unfccc.int/node/180267>

³ For one example, see

https://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/cancun_adaptation_framework/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/8_m_and_e_patwardhan.pdf

⁴ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/ac10_5b_m_and_e.pdf

including that very little of the literature reviewed discusses impact evaluation, which confirms the difficulty in using indicators in monitoring the success of adaptation actions.

4. In a meeting of Party experts organized by the LEG in collaboration with the AC in February 2018 to assess progress in the process to formulate and implement NAPs,⁵ conclusions included that:
 - a) It is necessary to have a plan against which to measure and assess progress and baselines are useful in showing change over time;
 - b) The ability to measure and assess progress in reducing vulnerability is a key aspect of the process to formulate and implement NAPs and it requires further attention as countries move towards implementing the adaptation policies, projects and programmes identified in their NAPs;
 - c) Limited experience exists of measuring and assessing the impact of actions aiming to reduce vulnerability as progress to date has primarily been in formulating NAPs rather than implementing actions specified therein.

5. In the aforementioned 2018 expert meeting on national adaptation goals/indicators and their relationship with the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, lessons and key conclusions from the meeting included:⁶
 - a) Collaborative work between different levels of government to link their M&E systems is needed to understand the full picture of adaptation. Such collaboration strengthens understanding of the status of adaptation at sub-national levels, and ensures local results can inform national adaptation policy;
 - b) Enhancing individual and institutional technical capacity for data collection and assessment of adaptation is an ongoing task for many countries. National statistical offices could be more engaged in developing national indicator reporting systems on climate change, given their experience and expertise in data compilation and assessing data quality and availability. Linking data gathering and reporting systems for the SDGs, the Sendai Framework and on climate change adaptation will help avoid the duplication of effort;
 - c) In contrast to the top-down approach of the SDGs and the Sendai Framework, approaches to measuring progress on adaptation need to be individually defined in different countries because of the context-specific nature of adaptation. M&E systems should be designed to align with a country's overall objectives on adaptation.

6. Building on existing work conducted by the AC, the NWP, the LEG and other expert organizations and considering the obstacles identified through this work, including as listed above, this event will serve as a platform to promote dialogue among various stakeholders, including representatives from subnational and national governments and other relevant institutions, on existing knowledge on and tools for M&E.

3. Potential themes and topics for the event

7. The event may explore, in collaboration with NWP partner organizations, one of the topics below to obtain a deeper understanding of conducting adaptation M&E at the national level and disseminate good practices and useful tools for countries. Additionally, AC members may wish to propose alternative themes and topics for the event for consideration by the AC.
 - a) Big data for adaptation M&E. A recurring theme in discussions of adaptation planning, monitoring, and evaluation is the lack of sufficient, or sufficiently high quality, data as an impediment to progress. An event on the potential applicability of big data for adaptation M&E can shed light on how the rise of these analytics tools and techniques can assist countries in understanding their adaptation progress, gaps, and potential. It can include academics⁷ who have already written on the topics and practitioners from firms who have engaged in big data analysis and visualization for the environment.⁸
 - b) Communicating M&E results. Monitoring and evaluation of adaptation is not conducted as an intellectual exercise – it is intended to inform future adaptation interventions and thereby improve the capacity of communities, businesses, and governments to mount effective responses

⁵ <https://unfccc.int/documents/65458>

⁶ https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/ac14_indicators.pdf

⁷ For one example, see <https://www.pnas.org/content/113/39/10729>

⁸ For one example, see <https://www.the-iea.org/>

to the changing climate. To have this effect, the results of M&E efforts must be communicated to different stakeholders in a meaningful and understandable way. Governments, agencies, and other actors who have carried out M&E can reflect on their experiences of explaining the results, including offering insights on questions such as: How can we effectively tailor our communications about adaptation M&E to different groups? What are challenges related to communicating M&E? What are some methods or techniques that have succeeded?

- c) Sharing existing knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation actions. Monitoring and evaluation of progress made by adaptation interventions is the final step of the NAP process. It is also recognized as one element of the adaptation communications referred in the annex of decision 9/CMA.1 and the biennial transparency reports (BTRs), following the modalities and guidelines adopted in Katowice. The LEG and the NWP will organize a 90-minute session during the 2019 NAP Expo in Songdo, the Republic of Korea, in April,⁹ which will focus on measuring adaptation progress in vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems with some specific case studies. Building on the outcomes of that session, the AC could organize an event on a related topic to highlight additional perspectives and dimensions of M&E, focused on exchanging knowledge and tools on measuring progress of adaptation with a view to contributing national capacity to respond to the new possibilities emerging from the Katowice Conference

4. Date, location, and format

8. Due to the secretariat's current budgetary limitations, the AC may wish to consider organizing an in-session/side event in conjunction with an upcoming conference, or a small expert meeting on the margins of a meeting of the AC (unless an offer for additional support or collaboration from Parties or other organizations are received). Possible conferences/meetings in the 2nd half of 2019 include:

- a) AC16 in Bonn, Germany (during the week of 23-27 September 2019);
- b) A regional TEM-A, as applicable;
- c) COP 25 in Chile (2-13 December 2019).

9. Should no suitable event be identified in the second half of 2020 the AC could also decide to postpone it to 2020 and hold it as a session of the next Adaptation Futures conference, likely to take place in April 2020 and/or propose the theme of "Sharing existing knowledge on and tools for monitoring and evaluation" to the AC's Adaptation Forum group as a theme for the 2020 Adaptation Forum.

10. Upon deciding on the scope, date, and location of the event, the AC may wish to agree on the length and format of the event.

11. The AC may also wish to consider the event's potential links with other upcoming events, such as the above-mentioned event during the NAP Expo and the 2019 NWP Focal Point Forum.

5. Size and target audience

12. The target audience would be Parties as well as practitioners from the national, subnational and project levels. The type and number of invitees depends on the topic selected, as well as on the event on whose margins the meeting would be organized.

6. Next steps

13. The AC will be invited to agree on a theme for the event. It may further wish to consider a date and location and request the secretariat to draft the agenda and background note under the guidance of the AC and in collaboration with the the Nairobi work programme.

⁹ <http://napexpo.org/2019/>