

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

Review and update of the Adaptation Committee's communications strategy

Recommended action by the Adaptation Committee

The Adaptation Committee (AC), at its 15th meeting, may wish to consider the information contained in this paper and agree on next steps as contained in chapter 5 below.

1. Background

1. In its 2019-2021 flexible workplan, the AC agreed to "Review and update the communications plan that includes a social media strategy and integrate [this] into [the] existing workplan."
2. In 2013, the AC published a Communication, Information and Outreach Strategy that outlined a plan based on a future-oriented vision and output-oriented mission. The working group reviewed the AC's previous communications strategy¹ and recommends the revised strategy contained in this document for consideration by the AC.
3. Since the publication of the previous strategy, the landscape of international climate action has changed substantially in light of the Paris Agreement and the subsequent Katowice outcomes. Additionally, social media has become even more integral to communications and outreach efforts for international organizations and climate change knowledge exchange. It is therefore suggested to recalibrate the existing strategy to leverage the potential offered by social media proliferation and showcase the enduring value of the AC's work as Parties move to enhance their adaptation actions. This cannot be limited to online engagement, but rather must encompass a combination of offline and online efforts to maximize the reach of the Adaptation Committee among all audiences for whom the Committee's work is relevant.
4. The previous strategy did not easily translate into concrete actions or measurable targets and, due to its relatively unfocused nature, was not actively used by the AC to guide its communication efforts. Building on the lessons learned from the previous strategy, this document incorporates those elements that typically serve as the bedrock of an effective and feasible communications strategy, namely to set the mission, objectives, target audiences and priorities for the communications activities to promote the work and the role of the AC. It can also be more efficiently be coordinated with the workstreams of the AC' flexible workplan for 2019-2021.²

¹

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

² https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/ac14_workplan.pdf

2. Mission statement

5. The AC offers expert guidance that helps countries, civil society and businesses to build resilience and adapt to the changing climate. It is the United Nations' leading voice on adaptation, working to ensure that all bodies and organizations under the UN System work together to chart a path to a climate-resilient future.

3. Objectives

6. The main communications objectives are as follows:

- a) Enhance the profile of the Adaptation Committee as a recognized body for adaptation for Parties and non-Party stakeholders, as well as the UN System;
- b) Improve understanding of the nature and value of the Adaptation Committee's work, and its role in enhancing effective international adaptation action;
- c) Increase reach and usage of Adaptation Committee resources, including reports, papers, and other knowledge products and events;
- d) Enhance the attention and thus (virtual) participation in Adaptation Committee events; and,
- e) Strengthen existing partnerships, and build new ones, with other bodies under the UNFCCC process and external organizations working on adaptation.

4. Strategy

7. To fulfil the objectives outlined above, the Adaptation Committee must engage in continual, thoughtful communications activities, tailored to the target audiences through the available channels and with the most efficient and effective communications style.

4.1. Target audiences

8. Through its communication products and efforts, the Adaptation Committee will tailor its communications style, information, and channels to target four primary types of audiences:

- a) **Parties**
- b) **Potential partner organizations**, including UN System organizations and constituencies – wishing to collaborate with the Adaptation Committee on a substantive level;
- c) **Multipliers** – making available their channels for distribution of the Adaptation Committee's messages and knowledge products;
- d) **Adaptation experts and practitioners** -interested in the technical work of the Adaptation Committee from a professional perspective;
- e) **General audience**

4.2. Style

9. In all its communications, the AC will strive for writing that is clear, simple, and concise. Wherever possible, documents, web posts, and other communications will avoid jargon. Any reader interested in the AC's work should be rewarded not only with technical information that is insightful and nuanced, but also with writing that is engaging and well-constructed. To achieve this, established principles of scientific communication and effective writing should guide all communications work. All documents and posts should be reviewed for clarity and style in addition to reviews completed for accuracy and grammar. Consciously and consistently producing and publishing well written work will help the AC fulfil its mandate of accelerating adaptation action across the globe by demystifying the complex and confusing field of climate change adaptation. In addition, the AC's communications products will use visual information wherever possible.

4.3. Channels

4.3.1. UNFCCC channels, including social media channels

10. The Adaptation Committee disposes of many UNFCCC communications channels, through the secretariat:

	Channel	Focus
Websites/Portals	UNFCCC website	UNFCCC process
	UNFCCC newsroom	UNFCCC process and news about climate change in general
	Adaptation Knowledge Portal	Knowledge products and news on adaptation
	NAP Central	Guidelines, events and other information relevant for the NAP process
Facebook	The Adaptation Exchange	Sharing of adaptation knowledge, announcement of events and activities
	UNFCCC	Sharing of climate change related knowledge, announcement of UNFCCC events and activities
Twitter	Nairobi work programme	Sharing of adaptation knowledge, announcement of events and activities
	UNFCCC	Sharing of climate change related knowledge, announcement of UNFCCC events and activities
LinkedIn	UNFCCC	Sharing of climate change related knowledge, announcement of UNFCCC events and activities
Instagram	UNFCCC	Sharing of visual information on climate change and UNFCCC events and activities
Newsletters	NWP eUpdate	Sharing of information with NWP partners and subscribers to the newsletter
	AC's Adaptation Finance Bulletin	Sharing of information on adaptation finance from the negotiations, constituted bodies and funds

11. To communicate effectively, the Adaptation Committee may wish to enhance the consistent use of the available UNFCCC channels.

4.3.2. Other channels

12. Apart from the UNFCCC's online channels, most of the organizations that collaborate with the AC or are otherwise involved with work on adaptation, have powerful channels at hand. In each collaboration, the AC should actively encourage information sharing through the partner's channel(s).

13. In addition, the use of external multipliers should be enhanced. Good examples of powerful multipliers are:

- a) Mailing lists for specific topics (such as the Climate-L mailing list);
- b) Newsletters by other organizations (such as UNDP Adaptation, Acclimatise);
- c) Adaptation-related websites (such as Re:Zilient; WeAdapt; PreventionWeb)

14. The AC may wish to, with support from the secretariat, create and maintain a list of relevant multipliers.

4.4. Products

15. For its communications activities, the AC can make use of different existing products:

- a) **Official documents;**
- b) **Reports and technical papers** – provide technical knowledge of specific aspects of adaptation and/or outcome of AC events;
- c) **Infographics and visuals;**
- d) **Events (including webcasted events)** – including the AC meetings, technical expert meetings, workshops and side events;
- e) **Videos** – this includes highlight or featured live videos from events or the creation of additional video material and interviews;

16. In addition, the AC could produce additional products:

- a) **Blog posts and op eds** – by AC members on partner website and on social media, covering specific aspects of the AC's work;

4.5. Measurable results

17. In order to measure and improve the AC's communications activities, the secretariat will keep track of good practices and lessons learned in the process of implementing the communications strategy and to capture statistics wherever possible and significant. These learnings will be used by the secretariat to continuously improve the implementation of the strategy and will also facilitate its review in 2021.

5. Next steps

18. The AC may wish to consider the information contained in this paper and request its working group, with support by the secretariat, to:

- a) Create a detailed communications plan to implement the communications strategy;
- b) Enhance the use of the UNFCCC's channels;
- c) Create and maintain a list of relevant multipliers;
- d) Keep a track record of good practices and lessons learned as well as statistics, wherever possible and significant; and,
- e) Evaluate the strategy in 2021, as stipulated in the flexible workplan, and explore options for conducting a survey of target audiences to inform the evaluation.

Annex: Communications strategy by key audience, objective

Key audience	Objective (see 3)	Main channels (see 4.3)	Products (see 4.4)
Parties	a, b, c, d	UNFCCC website, UNFCCC twitter, mailing lists	Official documents, Reports and technical papers, events, calls for submissions
Potential partner organizations, including UN System organizations and constituencies	a, b, c, d, e	UNFCCC website and newsroom, Twitter, Facebook, newsletters	Reports and technical papers, events, calls for submission
Multipliers	c, d	UNFCCC website and newsroom, Twitter, Facebook, multiplier's own channels (mailing lists, newsletters)	Reports and technical papers, events, visuals, blog posts and op eds
Adaptation experts and practitioners	a, b, c, d	UNFCCC newsroom, LinkedIn, Twitter, newsletters, external channels	Reports and technical papers, events, blog posts and op eds
General audience	a, b, c	Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, external channels	Visuals, videos, blog posts and op-eds