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**Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to
climate change**

Progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This report provides an overview of the progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change since the thirty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice. It describes the continued engagement of organizations, institutions, experts, communities and the private sector in the activities of the Nairobi work programme, as well as the secretariat's efforts to enhance the outreach of the work programme. The report further provides information on collaborations that have been catalysed between Nairobi work programme partner organizations and Parties, and concludes with a brief overview of possible next steps, taking into account the review of the work programme.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its twenty-eighth session, requested the secretariat to provide a report for consideration at each of its sessions, starting from SBSTA 29, on progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.¹
2. At its thirty-third session, the SBSTA agreed to continue activities under the Nairobi work programme while its review is under way (see para. 5 below).²

B. Background

3. The overall objective of the Nairobi work programme is to assist all Parties, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS), to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change on a sound scientific, technical and socio-economic basis, taking into account current and future climate change and variability.³
4. Upon completion of the first phase of the Nairobi work programme,⁴ the SBSTA, at its twenty-eighth session, agreed on further activities for inclusion in the Nairobi work programme, to be implemented by its thirty-third session.⁵ Progress made between SBSTA 28 and SBSTA 33 in the different areas of work is described in the previous progress reports.⁶ In addition, the secretariat prepared a summary report on the results of the second phase of the Nairobi work programme for the period up to SBSTA 32,⁷ and conducted an informal meeting of representatives from Parties, organizations and experts to consider the outcomes of the activities completed prior to that meeting.⁸
5. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 2/CP.11, requested the SBSTA to review the work programme and to report on the outcomes to the COP at its sixteenth session. The SBSTA, at its thirty-third session, commenced that review and agreed to continue and to complete it by its thirty-fourth session.⁹

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/6, paragraph 18.

² FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 17.

³ Decision 2/CP.11, annex, paragraph 1.

⁴ A summary of the results of the implementation of the Nairobi work programme during this first phase is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2008/12.

⁵ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/6, paragraphs 10–74.

⁶ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/INF.5, FCCC/SBSTA/2009/INF.3, FCCC/SBSTA/2009/INF.5, FCCC/SBSTA/2010/INF.2 and FCCC/SBSTA/2010/INF.7.

⁷ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/10.

⁸ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/12.

⁹ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 16.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

6. In accordance with its conclusions at its twenty-eighth and thirty-third sessions, the SBSTA may wish to consider this progress report at its thirty-fourth session.

II. Progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

7. The activities and expected outputs of the Nairobi work programme are structured around the two thematic areas “impacts and vulnerability” and “adaptation planning, measures and actions”, as set out in the annex to decision 2/CP.11, and the nine areas of work identified at SBSTA 25.¹⁰

8. In accordance with the conclusions of the SBSTA at its thirty-third session, activities carried out between December 2010 and the publication date of this report had a strong focus on:

(a) Further engaging relevant organizations, particularly those from developing countries, including the LDCs and SIDS, and from vulnerable communities and groups, with a view to supporting the objective of the Nairobi work programme;¹¹

(b) Providing assistance to all Parties, in particular developing countries, including the LDCs and SIDS, to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, to make informed decisions on the implementation of practical adaptation actions and measures, and to assist Parties to enhance the capacity of relevant decision makers and stakeholders, at different levels, including representatives of women, local communities and indigenous peoples, in order to better utilize the information and tools provided by the Nairobi work programme.¹²

A. Engaging organizations, institutions, experts, communities and the private sector

9. The number of partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme, including those from the private sector, has shown a steady increase over the years, ensuring that the spectrum of experiences and knowledge gathered under the work programme is continuously broadened. Since the publication date of the last progress report, additional organizations, institutions and enterprises have joined as partners and appointed focal points, bringing the total number of partner organizations to 205¹³ as at 21 April 2011.

10. Figure 1 provides an overview of Nairobi work programme partner organizations by category.

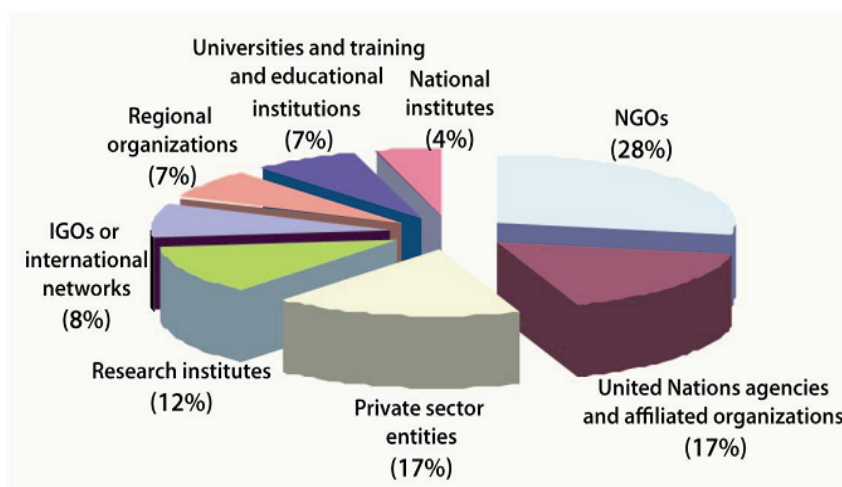
¹⁰ FCCC/SBSTA/2006/11, paragraphs 32–71.

¹¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 15.

¹² FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 20.

¹³ Since the previous progress report, there has also been a consolidation of seven partners into one, at their request.

Figure 1
Nairobi work programme partner organizations by category



Abbreviations: IGOs = intergovernmental organizations, NGOs = non-governmental organizations.

11. A full list of all partners to the Nairobi work programme can be found in the searchable database of partners and action pledges on the UNFCCC website,¹⁴ which also contains details of adaptation experts nominated by partner organizations. Partner organizations and experts have been encouraged to complete their profiles and keep them updated in the database.¹⁵ In addition, Parties are invited to nominate experts through the UNFCCC roster of experts.¹⁶

12. The success of the Nairobi work programme largely depends on the active participation of all its partners. Action pledges have proved to be an effective way for partner organizations to contribute to the implementation of the work programme and to showcase their commitment to carrying out adaptation-related activities towards its objective and expected outcomes.

13. The number of action pledges submitted by Nairobi work programme partners has further increased during the period covered by this progress report. The secretariat received an additional eight action pledges, with the total number of pledges received to date amounting to 141 from 57 organizations. The following partner organizations have submitted pledges since the publication of the last progress report: the Asian Development Bank, Birdlife International, CSR-in-Action, the Ecologic Institute, the Global Water Partnership (GWP), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Division of Science Policy and Sustainable Development, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme and the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies.

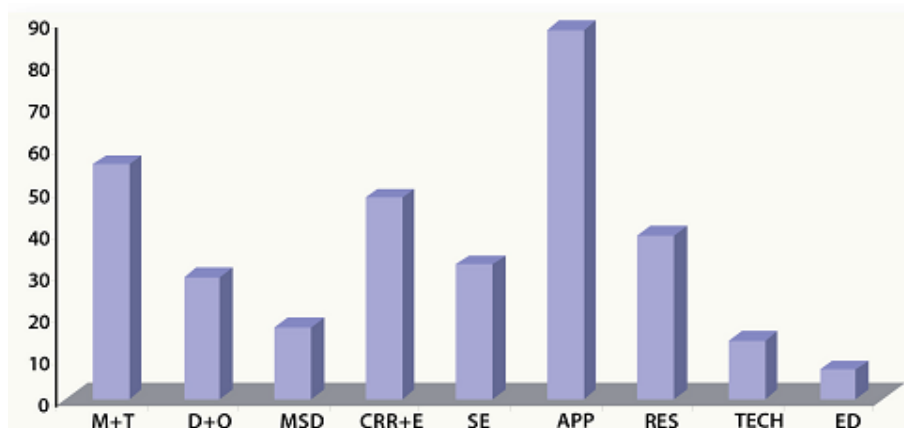
14. More details on all action pledges received to date can be found in the searchable database mentioned in paragraph 11 above. Figure 2 provides an overview of the action pledges submitted by partners, covering all nine work areas of the work programme.

¹⁴ <<http://unfccc.int/5005.php>>.

¹⁵ This can be done by filling out the respective forms available on the UNFCCC website: <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/nwp_organizations_form> for organizations; and <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/nwp_experts_form> for associated experts.

¹⁶ <<http://unfccc.int/534.php>>.

Figure 2
Action pledges under the Nairobi work programme by area of work



Note: One action pledge can cover more than one work area.

Abbreviations: M+T = methods and tools, D+O = data and observations, MSD = climate modelling, scenarios and downscaling, CRR+E = climate-related risks and extreme events, SE = socio-economic information, APP = adaptation planning and practices, RES = research, TECH = technologies for adaptation, ED = economic diversification.

15. All information submitted by partner organizations on the implementation of their action pledges is available on the UNFCCC website.¹⁷

16. As requested by the SBSTA at its twenty-eighth session, the secretariat has regularly organized meetings of focal points of organizations and institutions engaged in the Nairobi work programme with representatives from interested Parties during the sessions of the COP, with a view to taking stock of activities undertaken by organizations and institutions in support of the objective of the Nairobi work programme and to promoting a periodic dialogue between Parties and partner organizations and institutions.¹⁸

17. The fourth Focal Point Forum, chaired by the Chair of the SBSTA, was held on 6 December 2010 in conjunction with COP 16. It was attended by more than 60 representatives from Parties and Nairobi work programme partner organizations. Participants were invited to consider and share views on the implementation of the Nairobi work programme to date, and to share information on their adaptation activities. The following key messages emerged from discussions during the forum:

(a) The Nairobi work programme has been effective in engaging stakeholders; catalysing action on adaptation; and facilitating the sharing of information, knowledge, experience and practices relating to adaptation;

(b) Partner organizations are carrying out an increasing number of adaptation actions, and are using numerous innovative methods for disseminating knowledge;

(c) A wide range of ideas and suggestions could be pursued to further enhance the implementation of the work programme. These relate to:

(i) Process innovations, such as:

- The utilization of external processes and events as opportunities for engagement with the Nairobi work programme, as well as the introduction of means of recognition for strongly engaged Nairobi work programme partners;

¹⁷ <<http://unfccc.int/5005.php>>.

¹⁸ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/6, paragraph 29.

- A possible database or compendium that highlights actions that have already been taken in response to observed impacts;
 - Better dissemination of the large number of knowledge products that have been generated through the Nairobi work programme, across sectors and to all levels;
- (ii) Thematic and sectoral action, such as:
- The need for enhanced coordination and collaboration in areas that are multi-thematic and cross-sectoral. The Nairobi work programme could play a more active role in fostering partnerships and in facilitating collaboration among organizations and Parties to ensure synergy and complementarity of efforts;
 - Thematic innovation whereby collaborative action around specific areas and sectors could enhance the coordination function of the Nairobi work programme;
 - Scaling up work under the Nairobi work programme related to a number of particular subthemes, possibly including water, biodiversity, infrastructure adaptation, indigenous knowledge, education, training and public awareness, and the engagement of the private sector;
- (iii) Reaching the national level:
- The partnerships between the Nairobi work programme and partner organizations have been a useful means of reaching the national level. However, systems for reporting back need to be enhanced in order to make this work more visible to Parties. Packaging information on the activities being undertaken for the benefit of Parties is an important next step;
 - The Nairobi work programme can be enhanced to better serve Parties' needs through regional initiatives, thereby bringing its outcomes closer to the national and subnational levels. Such initiatives could be replicated in other regions, so that knowledge generated under the work programme can be shared more effectively;
- (d) A number of other practical measures could also be instigated to better respond to the needs of Parties. These include a help desk which could serve as an online clearing house to channel requests for technical support from Parties to relevant Nairobi work programme partners. This is in line with another proposal on strategic thought leadership, focused on catalysing targeted thinking by experts from Nairobi work programme partner organizations to meet the specific needs of Parties.

B. Enhancing the outreach of the Nairobi work programme

18. During the first half of 2011, one of the main focuses of activities carried out under the Nairobi work programme has been to enhance its outreach, in order to reach a greater number of stakeholders from vulnerable communities and groups, as requested by Parties during the thirty-third session of the SBSTA.¹⁹ The SBSTA also requested the secretariat to continue the dissemination of the information products produced under the Nairobi work programme.²⁰

19. In response to these requests, the secretariat has made efforts to explore opportunities for disseminating Nairobi work programme products to local communities and vulnerable groups, through regional and local organizations, thus enhancing the capacity of these vulnerable groups to better utilize the information and tools provided under the Nairobi work programme.

¹⁹ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 15.

²⁰ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 21.

1. Disseminating outputs

20. In line with the call from Parties to enhance the dissemination of adaptation knowledge, participants at the Fifth International Conference on Community-based Adaptation to Climate Change²¹ shared their knowledge gleaned from current adaptation action at the community level. The conference was organized by the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies and the Ring Alliance of Policy Research Organizations, following a corresponding action pledge submitted by IIED to the secretariat in May 2010.²² More details of this conference can be found on the IIED website.²³

21. In addition, GWP submitted a new action pledge highlighting the organization's new task in disseminating knowledge products developed under the Nairobi work programme. The pledge relates to two specific activities: using Nairobi work programme knowledge products as part of GWP's capacity-building materials; and using planned GWP workshops for disseminating Nairobi work programme products, in order to support the further processing and dissemination of water-related information generated under the work programme.

2. New publications

22. Since 2007, the secretariat, in close collaboration with Nairobi work programme partner organizations, has made available a wide range of information products to make the knowledge gained under the Nairobi work programme available to a broad audience and thus enable Parties and other stakeholders to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change on a sound scientific, technical and socio-economic basis.

23. Between SBSTA 33 and SBSTA 34 the secretariat facilitated, and made available, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, a number of new publications as described in paragraphs 24 to 26 below. In addition, the latest issue of the Nairobi work programme's electronic newsletter (eUpdate) was sent out to all Nairobi work programme partners and, for the first time, to all UNFCCC National Focal Points, in March and April 2011, respectively.²⁴

24. In order to provide Parties, organizations and other relevant stakeholders with a comprehensive overview of the information and knowledge generated from the implementation of the Nairobi work programme, the secretariat, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, has made available a series of summaries of information and knowledge products developed under the Nairobi work programme. Through attempting an appropriate balance between technical depth and readability, these summaries aim to deliver the results of the collective learning under the Nairobi work programme to the wider adaptation community. They will be made available on the UNFCCC website before SBSTA 34.

25. In response to recommendations made at the informal meeting of representatives from Parties, organizations and experts to consider the outcomes of completed activities under the Nairobi work programme,²⁵ a guide to assessing costs and benefits of adaptation options is being prepared. The guide seeks to assist adaptation planners and practitioners at

²¹ Held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, from 24 to 31 March 2011.

²² <http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/nairobi_work_programme/partners_and_action_pledges/application/pdf/nwp_ap_iied_20100517.pdf>.

²³ <<http://www.iied.org/cba-conference-2011-0>>.

²⁴ <<http://unfccc.int/4628.php>>.

²⁵ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/12.

the national and subnational levels in appraising different adaptation options, including through cost–benefit analysis, cost-effectiveness analysis and multi-criteria analysis.

26. In addition, a new knowledge product will be made available on the UNFCCC website before SBSTA 34. The publication will be entitled “Climate change and the freshwater system: a synthesis of adaptation actions undertaken by Nairobi work programme partner organizations”. The secretariat facilitated the development of this synthesis product in close collaboration with GWP, based on voluntary contributions from 21 partner organizations.

27. All knowledge resources and publications produced under the Nairobi work programme to date are available on the UNFCCC website.²⁶

3. Facilitating the exchange of information, knowledge and experiences

28. As part of the action pledge of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Adaptation Learning Mechanism has created a dedicated virtual space for Nairobi work programme stakeholders and others interested and engaged in adaptation work, to share experiences and knowledge on an ongoing basis.²⁷ All those previously engaged in Nairobi work programme activities are invited to join the virtual discussions, contribute to the enhanced learning on adaptation and help to broaden the reach of the work programme and its outputs. Upon request, facilitated ‘e-discussions’ could be organized for interested members of the network to discuss the various aspects of adaptation, within the context of the implementation of the Nairobi work programme.

29. Another means of exchanging information with a broad audience is the recently created Adaptation Exchange page on the Facebook website.²⁸ This page is intended to provide a space for dialogue on adaptation to the effects of climate change across all sectors, levels, scales and stages of adaptation planning and implementation. The exchange of a wide range of information is encouraged, from challenges to solutions, learning and successes, as well as adaptation needs.

30. With regard to the Nairobi work programme’s private sector initiative, a meeting on transport-related adaptation activities was held on 24 February 2011 in Bonn, Germany. This event was based on a request of the International Union of Railways (UIC), one of the work programme’s private-sector partners, and was built around the UIC project “Adapting Rail InfraStructure to Climate Changes”.²⁹ The project highlights good practice examples of how European railways manage and plan for extreme weather events and natural hazards under present-day weather conditions and uses these to develop guidance on how to deal with the changing weather and climate conditions of the future. Various Nairobi work programme partners³⁰ and experts have contributed information on and experience gained from transport-related activities and the private sector’s engagement in advancing the adaptation agenda. In addition, an insurance-related event for negotiators, organized by MCII together with Munich Re and other experts, was facilitated during the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in 2010 in Cancun, Mexico.

²⁶ <<http://unfccc.int/5136.php>>.

²⁷ For further details and to join the virtual space, see <<http://www.adaptationlearning.net/nairobi-work-programme-stakeholders>>.

²⁸ <<http://www.facebook.com/The.Adaptation.Exchange>>.

²⁹ <http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/application/pdf/iuc_further_information_101110.pdf>.

³⁰ UIC, Acclimatize, Flo-Cert and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

III. Catalysing collaboration between Nairobi work programme partner organizations and Parties

31. The secretariat has made efforts to match the needs of LDCs under the LDC work programme, through the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG), with offers of support from Nairobi work programme partners. In this context, several Nairobi work programme partner organizations, such as Environmental Development Action, the Global Change System for Analysis, Research and Training (START), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the World Health Organization, have been invited to meetings of the LEG. As a result, START has initiated the design of a scientific knowledge system on vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, in order to support regional assessments. This system will enable LDCs to consolidate their data on and their understanding of vulnerability, and promote the harmonization of data and methods used to conduct assessments that address different planning needs. START has an active fellowship programme supporting young African scientists. The selected projects for this programme have a strong capacity-building component on vulnerability, adaptation and impact assessment.

32. Another example of collaborations catalysed through the Nairobi work programme is an activity implemented jointly by the UNFCCC secretariat and the UNDP National Communications Support Programme (NCSP). A needs survey, carried out in late 2010, gave Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) the opportunity to identify technical constraints they encounter in the preparation of the vulnerability and adaptation component of their national communications. Based on the survey results and the identified specific needs for technical assistance, the secretariat, in collaboration with UNDP, invited partner organizations with relevant expertise to provide assistance to address these needs, through a technical backstopping workshop to be held from 3 to 5 May 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand. The following Nairobi work programme partner organizations have offered voluntary contributions from their experts to provide targeted technical support at the workshop: CLIMSystems (New Zealand), the Institute for Social and Environmental Transition (Nepal), the International Water Management Institute (Sri Lanka) and the University of Cape Town (South Africa). To date, 19 non-Annex I Parties in the Asia-Pacific region³¹ have registered to attend the workshop. Tailored technical 'clinics' will be held for experts to assist participants in analysing the technical bottlenecks of their vulnerability and adaptation assessments, and identifying practical solutions through the provision of technical advice, resource lists and recommendations for follow-up activities. Experts from Nairobi work programme partner organizations will advise on technical issues relating to a bottom-up approach to vulnerability assessment, assessment in the water resource sector, climate data and scenarios, socio-economic data and scenarios, as well as integrated assessments. This initiative shows that the Nairobi work programme, through its extensive network of organizations and experts, can indeed provide tangible technical support to the implementation of adaptation actions. This collaboration between NCSP and the Nairobi work programme could be replicated in other regions and in the context of implementing other adaptation activities on the ground.

IV. Next steps

33. As noted in paragraph 5 above, the SBSTA, at its thirty-third session, commenced the review of the Nairobi work programme and agreed to continue and to complete it by its

³¹ Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Fiji, Kiribati, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Micronesia (Federated States of), Nauru, Niue, Palau, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

thirty-fourth session. In this context, it requested Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 28 March 2011, supplementary to inputs received for its thirty-third session, further views and relevant information on progress made and gaps as well as views on new activities that may be needed to achieve the objective and expected outcomes of the Nairobi work programme, in order to inform the review.³² These submissions are contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/MISC.3 and will be considered at SBSTA 34 in addition to the documents made available for SBSTA 33.

34. In addition, the SBSTA agreed to consider, at its thirty-fourth session, and upon completion of the review, the outcomes of activities undertaken during the second phase of the Nairobi work programme, in order to provide relevant information and advice for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its thirty-fourth session.³³

³² FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 18.

³³ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/13, paragraph 22.