

BRIEFING PAPER

# Adaptation Committee #7

## Adaptation Committee: The next generation

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Advance Version

## Brief Summary

This briefing paper briefly summarizes major discussion points for the upcoming 7th meeting of the Adaptation Committee that takes place from 24 - 27th February 2015 in Bonn

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# 1 Introduction

In 2015 the Adaptation Committee (AC) enters the last year of its work plan. While it will carry out the remaining activities this year, it is now also time to draft a new work plan for the phase 2016 - 2018. The challenges are multifold: Demands from countries to implement National Adaptation Plans will increase at the same time learning from a first set of adaptation initiatives and programmes will have to be systematically enhanced.

The AC represents the global body that directly informs and promotes international norms on climate change adaptation. In order to be successful the AC has to continue adding value to the international response on adaptation. Particularly important in this context is to ensure suitable support for the vulnerable people who are at the frontlines of climate change.

## Background: History, Role and Functions of the Adaptation Committee

The establishment of the Adaptation Committee (AC) – the UNFCCC’s primary advisory body on matters related to adaptation – was an important milestone in the last years. Before, the adaptation agenda under the UNFCCC was fragmented over several agenda items and negotiation streams. In order to provide coherence and promote implementation of adaptation under the Convention, COP16 in Cancun in 2010 established the AC laying out the following functions.<sup>1</sup>

1. Providing technical support to the Conference of the Parties;
2. Enhancing sharing of information on adaptation on all levels;
3. Promote synergies and entry-point for engagement with national, regional and international organizations and networks to advance adaptation action;
4. Provide information and recommendations to the COP on the support of adaptation actions;
5. Stream information by Parties on monitoring and review of adaptation actions for possible needs and gaps to recommend further actions

At COP17 in Durban, 2011, Parties operationalized the AC, giving it modalities, determining its board representation and linkages, and clarifying reporting pathways. The COP also decided a list of indicative activities, and asked the AC to develop a 3-year work plan.<sup>2</sup> In September 2012, the AC met for the first time. The meeting yielded in the development of a work plan, which was subsequently endorsed by the COP in Doha at end of 2012. The 3-year work plan entails a list of different activities - employing a variety of different modalities such as reports, workshops, direct interaction with other technical bodies of the UNFCCC and stakeholders. COP19 in Warsaw and COP20 in Lima welcomed the work of the Adaptation Committee.

## 2 Adaptation Committee Task Force on NAPs (NAP TF)

While the last meeting of the NAP Task Force has been very successful in generating awareness among different institutions' work on NAPs, it has also identified a number of challenges that keep countries away from effectively engaging in a NAP process. Based on those challenges, the following recommendations could be considered at AC#7.

### 1. *Mobilize scaled-up financial support for countries engaging in the NAP process*<sup>1</sup>

- Encourage the GEF, GCF and bilateral agencies to develop tangible options on how they can jointly provide long-term funding for NAP formulation and implementation in an effective manner.
- Given the presence of a GCF representative at AC#7, there should be a concrete discussion on how the GCF can directly support countries in accessing funding for NAPs from the GCF, as mandated by the COP.<sup>2</sup>

### 2. *Provide proper technical support for developing countries, LDCs and other countries engaging in the NAP process, to effectively formulate and subsequently implement their NAPs*

- Reach out to regional centres, if existent, to facilitate (South-South) knowledge sharing on NAPs, e.g. through workshops that bring together all relevant actors working on adaptation in the region. Topics may include how to access (additional) financial support for NAPs, how readiness support from the GCF can be utilised, how coherence between donors and projects can be achieved, etc.
- Start discussions on expanding the initial guidelines for the formulation of NAPs to address the implementation of NAPs.
- Decide on a process how to develop an adequate reporting tool, e.g. built on the LEG methodology<sup>3</sup> or the GEF indicators<sup>4</sup>, in order to enhance the reporting of the process to formulate and implement NAPs, as mandated by the COP<sup>5</sup>. The workshop on sharing experiences, good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs on the process to formulate and implement NAPs should be a basis for this.
- Do not duplicate work done in the LEG for NAPs in LDCs and ongoing work in the AC for NAPs in other developing countries that are not LDCs.

### 3. *Encourage LDCs and other developing countries that have not yet engaged in the NAP process*

- Develop fact sheets (1-pager) for each country/region to provide a better understanding of the NAP process. Ideally, package the information into different types of messages that can reach particular target groups (e.g. government, national and local levels, financial institutions).

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<sup>1</sup> At the time of writing the policy discussion document AC/2015/5 had not been made available yet.

<sup>2</sup> 3/CP.20 (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/cop20/eng/10a02.pdf>)

<sup>3</sup> AC/2015/3, p. 7

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> 3/CP.20 (<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/cop20/eng/10a02.pdf>)

- Develop an information note on how support agencies can help creating political momentum at the national level that results in leadership actions for the NAP process.
- Set-up an information page at the NAPs Central, ideally featuring country specific information on the different NAP support programmes. This would for example feature the specific support provided by different bi- and multilateral agencies advancing towards NAP processes on the national level. In order to be as comprehensive as possible, a call should be send out to NAP support providers beforehand to identify all relevant support programmes.
- Start messaging and sensitising policy makers and the private sectors in developing countries, e.g. in the form of official letters from the AC, about what could happen if climate risks are not successfully incorporated into planning.
- Advertise, e.g. through fact sheets the institutional set-up and success factors of countries that are already effectively engaging in the NAPs process, e.g. Malawi to provide other countries with ideas of how to institutionalise NAPs within their government set-up.
- The GCF representative's presence should be used to jointly discuss how a NAPs readiness programme, which includes financial as well as technical elements, could be set up.

**4. *Encourage bilateral agencies, NGOs and other institutions working in countries to support NAP processes through their work***

- Encourage the GEF, GCF and bilateral agencies to identify concrete ideas on how they can work together more effectively in order to ensure adequate communication, coordination and complementarity between NAP supporting/funding organisations.
- Encourage organisations providing supplementary NAPs material to align those with the technical guidelines.

**5. *Generally, policy makers, donor agencies and practitioners should be aware that for an effective NAP process three aspects should be taken for consideration:***

- The formulation of NAPs requires dedicated institutional arrangements that take time to set-up. More than half of all LDCs have so far requested in-country targeted support from the NAPs global support programme.
- NAPs will be developed in a learning-by-doing process and experience will only be build up over time. Donor agencies have to be aware that NAPs may not evolve as quickly as expected.
- The formulation and implementation of NAPs require long-term institutions and processes (at the national as well as international level).

Given the productive nature of the last NAP TF meeting, the next meeting should be scheduled before COP21 in Paris. In advance of the meeting NAP practitioners, e.g. national ministry representatives, bilateral agencies, funding institutions, NGOs and academia should be consulted to agree on a most pressing issue regarding NAPs to become the guiding theme for the next NAP TK meeting. While participation at the last meeting was limited to a small number of observers, we encourage the NAP TF for the next meeting to spread the invitation to a broader audience to ensure input from various kinds of organisations.

### **3 Workshop to share experiences, good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs on the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans**

It is welcoming to see that three adaptation relevant meetings are taking place back-to-back in Bonn in April: the Adaptation Fund Board Meeting, the NAPs Expo, and the AC Workshop. Each event will attract a considerable amount of experts. The AC should encourage a free-flow of participants between the meetings. It will therefore be essential to open-up the AC workshop for interested practitioners to participate and feed-in their knowledge.

According to the mandate, the first objective of the workshop will be to *share experiences, good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs on the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans*.<sup>6</sup> To achieve this, the following topics should be addressed at the workshop:

- A session on how to create more political awareness and buy-in for adaptation and leadership at policy-making levels for the process to formulate and implement NAPs
- A session on how to best hold stakeholder consultations, including with local communities and considering gender issues, in order to make them as comprehensible as possible for local populations
- A presentation by representatives of regional centres over the role in providing advice on technical NAPs matter and financial issues such as accessing funding from different institutions
- A session with implementing agencies, national representatives and donor representatives to map options of cooperation, better coordination and the harnessing of (project) synergies. Discussions should particularly centre on how (short-term) GEF funding can be complemented by bilateral or other multilateral funding that is disbursed based on long-term bilateral or multilateral country strategies with the respective partner organisation.
- An overview session on different funding windows for NAPs and provide hand-outs/factsheets for participants with relevant information

For the second objective, namely to *explore options for enhancing reporting related to the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans*<sup>7</sup> it will be important to consider existing methodologies e.g. the tool for measuring progress, effectiveness and gaps in the NAP process that the LEG is currently developing<sup>8</sup> as well as the indicators and a methodology to collect evidence on the degree to which the policies and plans that the GEF supports contribute towards the NAP process<sup>9</sup>.

To ensure productive discussions with concrete outputs and action points to take forward it is much recommended to employ an external moderator. Consulting with him in advance will in addition offer the opportunity to select the best workshop methodologies, e.g. interactive discussions, presentations, small group meetings, etc.

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<sup>6</sup> AC/2015/4, p. 2

<sup>7</sup> AC/2015/4, p. 2

<sup>8</sup> AC/2015/3, p. 7

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*

## 4 Work plan of the Adaptation Committee

It is important that the AC starts the work on the new work plan for the phase 2016 - 2018 early on. Past experiences have shown that it is easier to structure discussions in a goal-based fashion instead of listing activities that then need to be reviewed to increase coherence. Thus, beginning the discussions on the work plan at their first meeting in 2015 is a welcomed step.

### *Critical look at existing activities & ways-of-working*

The AC is the primary body in creating international norms on adaptation. According to its mandate it has a great responsibility to provide technical sound preparatory support for issues relevant to the UNFCCC decision-making on adaptation matters. It has to maximize legitimacy and reach out to relevant stakeholders and institutions. It is the go-to-place on adaptation under the Convention. A discussion on future activities should root in critically reviewing existing events and accomplishments. It should also be cognisant of ongoing developments in adaptation policy and practice and maximize its outreach.

The AC has retrofitted its work plan in 2013 to be structured in work-areas, which can provide a starting point for the future work plan. In terms of types of activities, the discussions for the 2016-2018 work plan can benefit from a SWOT analysis on previous AC activities. For example, workshop formats of the AC have been praised in the past, also because the AC can attract high-profile experts and has the support of its secretariat. At the same time the AC does not have permanent staff, and its members might have other responsibilities at the national level. This means that activities which require continuous engagement (e.g. communications) will always be second best to organization that are better resourced. Doing a SWOT analysis on the activities and ways of working of the AC can thus help to improve the overall workflow and impact of the AC.

### *UNFCCC adaptation developments in 2016 – 2018*

The mandate of the AC derives from the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF). This is also the starting point for developing the new work plan. However, AC members should be aware of the ongoing policy discussions for COP21 that will yield a legally binding agreement, including additional COP decisions. There are substantial discussions in the ADP to both strengthen the role of the AC as well as mandate specific work. For its 2016 - 2018 work plan the AC will have to be responsive towards policy needs from COP21. Therefore the AC might be well advised to issue specific placeholders in the work plan that can absorb this additional work.

The following text box aims to summarize different positions that are relevant for the work plan discussions.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Submissions from the various Parties can be found at UNFCCC website:

AILAC & Mexico: Adaptation in the ADP, 2014

South Korea: Adaptation in den 2015 Agreement, 2014

Nauru on behalf of AOSIS: Adaptation in the 2015 Agreement, 2014

Nepal on behalf of the Least Developed Countries Group: ADP Co-Chairs' Non-Paper of 7 July 2014 on Parties Views and Proposal on the Elements for a Draft Negotiating Text, 2014



**Strengthened mandate:** Several country groupings suggest anchoring the AC in the Paris agreement. AILAC & Mexico put forward to do a full review of the adaptation institution landscape under the UNFCCC in 2017 and to strengthen mandates. South Korea wants to review membership, procedures and mandates to fulfil additional strategic objectives, and AOSIS suggests a science-link and a hands-on modality towards developing countries.

**Adaptation goal:** South Korea suggests the AC to conduct an analysis on the gap between global adaptation needs and available resources by establishing a task force for this purpose.

**Adaptation cycle for all countries:** South Korea called for the AC, through the NAP Task Force, to develop advanced guidelines for NAPs and M&E methodologies by 2025 that should be applied by all countries.

**Adaptation assessment:** AILAC & Mexico want to strengthen adaptation assessments worldwide. This would be operationalized through an enhanced Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP). For this, the AC is asked to provide recommendations to address potential gaps on metrics and assessment in 2016. AOSIS calls for methodologies for countries to assess capacities to cope with projected impacts and to identify gaps in capacities and knowledge.

**Knowledge platform:** LDCs propose the AC to become the international clearinghouse and repository for (1) National Adaptation Plans, (2) adaptation technologies, (3) adaptation experts, (4) biennial adaptation support reports, (5) information on research and capacity building. South Korea asks the AC to establish a global knowledge platform by 2025 especially in cooperation with the TEC and the NWP.

### ***Focus on vulnerable communities, people and ecosystems***

The focus of adaptation actions on vulnerable communities has been agreed by all Parties as part of the CAF and is an important context for the work of the AC. In addition, to serve the Warsaw International Mechanism, the AC is required to consider particularly vulnerable developing countries, vulnerable populations and the ecosystems that they depend on as cross-cutting topic, and to report back to the Warsaw International Mechanism Executive Committee on how to reduce and avert losses and damages among them.

### ***Future of the IPCC***

The IPCC will discuss form and scope of the 6<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report. While discussions about changing the general form of the IPCC report are underway, it seems that the IPCC will have to wait for the Paris outcome to give further guidance on the outline of AR6. This would mean that the AC could include activities to inform the set-up of the adaptation relevant parts of the IPCC in 2016.

### ***Implementing the Post-2015 Development Agenda (including the outcomes of the 3rd World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai)***

To take urgent action on climate change, the issue has been proposed as one of 17 Sustainable Development Goals. While the form will depend both on the negotiations towards the SDG summit in September in NY as well as the outcome of COP21, the existing proposal is to include climate

resilience and adaptive capacity on the target level.<sup>11</sup> The AC could engage for instance in the discussions around indicators, based on existing experiences and activities (e.g. M&E workshop).

In addition, there will be a decision on the post-2015 disaster risk reduction framework in March in Sendai/Japan. Again there are large overlaps with the adaptation agenda. On the international agenda is also the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 as well as the Habitat III Conference in October 2016.

### *Climate resilience initiatives*

While climate change mitigation was the dominant theme at the New York Climate Summit in September 2014, there are a few climate resilience initiatives as well that have been set-up, e.g. the ICI Portal and the NAZCA Portal. While the ICI Portal does not feature adaptation as a separate category, there are still ongoing discussions about the operationalization of the NAZCA Portal and thus its focus on adaptation.

COP21 will likely host a similar format and the role of initiatives outside the UNFCCC is likely to be increasing in the coming years. However, there is only limited follow-up in terms of implementation and general accountability of such initiatives. For the AC this represents a good opportunity to showcase the impacts of those initiatives, trying to harness synergies between them and thus providing them with the necessary publicity and thus public accountability of their work.

### *Other adaptation communities of practice*

There are already some scheduled yearly or biannual events that might be useful to consider in the work plan preparation. These include for example the Adaptation Futures Conference of the Provia consortium in May 2016, or the Community-based Adaptation Conference that takes place annually.

## **5 Various**

With regard to the expert meeting on promoting livelihoods and economic diversification to be held in the third quarter of 2015 it will be important for the AC to focus its work here on the vulnerable developing countries.

The workshop on means to incentivize the implementation of adaptation actions to be held in the beginning of March has not been opened up to interested stakeholders. Given the importance of the topic of *Understanding adaptation finance: how has adaptation finance resulted or not resulted in effective and concrete action?* this has been noted with concern. We thus encourage you to open up subsequent AC workshops such as the workshop on *Sharing experiences, good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs on the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans* to the climate change adaptation community of practice as well as other interested stakeholders.

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<sup>11</sup> Open Working Group on SDGs, 2014

## Background documents

3/CP.20

<http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/cop20/eng/10a02.pdf>

AC/2015/3

[http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups\\_committees/adaptation\\_committee/application/pdf/20140927r.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/20140927r.pdf)

AC/2015/4

[http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/cancun\\_adaptation\\_framework/adaptation\\_committee/application/pdf/ac7\\_wksp\\_acleg.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/cancun_adaptation_framework/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/ac7_wksp_acleg.pdf)

AILAC & Mexico: Adaptation in the ADP, 2014

[http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/39\\_99\\_130581311840849856-Adaptation%20Submission%20AILAC-Mexico%20vf.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/39_99_130581311840849856-Adaptation%20Submission%20AILAC-Mexico%20vf.pdf)

Nauru on behalf of AOSIS: Adaptation in the 2015 Agreement, 2014

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[http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/39\\_99\\_130584499817551043-Submission%20by%20Nepal%20ADP\\_21%20Oct%202014.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/39_99_130584499817551043-Submission%20by%20Nepal%20ADP_21%20Oct%202014.pdf)

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<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/owg.html>

South Korea: Adaptation in den 2015 Agreement, 2014

[http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/128\\_99\\_130618663718696554-Adaptation\\_in\\_2015\\_agreement\\_ROK\\_20141127.pdf](http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/128_99_130618663718696554-Adaptation_in_2015_agreement_ROK_20141127.pdf)

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