

NAP Global Network Submission on the Assessment of Progress in the Process to Formulate and Implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)

Mandate

Decision 3/CP.26, paragraph 3(a), invited Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat information on their progress towards the achievement of the objectives of the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (NAPs), as well as on their experience, best practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs, and support provided and received.

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TIP: Each **thematic lessons section** starts with a box summarizing key messages for the Secretariat to compile the synthesis report on the assessment of progress on the NAP process.

DISCLAIMER

This submission is made without prejudice to further submissions from the NAP Global Network and its secretariat, the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD). The views and inputs stated in this submission do not necessarily reflect the views, inputs, policies or opinions of the NAP Global Network and IISD's funders or the partners and participants of IISD initiatives.

No liability is assumed for the accuracy or uses of the information provided. Please note that this submission neither aims to reinterpret any existing decision under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change nor does it intend to pre-empt any potential future decisions under the Convention. As a technical submission, the exact language used should not be understood to change or reinterpret anything contained in relevant decisions under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other relevant international treaties and laws.

Summary for the Synthesis Report: Achieving the Objectives of the NAP Process

The assessment of progress in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans (the NAP process) is a strategic opportunity to recognize developing countries' adaptation efforts and emphasize the importance of the NAP process in light of the conclusions of the first Global Stocktake and the findings of Working Group II contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report. It is also a crucial opportunity to identify gaps and barriers, and solutions and best practices for countries to continue progressing in their NAP process, contributing to the achievement of the Global Goal on Adaptation.

More countries are progressing on their NAP process, as indicated by the number of NAP documents being submitted and the number of readiness supports being granted. More NAP documents were submitted between 2021-2023 than 2015-2020 combined. In addition, according to the data portal of the Green Climate Fund at least 107 adaptation planning readiness grants have been approved for 102 countries. The NAP Global Network has provided support relevant to the NAP process, including technical support and peer learning, to 81 developing countries.

The NAP process is being increasingly recognized at the international level. From the various Regional Climate Weeks to the NAP Expo to the intersessional meetings and COPs, there have been increasing recognition of the importance of the NAP process for countries to achieve the Paris Agreement's Global Goal on Adaptation and the Sustainable Development Goals. Similarly, the first Global Stocktake emphasized the critical role of the NAP process in facilitating developing countries' adaptation planning and implementation. The recently adopted UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience also set a target for all countries to have in place country-driven, gender-responsive, participatory and fully transparent national adaptation plans, policy instruments, and planning processes and/or strategies. The increasing attention on the means of implementation and support for adaptation and the NAP process also signifies a shift in paradigm in international cooperation on climate change to have more focus on building adaptive capacity and strengthening resilience.

More countries are undertaking their NAP processes with approaches that are gender-responsive, socially inclusive, participatory, and cross-cutting, and there have been success stories. And countries are aligning their NAP processes with other climate policy instruments, international commitments, and agendas to enhance synergies. Countries' progress on their NAP process is evident with a number of success stories. In Colombia, the government is actively building its capacity to move from national adaptation planning to actions with bankable projects. In Liberia, its NAP process is considered one of the country's most catalytic projects that spurred actions and support for building resilience for the countries' climate sensitive sectors and coastal areas. Similarly, Belize is enhancing its capacity and readiness to better coordinate across government agencies and engage with local stakeholders in its efforts to set the stage for adaptation planning in the coastal zone and the fisheries sector. And in Kenya, it has established a NAP knowledge base to promote knowledge management, communication and advocacy for adaptation and resilience-building.

Seeing accelerated progress in NAPs will require a different scale of, and approach to, support. Countries need greater volume of flexible, long-term support to embed adaptation in development decision-making and transition their NAP process from planning to implementation. The NAP Global Network and many other international development partners are supporting countries in making the

transition through greater emphasis on building systems and capacities of government institutions to mainstream adaptation across government decision-making and development planning.

Among the support requested, building capacities on adaptation planning and implementation remain crucial for the transition from planning to implementation. Building capacities on gender responsive and socially inclusive NAP processes, adaptation investment planning and budgeting processes, and building national monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems for adaptation will be critical in the next decade.

Support provided to Parties on the NAP Process

The National Adaptation Plan Global Network was established in December 2014 at the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 20) in Lima, Peru, where it was initiated by adaptation practitioners from 11 developing and developed countries. The Network's main objective is to accelerate national adaptation planning and action in developing countries. This is done by facilitating peer learning and exchange; supporting national-level action; and generating, synthesizing and sharing knowledge.

With its Secretariat hosted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), the Network currently connects over 2,000 individual members from over 158 countries; it has supported representatives from 67 countries in its peer learning, provided long-term and/or short-term technical support to 64 countries, and developed over 300 knowledge products to raise the profile of NAP processes. Of the 64 governments that received support via the Country Support Hub (CSH) and In-Country Programs (ICPs), 24 are LDCs and 16 are SIDS. Of the 67 countries represented in peer-learning events, 23 were LDCs.

The Secretariat offers demand-driven support through its CSH and the ICP mechanisms, both of which provide expert and targeted advice and technical and capacity support. The CSH meets the demand for short-term (up to 6 months) strategic support. ICPs offer support for several activities within one country over a longer period (i.e. 12 to 18 months on average), and often involve the appointment of "embedded advisors" in the ministry spearheading the NAP process. Requests for both types of support are received and assessed on a rolling basis.

The NAP Global Network operates primarily through the generous financial support that has been provided by the Government of the United States, Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU), the Government of Canada, Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs, The United Kingdom's Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), and the Government of Austria.

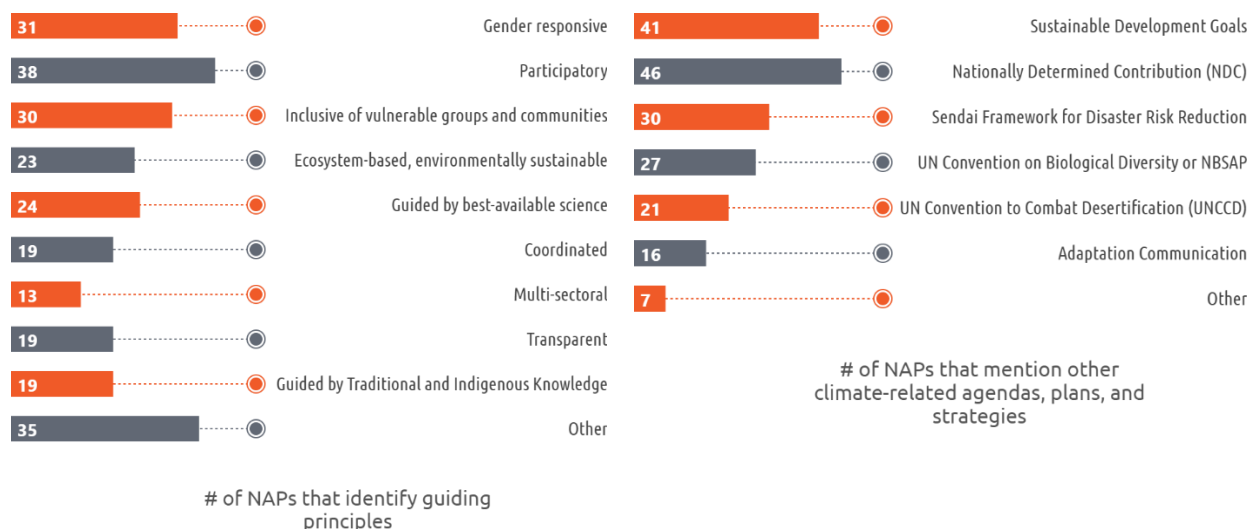
Quantitative Summary of Progress in the NAP Process

The NAP Global Network's NAP Trends platform¹ shares key information on NAPs to make it easy for the adaptation community to access analyses, trends, and statistics of NAPs submitted to the UNFCCC. This submission relies on the data and analyses of the NAP Trends platform, reflecting NAPs submitted to the UNFCCC as of January 31, 2024, unless otherwise indicated.

¹ <https://trends.napglobalnetwork.org/>

More countries are undertaking the NAP Process to identify and address their medium- and long-term priorities for climate adaptation. As of January 31, 2024, a total of 52 multi-sectoral NAPs have been submitted to the UNFCCC’s NAP Central, and 8 developing countries have developed and submitted various sectoral NAPs and other outputs.

It is worth noting that the number of communicated NAPs does not reflect the actual number of adaptation plans or strategies out there and belies the important progress that many countries have made in identifying their adaptation priorities. A total of 142 developing countries currently have a NAP Process underway and many further countries are expected to submit a NAP document in the coming years.²



Almost all NAPs (45; 87%) identified specific adaptation actions; and the average number of identified adaptation actions in NAPs is 106. Many NAPs have included guiding principles, such as participatory (38), gender-responsive (31), inclusive of vulnerable groups and communities (30), ecosystem-based and environmentally sustainable (23), guided by the best-available science (24), transparent (19), guided by traditional and Indigenous knowledge (18), and multi-sectoral (13).

Implementability and financing continue to be crucial factors in the NAP process. As of January 31, 2024, 29 NAPs included implementation strategies; and 26 (50%) NAPs included costing of adaptation actions, averaging around 34.074 billion USD. Almost all NAPs (49; 94%) mention financing sources, and 67% (33) of NAPs mention a separate resource mobilization strategy.

Countries are aligning their NAP with other relevant international commitments and agendas to achieve synergies and improve efficiency. As of January 31, 2024, 46 NAPs mention their countries’ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs); 41 mention the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); 30 mention the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction; 27 mention their countries’ National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) under the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD); 21 mention the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD); and 14 NAPs mention their countries’ Adaptation Communication (AdCom).

² United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat. (2023, November). *Progress in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans*. <https://unfccc.int/documents/635394>

A guiding principle of the NAP process is “to enhance the coherence of adaptation and development planning within countries, rather than duplicate efforts.” Integrating climate adaptation into new and existing development planning is a key objective of the NAP process. As of January 31, 2024, all of the NAPs (52; 100%) identified priority sectors and an average of 9 priority sectors were identified by each NAP. Sectors that are mentioned the most include, inter alia: agriculture, crops, livestock, and/or food security (51); health (48); water and/or sanitation (47); ecosystems, biodiversity, environment, and/or natural resources (40); and infrastructure (31).

Thematic Lessons from 10 Years of Support on NAP Process

Planning to implementation (including enabling factors)

SUMMARY FOR THE SECRETARIAT SYNTHESIS REPORT

Many countries are transitioning from planning to the implementation of their national adaptation priorities. To manage this transition in a timely, coordinated, and efficient manner, countries need to make national adaptation priorities implementation ready and develop projects and programs for addressing adaptation priorities in a strategic manner, while strengthening the enabling environment for implementation. Clear roles and responsibilities, sufficient means of implementation, functioning MEL systems, and good governance are crucial for this transition.

Based on our research and country support experience, we have identified three main factors that influence how countries manage this transition in a timely, coordinated, and efficient manner:

Making national adaptation priorities implementation ready. We have observed that countries must have at least six pre-requisites in place for national adaptation priorities to be ready for implementation:

- 1) **Roles and responsibilities for implementing national adaptation priorities:** A lead ministry or agency is identified for implementing each national adaptation priority. Clear roles and responsibilities support ownership, accountability, and a coordinated approach to transitioning from planning to implementation.
- 2) **Means of implementation:** Lead ministries or agencies know how they will implement their national adaptation priorities, whether it is through national, sectoral, and local development plans and development partners strategies and/or through ministries and agencies’ annual budget process.
- 3) **Sequencing of priorities:** Countries have decided which priorities should be implemented in the short, medium, and longer term. This is important because most countries identify a long list of national adaptation priorities, and these cannot be implemented simultaneously.
- 4) **Specificity of priorities:** National adaptation priorities are specific enough to estimate their human and finance costs and to be linked to relevant sources of finance. An initial estimate of the human and finance costs of national priorities (e.g., through the development of concept notes) is needed to pitch them to donors and identify relevant sources of finance.
- 5) **Process for managing proposals:** A clear process is in place for the management of proposals that address national adaptation priorities (from proposal preparation to proposals submission, costing, review, and prioritization) across all ministries and agencies. Such process supports a coordinated approach among key actors and contributes to improving the quality of the proposals since ministries and agencies can lack expertise on adaptation.

- 6) **Evidence of progress on MEL for national adaptation:** MEL and reporting systems are in place, or are being developed or strengthened, to access financial and other resources. Evidence of progress on MEL for national adaptation can build confidence of investors and foster resource allocations towards national adaptation priorities.

Developing projects and programs for addressing national adaptation priorities in a strategic manner. National adaptation priorities will ultimately be implemented through new or adjusted projects and programs, that translate adaptation priorities into concrete actions. Another key condition that enables a timely, coordinated, and efficient transition from planning to implementation relates to countries' ability to *implement* a clear process for managing these proposals.

Strengthening the enabling environment for implementation. As countries transition from planning to implementation, the enabling conditions need to be adjusted to support implementation readiness and the development of strategic projects and programs. For example, additional actors will need to be involved and more and different types of investments must be considered. The role of the Ministry responsible for coordinating the NAP process will pivot to different activities such as ensuring tailored communication about the NAP to the Ministry of Finance for incorporation into the national budget and to development partners for incorporation in their funding commitments.

Climate vulnerability and risk assessment

SUMMARY FOR THE SECRETARIAT SYNTHESIS REPORT

Countries are using different approaches to assess climate vulnerabilities and risks for their NAP processes. Mobilizing and engaging different social groups in climate vulnerability and risk assessment is essential to identify inclusive adaptation priorities in NAP processes. It is also imperative to consider non-climate change and intersectional factors for a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges that communities may face. However, countries face challenges in implementing their CRAs, including a lack of viable data at lower levels of governance, insufficient resources and capacities, and a lack of national MEL system for adaptation.

Climate risks assessments refer “to the assessment of climate change impacts, vulnerability, risks, and/or adaptation (or resilience)” ([Dekens, 2023, p.2](#)). They are crucial in NAP processes. They identify adaptation priorities and interventions, fostering an evidence-based approach to climate change adaptation. Drawing upon the experiences of 22 countries such as Burkina Faso, Ghana, and Senegal, several lessons and areas for improvement have emerged. Four overarching trends have emerged:

Countries are using different approaches to implementing their CRAs. Countries are adopting context-specific approaches that are adapted to the stage of development and implementation of their NAP process, their administrative structures, and the types of risks that are prevalent in the country. For instance, Burkina Faso is in the process of developing a regional approach to VRAs. This approach aims to streamline adaptation plans at the regional level, recognizing the importance of tailoring strategies to local contexts. Meanwhile, Ghana maintains a district-level approach to VRAs. This strategy emphasizes the generation of critical climate information to build resilient communities, collecting comprehensive data, including climate, socioeconomic, and ecological information. Senegal employs both sectoral and regional approaches, developing sectoral adaptation plans at the national level while implementing a regional approach to address eco-geographical zones, fostering inclusivity in addressing regional priorities. This has led to the creation of regional adaptation plans informing the national NAP.

Mobilizing and engaging different social groups in CRAs is essential to identify inclusive adaptation priorities in NAP processes. Involving women's organizations and youth clubs to establish local ownership in implementing actions derived from vulnerability assessments. Furthermore, recognizing the necessity of investing in systems to enhance data acquisition emerged as a key takeaway. Multisector dialogues can help to address cross-cutting issues when conducting CRAs. When assessing vulnerabilities and risks, it is also imperative to consider non-climate change and intersectional factors for a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges that communities may face. Addressing these issues ensures a more inclusive approach to VRAs that accounts for the interconnected nature of social, economic, and healthcare dynamics within a community. For instance, Poverty is a significant determinant of vulnerability, compounding with other social disparities such as education, access to healthcare, and essential services, collectively diminishing a community's overall adaptive capacities.

Countries still experience challenges in implementing CRAs. One prevalent challenge across countries is the lack of viable data at lower levels of governance. The scarcity of climate data poses a significant obstacle, compromising the accuracy of vulnerability assessments. Another challenge lies in ensuring inclusive participation, as diverse stakeholders with different priorities may not uniformly emphasize climate adaptation, potentially creating gaps in planning and execution. Additionally, countries grapple with challenges related to insufficient resources and awareness about climate change. The substantial costs associated with VRAs, coupled with a lack of political will and regional instability, further complicate the assessment process.

Countries still struggle to align their CRAs, NAPs and their MEL systems to assess adaptation progress. It is critical for countries to ground their NAP process in CRAs. The NAP process should clarify how national adaptation priorities are expected to reduce climate risks and vulnerabilities identified in CRAs in the short and long terms. Subsequently, countries' national MEL systems are designed to track and assess the performance of the implemented adaptation priorities. However, we often see a lack of alignment between the identification of risks and vulnerabilities, and the MEL system. Ideally, this requires the identification of well-defined adaptation objectives, targets, and outcomes—possibly by using an explicit Theory of Change for each national adaptation priority theme, sector, region, or a combination thereof, depending on the country's approach to its NAP process. This process could clarify how countries think that change will happen, including what success looks like, for whom, and how to get there. As countries increase efforts in designing and implementing MEL systems for their NAP processes, better alignment between CRAs and MEL are essential.

Vertical integration

SUMMARY FOR THE SECRETARIAT SYNTHESIS REPORT

Adaptation needs across governance levels must be carefully linked to and supported by national-level adaptation planning and implementation to channel resources to the people, communities, and systems that need them most at the subnational levels. Countries have made significant progress in creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and subnational governance levels in their NAP process, but challenges remain. Strengthening multilevel governance arrangements, budgeting adequate resources for subnational entities, engaging with non-governmental actors, and prioritize strengthening institutional and human capacities at subnational levels are essential.

Vertical integration is the process of creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and sub-national governance levels in the planning, implementation, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) ([Dazé et al., 2016](#)). Adaptation needs across governance levels must be carefully linked to and supported by national-level adaptation planning and implementation to channel resources to the people, communities, and systems that need them most ([Luna Rodríguez et al., 2023](#)).

During the NAP process, vertical integration is a cross-cutting issue relevant across its different phases. In recent years, countries have made considerable progress in creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and sub-national governance levels, but some challenges remain ([Morchain, 2021](#)). The following key trends are based on data collected through a review of 45 multi-sectoral NAP documents submitted to the UNFCCC as of July 2023 ([Luna Rodríguez et al., 2023](#)):

1. **All NAPs reference one or more non-governmental sub-national actor that is relevant for vertical integration in the NAP process.** Three quarters of NAPs (78%) reference actions for CSO (civil society organizations) groups to inform the NAP process at the sub-national and national levels. Approximately two thirds of the NAPs (67%) reference local private sector actors and/or micro, small, and medium-sized businesses. Additionally, more than half of NAPs (58%) reference engaging local communities in the NAP process.
2. **Most countries include a role for sub-national governments in climate change adaptation.** Many NAP documents (76%) mentioned planning³ roles for the sub-national authorities. Also, most NAPs (78%) refer to an implementation role for sub-national governments. Lastly, almost half of the NAPs (47%) mentioned a role for sub-national governments in MEL⁴ in the NAP process.
3. **Most NAPs mention coordination mechanisms across various levels of governance.** Many NAPs (78%) refer to coordination mechanisms across levels. Some countries use *existing* multilevel coordination mechanisms, while others propose *new* institutional arrangements be put in place. Finally, some countries set up *ad hoc* mechanisms between national and sub-national actors during the process of NAP formulation and/or update.
4. **Many countries' NAPs mention mechanisms to provide financing at sub-national levels.** Almost three quarters of NAPs (69%) refer specifically to the disbursement of funding to sub-national levels.
5. **A significant number of NAPs reference sub-national-level adaptation plans and several countries recognize the local dimensions in their NAP.** Many of the NAPs (60%) explicitly mentioned sub-national adaptation planning processes. Around half of countries' NAPs (51%) made an explicit reference to the concept of Community based Adaptation (CBA), while some countries (40%) mention the Locally led Adaptation (LLA) approach.

The following **good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs**, are identified based on information gathered during the NAP Global Network Secretariat's support provided to countries' NAP teams and engagement with development partners:

- ✓ **Strengthening multilevel governance arrangements is essential.** [Multilevel institutional arrangements](#) and coordination mechanisms can support ownership and accountability of adaptation measures during the planning, implementation and monitoring, evaluation, and

³ This finding includes the key words "formulation" and "planning" of adaptation for sub-national governments.

⁴ Key terms for this finding include "monitoring," "reporting," "verification," and the abbreviation "MRV"; "monitoring," "evaluation," and the abbreviation "M&E"; and "learning" and "MEL" of adaptation for sub-national governments.

learning of the NAP process. This process can be facilitated through [existing](#) or [new](#) multilevel coordination mechanisms ([Luna Rodríguez et al., 2023](#)).

- ✓ **Financial mechanisms must provide resources to subnational levels for adaptation.** Countries should continue to [establish mechanisms that provide financial flows](#) from diverse sources ([including budgeting](#)) to [subnational levels](#) to close the adaption gap. These mechanisms enable sustained financial resources necessary for implementation of adaptation measures prioritized in the NAP process ([Parry, 2017](#)).
- ✓ **Engaging non-government actors at sub-national levels is crucial.** Engaging [civil society organizations](#) that operate at subnational levels, as well as [small businesses](#), [local producers](#), [local communities](#), and [marginalized groups](#) in the NAP process can contribute to a more inclusive, equitable and just adaptation process ([Morchain, 2021](#)).
- ✓ **Prioritize strengthening institutional and human capacities at subnational levels.** Strengthening [institutional and human capacities](#) at subnational levels of governance ([including subnational governments](#) and [traditional and local authorities](#)) should be a top priority of national level governments and development partners for a successful NAP process ([Luna Rodríguez et al., 2023](#)).

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

SUMMARY FOR THE SECRETARIAT SYNTHESIS REPORT

National monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems are crucial to provide a structured approach to monitoring progress, evaluating results, and learning to ensure the NAP process is effectively achieving their intended outcomes. Starting context-specific, flexible, and adaptable MEL strategy early in the NAP process is crucial. And mixed approaches and methods for capturing information on adaptation progress could yield valuable insights for iterative learning in the NAP process. MEL should not be viewed merely as a tool for compliance, but as a mechanism to inform decision-making and support mobilizing adaptation finance.

Developing effective monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL) systems for adaptation within NAPs is a critical and challenging task in the face of climate change. MEL systems are used to provide a structured approach to monitoring progress, evaluating results, and learning to ensure climate change adaptation strategies are effectively achieving their intended outcomes. Additionally, the importance of national MEL systems for adaptation grows along with the momentum around assessing progress towards achieving the global goal on adaptation ([Beauchamp, 2023](#)). The NAP Global Network has supported over 26 countries in designing and strengthening their MEL system for NAP processes over the past nine years. We outline four strategies to support the development and operationalization of MEL systems have emerged.

Starting the MEL strategy early in the NAP process is essential. This ensures that MEL is integral from the beginning rather than an afterthought. At a first step, countries should establish clearly their objectives, how they will coordinated MEL efforts, leverage and mobilise resources, integrate capacity building, and tailor MEL reports to the audiences they are aiming to inform. Maximize synergies with other initiatives such as Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to create integrated systems supporting climate-resilient development and avoiding duplicate reporting burdens Collaboration also plays a pivotal role in adaptation efforts, requiring engagement with both government and non-government stakeholders at various levels to build a shared

‘MEL culture’. This collaborative approach turns stakeholders into active participants and ‘agents of change’. In this, legal and policy mandates support long-term and inclusive MEL systems.

MEL systems should prioritize context-specificity and flexibility, designed to reflect the unique conditions and needs of each context rather than adhering to a generic model. Flexibility is paramount in MEL systems, given the dynamic nature of climate actions and changing climatic conditions. Adaptability is crucial, allowing systems to evolve with changing needs and circumstances. This flexible approach enables countries to start with achievable goals by integrating climate adaptation into existing systems and gradually expanding upon them.

Reporting is effective when it is supported by legal and policy mandates, necessitating a unique and context-specific approach in each country. Vital elements include clarity in objectives, coordination, resource control, capacity integration, and audience-specific report tailoring within a simplified and user-friendly MEL framework system for practitioners and government counter parts. This simplicity ensures that stakeholders can engage with and understand the MEL process, allowing for operationalization with available resources and capacities.

MEL systems include mixed approaches and methods for capturing information on adaptation progress. While there is often a focus on indicators under MEL systems, indicators are not essential for tracking and assessing progress. In fact, indicators do not help evaluate whether the adaptation interventions. The use of qualitative approaches along with quantitative approaches is necessary. For example, the incorporation of storytelling in MEL emphasizes the human element, focusing on narratives that depict meaningful progress in climate adaptation, rather than relying solely on quantitative data. This strategy enhances the communicative power of MEL systems, making them more effective in conveying the nuances and impacts of climate adaptation efforts.

A MEL system should produce insights for iterative learning, to understand what works (or not), for whom, and how throughout the NAP process. MEL should not be viewed merely as a tool for compliance, but as a mechanism to inform decision-making and support mobilizing adaptation finance. This perspective shifts the focus from mere data collection to meaningful interpretation and application of the collected information. Regular progress reporting within the NAP process can significantly enhance its effectiveness by supporting decision-making, increasing transparency, and identifying barriers and opportunities for adaptation efforts. The NAP Global Network’s [research](#) on progress reporting emphasizes that a full MEL system isn’t necessary to begin progress reporting. Reporting can start at any stage, and initial simplicity is recommended, with reports evolving over time.

Gender-Responsive NAP Processes

SUMMARY FOR THE SECRETARIAT SYNTHESIS REPORT

The NAP process should follow a gender-responsive approach that recognizes gender differences in adaptation needs and capacities, ensures gender-equitable participation and influence in decision-making, and achieves gender-equitable distribution of benefits. There has been steady progress made by Parties in integrating gender considerations in adaptation planning and implementation. Gender analysis, access to gender expertise, and participation of civil society are crucial ways of ensuring a gender-responsive NAP process. Equally important is removing the barriers faced by countries related to a lack of gender-responsive finance, resources, and capacities; and enhancing the skills and knowledge of practitioners and decision-makers on integrating gender considerations and other social factors into the NAP process through intersectional approaches.

A gender-responsive NAP process is one that recognizes gender differences in adaptation needs and capacities; involves gender-equitable participation and influence in adaptation decision making; and yields equitable benefits from investments in adaptation for people of all genders and social groups ([Dazé & Dekens, 2017](#); [NAP Global Network & UNFCCC, 2019](#)).

To date, the NAP Global Network has provided direct technical support on gender to 20 countries (selected outputs available [here](#)), and connected representatives of more than 40 countries in peer learning processes focusing on gender-responsive NAP processes (one example [here](#)). We have completed three bi-annual [synthesis reports](#) that assess progress on integrating gender considerations in NAP processes and present promising examples from our country partners, and we track gender in NAP documents on an ongoing basis on [NAP Trends](#). Our work in this area is guided by the [Toolkit for a Gender-Responsive Process to Formulate and Implement National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#), developed in collaboration with the LEG.

Drawing on these activities, we would like to highlight 5 key lessons regarding gender-responsive NAP processes:

- ✓ **Gender analysis is an essential tool.** As noted in our [2023 analysis](#), though most useful in their early stages, countries see the value of gender analysis to inform their NAP processes throughout planning, implementation and MEL. If undertaken in a participatory process, these analyses foster collaboration among different actors and support integration of gender considerations in NAPs and other adaptation planning documents such as sector adaptation strategies. Importantly, they enable countries to engage in informed decision making towards gender-responsive adaptation.
- ✓ **Access to gender expertise makes a difference.** For systematic integration of gender considerations in NAP processes, NAP teams require ongoing access to gender expertise. This can be facilitated through [collaboration with the gender ministry](#), by [engaging external experts](#), or by collaborating with gender-focused organizations. The creation of a multi-stakeholder body, such as a technical working group, on gender, social inclusion and adaptation, or climate change provides a great opportunity to foster the participation of gender and social inclusion experts from diverse backgrounds and organizations.
- ✓ **Participation of civil society must be facilitated.** Civil society organizations (CSOs) provide an essential link between national governments and people on the front lines of climate change. NAP processes must involve participation of CSOs that advocate for the rights of women and other groups that face discrimination if they are going to be effective in meeting the needs of the most vulnerable groups. [Creative methods](#) like storytelling can help to facilitate dialogue that bridges different knowledge systems and places people at the centre.
- ✓ **Adaptation finance must be gender-responsive.** NAP processes play an essential role in mobilizing resources for implementation of adaptation actions. To realize the potential of gender-responsive adaptation, adaptation finance – whether from domestic budgets, international climate finance, or the private sector – must systematically integrate gender considerations and be made available to women’s organizations and others who are best-placed to advance participatory and inclusive processes and actions.
- ✓ **More attention is needed to other social factors and intersectional approaches.** We have observed [progress](#) in integrating gender considerations in NAP processes, and increasing attention to related concepts, such as inclusion and human rights. However, significant gaps remain in addressing other factors that drive discrimination that may exacerbate vulnerability to

climate change, such as disability, racialization, and Indigeneity. Ideally, countries will move towards an intersectional approach.

Most countries have an interest in integrating gender considerations in their NAP processes, but they may face gaps in the resources, expertise, and skills needed to do this effectively. Continued investment in gender-responsive and socially inclusive NAP processes is needed, particularly as countries shift from planning to implementation. Integration of gender and social considerations in MEL is also needed, to assess the extent to which decision-making processes are inclusive and gender-responsive, and whether the distribution of benefits from investments in adaptation is equitable across genders and social groups.

Nature

SUMMARY FOR THE SECRETARIAT SYNTHESIS REPORT

Countries are making progress on integrating nature and biodiversity considerations into the NAP process by assessing the risks and vulnerabilities of ecosystems and identifying Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) options for building resilience of both communities and nature. EbA has the potential to bridge siloes and promote synergies between climate change adaptation and biodiversity, by linking the NAP and the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP) processes. However, robust environmental and social safeguards are necessary to unlock the full potential of ecosystems in vulnerability reduction for people, their livelihoods, and socioeconomic development.

Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) is a type of nature-based solutions focused on climate adaptation. It is the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as a part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change ([Terton & Greenwalt, 2021](#)). The NAP process provides a framework for mainstreaming, mandating, and scaling up EbA across national and subnational adaptation planning and implementation. As of November 30, 2023, 71% of the submitted NAPs (41/49) mention EbA and 51% (25) identify specific EbA measures among adaptation actions.

EbA has the potential to bring together diverse stakeholders, bridge siloes across ministries or sectors, and enable creative solutions for societal challenges. It enables countries to advance the protection of biodiversity with adaptation objectives in mind, thus enhancing the synergies between climate change adaptation and ecosystem conservation ([Terton et al., 2022](#)). Half of the countries that have submitted their NAP document (53%; 26) mention their countries' NBSAP under the CBD. IISD and the NAP Global Network led the development of the [supplement to the NAP technical guidelines](#) under the Nairobi Work Programme, focused on **promoting synergies between climate change adaptation and biodiversity through the NAP and NBSAP processes**. It provides a useful framework for countries to leverage EbA to enhance the joint-implementation of adaptation and biodiversity actions – reducing the duplication of work and ensuring efficiencies and cost-effectiveness with limited resources.

A well-coordinated approach to the NAP process could facilitate countries' efforts to achieve multiple commitments domestically and internationally, including helping countries achieve the recently adopted **Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework**. It sets an ambitious target of conserving 30% of land, waters and seas and restoring 30% of all degraded ecosystems by 2030. Establishing and managing protected areas, a subset of EbA, could safeguard species, habitats and ecosystem services;

support households and communities with resource-based livelihoods; and help build human and natural resilience to the impacts of climate change.

Lastly, **robust safeguards and principle-driven implementation of EbA would increase community buy-in and address potential concerns with ecosystem approaches**. Gender, human rights, and environmental safeguards and principles are integral to effective EbA planning and implementation and the equitable distribution of adaptation and biodiversity benefits ([Lo et al., 2022](#); [Lo et al., 2023](#); [Caswell & Jang, 2024](#)). We have summarized the following best practices for integrating EbA into countries' NAP processes:

- ✓ Emphasize the **role of ecosystems in vulnerability reduction** for people, their livelihoods, and socioeconomic development.
- ✓ Take an **ecosystem-level approach to assessing vulnerability and risks** using the best available science, as well as Indigenous and Traditional Knowledge.
- ✓ Adopt an **integrated approach** that considers ecosystems across all sectors in the NAP process.
- ✓ Embrace **global policy alignment** by considering synergies with other relevant international commitments that EbA solutions contribute to.
- ✓ Make use of the **participatory and inclusive** nature of the NAP process to design the most appropriate and effective EbA solutions.
- ✓ Use the NAP process to **engage subnational and local level governments and actors** in the design and implementation of regional and local EbA solutions.
- ✓ Adopt a **long-term approach** and ensure sufficient resources for the implementation of EbA solutions.
- ✓ Ensure accountability and performance by **building an evidence base for EbA** as part of an overall MEL system for national adaptation.

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Annex 1: Key Resources

Climate vulnerability and risk assessment

Dekens, J. (2023). Using Climate Risk Assessment to Measure Adaptation Success at the National Level: Preliminary lessons from 12 countries (NAP Global Network Report). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/climate-risk-assessment-measure-adaptation-success/>

Vertical Integration

Dazé, A., Price-Kelly, H., & Rass, N. (2016). Vertical integration in National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes: A guidance note for linking national and sub-national adaptation (NAP Global Network guidance note). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/vertical-integration-national-adaptation-plan-nap-processes/>

Luna Rodríguez, M., Ledwell, C., & Bankole, O. (2023). Progress on vertical integration in national adaptation plan processes: Analysis of strategic linkages between national and sub-national levels (NAP Global Network synthesis report). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/achieving-vertical-integration-in-adaptation-processes/>

Morchain, D. (2021). Progress and challenges in achieving vertical integration in adaptation processes (NAP Global Network briefing note). <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/achieving-vertical-integration-in-adaptation-processes/>

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

Guerdat, P., Masud, S., & Beauchamp, E. (2023). Reporting on Progress in National Adaptation Plan Processes: An analysis (NAP Global Network report). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/reporting-on-progress-in-nap-processes/>

Gender-Responsive NAP Processes

Dazé, A. & Church, C. (2019). Toolkit for a Gender-Responsive Process to Formulate and Implement National Adaptation Plans: Supplement to the UNFCCC Technical Guidelines for the NAP Process (NAP Global Network). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/toolkit-for-gender-responsive-national-adaptation-plans/>

Dazé, A. & Hunter, C. (2022). Gender-Responsive National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Processes: Progress and promising examples (NAP Global Network report). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/gender-responsive-nap-processes-progress-promising-examples/>

Ceinos, A. & Dazé, A. (2023). Maximizing the Impacts of Targeted Gender Analyses for the National Adaptation Plan Process (NAP Global Network briefing note). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/maximizing-impacts-targeted-gender-analyses-for-nap-process/>

Dazé, A. (2023). Envisioning Resilience: What we're learning about creative methods for policy dialogue on adaptation (NAP Global Network briefing note). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/envisioning-resilience-what-were-learning-about-creative-methods-for-policy-dialogue-on-adaptation/>

Nature

Terton, A. & Greenwalt, J. (2021). Building Resilience With Nature: Maximizing Ecosystem-based Adaptation through National Adaptation Plan Processes (NAP Global Network guidance note). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/building-resilience-with-nature/>

Terton, A., Qi, J., & Zúñiga, G. (2022). Promoting Synergies Between Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity Through the National Adaptation Plan and National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan Processes. International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/synergies-between-climate-change-adaptation-and-biodiversity/>

Terton, A. & Greenwalt, J. (2020). Building Resilience With Nature: Ecosystem-based Adaptation in National Adaptation Plan Processes (NAP Global Network analysis). International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://napglobalnetwork.org/resource/building-resilience-with-nature-eba-in-nap-processes/>

Caswell, C. & Jang, N. (2024). Mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion in Nature-Based Solutions for Climate Change Adaptation. International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://ncai.iisd.org/resources/gender-equality-social-inclusion-nature-based-solutions-adaptation/>

Lo, V. & Rawluk, A. (2023). Enhancing Biodiversity Co-Benefits From Nature-Based Solutions. International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://ncai.iisd.org/resources/biodiversity-co-benefits-nature-based-solutions/>

Lo, V., Qi, J., & Jang, N. (2022). Seeking Clarity on Nature-Based Climate Solutions for Adaptation. International Institute for Sustainable Development. <https://ncai.iisd.org/resources/seeking-clarity-on-nature-based-climate-solutions-for-adaptation/>

Annex 2: Case Studies

Vertical Integration: Local finance for NAP-aligned adaptation in Benin

The government of Benin has been working since 2014 with the UN Capital Development Fund’s Local Climate Adaptive Living Facility (LoCAL), a mechanism that aims to help subnational governments in developing countries access and deploy climate financing. In the past decade, Benin has made significant progress on national adaptation planning, including establishing a National Environment and Climate Change Fund (NECCF) in 2017, and launching its first NAP document in 2022. Benin’s advancement on the NAP process has led to an important milestone to increase investment in local-level adaptation: in 2023, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) approved a USD 9.9 million project, with the NECCF as the Accredited Entity. The project aims to strengthen local climate governance and boost local-level access to climate finance in the key climate-sensitive sectors aligned with those prioritized in the NAP document (GCF, 2023). More than 35 countries are designing or using such mechanisms for financing local adaptation to climate change—performance-based climate-resilience grants—for vertical integration in their NAP processes.

Reference to this case study: [Synthesis report on vertical integration in NAPs](#)

Climate vulnerability and risk assessment: Enhancing Climate Resilience in Burkina Faso through a Regional Approach to Adaptation Planning

Burkina Faso initiated a regional-scale Risk and Vulnerability Assessment (RVA) in the Central Plateau region. This, along with plans from the other 12 regions, will contribute to the overall National Adaptation Plan (NAP). A mixed method approach to collect data was developed, incorporating household surveys and in-person interviews, in addition to utilizing climate data. The RVA unveiled that the agriculture, water resources, livestock, environment, and health sectors were the most vulnerable to climate change.

The results of the RVA guided the development of a priority list for adaptation measures, leading to the creation of the Regional Adaptation Plan (RAP) for the Central Plateau. An important lesson drawn from this process highlights that, despite the time-consuming and resource-intensive nature of the RVAs development, the process yielded a well-designed RAP. This engaged experts from various sectors and helped establish a standard and replicable methodology for future RVA. The Central Plateau RAP can now serve as a model upon which future plans for other regions can be based.

Reference to the case study: [Regional Approach to Adaptation to Climate Change in Burkina Faso - NAP Global Network](#)

Monitoring, evaluation and learning: Albania’s NAP

After several years of implementing its National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Albania, drawing on lessons from other countries' progress reporting, developed its first progress report covering the period 2019-2023. This report analyzes achievements, insights, and challenges faced in the initial years of the NAP, informing future revisions and aligning with the goal of building a climate-resilient Albania. The NAP, a key part of Albania's National Climate Change Strategy established in 2019, outlines 15 priority actions, 118 adaptation measures, and 23 goals to be achieved by 2035. The primary aims of this inaugural

progress report include monitoring the implementation status of the priority actions, adaptation measures and goals, mainstreaming climate change into sectoral policies, evaluating and learning from the NAP process, and meeting the reporting obligations under the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. The development of this report helped in revitalizing the interministerial group on climate change that had been non-active for a while. It also allowed the government of Albania to formulate recommendations to enhance the NAP's implementation through improved financing, capacity building, institutional arrangements, planning, and MEL practices.

Reference to the case study: [Albania's first NAP progress report](#)

Nature: Using EbA to link Eswatini's NAP and NBSAP process

By focusing on the assessment and mapping of climate impacts, as well as proactively integrating climate change considerations into its conservation, sectoral, and national development plans, Eswatini addresses biodiversity loss and climate risks holistically. This is achieved by cross-referencing its NAP and NBSAP and by also promoting EbA to explore the synergies and the trade-offs between the two portfolios. The strong coordination within the Ministry of Tourism and Environmental Affairs and a general awareness of the interlinkages between biodiversity and climate adaptation has created an enabling environment for Eswatini to link its NBSAP with its climate adaptation programmes. Eswatini also acknowledges that community-level engagement and local and Indigenous Knowledge played a crucial role in advocating for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources.

Reference to the case study: [Promoting Synergies Between Climate Change Adaptation and Biodiversity](#)