

Submission from Colombia on Views on process, modalities and guidelines for least developed country parties and other developing country parties to employ the modalities formulated to support National Adaptation Plans - NAPs

The Colombian Government welcomes the opportunity to present its views on process, modalities and guidelines for least developed country parties and other developing country parties to employ the modalities formulated to support National Adaptation Plans – NAPs and presents recommendations on the following issues:

1. Principles for NAPs:

- Support for the implementation of NAPs shall be in accordance with paragraphs 11 and 18 of 1/CP.16.
- Support shall be provided especially to particularly vulnerable countries in accordance with paragraph 11, in order to enable countries to undertake the actions and measures outlined in paragraph 14.
- Adaptation programming is critical to enable countries to implement development pathways that can be projected and maintained over the medium and long term, by avoiding maladaptation and identifying the most cost-effective and efficient measures, investments and strategies, as well as no-regret options, for enhancing resilience at all levels.
- Even in developing countries that are not LDCs, there are significant levels of poverty, and it is the poor who are the most vulnerable, not only because their coping range is far more limited (they have less resources at all levels to generate options) but because they tend to rely more on ecosystem services and natural resource bases that are the most threatened by climatic variability and long term climate impacts.
- The only way to put in place sound responses to climatic variability and climate change is to enact long term programming and planning processes, that articulate requirements, opportunities and challenges at all levels from local communities to national policies. This is a key requirement for all countries, but a pressing need in particularly vulnerable countries that are already suffering from the devastation wrought by climatic impacts.
- Colombia understands the NAP as a process, not a product. However, it is an inordinately complicated process given that it requires no less than full mainstreaming of climate change considerations into all levels of sectoral and territorial planning, and in-depth changes in behavior and productive practices. Therefore, not only is there a clear need for countries to be able to access guidance on the kinds of issues, information, tools, and measures that need to be considered, but there are evident benefits to be derived from sharing lesson learned, best practices, expert rosters and knowledge networks. The NWP has provided some useful products, but this is insufficient given the range and depth of requirements that effective reduction of vulnerabilities across all sectors and levels implies.

- Work undertaken to provide this support to LDCs is a sound beginning, but countries with more advanced and diverse productive sectors, and a broader range of investments, among other considerations, will require different support.
- Colombia underlines, moreover, that this effective support should be a cornerstone and a key deliverable under the Convention, which has to date inadequately and insufficiently considered and addressed issues related to Adaptation. Support to NAPs for all countries, especially those that are already particularly vulnerable, is an excellent start, but not sufficient. Therefore, over the short term, it is imperative that requisite time and space is allocated under the Convention to further explore and define how countries will be supported in responding to current and impending climatic impacts.

2. Proposed linkages with existing institutions under the Convention:

In line with the above considerations, it is evident that the Adaptation Committee should play a key role as a vehicle for sharing experiences and lessons, as well as gaps and requirements at all levels, in order to advance the international community's understanding of what tackling climatic variability and change implies. However, it is emerging quite clearly that the Adaptation Committee will not have the sufficient resources nor expertise to provide more targeted, technical support to countries, therefore the Convention also needs to consider what kind of mechanisms need to be put in place to deliver on this front.

In addition to this, strong linkages need to be established with the Technology Mechanism. Developing countries have a weak understanding of the requirements and options that exist regarding appropriate technologies for adaptation and what exactly an "adaptation technology" is all about. Funding under the GEF CC window makes this evident, given that there is significant imbalance between project requests and funding for adaptation and mitigation technology transfer projects.

Finally, there is a need to ensure that the Green Climate Fund provides strong incentives and support for channeling funding to adaptation projects and requirements. As noted above, the experience under GEF has been underwhelming, and many bilateral donors informally indicate that it has proven difficult to identify, develop and implement adaptation projects in developing countries. The GCF needs to ensure that the requisite capacity building or other foundational elements are in place to enable countries to identify adaptation requirements, formulate initiatives to respond to these, and access funding opportunities.

3. ~~Thematic areas and issues to be addressed for the NAPs:~~ Core adaptation issues in which the Convention should provide support to countries

Colombia considers that there are at least key areas that the Convention should contribute to at country levels, and which should be reflected, as appropriate, in the respective NAP development processes:

- a) An understanding of cross-sectoral approaches that assist decision-makers at all levels to address the trade-offs and linkages that adaptation will demand. Examples would be allocation of scarce water resources among competing users or definition of coastal land use. This includes the identification of no-regrets options.
- b) Guidance on vertical linkages between local, sub-national, and national levels, and also at regional levels in the case of shared water systems. There needs to be an understanding of the kind of overarching policies and measures, as well as institutional arrangements needed, at national level; but also a process for enabling informed feed-back loops to sub-national levels where adaptation ultimately takes place.
- c) Territorial (or landscape) approaches that address adaptation needs at local and sub-national levels. Adaptation will ultimately take place at local levels, because response measures are of necessity very specific to local contexts. Therefore territorial approaches will be a key component of effective adaptation programming. However, is the view of Colombia that these approaches can also present an opportunity for linking both adaptation and mitigation issues. For example, REDD should be understood also as an adaptation response measure given that sound forest ecosystems are more resilient and contribute to maintaining key ecosystem services - these are examples of the most cost-effective no-regrets adaptation measures. In this context, the NAPs process should incorporate lessons from ongoing work on Community Based Adaptation (CBA) and Ecosystem Based adaptation approaches.
- d) Guidance to specific sectors on increasing resilience to climatic impacts. In many countries, key sectors such as those related human health have not fully understood the possible impacts of climate change and requirements or options for putting in place long-term monitoring, evaluation and planning processes.
- e) Adaptation demands very complex decision-making processes, and decision makers are often constrained by limited capacity to base these processes on sound science. This is particularly true at sub-national levels, where in addition to the difficulties in interpreting scientific information, this information is quite often very limited and fragmented. Therefore there is a need to assist countries to put in place processes for “translating science” for decision making processes as well as for accessing the plethora of existing information which can provide a referent – even if it is not downscaled to the appropriate level - to at least orient decision-making processes.

4. Workshop to address adaptation programming:

There is a need to conduct a workshop on Adaptation, focused on how the Convention should address core adaptation issues such as those detailed above. The main theme of the workshop could be "challenges of incorporating climate risk management into development planning at national level". The workshop should be a grounded, sensible discussion that assists Parties to understand from a technical perspective how the Convention can support these efforts, attempting to avoid political discussions at this stage.