EXPERT PERSPECTIVE FOR THE NDC PARTNERSHIP

Using NDCs, NAPs and the SDGs to Advance Climate-Resilient Development

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With the Paris Agreement's entry into force, the focus is shifting towards its implementation—in particular, countries are exploring how to meet the commitments they set out in their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Although not mandatory, most countries are choosing to include an adaptation component in their NDC in addition to establishing their mitigation commitments. Just as the reasons for including an adaptation component can be varied, so is the content presented; it can range from a summary of observed impacts of climate change in a country, to the identification of vulnerable sectors and priority adaptation needs, to a description of ongoing and planned adaptation actions, to the articulation of time-bound adaptation targets, or some combination thereof.

Looking beyond the NDCs, adaptation's importance is emphasized within the text of the Paris Agreement itself, which includes a call for all countries to engage in national adaptation planning processes. The goals of the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process—established under the 2010 Cancun Adaptation Framework under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)—are for countries to build resilience to the impacts of climate change through medium- to long-term planning, and to integrate adaptation considerations into all relevant policies and strategies. Whereas the adaptation components of NDCs communicate internationally a country's contribution to (and/or needs for) dealing with the impacts of climate change, NAP processes are domestic planning processes that allow a country to identify, address, and review their evolving adaptation needs.

This expert perspective is part of a series that invites internationally recognized experts to explore key issues countries face as they implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement on climate change. The views expressed are the authors' own, and do not necessarily represent the views of the NDC Partnership Support Unit, its member countries or organizations. Read the series at **www.ndcpartnership.org/perspectives**

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Indeed, NAP processes are an important part of a country's efforts to implement the Paris Agreement. However, in light of adaptation not being a requirement in its signature vehicle—NDCs—we must ask how to define the relationship between NAP and NDC processes? Furthermore, emphasis *on integration* in the NAP process—e.g. as a means for achieving climate-resilient development—means we should think beyond the UNFCCC to the broader sustainable development agenda when considering how countries can best coordinate their efforts and manage the many important international commitments to which they are parties.

This paper explores potential to leverage NAPs as a process through which developing countries can implement or identify NDC adaptation priorities, and in turn how countries might leverage these commitments to adaptation in support of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

ALIGNING NDCS AND NAPS: A VISION AND FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION UNDER THE UNFCCC[1]

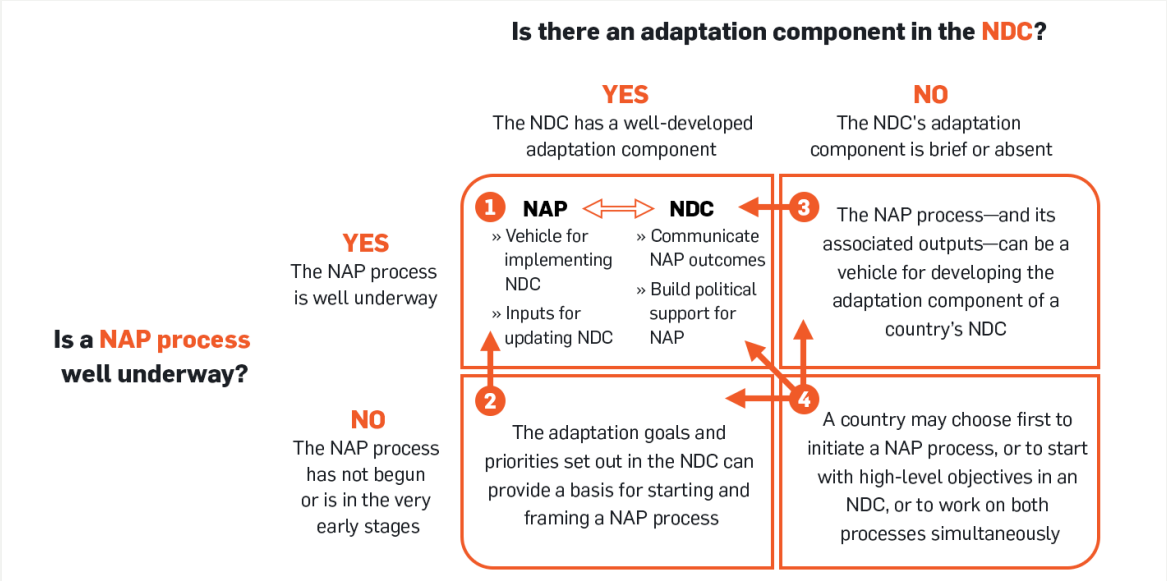
While a clear opportunity exists to streamline and leverage NDCs and NAP processes to improve adaptation planning and action, the starting point for doing so may not be entirely clear. If we understand NDC adaptation (NDC-A) components as setting out the high-level vision, objectives, and needs a country hopes to address through its adaptation efforts[2], and we understand NAPs as a country-driven, national-level process to integrate adaptation into planning processes and implement adaptation priorities in the NDC (GIZ 2016), the two become mutually reinforcing.

Two simple questions or criteria help to identify the starting point for linking NDCs and NAPs in a given country:

1. Is a NAP process currently underway in the country?
2. Was adaptation included in the country's NDC?

If these questions are placed along two axes, as in Figure 1, countries can identify the quadrant that best reflects their starting point, and explore how they can (or might eventually) link their NDC and NAP processes.

Figure 1: A framework for Linking National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)



Regardless of which quadrant a country may start in, it is possible to move among the quadrants while linking their NAP processes and NDCs. This figure is simplified for illustrative purposes, and interim degrees of progress may exist in the NAP process or the extent of coverage of adaptation in NDCs beyond "yes" or "no." Given the Paris Agreement's intention for countries to ramp up their commitments over the years, countries may choose to begin with a brief or simple adaptation component (or no adaptation component at all) in their NDC and build upon it over time.

Quadrant 1: Adaptation component in the NDC and a NAP process well underway

Countries may have both a well-developed NDC adaptation component and a NAP process that is well underway: In these cases, countries may approach the NAP process as a framework for implementing NDC commitments at the national level and producing inputs for updating subsequent NDC adaptation components. Simultaneously, they can use the NDC to build political support for the NAP process and its implementation, and to communicate the outcomes of the NAP process internationally.

Cambodia has already advanced in the NAP process, and clearly indicates how the country will leverage this progress to implement the adaptation component of its NDC. Its NDC states "The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process is being used… to strengthen the ongoing climate change adaptation processes through cross-sectoral programming and implementation at national and sub-national levels. It may in turn inform future climate change strategies, financing frameworks, and national development planning and budgeting." (Kingdom of Cambodia 2017) Cambodia has already made efforts to mainstream adaptation into priority sectors as a part of its NAP process through developing sectoral climate change strategic plans and action plans, and indicates how these will support implementation of related priority adaptation actions in its NDC. (Kingdom of Cambodia 2017)

Quadrant 2: Adaptation component in the NDC in the absence or early stages of a NAP process

Countries that included an NDC adaptation component without having made much progress in the NAP process could use the vision set out in their NDC-A to guide the NAP process. In other words, the NDC-A could provide a basis for establishing and building a NAP process, and the NAP process could ultimately provide a framework for translating the NDC's adaptation commitments into action. The high-level political attention that NDCs garner can also help to build political support for national adaptation planning and action. A country can therefore leverage the NDC adaptation component to move from quadrant 2 to quadrant 1 as appropriate.

Peru's NDC (Republic of Peru 2016), for example, sets out the country's high-level adaptation priorities, and notes the NAP process will be the instrument for complying with the NDC—their NAP process began in late 2015 after their INDC was submitted.

Quadrant 3: A NAP process well underway with a brief (or no) NDC adaptation component

Countries who have a NAP process underway but have not included an adaptation component in their NDC (or included it in a very limited way), may decide that they would like to (better) communicate their adaptation goals, priorities, needs and actions to the international community in future NDCs. In such cases, the NAP process and its results could be used to inform the development of future NDCs. Countries will have the opportunity to revise their NDCs every five years, alongside a global stock take assessing collective progress and a push to increase ambition with new commitments. Therefore, countries will have opportunities to move from quadrant 3 to quadrant 1 as they see fit. An NDC adaptation component could be a means to articulate the adaptation commitments that a country wishes to make based on priorities identified through the NAP process.

Botswana, for example, includes a brief adaptation component in their NDC that notes how their NAP process will help identify and address adaptation priorities in a systematic manner aligned with their development priorities. Botswana's NDC (Botswana 2016) states: "The outcome of this process will be significant in guiding how the country responds to the development challenges across all sectors that are attributed to global warming and climate change." This is an important acknowledgement of the iterative nature of the NAP process, with ongoing monitoring and review of progress in the process intended to inform how a country should adjust course as needed to adapt in the medium to long term. This ongoing monitoring and review could also be used to inform future adaptation NDCs and priorities included.

Sri Lanka is another example of a country whose NAP process informed the development of its NDC adaptation component: its NAP document explicitly states that the technical work on the NAP was a key source to inform the development of the NDC-A and the different sectoral commitments and priorities that it includes (Sri Lanka 2016a).

Quadrant 4: No adaptation component in the NDC and in the absence or early stages of a NAP process

Although unlikely—given that, as indicated at the beginning of this paper, most countries (and especially developing countries) have included an adaptation component in their NDC—cases may arise where a country does not include an adaptation component in their NDC, and have not made much progress in the NAP process. From this quadrant, a country may choose first to initiate a NAP process, to start with high-level objectives in an NDC, or to begin working on both processes simultaneously. Depending on what context best suits the country, it is possible to move towards any of the other quadrants. The factors determining the direction of movement may include timing (i.e. national planning process underway, providing an opening for NAP discussions, or an upcoming NDC submission deadline), politics (e.g. more political interest in developing the next NDC), resources, and capacity. Given the potential for NAP processes and NDC adaptation components to be mutually reinforcing, as described at the beginning of this section, countries may have incentives to move towards quadrant 1. Generally speaking, since NAP processes are strategic efforts to advance domestic action on adaptation, and the information that feeds into such processes is useful for other reporting and communications activities–such as NDC-As—countries that find themselves in quadrant 4 may see greater returns by emphasizing or prioritizing progress on their NAPs compared to developing NDC-As.

BEYOND THE UNFCCC: LINKS WITH THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Of course, climate-resilient development is not an exclusive concern for the UNFCCC arena: it is key to the broader sustainable development agenda, and in particular achieving the SDGs. The mutually supporting nature of the two agendas is clear—i.e. delivering on NDCs and NAPs will help countries achieve their SDGs, and achieving the SDGs will facilitate countries' efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. However, this should not be an assumed interaction and policy makers must acknowledge that tensions and trade-offs may exist between the agendas, particularly across different geographic and time scales—for example, bioenergy and food production (SDG 2), or flood protection and coastal wetland conservation (SDG 15).

Indeed, multiple intersections exist between SDGs and NDC-A/NAPs. At the highest level, two targets under SDG 13—"strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity" (target 13.1) and "integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning processes" (target 13.2)—are synonymous with the objectives of the NAP process. Thus, a country that is developing and implementing an NDC-A via a NAP process is effectively implementing SDG 13. In such cases, the NAP process can provide the operational bridge between NDC-As and the SDGs.

At a more diffuse level, SDGs are shaping the national development agendas that NDC and NAP processes should be supporting. SDGs provide a normative framework or reference point for guiding approaches to climate mitigation and adaptation, as laid out in NDCs and NAPs (i.e. promoting human rights, gender equality, women's empowerment, balancing the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development).

Beyond this, as countries nationalize the SDGs by identifying priority goals, setting nationally-relevant targets, and integrating them into national development plans and strategies, SDGs determine the sectors, geographies, populations, and, ultimately, the development ambitions that NDC and NAP processes should be strengthening. This 'development first' approach to addressing climate change is not new; what is new is that the SDGs are influencing how a country defines and pursues its development ambitions between now and 2030. A 2016 global review already revealed a high level of alignment between SDG targets and the climate actions countries communicated in their INDCs (Northrop et al, 2016). Given that adaptation was included in the vast majority of these INDCs, the alignment between NAP processes and SDG implementation is clear.

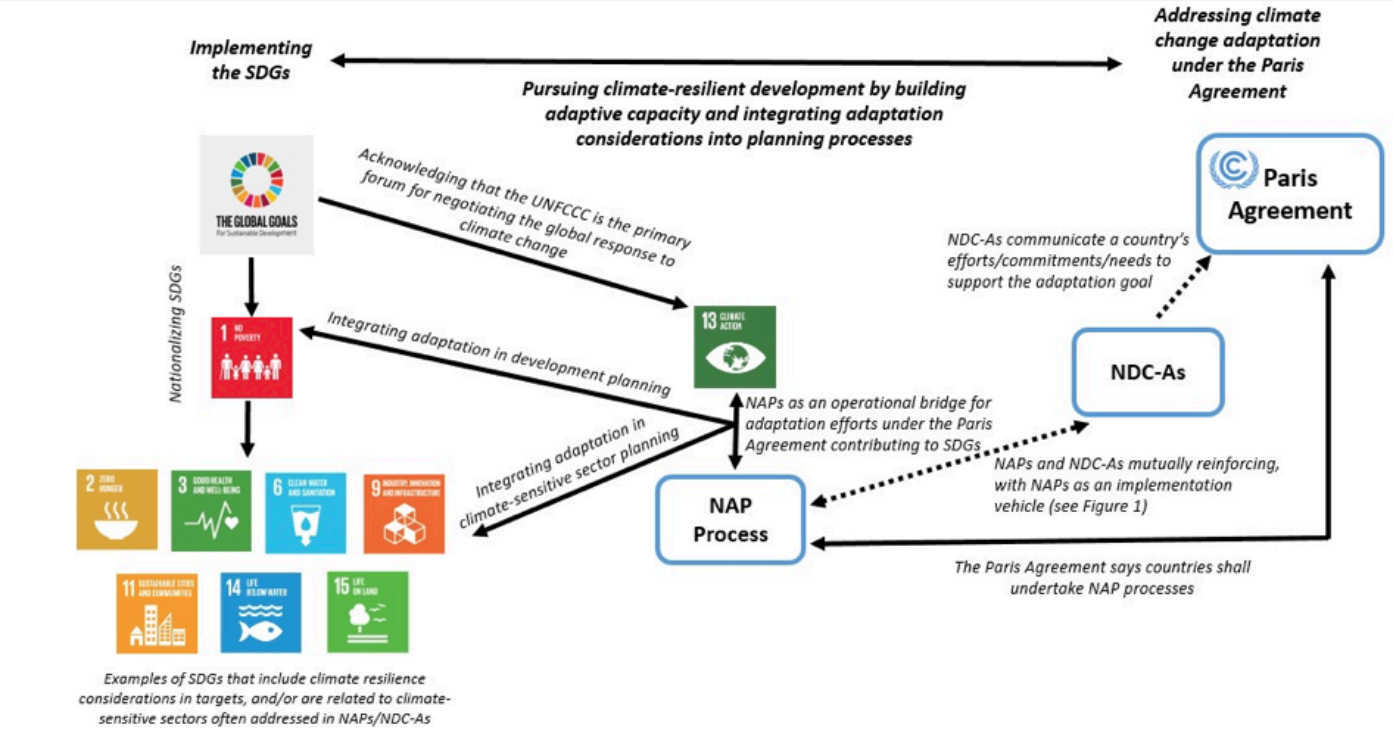
Specifically, as a process integrating adaptation considerations into development planning, as well as across sectors and levels of government, the NAP process will be central to meeting SDG targets in climate-sensitive sectors. Figure 2 illustrates these interconnections—building on the potential linkages between NDC-As and NAPs described earlier in this paper, it shows how these two UNFCCC vehicles can link implementation of adaptation commitments under the Paris Agreement and implementation of the sustainable development agenda.

Figure 2 on page 6 illustrates how leveraging the common objectives of the NAP process and SDG targets 13.1 and 13.2—building adaptive capacity and integrating adaptation considerations into planning processes—can serve as a bridge for linking adaptation efforts under the Paris Agreement and implementation of the SDGs in pursuit of climate-resilient development. Building on the relationship established in Figure 1, this figure also illustrates how in cases where mutually reinforcing NDC-As and NAP processes exist, the NAP process can provide an operational bridge for linking implementation of SDGs and NDC-A commitments or priorities.

The sectors a country prioritizes through its NAP process, and the approach taken to integrating adaptation considerations in sector planning and across levels, will vary depending on each country's specific vulnerabilities, priorities, institutional arrangements, and other factors (Price-Kelly & Hammill 2015). However, a number of the SDGs closely relate to climate-sensitive sectors that countries frequently prioritize through their NAP process, for example:

- *SDG2, End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture:* Agriculture is a priority climate-sensitive sector for many developing countries (Kissinger et al. 2014), and as acknowledged in SDG target 2.4, adaptive agricultural practices will be key to achieving this SDG. Cameroon's NAP document (2015), for example, includes a focus on agriculture as a key climate-sensitive sector with a focus on promoting climate-resilient agricultural practices, and its NDC adaptation component (2016) reinforces this priority with reference to the NAP.
- *SDG 9, Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation:* Infrastructure is another sector that is often included as a part of countries' NAP processes, and SDG target 9.1 acknowledges the importance of *resilient* infrastructure that can withstand shocks, including those that result from the impacts of

Figure 2: Linking NDC-As and NAPs to implement the Paris Agreement and the SDGs



climate change. Kenya is an example of a country including a focus on "enhancing climate proofing of infrastructure" in its NAP document and its NDC with reference to the NAP. It identifies actions ranging from short-term (including risk and vulnerability assessments), to medium-term (taking actions through responsible ministries, county governments, and other actors to climate proof infrastructure), to long-term (re-assessing vulnerability and upgrading as needed) (Kenya 2015, Kenya 2016).

- *SDG 14, Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development:* This goal is closely linked to the concerns of many coastal countries for whom target 14.2 and its focus on strengthening resilience of marine resources, including key sectors like fisheries, will be an important part of the NAP process. Sri Lanka is an example of a country that includes a focus on the coastal sector, including biodiversity, in both its NAP and its NDC (Sri Lanka 2016a, 2016b).

These are only a few examples of SDGs whose targets explicitly mention resilience or adaptation to climate change in key climate-sensitive sectors. Others may also be highly relevant to the NAP process depending on a country's specific vulnerabilities: for example, the health sector may have opportunities to link the NAP process and its efforts towards SDG 3 on good health and well-being in countries that face climate impacts affecting the spread and prevalence of vector borne-diseases.

Recognizing areas of alignment and mutual reinforcement is a starting point, however. Alignment must also take place operationally. That is, crosswalks must be established between the how priorities are identified, addressed, monitored and reviewed in a country's SDG, NDC-A, and NAP processes. For

example, one criteria in prioritizing SDG targets during the nationalization/localization process could be the extent to which it is climate-sensitive and/or critical to building adaptive capacity, which could be identified in a country's NAP process or described in its NDC-A. Similarly, the adaptation vision, goals and priority activities included in NDC-As/NAP processes should reflect, as appropriate, a country's nationalized SDG targets.

At a minimum, the agendas should cross-reference each other so that governments can simultaneously invest in multiple agendas. For example, in Uganda, efforts have been underway to integrate adaptation into catchment management planning as part of the country's broader, evolving NAP process. This is consistent with "improving water catchment protection", which is listed as a priority adaptation action in its NDC-A (Uganda 2015a). These efforts also address one of the development objectives under Uganda's Second National Development Plan (NDPII) – i.e. increase the provision of water for production facilities through, inter alia, the protection and management of catchment areas (Uganda 2015b). NDPII is the current framework for implementing the SDGs and this particular development objective also happens to address SDG 6—"ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all"—which was noted in Uganda's report to the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, describing the country's readiness to implement the SDGs (Uganda 2016). Thus, investments in integrating adaptation into catchment management planning represents Uganda making progress in its NAP process, implementing its NDC-A commitments, and implementing the SDGs—and all anchored in its current medium-term plan and its Vision 2040.

Beyond priority identification, alignment must also be pursued in implementation, tracking and reporting. Harmonized SDG/NDC-A/NAP priorities could present an opportunity to expand the pool of resources sought for implementation and/or may strengthen the case for securing technical and financial support. The potential for vertical integration in the NAP process, which refers to the process of creating intentional and strategic linkages between national and sub-national adaptation planning so that local realities are reflected in the NAP and the NAP enables adaptation at sub-national levels, may be one opportunity for aligning the process of localizing SDGs, and implementing NDC-As (Dazé, Price-Kelly & Rass 2016).

In terms of tracking, indicators that help track progress across the multiple agendas should be sought and/or prioritized in order to minimize the information management burden on countries. Table 1 on page eight presents some of the SDG targets and associated indicators that could be used (perhaps with some adjustments during the SDG nationalization process) in tracking progress in adaptation and therefore included in a country's NAP process, and reported in its NDC-A.

Each of the SDG, NDC, and NAP processes have their own reporting structures and timelines, so aligning them so they feed into each other is challenging but doable with sufficient planning and coordination. For example, countries preparing their voluntary reviews on SDG implementation to be shared at the high-level political forum (HLPF) might refer to the NDCs and NAP processes to glean relevant successes, challenges and lessons learned. The preparation of NDCs – including NDC-As – should take note of a voluntary national review on SDG implementation, should it exist.

CONCLUSION

Linking priorities identified through NDC-As and the NAP process with the SDGs can help build broader political support for climate change adaptation beyond those involved in UNFCCC by demonstrating the importance of climate adaptation to a country's overall development priorities and livelihoods. Coordination of the actors involved in these different agendas—both domestic actors and international actors, such as development partners—is key to leveraging these synergies.

Table 1: SDG and adaptation indicators

SDG TARGET	SDG INDICATORS (IAEG-SDGS 2017)	INDICATORS (ADJUSTED) FOR ADAPTATION
Goal 1: No Poverty		
1.3 / Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable	1.3.1 / Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems, by sex, distinguishing children, unemployed persons, older persons, persons with disabilities, pregnant women, newborns, work injury victims and the poor and the vulnerable	Percentage of population living in flood and/or drought-prone areas with access to social protection schemes, disaggregated by sex
1.5 / By 2030, build the resilience of the poor and those in vulnerable situations and reduce their exposure and vulnerability to climate-related extreme events and other economic, social and environmental shocks and disasters	1.5.1 / Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	Number of people permanently displaced from homes as a result of flood, drought or sea-level rise (Kenya NCCAP)
	1.5.2 / Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)	Losses of GDP in percentage per year due to extreme rainfall (Mexico)
Goal 2: Zero Hunger		
2.4 / By 2030, ensure sustainable food production systems and implement resilient agricultural practices that increase productivity and production, that help maintain ecosystems, that strengthen capacity for adaptation to climate change, extreme weather, drought, flooding and other disasters and that progressively improve land 8 and soil quality	2.4.1 / Proportion of agricultural area under productive and sustainable agriculture	Percentage of cultivated surface with locally-adapted and/ or drought resistant varieties (Morocco) Increase in agricultural productivity through irrigation of harvested land (Mexico)
Goal 6: Clean Water and Sanitation		
6.1 / By 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all	6.1.1 / Proportion of population using safely managed drinking water services	Percentage of poor people in drought-prone areas with access to safe and reliable water (Kenya NCCAP)
Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure		
9.1 / Develop quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, including regional and trans-border infrastructure, to support economic development and human well-being, with a focus on affordable and equitable access for all	9.1.1 / Proportion of the rural population who live within 2 km of an all-season road	Percentage of climate-resilient roads in the country (Kenya NCCAP)
Goal 13: Climate Action		
Target 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries	13.1.1 / Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population	Number of households affected by drought (Mekong River Commission)
Target 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning	13.2.1 / Number of countries that have communicated the establishment or operationalization of an integrated policy/ strategy/plan which increases their ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development in a manner that does not threaten food production (including a national adaptation plan, nationally determined contribution, national communication, biennial update report or other)	Number of sectors planning, budgeting and implementing climate change adaptation actions (Kenya NAP) National and county performance contracting systems integrating climate change adaptation targets (Kenya NAP)

The NAP process provides an operational bridge between the NDC adaptation components and the SDGs: its national-level focus on operationalizing the types of adaptation commitments that countries may make under NDCs, and its emphasis on integration into broader development planning as climate-sensitive sector planning make it an important vehicle for climate-resilient, sustainable development. Therefore, to help countries leverage adaptation commitments in their NDCs, the NDC Partnership should look at how it can work effectively with existing initiatives supporting the NAP process and SDG implementation.

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ENDNOTES

1. This section was originally published as a blog post by the Secretariat of the NAP Global Network, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD): http://napglobalnetwork.org/2016/11/using-ndcs-naps-advance-climate-resilient-development/

2. Note that the Paris Agreement also states that countries "should, as appropriate, submit and update an adaptation communication, which may include its priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions, without creating any additional burden for developing country Parties" (Article 7, paragraph 10). It goes on to state that this Adaptation Communication can be submitted as part of or in conjunction with other documents, such as NAPs, NDCs or national communications, The exact scope and content of these adaptation communications is still defined, but there is the potential for significant overlap with NDC-As and their purposes may be merged.

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Most of the examples presented in table one are taken from the Repository of Adaptation Indicators: Real case examples from national Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (GIZ and IISD 2014), which do not necessarily reflect if/how such indicators are currently being used in a country's NAP process. Rather, they are illustrative examples based on adaptation indicator activities that were taking place several years ago. In the case of Morocco, the indicators are taken from an M&E system in the regions of Souss-Massa and Marrakech. In the case of Kenya, indicators referenced as "Kenya NCCAP" represent those that were identified during the National Climate Change Action Plan process (2013). These were subsequently refined during the finalisation of country's NAP document (2016); those that appear in the NAP document are referenced as "Kenya NAP."

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