



# National Adaptation Plans in focus: Lessons from Haiti



The Republic of Haiti covers a total land area of 27,560 square kilometres, and shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic. Although rapidly urbanising, Haiti's 11 million people rely heavily on subsistence agriculture and the sugar and flour industry for their livelihoods.

The country ranks 163 out of 185 countries surveyed for the 2016 Human Development Report. According to a 2013 report on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) (UNDP 2013), Haiti's poverty rate was at 59%, amounting to 6.3 million people, with 24.7% or 2.5 million people living in extreme poverty. The richest 1% of Haitians own the same wealth as 45% of the poorest population.

As the only Least Developed Country (LDC) in the region, Haiti's economic sectors, public health systems and infrastructure lack resilience to the effects of natural disasters and climate change impacts.

The devastating earthquake which struck Haiti in January 2010 killed more than 230,000 people, and injured a further 300,000. The quake displaced 1.5 million people and caused approximately USD 8 billion in damages. Even before the quake struck, Haiti was the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere.

*The NAP is an important multi-sectoral and multi-dimensional exercise to implement the National Policy on Climate Change. It is a driving force to accelerate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by putting in place economic and investment scenarios.*

*Aviol Fleurant, Minister of Planning and External Cooperation, Republic of Haiti, 15 September 2017*

## Climate change risks

As a small island developing state, Haiti is exposed to the threat of sea level rise, and to increasingly intense hurricanes and frequent tropical storms. Haiti is also particularly vulnerable to droughts, coastal erosion and landslides. These disasters can jeopardise the country's food security, infrastructure, and the safety of the population.

Haiti's vulnerability to climate change is due to a combination of factors, ranging from its geographical location, deforestation and land degradation, to high poverty rates and weak institutional capacity. In 2008 alone, hurricanes and cyclones accounted for a 15% loss to the country's GDP (PDNA 2008).

In 2016, Hurricane Matthew was responsible for 473 deaths and 339 injuries. The hurricane destroyed or severely damaged around 200,000 homes, leaving 1.4 million people in need of humanitarian aid. It was the most damaging disaster in the country since the 2010 earthquake.

Haiti is ranked as one of the most vulnerable countries in the world to climate change, on an index which takes into account government capacity, population growth and density, agricultural dependency, poverty, and history of armed conflict. This also emphasises the significance of socioeconomic factors in climate change vulnerability.



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# Groundwork for supporting the process to formulate and implement NAPs

## Policy, planning and budgeting

The government of Haiti has made progress in terms of planning for climate change mitigation and adaptation, with the ratification of the Paris Agreement in February 2017. In the same year, the government also introduced the National Climate Change Policy (PNCC), aligned to the country's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC, 2015). The PNCC has a vision to significantly reduce the vulnerability to climate change of Haiti's population and its sectors by 2030, by adopting and implementing appropriate and effective adaptation and mitigation measures, in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Strategic Development Plan of Haiti 2010-2030 (PSDH 2010). However, the PSDH itself does not focus effectively on climate change.

Some of the country's notable climate resilient plans include the 2005 Framework Decree, designed as a regulatory and guidance framework for the environmental sector. This plan prioritises climate change and natural disasters. The Government and Ministry of Environment's (MOE) road map (2017) streamlines the MOE's actions in line with the Government's policies, and contains a section entirely focused on climate change.

Haiti's NDC highlights measures taken and envisaged to reduce emissions and adapt to impacts of climate change. This will guide the country's adaptation aspirations. The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA, 2006, revised in 2017) proposes a number of projects, as well as institutional mechanisms to facilitate their implementation on a country-driven and participatory basis. The implementation strategy is expected to be used as an entry point for the implementation of the NAP.

There are various climate change-related projects and programmes which are being supported and/or implemented by development partners.

In addition to international actors, the Ministry of Economy and Finance, universities and civil society groups have been active in climate change financing, research, capacity building and awareness raising. However, these initiatives are not well established or mature enough to sustain the NAP process on their own.

## Preparing for adaptation planning

Haiti has submitted two National Communications to the UNFCCC (2001, 2013). A Third National Communication is being prepared in 2018. Climate change vulnerability assessments have been conducted through NAPA in 2006 and through a survey conducted during its revision in 2017. Vulnerability to climate change at the local level is ascertained through the use of a vulnerability index, with various indicators. Vulnerability studies were conducted from 2009 until 2014.

This variability of indicators makes it difficult to compare the assessments over time. Many multi-and-bilateral organizations (CHIRPS, CRED, OECD, FAO, UNDP) are collecting data, through an European Union (EU) funded initiative (MPCE and National Observatory on Poverty and Social Exclusion – ONPES – Minimum Statistics Program) and work is currently underway to check the applicability of a vulnerability index to climate change using routinely collected open data. Such a system will provide an ideal setup to regularly apply openly available data and update vulnerability assessments as and when required.

## Implementation of adaptation actions

A range of adaptation projects have been implemented in Haiti that provide a strong basis for the NAP process. The most relevant projects are listed below:

- Building adaptive capacity of coastal communities in Haiti (2011-2016), with the aim to integrate climate risk management into development plans and to increase climate resilience of coastal communities, funded by the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)
- AP3C Project (Appui à la Prise en Compte du Changement Climatique dans le Développement d'Haïti, 2015-2020) with the aim to reduce Haiti's vulnerability to climate change through improved coordination on adaptation and mitigation, and improvement of national environmental legislation, funded by the EU Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA)
- Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience (PPCR, 2014-2021), funded by the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank
- Capacity building project to implement Multilateral Environmental Agreements (2016-2018), supported by UN Environment
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation (2016-2021), with the aim to increase resilience of ecosystems and vulnerable communities through biodiversity conservation and watershed management of three rivers in Haiti, funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

Several other projects have been implemented, which focus on climate research and action supported by FAO, UNESCO, USAID, national universities, the Ministry of Economy and Finance and civil society/NGOs.





## The process to formulate and implement NAPs in Haiti

### Institutional arrangements

Haiti has identified the key ministries which need to be involved in the integration of climate change adaptation into development planning and budgeting. The NAP process is led by the Ministry of Environment (MOE) in collaboration with the Ministry of Planning (MPCE). There is also a technical secretariat, coordinated by the Climate Change Directorate (DCC) and the Directorate of Spatial Planning and Local and Regional Development (DATDLR), alongside representatives of other sectoral ministries. A Steering Committee is proposed to monitor the implementation of NAP. This will be led by representatives of the National Committee on Climate Change (CNCC), with members composed of sectoral ministries, universities, parliamentarians, local authorities, civil society, private sector and the media. A revival of the APRIS system (Regional Inter-Sectoral Programme Approach) defined by the revised NAPA (2017) is proposed, to advance the NAP at the regional level.

### NAP support

The NAP process in Haiti has been supported by a range of development partners, including the GEF-funded joint UNDP/UN Environment NAP Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP), the LDC Expert Group, the EU, the Inter-American Development Bank, UNDP, FAO, UN Environment, and through the capacity building projects listed above.

### Challenges

A NAP stocktaking workshop held in September 2017 revealed a number of key challenges for adaptation planning. Weak coordination between various line ministries, as well as between donors, was identified as a key issue.

The communication and dissemination of climate-related hazards and risks at national and sub-national levels remains ineffective. Although certain universities are engaged in climate studies and research, the majority are project-funded by international donors and are therefore not sustainable beyond the lifespan of the projects. The government budgets do not currently support such initiatives. There is a lack of systematic coordination and sharing of climate-related data and information. Numerous institutions are involved in weather and climate data across the nation at various levels. In most cases, these institutions are unaware of each other's research and information.

Haiti has increased its capacity for disaster risk management (DRM), including the development of disaster risk reduction (DRR) plans and early warning systems. As Hurricane Matthew passed through Hispaniola, communities in northern parts of the country were alerted and evacuated, thus saving many lives. However, there is little synergy between DRM and climate change adaptation (CCA) efforts and virtually no sharing of information between responsible ministries.

#### September 2015 –

As part of its NDC, Haiti specifically indicated the goal to develop the NAP by 2020.

#### August 2017 –

NAP-GSP mission coincided with the 32nd meeting of the LDC Expert Group in Haiti and initiated a stocktaking of available information, policies, plans, strategies and programmes relevant to the NAP process.

#### September 2017 onwards –

The National Designated Authority to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), MOE, is preparing a NAP project proposal for financing by the GCF under its Readiness and Preparatory Support window.

#### May 2017 –

The National Climate Change Policy (PNCC) was validated by the relevant Ministries, providing a natural point of entry for the NAP process.

#### September 2017 –

A draft stocktaking report was produced in consultation with all key stakeholders. Haiti further participated in a LEG regional workshop in Costa Rica. The NAP roadmap was initiated in consultation with the LEG at an inter-sectoral NAP training held in Montrouis, Haiti. A high-level consultation workshop was held in Port-au-Prince, to validate the findings of the NAP stocktaking.

## What is the process to formulate and implement NAPs?

The Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) established the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process in 2010, to enhance country-led planning and preparedness for climate change adaptation (CCA) in the medium and long-term. The objectives of the NAPs are to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and to facilitate the integration of adaptation into all levels of development planning. The NAP process is multi-sectoral, involving Ministries of Environment as well as Planning and Finance, in addition to other key ministries. By bringing greater institutional integration and coordination to adaptation planning, NAPs can enhance ongoing national development planning processes, safeguard development gains, and build resilience.



‘The NAP will be an opportunity to fully integrate the issue of adaptation to climate change in development planning at national level, to consolidate our economy and to adopt a coherent and strategic approach to the fight against climate change.

*Pierre Simon Georges, Minister of Environment, Republic of Haiti, 15 September 2017*

## Successes

The implementation of NAPA projects since 2006 has provided Haiti with valuable expertise and information on climate risk and hazard analysis. The many adaptation projects and programmes underway in Haiti, allow for lessons learned to be drawn to scale-up adaptation. These projects are implemented in a range of sectors – including agriculture, DRR and coastal zone management – and can provide a basis for integrating adaptation into sectoral planning.

The Ministry of Planning and the Ministry of Environment are together leading the NAP process in equal partnership in Haiti. This cooperation brings the benefits of effective sectoral coordination in adaptation planning and budgeting.

The proposed APRIS system of regional governance presents an equally favourable condition to effectively coordinate and monitor the NAP process and adaptation interventions at the national and sub-national levels.

## Opportunities

The existence of many donors in Haiti provides an opportunity to leverage donor funds in a concerted effort to tackle climate change impacts. Many studies and technical reports on climate change impacts in Haiti have been prepared, supported by various initiatives on climate change as well as DRM. These can be harnessed to support the NAP process in terms of providing a baseline and sectoral prioritisation. Haiti’s population is also sensitised to disaster risks, increasing the likelihood of its acceptance of awareness raising activities on climate change adaptation. Haiti’s NAPA, and its revision recently provide a unique opportunity to integrate medium-to-long-term adaptation planning on top of its existing processes.

UNDP is supporting Haiti to develop a Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness Project proposal for NAP in Haiti, with a focus on; i) strengthening institutional capacity to coordinate the NAP; ii) empowering universities in strengthening technical capacity and analysing information on climate change, and; iii) establishing financing mechanisms to sustain the country’s adaptation process in the medium- to-long term.

## Key documents

- [The Government and MOE’s roadmap](#)
- [Initial National Communication](#)
- [Second National Communication](#)
- [Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, 2015](#)
- [National Adaptation Programme of Action, 2006](#)
- [National Policy on Climate Change, 2017](#)

1

NAPA (2006 – revised in 2017)

2

Institutions leading the NAP process (MDE, MPCE)

2

National Communications

8

priority areas for adaptation in NDC

16

Institutions represented in NAP coordination bodies

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## About the NAP-GSP

The joint UNDP-UN Environment National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP) was launched in June 2013, financed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF). The NAP-GSP, together with partners, are assisting developing countries to identify technical, institutional and financial needs to integrate climate change adaptation into medium and long-term national planning and financing. The NAP-GSP provides technical expertise and guidance on country NAP processes, and provides opportunities for knowledge exchange on NAPs.



Email:  
[Rohini.Kohli@undp.org](mailto:Rohini.Kohli@undp.org)  
[Mozaharul.Alam@unep.org](mailto:Mozaharul.Alam@unep.org)  
 For media enquiries / dissemination:  
[Esther.Lake@un.org](mailto:Esther.Lake@un.org)  
 Website:  
<http://globalsupportprogramme.org/nap-gsp>