



Summary

National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) are strategic planning documents developed to respond to climate change's present and future effects. They are aimed to reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and promote the integration of the adaptation measures in policies and development strategies at all levels, thus offering an integrated and coherent approach to climate change adaptation. This Tool provides an overview of NAP core principles, outlines the steps in the NAP development process, and discusses how to address water within NAPs.

What are National Adaptation Plans?

The NAP process provides opportunities to develop an integrated approach to climate change adaptation, thus fostering socio-economic development and environmental sustainability. NAPs can be instrumental in facilitating climate change adaptation strategies to become more integrated into national planning processes (Tool A1.03) and better integrate climate change with sectoral planning strategies and programmes. Given the cross-cutting nature of water, the need to influence fragmented development efforts is critical. Coherent and well planned cross-sectoral and regional planning under NAPs will contribute to the effective management of necessary trade-offs to prioritise interventions and the allocation of environmental resources, including water.

Objectives and Core Principles

The Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) established the national adaptation plan (NAP) process with the following agreed objectives (UNFCCC, 2021):

- Reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity and resilience;
- Facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation coherently into relevant new and existing policies, programmes and activities, particularly development planning processes and strategies, within all relevant sectors and at different levels, as appropriate.

The core principles of the NAP process include (UNFCCC, 2021):

- The continuous planning process at the national level with iterative updates and outputs
- Country-owned, country-driven
- Not prescriptive, but flexible and based on country needs
- Building on and not duplicating existing adaptation efforts

- Participatory and transparent
- Enhancing coherence of adaptation and development planning
- Supported by comprehensive monitoring and review
- Considering vulnerable groups, communities, and ecosystems
- Guided by the best available technologies and science
- Taking into consideration traditional and indigenous knowledge
- Gender-sensitive.

Steps in National Adaptation Planning Process

UNFCCC has developed a step-by-step approach to the development of the NAP process based on four elements (UNFCCC, 2013):

Element A – Groundwork and bridging the gaps

1. Initiating the NAP process
2. Identifying available information on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation
3. Addressing capacity gaps in running the NAP
4. Assessing development needs and climate vulnerabilities

Element B – Preparation

1. Analysing current and future climate scenarios
2. Assessing climate vulnerabilities and identifying adaptation options
3. Reviewing adaptation options
4. Producing and communicating national adaptation plans
5. Integrating climate change adaptation into existing planning frameworks

Element C – Implementation strategies

1. Prioritising climate change adaptation in national planning
2. Developing an implementation strategy
3. Enhancing adaptation capacity
4. Promoting coordination and synergy

Element D – Reporting, monitoring, and review

1. Monitoring the NAP process
2. Reviewing the NAP process for tracking progress
3. Updating the national adaptation plans
4. The Reporting on NAP process progress and effectiveness

Water within National Adaptation Plans

Adaptation to water-related climate vulnerabilities is an essential part of NAPs. Eighty nine percent of 2015 Nationally Determined Contributions prioritise water as key to adaptation, crucial for economic resilience, social welfare, and environmental sustainability (GWP, 2021). Water is a unifying element of global strategic frameworks, connecting NAPs, Sustainable Development Goals, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and development plans at the regional, national, and local levels. For this reason, water-related adaptation needs and opportunities should be incorporated into the National Adaptation Planning process. The NAP Water Supplement (GWP, 2019) was developed to support countries co-develop water-related adaptation and development agendas (Fig. 1).

Image

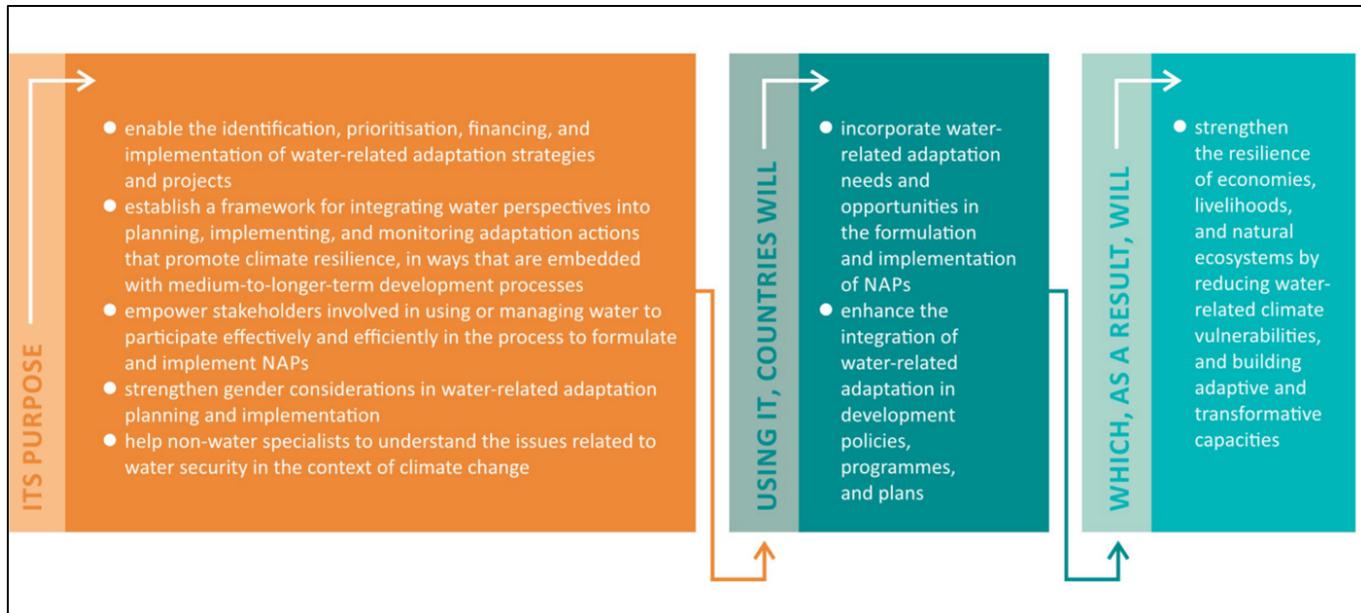


Figure 1. NAP Water Supplement. Source: GWP (2021).

Key Elements for Integrating Water into the NAP Process

As advised by the UNFCCC NAP Technical Guidelines, management of the National Adaptation Planning process should be holistic and transparent, with all roles and responsibilities allocated in a straight-forward manner (UNFCCC, 2012). In the resulting flow of responsibilities (Fig. 2), there are multiple ways the water discourse can be integrated:

- Identify windows of opportunity: for detailed planning and implementation of options within existing plans and strategies (e.g., alongside the planned upgrading of existing infrastructure) or integrating longer-term water-related adaptation options in strategies under review (e.g., strategic water resources planning) (Tool A1.03).
- Ensure high-level political support for integrating the water-related options into relevant planning bodies and detailed planning processes: This provides a driver for planning authorities to carry investments to the implementation phase (Tools D2).
- Engage with non-government actors and the private sector: The involvement of stakeholders from the water sector, including government and non-government stakeholders, is key to ensuring effective adaptation planning processes (Tool B3.05; Tool B4.01; Tool B4.03; Tool

C5.05).

- Enhance cross-sectoral exchange: Effective coordination and clarity on roles and responsibilities among central economic planning and financing ministries, the water sector and other sectoral ministries and departments, and between various governance levels are essential to effective planning and implementation of adaptation actions (Tools B3).
- Integrating adaptation into policy and planning instruments is not to be restricted to the water sector alone: It should extend to all water-dependent economic sectors, and a crucial role of water sector actors is to raise awareness of issues, provide guidance and advice, and influence change among sectors and sub-sectors that may be less well informed or cannot respond (Tool A1.03).
- Share learning and approaches: Promoting open dialogues and encouraging participatory assessments and projects helps to build local ownership and builds local institutional capacity (Tool B1.02; Tool B1.03).
- Provide support for planners: through partnerships and capacity building to catalyse integration and capitalise on new skills and partnerships (Tools B4).
- Complete comprehensive intersectoral research: to form the scientific background of the National Adaptation Planning process.

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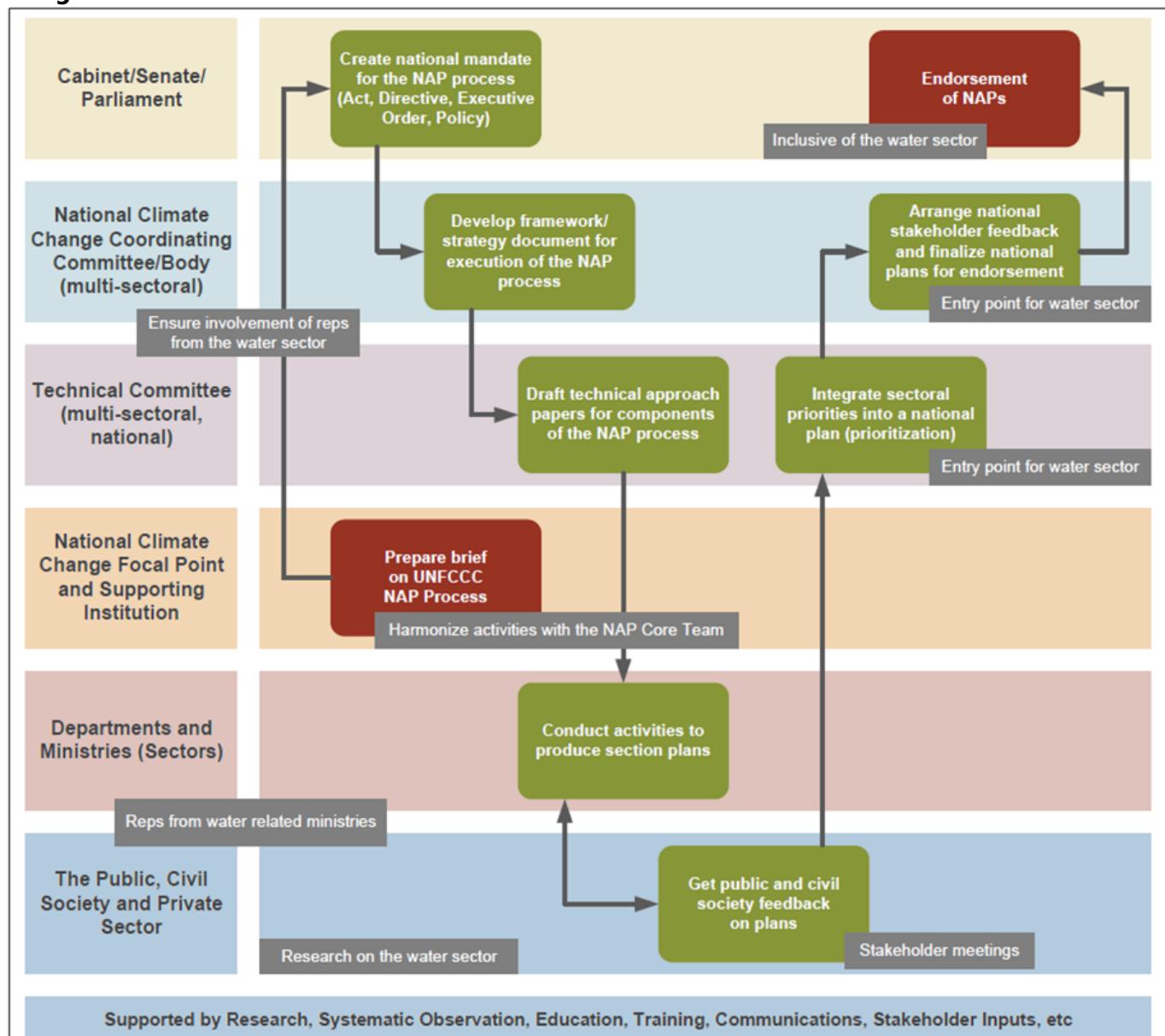


Figure 2. Possible Flow of Responsibilities for NAP Process: Potential Entry-Points for Integrating Water. Source: GWP (2019)



Thematic Tagging

Climate

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