

France: Monitoring and Evaluation of the French National Adaptation Plan

1. Context

► Policy context

Implementation of France's 2006 National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change was translated into a first National Adaptation Plan (NAP) in 2011.

In 2009, the **National Observatory on the Effects of Global Warming (ONERC)** conducted a national economic assessment of the costs of climate change impacts in selected sectors. To address these impacts, the Government was required by law in 2009 to set up a NAP by the end of 2011. Following a consultation process, ONERC issued a National Recommendation Report on adaptation actions in November 2010. Building on the recommendations of that report, the relevant Ministries, under the overall supervision of ONERC, developed the NAP's adaptation actions and monitoring indicators in late 2010/early 2011.

This first NAP¹ provided the first national, multi-ministerial roadmap of prioritized adaptation actions for the period from 2011 to 2015. It was a set of 84 adaptation actions supported by 230 measures across 20 sectors or thematic areas. The first NAP aimed to plan adaptation actions, prevent maladaptation and ensure coherence across public policy measures relating to adaptation. Most NAP actions started in 2011 and were regularly monitored to inform the final evaluation in

¹ www.ecologique-solidaire.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/ONERC_PNACC_1_complet.pdf

2015 and build a sound basis for the second NAP. Following a comprehensive stakeholder consultation a second NAP has been announced by France's governmental climate plan for the end of 2017.

► Purpose of the M&E system

The purpose of the current M&E system is twofold. First, the system aims to **monitor progress in implementing actions in the NAP** and their outcomes. The M&E of the NAP serves as a proxy for monitoring the resilience of the country to climate change. It is based on the assumption that implementing the NAP should reduce the country's vulnerability to climate change. Thus, implementing actions of the NAP reflect efforts in increasing the country's climate resilience. Making results publicly available also allows for better exchange of experiences and awareness raising and promotes planning at local levels as well as mobilization of resources. Second, the system aims to **evaluate, whenever possible, the impacts of the implemented actions**. While the first plan did not specify the evaluation process, the external evaluators focused on the implementation process and the effectiveness and coherence of its actions.

► Scale: level of application and aggregation

The system of the first plan operated only at the national level and aggregated sectors or thematic areas.



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M&E Guidebook for national adaptation M&E systems

An M&E guidebook by GIZ & IISD (2015) in collaboration with the Adaptation Committee and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group outlines key considerations for the development of country-specific adaptation M&E systems. This factsheet is structured along its four building blocks:

- **Context:** what is the policy context and purpose of undertaking M&E?
- **Content:** what information is required to address the purpose?
- **Operationalization:** how will the information be gathered and what are the institutional arrangements?
- **Communication:** how is the generated information used and disseminated?

2. Content

The mid-term evaluation of the NAP focused on identifying gaps and actions which should be filled, strengthened or stopped while the final assessment considered the overall progress on adaptation as well as the coherence of national action.

► Focus and approach

The M&E system of the first NAP was an **indicator-based one** using participatory (i.e. based on a consultation process and inter-ministerial collaboration) and quantitative approaches (i.e. the achieved percentage of implementation of each sector's adaptation actions was calculated for the annual monitoring report to compare results across the different sectors). Changes in vulnerability at the national level are not measured.

► Indicators

The first plan covered 20 sectors or thematic areas yielding a total of **84 adaptation actions that are further broken down into 230 measures**. At least one **monitoring indicator** has been identified for each measure, mainly implementation/process indicators and sometimes outcomes/result indicators, i.e. in 2013 92% of the measures had been started and 60% of the budgets allocated, but also qualitative aspects like difficulties encountered, whenever possible and appropriate for each individual measure. These have been defined by the ministerial sectoral leaders in charge of implementing adaptation actions to ensure that the data and information needed for measuring those indicators are available and easy to access. **Evaluation indicators** still have to be defined as part of the work under the second NAP. They will focus on the evaluation of

adaptation actions with regard to their progress of implementation (on time and on track/complete) and to their effectiveness (i.e. evaluate, if the objective of the action has been reached).

The 20 thematic/sectoral Action Sheets were annexed to the NAP and provided a description of the adaptation actions and related measure(s), the names of the leading institution(s) and partner(s) responsible for the measure, the tools and timeframe necessary for implementing the measure, and the title of the indicator(s).

3. Operationalization

► Data collection and analysis

The data for monitoring adaptation actions is extracted from existing M&E systems (e.g. for expenditures, website traffic tracking) by individual action leaders and is then aggregated at the sector level by sectoral leaders. Data was first aggregated using an **implementation chart** (i.e. monitoring indicator and output by action) and second in terms of implementation status (i.e. on time/ delayed/ cancelled) to allow for a general comparison between actions and sectors. Required data for the evaluation of the NAP was taken from existing data bases (risk mapping and evolution of risk, etc.) or collected through light-touch processes (e.g. poll of urban heat island knowledge, numbering of adapted building codes). The emphasis is on **easy-to-access data** and **simple information**.

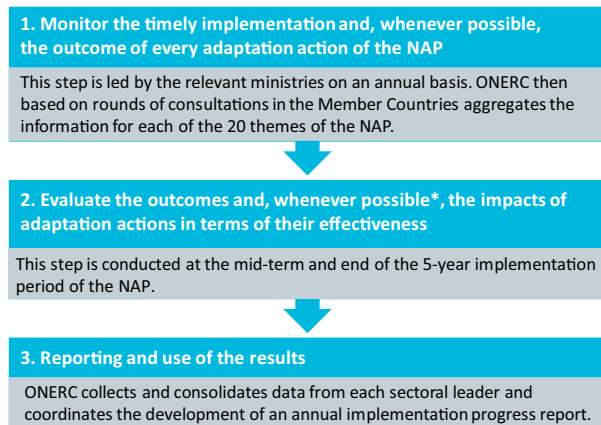
► Institutional arrangements

ONERC is the national agency responsible for climate change adaptation under the General Directory of Energy and Climate (DGEC) of the Ministry of Ecology. ONERC leads and coordinates the development and implementation of the NAP including its M&E process in close collaboration with all other relevant ministries.

The implementation of the NAP is carried out by the relevant ministries and coordinated by ONERC (see figure 1 for the key steps of the implementation process).

Each relevant ministry identified a **NAP focal point or sectoral leader** for reporting to ONERC on the implementation of NAP actions in each of the 20 sectors. These sectoral leaders could be adaptation experts, M&E experts or other thematic experts depending on the capacities available and on the needs. In addition, so called ministerial action leaders were appointed for implementing adaptation actions and for reporting on the progress of implementation to the sectoral leaders.

Figure 1 Key steps of the implementation process



Within the Ministry in charge of Ecology, a National Committee for Ecological Transition – which is in charge of reviewing environmental policies and consists of elected representatives and local authorities, employers, employee unions, non-profit associations and scientists – reviewed the results of the M&E process and provided recommendations to ONERC on the implementation of the adaptation actions of the NAP.

Within the framework of the implementation of the roadmap stemming from the 2014 Environmental Conference, the General Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CGEDD, Conseil général de l'environnement et du développement durable) was entrusted with the final review of the NAP, by the Minister of the Environment, Ségolène Royal, in June 2015. Several evaluations, both on individual themes and on the overall plan, were also published and composed into the final assessment report.

► Resources needed

The development and implementation of the first NAP, including its M&E system, was not very resource intensive³. Currently the French national adaptation team at ONERC is composed of a total of five persons. Responsibility for supervising the implementation of the NAP required the equivalent of one person on a full time basis. The Government spent a total budget of less than 500,000 EUR for the development of the first NAP and its M&E system – which is mainly comprised

² Evaluating the outcomes and/or impacts of some actions is not always feasible because:

- Some actions do not have a baseline against which impacts can be evaluated.
- Some actions can only be measured after a certain number of years that go beyond the timeframe of the first NAP.
- The impacts of some actions are difficult to evaluate. For example, it is assumed that providing free access to climate projections will enhance the country's adaptive capacity to climate change. But the real impact of free access is not measurable, because the number of downloads does not reflect any real impact.

³ Since the M&E system is closely linked to the NAP (they have been developed simultaneously), it is difficult to distinguish the cost of the M&E parts from the development and implementation of the NAP itself.

of the costs associated with the consultation process over 18 months – plus in-kind staff time contribution from the various ministries involved. The implementation costs of the NAP are estimated to have been approximately 171 mio. EUR, excluding civil service staff costs over a 5-year period. No specific budget was allocated for M&E in the NAP because M&E is a task of sectoral and action leaders who spend in-kind staff time in annual reporting to ONERC.

4. Reporting and outlook

► Outputs and reporting

An **annual monitoring (or implementation) report** of the NAP was presented to, and reviewed by, key stakeholders through the National Committee for Ecological Transition. All data was aggregated in achieved percentages of the initial outcome. This was complemented by **mid-term and final evaluations of the NAP** (at the end of 2013 and 2015) and communicated to the public via Internet. These evaluations highlighted key lessons learned at the national level and recommendations for the future. The mid-term review was conducted by ONERC itself, while the final evaluation was conducted by CGEDD who has an official mandate to audit ministerial policies. The CGEDD's findings formed the bulk of the latest annual report of ONERC to Parliament which is publicly available⁴.

► Lessons to date

The results of the **final evaluation highlight the plan's flagship achievements, areas for improvement and most significant shortcomings**. This first plan focused primarily on developing knowledge and methods and has produced a clearer picture of what the public policy issues around adaptation are. In this sense, it has improved France's preparedness for climate change. The CGEDD also concluded that actions must be better coordinated and governance of adaptation strengthened by creating links between the different themes and the different levels. The review concludes with the recommendation that: the targeted research programme on "Management and impacts of climate change" should be continued on a permanent basis; adaptation initiatives should be given greater publicity; issues surrounding climate change should be brought to the attention of the various economic sectors and adaptation work should be significantly increased at local level.

⁴ http://www.ecologique-solidaire.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/ONERC_Rapport_2016_EvaluationNap_EN.pdf

France opted for a **pragmatic, relatively simple, non-technical approach** to M&E of climate adaptation at the national level with a strong emphasis on **inter-ministerial collaboration** (including the development and monitoring of indicators). The approach has the advantage of being relatively inexpensive and avoids the high transactional costs of developing, monitoring and evaluating adaptation outcome indicators (e.g. these may require baseline data that do not necessarily exist). Such an approach might be particularly relevant and cost-effective at the initial stages of setting up an M&E system.

The French case study highlights **that informed trade-offs are needed between detailed analysis, stakeholder involvement and resource availability**. The proposed interventions are relatively straightforward and are in line with the relatively simple design of the M&E system. These emerging lessons provided useful feedback for the revisions of adaptation actions and led to learning and rapid improvements where it was possible. So far, the French experience shows that a less technical and less costly approach can provide useful results, given that stakeholders have been involved from the initial stage of the process. Some key challenges that remain are the development and implementation of more elaborated evaluation indicators and the establishment of synergies between M&E processes at the central, regional and local levels.

► What's next?

Following a comprehensive stakeholder consultation that lasted from October 2016 to July 2017, a second NAP has been announced by France's governmental 'climate plan' for the end of 2017. It will build on the

recommendations that emerged from the consultation and which are structured along six main strands of work, inspired by the results of the final evaluation in 2015.

For further information

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This factsheet is part of a **series of factsheets about national adaptation M&E systems**. The series was initially published as part of the 2014 study '[Monitoring and Evaluating Adaptation at Aggregated Levels: A comparative analysis of ten systems](#)' by GIZ & IISD. All country factsheets are available on www.AdaptationCommunity.net under 'Monitoring & Evaluation'.

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