



Albania: NAP Process Country Case Study

This Country Case Study was developed as part of a series on the national adaptation planning (NAP) process in selected countries. The purpose of the series is to provide an update on the current NAP process, showing first lessons learned and giving an outlook on the next steps to be taken in the iterative NAP process, considering how it contributes to reaching the countries' adaptation goals. The case studies shall furthermore serve the purpose of peer learning to countries that are planning or just starting the NAP process.

Climate risks in Albania

Albania is specifically impacted by extreme weather events including flash floods, heavy rainfalls during autumn and winter, and prolonged periods of hot days and drought in summer. Such events are very likely to further increase in the future. The northern part of Albania, the coastal and the agricultural regions are particularly exposed to these climate change hazards.

In 2010, the Drin river basin in northern Albania experienced one of the heaviest documented floods of the last 50 years. It mainly affected the rural part of the Shkodra region. Approximately 15,000 people had to leave their homes, 4,800 houses were flooded and many other buildings affected.¹ The economic damage amounted to over € 60 million,² mainly due to impacts on agriculture and livestock. Repeated lower intensity floods in this region in 2013, 2015 and March 2018 clearly show the increased vulnerability of the area. In addition, the southern part of Albania was hit by devastating floods in the Vjosa River basin in February

2015 and December 2017. More than 850 families were evacuated in 2015 and the economic loss was evaluated at € 36.7 million.

According to Albania's National Communications to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the most vulnerable sectors to climate change are hydrological systems, agricultural lands, the energy production sector, ecosystems (e.g. protected coastal areas) as well as tourism (via impacts on tourism infrastructure and natural attractions).

Governance structure for adaptation to climate change



The **Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MoTE)** is coordinating the Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) implementation as well as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process and supports the climate risk identification and management process. In 2014, the **Government of Albania** established an **Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Climate Change (IMWGCC)** with a Council of Minister Decision. It is composed of 15 technical level experts of key line

¹ Western Balkans Investment Framework. [Flood Prevention and Management](#). Published September 2015. Accessed February 2018.

² Till Below, Daniel Nordmann. [Making flood-risk maps publically available](#). D + C. Published May 2017. Accessed February 2018.

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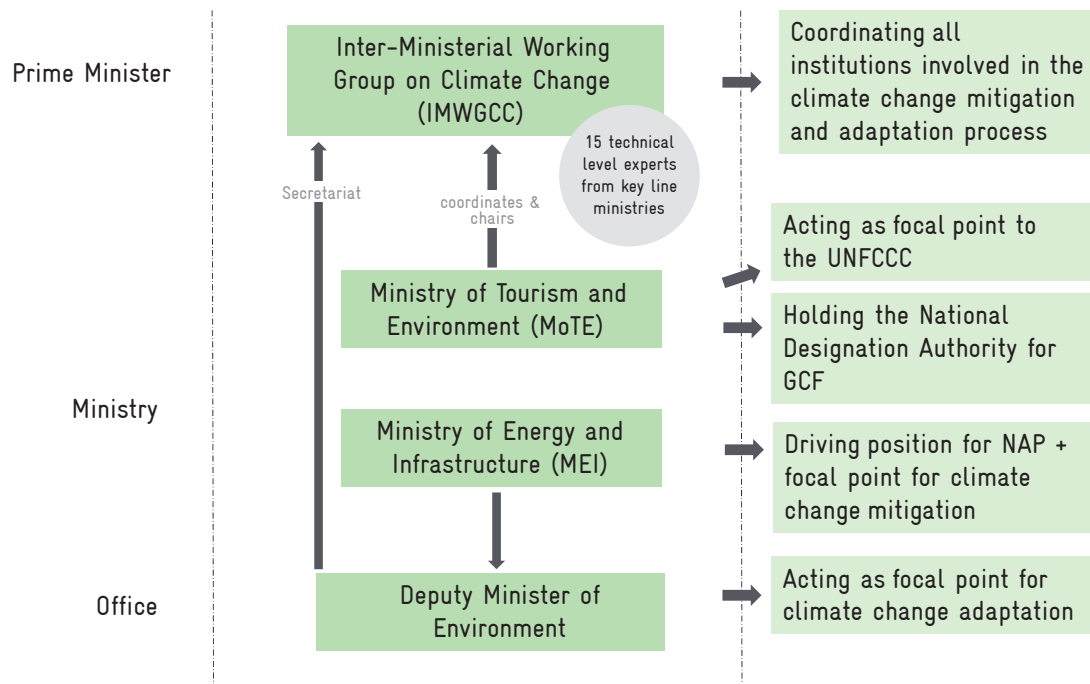
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Climate Governance Structure



ministries and aims at coordinating all the institutions involved in the climate change mitigation and adaptation process. Furthermore, its role is to facilitate the integration of climate change into relevant new and existing policies, programmes and activities. The Deputy Minister of Environment chairs the IMWGCC. In addition, the MoTE is the acting focal point to the UNFCCC. It has equally established the **Climate Change and Air Unit (CCU)** inside the ministry, which serves as a secretariat to the IMWGCC and is concerned with adaptation policies and measures.

Adaptation Policy Framework

Albania has consistently promoted climate change adaptation and its efforts to mainstream climate change into relevant sectors such as water, agriculture, ener-

gy, biodiversity, tourism, emergency response planning, coastal management or health.

The **Second National Strategy for Development and Integration (NSDI-II)**, the **National Territorial Plan (NTP) 'Albania 2030'**, and the draft **Environmental Cross Cutting Strategy (ECCS)** are the main cross-sectoral strategies that address, among others, issues related to climate change adaptation.³ In 2016, climate change adaptation has also been integrated into a draft for a **Law on Climate Change**, a proposed legal framework for the climate protection program, which is expected to be approved in 2018. The law will cover both mitigation and adaptation and define measures on the national and sectoral level as well as the institutional implementation of international commitments.⁴

³ NAP Global Network (Anika Terton). [Albania's Approach to Integrating Adaptation into Domestic Budgeting](#). Published November 2017. Accessed March 2018.

⁴ Invest in Albania. [Albania's Law on Climate Change Ready by 2018](#). Published June 2017. Accessed February 2018.

Additionally, the following sector specific policies, programmes and projects address adaptation to climate change:

- The Ministry of Health developed – as the first sector – a specific **Health and Climate Change Adaptation Strategy**, which provides strategic approaches for mainstreaming climate change adaptation into health policies.
- After the flood of 2010, the **Flood Risk Management Plan Shkodra Region 2012-2018** was designed to improve Flood Risk Management especially by focusing on non-infrastructure measures, such as warning systems, economical and informational preparedness, as well as spatial planning.⁵
- The **National Integrated Water Resources Management Strategy**, once approved and implemented, will allow water resource managers to better address climate-related stress factors such as droughts in the management of water resources.
- The drafted **National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development 2018-2022** aims to increase the climate resilience of the tourism sector to climate change.⁶
- In 2015, the **Ministry of Urban Development (MoUD)** launched the **Integrated Cross-sectoral Plan for the Coast**, which includes climate change considerations in its Strategic Environmental Assessment methodology.⁷

The Albanian NDC, submitted in 2016, does not include an adaptation component. However, the MoTE provided important information on climate change and its effects, climate models, impact analyses, vulnerabilities and potential mitigation and adaptation measures in its National Communications to the UNFCCC, laying the base for the NAP process.

NAP Process

NDC	PA ratified	Yes, 21.09.2016
	NDC submitted	Yes, 20.09.2016
	Adaptation component in NDC	No
	Reference to NAP	No reference to NAP
NAP	NAP process initiated in	2015
	Timeframe for implementation	Until 2035
	Responsible institution	Ministry of Tourism and Environment (MoTE)
	Current status	NAP document is drafted (not yet approved or implemented)
	Financing	In progress of approval
	Scope of NAP document	Sector-specific adaptation strategies and mainstreaming
	Reference to NDC	Only concerning mitigation efforts

⁵ Albanian Ministry of Environment. [Flood Risk Management Plan Shkodra Region](#). Published June 2015. Accessed February 2018.

⁶ Albanian Ministry of Tourism and Environment. [National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development 2018-2022](#). Published January 2018. Accessed March 2018.

⁷ AVCON. [Strategic Environmental Assessment for Integrated Coastal Plan](#). Published March 2016. Accessed November 2017.

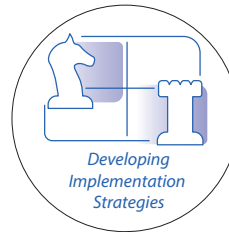


Albania's NAP is designed as a long-lasting and cross-sectoral process. It was officially launched by the Deputy Minister of Environment in February 2015 with support from the GIZ **Climate Change Adaptation in the**

Western Balkans (CCA WB) project and in close consultation with **UN Development Program (UNDP)** and the **EU**. In 2015 and 2016, the relevant line ministries cooperated closely under the lead function of the MoTE and within the framework of the IMWGCC to develop the NAP document. With the establishment of the IMWGCC, Albanian public authorities were able to build on already existing knowledge of climate risks and the need for committed action. In a participatory stocktaking workshop organised by the MoTE, the working group reviewed the existing institutional framework and identified gaps and development needs by applying the [SNAP Tool](#). It identified the following main weaknesses: insufficient coordination structures, e.g. between sectors, as well as the absence of consolidated government structures for climate change. It also identified opportunities, such as existing potentials for mainstreaming climate change adaptation and possible benefits of climate funds for the NAP process.

The NAP document was launched in June 2016 at a NAP assembly organized in collaboration with the **NAP Global Network (NAP GN)**. The NAP document gives no detail on specific adaptation measures but indicates main goals of the adaptation process. They refer to reducing damages through floods, enhancing agricultural resilience against droughts and securing drinking water for the Shkodra and Fier-Vlora Regions. The overall period for achieving these goals is 20 years (until 2035). The NAP document provides a framework for targeted mainstreaming by delegating the implementation of climate change adaptation to the respective sectoral strategies.⁸ Water management takes a central role in the process, due to its close linkages to the agriculture, energy and health as well as sanitation sectors.

Alignment to other national policies and mainstreaming



Even though the MoTE and the IMWGCC are working on both the NDC and the NAP, no concrete steps for integrating the NAP process and the NDC adaptation component have been taken so far.⁹ The NAP

document is Albania's framework for the integration of climate change adaptation into national and subnational structures and development. Given the fact that Albania is in the process of applying for EU membership, it is aligning its national policies to EU-standards. This has led to the retrospective mainstreaming of adaptation into the NSDI in 2016. These efforts resulted in adjustments of recommendations and goals in key sectoral strategies, such as water, energy, tourism, health, agriculture and emergency response. Additionally, the NAP document was used as a base for the adaptation component of the draft **Climate Change Strategy**.

The MoTE has already started planning and implementing the priority areas under its responsibility. These include steering and mainstreaming the NAP process and establishing a monitoring system. Furthermore, the MoTE has initiated a project supported by the **Global Environment Facility (GEF)** and the UNDP to build resilience of the Kune Vain Lagoon System through ecosystem-based adaptation. An integrated set of adaptation interventions including ecosystem-based monitoring will address the needs of the protected area.

The MoUD has begun implementing its priorities into integrated cross-sectoral plans for the coastal areas by supporting municipal adaptation. The GIZ assists in implementing the project **Climate change Adaptation in Transboundary Flood risk management, Western Balkans II**. Flood risk management as well as emergency and preparedness plans have been elaborated in 2016 and will continue to be updated. The GIZ also supported the CCU in organizing a training session to strengthen its own capacities, and to help determine the allocation of its specific tasks. These include creating a monitoring and evaluation system for the

⁸ Albanian Ministry of Environment. [National Adaptation Plan \(NAP\) to Climate Change in Albania](#). Published November 2016.

⁹ Republic of Albania. [Nationally Determined Contribution of the Republic of Albania](#). Published September 2016.

NAP process and integrating climate change adaptation criteria into governmental infrastructure projects.

In order to successfully implement the strategies set out in the NAP document, Albania has created a dedicated NAP financing document with assistance of the GIZ. This has helped to mobilise national and international, domestic and private resources. Measures like climate finance readiness support can strengthen national capacities for accessing international climate funds. The financing document has also helped to mainstream adaptation into the **Medium Term Budget Program 2018–2020**, the key national development planning and budgeting program, and gives a framework on how to finance prioritized climate change adaptation action.¹⁰

Since December 2016, the **NAP Global Network Country Support Hub** supports the NAP process. It contributed to the financing strategy by including an approach for integrating adaptation planning into the mid-term budget cycle. In terms of external funding, the **EU IPA** (Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance) is the most important source of funding for the time being.

¹⁰ NAP Global Network (Anika Terton). [Albania's Approach to Integrating Adaptation into Domestic Budgeting](#). Published November 2017. Accessed March 2018.

The **Green Climate Fund (GCF)** is increasingly gaining attention of the government and different implementing agencies

Results of the NAP process and country-specific lessons learned

- **High-level political support is crucial.** The Prime Minister Order on establishing the IMWGCC ensured high-level political support and approval of the ministries.
- **Intersectoral and sub-national cooperation increases effectiveness.** Nominating official focal points from all line ministries to the IMWGCC has shown to be central for ensuring regular progress updates and high-level procedural awareness in the ministries. In addition, the establishment of official communication channels between and within the ministries has shown to be vital.
- **Strong NAP-relevant technical capacities of the Ministry of Environment are important for mainstreaming climate change into national policies.** The increased capacities of the new CCU in the MoTE were crucial to coordinate mainstreaming processes. First achievements have been the mainstreaming of climate change into the NSDI as well as the EU IPA country strategy.



Floods 2010 in Shkodra region.
Photo: © GIZ/Jutta Benzenberg



Measurements in Djac, Shkoder.
Photo: © GIZ/Albanien

- **Peer exchange within networks, such as the NAP GN, are an important means for enhancing capacity building.** Constant exchange helps identifying opportunities for mainstreaming, such as integrating adaptation into the Regional Development Fund and mainstreaming adaptation into the mid-term budget.
- **Active participation of the Ministry of Finance is key for a successful NAP financing strategy.** The preparation of the financing strategy, which also focusses on domestic financing and proposes steps for integrating adaptation planning in the domestic budget cycle, was key to ensure an active participation of the MoF in the IMWGCC.

Way forward

NAP-Process: Albania is currently working on Element C for the formulation of NAPs of the LEG

Technical Guidelines, looking at implementation strategies for measures and actions set out in the NAP document. The next NDC cycle can be an opportunity to link the NAP process closely with the NDC to create synergies. The success of climate change adaptation interventions is currently highly dependent of the new government, elected in 2017, and its restructuring process of the line ministries.

- **Financing:** With the support of the NAP GN, the MoTE will continue to concentrate efforts on mainstreaming adaptation into the Medium Term Budget Program and into the different sectoral strategies. If adaptation gains buy-in from political leaders, the chance to borrow from international adaptation funds such as the GCF or the International Fund for agricultural development will increase. GIZ supports Albania in requesting support from the GCF and NAP GN.

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