



National Adaptation Plans in focus: Lessons from Central African Republic

The Central African Republic (CAR) is a landlocked country in Central Africa. Its agricultural land is rich, and it is endowed with significant natural potential, due to its high rainfall, dense hydrographic system, vast mining resources and large forested areas. From south to north, the biological diversity is divided into five major phytogeographical regions, each with its own varied wildlife: the *Guinean forest zone* of the rainforest; the *Sudano-Ubangi zone*, with its dense, semi-humid, dry, and open forests; the *Sudano-Guinean* and *Sudano-Saharan zones*, composed of diverse types of savanna; and the *Sahelian zone*, characterized by steppe.ⁱ The CAR hosts two international hydrographic basins: the Lake Chad basin and the Congo basin. The climate is equatorial, hot, and humid, characterized by a dry season and a rainy season.

The population is estimated at 5.3 million and is primarily rural and young (the median age is 17.6 years-old and life expectancy is 53.3).^j

The country is sparsely and unevenly populated. It is one of the poorest countries in the world and ranks 188th out of 189 countries on the Human Development Index (HDI).^k Since gaining independence in 1960, the CAR's political life has been affected by the instability of its political institutions, characterized by multiple military-political crises. The country is simultaneously in a post-conflict period and a political transition. As a result, the country is quite vulnerable socio-economically.^l

The economy largely depends on agriculture and extractive industries. The number of people exposed to food insecurity rose by 50 percent, from 1.2 million in 2015, to 1.8 million in 2018.^m This increase is primarily attributable to conflicts, deforestation, and natural disasters, often linked to climate change.ⁿ The rural populations, who are the poorest, are the most exposed. The restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic has had direct and indirect impacts on food security and nutrition in the CAR.

Climate change risks

The CAR is exposed to extreme climate hazards, from drought to heavy rain, followed by flooding. In 2017, bush fires, violent winds and floods killed an average of 417 people out of every 100,000 and caused significant property damage.^o In 2019, the country experienced the worst floods in 10 years that displaced 20,000 people.^p

The average annual temperature has increased by 0.35°C - per decade over the last 30 years.^q Total annual rainfall has risen, on average, by a large and statistically significant amount of 8 percent over the last 30 years.^r According to the moderate emissions climate scenario

(RCP 4.5), climate change will increase temperatures by between 1.31°C and 2.11°C by 2050. Most climate models also predict a slight increase in annual total rainfall.

The most affected sectors are the agriculture (farming and livestock); water and sanitation; health; energy; forestry; ecosystems and protection of flora and fauna; and infrastructure and housing sectors. Women, youth, displaced persons, people with disabilities and indigenous people (Mbororo and Pygmies) are particularly affected by climate change impacts.



Groundwork for supporting the NAP process

Adaptation-relevant policies, plans, and programmes

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) is aligned with national priorities, and as such aligns with the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan, the reference framework that aims to promote recovery and peacebuilding to increase well-being and prosperity among the populations of the CAR. At the sectoral level, a set of policies, plans and programmes constitute points of entry for incorporating climate change adaptation in development planning in the CAR. They are as follows:

- **Agriculture and livestock:** the Agricultural Framework Law of the CAR and the National Agricultural Policy Document (both under development) and the Livestock Roadmap (2017-2021);
- **Water and sanitation:** the National Water Policy (2020-2030);
- **Forestry:** the Forestry Policy (2019-2035) (pending adoption), the National Strategy for Participatory Forestry, and the National Policy for Wildlife and Protected Area Management;
- **Energy:** the decentralized Energy Policy;
- **Health:** the National Health Development Plan and Policy (2019-2030) (under development);
- **Education:** the Education Sectoral Plan (2020-2029) and its climate change adaptation programme;
- **Meteorology:** the Strategic Meteorological Plan 2017-2020 (pending adoption);
- **Gender-related issues:** the Equality and Equity Policy, Women's Empowerment Policy and the Gender Equity Law;
- **Environment, nature conservation** related plans;

Furthermore, as a signatory to the UNFCCC in 1992 and the Paris Agreement in 2016, the CAR government develops and implements several plans, programmes and strategies directly linked to the fight against climate change. The following has been prepared or is under preparation:

- The National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) submitted to the UNFCCC in 2008 and addressing the country's urgent and immediate need for adaptation;
- The Climate Change Strategic Operating Plan (POS-CC) (2017-2020);
- The Green Climate Fund (GCF) Country Programme (2018);
- The National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS) (2021), that constitutes a road map to facilitate the joint, holistic implementation of the Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) and underpins achievement of the SDGs in the CAR;
- The Third National Communication (TNC) (under development);
- The Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC, 2015) and its revised version (2022);
- The REDD+ programme, which seeks to reduce emissions resulting from deforestation and forest degradation; and the REDD+ National Investment Framework (2020-2025);
- Sustainable Energy Access and Climate Action Plan (SEACAP) of the city of Bangui.

Adaptation actions implemented

The CAR Government, together with national and international partners, has started to implement some climate change-related projects and programmes that contribute to addressing adaptation. The most recent ones, are:

- Support Programme to Rebuild Grassroots Communities (2017, 2020), implemented by the African Development Bank (AfDB)
- GCF NAP readiness proposal, implemented by Ernst and Young, which includes as part of its outputs the development of a second more comprehensive NAP
- The GCF Country programme, implemented by the Global Water Partnership (GWP)

The CAR is also involved in regional programmes, including the programme focusing on building the disaster risk management capacities of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

The process to formulate and implement NAPs in the CAR

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process was launched in the CAR in September 2019. Aligned with the national vision, its medium- and long term-objective is *"to improve the resilience of the country, particularly in the agriculture, food security, health, natural resource management and infrastructure sectors, in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change."*

Institutional arrangements

The NAP process is spearheaded by the National Climate Coordination (CN-C) under the Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development (MEDD).

NAP formulation

The CAR developed an initial NAP drawing from existing studies, data and recent knowledge and inputs provided by national and sub-national stakeholders consulted as part of the process. The document identifies gaps and areas for improvement and makes recommendations, particularly regarding governance, integration and adaptation in the planning and budgeting process, the scientific analysis of climate and the assessment of climate risks and vulnerability and monitoring and evaluation. It also presents enabling activities and sectoral priorities for the short and medium terms. It provides the basis for a more comprehensive NAP to be developed in the medium-term.

Support programmes

The NAP-GSP, UNDP, national experts, and the GEF have provided technical and/or financial support to the NAP process. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the NAP-Global Network and the GWP have also provided inputs to the NAP formulation through the NAP-GSP coordination. The country is also supported by Ernst and Young for the development of its first NAP readiness project under the GCF.

Challenges and successes

Challenges

The CAR is still facing security concerns, poverty, food insecurity, limited institutional and technical capacity, lack of intersectoral coordination, and economic challenges. Climate change and the impacts of COVID-19 exacerbate these already challenging conditions. Most of the climate change adaptation actions identified in the national and sectoral action plans have not been implemented because of these.

December 2020

Field missions and local consultations organized at the sub-national level (Lobaye prefecture).

August 2021

NAP validation workshop is held.

Since 2020

Starts development of the GCF NAP Readiness proposal.

February 2022

NAP submitted to the UNFCCC.

Successes

Despite its fragile political context, the CAR has been persistent in its efforts to address climate change as testified by its active engagement in the REDD+ programme, and the development of a NAPA, an NDC and revised NDC, and National Communications (2003, 2015, and a third one is under development). These achievements have led to some degree of integration of climate change adaptation at the planning level into the higher education and forestry sectors.

September 2019

Launch of the NAP process in the CAR.

April 2021

NAP consultation workshop is held.

September 2021

A NAP consolidation workshop is held.

January 2022

NAP sensitization workshop is held.



The process to formulate and implement NAPs

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process was launched in the CAR in September 2019. Aligned with the national vision, its medium- and long term-objective is "to improve the resilience of the country, particularly in the agriculture, food security, health, natural resource management and infrastructure sectors, in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change."



Opportunities and next steps

As an immediate next step, the CAR Government is keen to implement the enabling activities identified in the NAP as they will help strengthen adaptation planning and better equipped the country to lead major adaptation programmes and projects. Some of these activities will be implemented through the GCF NAP readiness project under development. Operational priorities will also be further elaborated to become investment opportunities.

Despite being socially and economically disadvantaged, women have been engaged in national structures, as well as regional reconciliation entities, and the NAP process can build on their significant role in the process of reconciliation and peace.

Key documents

- [National Adaptation Programme of Action \(NAPA\) \(2008\)](#)
- [Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change \(2015\)](#)
- [Nationally Determined Contribution \(2015\)](#)
- [Revised Nationally Determined Contribution \(2022\)](#)

188th out of 189 countries ranked on the Human Development Index (2019)

703,000 Central African refugees (and 713,000 internally displaced people)^x

20,000 people displaced by the 2019 floods

World's 2nd largest rainforest (the Congolese rainforest) partly covering the CAR

88% of electricity generated by hydropower (accessed by only 14% of the population)

Notes

ⁱ UNDP, 2019. Human Development Report. <http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2019.pdf>

ⁱⁱ OECD, 2017. Accelerated recovery framework towards a financing strategy. https://www.oecd.org/dac/conflict-fragility-resilience/docs/Financing_for_Stability_CAR_en.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ *Idem.*

^{iv} Central African Republic, 2019. Voluntary National Review of monitoring and implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/252302019_VNR_Synthesis_Report_DESA.pdf

^v *Idem.*

^{vi} International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2019. Rapid assessment Report – floods. file:///C:/Users/admim/AppData/Local/Temp/DTM%20RCA_Inondations_Bangui_Nov_2019_Rapport.pdf

^{vii} GERICS, 2015. Climate fact sheet Central African Republic. https://www.climate-service-center.de/products_and_publications/fact_sheets/climate_fact_sheets/index.php/en

^{viii} *Idem.*

^{ix} African Development Bank, 2017. Country Strategy Document, Central African Republic (2017-2021). <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/document/car-2017-2021-country-strategy-paper-99374>

^x United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), 2021. Central African Republic. Situation Report. Updated on 27 September 2021. <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Situation%20Report%20-%20Central%20African%20Republic%20-%2015%20Sep%202021.pdf>

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 opportunities for knowledge exchange on NAPs.



Email:

Rohini.Kohli@undp.org
Mozaharul.Alam@unep.org

For media enquiries / dissemination:

Melanie.Pisano@undp.org

Website:

<http://globalsupportprogramme.org/nap-gsp>