



National Adaptation Plans in focus: Lessons from the Kyrgyz Republic

The Kyrgyz Republic is a landlocked nation located in the heart of Central Asia with an area of approximately 200,000 km² and a population of 6,256,700.¹ Over 90 percent of the landscape is dominated by the rugged Alai, Kirghiz and Tien Shan mountain ranges² with a mean elevation of 2630 metres above sea level.³ The climate is continental, which is in part characterised by large seasonal variations of temperatures. In the Naryn River basin, temperatures can reach below -50°C in winter and exceed 40°C in the summer.⁴ Drought is a common occurrence, and the country is prone to other hydrometeorological hazards such as mudslides, avalanches, squalls, downpours, ice, frosts, glacial lake outburst floods, and riverine flooding. Agricultural land consisting mainly of pastures, covers 53 percent of the country.⁵ Almost one-third of the workforce is engaged in the agricultural sector, which generates

approximately 25 percent of the gross domestic product. 65 percent of the population lives in rural areas and poverty is widespread in the country, where 25.6 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.¹ In 2018 the Kyrgyz Republic ranked 121 out of 188 countries with respect to its Human Development Index (HDI; 0.672).⁶

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“Climate change is a challenge but also an opportunity to accelerate our planning and actions towards the Sustainable Development Goals in the Kyrgyz Republic”

Rustamov A.A., Director of the State Agency on Environment Protection and Forestry of the Kyrgyz Republic, UN FCCC Focal Point, NDA on GCF

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Climate change risks

Temperatures in the Kyrgyz Republic have increased consistently over the past 80 years. Future projections indicate continued warming in the range of 2.6-4.8°C by the end of the century.⁷ Summer precipitation is expected to decrease across the region⁸ and droughts are likely to increase desertification. The total area covered by glaciers in the region has decreased by 10 percent between 1960 and 2009.⁹ This is a significant concern for the Kyrgyz Republic, which depends on glaciers to regulate water supplies and generate

electricity. Climate change will also negatively impact agriculture systems¹⁰ since unreliable crop yields are projected to threaten food security and social development across the country. The relatively low level of socioeconomic development, inadequate infrastructure, and high dependency on climate-sensitive sectors make the country extremely vulnerable to climate-induced extreme events. By 2050, it is estimated that 6.6 million people in the Kyrgyz Republic will be at risk from the impacts of climate change.¹¹



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Groundwork for supporting the NAP process









Policy, planning and budgeting

The Kyrgyz Republic has recognised the risks posed by climate change and has begun to take steps towards improving their adaptive capacity. The Kyrgyz Republic Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2014) identified the integration of disaster risk management into sustainable development planning, poverty reduction and adaptation to climate change, as one of five priority areas required for building a basis of stable risk management, according to international standards. In 2013, with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) the Kyrgyz Republic developed and approved their first national strategic document on adaptation to climate change - 'Priority Directions for Adaptation to Climate Change in the Kyrgyz Republic Until 2017'. The document initiates the formulation of a national policy on resources mobilisation. It focusses on minimisation of negative risks and utilisation of potential opportunities of climate change for sustainable development of the Kyrgyz Republic. The document considers adaptive measures, particularly their implementation in economic sectors, which are the most vulnerable to climate change. The 2015 Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC), while focusing on mitigation, also highlights the need for national level climate adaptation action to start addressing long-term climate vulnerabilities.

In November 2018, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic approved the National Strategy for Sustainable Development (NSSD), which provides long-term direction, covering the period from 2018-2040. This strategy recognises the need to transition to more sustainable development pathways through the advancement of green economic principles as a national priority in various policy frameworks. The NSSD calls for the development of climate change adaptation strategies to reduce vulnerability and improve resilience. The NSSD will be implemented through five-year development programs. The first phase, covering the period 2018-2022, is referred to as the "Unity, Trust, Creation" program, and was approved by the parliament (*Jogorku Kenesh*) on 20 April 2018. Sections of the NSSD, including the "development of strategic branches of economy crosscutting priority" and "cross-cutting directions of development: ecological aspects of development" provide a clear mandate to establish a NAP process to provide strategic guidance on climate change adaptation, aligning it with the country's efforts to achieve the SDGs.

Six priority sectors identified in the INDC¹² and their expected economic losses in the absence of effective climate change adaptation planning:¹³

| Sector | Losses in million US\$* |
|---|-------------------------|
|  Water resources | 718 |
|  Agriculture | 70 |
|  Energy | 200 |
|  Emergencies | 38 |
|  Healthcare | 110 |
|  Forest and Biodiversity | 94.8 |

*The Kyrgyz Republic Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (2015)

Preparing for adaptation planning

The Kyrgyz Republic has prepared three National Communications which were submitted to the UNFCCC in 2003, 2008, and 2017. These documents are considered an integral part of the climate change assessment and response processes. The First National Communication raised public awareness, established legal frameworks and sought to develop human and intellectual potential to address environmental problems. The Second National Communication demonstrated the sustainability of development priorities and the relevance of climate change for the country. The Third National Communication provided an overview of national circumstances, an inventory of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removal by sinks of greenhouse gases, vulnerability assessments and adaptation measures, an analysis of mitigation efforts and a summary of future projections. In the Third Communication the highest priority economic sectors, requiring adaptation measures, have been identified based on observed and expected changes.

In addition, national strategies and action plans have been developed and approved for emergency situations, forest and biodiversity, agriculture and water management, human health, and energy¹⁴. These strategies and plans will be updated as part of the NAP process.

Implementation of adaptation actions

The GoKR has recently submitted a request for Green Climate Fund (GCF) Readiness and Preparatory Support for the initiation of its National Adaptation Plan process. This process will be consistent with the government's strategic vision for climate change adaptation. The project objective is to establish a national adaptation planning process that enhances vertical and horizontal climate change adaptation planning, facilitates mainstreaming of climate risks at sectoral and subnational levels, and identifies a program of priority climate change adaptation investments. To date no other major climate adaptation projects have been implemented in the country.



The process to formulate and implement NAPs in Kyrgyz Republic

Institutional arrangements for the NAP process

The overall responsibility for the development, management, and coordination of environmental and climate change policies lies with the State Agency on Environmental Protection and Forestry (SAEPF), which serves as the focal point for the UNFCCC and as the National Designated Authority (NDA) for the GCF. To respond specifically to challenges of climate change, the government established the Climate Change Coordination Commission (CCCC) in 2012 to coordinate activities related to climate change. The commission is chaired by the First Vice Prime Minister and consists of the heads of key ministries and divisions, and representatives of civil society, academia, and the private sector. The SAEPF serves as the working secretariat for the CCCC, while the CCCC is the lead agency for implementing the NAP process.

Support programmes

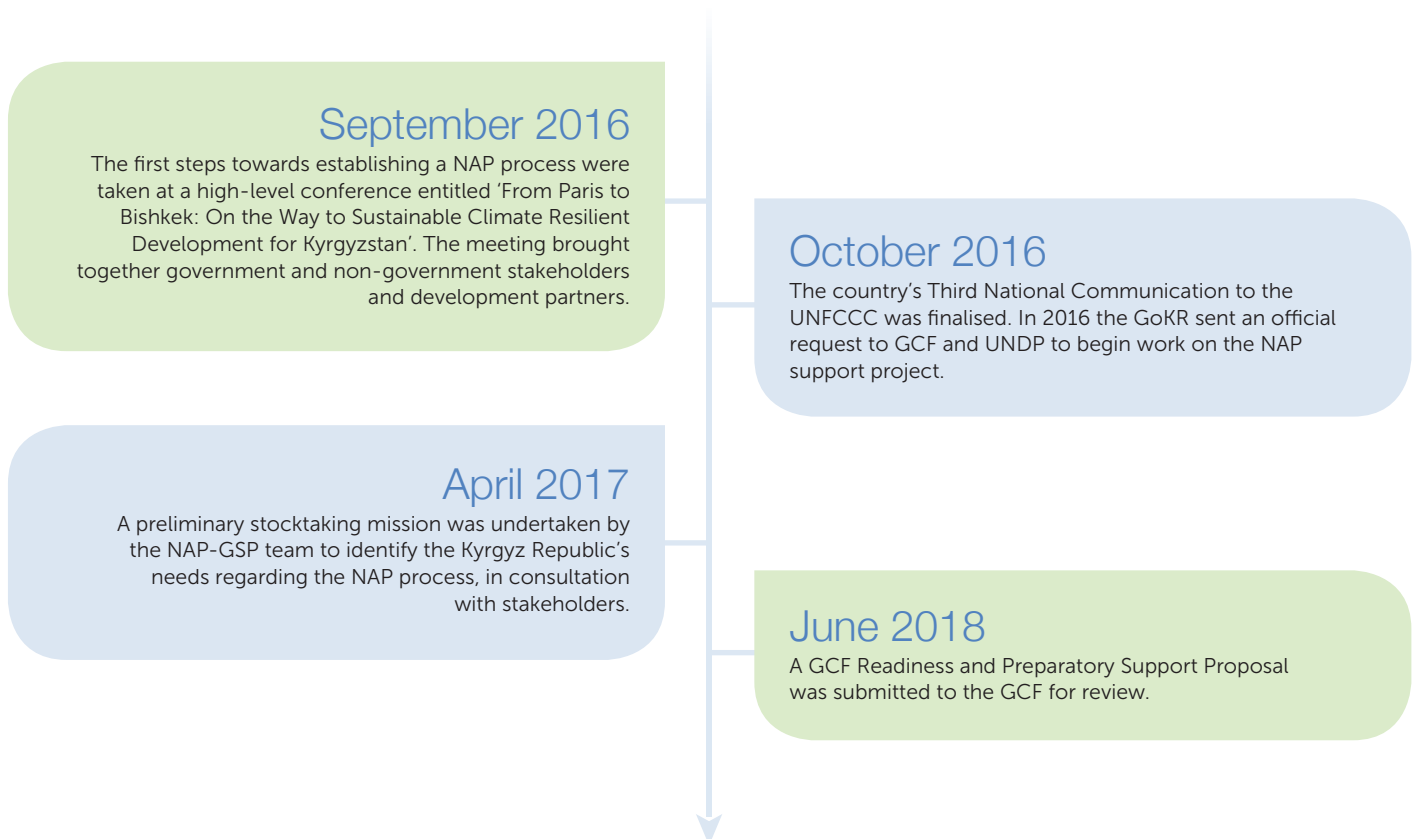
The NAP process has been supported by the joint UNDP-UN Environment National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP).

Challenges

At present the Kyrgyz Republic's technical, institutional and financial capacities to address the impacts of climate change are scarce. Adaptation investments will need to be increased to reduce climate vulnerabilities. Currently, domestic financing is insufficient and cannot support such efforts.

Gender inequalities are high in the Kyrgyz Republic and show significant regional disparities. Women experience higher unemployment rates than men (9 percent versus 6.5 percent) and are overrepresented in lower income occupations. Drastic limitation of women's access to economic opportunities is amongst the most acute and noticeable developmental issues faced by the GoKR.

Successful implementation of the NAP will be dependent on the integration of climate change adaptation planning into all national planning policies and documents, as well as sectoral strategies.



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.



Opportunities and next steps

The NAP Readiness and Preparatory Support Proposal provides an opportunity to advance adaptation planning in the Kyrgyz Republic by focusing on strengthening national coordination and institutional arrangements for adaptation planning, formulating gender-responsive adaptation plans and budgets for priority sectors and strengthening climate change adaptation capacities at provincial and sub-national levels. Other prioritised NAP activities include enhancing climate data and use in planning, carrying out sectoral, regional and ecosystem level vulnerability assessments, doing appraisal and costing of adaptation options, establishing a comprehensive monitoring framework and developing an operational framework to fulfil gender-inclusion targets through the NAP process.

Key documents

- The Kyrgyz Republic Intended Nationally Determined Contribution http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/INDC/Published%20Documents/Kyrgyzstan/1/Kyrgyzstan%20INDC%20_ENG_%20final.pdf
- Third National Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. https://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/application/pdf/nc3_kyrgyzstan_english_24jan2017.pdf
- Sustainable Development Strategy of the Kyrgyz Republic for the period of 2018-2040 (<http://www.president.kg/sys/media/download/51107/>)
- The Kyrgyz Republic Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2014/cr14247.pdf>

Notes

- ¹ The National Statistic Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic, as of January 1, 2018. www.stat.kg.
- ² World Bank, 2013: Kyrgyz Republic, Overview of Climate Change Activities. Washington D.C., 17pp.
- ³ Iliasov, S., and Coauthors, 2016: Third National Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Bishkek, 205pp.
- ⁴ Hill, A.F. and coauthors, 2017: Hydrologic controls and water vulnerabilities in the Naryn River Basin, Kyrgyzstan: A socio-hydro case study of water stressors in Central Asia. Water, Switzerland.
- ⁵ Iliasov, S., and Coauthors, 2016: Third National Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Bishkek, 205pp.
- ⁶ Human Development Indices and Indicators: 2018 Statistical update. <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2018-update>.
- ⁷ United Nations Development Programme, 2016: Human Development Report 2016. 8pp.
- ⁸ Hijoka, Y., and Coauthors, 2014: Asia. Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Cambridge University Press, 1327-1370.
- ⁹ Aizen, V.B., 2011: Altai-Sayan glaciers. Encyclopedia of Snow, Ice and Glaciers, V. Singh, P. Singh, and UK Haritashya, Eds., Dordrecht, Netherlands, 38-39.
- ¹⁰ Iliasov, S., and Coauthors, 2016: Third National Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Bishkek, 205pp.
- ¹¹ World Bank, 2014: Turn Down the Heat, Confronting the New Climate Normal.
- ¹² GoKR, 2015: The Kyrgyz Republic Intended Nationally Determined Contribution.
- ¹³ Annual losses under the temperature increase by 5°C relatively 1961-1990 level
- ¹⁴ Oksana Lipka, Lomonosov Moscow State University, 2017: Climate Change and Adaptation in Kyrgyzstan
- ¹⁵ Iliasov, S., and Coauthors, 2016: Third National Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Bishkek, 205pp.
- ¹⁶ World Bank, 2014: Turn Down the Heat, Confronting the New Climate Normal.
- ¹⁷ World Bank, 2014: Turn Down the Heat, Confronting the New Climate Normal.
- ¹⁸ Iliasov, S., and Coauthors, 2016: Third National Communication of the Kyrgyz Republic under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Bishkek, 205pp.

3.7°C
average increase in
temperature by
2100¹⁵

Over 1 million
people are affected
by food insecurity¹⁶

25.4%
of the population lived
below the national
poverty line (2016)

7000
people have migrated
from landslide zones
since 1992¹⁷

US\$1.2 billion
projected economic
losses due to climate
change¹⁸

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.



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