



# National Adaptation Plans in focus: Lessons from Moldova



**The Republic of Moldova** is a landlocked country located in Central Europe in the north-western Balkans, neighbouring Ukraine to the north, east and south, and Romania to the west. The western border goes along the Prut River, and the southern border extends almost to the Black Sea coast. Moldova's topography consists of plains and elevations; the latter being concentrated in the central part of the country. Its climate is moderately continental, characterised by relatively mild winters with little snowfall, warm summers and low humidity.<sup>(1)</sup>

Due to its favourable climate and farmland, the country's economy depends on the agriculture sector. Almost 60 percent of the population live in rural areas and about one third of the labour force is employed in agriculture. Approximately 70 percent of the rural population depends solely on agriculture for their livelihoods.<sup>(2)</sup>

Following its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, Moldova experienced significant economic slowdowns. Despite recent and steady recovery mainly due to the rebound of its agricultural output, Moldova remains one of the poorest countries in Europe with multi-dimensional poverty rates of around 41 percent.<sup>(3)</sup> Poverty is most severe in rural areas, where low wages, limited numbers of jobs, climate-related shocks, poor infrastructure and livelihood conditions have led to an increased rural to urban migration.

*Our country is facing many climate related disasters. It is necessary to identify and plan concrete measures of adaptation in all priority sectors.*

*Ion Apostol, Deputy Minister of Environment, Moldova*

## Climate change risks<sup>(4)</sup>

The Republic of Moldova is highly vulnerable to climate change and variability, and the socio-economic costs of climate change related to hazards such as droughts, floods and hail are significant.

It is predicted that the impacts of climate change on the country's social, environmental and economic dimensions will intensify in the medium- to long-term which will have devastating effects on the country's key economic sector, agriculture, and its predominantly rural population, for whom agriculture is a major source of food and income.

Around 90 percent of crop production is rain-fed, which makes the agricultural sector highly vulnerable to climate change. Between 1984 and 2006, annual economic losses due to climate-related hazards averaged around US\$61 million.

Major recent impacts were predominantly caused by droughts and floods. The 2007 and 2012 droughts resulted in estimated economic losses of about US\$0.72 billion and US\$0.3 billion, respectively. While the 2008 floods cost the country about US\$120 million, the 2010 floods led to negative GDP growth rates of approximately 0.15 percent.



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# Groundwork for supporting the process to formulate and implement NAPs

## Policy, planning and budgeting<sup>(5)</sup>

The Government of Moldova has a strong commitment to increasing their capacity to respond to disasters and climate risks. Climate change is streamlined into Moldova 2020, the country's national development strategy approved in 2012. The Government of Moldova increasingly recognises the importance of adapting to new climatic conditions. In 2014 the Government approved the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (CCASM), its first national strategic framework, which aims to advance the resilience of the country's social and economic development processes. It is intended to serve as an umbrella strategy which creates the enabling environment for specific sectors and ministries to 'mainstream' climate change adaptation and risk management into existing and future strategies through a series of National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and Sectoral Adaptation Plans (SAPs).

This initiative is supported by a long-term financial strategy which includes national resources and international support. Other national strategies to enhance climate change adaptation are the Strategy of Biological Diversity for 2015-2020 and the National Environmental Strategy 2014-2023.

In June 2017, Moldova submitted its First Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), which outline adaptation priorities for the following six climate-sensitive sectors:

1	Agriculture
2	Health
3	Water Resources
4	Energy
5	Forestry
6	Transport

The Government has developed adaptation Action Plans for each of these priority sectors. The overall self-evaluated economy-wide costs for the implementation of the CCASM and Action Plans are estimated at approximately US\$200 million.<sup>(6)</sup> The first iteration of the country's National Adaptation Planning (NAP-1) process, carried out between 2013 and 2017 aimed to include climate change adaptation needs into national budgeting processes. However, the climate budget tagging guidelines developed under NAP-1 were not implemented due to lack of funding for training. Current budgets for sectors do not refer to or include climate change adaptation. Moldova is the first Non-Annex I country in Europe and Central Asia to have prepared and submitted its Fourth National Communication in February 2018, which further enhances the country's capacity to meet its reporting obligations under the UNFCCC.

## Preparing for adaptation planning

There is substantial information available in Moldova about climate change impacts and vulnerabilities. Initial assessments of adaptation priorities were undertaken as part of the First (2000), Second (2010), Third (2014) and Fourth (2018) National Communications to the UNFCCC.

The National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, which built on previous National Communications, identifies the main climate change impacts, risks and vulnerabilities for key sectors of Moldova's economy. It provides an integrated vision for the development of opportunities to address the impacts of these changes in a resilient manner.

Additional sector-specific and regional studies and projects provide important supporting information on climate modelling, impact analysis, vulnerabilities and potential adaptation measures.

The first cycle of the NAP process proposed to develop a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system that will track and monitor individual sectoral objectives and indicators. This will allow for iterative, continuous, evidence-based adaptation planning, and will help to enforce the gradual integration of adaptation priorities in regular development planning.

The NAP M&E system also aims to ensure the transparency of adaptation processes and data collection, and to measure and monitor outcomes and impacts of adaptation activities, investments and programmes.

## Implementation of adaptation actions

The Republic of Moldova is working to increase its capacity to address the country's climate change vulnerabilities. This endeavour is supported through several bilateral and multilateral adaptation projects of diverse sizes and scopes, targeting the country's priority sectors. Almost all projects have the potential for further upscaling. Selected projects include:

- Disaster and Climate Risk Management Project (2010-2016, US\$10 million, World Bank)
- Strengthening Environmental Fiscal Reform for National and Global Environment Management (2011-2013, US\$1.09 million, Ministry of Environment/ the GEF/UNDP)
- Climate Resilience Through Conservation Agriculture (2012-2016, US\$28.3 million, the GEF/ International Fund for Agricultural Development/Ministries)
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation, Climate-Resilience Measures and Institutional Development in the Lower Dniester Area (2017-2021, US\$0.92 million, Austrian Development Agency)
- Climate Adaptation Project for Moldova (2017-2023, US\$27.2 million, IBRD/IDA/the GEF/World Bank)





## The process to formulate and implement NAPs in Moldova

### Institutional arrangements

Moldova's Climate Change Adaptation Coordination Mechanism (CCACM) holds the mandate to coordinate adaptation planning and action among all government entities. The CCACM also monitors progress on adaptation, facilitates the implementation of enabling activities for capacity development, and oversees the distribution of resources for adaptation.

The National Commission on Climate Change (NCCC), under the CCACM, is a permanent, formalised and independent body which advises the Government on how to prepare for climate change.

The NCCC is made up of key stakeholders, including sectoral ministries, NGOs, academia, research, private sectors, civil society representatives and women's associations. The NCCC Secretariat is tasked with collecting and integrating information on climate change across sectors and producing reports according to the progress of the NAP implementation. The Climate Change Office under the Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (MARDE), serves as the technical support unit.

### Challenges

There are several gaps and barriers to adaptation planning which have been identified in the NAP-1 and in a Stocktaking Report on the NAP process in Moldova – compiled under the joint UNDP-UN Environment National Adaptation Plan Global Support Programme (NAP-GSP).

The operationalisation of the CCACM is not yet in place due to limited financial resources which hinder the completion of the M&E system development, technical staff capacities and insufficient cross-cutting adaptation knowledge of climate change commission board members and sectoral focal points. In addition, various ministries and agencies focus on parallel aspects of climate change without a formal structure and with limited dedicated capacity to integrate climate change-related concerns into national development budgets, programmes and policies. There is limited cross-sectoral coordination and gender integration of adaptation activities. Finally, the monitoring of climate change adaptation efforts is still insufficient, leading to a lack of knowledge about their long-term impacts.

#### June 2013 –

The project 'Supporting Moldova's National Climate Change Adaptation Planning Process', the first phase of the NAP process (NAP-1) was initiated in June 2013 and completed in November 2017 with an overall budget of US\$1.12 million.

#### October 2017 –

In October 2017, a workshop was organised to discuss adaptation priorities and validate them for further consideration during the NAP-2 process.

#### September 2017 –

Between August and September 2017, a survey with line ministries was undertaken to identify current adaptation activities, as well as gaps in Moldova's adaptation planning process, and to identify further needs related to climate adaptation planning in the country.

#### 2018 –

The NDA, supported by UNDP, is currently drafting the readiness and preparatory support proposal for the second phase of the NAP process (NAP-2) to be submitted to the GCF.

## What is 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.



## Successes and lessons learnt

NAP-1 was the first UNDP-assisted project in the Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (ECIS) region to support comprehensive, participatory and iterative adaptation planning. Moldova was amongst the first countries in the region to set up and implement national and sectoral NAP processes in line with the UNFCCC Technical Guidelines for the NAP Process. Almost all activities envisaged in the NAP-1 project document were implemented. The lessons learnt during their delivery form an important and valuable experience contributing to the regional and global understanding of NAPs. The purpose of NAP-1 was to ensure that Moldova develops systemic capacities to support medium- to long-term adaptation planning and budgeting to reduce vulnerability of the population from climate change impacts, particularly in the identified priority sectors. Its key aspects were to coordinate adaptation planning and action among all government entities, to develop an indicator-based monitoring system, to assign sectoral adaptation focal points and to identify sector specific legislative and institutional adaptation-enabling environments.

## Next steps

One of the critical next steps is the development of a baseline against which sectoral climate change adaptation progress will be measured — alongside the development of the appropriate baseline metrics. As an integral part of the NAP process, a stakeholder communication and engagement plan for NAP-2 will be formulated to ensure that a wide range of stakeholders will be consulted and engaged at all stages. Outreach and engagement activities will include sensitisation, consultations and training workshops.

## NAP support

The advancement of Moldova's NAP processes is backed by a range of supporters such as the Austrian Development Cooperation Agency (ADA), the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management of the Republic of Austria, the joint UNDP-UN Environment NAP-GSP and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

## Key documents

- Fourth National Communication to the UNFCCC (Feb 2018)
- First Nationally Determined Contributions (June 2017)
- National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy (Dec 2014)
- Moldova 2020: National Development Strategy (July 2012)

## Notes

- (1) Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (2018). *Fourth National Communication of the Republic of Moldova under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*
- (2) Dávalos, M. E., Pojunas, B. B., Holla, A., Nguyen, T. C., Seitz, W. H., Smolyar, Y. (2017). *A human-rights based approach to the economic security of older people in Moldova* (English). Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.
- (3) The World Bank (2016). *Moldova Economic Update*.
- (4) Government of the Republic of Moldova (2014). *The Republic of Moldova's Climate Change Adaptation Strategy by 2020 and Action Plan for its Implementation*.
- (5) Ministry of Agriculture, Regional Development and Environment (2018); Government of the Republic of Moldova (2017). *Republic of Moldova First NDC*; Government of the Republic of Moldova (2014); Republic of Moldova (2012). *Moldova 2020: National Development Strategy: 7 Solutions for Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction*; United Nations Development Programme (2018). *Readiness and Preparatory Support Proposal to the GCF*.
- (6) Government of the Republic of Moldova (2017, p.25).

6

adaptation priority sectors in NDC

60%

of population concentrated in rural areas

0.15%

negative GDP growth caused by 2010 floods

us\$200m

costs of Adaptation Strategy Action Plan

1

catastrophic drought every two years

## 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 provides opportunities for knowledge exchange on NAPs.

Email:  
[Rohini.Kohli@undp.org](mailto:Rohini.Kohli@undp.org)  
[Mozaharul.Alam@unep.org](mailto:Mozaharul.Alam@unep.org)  
 For media enquiries / dissemination:  
[Esther.Lake@un.org](mailto:Esther.Lake@un.org)  
 Website:  
<http://globalsupportprogramme.org/nap-gsp>

