United Nations Development Programme
Global Environment Facility

**National Capacity Self-Assessments:
A Resource Kit**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CDI	Capacity Development Initiative
EA	Enabling Activity (GEF support that aims to strengthen the enabling environment)
EU	European Union
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IDRC	International Development Research Council
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCDAP	National Capacity Development Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NCSD	National Council for Sustainable Development
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPD	National Project Director
NSSD	National Strategy for Sustainable Development
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAN	Protected Area Network
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PSC	Project Steering Committee
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research

1.1   Purpose of this Resource Kit

The National Capacity Self-Assessments (NCSA) projects assist developing countries and economies in transition to assess capacity to meet requirements under the United Nations Convention for Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). UNDP is supporting 116 countries to prepare a NCSA. This Resource Kit is the core of UNDP's technical backstopping to those countries. Its purpose is to guide Project Teams through every step of project implementation, from project signature until project closure.

This Resource Kit provides the Project Teams[1] with a solid framework for undertaking the NCSA. However, this Kit is not intended to be comprehensive or to cover every possibility in the NCSA process. Annex 1 provides many additional sources of help and guidance.

It is noted that many countries already have a clear vision of how to prepare their NCSA, and some have already undertaken many activities. This Kit should help those countries by provoking discussion and providing tools to overcome the challenges they face.

1.2   Required Outputs and Guiding Principles of the NCSA

GEF has prepared Operational Guidelines[2] covering the NCSA process. The over-riding objective of each NCSA is to identify and analyze country level priorities and needs for capacity development related to the implementation of the three Conventions. The Guidelines state the expected Outputs from each NCSA:

- The Stock-Take – a quick review of previous and ongoing activities related to capacity building;
- Three Thematic Assessments – a list and description of the capacity situation, priority constraints, barriers and needs in relation to each of the three Conventions;
- The Cross-Cutting Assessment – a consideration of the capacity situation, priority constraints, barriers and needs that cut across the three Conventions;
- The Action Plan – a plan of action to meet the needs and to address the constraints, incorporating a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating progress[3]; and
- The NCSA Report – a report of the NCSA process and a summary of the Outputs;

The NCSA process and outputs are expected to help mobilise support for meeting the identified capacity development needs. The NCSA should mobilise both financial and non-financial support. It should mobilise support from both inside the country and from the international community. Some support may be mobilised from GEF. Specifically, the Action Plan is to ensure that the needs are addressed in a coordinated manner.

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[1] Throughout this Kit, the term 'Project Team' refers to the core group of people responsible for implementing the NCSA. This Team typically consists of the National Project Director, a national project manager or coordinator, a team leader for each Convention area and the UNDP officer. The GEF and the Convention Focal Points may be part of this Project Team.
[2] *"Operational Guidelines for Expedited Funding of National Self Assessments of Capacity Building Needs"* *(*GEF, 2001). See: www.gefweb.org
[3] Although the Action Plan is optional, each country has chosen to prepare one.

The GEF Operational Guidelines also provide a series of principles to guide the NCSA process, as follows:

- The NCSA should be nationally owned and nationally led. Likewise, it should use national experts where possible, and regional experts if necessary;

- The NCSA should draw on existing structures and mechanisms for coordination, this could include teams involved in other GEF enabling activities (EA);

- The NCSA should pay due attention to the provisions and decisions of the three Conventions;

- Within the NCSA process, participation, consultation and decision-making should be multi–stakeholder. This requires appropriately inclusive institutional arrangements;

- The NCSA should build on existing and related work. This includes assessment-related work undertaken through GEF-supported enabling activities and in national reports to the Conventions. This also includes previous capacity assessments not necessarily related to the Conventions.

- The NCSA should contribute to the long term aim of developing an holistic approach to capacity development that addresses capacity needs at the systemic, institutional and individual levels;

- The NCSA should be firmly mainstreamed into the broader context of sustainable development in-country, should be closely related to goals such as poverty alleviation, achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) and economic transition.

Building on the above GEF principles, UNDP emphasizes the following principles:

- Where appropriate, the NCSAs should focus on issues that cut across the three Conventions. There are many other GEF and internationally supported activities focussing on issues specific to one convention. A comparative advantage of the NCSAs is to focus on cross-cutting issues. A long term aim is to strengthen synergies across the Conventions;

- Where appropriate, the NCSAs should pay particular attention to assessing capacity needs at the *systemic* level. Many development projects focus on capacity at the individual and institutional levels, while neglecting important systemic issues;

The above Principles determine the *approach* to undertaking all the NCSA activities. All activities should be planned and implemented in a manner that ensures the principles are satisfied. In general, by following the guidance and using the tools in this Resource Kit, the Project Team will be able to ensure that the above-mentioned principles are fully satisfied. In general, there is little need for specific activities to meet these principles, although some additional measures may be necessary in some countries. More information on how to satisfy the Principles is provided in Annex 2

Each NCSA must respect the above-mentioned Outputs and Principles. However, each NCSA must be uniquely adapted to the national conditions and circumstances. Each should focus on issues and questions of national significance and importance. This adaptation can only be achieved in country by the Project Team and its network. *It is the responsibility of the Project Team to ensure that the NCSA Outputs contribute concretely to implementing global environmental conventions in the country and to realizing national sustainable development goals.*

1.3   The Nine Steps of the NCSA

This Resource Kit provides a standardized approach to preparing the NCSA. This approach consists of nine Steps (see Figure 1). Chapter 2 provides a detailed explanation of each Step. Countries are encouraged to review and, if necessary, modify these nine Steps to suit their country situation, whilst fully respecting the Principles and ensuring the quality of the Outputs set out in Section 1.2.

Figure 1: The Nine Steps of the NCSA
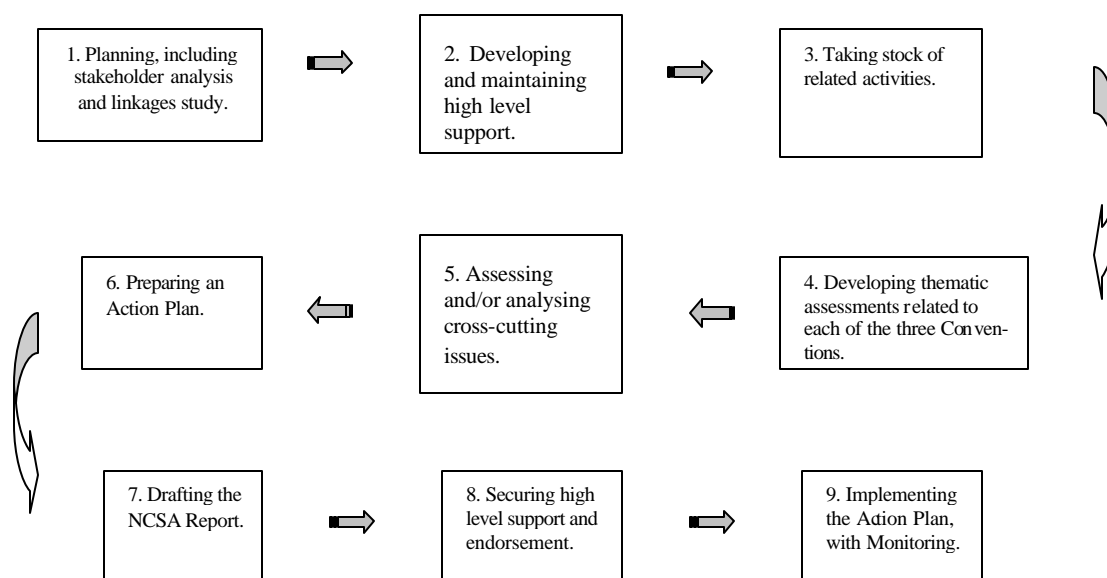
The key analytical Steps are 3 – 6. In Step 3, the Stock-Take, the Project Team prepares an objective, broad-ranging description of the Convention implementation status and previous related activities. This provides a basis for all future activities. In Step 4, the Project Team assesses capacity related to each of the three Conventions. The process is very likely to have already narrowed its focus into priority areas. The output would include a full understanding of problems and opportunities; yet no specific recommendations should be made at this stage. Step 5 is similar to Step 4, except the focus is cross-cutting issues, and the process will typically further focus into priority areas. Step 6 will build on the problem analysis from Steps 4 and 5, and determine the necessary measures to be implemented through the Action Plan, and how. Further focussing is very likely.

1.4   The Requirements of the Rio Conventions

The NCSA and capacity development are means to the following end: implementing the three Conventions by meeting all concerned requirements.

The text of the Conventions and subsequent Convention decisions place many requirements on the participating countries. In some cases, the Conventions require countries to take specific measures pertaining to capacity and capacity development. Table 1 below provides an initial list of the main requirements under each of the Conventions[4]. Table 1 can be used as a starting point, in each country, for preparing a comprehensive list of requirements or obligations. In many cases, in order to meet these requirements, participating countries will need new or improved capacity.

From Table 1, it is clear that there are many linkages across the sub-sectors of the three Conventions.

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[4] Table 1 is adapted from "*A Guide to carry out GEF National Capacity Self-Assessments of capacity building needs*" (GEF/UNITAR 2003), and is based on previous consultations with the Conventions. The list is not comprehensive, particularly with regards to UNCCD.

Table 1: Preliminary list of requirements under the Conventions. Convention text and decisions provides great detail on these requirements.

Biodiversity	Climate Change	Land Degradation
• National biodiversity conservation planning • Identifying and monitoring biodiversity and its conservation • In-situ conservation, including protected area system management • Preserving indigenous and local knowledge, innovations and practices • Ex-situ conservation of biodiversity • Developing and introducing economical and social incentives • Providing scientific and technical education and training • Raising understanding and awareness • Utilising environmental impact assessment for biodiversity conservation • Regulating the handling of living modified organisms • Regulating access to and transfer of genetic resources • Regulating the commercialisation and ensuring benefit-sharing from genetic resources • Managing information, notably through clearing house mechanisms • Implementing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety • Accessing financial resources	• Preparing national communications • Developing national climate change programmes • Preparing and managing greenhouse gas inventories, including emission database management • Assessing vulnerability and adaptation • Developing and implementing adaptation plans and measures • Assessing mitigation options • Research and systematic observation of climate and other functions • Developing and transferring technology • Improved decision-making, including assistance for participation in international negotiations • Clean Development Mechanism • Needs arising out of the implementation of Article 4.8 and 4.9 of the Convention • Education, training and public awareness raising • Information and networking, including databases In addition, obligations directly require the following capacity development: • Institutional capacity-building, notably through Secretariats or focal points • Enhancement of the enabling environment	• Education and public awareness • The transfer, acquisition, adaptation and development of economically, socially and environmentally appropriate technology • Training and technology regarding alternative, renewable energy sources • Promotion of alternative livelihoods, including training in new skills • Training for collection and analysis of data for disseminating and using early warning information systems, covering drought and food production • Systems to collect, analyse and exchange information • Effective early warning and advance planning for periods of adverse climatic variation • Systems for research and development • Technical and scientific co-operation • Joint research programmes for the development of appropriate technologies

1.5   The Capacity Needed to Implement the Conventions

In this Resource Kit, _Capacity_ is broadly defined as the ability of individuals, institutions and broader systems to *perform* their *functions* effectively, efficiently and in a sustainable way[5].

Table 1 in the previous section listed the requirements under the three Conventions. Based on Table 1, and based on previous analytical work[6], the functions to be performed in order to meet the requirements of the Conventions can be grouped as follows:

- organizing and formulating policies, legislations, strategies and programmes;
- implementing and enforcing policies, legislations and strategies, often through projects, notably by mobilising and managing all required resources;
- building consensus and partnerships among all stakeholders;
- mobilizing information and knowledge;
- monitoring, evaluating, reporting and learning.

Hence Capacity is needed to perform each of the above functions, for each of the Conventions.

For a country to be able to perform the above functions, it requires a complex composition of effective individuals, effective institutions and an appropriate enabling environment. In other words, if the country has the *appropriate* individuals, working effectively in the *appropriate* institutions, within the *appropriate* system, then it will be able to perform all the necessary functions and so meet its requirements under the Convention.

Capacity development is a process of change through which the system, institutions and individuals are strengthened in order to better perform the capacity functions. In this Resource Kit, capacity development is defined as *the process by which individuals, institutions and social systems increase their capacities and performance* in relation to meeting each of the requirements under the Conventions[7]. Capacity development directly increases ability to meet requirements under the Conventions.

- At the *individual* level, capacity development refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviours, most frequently through imparting knowledge and developing skills through training. However it also involves learning by doing, participation, ownership, and processes associated with increasing performance through changes in management, motivation, morale, and levels of accountability and responsibility;

- Capacity development at the *institutional* level focuses on the overall performance and functioning capabilities of an institution. This includes developing the mandates, the tools, the guidelines and the information management systems for the institution. It aims to develop its constituent individuals and groups, as well as its relationship to the outside. Institutions can be governmental or non-governmental, local or national, and formal or informal;

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[5] Adapted from '*Handbook in Assessment of Institutional Sustainability'*, NORAD, 2000
[6] See '*Capacity Development Indicators, UNDP/GEF Resource Kit'*, UNDP/GEF 2004
[7] Adapted from NORAD, 2000.

- At the *systemic* level, capacity development is concerned with the creation of "enabling environments", i.e. the overall policy, economic, regulatory, and accountability frameworks within which institutions and individuals operate. Relationships and processes between institutions, both formal and informal, are also important.

Table 2 provides more detailed information on the capacity functions and the three levels of capacity. Table 2 illustrates how capacity at the three levels is necessary to ensure the functions can be performed.

Box 1 : The NCSA – A Flexible and Responsive Tool

The NCSA is designed to be a flexible tool. It allows countries to respond to and exploit unique opportunities as they arise, both in the design stage and during the assessment itself. For example, during implementation, unexpected opportunities for cooperation amongst certain stakeholders may arise, or unique 'institutional moments' might arise, whereby an organisation can mainstream protection of the global environment into its mandate. The flexibility of the NCSA mechanism will allow a country to adapt the process to grab such opportunities.

Take the hypothetical case of a country that experiences an extreme weather-related event of national significance during implementation of the NCSA - such as flooding or drought. This creates an opportunity to put land management and climate change in the centre of the national agenda. The NCSA process could be adjusted to respond to this opportunity. For example, the NCSA could be used to assess national capacity to prevent and manage floods, in the context of the three Rio Conventions. This would ensure that the NCSA responds to a national priority in a timely manner. This would help secure high-level support for the NCSA. This would merge the work on the Conventions with national sustainably development – substantive mainstreaming. The groups responsible for the Conventions would work closely on the NCSA with the groups responsible for national development – institutional mainstreaming.

NCSA Project Teams should constantly be seeking such opportunities.

Table 2: Capacities at three levels required to perform the key functions of the Conventions[8]

Key functions to be performed to comply with Conventions[9]	Capacity required to perform key functions		
	System level[10]	Institution level[11]	Individual level
Conceptualize and formulate policies, legislation, strategies and programmes • Analyze global, regional and national socio-economic conditions • Visualize and develop long-term strategies • Conceptualize sectoral and cross-sectoral policies • Prioritize, plan and formulate programmes **Implement policies, legislations, strategies and programmes** • Mobilize and manage human, material, and financial resources • Execute and manage programmes and projects effectively • Select effective technologies and infrastructure **Engage and build consensus among all stakeholders** • Identify and mobilize stakeholders • Create partnerships • Raise awareness • Find "win-win" approaches • Appropriately involve all stakeholder groups in decision-making and implementation • Accept sharing arrangements and resolve conflicts	**Contextual framework** • **Situation analysis completed** • **Linkages with national reporting established** **Institutions and laws** • Environmental legislation in place • Penalties for violating the laws enforced • Appropriate mechanism to resolve disputes established **Participation, accountability and transparency** • Public can influence and contest legislation • People who use/depend on natural resources are represented in decision-making process **Authority level** • Authority over natural resources reside at the appropriate level (local/regional/national/international) • Decisions are taken at the appropriate level in the country	**Corporate governance** • Consistent strategic direction established • Corporate risk managed appropriately • Management structure acts on performance results **Corporate strategy** • Corporate strategy based on mandate • Corporate plan linked to management plans • Appropriate corporate goals and targets established with clear indicators to measure progress **Resource management** • Resource allocation in line with management plan • Adequate financial control mechanism established **Operational management** • Efficient operational procedures established • Clear operational targets set • Free flow of information	**Job requirements** • Job requirements clearly defined **Monitoring performance** • Clear reporting and accountability system in place • Reliable and transparent performance measurement system in place **Incentives** • Appropriate salaries and incentives provided • Possibility of career advancement provided **Skill development** • Adequate training provided to gain skills necessary to conduct tasks effectively • Adequate information available

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[8] This table provides a sample structure to analyze national capacities needed to respond to requirements under the 3 Rio Conventions. The table is not exhaustive or definitive.

[9] Capacity Development Indicators – UNDP/GEF Resource Kit (No.4), Page 4. http://www.undp.org/gef/undp-gef_monitoring_evaluation/sub_undp-gef_monitoring_evaluation_documents/CapDevIndicator%20Resource%20Kit_Nov03_Final.doc

[10] Adapted after World Resources 2002-2004 by World Resources Institute, Page 7, Box 1.3 "Seven Elements of Environmental Governance"

[11] Presentation on "UNDP's evolving approach to managing for results" – table on multilateral effectiveness scorecard level 3.

Mobilize information and knowledge • Gather, analyze and synthesize information • Identify problems and potential solutions **Monitor, evaluate, report, and learn** • Monitor and measure progress • Identify and distribute lessons learned • Use lessons learned for policy dialogues and planning • Report to donors and global conventions	**Property rights and tenure** • Property rights and tenure respected **Markets and financial flows** • Implementation of a market-oriented economy, prices reflect scarcity **Science and risk** • Science incorporated into decision-making as appropriate	**Quality assurance** • Adequate internal guidance and review in place • Adequate monitoring and supervision mechanism established • Well-functioning internal audit process in place • Well-functioning evaluation office in place **Staff quality** • Transparent recruitment exercised • Transparent promotion mechanism established • Appropriate staff performance management system in place	

1.6   How to use this Resource Kit

This Resource Kit is one of several technical support mechanisms provided by UNDP and the GEF Secretariat. Firstly, this Resource Kit is within the framework of the GEF Operational Guidelines (GEF, 2001). It provides additional guidance on how to satisfy the Guidelines. Secondly, it is a companion to "*A Guide to Carry out GEF National Capacity Self-Assessments of Capacity Building Needs*" (GEF/UNITAR, 2003), hereafter referred to as the 'UNITAR Reference Guide'. The UNITAR Reference Guide provides information on tools and methodologies. In order to avoid duplication, this Resource Kit refers the reader to the UNITAR Reference Guide at the appropriate points.

This Resource Kit draws from UNDP's experience in directly supporting similar projects in recent years. It also builds on the initial experience of several countries in implementing the NCSA. As more lessons are learnt regarding the NCSA, UNDP is to regularly update the Resource Kit [12].

Chapter Two provides the detailed step-by-step support to NCSA implementation. Chapter Two provides details on one suggested approach to undertaking the NCSA. It provides details of methodologies and tools. And it provides a suggested format or outline for each NCSA Output. Project Teams are encouraged to refer regularly to Chapter Two as they implement the NCSA.

It is not expected that this Kit can provide a response to the full range of challenges that will arise in the many countries as they implement their NCSA. During implementation, Project Teams may regularly require further information or have additional questions. In many cases, Chapter Two will direct the Teams to additional sources of information (see also Annex 1). If this is not sufficient, the Project Teams should use the additional technical backstopping services provided by UNDP as described in Chapter Three.

This Resource Kit provides details on one suggested approach to undertaking the NCSA. It intends to be an informative and useful resource; not to provide strict rules. Hence, it is understood that some countries may choose different methodologies, approaches, tools and formats. These may be equally valid – provided that the Principles and Outputs in Section 1.2 are satisfied. Furthermore, different countries will attach differing degrees of importance to different steps – based on the in-country situation and status. In recognition of the need for flexibility, in addition to describing one suggested approach, Chapter Two briefly introduces alternatives. It is also noted that the UNITAR Reference Guide provides alternatives.

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[12] The present the version is the third complete version

CHAPTER 2: A NINE STEP PROCESS

2.1   Step 1: Planning the NCSA Process

2.1.1.   The importance of planning

Although significant planning will have taken place during development of the NCSA proposal and project document, additional planning will be required after the project has begun and at *regular* intervals throughout implementation. This is in order to:
- Adapt to changes and update the situation;
- Bring new actors into the process, and constantly keep key stakeholders involved;
- Determine additional details on steps to be taken, by when, and by whom.

Successful planning puts in place the foundations for a successful project. Successful planning ensures optimal coordination and technical mechanisms for project implementation. Planning ensures there is a clear, common understanding of what is to be achieved and how it will be achieved.

2.1.2.   Suggested planning sub-steps and tools

1. Review the approved NCSA project document, including the initial workplan. Is it still appropriate? Should there be changes? For example, is it necessary to modify the activities or the institutional arrangements? If so, why? Prepare an updated overall and annual workplan (see Box 2).

2. Agree on the scope of the NCSA project. Discussions should be held on the geographical, institutional and substantive scope of the NCSA. The NCSA should be comprehensive in the initial stages. At later stages, it will be essential to focus. The focus could be on substantive issues, on institutions or even on a geographical area. This is closely related to Prioritisation (Section 2.4).

3. Prepare a detailed work plan for the first quarter of project implementation.

Box 2: Workplans

Workplan are documents that:
- Defines how the Project Team aims to achieve project objectives (through the *inputs* and *activities*) and over what timescale (through the *timeframes* and *milestones*). Clear linkages between each activity and the overall NCSA objective are established through the workplan;
- Defines how project success is measured (through the *indicators*) and provides a basis for monitoring/auditing and evaluation;
- Determines the roles and responsibilities of project team members and stakeholders;
- Justifies budget requirements over the given period;
- Can be used to communicate project aims and strategies to the project team, to decision-makers and possibly to the general public.

A workplan may be presented in the form of a matrix. Typically workplans are prepared annually and quarterly. Quarterly workplans are more detailed than annual workplans. Annual workplans are typically the basis for securing budget approval.

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4. Determine the roles and responsibilities of each member of the Project Team. Prepare individual Terms of Reference (TOR). TOR are used to plan and manage the roles and responsibilities of all team members, both short-term and long-term. A TOR is a document that briefly describes: the context; the objectives of the team member; the expected outputs from the team member; and the expected inputs, activities or tasks. TOR should also clearly state the time schedule and reporting requirements. TOR may also list the required qualifications for the position. In addition to planning and managing inputs, TOR are used:

- as a means of communicating the activities of the project and its experts;
- as a legal document, attached to the contract;

5. Undertake the initial Stakeholder Analysis. A stakeholder analysis is an analytical tool to determine who should be involved in a project, an activity or a process. It also determines *how* to involve each stakeholder. The Stakeholder Analysis is essential to ensure that there will be sufficient involvement in the NCSA process and widespread ownership of the NCSA products. A Stakeholder Analysis is often presented in matrix form. It should list all stakeholders, it should list their connection to the NCSA (or to the relevant activity), it should state how to involve them in the NCSA, and list any other relevant information (See Box 3).

The project stakeholder analysis should be completed at the beginning of the NCSA project. The analysis should be reviewed, and possibly revised, at least once during project implementation.

Box 3: The Stakeholder Analysis Matrix[13]

Who?	What?	Why?	How?
Stakeholder Name	Stakeholder Interests, Position and Official Mandate	Reasons for inclusion	Possible role

After identifying stakeholders, their interests, etc., it may be helpful to divide stakeholders into four categories: (i) those who are likely want to participate fully or whose active involvement will determine the credibility of the process; (ii) those who are likely to play a more limited role; (iii) those who are likely to wish simply to be kept well informed; and (iv) those who will not want to be involved.

The following questions could be used to identify all stakeholders in the overall NCSA process:

- Who makes/influences related policy and decisions?
- Who could "champion" the capacity initiative?
- Who could provide financial and technical resources?
- Who would be affected by the project?
- Who are the direct/indirect beneficiaries?
- Who has no formal "voice" yet merits special attention?
- Who represents those impacted?
- Who is likely to support or oppose the initiative?
- Who is responsible for implementation?
- What political forces are there?

(*adapted from UNDP MDGD/BDP, Technical Advisory Paper no. 3*)

6. Identify the members of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and prepare draft TOR for the PSC;

7. At the appropriate time, identify all project experts and consultants and develop their TOR. Project Team members should prepare *draft* TOR well in advance of the expected tasks. Key project stakeholders and consultants may provide comments on the draft TOR. The TOR are then used to identify/select experts. Once the expert has been selected, the TOR should be thoroughly discussed and modified, in order to reflect the thoughts, insights and specific strengths of the expert.

8. Undertake an initial Linkages Study. The Linkage Study will be used in later Steps of the NCSA. This study should indicate how to link the NCSA with other processes in strategic and mutually beneficial ways. The Linkages Study should consist of:
   - A list of programmes, projects and plans related to NCSA;
   - A short description of each of the above;
   - A statement of possible linkage with the NCSA (e.g. scope for having joint inputs, joint outputs or joint activities);
   - A specific entry or linkage points, such as the individual responsible for the programme;
   - Any additional comments or remarks.

9. Undertake a Client Survey. In order to ensure that the NCSA is responding to an agreed need, the Project Team should carefully consider who are the clients (or the proposed beneficiaries) of the NCSA. What do these clients expect from the NCSA? The NCSA must meet, or modify, these expectations. In many cases, the environmental ministry will be the principal client. However, capacity to implement Conventions is needed in many stakeholder groups such as NGOs, private sector, local government, academia, educational

institutes, media, farmers, and ministries not responsible for environment. Some countries may choose to focus their NCSA on one of these.

The Client survey consists of:
- List of possible agencies and programmes that could benefit, could use or could be influenced by findings from NCSA;
- One line description of each agency or programme;
- A short description of how the agency/programme may benefit;
- Proposed way to develop linkages with the agency/programme;
- Additional comments or remarks.

Box 4: 'Stakeholder Analyses' and 'Linkages Surveys; New Tools in Many Countries

'Stakeholder analyses', 'linkages surveys' and 'client surveys' may be new terms, and possibly new concepts, in some cultural and institutional contexts. Inertia and other forces may resist their being properly undertaken. The Project Team should recognise and account for this from the outset. Time and other resources must be allocated to the stakeholder analyses and surveys, and to ensuring that they are prepared in an appropriately participatory manner.

2.1.3. Additional recommendation - the Planning Workshop

In most countries, many or the above-sub-steps will be undertaken through a 'National NCSA Planning Workshop'[14]. This Workshop brings together a range of stakeholders. It obtains their ideas and their contribution to the project process. Most importantly, it starts the process of securing their involvement and understanding. Holding a National NCSA Planning Workshop early in the process can help to ensure that the NCSA process is accepted as a national activity. By the end of this Workshop, agreement should be reached on:

- the objectives and anticipated benefits of preparing the NCSA;
- the NCSA coordinating mechanism;
- the workplan and timeframe for preparing the NCSA;
- the scope of the intermediate and final outputs, and;
- the need for, and establishment of, working parties responsible for developing the thematic assessments.

At the Workshop, different working groups can be used to develop the stakeholder analysis and the client and linkages surveys.

Participants at the Workshop should include representatives of all interested national, regional and local ministries/agencies, universities and research institutes, industrial and professional organisations, labour organisations, environmental groups, and consumer and other interested community-based groups. The representatives of the national ministries should be high-level officials with sufficient authority to ensure the input of the ministry in the NCSA process. Project Teams may also consider inviting international technical co-operation agencies that have programmes related to the Conventions.

2.1.4.   Additional recommendations for Planning

<u>Quality management</u> Planning also involves monitoring the *quality* of the project progress and products. A useful tool for such quality management is the Quality Management Matrix (see Annex 3). The Project Team may use this matrix to constantly observe the quality of the process, and to observe progress towards expected products. The Project Team may use this Matrix to identify weaknesses and determine the need for changes in the project approach. The Matrix can also be used to communicate project progress to a wider audience.

<u>Who is involved in planning?</u> The only project participants at the beginning of the project are the Project Team and, in some countries, the three convention Focal Points. Project planning should first be done by this small group. Once a broader group of project stakeholders has been identified, the outputs of the planning should be shared with that group. For example, the planning process will lead to a proposed membership and a proposed TOR for the PSC; the PSC should review and modify its membership and its TOR.

<u>Assuring flexibility</u> As mentioned previously, the NCSA are intended to be flexible and responsive. Planning allows decisions on the project approach to be regularly reviewed and revised.

> the Project team should constantly work with all consultants to ensure consistency.
>
> **2. The NCSA Project Team and key consultants should have a clear understanding of capacity development concepts from project beginning.** Typically, Project Team members and key consultants are drawn from traditional environmental sectors. They often have little knowledge or experience related to 'capacity development' or 'capacity assessment'. Hence, measures must be taken to familiarise the Team members, particularly with Table 2, the capacity performance functions and the capacity levels.

2.2 Step 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective High-level Support

2.2.1. The importance of high-level support

High-level support helps the process to prepare the NCSA and significantly increases the chance of a successful follow-up. According to UNDP/OECD (2002), high-level support can:

- Ensure issues are addressed from a multi-sectoral perspective;
- Underpin the need for, and the appreciation of, the fact that sustainable development requires economic, financial, social, cultural and environmental progress;
- Ensure that the PSC and other coordinating mechanisms function;
- Ensure that the principles set out in Section 1.2 are followed throughout project implementation, not just at project completion;
- Ensure that the NCSA supports sustainable development and national priorities;
- Ensure that national policies reflect the aims of the NCSA;
- Make key decisions, and ensure they are followed through;
- Help commit government funds, and help mobilise non-governmental or donor funds;
- Keep the process open and inclusive.

2.2.2. Suggested sub-steps and tools for creating high-level support

The main justification for high-level support is that the NCSA can lead to a better use and allocation of resources. Once the country is better equipped to allocate resources, the international community should be more willing to contribute resources to the country. Hence a well-prepared NCSA should help mobilise funding. This fact should attract high-level interest.

Given the array of programmes competing for the attention of high level officials and decision-makers, special and strategic efforts are needed to create and maintain this high-level support. The suggested sub-steps are:

1. Identify from where support is needed, desirable and realistically achievable (the Stakeholder Analysis and Client Survey from Step 1 should provide this information);

2. Prepare a strategic plan for enlisting the support of high-level individuals. Typical actions that *may* be included in the strategic plan are:

   - Use of the Linkages Survey and Client Survey to identify entry points and approaches. Follow-up by building linkages;

- Identify the attractive points of the NCSA, suc h as its international nature, and the fact that it should lead to an increased and better use of resources. Highlight these points in a one-page doc ument;
- Build support and understanding at all levels in the Ministry responsible for the NCSA, by briefing the Minister, preparing a mission statement, and ensuring the NCSA is appropriately internalised into the ministerial processes;
- Request senior officials in the Ministry to contact senior officials from other Ministries and from outside government, possibly through their membership on national coun-cils;
- Request the support of senior staff in international organisations. Notably, the UNDP Resident Representative is well placed to contact senior stakeholders from a range of sectors and agencies;
- Contact and engage high-level stakeholders through existing channels, such as National Councils for Sustainable Development (NCSD) or the Cabinet;
- Use targeted briefings, brochures and news-sheets to provide high-level officials with information;
- Determine just how the NCSA will contribute to national and regional development priorities. For example, for many countries a one-page paper could be prepared on how the NCSA will help the fight to alleviate poverty. This one-page paper should be circulated to senior officials. Senior officials will then see how the NCSA can help them with their work to fight against poverty. Likewise, in eastern European countries, it should be made clear how the NCSA will support the European Union (EU) Accession process. The NCSA can then be linked to the Accession process, and will benefit from this momentum;
- Secure media coverage for the NCSA through TVs and newspapers. This will draw wide attention to the NCSA and so encourage senior stakeholders, especially politicians, to want to be associated with the project. A possible starting point would be to arrange a TV interview with one or more high level officials on the subject of the NCSA;
- Invite senior people to give speeches at workshops, and ask them to review project documentation.

3. Once high-level officials are interested in and informed about the whole NCSA process, it should be possible to maintain their interest. It will be necessary to ensure they are regularly briefed, by both formal and informal means, and that from time to time they are given an opportunity to play a more active role (using the mechanisms listed above). High-level inputs should be secured regularly during the process, for example at the finalisation of the Action Plan, and during monitoring.

4. The status of high-level support should be monitored. If it declines, remedial measures should be taken.

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Box 7: A Participatory Approach

Experience indicates that one of the reasons that previous assessments and planning processes failed to initiate change was that they were not adequately participatory. *Participation* is a development mantra – sometimes giving the impression that it is the solution to all development challenges. But what is it, what does it mean, and, in particular, what does it mean for the NCSA processes?

The NCSAs are most likely to be led by a small project team lying within one or two government departments. Other p*articipants* will vary, and could include other government departments, decision-makers, local governments, NGOS, academic and educational institutions and private sector.

The lowest level of participation is when the participants are asked to provide information. The level of participation increases through *sharing information*, to participants *giving advice*, to participants *setting the agenda* and ultimately to enabling participants to *take key decisions*.

Clearly, there are costs and benefits to increasing participation. The main benefits are that it ensures the process is country driven and broadly owned, that it responds to real needs and it builds on existing structures. More participation also leads to more information and understanding being generated. The more broad and intensive the participation, the more likely the Action Plan will be implemented. Although a participatory process is unlikely to generate a full consensus, it should leave all stakeholders feeling that they have contributed.

The costs are mainly organisational and logistical. In order to participate in a truly meaningful manner, stakeholders should have sufficient time, understanding, information and confidence. The project will have to allocate resources to ensuring this. Another possible cost of participatory approaches is that the outputs are less refined and less consistent.

NCSAs will also have to address *unwilling* participants. That is, stakeholders who have been identified as being essential to the process, but who are not interested initially. This may be a key Ministry, or for example the private sector. This unwillingness should not be used as an argument for abandoning the participatory approach. A strategy must be developed to overcome it.

Another challenge to be faced by project managers is ensuring the participation of large groups of people. For example, the private sector, or the agricultural community? It is not feasible to involve all members of these groups as participants in the NCSA. Ideally, an appropriate *representative* must be found. This may be for example an industrial association, a local government department, a local farmer's unions or possibly an NGO. If it is not possible to find representatives of a stakeholder group, then a *sample* of the group should be involved in the process.

OECD/UNDP 2002 provides detailed information on the different perceptions regarding participation, and how to ensure a participatory approach.

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Box 8: Ensuring High Level Support - Lessons Learnt

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2.3   Step 3: Stocktaking

2.3.1. The importance of the Stock-take

The Stock-take is a requirement of NCSA, as set out in the GEF NCSA Operational Guide-lines.

The Stock-take is essential as a foundation for the capacity assessment. The Stock-take en-sures that no issues are neglected, and so provides a reliable basis for priority setting and fo-cussing. The Stock-take creates an open, non-controversial description of previous activities and provides a platform for dialogue and debate. The Stock-Take will be a key input into the preparation of TOR for the later analytical steps of the project.

Some countries may have already prepared related Stock-takes. In such countries, the NCSA should not repeat previous stock-takes, and so Step 3 may be very rapid.

2.3.2. The contents and structure of the Stock-take

Step 3 leads to a specific Output: the Stock-take. This document reviews and summarises previous capacity assessments and previous measures to develop capacity in relation to the three Conventions. Three Stock-takes should be prepared; one for each Convention. Box 9: provides a suggested outline for the Stock-take of each Convention.

Box 9: Suggested Outline of the Stock-take

1. Introduction

2. Summary Stakeholder Analysis

3. Stock-take (for each requirement listed in Table 1, provide):

   - An overview of progress towards meeting the requirement;
   - A list and short description of related previous capacity assessments and capacity development exercises;
   - A list and short description of the main findings and Outputs from previous exercises;

4. Synthesis. Provide a synthesis of previous capacity development efforts within the framework of the Convention, including a synthesis of lessons learnt, and a listing of the Convention requirements that have been neglected.

   The stock-take should be broad and inclusive. It is important to consider, at least briefly, *all* activities related to each Convention, and so ensure that the NCSA builds upon all past experience, all lessons learnt, and all existing country-specific analyses. Thus, the Stock-take should not be limited to official government sources. It should consider the broad range of secondary information available from university studies, unofficial government exercises, NGO research, etc. It should also include similar exercises for other international environmental conventions and agreements, and capacity assessments.

   Documents to be consulted should include reports to the three Conventions, relevant Strategies and Action plans, assessments of land, water and forest resources, preparation of national sustainable development strategies, environmental action plans, Agenda 21.

2.3.3. Suggested tools for the Stock-take

In all cases, through a brainstorming, it is necessary to first develop a detailed list of requirements under each Convention. The starting point for such a brainstorming is Table 1.

Tool 1 - Desk Study

The most basic Stock-take can be done through a desk study. In a desk study, project managers will commission (typically through a sub-contract) one or a small number of individuals to collect existing secondary information related to a chosen subject. Or, members of the Project Team can directly implement the study. Detailed TOR are prepared to guide the work. Information is collected, analysed and summarized.

In general, desk-studies are used:
- As a starting off point – to gather all information, documentation and opinions together in one document as a basis for future actions;
- When time is limited and participation is not essential;
- When most information is considered to be readily available;
- When few conflicts are anticipated, and when individual viewpoints are not important;
- When the source of the information is not critical.

Desk studies are rapid and easy to manage. However, they are generally not very participatory. Ownership over the outputs of a desk study will largely be limited to the individual(s) preparing the report and the project managers. Desk studies are not good at generating *new* information.

The Project Team can use desk studies as a way of bringing stakeholders into a process. For example, if the aim is to involve the Ministry of Energy in environmental issues, and previously they have shown little interest, it can be useful to sub-contract the Ministry (or their trusted institute) to prepare a desk study on the relationships between energy and environment.

Several desk studies can be requested simultaneously from different groups, addressing the same or related issues. This is a way to facilitate inter-sectoral discussion. For example, prior to a workshop, participants from 'opposing' sectors can each be commissioned to prepare desk studies. They would be expected to present these at the workshop, hopefully opening a dialogue.

Tool 2 - Questionnaire

If little previous work has been done, a more thorough stock-take is necessary. This can be done using a self-completion questionnaire. In its simplest form, this is a list of questions that is sent out to institutions/individuals. They answer the questions in writing and return it to the project office. The Project Team may have to chase up to ensure that most questionnaires are actually completed and returned. Once all forms have been returned, the Project Team should compile, assemble and analyse all the information in the completed questionnaires.

In some cases, questionnaires can be completed through interviews with the Project Team (by telephone and in-person).

Questionnaires are used:

- When the participants are distributed over a large geographical area, and time and financial constraints preclude visits;
- When detailed responses are needed to questions;
- When it is essential to account for points of view;
- When it is felt that the anonymity of written responses may facilitate more complete answers.

Great care and attention should be given to preparing the questions and the format of the Questionnaire. The Questionnaire should be probing but it should not be leading. Questions should be focused, but should be flexible enough to allow surprises to emerge. Questionnaires should be easy to complete, but provide sufficient information and detail. As for all survey techniques, experts can be contracted in order to assist the preparation of the Questionnaire. If resources are very limited, the Project Team may prepare the Questionnaire. During the design process it is important also to consider how the questionnaire will be coded for analysis and data organisation.

Those responsible for completing the questionnaires may be selected randomly or they may be selected based on pre-agreed criteria. The responses may be either anonymous or named. Anonymous responses may be more detailed. However, in some cases it is important to know the source of information in order to fully understood the implications.

In general, this is not a very participatory tool. It involves a limited number of persons, on a bilateral basis, and possibly only certain categories of stakeholders complete questionnaires in a serious manner. This tool can be made more participatory by:
- Sending out the questionnaire to both a targeted group *and* to a large random group of related stakeholders;
- Including many open sections on the questionnaires, where the respondents are encouraged to provide additional thoughts and information;
- Administering the questionnaire during a personal interview;
- Ensuring a summary of the questionnaire findings are sent to all respondents, possibly asking for their comments;
- Encouraging respondents to respond, and complementing the findings of the questionnaire with direct interviews.

Tool 3 – A Workshop or A Series of mini-Workshops

In cases where no previous work has been done before, and there is little consensus or dialogue relating to the Convention in the country, it may be useful to have a workshop or a series of mini work-shops to prepare the Stock-take. The term 'workshop' covers a wide range of activities involving the bringing together of a large number of stakeholders to one event, for a period of between one half-day and one week. The aim of the event could be to distribute information, to gather information, to provoke ideas, to discuss ideas, to generate answers to questions, to create linkages, or some combination of all these.

This tool is best used to address issues that can be addressed publicly, or where bringing together stakeholders is likely to generate additional information or viewpoints, or when holding one meeting with a large number of stakeholders is cost and time effective. Workshops are also effective tools for addressing complex and multi-dimensional issues. Finally, workshops are useful when it is desirable to build networks or to improve connections amongst stakeholders.

In order to be successful, workshops should be carefully planned and organised. This begins with a clear identification of the workshop objectives[15]. Planning also includes:

- identifying and preparing participants in a timely manner;
- identifying and preparing resource persons;
- distributing documentation to participants ahead of the workshop;
- preparing the agenda. This should not be too ambitious. There should be plenary and breakout sessions. Objectives and outputs should be identified for each session. Time should be allowed for discussion and questions;
- identifying capable chairpersons and note-takers (for both plenary and breakout sessions).

None of the above can be left to chance and all require a long lead time. Good logistical support, such as working rooms, stationary, equipment and interpreters is essential. Attention should be paid to the design of the coffee breaks and lunches – as these are an important part of the workshop.

The time and effort needed to prepare workshops can be considerable, and many workshops fail because it has been under-estimated.

Workshops are generally broken down into several sessions, including: formal presentations, focussed working groups, open working groups, brainstorm sessions, plenary discussions, etc. A draft workshop output should ideally be presented in the final session of the workshop. Following the workshop, time should be allowed for all participants to further reflect and provide additional information and viewpoints.

Workshops are not always highly participatory. In some contexts, only formal workshops are possible. Some issues cannot be addressed in public in some countries, and some stakeholders are unwilling or unable to participate fully in public events.

2.3.4. Alternative approaches to the Stock-take

The Project Team will have to judge how much time and resources to devote to the Stock-take. This will depend on the extent of previous activities, and the amount of information readily available.

The Project Team should reflect on the existing country situation to determine the amount of participation desired in the stock-take. It can be very participatory - or a single individual may complete it.

Although it is likely that the stock-taking will be done separately for each of the three Conventions, it is essential that the three teams working on the three stock-takes work coherently and regularly exchange information and ideas. There should be a common format to the stock-take reports and a common timetable.

The Stock-take will focus only on activities directly related to capacity building in most countries. However, some countries may wish to include this into a broader stock-take of all activities related to implementing the Convention.

2.4   Intermediary Step - Setting Priorities

It is not possible to do an in-depth analysis of all requirements or of all capacity needs. Accordingly, at some stage it will be necessary to set priorities. This may be immediately after Stock-take, or during the Thematic Assessments (Step 4), or later. Additional priority setting may be done during the Cross-Cutting Assessment, or whilst preparing the Action Plan.

Setting priorities represents one of the most important and potentially difficult activitie s of the NCSA process. There are many competing interests and values that must be considered and balanced Setting priorities is difficult in many cultural contexts.

It is noted that the NCSA does not select priority requirements under the Convention – all Convention requirements are *equally* obligatory. However, it may be necessary to select requirements that are a *priority for capacity development*.

2.4.1.   Suggested tools for setting priorities

The <u>workshops</u> and <u>mini-workshops</u> described under Step 3 can be very useful tools for setting priorities.

<u>Tool 4 - Prioritisation Matrix</u>

This is an analytical tool for setting priorities. It can be used to set priorities across Convention requirements, or across capacity needs, or across proposed capacity development measures. A prioritisation matrix would normally be used in conjunction with workshops. Sub-steps are (UNITAR, page 23, provides additional guidance):

1. Determine who will take the decisions, for example a selection panel;
1. From Table 1, and from the Stock-take, make a list of all the requirements under the Convention;
2. Develop selection criteria. For example, these may include: importance; urgency, low compliance, feasibility. The list of criteria should be agreed upon by all concerned. Time must be taken to allow for the strategic views of stakeholders;
3. Display the list of requirements and the criteria in a matrix form (see Table 3 below for an example from Macedonia);
4. Determine a *weighting system* to give different importance to the selection criteria. All criteria should not be considered equal. Also, some criteria may be considered *essential*, and even if a requirement scores high overall, if it does not succeed on an essen-

tial criterion, it will not be selected as a priority. This weighting may be used to give special emphasis to cross-cutting issues;

5. Whilst referring to the Stock-take, each member of the selection panel should allocate a score to each requirement for each criteria;
6. The points are totalled, and the requirements with the highest points are the priorities.

Table 3: Macedonia: Elements from the biodiversity prioritisation matrix

Number	Issue	Scale of Problem*	Level of Concern*	Ability to Adequately Address Issue*	Priority Ranking*
1	Need for measures for in-situ Conservation of the natural ecosystems and species, restoration of degraded ecosystems, and recovery of threatened species	T/N	H	M	1
?	Identification and monitoring components of biological diversity important for their conservation and sustainable use	N/L	H/M	M	1
?	Decreasing the number of threatened species and habitats (especially wetlands and forests	G/T/N/ L	M/H	M	1
ETC					
6	Reaching the effective national biodiversity planning	T/N	H	M	1/2
7	Appropriate measures for ex-situ conservation for the biodiversity components	N	M/H	M	2/1
12	Incorporation (integration) of the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity within the overriding priorities of the country - economic and social development and poverty eradication	N	M	M	2
13	Development and introduction of economically and socially sound measures that act as incentives for the conservation and sustainable use of components of biological diversity	N/L	M	M	2
ETC					
19	Approximation of the national laws to European legislation and implementation of international obligations, as well as legal inter-sectoral harmonization	N/G	H	M	2/3
20	Develop and introduce measures regulating the access to genetic resources and providing access for technology transfer that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity	N/G	L	M/H	3
*For 'scale', enter: L - local, N - national, T - trans-boundary or G – global. *For 'level', and for 'ability', enter: L - low, M - medium or H – high. *Provide relative ranking from 1 to 5 of the problem(s) being faced by the country (1= most severe problem(s), 2= second most problem(s), etc.). The same ranking can be given to different issues where appropriate.					

There is always a danger of political interference when priority-setting. This can be avoided if the criteria and weighting are carefully determined to reflect any likely political concerns. It is essential that the selection process be transparent.

The final ranking should be discussed with all stakeholders at national and local level. The finalisation of this ranking should be one of the most participatory steps in the NCSA. It is highly recommended to have either a national workshop or local workshops for this.

2.4.2.   Alternative approach to prioritisation

There are many ways to select priorities and it is not possible to cover them in any detail in this document. For example, technical experts may simply pre-select possible priorities. Then, in a workshop, an expert presents and justifies each possible priority. Following a debate, the workshop participants would vote to select priorities. In this example, the prioritisation is done *qualitatively*. It is essential that selection be transparent and reasonably participatory – at a minimum the project team should be able to describe to stakeholders the process and criteria for selection.

Box 11: Prioritisation - Lessons Learnt

1. The importance of regular or continuous prioritization through the NCSA. The scope of the NCSA is so ambitious that a single priority-setting step is insufficient. The approach is to be comprehensive at the outset, and to progressively narrow the focus into a manageable number of issues. It is likely that several priority-setting steps will be needed. This may include prioritization across Convention commitments, followed at a later stage by prioritizing across the capacities to be analyzed, followed by prioritizing across objectives of the Action Plan. At each step, the method to prioritize should be clear, it should documented and communicated, and it should be reasonably participatory.

2.5   Step 4: Preparing Thematic Assessments

2.5.1.   The importance of the Thematic Assessments

The Thematic Assessments are a requirement of the NCSA, as set out in the GEF Operational Guidelines. Three Thematic Assessments should be prepared, covering respectively biodiversity, climate change and land degradation. Preparing the Thematic Assessments is the greatest technical challenge in the NCSA. Appropriate NCSA technical resources should be allocated to preparing these assessments.

The Assessments are prepared through an in-depth analysis. The starting point is the list of requirements under the Convention and the Stock-take. From this, the analysis identifies which requirements are not being met; it identifies the layers of underlying causes, the contributing factors and the key barriers. The analysis leads to a complete understanding of the nature of the capacity needs, constraints and opportunities. Finally, the analysis leads to a clear identification of optimal interventions points – i.e. where an appropriate capacity development intervention can have the most impact. The results of the analysis are presented in the Thematic Assessment. The Thematic Assessment is the basis for all future action to develop capacity.

The methodology for preparing the Thematic Assessments is very important. It should provide a platform for bringing together all the stakeholders. The methodologies for all three Thematic Assessments should be fully coherent.

2.5.2.   The contents and structure of the Thematic Assessments

A suggested format for the Thematic Assessments is provided in Box 12.

Box 12: SuggestedFormat for Thematic Assessments[17]

1. Introduction to the Convention thematic area (i.e: biodiversity, climate change or land degrad a-tion) in-Country

    1.1   Brief overview of the in-country situation with regards to the Convention.
    1.2   The country's priority requirements under the Convention, with explanation.
    1.3   Brief overview of progress to meeting each priority requirement.
    1.4   The overall enabling environment:
    - overall economic -framework;
    - overall approach in-country to partnerships, delegation, governance, etc,;
    - overall physical infrastructure and logistics in-country;
    - overall approach to environmental protection;
    - overall approach to implementing the Convention.

2. Capacity affecting all requirements (each of the following sub-sections to be addressed in terms of systemic, institutional and individual capacity; each of the following sub-sections to explore the underlying causes of failure to implement the Convention).

    2.1   Capacity to Conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programmes.
    2.2   Capacity to Implement policies, legislations and strategies.
    2.3   Capacity to Engage and build consensus among all stakeholders.
    2.4   Capacity to Mobilize information and knowledge.
    2.5   Capacity to Monitor, evaluate, report, and learn.

3. Capacity to meet priority requirement no. 1 (each sub-section to be addressed in terms of systemic, institutional and individual capacity; each of the following sub-sections to explore the underlying causes of failure to implement the Convention).

    3.1   Capacity to Conceptualize and formulate policies, legislations, strategies and programmes.
    3.2   Capacity to Implement policies, legislations and strategies.
    3.3   Capacity to Engage and build consensus among all stakeholders.
    3.4   Capacity to Mobilize information and knowledge.
    3.5   Capacity to Monitor, evaluate, report, and learn.

4. Capacity to meet priority requirement no. 2 (each sub-section to be addressed in terms of systemic, institutional and individual capacity; each of the following sub-sections to explore the underlying causes of failure to implement the Convention).

    4.1   Capacity to Conceptualize and formulate policies, legislat ions, strategies and programmes.
    4.2   Capacity to Implement policies, legislations and strategies.
    4.3   Capacity to Engage and build consensus among all stakeholders.
    4.4   Capacity to Mobilize information and knowledge.
    4.5   Capacity to Monitor, evaluate, report, and learn.

And so forth, for each priority requirement.

5. Description of the process: tools used, stakeholders involved, etc.

2.5.3.   The suggested sub-steps and tools

The specific methodology for an in-depth analysis will depend on the in-country situation and on the nature of the issues being analysed. However, the Thematic Assessments should be prepared in a participatory manner. If not, there should be a broad consultation around the draft output. This is to ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the process, and that no major issues have been overlooked.

Suggested sub-steps are:

1. Draft TOR for each Thematic Assessment and assemble teams of experts/consultants to do the three Assessments (i.e. the 'assessment teams');
2. Review the Stock-take and the suggested format for the Assessment in Box 12;
3. Determine the scope of the Assessment:
   - Should all requirements in Table 1 be covered?;
   - Should all capacity levels and performance functions in Table 2 be covered?;
   - If necessary, select priorities;
4. Review the Stakeholder Analysis, Linkages Survey and Client Survey (see Step 1) to identify who should be involved in this Step, and how;
5. The Project Team and assessment team develop a workplan for the in-depth analysis, including detailed TOR for the assessment;.
6. The Project Team, the three assessment teams and other core stakeholders hold a one-day workshop to discuss and finalise the TOR;
7. The assessment teams collect information related to the priority requirements;
8. The assessment teams hold workshop(s) at different parts of the country to discuss each requirement and the capacity existing to meet the requirement. One workshop may cover several requirements, if the same stakeholders are to be involved. The workshops are results-oriented – the output of the workshop will be:
   - a statement of progress and challenges to meet the requirement;
   - a review of the five capacity performance functions with regards to the requirement;
   - an examination of the existing capacity at system, institutional and individual level;
   - a draft analysis of root causes, contributing factors, and key barriers to progress;
   - a listing of possible needed capacity building measures and intervention points.
9. Based on the workshop output, for each requirement, the assessment team writes up the in-depth analysis in the pre-agreed format.
10. The reports for each requirement are combined into a single Thematic Assessment report (see Box 12 for suggested format).

The following tools may be used to prepare the Thematic Assessments: desk study, questionnaires/interviews, workshops and mini-work-shops. These tools are described under Steps 1-3 above.

In addition, in order to have a fuller understanding of the capacity situation, notably of the root causes, the following tools may be necessary:

Tool 5 – Site visits/technical studies

In some cases a detailed technical analysis of the capacity by an expert may be necessary.
The assessment team initially prepares a list of topics to be discussed and explored. The team then visit the site (examples of possible sites include a national institution, a local government

body, or a protected area). Using the list of topics, the team discusses each topic with all concerned stakeholders at the site. The discussions will most likely lead to new topics, which should also be discussed. At the same time, the team should review all existing documentation. The analysis and discussions will lead to a through understanding of the capacity and needs.

A site visit is useful when it is not possible to prepare a detailed questionnaire because there is not sufficient information. A site visit is useful in ensuring all topics are covered in the analysis (topics that were not originally anticipated will come out of the discussions). A site visit is useful to get all concerned feedback and points of view.

Site visits are limited because:
- They can be costly, in both money and time;
- They focus on qualitative discussion rather than quantitative measurement.

Tool 6 – Root cause and problem tree analysis

A Root Cause is a cause that underlies the capacity constraint or shortage. The recurrence of undesired outcomes can only be effectively addressed by addressing the root causes.

A Root Cause Analysis is a tool for diagnosing fundamental problems and challenges. It is also useful for understanding the linkages between causes, problems and symptoms. Most likely, it should lead to a diagram representing all problems, causes, underlying causes and so forth. This diagram is often called a problem tree.

Within the context of the NCSA, the root cause analysis:
- will illustrate the linkages between failed commitments to the Conventions and capacity needs;
- will illustrate the linkages between major capacity constraints and the underlying causes and constraints;
- help define priority areas, and help determine actions to remove capacity constraints..

Root cause analyses are difficult and require the involvement of experts, grass-root practitioners and decision-makers. These three groups are all necessary to ensure technical accuracy and ownership over the findings. The root cause analysis is best done in a workshop or working-group situation.

The root cause analysis starts with a major requirement or a major capacity constraint. A series of questions is asked in order to probe the related fundamentals. In a workshop, the answers and all findings are written on small pieces of card and pinned to a board. The lines between the cards represent cause/effect. The cards should be modified, changed and moved until all participants are satisfied that they accurately represent the situation. These cards form the problem tree.

The problem tree will also illustrate *bottlenecks*. A bottleneck is one cause that lies at the root of many problems. Removing a bottleneck can have a major impacts. Problem trees can also reveal causes that underlie problems in all three Conventions; addressing the one cause will therefore improve implementation for all three Conventions.

Box 13 provides a sample problem tree analysis. In this sample, the country is unable to meet all its requirement under the UNCBD because its protected area network (PAN) is not effective. The problem tree identifies a series of causes and root causes to this. Although very incomplete, the problem tree also points to appropriate intervention points.

Box 13: Sample Problem tree analysis

| Typical Interventions | Underlying causes | Cause | Failed commit-ment to UNCBD |

Project area level coo-dination mechanism

Negotiated agree-ment with possible financial compen-sation

Too few guards per hectare/PA too large

Poor management capacity

Lack of manage-ment data

Poor equipment

Local people do not respect PA

Some villages have *legal* access, often pre-dating PA establishment

All PA is not fully registered

Provincial gov-ernment is unable to control *illegal* access

Access to PAN is free and easy

Converting PAN and surrounding forest land to farm-land

Local, biodiversity friendly, development plan

Protected area man-agement plan pre-pared together with community and im-plemented

Awareness raising, through village coun-cils etc

Provincial level co-ordination mecha-

ABS, innovative fi-nancing, land tenure reform

No benefits to individual farmers from standing forest.

Perceived and real Economic benefits to farmers

National level coordi-nation

Agricultural enhance-ment, tourism, etc.

Desire to maximise prof-its and income

No economic alternative (related to unemploy-ment and population growth)

Perverse incentive to convert land to obtain ownership

SWOT is an alternative method for understanding the detailed situation. A SWOT analysis investigates the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. A SWOT analysis can be applied to many circumstances, e.g. to an institution, to an individual, to a requirement under the Convention, or even to a policy or legislative act. SWOTs are usually prepared through a workshop, but can be prepared by an individual or group of individuals. The aim is to list and briefly describe each of the strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats. These lists are used as a basis for analysis, and for planning capacity development measures. The results of the SWOT analysis are usually presented in the form of a matrix.

The Romanian Climate Change team undertook a SWOT analysis of 13 requirements under the UNFCCC. Table 4 shows some elements of the draft SWOT matrix prepared in Romania for the requirement to adapt to the impacts of climate change.

Table 4: Draft SWOT Analysis of Romanian Response to UNFCCC Requirement to Adapt to Impacts of Climate Change

S T R E N G T H S	*Legal aspects:* • The Second National Communication presents the national approach on the strategies to be adopted for preparing adaptation to the impact of climate change on agriculture, forestry, water resources and water management based on the evaluation performed using specialized assessment models. Adaptation Strategic guidelines are formulated for each of the above fields • The Water Law no.107/1996 amended by the law 310/2004 establishes the principles to be applied for a sustainable use of the water resources taking into account the vulnerability of aquatic ecosystems. The law states the responsibilities of the MEWM and of the National Administration "Apele Romane" in the water management. *Institutional aspects:* **Ministry of Environment and Water Management – Department of Water management** • Responsible for water management at national level **National Administration "Apele Romane" and territorial units** • Responsible for water management – quantity and quality - at national, rivershed and county level. Responsible for management plans for water resources and for coastal zones. Main regulatory body for surface and underground water management.
W E A K - N E S S E S	*Legal aspects:* The are no specific provisions on the climate change impact adaptation. *Policies & Strategies:* No specific provisions on climate change adaptation in Romanian strategies.
O P P O R T U - N I T I E S .	*Legal aspects:* Promotion of international and/or national cooperation programmes to develop strategies for the climate change impact adaptation and to provide financial support for the necessary measures.
T H	*Legal aspects:*

R E A T S	Lack of the necessary fund to support the measures to limit the impact of the climate change.

The SWOT analysis ensures that all aspects are equally covered. There is no danger, for example, of focussing only on strengths, or on weaknesses. The resulting SWOT matrix provides an excellent basis for discussion and further analysis. Additional study and compilation is necessary after the SWOT.

2.5.4. Additional recommendations for the Thematic Assessments

Care should be taken to ensure that the Thematic Assessments do not threaten or alienate certain stakeholders. Thematic Assessments should not be too opinionated. In many cases, there will be conflicting opinions and evidence regarding the capacity situation. In such cases, the Thematic Assessments should describe both viewpoints, and state that further analysis and discussion is necessary to reconcile the two viewpoints.

2.5.5. Alternatives approaches to the Thematic Assessments

For both the Stock-takes and the Thematic Assessments, the Project Team should judge the optimal breadth and depth of the analysis. For example, the Thematic Assessment may cover *all* requirements under the Convention, or it may focus on a small number. In the latter case, there will be a greater depth of analysis.

In terms of timing, preparation of the Thematic Assessments could be a long activity, or it could just be a synthesis of previous work undertaken (e.g. the NBSAP).

The suggested format provided in Box 12 may be substantially revised should a country have a good reason. This should be done in consultation with the UNDP/GEF regional support services.

Box 14: Thematic Assessments - Lessons Learnt

1. The importance of respecting the logic of the assessment. In several cases, project teams have been unable to maintain the logic of the assessment. This has led to all documents (stocktake, assessment, action) each containing a mixture of description, analysis and recommendations for change. This lack of logic makes it difficult to convince future donors to support the process. Efforts must be made to assure that:

- the Stock-taking is a neutral, descriptive process. The output is a general description of the entire situation;
- The Thematic Assessment is an analytical process, leading to understanding, but not leading to recommendations. For practical reasons, it must focus, and it is necessary to set priorities before the thematic assessment. The Output is a detailed understanding of the capacity situation in priority areas (likewise, the cross-cutting assessment is an analytical process);
- The Action Plan is a planning process. Through this process, detailed understanding is transformed into recommended measures.

2.6   Step 5: Preparing the Cross-Cutting Assessment

Box 14: Common and Cross Cutting Issues

There may be a need to differentiate between things *common* to all three Conventions and things that truly *cut across* all three Conventions. For example, the need for more experts is common to all three conventions in many countries, but in most cases the *type* of experts needed is specific to the Convention. Hence this is not a truly cross-cutting need. It is a common need, and some synergies and efficiencies may be generated by addressing it through a single activity.

Alternatively, the need for data on land capability is needed for all three Conventions in many countries. The same data is needed for each Convention. This is a truly cross-cutting need. Likewise, shortage of capacity to draft project proposals is a cross-cutting constraint in many countries.

2.6.1.   The importance of the Cross-Cutting Assessment

One of the unique aspects of the NCSA is its focus on issues that cut across the three Conventions, so-called cross-cutting issues. The underlying objective of the cross-cutting work is to identify opportunities for cooperation and synergies across the three Conventions. For example, a cross-cutting analysis may identify a single capacity constraint that is affecting all three Conventions. Removing that constraint would therefore have a three-fold impact.

Cross-cutting assessments can be undertaken at several levels:
- cross-cutting requirements under the Conventions;
- cross-cutting capacity constraints;
- cross-cutting capacity needs;
- cross-cutting opportunities;
- cross-cutting natural resource management problems.

Box 16 gives examples of a variety of cross-cutting parameters from Belarus.

> **Box 16: Examples of cross-cutting parameters from Belarus**
>
> Cross-cutting natural resource problems
> Land degradation in Polesie region;
> Inappropriate or unsustainable drainage schemes;
> Carbon sinks (forests or wetlands), and their relation with biodiversity and land degradation;
> The changing local climate – drought and floods and seasonal warming;
>
> Cross-cutting root causes or constraints
> The pervading belief that the only problem in Belarus is the financial limitation – and that Belarus has all the other capacity needed;
> The shortage of good information;
> The fact that several related information collection mechanisms exist in parallel, none of which are optimally effective;
> The fact that 'planning' is not given enough resources, and activities are implemented without sufficient planning;
> The fact that the interagency mechanisms (eg on biodiversity) are not always effective;
> The ineffective delegation of decision-making power: within government, within Ministries, to local levels of government and to people;
> How to use the $110 million annually collected in the special environmental fund? How to manage and distribute this optimally?
> The low economic value given to water and other natural resources;
> The poor monitoring of the environment, and related monitoring of implementation of Conventions;
> The inadequate mechanisms for successfully influencing economic sectors;
> Inadequate linkages and synergies with other Conventions (Stockholm, Montreal Protocol, etc.);
> The fact that public commitment and understanding is limited;
> The shortage of funding to address priority issues;
> The regular changes in government officials;
> Poor communication with Convention Secretariats;
>
> Cross-cutting capacity needs
> Comprehensive legislation and legislative framework;
> Good information collection and management systems;
> System of market-based incentives;
> Enhanced NGO community, possibly through the 'Public Coordination Council';
> More scientific and technical experts;
> A mechanism for generating synergy and improving coordination across the three Conventions;
> More coverage of global environmental issues in the newspapers and on television;
> A comprehensive land classification system;
> More fundamental research, or a better organised, coordinated and planned system of pure research;
> Improvements to the existing educational courses and curricula;
>
> In addition, cross-cutting *opportunities* include: exploiting resources available through the European Union, and developing a strong network (in government, institutes and NGOs) of relations with Poland and Lithuania.

2.6.2.   The contents and structure of the Cross-Cutting Assessment

Box 17 provides a suggested outline for the Cross-Cutting Assessment. This is intended to be preliminary. Project Teams should use the findings of the Thematic Assessment and this suggested outline to prepare an outline for the Cross-Cutting Assessment that is optimal for their country. It is vital that the Cross-Cutting Assessment does not repeat work done under the

Thematic Assessment, and that it adds value in terms of indicating future capacity development needs.

Box 17: Suggested Outline for the Cross-Cutting Assessment

1. Introduction:

    1.1 Description of existing arrangements to coordinate across the three Conventions.
    1.2 Description of existing activities linking all three Conventions.
    1.3 List of organisations involved in two or more of the three Conventions.

2. Assessment of capacity to meet priority requirements that cut across all three Conventions.

    2.1 Based on the three Thematic Assessments, and on Table 1, list and describe overlapping requirements of the three Conventions.
    2.2 Select priority overlapping requirements.
    2.3 Priority requirement no. 1:
    -   Define and describe the requirement in terms of all three Conventions;
    -   Describe and assess the status of the 5 capacity performance functions;
    -   Describe the capacity existing and needed at system/institutional and individual levels;
    -   Clarify the underlying causes of the failure to meet the requirement;
    -   Describe the impact of weak capacity on implementation of each of the three Conventions;
    -   Describe any opportunities: points where synergies and economies of scale can be generated by taking cross-cutting approaches and measures, even if no specific capacity constraint or gap has been identified.
    2.4 Priority requirement no. 2:
    2.5 (and so forth)

3. Assessment of cross-cutting capacity constraints

    3.1 Based on the three Thematic Assessments, and the capacity performance functions (see Table 2), select priority capacity weaknesses.
    3.2 Weakness no. 1:
    -   Describe and assess the capacity situation. Assess individual, institutional and system situation. Describe needs, gaps, constraints and opportunities. Clarify the underlying causes.
    -   Describe the impact on implementation of the three Conventions.
    3.3 Weakness no. 2 (and so forth).

4. Description of the process: tools used, stakeholders involved, etc.

2.6.3. Suggested sub-steps and tools for the Cross-Cutting Assessment

1. Assemble a team to do the Cross-Cutting Assessment;
2. Review the Thematic Assessments;
3. Determine the scope of the Cross-Cutting Assessment. Which of the following should it cover? cross-cutting requirements; cross-cutting capacity needs; cross-cutting capacity barriers; cross-cutting opportunities and/or required cross-cutting measures.
4. In line with the scope, finalise the outline of the Cross-Cutting Assessment;
5. Hold mini-workshops and consultations;
6. Prepare the draft Cross-Cutting Assessment providing information on:

- constraints to meeting cross-cutting requirements;
- cross-cutting capacity constraints, and;
- cross-cutting capacity development opportunities;

7. Discuss, modify and eventually validate the Cross-Cutting Assessment through a consulta-tive process.

At some stage it may be necessary to further set priorities.

Tools

Although the subject matter may be different, the methodology and tools for undertaking the Cross-Cutting Assessment are similar to those used for the Thematic Assessments (work-shops, questionnaires, root-cause analysis, SWOT, etc., see Section 2.5).

In certain cases, the level of analysis under the Thematic Assessment may be such that no ad-ditional analysis is needed for the Cross-Cutting Assessments. In such cases, the Project Team needs to simply compile and categorize the findings from Thematic Assessments in order to prepare the draft Cross-Cutting Assessment.

The draft Cross-Cutting Assessment should be discussed with stakeholders, probably through a series of mini-workshops.

Box 18: The Promise of "Synergies"

It is important to draw a distinction between three separate but interrelated concepts: interlinkages, overlaps, and synergies:

- *Interlinkages* are the formal and informal coordination mechanisms that exist between differ-ent MEAs;
- *Overlaps* describe situations where the specific provisions or areas of competence of one Con-vention intersect with those of another. This creates the potential for conflict, duplication of efforts, and, of course, synergy;
- *Synergies* are the amplified positive impacts resulting from coordinating or linking implemen-tation of two or more MEAs.

In the context of the NCSA process, the mandated analysis of cross-cutting issues offers an opportu-nity for countries to identify synergies in the implementation of the Rio Conventions. By encouraging countries to examine existing overlaps, identify potential synergies, and establish effective interlink-ages, the NCSA process can find more cost-effective approaches to implementation.

2.6.4.   Alternatives approaches to the Cross-Cutting Assessment

In some countries, it may be appropriate to combine all thematic assessments into one single assessment. This single assessment would cover thematic and cross-cutting issues.

Box 19: Cross-Cutting Assessment - Lessons Learnt

2.7   Step 6: Drafting the National Capacity Development Action Plan (CDAP)

2.7.1.   The importance of the Action Plan

Preparation of an Action Plan is not an obligatory component of the NCSA. However, all countries undertaking an NCSA with UNDP support have opted to do this. The most important aspect of the Action Plan is that it has to turn the results of the earlier assessments into programmable, realistic, bankable actions that will be fully supported over the medium term immediately following the Assessments. The Action Plan is the vehicle for ensuring there is follow-up to the NCSA process. It should also mobilise specific support to specific follow-up activities.

2.7.2.   The contents and structure of the Action Plan

No specific format is suggested for the CDAP. Each country should develop its own format, in line with the opportunities, institutional arrangements, funding abilities, priorities, potential partners, etc. The Action Plan should be a realistic but ambitious. The *minimum* contents of an Action Plan are suggested in Box 20.

Whereas many actions in the Action Plan may be costly and require financial reallocation, many other actions in the Action Plan will be low or no-cost. These actions should be identified and initiated immediately. This proactive approach will build trust and serve to convince potential financers that the Action Plan is to be seriously implemented. Likewise, the assessments and analysis from earlier steps in the NCSA will point to urgent actions that can be immediately taken, without the need to await formal approval of an Action Plan. These should be taken immediately, before the Action Plan is approved.

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┌────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                                              │
│      Box 20: Suggested Minimum Contents of the National Capacity            │
│                    Development Action Plan                                   │
│                           (CDAP)                                             │
│                                                                              │
│   The Action Plan should include all the following information:             │
│                                                                              │
│   Part I - Context                                                           │
│                                                                              │
│   1.  A summary of the Thematic Assessments and the Cross-cutting            │
│       Assessment.                                                            │
│                                                                              │
│   2.  The overall vision for capacity development to implement global        │
│       environmental conventions, stating the guiding principles, the        │
│       main approaches and the overall objectives.                           │
│                                                                              │
│   3.  General description of resource mobilisation requirements:            │
│       financial and non-financial resource needs; national and              │
│       international resource needs, and; GEF eligibility. Include, if        │
│       necessary, a resource mobilization plan.                              │
│                                                                              │
│   4.  Overall institutional arrangements for the Action Plan, including      │
│       the approach to monitoring and the monitoring schedule.               │
│                                                                              │
│   5.  Based on the Thematic and Cross-Cutting Assessments, a selection       │
│       and brief description of priority capacity constraints, barriers       │
│       or opportunities.                                                      │
│                                                                              │
│   Part II – Action Plan                                                      │
│                                                                              │
│   6.  Priority capacity constraint, barrier or opportunity no. 1            │
│       6.1   Description of existing capacity, needs and opportunities       │
│       6.2   List of related ongoing activities                             │
│       6.3   List of partners active in related sub-sectors                  │
│       6.4   Description of how capacity development will help the           │
│             country to meet its requirements under the three Conventions    │
│       6.5   Specific details of measures to be taken                        │
│       6.6   Timetable for measures                                          │
│       6.7   Allocation of roles and responsibilities – including clear      │
│             description of the role of each partner, and a description of   │
│             linkages with each related activity                             │
│       6.8   Financial plan – costs and sources of finance                   │
│       6.9   Annual targets and indicators of success                        │
│       6.10  Description of linkages to ongoing national sustainable         │
│             development (eg Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, PRSP)         │
│             initiatives                                                      │
│       6.11  Risks and assumptions                                           │
│                                                                              │
│   7.  Priority capacity constraint, barrier or opportunity no. 2            │
│       7.1   Etc.                                                             │
│                                                                              │
│       Etc, until                                                             │
│                                                                              │
│   8.  Description of the Process: tools, methodologies, stakeholders         │
│       involved, approval and appraisal                                       │
│                                                                              │
│   Clearly, Chapter 6 may be best presented in the form of a matrix.         │
│                                                                              │
└────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
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It is noted that there may be four Action Plans (for climate change, biodiversity, land degradation and cross-cutting issues) or just one, *consolidated*, Action Plan.

2.7.3. Tools for preparing the Action Plan

The Linkages Survey and the Client Survey prepared under Step 1 will be very useful at this stage. The Linkages Survey will identify how and where linkages and partnerships can be built, and these partnerships will greatly increase the chances of successful implementation of the Action Plan. The Client Survey will identify who will be the users of the Action Plan. These 'clients' have to play a key role in preparing the Action Plan, or it is unlikely they will use it.

Tools are required to translate the analysis in the assessment reports into a series of programmable, realistic, cost-effective activities to be implemented through an Action Plan.

Tool 8 – Logical Framework Analysis

Logical framework analysis is a tool for determining the necessary activities and inputs to achieve determined goals or to resolve problems. It should be used when:

- preparing and discussing project activities and inputs;
- moving from the assessment reports to the Action Plan.

Logical framework analysis is a reiterative process. The starting point is to determine the overall objective. Through discussion and dialogue, the sub-objectives are then determined, followed by the necessary outcomes to ensure the sub-objectives are met, followed by the necessary inputs and tasks to ensure the Outcomes. This process should also identify time-lines, responsibilities, targets and indicators. Following the reiterative process, all the information is usually displayed in a matrix (often referred to as the 'Logframe'). The Logframe is often a key element in a project proposal. Box 21 provides an example of parts of a Logframe for a typical UNDP capacity development project.

Another important tool is a national workshop to help finalise the Action Plan. This will help generate ownership of, and active support for, implementation of the Plan.

Box 21: Elements of the LogFrame Matrix from a Typical UNDP Capacity Building Project				
Goal:	*To empower local communities in UNDP programme countries to improve the quality of peoples lives and realize the MDGs*			
Objectives	**Inputs**	**Outcome**	**Impact**	**Assumptions**
Objective 1. To develop the capacity (i.e. tools, policies, networks and advocacy strategies) of local communities to more deeply engage in realizing the MDGs				
Task 1.1 Identify what information communities require to realize the MDGs	Identify from community engagements top issues that communities are dealing with	List of top issues that UNDP could start developing action	Increased value added inside of UNDP due to its clear knowledge about the needs of local peoples (Builds into its comparative advantage)	Throughout the different networks and experts, UNDP can identify the needs of those communities and support with information their local needs
	Research from partner organizations and other unit members the type of information required for community dissemination	Documents targeted for local communities		Support of local peoples do add into UNDP's goal to achieve the MDGs
Task 1.2 Etc.				
Objective 2. To develop capacity of UNDP staff in community-based initiatives including lessons learned and access to information				
Task 2.1 Identify and collect UNDP contacts and its contacts for each key unit and practice area engaged with community based work.	Contact information Develop framework for collecting and beginning to codify UNDP's CBI work UNDP internal research of CB work etc	List of UNDP staff with list of key activities Framework for UNDP's CB initiatives Summary information of CBI initiatives organized by the framework etc	Develop a better understanding among units of how UNDP works at the community level List of key activities would allow different units to build communication among each other etc	Identifying key UNDP units allows to understand who within UNDP is working with local communities Most of our CBI work will rely heavily on our partners therefore contacts with partners are extremely important etc

Stakeholder consultations can be useful when finalizing the Action Plan. This is a specific form of workshop. The objectives of the stakeholder consultation are to: generate information related to a specific issue; generate discussion and ideas around a specific issue; generate consensus on a recommendation; or generate ownership over a specific finding.

Stakeholder consultations are also used when there is a need to increase dialogue on a single issue with a clear group of stakeholders. Stakeholder consultations are also used to overcome resistance to a proposed change, or to find a compromise.

Prior to the consultation, a report is prepared to present information and all viewpoints. The report is distributed (in the local language) to the stakeholders before the consultation. Several representative stakeholders should be contacted beforehand and encouraged to play an active role in the consultation, for example by preparing an intervention.

Stakeholder consultations can be a strategic manner to convince doubters of the merits of a proposed activity. By involving stakeholders, by listening to their concerns and clearly responding to some of their concerns, it is possible to increase confidence and instil a sense of ownership.

Finally, desk studies can be useful when preparing the Action Plan.

It should be recalled that GEF NCSA funds cannot be used for *implementing* the Action Plan.

2.7.4. Alternatives

Three alternative approaches to the Action Plan are outlined in Box 22.

A country may decide to focus its Action Plan (or part of it) on one very specific activity. For example, a country may determine that the establishment of a single centre to implement all three Conventions would remove many capacity barriers to all three Conventions. In such a case, the Action Plan would focus on the establishment of the centre. The Action Plan would be a *business plan* for the centre. It would detail the legislative requirements, the data requirements, the staffing requirements and logistical and equipment requirements. It would then set out how all these requirements are to be met, by when, by who and the related partnerships.

Box 23: Action Planning - Lessons Learnt

1. Adjusting the Action Plan to the audience. In some contexts it may prove useful to have 'two' Action Plans, or to separate the Action Plan into two parts. The first part would be similar to Part I in Box 20 above. It should be sufficiently succinct to be read by high-level authorities. It would include a brief summary of the actions to be taken. Part II would include the full details of the actions to be taken and how they are to be taken. It will not given to high level decision-makers; it will be distributed and approved at a working or technical level.

Box 22: Alternative approaches to the Action Plan

Alternative 1 – Standard National Action Plan

The standard approach is a single, national action plan that will probably include the following:
- General national objectives and strategy;
- An explanation of the benefits of implementing the proposed Action Plan;
- An Activity Framework, covering say 3-5 years;
- A detailed list of the funding needs, and the sources of financing;
- Allocation of responsibilities amongst concerned stakeholders;
- Targets, milestones and indicators.

Depending on the scope of the Action Plan, implementation may be fully within the framework of one Ministry, or it may require the active involvement of several ministries and other institutions. If it is fully within the framework of one Ministry, approval by that Ministry is sufficient. However, this approval would probably be in close consultation with the Ministry of Finance, given the likely budgetary implications. This approval is likely to be somewhat time-consuming, but feasible and meaningful.

If several agencies are required to implement the Action Plan, approval by all those agencies will be necessary (experience shows that approval by a single coordinating committee is unlikely to be sufficient). This approval should be meaningful, and include the financial commitment to implementing the Action Plan. This approval may be very time-consuming. There is a trade-off: the more specific the Action Plan (particularly in terms of financial requirements); the more difficult the approval process.

Alternative 2 – an internal Action Plan

A less ambitious, but possibly more realistic, approach is to prepare a stand-alone Action Plan that is fully within the influence of the stakeholders already fully involved in implementing the Conventions. In this scenario, all elements of the Action Plan will be fully implemented by the Convention Focal Points and the small teams already fully committed to implementing the Convention (e.g. the responsible departments in the Ministry of Environment, the experts working in the academies/institutes, the NGOs dedicated to the Convention and possibly some media stakeholders).

The advantage of this approach is that the Action Plan *will* be implemented. There is no danger that it will not be approved. There is no danger that approval will be meaningless because finance and commitment is lacking. However, the *reach* of this Action Plan would be less than in Alternative 1.

The methodology to prepare this would start with a stakeholder analysis to determine those *willing* and *able* to make direct contributions to implementing the Convention. The Action Plan, based on the NCSA Assessments, will set out the coordinated and strategic actions to be implemented by the willing and able stakeholders. It will set out timeframes, indicators and financial needs. In this case, the financial needs will already be secured - there may be no need for an approval process.

Such an Action Plan could be catalytic. It could set out how the willing and able community over, say 3-5 years, will build up partnerships, mobilise resources, implement a limited number of actions and establish the foundational *basis* for more widespread action over the long term.

Alternative 3 – Mainstreaming

In this case, no separate stand-alone Action Plan will be prepared by the NCSA. Implementation will be through existing related programmes and projects, thus:

- first, a list of priority capacity development measures will be identified through the Assessments;

- second, a comprehensive list of related *existing* Action Plans and programmes will be prepared (including, for example, PRSP, NSSD, Agricultural Strategy, Tourism Strategy, NBSAP, etc);
- third, where possible, the priority capacity development measures will be ***placed into*** the related existing Action Plans;
- fourth, the proponents of the related Action Plans will be contacted and convinced to modify their plans in order to implement the recommended capacity development measures. This may also include the securing of third-party financing. This will be the approval process;
- Some mechanism to *monitor* the extent to which the measures recommended by the NCSA are being implemented will be necessary.

2.8   Step 7: Drafting the NCSA Report

2.8.1.   The importance of the NCSA Report

The NCSA Report is a requirement under the GEF NCSA guidelines.

The NCSA Report will be used to help ensure accountability in the final stages and in the follow-up to the NCSA. The NCSA Report is to be circulated to all stakeholders as a way to secure their long-term involvement in the process. The report is also an excellent way for communicating the successes of the NCSA, as well as the remaining challenges.

A key aspect of the NCSA projects is the focus on *process* as well as *product.* It is more difficult to demonstrate a good process than a good product. The Assessment Report is a key tool for capturing and communicating the quality of the process.

2.8.2.   The contents and structure of the NCSA Report

The NCSA Report must include a summary description of the process in Step 1 through Step 6. It must also include a summary description of all major Outputs under the project. Box 24 suggests a format for the NCSA Report.

Finally, in some contexts, producing voluminous reports may not be the best way to communicate with decision-makers. Accordingly, project managers may decide that short reports accompanied by persuasive verbal presentations are the best manner to present the Assessments. In such cases, it is even more important to determine indicators of success.

Box 24: Suggested Format for the final NCSA Report

Executive summary

1. Introduction
    1.1 National Priorities for implementing the Three Conventions.
    1.2 Institutional arrangements for the Conventions, including coordination mechanisms.
    1.3 Brief review of status of Convention implementation.
    1.4 Brief description of priority cross-cutting issues.

2. Basic information regarding preparation of the NCSA
    2.1 Implementation arrangements.
    2.2 Timetable.
    2.3 Major stakeholders.
    2.4 Finances.
    2.5 Monitoring arrangements.

3. Description of the NCSA Process
    3.1 An overview of achievements with regards to each of the GEF and UNDP Principles for the NCSA. A self-appointed ranking between 1 and 5 for each Principle [18], with justification. The Principles are (see Annex 2 for more details):
        • Nationally owned and driven;
        • Implementation based on existing structures and mechanisms and working teams;
        • Paying due attention to the provisions of the three Conventions;
        • Multi–stakeholder participation, consultation and decision-making;
        • Build on existing related work;
        • Contributes to holistic approach incorporating systemic, institutional and individual levels of capacity;
        • Mainstreamed into sustainable development in-country;
        • Where appropriate, focus on issues that cut across the three Conventions;
        • Where appropriate, pay particular attention to the *systemic* level of capacity;

4. Description of the required NCSA Products
    4.1 Stock-take: Brief description of the contents, comprehensiveness, relevance and utility. A self-appointed ranking between 1 and 5.
    4.2 Thematic Assessments. Brief description of the contents, comprehensiveness, relevance and utility. A self-appointed ranking between 1 and 5.
    4.3 Cross-cutting assessment. Brief description of the contents, comprehensiveness, relevance and utility. A self-appointed ranking between 1 and 5.
    4.4 Action Plan.
        • Brief description of the main objectives and monitoring framework;
        • Brief outline of the proposed programme and projects;
        • Progress so far.

5. Description of any unexpected useful outputs of the NCSA. This may cover issues such as:
        • Contribution to socio-economic development;
        • Improved negotiation skills;
        • Enhanced cross-sectoral coordination;
        • Strengthened involvement of non-governmental organizations;
        • Establishment of a culture of self-evaluation;

Annex: Lessons Learnt during the implementation of the NCSA (see Box 25)

Box 25: Lessons Learnt From The NCSA Process

It is important that each team carefully documents the lessons learnt from successes as well as failures. This is an excellent way for a Project Team to collectively 'learn'. Lessons can be summarised and communicated with other Projects, even in other countries. This way, the global NCSA community can collectively 'learn'.

To achieve this, the Project Team should regularly record lessons, perhaps in the quarterly progress reports. Then, at the time of the Annual Project Review, each Project Team should prepare a 1-2 page document summarising Lessons Learnt. This should provide the following information:

1. Context: Country, NCSA status and main characteristics

2. Lesson no. 1
   - Summary of lesson;
   - Summary of proposed solution or alternative approach

3. Lesson no. 2
   - Summary of lesson;
   - Summary of proposed solution or alternative approach

     And so forth to a maximum of 5 lessons.

4. Conclusion and any overall lesson learnt.

2.8.3.   Tools for drafting the NCSA Report

Ideally, Step 7 should be an activity *ongoing* through the project. All project events and milestones should be documented and recorded, as and when they occur, in a coherent way. For example, there should be brief reports of workshops, brief reports from all sub-contractors, and quarterly progress reports associated with the workplan. There will also be photographic and video records. At the end of the project, this documentation can be summarised to help prepare the NCSA report. The Quality Management Matrix in Annex 3 may also be useful for regularly monitoring and documenting progress.

Desk studies and stakeholder consultations are useful tools when preparing the NCSA Report. The Project Team should first prepare a draft NCSA report, and then should consult key stakeholders before finalisation and submission.

In some cases, the Project Team will not have the best perspective for observing overall progress. The Project Steering Committee has an important role to play in providing this perspective and preparing this Report.

Box 26: Drafting the Final Report - Lessons Learnt

1. The need for a synthesis report. In some countries, it has been necessary to prepare a short overall report for circulation to senior decision makers (The report described in Box 24 would be too detailed for most decision-makers). Such a synthesis report typically contains a summary of the process, a summary of the four assessments, and a summary of the Action Plan. Such a report is typically submitted for approval together with the Action Plan.

2. The need to make all technical reports accessible. NCSA projects are generating vast amounts of data, information and analysis. Clearly, the final report cannot include all this. However, these technical reports must remain openly accessible to interested parties. This access should preferably be internet based, with a system of filing/searching in order to assure rapid access to relevant information.

2.9   Step 8: Obtaining High-level Approval of the Action Plan

2.9.1.   The importance of high-level approval

The Action Plan is the main tool for achieving capacity change and capacity development. If successfully implemented, the country will go a long way to meeting its goals with respect to the three Conventions. High-level support for the Action Plan will greatly increase the chances of it being implemented.

2.9.2.   What does high-level approval consist of?

The method to obtaining approval will vary from country to country. In many cases, this may mean submitting the Action Plan to the President or Prime Minister's office, or presenting it to the Cabinet, or presenting it to a multi-sectoral National Committee for Sustainable Development.

The Action Plan is likely to consist of no-cost, low-cost, medium-cost and high-cost activities. Hence, implementation of the Action Plan can start at little or no cost. Typically, these parts of the Action Plan can be approved without the involvement of the financial or budgetary departments responsible. The Project Team should immediately proceed with these low and no-cost activities. This will raise morale and encourage donors.

Medium and high-cost actions will need to be approved by the budgetary bodies, and this may be a time consuming process.

2.9.3.   Suggested sub-steps and tools for high-level approval

This is really a continuation of Step 2. Further consultation with the targeted high-level officials may be necessary. In many countries, the PSC will play a key role in obtaining high-level approval.

Box 27: High Level Endorsement - Lessons Learnt

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1. It is important to determine early in the process how the NCSA Action Plan will be formally endorsed by the government. The cross-cutting nature of the NCSA and the fact that it does not stem directly from a country's obligations under the Rio Conventions have led to problems with the official endorsement process in some countries. For example, in all countries, the NCSA Action Plan addresses some systemic issues that fall outside the scope of the Ministry of Environment, and some issues that require significant cooperation with other Ministries. This means that high-level, formal endorsement is necessary. However, this is not a legal requirement, and existing approval procedures do not anticipate this situation. To avoid or mitigate these problems, preparations for the NCSA action plan approval process should begin relatively early in the process.

2.10   Step 9: Monitoring Implementation of the Action Plan

2.10.1. The importance of monitoring

The NCSA is the beginning of a reiterative process. It is essential that implementation of the Action Plan be monitored in order to:

- Capture successes and share information;
- Detect weaknesses and take remedial measures;
- Prepare the basis for future initiatives to assess and develop capacity;
- Provide understanding and information that can be shared across countries implementing the three Conventions, and with processes for implementing other environmental conventions or agreements

2.10.2. The contents of a monitoring system

The national Project Teams will be responsible for monitoring implementation of the plan, with or without assistance from the UNDP/GEF NCSA project.

The schedules and targets identified in the Action Plan will provide the framework for monitoring implementation. Monitoring activities will vary from country to country and may include:

- preparation of quarterly and annual progress reports, to be distributed to key national stakeholders;
- holding a monitoring workshop, between 6 and 12 months after approval of the Action Plan, in order to discuss progress, to define constraints to progress and to identify measures for overcoming these constraints;
- in the case where the Project team is not directly responsible for implementing actions (for example if the actions are implemented through an existing environmental or sustainable development initiative), the Project team should still coordinate monitoring of all actions in the Capacity Development Action Plan.

CHAPTER 3: UNDP TECHNICAL SUPPORT

The <u>UNDP Country Office (CO) is</u> the first calling point for NCSA project teams for assistance on technical and administrative matters. The programme officers in the Country Office are supported in each region by one of UNDP-GEF's Regional Coordination Units (RCU), where a Regional Coordinator is given specific responsibilities for NCSA projects; his/her name and contact points are provided to all NCSA project team members. Regional Coordination Units will take the lead in arranging and conducting the most appropriate implementation support activities for their region in close cooperation with the Country Office staff.

The <u>UNDP/GEF Headquarters Unit</u> in New York will provide overall guidance to NCSA implementation. It will serve as a global hub for NCSA knowledge management, distilling and disseminating lessons learnt from NCSAs worldwide. The unit will periodically update the contents of the present Manual to reflect the experiences gathered from NCSAs at various stages of the implementation process. The HQ unit will provide inputs to the GEF Secretariat and other implementing agencies on the NCSA process based on the lessons learnt from the implementation process, thus helping shape the GEF's evolving approach to capacity development.

The <u>Global Support Programme</u> will provide technical backstopping to countries to ensure timely completion of their National Capacity Self-Assessments (NCSAs). The strategy is to identify, on an ongoing basis, countries' assistance needs for NCSA activities, over and above what they are receiving through COs and RCUs. The aim is to meet this demand with the rapid mobilization of technical backstopping, training and opportunities for countries to share experiences related to the preparation of NCSAs. The Support Programme will be structured as a learning and knowledge management mechanism, with an initial emphasis on analyzing information and knowledge generated by the NCSA process.

Regional institutions will play a central role in assisting countries, assessing emerging needs and developing training strategies. Depending on the expertise required, a number of regional institutions will be involved in technical backstopping activities. A Support Unit will be established at UNDP HQ to implement and supervise the Support Programme's activities. Under the supervision of the UNDP-GEF Capacity Development and Adaptation Cluster, the Support Unit will work in close coordination with UNEP/Nairobi and the UNDP-GEF Regional Coordination Units

An <u>NCSA website</u> (http://roo.undp.org/gef/ncsa) has been established to enable countries to share various information on-line at the global level. The website includes such information as key project outputs, lessons learnt, event calendar, contact information of NCSA projects, and technical support desk Once NCSA projects start implementation, the project coordinators/managers will receive information on how to become a member of the website from the website manager by email. In case NCSA projects do not receive the information, the RCUs could provide assistance.

<u>Regional E-Groups</u> will be established in all regions, whereby national projects can communicate and learn from the experience of other countries within their own regions. These groups are facilitated by the Regional Focal Points, often in conjunction with the UNDP Regional SURFs. These groups are ideal stopping points for obtaining further information on method-

ologies, overcoming challenges, etc. Questions on methodology, substance, etc. can be placed on the e-group mailing list. This should also develop into a pool of expertise.

In addition to these regional e-groups, <u>Regional Technical Workshop(s)</u> will be organized for project managers and other team members to provide methodological guidance on each process of the NCSAs, and to exchange experiences and lessons learnt.

<u>Implementation missions</u> UNDP/GEF will support the implementation process through country or region specific implementation missions. Mission members will include UNDP/GEF staff, international/regional consultants, and members of NCSA project teams from the country or regions. Such missions will occur at key points during the project, for example, at project planning or at the outset of the in-depth analyses. The missions would have a dual purpose; first, to contribute to national NCSAs, and second, to contribute to the global body of knowledge regarding NCSAs, specifically regarding the development of a best-practices database and the further updating of this present Manual.

<u>Regional and International Experts</u>. UNDP/GEF is building a roster of regional and international experts trained and capable of supporting NCSA processes. These experts can be brought in at critical project points to provide technical support on methodological approaches and expected outputs, as well to facilitate key project events.

ANNEX 1: ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

<u>UNDP and Capacity Development</u>

UNDP, 1994. *Handbook On Capacity Assessment Methodologies: An Analytical Review.*

UNDP, 2003. *Developing Capacity through Technical Cooperation: Country Experiences.*

UNDP, 2004. *Capacity Development Indicators, UNDP/GEF Resource Kit no.4*. (www.undp.org/gef/undp-gef_monitoring_evaluation/sub_undp-gef_monitoring_evaluation_documents/CapDevIndicator%20Resource%20Kit_Nov03_Final.doc).

<u>Rio Linkages and Synergies</u>

UNU, 2004, *Handbook: Key Linkages Across the Rio+ Conventions (March 2004 Draft).* (www.geic.or.jp/jerry/Rio_Links_Report_001.pdf.zip).

UNDP/SEED, 1998. *Synergies in National Implementation of the Rio Agreements.*

<u>Material from the GEF/UNDP Capacity Development Initiative (CDI)</u>

GEF Secretariat, 2001. *Operational Guidelines for Expedited Funding of National Self Assessments of Capacity Building Needs.*

UNDP/GEF, 2001. *Proposed Elements for Strategic Collaboration and a Framework for GEF Action on Capacity Building for the Global Environment.*

UNDP/GEF, 2000. *Capacity Development Initiative – Country Capacity Development Needs and Priorities – A Synthesis.*

GEF/UNITAR, 2003. *A Guide for Self -Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management – revised draft.(See* insert web address)

Capacity Assessment and Assessment Tools

Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), 1996. *Capacity and Institutional Assessment: Frameworks, Methods and Tools for Analysis.* (www.capacity.org/pubs/cida/cida3-morgan.htm).

International Council on Management of Population Programmes (ICOMPP*). Assessment Methodologies and Tools.* (www.icomp.org.my/OE/OEAccess-OCA.htm and http://www.icomp.org.my/OE/OEAccess-EEMO.htm).

International Development and Research Council (IDRC*). Institutional Assessment: A Framework for Strengthening Organizational Capacity for IDRC's Research Partners.* (www.idrc.ca/books/focus/771/771.html).

OECD/UNDP, 2002. *Sustainable Development Strategies, A Resource Book.*

Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (DAC Working Committee on Aid Evaluation). *Donor Support for Institutional Development in Environment: Lessons Learnt.*

UNDP (Management Development and Governance Division, Bureau for Development Policy). *Capacity Assessment and Development In a Systems and Strategic Management Context, Technical Advisory Paper No.3.* (http://magnet.undp.org/docs/cap/main.htm).

UNDP (BPPS/MDGD). *Capacity Development Resource Book with Capacity Development Assessment Guidelines.* (http://magnet.undp.org/cdrb/Default.htm).

Organisational/Institutional Assessment

International Development and Research Council (IDRC), 1999. *Enhancing Organisational Performance: A Toolbox for Self-Assessment.*

International Development and Research Council (IDRC), 1995. *Institutional Assessment - A Framework for Strengthening Organizational Capacity for IDRC's Research Partners.* Authored by Charles Lusthaus, Gary Anderson and Elaine Murphy.

Government of United Kingdom, Official Development Agency (ODA), 1995. *Guidelines on Institutional Development.*

NORAD, 2000. *Handbook in Assessment of Institutional Sustainability.*

UNDP. *CAPBUILD: UNDP's Design Assistant for Institution -Building Projects.* This is actually a software for supporting institutional capacity assessments. (see http://magnet.undp.org/capbuild/Read1st.htm).

Other references

Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (Development Assistance Commit-tee, DAC), 1997. *DAC Seminar On Technical Co -Operation And Capacity Development: Synthesis Report, March 1997*

ANNEX 2: SATISFYING THE GEF NCSA PRINCIPLES

The UNITAR Reference Guide (Section 1) provides a more detailed explanation of these principles. This Annex provides suggestions as to how NCSA projects can respect and satisfy the principles.

1. The NCSA should be nationally owned and nationally led.

How? If the Project Team follows the nine Steps and uses the suggested tools this principle should be fully satisfied. Notably, the team should:

- ensure high-level ownership through Steps 2 and 9;
- undertake and use the stakeholder analysis to identify an appropriate role for all concerned participants. Check regularly that all groups are represented;
- broadly use workshops and other participatory tools to obtain the input and buy-in of all stakeholder groups;
- ensure project outputs are first drafted in local languages, not English;
- rely predominantly on national experts, with very few exceptions, in order to ensure the process is entirely driven in-country.

2. The NCSA should draw on existing structures and mechanisms for coordination.

How? The process to design the NCSA, before the project begin, included an assessment of existing mechanisms. Agreement was reached that they would be involved in the NCSA project. Notably, the GEF Focal Point, the Convention Focal Point, and all existing inter-sectoral mechanisms contributed to the design of each NCSA.

During implementation, the Project Team should reinforce this principle by using the tools suggested in this Resource Kit e.g.:

- using the stakeholder analysis to ensure that no mechanisms are neglected;
- using the linkages study as a basis to build links with existing structures. Pay sufficient attention to planning (quarterly workplans and activity design) to ensure that sufficient attention is paid to generating linkages;
- using an existing mechanism, such as the National Council for Sustainable Development (NCSD), to act as the NCSA Project Steering Committee;
- using an existing mechanism, such as the NCSD, as a channel for generating high-level support;
- ensuring the NCSA, where possible, provides support to existing mechanisms, such as the NCSD;
- work through the Ministries responsible for the Conventions, and through their existing linkages to other Ministries and important committees (eg. through the Council of Ministers);
- hire a part-time consultant to focus on coordination, participation, partnerships and communication.

3. Pay due attention to the provisions and decisions of the three Conventions.

How? The requirements of all three Conventions underlie each and every Step in this Re-source Kit. Table xx, which sets out the requirements, is a basis for each Step in the NCSA. The standard formats for the outputs (Stocktake, Thematic Assessments, Cross-Cutting As-sessment and Action Plan) provided in Chapter Two all draw strongly from Table xx. Hence, if the Project Team follows the Steps and uses the model formats, this principle will be fully satisfied.

If the Project Team amends the Steps and/or amends the formats, it should pay great attention to ensuring that the new formats are partially drawn from the requirements, the decisions and the provisions of the three Conventions.

4. Consultation and decision-making should be multi–stakeholder.

How? This requires two elements:

1. Institutional arrangements should be appropriately inclusive. This should have been ad-dressed *before* the NCSA begins, in the design stage. It is a task for UNDP to verify the insti-tutional arrangements at the project outset, and from time to time during project implementa-tion;

2. Project Team should ensure broad, inclusive and representative consultation and participa-tion during implementation. If the Project Team follows the Steps and uses the tools in this Kit, this will be assured, notably by:
- effective planning to ensure all are involved;
- effective use of the stakeholder analysis to ensure an appropriate role for all;
- effective participatory use of the workshops, questionnaires and other tools;
- use of launching workshops, media and internet to communicate with a large audi-ence;
- hiring a part-time consultant to focus on coordination, participation, partnerships and communication. This is because participation and consultation require specialized skills, which technical experts often do not have.

5. The NCSA should build on existing related work.

How? The Stock-take (Step 3) in the NCSA is designed to address this principle. During the Stock-Take, the Project Team and/or consultants review and summarise all that was done pre-viously in terms capacity assessment and capacity development. The Output of the Stock-take, a document, will be used as a basis for all future discussion and for the design of all future activities in the NCSA.

The Project Team are expected to use the Stock-take when designing the Thematic Assess-ments. The Project Team, or consultants, when proposing priorities, may use the Stock-Take. Finally, the experts responsible for preparing the Thematic Assessments are expected to base their work base on the contents of the Stock-Take.

Institutional measures should also be taken. For example, the NCSA should use the teams and experts involved in previous GEF Enabling Activities (EA). It should build on the institutional frameworks used for approving and managing the EAs. Where possible, the Project Team should contact related internationally supported projects, and develop strong, effective linkages.

6. The NCSA should contribute to developing an holistic approach to capacity development addressing capacity needs at the systemic, institutional and individual levels.

How? If the Project Team follows the nine Steps and uses the suggested tools, this principle is an integral part of the NCSA. Note that the Assessments undertaken through Step 4 and Step 5 (the most resource intensive Steps) both require the NCSA to investigate these three levels of capacity. The standard format for both Steps specifically addresses these three levels.

If the Project Team amends the order of the Steps and/or amends the standard formats, it should pay great attention to ensuring that the new formats specifically address each of the three levels of capacity.

7. The NCSA should be firmly mainstreamed into broader context of sustainable development in-country, closely related to goals such as poverty alleviation, achieving MDGs and economic transition.

How? This principle may require additional effort during the implementation of the NCSA. This principle can be satisfied by:

- The stakeholder analysis and linkages study will identify critical objectives and entry points for mainstreaming. The Project Team must work to ensure that these entry points are acted upon. Notably:
  - o Project Team should identify individuals responsible for critical initiatives such as the PRSP or EU Accession. It should contact these individuals and design joint activities/outputs;
  - o The Project Team should identify the motivations of the individuals/ institutions responsible for critical initiatives such as the PRSP or EU Accession. The Project Team should ensure that the NCSA is strategically designed to support these motivations;
- Ensuring high level support (Step 2) can partly be achieved by mainstreaming. Hence, it is in the interests of the Project Team to mainstream as this will ensure high level support;
- Thought needs to be given as to how a successful NCSA will help the country meet broader sustainable development objectives in the medium and long term. This should be documented and communicated/marketed to those responsible for sustainable development;
- Ensuring that the TOR for each consultant and each workshop specify the need to pay particular attention to mainstreaming;
- The monitoring framework in the Action Plan should include monitoring of mainstreaming;
- Finally, it may be useful to hire a specific national consultant (part-time) to focus on mainstreaming.

8. **Where appropriate, the NCSAs should focus on issues that cut across the three Conventions.**

How? Step 5 is designed to address this point. The Project Team should ensure that adequate resources are devoted to Step 5. Other ways to respect this principle may include:

- Ensuring that 'cross-cutting' is an essential criteria for selecting priorities at the priority-setting stage;
- Having only one Action Plan that addresses all three Conventions;
- In extreme cases, the Project Team could decide to focus the Action Plan only on issues or constraints that are common to or cut-across all three Conventions;
- Hiring neutral experts, who are not connected to any of the Conventions, who are able to work equally well with all Conventions.

9. Where appropriate, the NCSAs should pay particular attention to assessing capacity needs at the *systemic* level.

How? Experience shows that this is happening with many ongoing NCSA. Hence, this may not be a concern. However, in order to ensure this:

- The focus on 'cross-cutting issues' will help, as system level capacity is more likely to be cross-cutting;
- Project Team should ensure that the criteria for selecting priorities includes allocating additional weight to system level issues;
- It may be necessary to hire a specific national consultant to focus on the system level of capacity (as in the case of the Latvian legal expert);
- Ensuring that the TOR for each study and each activity specify the need to pay particular attention to system level policy.

Summary
As can be seen from the above, the Project Team is mostly responsible for ensuring that all the principles are satisfied during the NCSA. However, the Project Team is closely involved in all activities and may be too close to judge progress on some principles. Moreover, there is a danger that the Project Team and the main project stakeholders focus on technical issues – rather than the process and the principles. Hence, there may be an additional need to periodically review the project from a strategic perspective, notably reviewing progress relative to the principles. This could be addressed by:
- The Project Steering Committee. This high level body meets on average 3-4 times during the NCSA. The Project Team should report on the principles to the PSC at each meeting;
- Establish a strategic review team consisting of the NPD, UNDP Programme Officer, Project Coordinator and possible Team Leaders. This team should meet monthly. This team should discuss strategic issues, notably if the principles are being satisfied, and how to strengthen this.

ANNEX 3: QUALITY MANAGEMENT MATRIX

The following matrix may be used by project teams to monitor the *quality* of the project progress. This monitoring can be used to support internal planning, or to support communication with external partners. It may be necessary to adopt the matrix to country circumstances, and to the stage of the NCSA.

Is Project Management Effective? (Yes/No Answers)	Is the Project Complying with the Key Principles of the NCSAs?	Quality of Project Outputs	Quality of Outcomes and Impacts
Timeliness Start-up elapse time is less than 3 months Financial management Disbursement ratio is more than 90 percent	National Ownership NCSA activities are conducted by national and regional experts. When Project has an international consultant, he/she acts as an advisor Final report and action plan are officially endorsed by the Government Use of Existing Coordinating Structures Existing coordination mechanism plays an important role in the NCSA, such as acting as the Project Steering Committee Paying Due Attention to Provisions and Decisions of the 3 Rio Conventions Final report lists the obligations under the 3 Rio Conventions and priority capacity constrains to comply with the obligations Multi-stakeholder participation NCSA processes involve active participation of the National Focal	Stock-taking Stock-taking report lists all the relevant past and ongoing initiatives for the 3 Rio Conventions Thematic Assessments Thematic assessments identify priority capacity constrains at the individual, institutional, and systematic levels Crosscutting Analysis Crosscutting analysis identifies priority crosscutting issues and capacity constrains at the individual, institutional, and systematic levels Action Plan Action plan lists: a) actions to be taken to address the identified priority capacity constraints; b) timetable; and c) players to drive the actions Action plan states a monitoring and evaluation plan Final Report	Contribution to Socio-Economic Development NCSA action plan designs measures that can improve the global environment and contribute to national development priorities Improved Negotiation Skills NCSA final report and action plan are used to negotiate donors for technical cooperation and capacity development assistance in the environmental arena Enhanced Cross-sectoral Coordination NCSA helps build a more cooperative relationship between ministries and agencies Involvement of Non-governmental Organizations NCSA strengthens non-governmental roles in environmental management Established Culture of Self-

	Points of the 3 Rio Conventions, the Government, NGOs, Private Sector, and any other relevant players **Building on Ongoing Work** Final report states the linkage between the NCSA and relevant past and ongoing initiatives **Holistic Approach** Final report identifies capacity constraints at the individual, institutional, and systematic levels Final report and action plan cover both thematic and crosscutting capacity constrains **Long-term Approach** NCSA is mainstreamed into broader national sustainable development context such as Agenda 21, the Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper (PRSP) Internal and external funding is mobilized for follow-up actions to the NCSA.	Final report clearly explains the processes and products of the NCSA, including the methodologies used Final report lists priority thematic and crosscutting capacity constraints at the individual, institutional, and systematic levels	**Evaluation** NCSA helps establish culture of self-evaluation and problem-solving