

THE ADAPTATION KNOWLEDGE INITIATIVE

An action pledge by UNEP under the UNFCCC Nairobi work programme



The Context of the Adaptation Knowledge Initiative

- Adaptation knowledge gaps are a barrier to widespread and successful adaptation.
- There is therefore a need for better alignment of the supply of and demand for adaptation knowledge.
- Prioritising knowledge gaps is key to effectively addressing the most relevant and strategic knowledge gaps.

The Nairobi work programme¹

The Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP) serves as a knowledge mechanism on adaptation under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The NWP facilitates and catalyses the development and dissemination of information and knowledge to inform and support adaptation policies and practices. As a knowledge hub, the NWP provides unique opportunities for relevant institutions, processes, resources and expertise to respond to adaptation knowledge needs. Over the past 9 years, the NWP has built extensive and strong partnerships with international, regional and national partner organizations working on various aspects of climate change adaptation (see figure 1 on page 2).

UNEP and its Global Adaptation Network²

The Global Adaptation Network (GAN) was initiated through a UNEP-facilitated consultative process with key partners and stakeholders between 2008 and 2010. Its objective is to help build climate resilience of vulnerable communities, ecosystems and economies through the mobilization of knowledge for adaptation. The GAN consists of four building blocks, namely its regional network in Asia Pacific (APAN) Latin America and the Caribbean (REGATTA), West Asia (WARN-CC), and Africa (AAKNet). The GAN provides the overarching structure for these networks to exchange knowledge, experiences and lessons learnt.

Linked to the work of the GAN, UNEP will launch its Adaptation Gap report at COP20 in Lima in 2014, which will include a chapter on adaptation knowledge gaps.

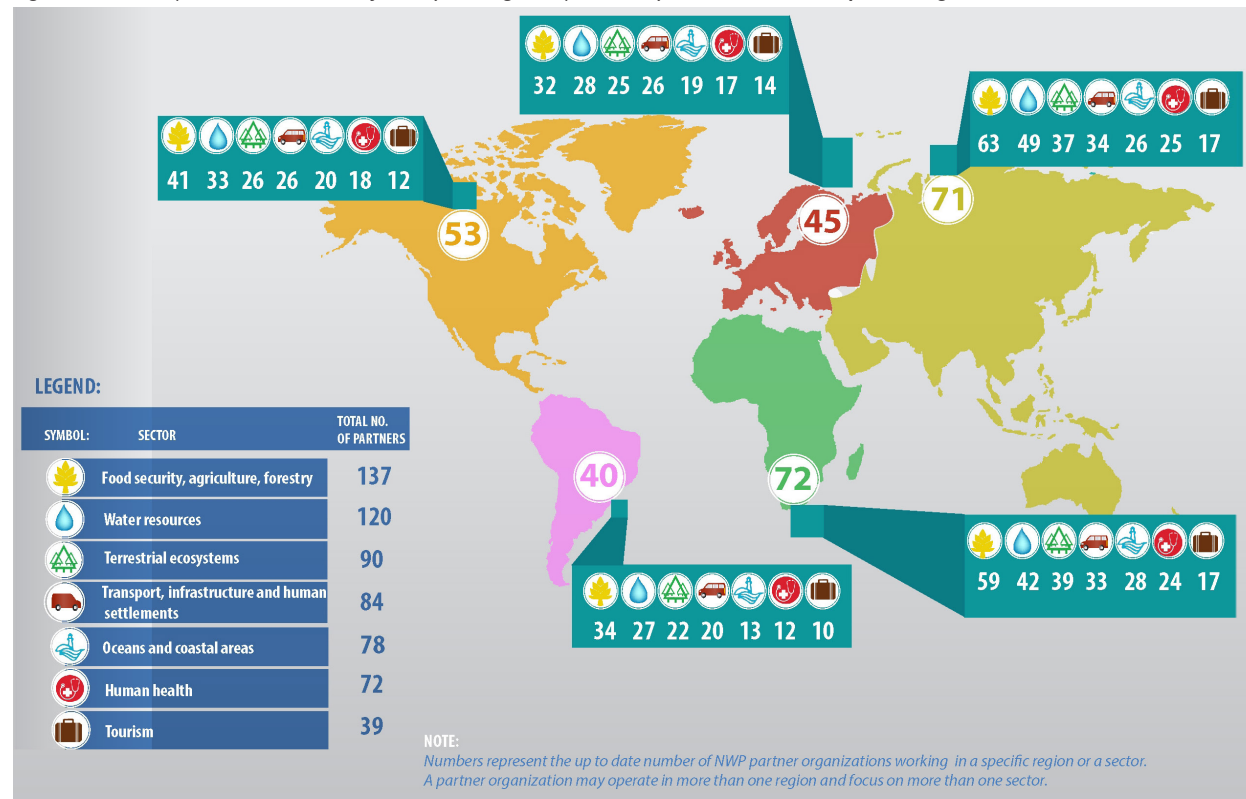
¹ Further information on the NWP is available at <<http://unfccc.int/nwp>>.

² Further information on UNEP's Global Adaptation Network is available at <www.GANadapt.org>.

The Adaptation Knowledge Initiative – an action pledge³ under the NWP⁴

UNEP, through its GAN, is implementing an Adaptation Knowledge Initiative to prioritise and catalyse responses to subregion- and theme-specific adaptation knowledge needs through a rigorous process that can be replicated (see figure 2 on page 4). This initiative is consistent with the mandate of the NWP, and builds on the infrastructure and resources under the GAN.

Figure 1. Sectoral (denoted in different symbols) and regional (in colours) distribution of NWP partner organizations



³Action pledges are targeted adaptation actions that NWP partner organizations undertake in response to knowledge needs and gaps identified under the NWP.

⁴Details of the action pledge are available at <https://www3.unfccc.int/pls/apex/f?p=333:31:3398643959867755::NO::P31_ID:461>.

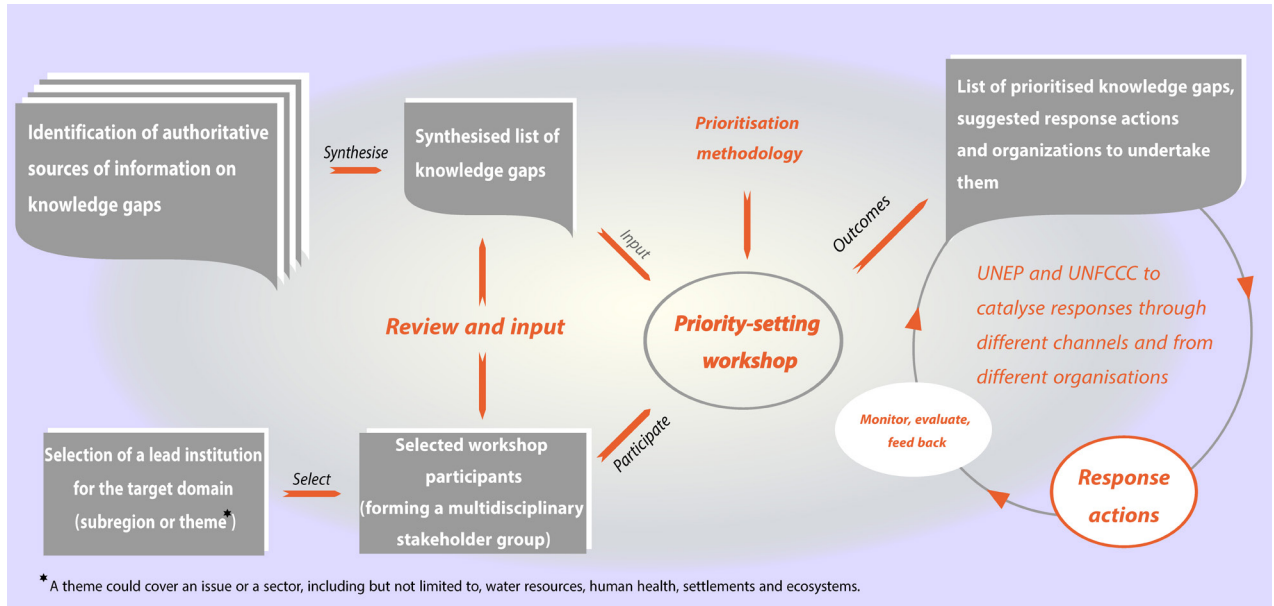
Unique features of the Adaptation Knowledge Initiative

- Prioritises strategic adaptation knowledge gaps;
- Aligns knowledge “supply” with “demand” through an iterative process;
- Catalyses responses to knowledge needs through identifying and “re-packaging” knowledge and sharing and disseminating it;
- Brings together actors and organizations to fill the adaptation knowledge gaps.

Methodology/ key steps involved

1. Conducting a scoping exercise that synthesises the published information on knowledge gaps for the target domain (a subregion and/or a theme), centred on a literature review of authoritative sources;
2. Engaging a lead institution and a multidisciplinary stakeholder group (MSG) to participate in the priority-setting workshop;
3. Convening a priority-setting workshop for the target domain, and applying a rigorous prioritisation methodology to rank the gaps using transparent criteria;
4. Synthesising the outcomes for catalysing response actions;
5. Monitoring progress of implementation, and feeding back the evaluation of this process into the subsequent iterations to be conducted for the same as well as other target domains.

Figure 2. A schematic representation of the Adaptation Knowledge Initiative



A pilot for the Andean subregion

A pilot of this initiative has been implemented for the Andean mountainous subregion. Its priority-setting workshop took place from 24 to 26 September 2014 in Bogota, Colombia, led by the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture. The workshop resulted in a set of strategic knowledge gaps through the application of the prioritisation methodology. At the workshop, the MSG, composed of 15 experts from national governments, the United Nations, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, prioritised the knowledge gaps for the Andean subregion (see figure 3). The MSG also provided inputs on possible responses and on relevant institutions able to take response action.⁵

This pilot for the Andean mountainous subregion was welcomed and endorsed by the COP20 Presidency as a component of a set of actions to further address adaptation to climate change under the Convention. It identifies not only significant adaptation knowledge gaps in the Andean subregion, but also actions and actors to address them.

Figure 3. Photos from the priority-setting workshop in Bogota, Colombia



⁵The outcomes of the workshop are available as a joint update to the action pledge by UNEP and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture at <https://www3.unfccc.int/pls/apex/f?p=333:31:3398643959867755::NO::P31_ID:461>.

List of prioritised knowledge gaps

Ranking based on the prioritisation exercise	
Knowledge gaps	1 Gaps in integrated research on the effects of climate change on ecosystem services, and their relationship with the quality of life of populations
	2 Scarcity of mechanisms for including adaptation in current planning tools
	3 Lack of data and information on health and associated variables, and on the impact of climate change on health in the Andean subregion
	4 Lack of economic information and cost-benefit analyses needs for adaptation
	5 Gaps in methodologies for promoting processes that facilitate multi-sectoral adaptation
	6 Gaps in socio-economic information for evaluating the impact of climate change
	7 Scarcity of sectoral analyses on the costs of climate change and on the investment needs for adaptation
	8 Gaps in information on tools for territorial planning and land use
	9 Gaps in the analyses of social variables, and of supply and demand for water, associated with different climate change scenarios
	10 Scarcity of information and of analyses relating to the impact of climate change on agricultural and livestock production systems

Invitation to act on prioritised knowledge gaps for the Andean subregion

Relevant organizations, including NWP partner organizations, are invited to collaborate and undertake actions to address the prioritised knowledge gaps in the Andean subregion. NWP partner organizations are encouraged to make associated action pledges under the Nairobi work programme.



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