



LEARNINGS FROM NEPAL'S NATIONAL ADAPTATION PLAN FORMULATION PROCESS

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ACTION AREA: Adaptation

FOCUS AREA: Engaging

COUNTRY: Nepal

SECTORS

INVOLVED: Cross-sectoral

TIMEFRAME: September 2015 – Ongoing

CASE SUMMARY: The Ministry of Population and Environment of the Government of Nepal launched a National Adaptation Plan (NAP) formulation process for strengthening climate preparedness and facilitating climate-inclusive planning within existing programmes and policies across sectors. The NAP process builds on the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) which gives due recognition to social differentiation as well as natural and cultural heritage.

The process was carried out being mindful of the geographic, geo-political, socio-economic and socio-cultural realities of the country and its people. It has been inclusive by engaging vulnerable groups and emphasising gender concerns. Besides, multi-stakeholder consultative deliberations ensured incorporating viewpoints of non-governmental and private bodies.

Nepal's NAP formulation process followed an integrated working group approach with seven thematic and two cross-cutting groups, exemplifying the inter-sectoral nature of the process and dovetailing with existing policies and programmes. It has furthermore been characterised by a scientific basis for decision-making and transparency. The NAP process has been unique in the emphasis laid on inclusive bottom-up approaches and by capitalising on the developmental co-benefits.





BACKGROUND: Nepal is a country located in one of the climatic hotspots, the Himalayan region. General circulation models indicate an overall increase in precipitation in Nepal from 1976-2004 out of which 15% to 20% increase is projected in the summer months (Joshi et al., 2012). In terms of partial distribution, projections indicate increased monsoon rainfall in eastern and central Nepal (ibid., p.24). The Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change not only projects an increase in the intensity of monsoon and post-monsoon rainfall as well as extreme precipitation events, but also a decrease in winter precipitation and overall decrease in the annual number of rainy days over a large portion of South Asia. Nepal furthermore witnessed one of the strongest long-term temperature increases with an increase of 1.6°C between 1976 and 2005 compared to a global average temperature increase of 0.6°C in the last three decades. Along with significant warming, the reduction in snow and ice coverage, and an increase in flood and drought events adversely impact the country (IPCC, 2007).

Nepal's society largely relies on agrarian activities, which leads to a high dependency of people's livelihoods on their natural environment. Therefore, they are highly sensitive to changes in climate and natural resource availability. Climate change is having clear impacts on crop productivity and availability of water resources, thereby impeding the development of the country. The most vulnerable, marginalised and poorer sections of the society residing in rural and urban areas will be affected the most by risks arising from extreme climatic events. Hence, the government of Nepal recognises that effective adaptation is required to deal with the negative impacts of climate change.

In order to address these impacts, Nepal prepared a National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) in September 2010. Nepal also prepared a National Framework on Local Adaptation Plans for Action (LAPAs) to implement adaptation actions at the local level and ensure the integration of climate change adaptation into local to national planning processes (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2017, p.44). Nepal developed its Climate Change Policy in 2011 which envisioned the development of a Climate Change Fund. The Climate Change Policy ensures the allocation of at least 80 % of the total budget from the Climate Change Fund to programme implementation at the community level. The Climate Change Budget Code, introduced in 2013, delineates climate expenses, facilitates effective monitoring and implementation of climate activities and opens avenues to channel climate finance to the field level activities (Lamsal et al., 2014) However, due to the increasing number of climate-induced disasters and the large number of vulnerable people, policy makers felt the need to prepare Nepal for the medium and long-term impacts of climate change by building adaptive capacity resilience to climate change. As NAPA addresses only the most urgent and immediate adaptation needs, it became imperative to formulate a plan that addresses medium and long-term adaptation needs (see website of the Ministry of Population and Environment on the National Adaptation Plan formulation process).

At the 16th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process was established. Adhering to this decision, Nepal through its Ministry of Population and Environment (MoPE) - the focal point for the UNFCCC - launched a process to formulate its NAP in September 2015. Adopting an expedited process, the ministry created a NAP roadmap and established a technical team to advance the formulation process. In May 2016, the NAP formulation process formally started with hiring the experts required for the NAP process. The NAP serves as a guiding document to facilitate the integration of adaptation into the country's policies, programmes and activities through a consultative process. This draws on experience, knowledge and understanding on how to best implement and mainstream adaptation policies gathered from government's efforts in the past through other initiatives such as NAPA (national adaptation plan of action) and LAPA (framework for local adaptation plans for action).

The Ministry of Environment formulated the entire process based on the principles of climate-inclusive planning, including the use of bottom-up approaches and strategies for low carbon development with significant developmental co-benefits. Nepal's long term climate-inclusive development has been guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which focus on enhancing overall well-being by 2030, ensuring economic growth for all while improving the health of the country's natural resources. The NAP process will work on the incorporation of SDGs in the process and also focus on mobilising national and international sources of climate finance (Bishokarma, 2017b).

ACTIVITIES: ————— The Ministry of Population and Environment (MoPE) acted as the lead ministry in formulating the NAP process. The Multi-Stakeholder Climate Change Initiative Coordination Committee (MCCICC), which was established in 2010 from the NAPA process to coordinate all climate change-related actions including plans, policies, dialogues and finance, handled the overall coordination of the NAP process and provided guidance. A technical team of consultants also worked closely with the MoPE in the initial stages to ensure the technical soundness of the process. Figure 1 illustrates the stakeholder structure of the NAP formulation process.

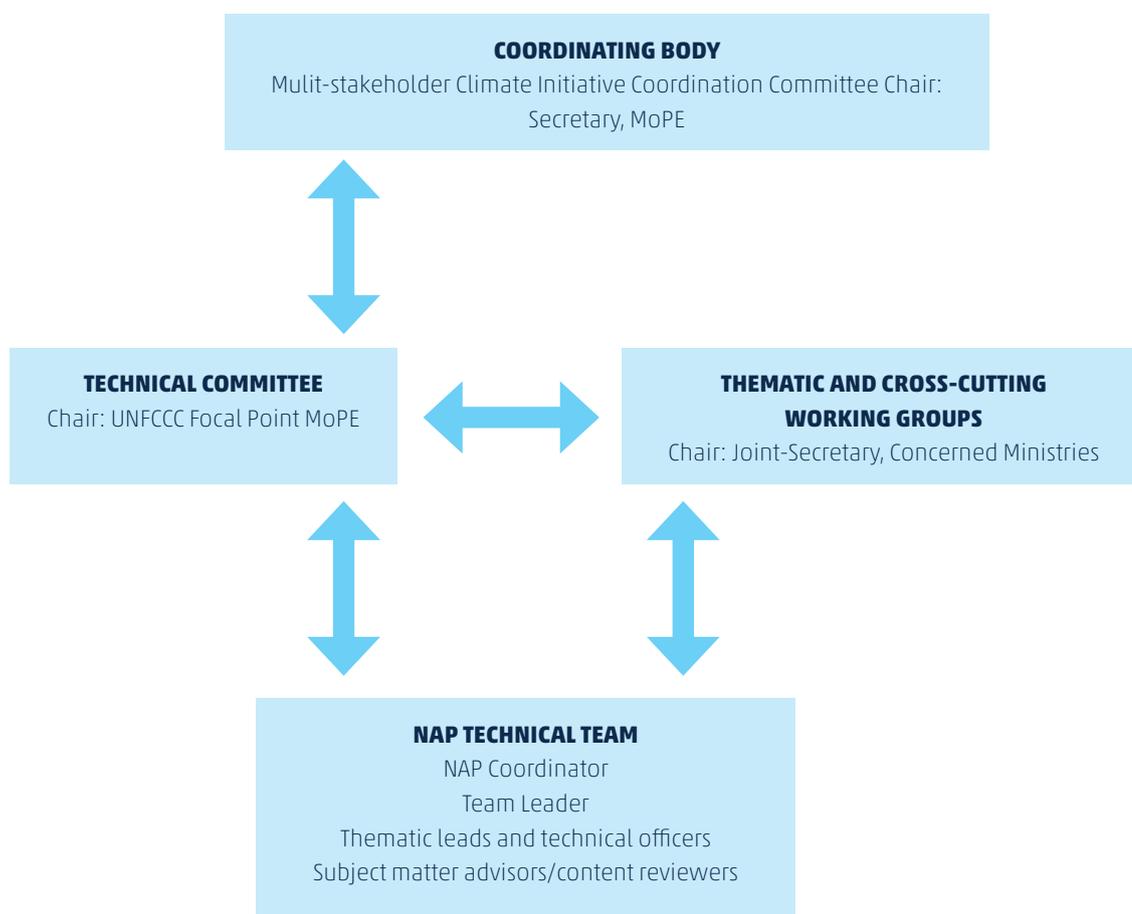


Figure 1: Overview of stakeholder structure of NAP formulation process (MoPE, 2016)



- **OBJECTIVES OF THE NAP FORMULATION PROCESS:** The overall goal of the process was to formulate Nepal's NAP and improve the institutional capacity of the government to implement climate-resilient development in Nepal. The specific objectives of the NAP are (MoFE, 2018):
 - Reduce vulnerability to the impacts of climate change of climate-sensitive sectors by building adaptive capacity and resilience in Nepal;
 - Facilitate the integration of climate change adaptation in a coherent manner into relevant new and existing policies, programs and activities, in particular development planning processes and strategies, within all relevant sectors and at different levels, as appropriate in Nepal.
- **THEMATIC AND CROSS-CUTTING WORKING GROUPS:** The design and implementation of the NAP has been envisaged through a working group approach. Seven thematic and two cross-cutting working groups (TWGs/CWGs) were formed to advance the process, totalling nine groups (see Table 1). Each working group is coordinated by the Joint-Secretary of the concerned ministry. Based on experiences of the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) preparation, a Deputy-Coordinator and Member-Secretary are designated in each working group to expedite the NAP process. Each of the nine working groups is coordinated by a respective ministry which has assumed responsibility for a theme (MoFE, 2018). The MoPE has the overall responsibility to coordinate, collaborate, support, and organise consultations in order to formulate a feasible NAP. The cross-cutting working groups (CWGs) will contribute to integrating issues associated with gender and social inclusion, livelihoods and governance into the seven standalone themes, and identify and prioritise adaptation options in other sectors based on the LAPAs where appropriate (see website of the Ministry of Population and Environment on the National Adaptation Plan formulation process).

WORKING GROUP	COORDINATING MINISTRY
THEMATIC WORKING GROUPS (TWGS)	
Agriculture and food security (nutrition)	Agricultural Development
Climate induced disasters	Home Affairs
Forests and biodiversity	Forests and Soil Conservation
Public Health (WASH)	Health
Tourism, natural and cultural heritage	Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
Urban settlements and infrastructure	Urban Development
Water resources and energy	Energy
CROSS-CUTTING WORKING GROUPS (CWGS)	
Gender and Marginalised Groups (social inclusion)	Women, Children and Social Welfare
Livelihood and governance	Federal Affairs and Local Development

Table 1: NAP Working Groups and Coordinating Ministries (MoPE, 2017a)

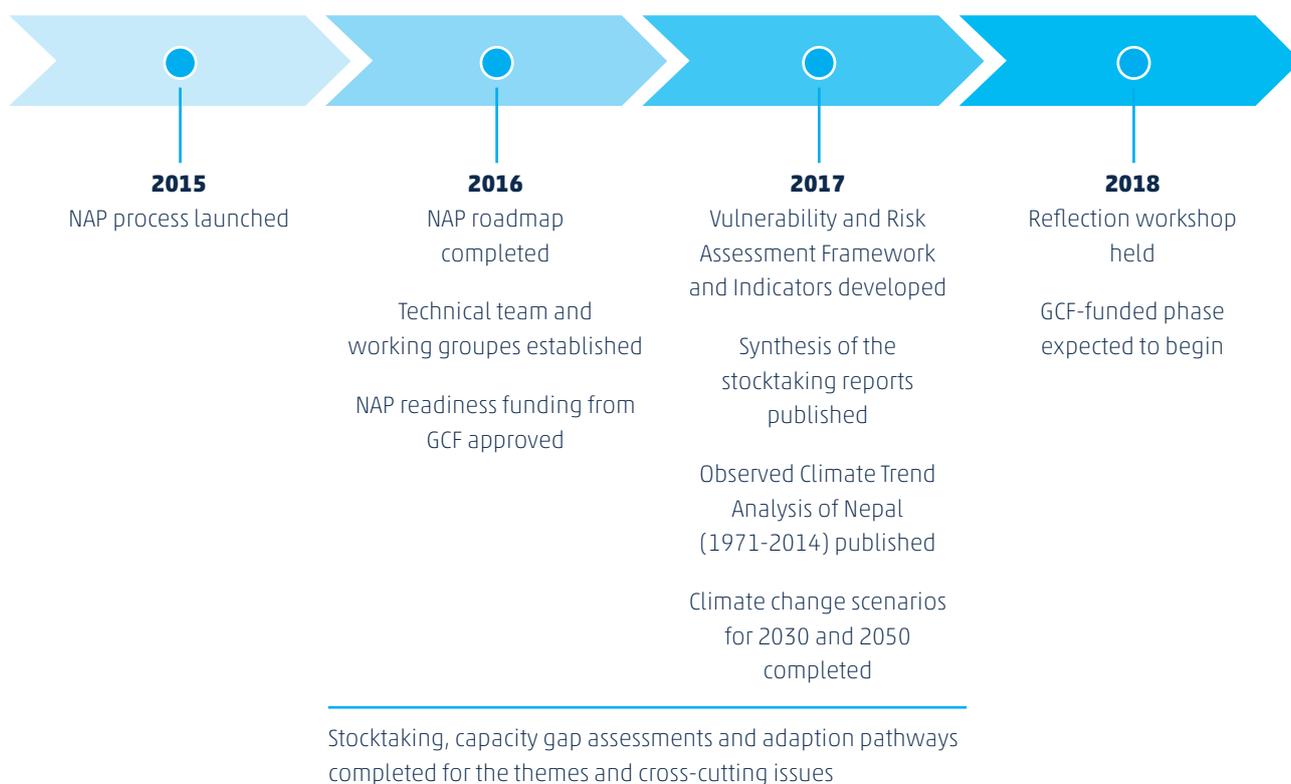


Figure 2: Nepal's NAP Process: Progress to date (MoFe, 2018)

- PROGRESS IN THE NAP FORMULATION PROCESS: Nepal's NAP formulation process, as per 'initial guidelines (Decision 5/CP.17)' and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) NAP technical guidelines, focuses on four major elements: 1) laying groundwork; 2) preparatory work; 3) implementation strategy; and 4) reporting, monitoring and review. The first element includes the identification of available information on climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, and the assessment of gaps and needs for creating an enabling environment for the NAP process (LDC Expert Group, 2012). Figure 2 lays out the activities that have been carried out so far as part of laying groundwork.

- As of January 2017, all working groups have been formed. More than two hundred members (institutions and experts) are engaged through the working groups. The groups include representatives from government institutions, non-governmental and community-based organisations, federations and networks, indigenous communities, the private sector, associations of local bodies, women, youth, media, academia and research organisations. Multi-stakeholders are grouped into policy stakeholders (parliamentary committees and constitutional bodies), service providers, beneficiaries, enablers and advocates (see website of the Ministry of Population and Environment on the National Adaptation Plan formulation process).
- The Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (VRA) for Nepal has been developed by a team of experts constituted for the NAP. They were supported with inputs and feedbacks from the Practical Action and International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) (MoPE, 2017a). The VRA framework has largely been based on the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).



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- A stocktaking report has been prepared by each of the working groups, reviewing the available information on climate change and linkages to the theme of the group. Further, the stocktaking reports identify major stakeholders as well as key gaps and needs, and include recommendations for the way forward. A synthesis report was also published, which incorporates all of the stocktaking reports (MoFE, 2018)
- The climate trend analysis for the NAP was carried out by Department of Hydrology and Meteorology (DHM) (DHM, 2017). One of the key outputs of the working groups under the NAP has been the identification of adaptation pathways specifying a set of concrete objectives for adaptation.
- In addition, capacity gap analyses and needs assessments were produced for each theme and cross-cutting issue from 2016-2017 by the NAP expert team.

INSTITUTIONS

INVOLVED:

- **MINISTRY OF POPULATION AND ENVIRONMENT (MOPE):** Led the national process to identify and prioritise medium- and long-term adaptation actions
- **MULTI-STAKEHOLDER CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVES COORDINATION COMMITTEE (MCCICC):** Provided overall coordination and guidance
- **SUPPORTING MINISTRIES:**
 - Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE)
 - Ministry of Agriculture Development
 - Ministry of Home Affairs
 - Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation
 - Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
 - Ministry of Health
 - Ministry of Urban Development
 - Ministry of Energy
 - Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare
 - Ministry of Federal Affairs and Local Development

COOPERATION WITH:

- The NAP formulation process was supported by the technical expertise from the following institutions:
- Action on Climate Today (ACT)
 - Practical Action, Nepal

FINANCE:

— Estimates by the government of Nepal depict that 20 % of the national budget allocation was directly or indirectly addressing climate change in the country from both an adaptation and mitigation perspective (Bishokarma, 2017a). USD 793,925 have been granted under the Green Climate Fund in 2016.

Outside the UNFCCC, a number of bilateral and multilateral development partners have supported the implementation of adaptation projects and programmes. Notable among these are:

- the multi-donor Pilot Program on Climate Resilience (PPCR)
- the European Union
- the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- the Nepal Climate Change Support Programme (NCCSP), funded by the U.K. Department for International Development (DFID)

Local non-governmental and international organisations have also been actively involved in funding adaptation actions (Bishokarma, 2017a; MoFE, 2018).

IMPACT OF ACTIVITIES: — The NAP formulation process has led to the following impacts:

- The NAP process has led to increased understanding of ministries regarding climate change adaptation.
- Through the thematic and cross-cutting working groups the initial phases of the NAP have seen extensive stakeholder engagement.
- The NAP process has also led to increased private sector involvement and initiatives towards increased long-term and medium-term investment regarding adaptation.

WHY IS IT

GOOD PRACTICE: — The process of establishing Nepal's NAP is unique in several regards (see Figure 3), notably:

- **SAFEGUARD VULNERABLE GROUPS AND GENDER CONCERNS** Building on Nepal's culture of engaging multiple stakeholders in the planning process, Nepal's NAP has been designed on the fundamental premise that it will 'leave no one behind': The NAP process gives due recognition to the needs of marginalised and disadvantaged communities, indigenous and traditional groups, youth, women and people with disabilities (MoPE, 2016). This approach has been undertaken in response to UNFCCC's call in the NAP decision to prioritise vulnerable groups, communities and ecosystems (UNFCCC, 2010). It also recognises the cross-cutting nature of gender equality and social inclusion in addition to a standalone theme for the same. This has laid a solid ground for integrating these concerns in an informed and practical way from the inception of the process. Integrating vulnerable groups and communities into adaptation planning, the NAP process aims to aid in the development of sustainable livelihoods. The inclusion of cross-cutting themes like gender and social inclusion has opened up the space for multidisciplinary dialogues that can pave the way for the development of climate-resilient livelihoods.
- **INTER-SECTORAL COOPERATION:** One of the salient features of Nepal's NAP process is the integrated approach it follows, based on seven thematic areas, as well as two cross cutting issues, bringing together multiple actors. This approach stands out from the sector or ministry-based planning approaches adopted by many countries. Besides, Nepal's approach also enables better co-ordination among different ministries and a better understanding of the multiple intersections between climate change and key developmental objectives
- **SCIENCE-BASED:** Nepal's NAP process has been rooted in scientific and technical analysis, where climate trends from 1971 to 2014 and scenarios for 2030 and 2050 were analysed and scaled down to the district level. A comprehensive framework has been developed for vulnerability and risk analysis including future assessments across the NAP thematic areas. These initiatives have ensured that Nepal's NAP has set the foundation for an informed decision-making process.



Figure 3: Unique Features of Nepal's NAP Process (MoFe, 2018)

SUCCESS FACTORS:

- **EMPHASIS ON STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT:** While the NAP process is led by the government, it has actively involved stakeholders from the very beginning through the thematic and cross-cutting working groups. These groups encompass civil society organisations, academics and research organisations and private sector actors, among other representatives. Efforts have been undertaken to make sure that each group includes a variety of actors that can be characterised as service providers, beneficiaries, enablers and advocates. These efforts have spurred multi-stakeholder dialogues on opportunities and challenges related to adaptation within the different themes, with the different types of actors bringing diverse inputs and perspectives to the table. The working group approach has facilitated learning and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, it has built ownership of the NAP process (MoFE, 2018). Treating stakeholders as core members in the institutional arrangements for the NAP process is true to the principles of participation and transparency established under the UNFCCC (UNFCCC, 2010).
- **TRANSPARENCY:** The multi-stakeholder engagement and consultative mechanisms utilised in the formulation of the NAPAs and the NAP has led to extensive sharing of information and transparency.
- **INTEGRATION OF ADAPTATION ACTIONS WITH DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS:** Adaptation actions in the NAP have envisaged co-benefits like poverty reduction, strengthening of livelihoods and building resilience for the most vulnerable communities. The NAP process report by MoFE (2018) argues that the adaptation pathways developed have an implicit goal of building resilient livelihoods and reducing poverty levels.
- **INTEGRATED INTO EXISTING PROCESSES:** Nepal's NAP has been formulated to dovetail with the existing national policies, programmes and sectors as well as with international policies such as the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risks Reduction, and Sustainable Development Goals (2015-2030) (MoPE, 2016). The development of adaptation priority areas under the NAP will be coordinated with those identified in the NAPAs and LAPAs.

OVERCOMING BARRIERS / CHALLENGES:**WHAT WERE THE MAIN BARRIERS / CHALLENGES TO DELIVERY?****INSTITUTIONAL:**

Nepal as a young democracy is still in the process of restructuring the governmental processes. Under this new regime, clear roles and responsibilities still need to be defined in terms of adaptation planning.

INFORMATIONAL:

The availability and quality of climate data and information is inadequate and often not reliable for the design and implementation of an integrated approach to climate change adaptation interventions. Challenges also exist due to the topography of the country (lowland to highlands), scarcity of stations including time-series data in certain areas, lack of skilled human resources to collate and analyse available data and information, and lack of use of models to downscale climate change impact areas.

HOW WERE THESE BARRIERS / CHALLENGES OVERCOME?

- A practical cross-cutting approach rather than a sectoral/ ministerial for appreciating the complexity of climate change adaptation was adopted.
- An enabling environment for following an integrated approach by holding consultations at the national and subnational level was created.
- Capacity gap analysis and needs assessment has been conducted by the working groups for a fully operational and sustainable climate information system in Nepal.
- A model for operation and maintenance of the climate information system will be developed in the long term.
- Staff from meteorological offices was trained on using climate monitoring equipment and calibration, use of multiple sources of climate data for developing climate change scenarios, impact scenarios and modelling. The training is expected to be conducted using external consultants and other leading institutions in the country.
- Climate scenarios were updated with new data and information.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- **USE A WORKING GROUP MODEL TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE STAKEHOLDER INTEGRATION PROGRAMME:** One of the significant learnings from Nepal's NAP process is the working group model it follows, while focusing on thematic and cross-cutting issues. It has been found to be a very effective model for stakeholder engagement. However, a significant challenge in implementing this model is to effectively engage multiple stakeholders. To this end, multiple platforms for engagement are planned to be developed at the national and subnational level (MoPE, 2016).
- **SPUR INFORMED DECISION-MAKING THROUGHOUT THE NAP PROCESS:** Nepal's NAP has placed due emphasis on analysing existing data generated by governmental and non-governmental actors. It has furthermore adopted mechanisms to generate new data and frameworks. This process facilitates a robust decision-making structure for effective adaptation measures.

HOW TO REPLICATE THIS PRACTICE:

- **DOVETAIL WITH EXISTING PROCESSES:** Nepal's NAP process focuses on coordinating with existing processes, practices and coordination mechanisms. Besides, it also builds on the lessons learned from the NAPA and LAPA preparation and implementation.



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- **FOSTER INTERDISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE AND INCLUSIVITY:** The interactive thematic and cross-cutting working groups also bring interdisciplinary knowledge and inclusivity into the processes. The integration of formal and traditional structures of knowledge will also lead to co-creation of new knowledge and better participation of different societal groups. The working group model as well as the emphasis on an inclusive process through multiple mechanisms can be effectively replicated in other countries as well.

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FURTHER KEY RESOURCES:

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