EXPERT WORKSHOP

Integrating genetic diversity considerations into national climate change adaptation plans – *Development of guidelines*

Rome, Italy
8 - 9 April 2014

Report

Contents

COMMISSION ON GENETIC RESOURCES FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

BACKGROUND

At its Fourteenth Regular Session in April 2013, the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (Commission) adopted a Programme of Work on Climate Change and Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture[1]. As part of the Programme of Work the Commission agreed to develop *Guidelines for the integration of genetic diversity considerations into climate change adaptation planning* (National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)/National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPAs)).

The Secretariat of the Commission organized an informal expert workshop to review a preliminary draft of the guidelines. It was agreed that comments and inputs received from the experts would be integrated into a revised version of the guidelines with the aim to present them to the Commission's Intergovernmental Technical Working Groups on forest (7-9 July 2014), plant (9-11 July 2014) and animal (26-28 November 2014) genetic resources, for their consideration. Subsequently, a further revised draft of the guidelines would be presented to the Commission at its Fifteenth Regular Session in January 2015.

THE WORKSHOP

The informal expert workshop was held on 8 and 9 April 2014, at FAO Headquarter, Rome, Italy. The agenda of the workshop is given in Annex 1 to this report. A list of participants is contained in *Annex 2*. The objective of the workshop was to provide technical and scientific advice on the draft guidelines. To facilitate the discussion, a preliminary draft of the guidelines was shared with the experts prior to the workshop.

[1] http://www.fao.org/nr/cgrfa/cross-sectorial/climate-change/en/

Part 1. Setting the scene

During the first part of the workshop expert presentations set the scene for the development of the guidelines and provided information on the global policy framework and technical background. Presentations included an introduction to international climate change adaptation policy processes and the technical guidelines for the NAP process[2] (prepared by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), as well as lessons learned from projects and research, in particular the CGIAR Research Program on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, [3] the Economics and Policy Innovations for Climate-Smart Agriculture programme[4] and a global survey on the conservation and use of genetic diversity to build resilience to climate change in food and agriculture systems[5].

Part 2. Main conclusions

During the second part of the workshop, participants reviewed the preliminary draft guidelines. Consultations were held in four break-out groups divided by sectors (animal, plant, forest and aquatic genetic resources). Each of the groups discussed each section of the preliminary draft guidelines and provided inputs on:

1. Element A - Lay the ground work and address gaps
2. Element B - Develop preparatory elements
3. Element C - Develop implementation plan
4. Element D - Review, monitor, report and communicate progress

The moderator of the workshop summarized the main results of the workshop as given below. A large number of other more specific comments and edits were recorded by the Secretariat.

[2] http://unfccc.int/adaptation/items/4159.php
[3] http://ccafs.cgiar.org/
[4] http://www.fao.org/climatechange/epic/home/en/
[5] http://www.fao.org/3/a-mn178e.pdf

Moderator summary of main results

General comments

- The overall structure and framing of the draft guidelines (following the NAP Technical Guidelines) is appropriate. The elements and steps proposed are valid for issues concerning integrating genetic diversity into national climate change adaptation planning.
- The language used in the guidelines should be direct, accessible and easy to understand.
- The guidelines need to take account of, and reflect differences between, sectors.
- The implementation of the guidelines will provide an opportunity to develop collaboration between sectors and improve recognition of all GRFA by using an approach which recognizes the essential and complementary contributions to adaptation of different sector GRFA.
- The ecosystem and production system approach adopted by the guidelines is appropriate.
- Definitions should be provided for key terms such as genetic resources, adaptation, adaptive capacity, vulnerability and resilience.
- A fuller account of the importance of genetic resources to climate change adaptation may be useful in support to the guidelines. A two page briefing for policy makers on genetic resources and climate change would also be valuable.
- A fuller description needs to be given of the different stakeholders to be involved in implementing different elements and steps of the guidelines.
- The guidelines should seek to strengthen an inclusive approach to the different stakeholders – especially recognizing the contribution of farmers, fishers, pastoralists and forest dwellers and ensuring their participation.
- Building adaptive capacity is an essential part of the process of implementing the guidelines and may need more emphasis.
- The iterative nature of the approach to be used in implementing the guidelines needs to be more strongly expressed with explicit recognition of the importance of review, assessment and feedback both within steps and elements and for the process overall.
- The Global Plans of Action are important to climate change adaptation as reflected in the draft guidelines. However it should be noted that:
    - They have yet to be developed for aquatic genetic resources;
    - The way in which the plant, animal and forestry GPAs include climate change perspectives varies;
    - The extent to which they have been fully internalized in national decision-making varies.

- The workshop noted a number of areas which were important in planning adaptation and on which further information would be valuable to those implementing the guidelines. These include:
    - Aspects of scale in terms of implementation of the guidelines and adaptation actions. Scale is also important for climate change scenarios analysis. Some information presented at the workshop suggested that agro-ecological zones within a country were particularly relevant for adaptation assessments and planning.
    - Reflecting the different perspectives of the contribution to adaptation of diversity, diversification, and of specific genetic resources in the guidelines. All are important aspects of adaptation but they can involve different approaches.
    - The value of developing common methods needed (cross-sectoral and cross-scale) for assessing risk, vulnerability, change.
    - The ways in which temporal aspects were taken into account in national planning. Many adaptation actions took many years to implement while some could be done much more quickly – however, a temporal dimension was always involved.

Element A "Lay the ground work and address gaps"

- An essential element will be creating the political will required to support implementation.
- Key contact points are the Climate Change and NAP Focal Points. They will need jargon free information and documentation that explains importance of genetic diversity and GRFA.
- Some additional (or separate) guidance may be needed on creating a collaborative mechanism between sectors within countries.
- The importance of the role (and inclusion) of local institutions and of trans-national aspects of GRFA conservation and use should be clearly stated.

Element B "Develop preparatory elements"

- The guidelines need to take account of the lack of information in many areas and give help on handling decision-making in these situations.
- The guidelines should provide information that will enable users to access available tools or examples (e.g. methods for vulnerability assessment or for identifying new adapted materials).
- Illustrative examples may be useful and participants were invited to propose examples for boxes.
- Some additional reference might be made to the importance of associated biodiversity, including soil micro-organisms, pollinators, mycorrhizae.

Element C "Develop implementation plan"

- The international aspects of conservation and use of GRFA in the context of adaptation need to be given more emphasis.
- Identify the different aspects of capacity development (and constituencies) more fully and the importance of strengthening capacity of middle tier

(extension workers and national crop, animal aquatic, and forestry professionals).

- The group endorsed the importance of inter-sector collaboration with regard to the development of an overall implementation plan

Element D "Review, monitor, report and communicate progress"

- The importance of continuous monitoring and review should be reflected.
- The guidelines could usefully identify three aspects of monitoring: monitoring the process of implementing the guidelines, monitoring the outputs from implementation and monitoring the outcomes of the adaptation outcomes adopted.

ANNEX 1: AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP

Day 1, 8 April 2014, German Room (C-229)	
09:00 – 10:30	**Part 1. Setting the scene** ***Introduction and overview of the workshop*** Linda Collette, Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture ***Climate change adaptation policy framework: the National Adaptation Plan process*** Sadya Ndoko, UN Climate Change Secretariat ***Lessons learned from the Economics and Policy Innovations for Climate-Smart Agriculture programme*** Leslie Lipper, FAO ***Contribution of the CGIAR research programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security to the integration of genetic diversity considerations in climate change adaptation: From knowledge generation to practice*** Michael Halewood, Bioversity International
10:30 – 11:00	Coffee break
11:00 – 12:30	***Conservation and use of genetic diversity to build resilience to climate change in food and agriculture systems: Highlights of a global survey*** Nicole Demers, Platform for Agrobiodiversity Research ***NAP technical guidelines*** Sadya Ndoko, UN Climate Change Secretariat ***Presentation of the guidelines for the integration of genetic diversity considerations into climate change adaptation planning*** Anna Asfaw, Secretariat of the Commission on Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture **Discussion** **Q&A Session**
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:15	**Part 2. Review of guidelines** **Review of element A *"Lay the ground work and address gaps"***
15:15 – 15:45	Coffee break
15:45 – 17:00	**Parallel working group session:** **Review of element B *"Develop preparatory elements"***
17:00 – 17:30	**Report back from working groups and discussion on Element B**
17:30 – 17:45	**Review of day 1**

Day 2, 9 April 2014, German Room (C-229)	
09:00 – 10:15	**Parallel working group sessions on element C *"Develop implementation plan"***
10:15 – 10:45	**Report back from working groups and discussion on Element C**
10:45 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 12:30	**Parallel working group sessions on Annex 2**
12:30 – 13:00	**Report back from working groups and discussion on Annex 2**
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 15:00	**Review of element D *"Review, monitor, report and communicate progress"***
15:00 – 15:30	Coffee break
15:30 – 17:00	**Part 3. Integrated discussion on guidelines based on working group reports and plenary discussion** **Agreement on final conclusions**
17:00 – 17:30	**Conclusions**

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