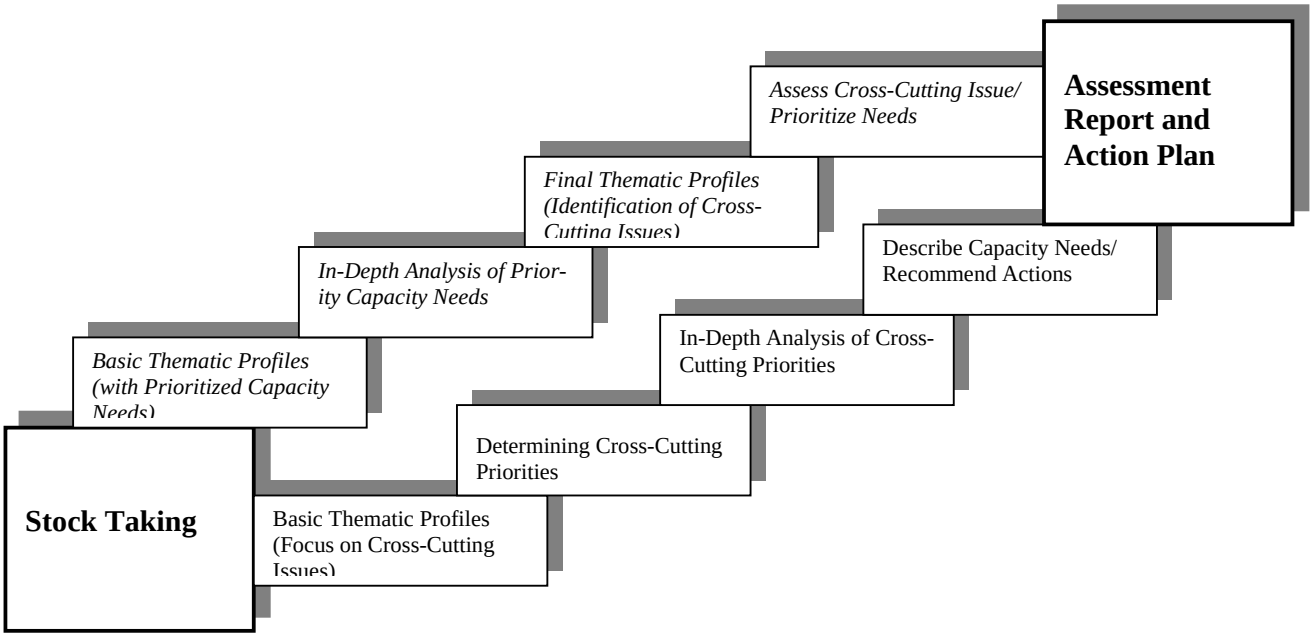
National Capacity Self-Assessments

UNDP/GEF Resource Kit (No. 3)



Work In Progress

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PREFACE

Over the course of the 90s, the international development community engaged in a sustained dialogue about the nature of technical cooperation and capacity development. Among the many principles that emerged was the need for developing countries to assert a stronger leadership role in determining their capacity development priorities and needs and deciding how best to meet these needs. One of the keys to successfully assuming such a role will be for countries to assess their existing capacity in a thorough and systematic manner in order to identify and prioritize their most critical needs.

In January 2000, UNDP and the GEF Secretariat launched the Capacity Development Initiative (CDI), a strategic partnership designed to produce a more comprehensive and strategic approach to building the capacity of developing countries to meet their global environmental commitments. Over a period of 18 months (January 2000 – May 2001) an extensive process of consultation, outreach, and dialogue was undertaken. This process was conducted in close collaboration with the other GEF Implementing Agencies, STAP, the Secretariats of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Convention to Combat Desertification, as well as other actors in the area of capacity development, such as multilateral development organizations, including regional development banks, bilateral organizations and non-governmental organizations.

Under the CDI more than 45 national, regional and global capacity development experts were mobilized to conduct national, regional, sectoral, and cross-cutting studies of capacity development needs; more than 2,000 questionnaires were distributed to governments, NGOs, academic institutions, international agencies, and project managers, among others, in three different languages; ten regional technical consultative workshops, some involving more than 100 participants, were carried out; presentations and consultations were organized at the Conference of the Parties of the Climate Change, Biodiversity and Desertification conventions, as well as at some of their subsidiary meetings. The results of this process are documented in a series of reports.

The consultations and outputs described above helped to identify the basic elements of a potential collaborative approach to assist the international community in meeting countries' capacity development needs for global environmental management. They were also instrumental in developing a GEF-specific framework for action designed to channel appropriate resources to this effort. These are described in detail in the document titled "Elements of Strategic Collaboration and a Framework for GEF Action for Capacity Building for Global Environmental Management", which was presented to the GEF Council in May 2001. While delaying action on certain elements of that framework pending further consultations with the parties to the Rio Conventions, the GEF Council approved funding to allow countries to design and implement National Capacity Needs Self Assessments (NCSAs).

In September 2001 the GEF Secretariat released the *GEF Operational Guidelines for National Capacity Self-Assessments*. The approach recommended by these Guidelines to preparing the NCSAs is both innovative and challenging. First, although the Guidelines provide general guidance on the content, structure and focus of the assessments, they leave considerable flexibility with regards to the detailed activities and methodologies that a country will employ. Second, the assessments should be '*self*'-assessments. That is, the entities being assessed should take the lead on conducting the assessment *themselves*. This is in contrast to most internationally supported assessments that are undertaken by independent experts, usually international experts.

Moreover, in addition to the challenging approach outlined above, the *substantive focus* of the NCSAs is also innovative and complex: Countries are required to address cross-cutting issues and focus on synergies across the Conventions. This is unprecedented for a GEF Enabling Activity in particular and unfortunately quite rare in terms of technical cooperation in general. While there has been considerable rhetoric at the global level about promoting synergies between Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), the reality of implementation at the national and local levels falls far short of this goal. Stand-alone, piecemeal approaches to helping developing countries meet

their MEA obligations have proven inadequate and can divert already scarce resources from national sustainable development efforts. The NCSA process represent the only nationally focused, global initiative explicitly explicitly designed to examine potential synergies between the Rio Conventions. In addition, they can be used by countries to mainstream the global environment into broader national sustainable development processes.

Many countries have a clear vision as to how best to implement the NCSA. It is hoped that this Companion Implementation Resource Kit and Resource Kit ("the Resource Kit") will help those countries by provoking discussion and providing information on tools that might be used to overcome any challenges they might face. For other countries, perhaps unsure as to how best to undertake the assessment, this Resource Kit provides a step-by-step approach to undertaking an assessment that is both a constructive process, and leads to a product that is that will find useful.

This Resource Kit is just one of several technical support mechanisms provided by UNDP and the GEF Secretariat. It is intended to be a companion to the UNITAR Reference Guide found on the GEF Web site. The Resource Kit is based on real-world experience and insights that have emerged from the UNDP's capacity development activities and the proposal development phase of the NCSA process. It is meant to be an organic document that will be improved and revised as countries get further along in implementing their NCSAs. Hence we welcome continual feedback, suggestions, and ideas from users on how to improve it.

An NCSA is a flexible and powerful tool for helping developing countries examine their global environmental commitments in a holistic and integrated fashion. UNDP is ready to provide countries with the technical guidance and support necessary to realize the potential of this new cross-cutting Enabling Activity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The principal authors of this resource kit were Dennis Fenton and Arturo Garcia-Costas. However, the document benefited from the input of wide range of individuals, including the participants of a Regional NCSA Implementation Workshop held in Bratislava, Slovakia in May 2003. The contributions of Oliver Page, Sharon Laws, Rebecca Carman, Yamil Bonduki, Olga Corrales, Yannick Glemarec, and John Hough were particularly valuable. While this current draft represents a collaborative effort, complete responsibility for this first edition lies with the principal authors.

NOTICE

This document is part of the UNDP/GEF Resource Kit series. Resource Kits are an assemblage of reading materials, some prepared by UNDP/GEF and others drawn from the body of leading literature on the subject matter at hand. The Kits are not 'one-time' publications, but rather *works in progress* that will be regularly updated. Their objective is to empower UNDP country offices and project teams to manage GEF projects effectively. Resource Kits will be made available to UNDP and to external partners in printed and electronic formats on our Internet and Intranet sites.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CDI	Capacity Development Initiative
GEF	Global Environment Facility
IDRC	International Development Research Council
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPD	National Project Director
PCC	Project Coordinating Committee
POPs	Persistent Organic Pollutants
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PSR	Public Sector Reform
TOR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNITAR	United Nations Institute for Training and Research

1. ABOUT THE RESOURCE KIT

1.1 Why this Resource Kit?

In the 1990's, the international community reached unprecedented agreements on the need to protect the global environment, most notably by negotiating and ratifying three global Conventions addressing climate change, biodiversity and desertification/land degradation. If implemented effectively by the parties, these treaties will contribute significantly to realizing the goal of sustainable development and to conserving the planet's natural resources for future generations.

Despite their good faith participation in the negotiation process, many, if not all, of the parties lack the capacity to fully implement these Conventions. This lack of capacity is a key obstacle to the effective implementation of the Conventions. Moreover, in most countries, not only is the necessary capacity lacking, there is also insufficient understanding of exactly what capacity is needed. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) has recognized made funds available to participating countries to support an assessment of capacity needs. Since 1997, notably through the so-called 'Enabling Activity Add-On' projects, GEF has financed sectoral assessments related to biodiversity, climate change and POPs.

In September 2001 GEF established a new source of funds to support capacity national capacity self-assessments (NCSA). These funds are guided through the *GEF Operational Guidelines for National Capacity Self-Assessments* – hereafter referred to as the *Guidelines*. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is assisting over 100 countries in undertaking these assessments. The Resource Kit provides UNDP-specific guidance and information about tools, methodologies, and issues relevant to the NCSA process. The Resource Kit sets out to support national project teams through every step of project implementation, i.e. from project signature until project closure.

1.2 Limitations of the Resource Kit

This Resource Kit is intended to be an informative and useful resource, not a prescriptive blueprint for the NCSA process. Whilst providing information on many tips and tools, the Resource Kit simply cannot address the full range of situations and challenges arising in the more than 100 countries being supported by UNDP. It will, however, provide general guidance, help direct overall processes, and give project managers the tools and confidence to adapt and manage the situation in their country.

There is extensive international and regional literature regarding capacity, capacity development and capacity assessment, with much of it focussing on the environment sector. The international literature provides a theoretical basis for capacity assessments, and also provides details on tools and methodologies for undertaking capacity assessments. This Resource Kit does not set out to repeat or replace the extensive literature. Where appropriate, it draws on this literature. Most importantly, this Resource Kit sets out to operationalize the findings of the international literature within the context of UNDP projects.

Likewise, UNDP, and many UNDP Country Offices, have developed execution Resource Kits providing details on project management and procedures. Again, this Resource Kit does not set out to repeat or replace the execution Resource Kits. It provides an overview for NCSA project teams that is applicable in the context of NCSA projects, and should be sufficient to guide the teams through the UNDP project management process.

1.3 How to Use this Resource Kit

This Resource Kit provides *implementation* guidance to national project teams responsible for managing and overseeing all activities related to NCSA implementation. Depending on in-country circumstances, the national project team typically consists of a National Project Director (NPD, provided by government), a National Project Coordinator (NPC, who is likely to be full-time and to be financed by the project), and a UNDP Programme Officer. In many countries, the three Convention Focal Points or their representatives are also part of this team. In addition, as appropriate, this Resource Kit should be useful to project support staff assistants, consultants and technical experts as they each perform tasks within the framework of the NCSA.

This Resource Kit is divided into six Sections and is accompanied by four Annexes and detailed Modules. It is strongly recommended that the NPC, team leaders, technical experts, and neutral facilitators that may be involved in process become familiar with the entire contents of the Resource Kit. Table 1 briefly introduces the structure of the Resource Kit and indicates which stakeholders are likely to benefit most from each Section.

Table 1: Contents and Structure of the Resource Kit

Section	Details covered in the section	Principal Expected User
1	General background to the Resource Kit and an introduction to its structure and utilisation.	All project stakeholders
2	Introduction to the NCSA concept, its history, the objectives, outputs and guiding principles of an NCSA.	
3	A short, simple description of each step in the NCSA process and the minimum requirements to complete the step. Detailed supporting information is provided in Annex 1.	The stakeholder involved in the respective NCSA step
4	Specific guidance related to project management for the project start-up and the implementation phase. Guidance on administrative and financial matters and trouble-shooting.	In particular the National Project Team
5	Information on the other UNDP/GEF support measures, and tips on how to access them.	
6	A list of sources of information, reference material and websites where additional information is to be found.	
Annex	**Issues addressed in the Annexes**	**Principal Expected User**
1	Guidance for the Use of Assessment Tools and Methodologies	Project Teams, Consultants, Technical Experts
2	'Institutional', 'Organisational' or 'Entity' Assessment	Project Team
3		
4		Project Team

As project teams implement the NCSA, they may closely follow the steps in Section 3. If so, Section 3 will guide them through the process, and will indicate which tools and methodologies can be used. Information on these tools and methodologies is provided in the Modules. Other project teams may not follow the steps so closely. However, they will still need to use assessment tools and methodologies. The attached Modules provide them with introductory information on a broad range of such tools.

This Resource Kit is an evolving document. Project teams are encouraged to provide feedback and suggestions as to how the Resource Kit can be more responsive to the vast diversity of in-country needs and situations. Project teams and experts are further encouraged to provide information on additional tools not yet covered in the Modules. Project teams are also expected to provide case studies, through which other countries preparing the NCSA can learn. These will fall into Annex 3.

2. INTRODUCTION TO NATIONAL CAPACITY SELF-ASSESSMENTS

2.1 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 terms of the design of the process and during the assessment itself. For example, during the process unexpected opportunities for cooperation amongst certain stakeholders may arise, or 'institutional moments' whereby the global environment can be better aligned with a particular organization's mandate might come into being. The flexibility of the NCSA mechanism will allow a country to adapt the process to take advantage of such developments.

Take the hypothetical case of a country that experiences an extreme weather-related event of national significance such as flooding or drought during implementation of the NCSA. This may create an opportunity to put land management and climate change firmly on the national agenda, attracting the attention of high-level decision makers and many other parts of society. The NCSA process could be adjusted to respond to these new circumstances and be used to assess national capacity to prevent and manage floods, in the context of the three Rio Conventions. Doing this would ensure that the NCSA responds to a national priority in a timely manner, as well as securing a high-level entry point for the NCSA process and raising awareness of the relevance of the Conventions. National project teams should constantly be on the look out for such opportunities to use the relative flexibility and agility of the process to raise its profile and maximize its positive impacts.

2.2 GEF Support for the NCSAs and Capacity Development

Over the last decade, capacity constraints have been increasingly recognised as a main obstacle to sustainable development in many countries. Accordingly, the development community has paid increasing attention to capacity development and capacity assessment in its policies and projects. In addition, a large number of regional and international agreements and Conventions have come into force over the last two decades. Each places additional demands on the capacity of participating countries.

In this context, the GEF Council approved the CDI in May 1999. The CDI was the first step in an ongoing and evolving effort on the part of the GEF use its resources more effectively to build sustainable capacity. Although a main focus of the CDI was to provide input into the design of future GEF programmes and projects, it was also intended to galvanise a new global approach to developing capacity to implement the three conventions.

The recommendations for a new strategic framework for capacity development that emerged from the CDI had four components: (i) the need for country specific, detailed, self-assessments of capacity needs; (ii) a new GEF funding window focusing on capacity development; (iii) guidelines for changes to all new GEF projects, and; (iv) global measures to collect and disseminate best practices. At the time of going to print, the GEF Council had approved the first component[1] and made funds available for these self-assessments. These self-assessments are the subject of this Resource Kit.

2.2 Understanding Capacity Development

The terms *capacity* and *capacity development* can mean different things to different people depending on who uses them and the context in which they are used. Capacity development, as a concept, is generally associated with training, human resources development, knowledge acquisition, the learning organization and other concepts. The development of the individual and the entity within which the individual works is central to capacity development, but there is a further dimension that is often overlooked in traditional capacity development interventions.

[1] Components (ii) – (iv) are scheduled to be reviewed at the November 2003 GEF Council Meeting.

Box 1: "Capacity Development" v. "Capacity Building"

Because the terms "capacity development" and "capacity building" have been used interchangeably within the development assistance community over the last decade, the use of one or the other can sometimes generate confusion. Many development professionals believe that the former term more adequately reflects the reality that "developing" capacity is primarily a dynamic, endogenous process that builds upon existing systemic, organizational and individual capacity, while the latter term implies that capacity is newly created and is often associated with interventions and activities that are primarily externally driven. However, while a common understanding of capacity development as a dynamic, endogenous process has taken root throughout the United Nations system and the wider development assistance community, different individual and institutional actors have become accustomed to using either one of the terms. Ultimately, focusing on exploring and reinforcing the common understanding discussed above is a far more relevant and productive exercise than settling on a uniform terminology. This Resource Kit uses them interchangeably, but generally will favor the term "capacity development".

The failure of many capacity development interventions can often be attributed to the narrow view of capacity that informed their design. For example, complex change initiatives such as a change in the way a particular government service is delivered, often limit capacity development activities to addressing individual training needs or, in some cases, may include an institutional strengthening component. Often missed are important dimensions of capacity at the policy or legislative levels, or in supporting processes and regulations.

If these other levels and dimensions of capacity are not addressed, then the chances of successfully developing sustainable capacities are often greatly diminished or forestalled. Therefore, capacity development must go beyond the level of the individual and the entity to consider the broader societal environment or overarching systems within which they function. In keeping with this tri-level conceptual framework, one widely accepted definition of capacity development advanced by UNDP is that the term encompasses "the actions needed to enhance the ability of individuals, institutions and systems to make and implement decisions and perform functions in an effective, efficient and sustainable manner"[2].

At the *individual* level, capacity development refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviors, 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 overall organizational performance and functioning capabilities, as well as the ability of an organization to adapt to change. It aims to develop the institution as a total system, including its constituent individuals and groups, as well as its relationship to the outside. In addition to improvements in physical assets, such as infrastructure, institutional capacity building involves clarification of missions, structures, responsibilities, accountabilities and reporting lines, changes in procedures and communications, and changes in the deployment of human resources.

[2] CDI, October 2000, *Country Capacity Development Needs and Priorities: A Synthesis.*

At the *systemic* level capacity building 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, as well as their mandates, are important.[3]

Capacity development interventions can be focused at local, national, or global levels and amongst any individual or group of stakeholders – individuals, entities or institutions, as well as at an overall systems level. Interactions between the different levels are also important to overall capacity. Capacity is relevant in both the short term (for example, the ability to address an immediate problem) and the long term (the ability to create an environment in which particular changes will take place). And capacity development does not always involve the creation of new capacity, but often the redeployment of existing capacities or the release of latent capacities.

2.3 UNDP and Capacity Development

Capacity development, including capacity assessment, has been one of UNDP's core business areas since the early 1990s. UNDP has been involved in capacity development and capacity assessment at both the global level and on the ground in over 130 countries. At the global level, UNDP plays a key role as a forum for intellectual debate, facilitating discussion and advancing the collective understanding of capacity development. At the country level, UNDP is supporting thousands of projects developing and assessing capacity. This unparalleled on the ground experience grounds UNDP's academic output and reinforces its status as the global leader in capacity development.

UNDP is also an established partner for countries as they address environmental issues and implement global conventions. UNDP's Energy and Environment Group supports projects in the environmental sector across the world, the vast majority of which include capacity development activities. UNDP is also directly supporting the implementation of global environment conventions through GEF funded projects and enabling activities, through the Montreal Protocol Unit, and through the Drylands Development Centre.

The Millennium Declaration, adopted by all 189 member states of the UN General Assembly in 2000, outlines a common approach to the key challenges facing humanity at the beginning of the 21st century. Based on this Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) outline specific goals and targets to respond to these challenges. Meeting the MDGs cannot be accomplished simply by providing resources to developing countries; governments, civil society, and the international community must work together to strengthen countries' abilities to use resources effectively. Recognizing the importance of capacity development in achieving the MDGs and UNDP's leadership in this field, Secretary General Kofi Annan has designated UNDP as the MDG coordinating agency within the UN system. With the MDG framework as an overarching priority, UNDP is working at the country level to enhance capacities to find nationally owned solutions to reduce poverty and to improve national reporting capabilities to measure progress in achieving MDG targets.

Launched in the 2002 Johannesburg WSSD, the Capacity 2015 platform builds upon Capacity 21's efforts to develop countries' capacity to implement Agenda 21. Capacity 2015's mission is to "assist communities to develop their capacities to nurture healthy local economies, societies, and environments, to effectively face the challenges of globalisation and derive the greatest possible benefits from actual and emerging global trends, such as rapid changes in information technologies." By focusing on local initiatives, but maintaining close ties to national economic, social, and environmental policy making, the Cap2015 platform encourages and empowers people to take ownership of the processes and decisions that affect them. Capacity 2015 will be one of UNDP's main tools to work on the MDGs at a local level, particularly in achieving the goal of halving poverty by 2015.

[3] UNITAR NCSA Reference Guide, page 5.

Box 2: The Environmental Governance Dimension of the NCSA Process

The NCSA process has a significant environmental governance focus. Arriving at a common understanding of the important environmental governance concepts that frame the exercise will prove useful for the project team and other relevant decision-makers during the implementation process.

Governance – common definitions

Definitions of governance by leading institutions and studies converge on the term as referring to a process by which power is exercised.

World Bank: Governance is defined as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources. The World Bank has identified three distinct aspects of governance: (i) the form of political regime; (ii) the process by which authority is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development; and (iii) the capacity of governments to design, formulate, and implement policies and discharge functions. (World Bank, 1997);

UNDP: Governance is viewed as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences. (UNDP 1997);

OECD: The concept of governance denotes the use of political authority and exercise of control in a society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development. This broad definition encompasses the role of public authorities in establishing the environment in which economic operators function and in determining the distribution of benefits as well as the nature of the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. (OECD DAC, 1995);

Institute of Governance, Ottawa: Governance comprises the institutions, processes and conventions in a society which determine how power is exercised, how important decisions affecting society are made and how various interests are accorded a place in such decisions (Institute of governance, 2002);

Commission on Global Governance: Governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken. It includes formal institutions and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interest. (Commission on good governance, 1995). [4]

Elements of Effective Environmental Governance:

For example, effective environmental governance requires specialized capacity in:

1. Designing the rules and institutions necessary to set and enforce effective and locally appropriate environmental standards. Environmentally effective rules and institutions must respect local cultural values and perceptions of risk, as well as the ecological boundaries of the targeted ecosystem or ecosystems.

2. **Recognizing and allocating substantive rights** in a manner that promotes equitable access to energy, natural resources and ecosystem services. Environmental institutions are often challenged with

[4] Excerpted from *Governance: Past, Present, Future Setting the governance agenda for the Millennium Declaration*, Sakiko Fukuda-Parr and Richard Ponzio, 2002

mediating rights to access scarce resources, or communally held resources. These rights can, for example, include property rights, land tenure and land use rights, as well as intellectual property rights, and the right to protect traditional knowledge.

3. Determining the **best level of decision-making** for the effective management of natural resources. This requires the drawing of a "systems boundary" on the basis of, for example, a watershed or ecosystem, in manner that empowers the main user groups dependent on the resource as well as the biological or hydrological dynamics of the resource. In many countries this requires the promotion of decentralization of authority or, in the context of transboundary natural resources, the development of regional governance structures.

4. Promoting the meaningful **access, participation and representation** of communities, through empowering, for example, Civil Society Organizations, Community Based Organizations, and indigenous peoples. The communities in closest contact to natural resources, or to polluting activities often most ably represent the interests of the environment.

5. Ensuring **accountability and transparency** of the institutions and the individuals entrusted with authority over natural resources, or whose activities have an impact on the environment. This requires rules and procedures that allow the public to access information – held by governments and by companies, and encourage authorities to expose corruption, and to enforce against criminal and civil violations of environmental standards.

6. Tapping **markets and channeling financial flows**, through taxes, fees, tradable permits, economic incentives and consumer information, in a manner that promotes the efficient use of natural resources and internalizes the costs of pollution by requiring polluters to pay. In a world of increasingly open markets, these tools need to be designed with an understanding of their interaction with a growing number of international rules on trade and investment, such as those of the World Trade Organization, and regional and bilateral agreements.

7. **Incorporating science and managing risk** as part of effective environmental decision-making. Environmental regulators, user groups and effected communities depend upon quality scientific data to guide their decisions. This includes information related to technologies, ecosystems and substances. However, they also depend upon techniques, such as risk assessment and risk management and precautionary decision-making, that enable policy-makers to take into account differences in our perceptions of risk.

2.4 Why Should a Country Undertake an NCSA?

The flexibility and focus of the NCSA process provides countries with an opportunity to review the global environmental responsibilities they have assumed since the Earth Summit and determine how to reconcile these responsibilities with their national sustainable development priorities. In particular, the NCSA process has three aspects that make it a particularly valuable exercise. First, a country undertaking an NCSA can carefully examine past capacity development efforts focused on the three thematic areas in order to derive lessons from the successes and failures of specific interventions. Second, the process allows a country the freedom to explore potential "win-win" situations between their global environmental obligations and local and national environmental challenges and opportunities. Third, with its unprecedented focus on analysing issues that cut across the Rio conventions, the NCSA

represents a critical step in their effective implementation by promoting a more integrated and synergistic approach.

The cross-cutting dimension of the NCSA process is particularly significant. Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) have become the primary means of mounting coordinated global and regional responses to threats such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and transboundary pollution. Accordingly, over three hundred regional and international environmental agreements have been negotiated since the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment to assist countries to collaboratively address an increasing range of environmental threats. Unfortunately, while this explosion of agreements reflects the growing awareness of the critical importance of the environment for welfare and prosperity of human civilization, the range of obligations they contain have significant capacity implications for developing countries.

While there has been considerable rhetoric at the global level about promoting synergies between Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), the reality of implementation at the national and local levels falls far short of this goal. Stand-alone, piecemeal approaches to helping developing countries meet their MEA obligations have proven inadequate and can divert already scarce resources from national sustainable development efforts. The NCSA

Finally, the information on capacity that emerges from the NCSA can lead to better use and allocation of resources in the efforts to implement the global environmental conventions and manage the global environment. By assisting a country in the development of a more strategic approach to developing capacity for global environmental management, a well-prepared NCSA will strengthen a country's ability to mobilize domestic resources and attract and manage external assistance. Resources may be both financial and non-financial; they may originate from inside the country, from the international community, and from the GEF.

2.5 Potential Benefits Flowing From an NCSA

An NCSA should build upon and strengthen existing development and/or environmental decision-making processes. Conducting the exercise in isolation is likely to limit its positive impacts.

The NCSA process should therefore have multiple benefits to the country. Some of these potential benefits include:

- Direct contribution to socio-economic development and addressing local environmental issues. For example, the NCSA may identify and design measures that can both improve the global environment and contribute to local development priorities;
- Enhanced ability to negotiate with the donor community regarding technical cooperation and capacity development assistance being offered in the environmental arena.
- Improved cross-sectoral coordination and dialogue, as the NCSA brings together stakeholders from the various sectors. For example, in some countries, national councils for sustainable development have been entrusted with coordination of the NCSA. It is hoped that this involvement will also help strengthen these national councils;
- Strengthened national-local coordination and decentralisation processes, as the NCSA process can be designed to support such objectives and analyze capacity constraints, introduce new working methods, and contribute to local level capacities;
- Strengthened networks within the environmental community, and between the environment and the broader governance communities. For example, by working together on the different NCSA components, members of these communities may develop a mutual trust and understanding. Communities that were previously in conflict may realise that it is possible to work together, and that this would be mutually beneficial;
- Strengthened non-governmental roles in environmental management, as the NCSA brings NGOs to work with governments, for the first time in many countries;
- An established culture of self-evaluation and problem-solving, which is currently not present in many countries.

While achieving some progress on several of these fronts is feasible, the NCSA will probably only be able to make significant progress on one or two of the above.

2.6 What will be the Principal Outputs of the NCSA?

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 3 Rio conventions. The Guidelines identify a basic series of Outputs that each NCSA is expected to deliver:

- A stock-take or quick review of previous and ongoing activities related to capacity building;
- An account of the process by which the NCSA was prepared;
- A list and description of capacity building needs in the three thematic area;
- An identification of cross-cutting issues and synergies, and;
- (optional) A plan of action to meet the prioritised needs and a mechanism for monitoring and evaluating the progress made in meeting those needs.

2.7 Guiding Principles

All countries undertaking the NCSA have prepared a project proposal outlining the project scope and methodology. Inherent in each of these proposals is a series of guiding principles. These principles stem from the GEF Operational Guidelines, and are:

- 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;
- 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 appropriate institutional arrangements for the NCSA;
- The NCSA should build on existing 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[5];
- The NCSA should support a long-term approach to in-country capacity building, within the broader context of sustainable development. In this context, the NCSA should be seen as a first step in a cycle of capacity assessment and development.

In addition, UNDP emphasizes the following principles for those countries it is supporting:

- Where appropriate, the NCSAs should focus on issues that cut across the three Conventions. As many other GEF and internationally supported activities focus on issues specific to one convention, a comparative advantage of the NCSAs could be to focus on cross-cutting issues. The long term aim is to strengthen synergies across the Conventions and to develop capacity in the most cost-efficient manner;

[5] UNDP (October 2000) gives an introduction to these three levels of capacity.

- Where appropriate, the NCSAs should pay particular attention to assessing capacity needs at the *systemic* level (see Box 9). Many development projects focus on capacity at the individual and institutional levels, while neglecting important systemic issues;
- The NCSAs should lay the foundation for integrating capacity development for the global environment into wider sustainable development processes. Notably, links should be established with the ongoing processes to prepare Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) and efforts to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Annex 2 provides some examples and more information on how countries have proposed to operationalise these principles.

Whilst respecting the above-mentioned objectives and principles, each NCSA must be uniquely adapted to the national conditions. It should focus on issues and questions of national significance and importance. This adaptation and this focussing 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.*

Box 3: Realizing the Potential of the NCSA Process

For an assessment to be a useful exercise and constitute a basis for action and decision-making, it must be (1) technical sufficient and credible, (2) acceptable to key decision-makes and stakeholders, and (3) likely to lead to follow-up actions.

To realize the potential of the NCSA process, each of these conditions should be carefully considered in the context of the particular national circumstances facing the project team. In some cases it may be necessary to balance one against the other during the implementation process. For example, in countries where basic information and understanding concerning global environmental issues is lacking, emphasis might be on filling these gaps through technical analysis or on educating critical stakeholders.

In other countries, where such basic information and understanding exist, there may be significant disagreements over priorities and how to best to proceed in meeting convention obligations. There may be institutional, even personal, conflicts that create a difficult policy landscape for implementation of the conventions. In such countries, the NCSA could be used to facilitate or continue a dialogue among the key stakeholders to build consensus on a way forward. In any event, one of the keys to a successful NCSA is ensuring that the key stakeholders and decision-makers involved have a common understanding of where the process is going and what the country want so achieve with it. UNDP strongly recommends that a "visioning" exercise be conducted very early in the process to develop that understanding and forge the necessary consensus to support implementation.

Three Approaches to Determining Capacity Needs

The most common approach to determining capacity needs is by observing the difference between existing capacity and the capacity needed to achieve *existing* goals or obligations. With respect to the global environment, this will require identifying the capacity needed to meet the binding commitments contained in the Rio Conventions and determining how best to develop this capacity. This represents an *incremental* approach to capacity development. In this approach, individuals, institutions and the system evolve in relatively minor ways with few dramatic changes at any level. The incremental approach focuses on taking actions in the short- and medium-term.

A more drastic approach would involve a fundamental evaluation of overall goals and determination of the kinds of organizational structures and capacities needed to attain them without regard to the existing baseline. This is a *transformational* approach to capacity development. In this approach, it is possible that very little of the existing capacity (individuals, institutions or system level) will remain unchanged. Individual positions, sub-units and entire organizations may be eliminated or restructured, take on new mandates, and develop entirely new skill sets. This approach usually implies an extended time horizon.

A third approach is to focus on where existing efforts to implement the Rio Conventions are failing, and quickly develop the missing capacity, by filling in gaps or shifting capacity around. For example, a country may decide that low awareness is the most important obstacle to implementing one, or all three, Conventions. The country will immediately develop and implement a plan for increasing awareness, thereby removing that capacity constraint. This is the *barrier-removal* approach.

Operationally, these approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Indeed, all three could be employed in a complementary manner. However, each approach has methodological implications that must be carefully considered.

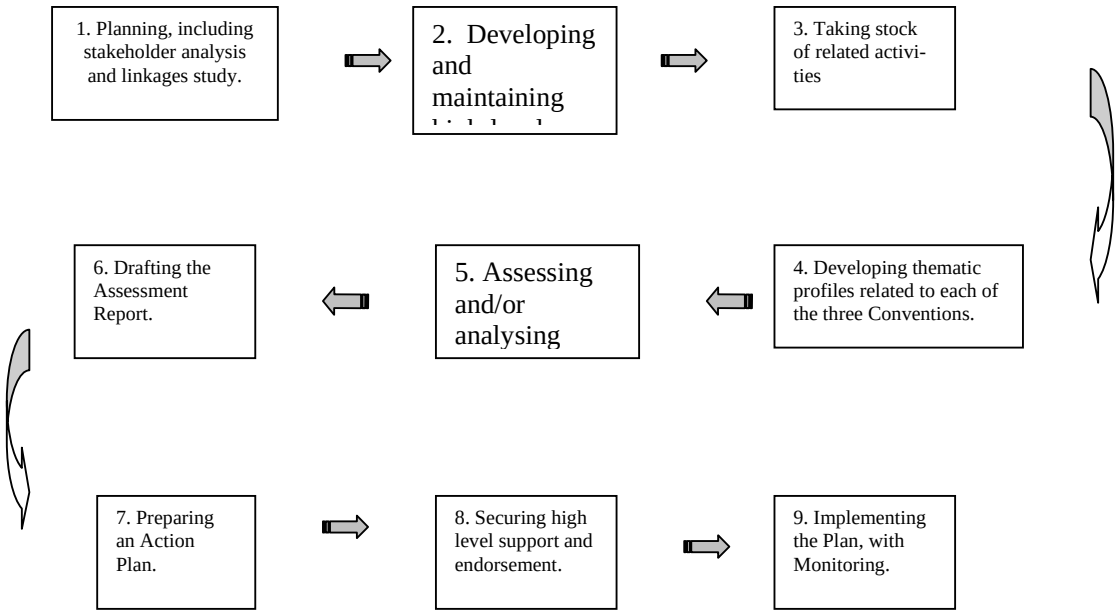
3. A NINE STEP PROCESS

This Resource Kit provides practical information on managing an NCSA and contains guidance on a range of tools and methodologies. The UNITAR Reference Guide sets forth a particular approach to conducting an NCSA and recommends the use of a specific set of methodological tools. Thus, the UNITAR Guide offers a concrete model for countries to consider in designing and implementing the NCSA process. By providing additional and complementary information, this Resource Kit should assist countries in selecting the tools and methodologies that are most appropriate to their national circumstances and specific objectives for the NCSA.

Figure 1 illustrates the nine steps in a typical NCSA process. This Chapter describes each step, providing guidance, tips and alternatives for each step. It is noted that there will be variations across countries, particularly in the order of the Steps and in the relative emphasis placed on each Step.

Each of the following sections gives a list of useful tools for each step. **More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.** After having become familiar with the overall process, the reader should refer to the Modules for guidance on how and when to use specific tools and methodologies.

Figure 1: Nine Steps in the NCSA



In addition to its main purpose, each step often aims to bring together the many different parties, to involve them in the project activities, to foster their cooperation and to stimulate dialogue across stakeholders groups.

However, it should be noted that countries are welcome to develop their own unique and appropriate NCSA processes and methodologies, as long as the principals outlined in Chapter 2 are respected, and that they produce the required outputs.

Box 4: Managing a Participatory Approach

Experience indicates one of the primary reasons that previous assessments and planning processes have failed to initiate change because they were not adequately participatory. *Participation* is a development mantra, 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. *Participants* in the process will vary, and may include other government departments, decision-makers, local governments, NGOS, academic and educational institutions and private sector. These participants may participate in studies, workshops, questionnaires.

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

Clearly, there are costs and benefits to increasing participation. The main benefits are that the process will be country driven and broadly owned, that it will be responsive to real needs and it will build on existing structures. More participation also leads to more information being generated and more understanding. 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.

It should be noted that, in order to participate in a truly meaningful manner, stakeholders should have sufficient time, understanding, information and confidence. The project may have to take steps and allocate resources to ensure that this is the case. Senior project management must support this need to allocate resources to making participation happen.

One cost of participatory approaches is that the ultimate product is less refined, less consistent. However, there is a much greater chance of the product leading to changes and results, with all or most stakeholders working to achieve implementation.

The project 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, but a strategy must be developed to overcome it or the results will not be valid.

Another challenge to be faced by project managers is how to ensure 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.

Step 1: Planning the NCSA Process

Why is planning important?

Although significant planning will have taken place during development of the NCSA proposal and project document. After the process is initiated, and at *regular intervals throughout its implementation,* additional planning will be required to:

- Adapt to changes and update the situation;
- Bring new actors into the process, and constantly keep key stakeholders involved;
- Determine the additional details on the steps to be taken, by when, and by whom.

Successful planning puts in place the foundations for a successful project and product, notably by carefully crafting coordination and technical mechanisms for project implementation and by ensuring there is a clear, common understanding of what is to be achieved, and how.

What does planning involve?

The suggested sub-steps are:

- Review the approved NCSA project document, including the initial workplan. Is it still appropriate? Should there be changes, for example to the activities or the institutional arrangements? Why and what?

- Prepare a detailed work plan for the first quarter of project implementation. Identify costs, responsibilities and milestones (see Annex 1, Module 8);

- Determine the roles and responsibilities of each member of the project team. Prepare individual TORs (see Annex 1, Module 9);

- Undertake an initial stakeholder analysis. This is a key stepped that is often overlooked, leading to problems at later stages of the project. Through the analysis, determine an appropriate role for each project stakeholder. If necessary, determine a mechanism for engaging key stakeholders (see Annex 1, Module 10);

- Identify and recruit key individuals for the Project Steering Committee and review the TOR;

- Identify project experts and develop their TORs;

- Prepare an initial linkages plan, identify partner processes supported by UNDP (such as MDG monitoring and the Capacity 2015 platform), identify entry points, and, establish a firm and complementary relationship with these processes where appropriate. Do the same for none-UNDP and national processes. For example, identify initiatives to transform the public administration, and determine ways to link into this transformation process (see Annex 1, Module no 11).

Which tools to use?

The following tools may be useful for planning: TOR, Workplan, Stakeholder Analysis, Linkages Study and a Planning Workshop. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.

Box 5: 'Stakeholder Analyses' and 'Linkages Plans', New Tools in Many Countries

'Stakeholder analyses', 'linkages plans' and 'participatory approaches' 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 linkages study, and to ensuring an appropriately participatory approach.

Despite the best intentions, in some countries project managers may lack the capacity to engage stakeholders in a participatory process. This is a key capacity constraint – and a constraint to effectively doing the NCSA! Attention must be paid to this during the NCSA.

Additional recommendations

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 be done first 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 a PSC; the PSC should then review and modify its own membership and TOR.

In most countries, the Planning Workshop will help bring together stakeholders and secure their involvement, understanding, their ideas and contribution to the project.

As mentioned previously, NCSA are to be flexible and responsive. Planning allows decisions on the project approach to be regularly reviewed and revised.

Box 6: Linking the NCSA to other Initiatives, Projects, and Processes

Because an NCSA touches on a broad range of environmental and development issues, there are likely to be a considerable number of initiatives, projects, and activities that could be linked to the process. In fact, the NCSA Operational Guidelines stress the flexibility of the process and the need to link it to broader national development processes and activities. Accordingly, the NCSA proposal format provides a place for countries to briefly describe such linkages. Once the NCSA is launched, however, a project team should review the linkages that were included in the original proposal to determine whether they are still relevant or make strategic sense. At this point, a project team might also determine whether there exist other potential linkages that should be explored. Developing a Linkages Plan is one approach a project team might employ to managing this aspect of the NCSA process (see Annex 1, Module ?).

A Linkages Plan is a methodological tool that analyses and determines how the NCSA process will be linked to other activities in operational, concrete terms. Developing such a plan involves the following steps:

- Identify opportunities for linkages (i.e. mapping of institutional mandates and relevant initiatives)
- Analyze the relevance and potential strategic usefulness of these opportunities
- Determine a discrete set of linkages that will be pursued
- Set forth in concrete, operational terms how those linkages will be realized

In conducting the analysis for such a plan, the project team should take into consideration exactly what kind of linkage would be most appropriate and strategically beneficial. There are three basic categories:

- *INPUT Linkages* simple involve formally or informally incorporating outputs of other processes into the NCSA process. The difference between formal and informal incorporation is typically determined by the level of awareness and coordination involved in making uses of a particular output. For example, if a current government study is somehow tailored to feed into the NCSA process, this would be a formal input linkage. On the other hand, simply reviewing an output and listing it as a source of information in the NCSA synthesis report would be an example of an informal input linkage.
- *PROCESS Linkages* entail a range of activities and actions such as conducting joint meetings and events, sharing management structures, office space, or personnel, or formally incorporating the NCSA within another process (i.e. NSDS implementation, WSSD follow-up, etc.)
- *OUTPUT Linkages* involve arranging for the results of NCSA activities to be formally considered by a particular body or institution in decision-making. It can also refer to an effort to incorporate NCSA outputs in another process or project.

Successfully linking the NCSA process to related processes and projects will help to maximize its beneficial impacts and ensure that it is not conducted as an isolated exercise.

Step 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective High-level Support

Why create high-level support?

High-level support helps the process to prepare the NCSA and significantly increases the chance of successful implementation.

UNDP/OECD (2002) identify a series of reasons for securing high-level support for strategy development process. Many of these are directly relevant to the NCSA process. 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 2.5 are followed, and 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 mobilise non-governmental or donor funds;
- Keep the process open and inclusive.

How to create high-level support?

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:

- Identify from where support is needed and desirable (the stakeholder analysis from Step 1 should provide this information);

- Prepare a strategic plan for enlisting the support of high-level individuals. This strategic plan could include the following actions:

    - Identify just what in the NCSA is attractive to important people, such 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 document;
    - Build up support and understanding in the implementing ministry, 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 responsible for the NCSA to contact senior officials from other ministries and from outside government, possibly through their membership on national councils;
    - Requesting 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 sustainable development committees or the government's 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. Aligning the NCSA with the fight against poverty will increase its visibility in many countries. Likewise, in eastern European countries, it should be made clear how the NCSA will support the EU accession process;

- 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 asking them to review project documentation.

- High-level stakeholders that have shown an interest in the NCSA should be regularly briefed and involved throughout the NCSA process;

- The status of the high-level support should be monitored. If it is seen to be slipping, remedial measures should be taken.

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 in the process, for example at the finalisation of the Assessment Report, the Action Plan and during monitoring.

Which tools to use?

The following tools may be useful for creating/maintaining high-level support: Stakeholder analysis, project workshops, (More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.)

Step 3: Stocktaking

Why is stocktaking useful?

Besides being a requirement contained in the NCSA operational guidelines, the Stock-take is a necessary foundation for the capacity assessment. The Stock-take should produce a thorough, fair picture of the current situation and previous activities. The information contained in the Stock-take should serve as a platform for continuing dialogue and debate.

However, in most countries, previous work has already focussed on capacity assessment. This work should not be repeated. The stock-take allows managers to summarise what has been done, and ensure that the project can quickly move forward from this base. In some countries the stock-take will be very rapid.

What do the results of the stocktaking exercise look like?

A stock-take is simply a review and summary of what's been done in terms of implementing the Conventions, assessing capacity and developing capacity.

The Stock-take results in a document that is used as a basis for future discussion and for designing the future activities in the project. A possible contents for the stock-take is given in Box 7.

Box 7: Suggested Results of the Stock-taking Exercise

- A list of related exercises, both ongoing and previous, and a short description of each exercise.

  The stock-take should be broad and inclusive. It is important to consider, at least briefly, *all* that has been accomplished related to each Convention, and so ensure that the NCSA builds all past experience, all lessons learnt, and all existing country-specific analyses. Thus, the stock-take should not be limited to official government exercises. It should consider university studies, unofficial government exercises, NGOs studies, etc.

  This will 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. It will also include similar exercises for other international environmental conventions and agreements, and capacity assessments.

- A list and a short description of documents produced through related exercises;

- A discussion of the main Convention areas not addressed by the related exercises;

- A discussion of the lessons learnt from the previous and related exercises;

- A discussion of the main findings in terms of capacity.

Which tools to use?

The following tools may be useful when doing the Stock-take: Desk study, questionnaires, workshop or a series of mini work-shops, focal groups, site visits and technical studies. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.

Additional considerations

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.

How participatory should the process to prepare the Stock-take be? Each 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 it can be undertaken by an individual.

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.

Box 8: Asking the Right Questions

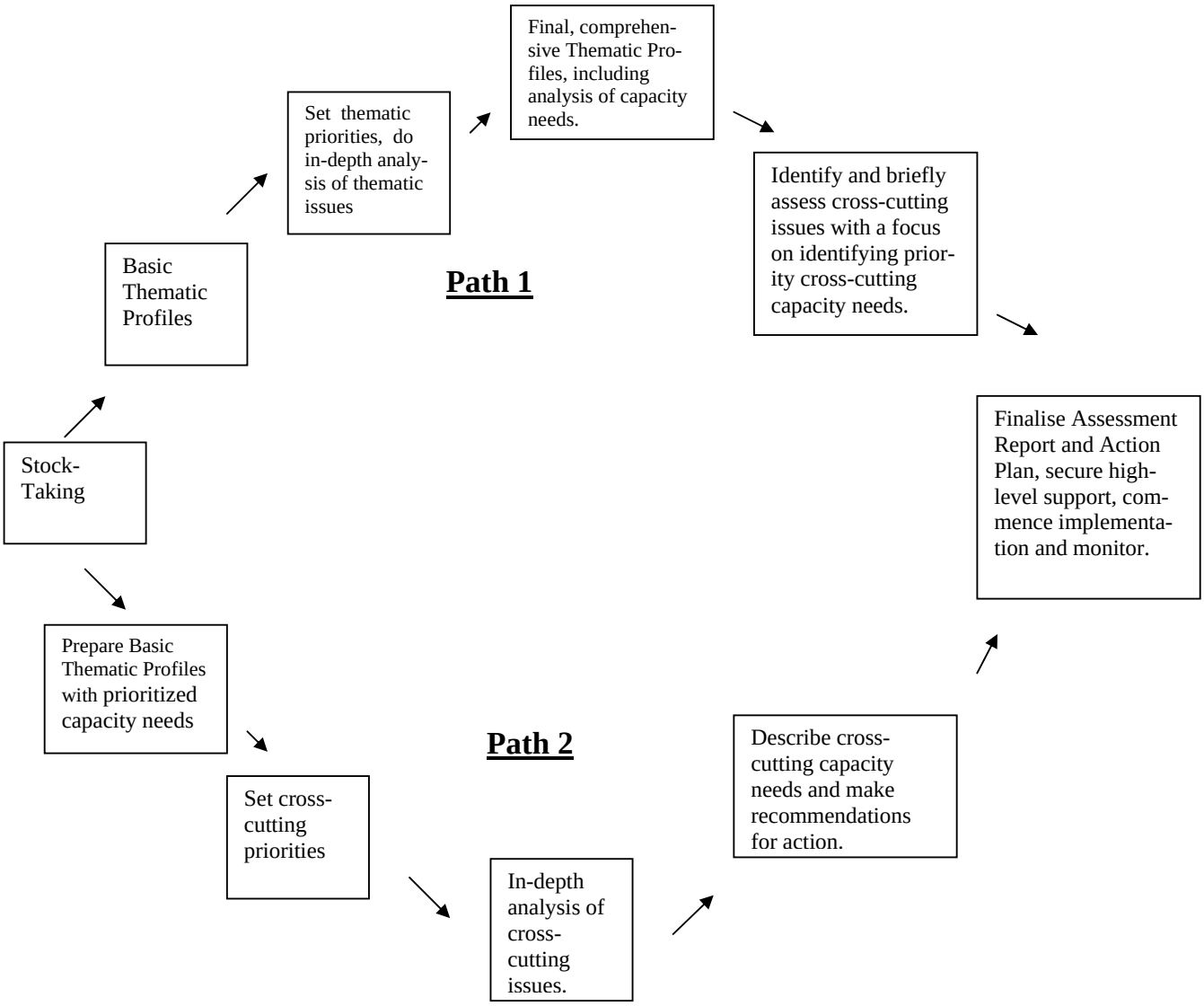
As with any assessment or analysis, it is critical to ask the right questions. At the project outset, this means carefully choosing the table of contents for the stock-takes and thematic profiles. These contents will guide the project experts in their information gathering. If these contents are well chosen, the profiles will cover all relevant issues without threatening or alienating key stakeholders.

A second 'question asking stage' is when the priorities for the in-depth analysis are being chosen. It is very important to define a process and criteria for choosing priorities. The priorities are in effect the questions to be asked in detail – and so must be carefully worded.

What Next?

Following the Stock-taking exercise, there are two typical paths for completing the NCSA, as illustrated by Figure 2.

Figure 2: Typical NCSA Paths



Path 1 This Path has a much stronger focus on the thematic profiles. While thematic profiles are a necessary output of the NCSA process, under this Path, a country will invest a greater percentage of time and resources on their preparation. Path 1's defining operational characteristic is that the priority capacity needs identified during the preparation of a thematic profile will be analysed in-depth (see Box 11). This Path naturally lends itself to an incremental approach (see Box 3).

Path 2 Under this Path, a country would prepare basic thematic profiles that include a brief description of priority capacity needs and a distillation of past analytical work, but do not encompass further analysis of these needs. The bulk of the attention and resources will be focused on analysing cross-cutting issues, identifying potential synergies between the conventions, and determining how best to realize these synergies through cross-cutting capacity development activities and interventions. Path 2 lends itself much more to taking a transformational approach to the NCSA (see Box 3).

Step 4: Preparing Thematic Profiles

Why prepare a thematic profile?

Beyond the fact that the NCSA Operational Guidelines require countries to prepare them, the thematic profile affords a country the opportunity to set out all the capacity-related issues in a descriptive and neutral manner and determine priorities. This provides a platform for bringing together all the stakeholders to discuss progress, strengths and weaknesses.

What is a thematic profile?

As can be seen from the diagram in Figure 2, the thematic profile may include an in-depth analysis of priority capacity constraints, or may be limited to a basic description of the existing capacity situation as distilled from existing studies and analyses. This section focuses on preparing a basic thematic profile.

The contents of the basic thematic profile are:

- a succinct summary of the strength and weaknesses in the country related to implementing the related Convention.

  For this section it is very important to select a good table of contents for the profile. The table of contents should be comprehensive, covering all aspects of the convention, and should be neutral, in no way looking to allocate blame. Annex 2 provides two alternative model Table of Contents for the Thematic Profiles.

- an identification and validation of priority areas for action;

- a general discussion of existing capacity in the priority areas. The discussion should include a breakdown of capacity into the three levels (systemic, institutional, individual). The questions in Box 9 can help this discussion.

- A discussion, from the perspective of the thematic areas, of priority areas and capacity issues that cut across the other thematic areas;

- a discussion of existing gaps in the profile, i.e. where information is too incomplete to make a judgement.

Box 9: Questions to Lead the Discussion into the Systemic, Institutional and Individual Levels

Assessing Capacity Constraints at the Systemic Level

Capacity building at the systemic level emphasises the overall policy framework in which individuals and organisations operate and interact with the external environment, as well as the formal and informal relationships of institutions. Guiding questions include:

- *Policy framework:* Is the overall policy environment conducive?
- *Legal and regulatory framework:* Is the appropriate legislation in place and are these laws effectively enforced? (These may be both formal and informal, such as cultural mores)
- *Management accountability framework:* Are institutional responsibilities clearly defined and are responsible institutions held publicly accountable?
- *Economic framework:* Do markets function effectively and efficiently?
- *Systems level resources:* Are the required human, financial and information resources available? (These may be in any or all of national and local government, private sector, and civil society – including NGO's)
- *Processes and relationships:* Do the different institutions and processes interact and work together effectively? (Including national and local government, private sector, and civil society)

Assessing Capacity Constraints at the Institutional Level

Capacity building at the *institutional* level focuses on the overall organisational performance and functioning capabilities, as well as the ability of an organisation to adapt to change. It aims to develop the institution as a total system, including individuals, groups and the organisation itself. Guiding questions include:

- *Mission/strategic management: Do the institutions have clearly defined and understood missions and mandates?*
- *Culture/structure/competencies: Are the institutions effectively structured and managed?*
- *Processes: Do institutional processes such as planning, quality management, monitoring and evaluation, work effectively?*
- *Human resources: Are the human resources adequate, sufficiently skilled, and appropriately deployed?*
- *Financial resources: Are financial resources managed effectively and allocated appropriately to enable effective operation?*
- *Information resources: Is required information available and effectively distributed and managed?*
- *Infrastructure: Are material requirements such as buildings, offices, vehicles, computers, allocated appropriately and managed effectively?*

Assessing Capacity Constraints at the Individual Level

Capacity building at the *individual* level refers to the process of changing attitudes and behaviours-imparting knowledge and developing skills while maximising the benefits of participation, knowledge exchange and ownership. Guiding questions include:

- *Job requirements and skill levels: Are jobs correctly defined; are the required skills available?*
- *Training/retraining: Is the appropriate learning taking place?*
- *Career progression: Are individuals able to advance and develop professionally?*
- *Accountability/ethics: Is responsibility effectively delegated and are individuals held accountable?*
- *Access to information: Is there adequate access to needed information?*
- *Personal/professional networking: Are individuals in contact and exchanging knowledge with appropriate peers?*
- *Performance/conduct: Is performance effectively measured?*

How to prepare Thematic Profiles?

The thematic profiles should be prepared in a participatory manner or, at a minimum, there should be broad consultation around an early draft. This is to ensure that all stakeholders are informed about the process, and that no major issues have been overlooked.

A basic thematic profile that does not involve further assessment or analysis will not normally require the collection of new information; it should be based on the outputs of all the activities identified in the stock-take. The NBSAP, the National Communication, the WSSD report, and many other documents or reports provide the information that would be distilled to prepare such a profile.

The following tools may be used to prepare NCSA Thematic Profiles. Desk study, questionnaires/interviews, workshop or a series of work-shops, site visits and technical studies. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.
The methodology described in Box 10 may be useful for setting priorities.

Additional Recommendations

One important element of the basic thematic profiles is to determine the existing gaps in terms of knowledge and information regarding the implementation of the conventions, more specifically regarding capacity to implement the Convention.

In terms of timing, the thematic profile could be a long activity, or could just be a synthesis of previous work undertaken (e.g. the NBSAP).

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

For both the Stock-takes and the Thematic Profiles, a judgement has to be made on how broad and how deep the analysis should be. It will be a key task of the national project team to guide on this.

In countries following Path 1, priorities should be set (see Box 10) and the in-depth analysis undertaken (Box 11) within the themes. Following this, cross-cutting issues should be addressed as described under Step 5 below.

In countries following Path 2, the project team should move straight to Step 5.

Box 10: Setting Priorities

Why?

It is not possible to do an in-depth analysis of all issues and capacity needs that are identified through the thematic profiles. Priorities will have to be set. Setting such priorities represents one of the most strategically important and potentially difficult activities of the NCSA process, because of the many competing interests and values that must be considered and balanced.

Elements of a prioritisation process:

i) First, a list of criteria for setting priorities and an associated system for giving weight to the criteria is developed in a consensual manner. Time must be taken to allow for the strategic views of stakeholders. This weighting may be used to give special emphasis given to cross-cutting issues;

ii) Then, using the criteria and weighting, each of the previously identified capacity constraints should be considered and given a *score*. This will lead to a ranking across the capacity constraints.

iii) The ranking should be broadly discussed, at national and local level, involving all stakeholders. The finalisation of this ranking is a key step and should be one of the most participatory steps in the NCSA. It is highly recommended to have either a national workshop or local workshops at this stage.

Possible Tools: Prioritisation Matrix, Workshop, mini-Workshops. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.

Box 11: Undertaking an In-depth Analysis

The specific methodology for an in-depth analysis will depend on the in-country situation and on the nature of the issue being analysed. However, it is necessary to involve a range of experts in the analysis and to have consultation on the final products. A combination of working teams, local workshops, and possibly a national consultation is likely, with an additional due reliance on questionnaires, interviews, etc.

Suggested Steps

i) Once issues have been selected for analysis from the prioritisation process, the Project team and senior management compile existing information related to the issue;
ii) The project team should then develop a detailed Workplan for the in-depth analysis, possibly including detailed ToR for national consultants or consultant teams for *each* priority issue;
iii) A joint one-day workshop involving all the national consultant teams should be held to discuss and finalise the TOR;
iv) National consultant teams collect information related to the priority issues;
v) A workshop is held at different parts of the country to discuss the issues. Several issues may be discussed at one workshop if the same stakeholders are involved. The workshops are results-oriented – the output of the workshop will be:
   - a draft analysis of root causes, contributing factors, and key barriers;
   - an examination of capacity constraints broken down into the three capacity levels;
   - a listing of possible needed capacity building measures and intervention points.
vi) Each national consultant team writes up the in-depth analysis in pre-agreed format.

Possible Tools: Root cause analysis and problem tree, SWOT, Mapping, Focus Groups, Structured interviews, site visits, workshops and/or mini-workshops, logical framework analysis. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.

Additional Recommendations

Wide consultation should take place on the final products.

The aim of the in-depth analysis is to truly understand the nature of the needs/constraint by identifying all the layers of underlying causes, the contributing factors and the key barriers to effectively addressing it. This should lead to a clear identification of optimal interventions points - areas where an appropriate capacity development intervention can have the most impact. The analysis should also point clearly to missed synergies, notably issues common to all three Conventions which are presently being addressed separately and, hence where greater efficiency and impact could be obtained by addressing them collectively.

The in-depth analysis should involve a consideration of the systemic, institutional and individual levels of capacity. For those issues involving capacity at all three levels, the in-depth analysis will list constraints to progress at *each* level, and will provide further analysis of the systemic level.

Step 5: Analyse Cross-Cutting Issues

Why analyse cross-cutting issues?

The cross-cutting focus is one of the unique aspects of the NCSA. The underlying objective of the cross-cutting work is to identify opportunities for synergy and inter-Convention cooperation. For example, the cross-cutting analysis may identify a single capacity constraint that is affecting all three Conventions. Removing that constraint may therefore have a three-fold impact, and should become a priority. Box 12 discusses cross-cutting issues in greater depth.

What is a cross-cutting analysis?

In Path 1, suggested sub-steps are:

- review all thematic profiles (notably the section where each thematic profile attempted to assess cross-cutting issues) and in-depth analysis;
- identify those issues and capacity constraints that are common to all three Conventions (not just the priorities);
- draft a report providing information on cross-cutting capacity constraints and on capacity constraints in cross-cutting issues;

In Path 2, suggested sub-steps are:

- review all basic thematic profiles (notably the section where each thematic profile attempts to assess cross-cutting issues);
- identify those issues and capacity constraints that are common to all three Conventions (not just the priorities);
- set priorities for in-depth analysis (see Box 11);
- undertake further analysis of these priority cross-cutting issues and constraints, in particular analysing the cross-cutting *nature* of the issue (Box 12).

Box 12: Defining "Cross-Cutting" in the context of the NCSA

There are both cross-cutting issues and cross-cutting capacity constraints. A cross-cutting issue could be a technical or development problem that is important in relation to all three Conventions. For example, in Ghana, all three Convention Focal Points identified bush-fire management as a key issue. The NCSA affords the country an opportunity to analyze this common priority from all three perspectives. Each convention will bring to bear its own set of priorities and perspectives on such an issue. In reconciling these differing agendas, national decision-makers and stakeholders can build greater understanding, identify potential conflicts, and work toward a consensus framework for action.

A cross-cutting capacity constraint, on the other hand, is one that, if addressed effectively, would yield benefits for the implementation efforts of all three Rio Conventions. Typical examples include capacity to negotiate at Conferences of the Parties, capacity to manage international projects, incorporation of convention obligations in national legislation, policy, and institutional mandates, capacity to raise public awareness of global environmental issues..

The following are examples of potential cross-cutting issues that could be analyzed through the NCSA process:

- Forest and watershed management
- Wetlands management
- Public awareness and environmental education
- Development and enforcement of legal frameworks
- Monitoring and data collection
- The role of local governance structures
- Cross-sectoral coordination mechanisms
- The poverty and environment nexus
- Effective public participation
- Economic instruments and sustainable finance mechanisms
- The use of scientific information and data in policy-making

How

The cross-cutting analysis should be undertaken by a team representing all sectors. The following tools may be used in this step: desk studies, workshops and/or mini-workshops. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1. See also Box 11.

Box 13: Realizing the Promise of "Synergies"

Like the phrase "sustainable development", the word "synergies" is often used in vague and ill-defined ways. Promoting synergies between multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) is often held up as the 'holy grail' of global environmental governance. When grappling with either of these concepts, it is crucial to remove them from the realm of abstraction by defining them in a concrete manner and, whenever possible, placing them within a specific context.

For example, the most widely accepted definition of sustainable development is that development activities must appropriately balance the economic, social, and environmental dimensions of a given situation. But even this definition remains too abstract when it comes to designing the specific parameters of a project or making practical day-to-day project management decisions. Under such circumstances, the lofty ideal of sustainable development must be integrated in a pragmatic and effective fashion with the gritty reality on the ground.

This process of reconciling the ideal of sustainable development with the real world challenges of reducing poverty and promoting prosperity requires at least two steps; (1) conducting a thorough analysis of the specific development context in which an activity will take place, and (2) developing and implementing a realistic plan for balancing the key economic, social, and environmental considerations of the activity. Realizing the promise of synergy between particular MEAs will require similar degrees of analysis and planning.

In arriving at a practical definition of synergies in the implementation of MEAs, it is important to draw a distinction between three separate but interrelated concepts: interlinkages, overlaps, and synergies:

- *Interlinkages* often represents the formal and informal coordination mechanisms that have been come into being between different MEAs, though some consider the term to be synonymous with "overlaps" or "intersections";
- *Overlaps* describe situations where particular MEAs intersect with respect to their specific provisions or areas of competence creating the potential for conflict, duplication of efforts, and, of course, synergy;
- *Synergies*, on the other hand, refer to the amplified positive impacts that can result from coordinating the implementation of related or interlinked MEAs in an effective and appropriate manner.

Thus, in the context of the NCSA process, the mandated analysis of cross-cutting issues offers an unprecedented opportunity for countries to identify potential synergies in the implementation of the Rio Conventions. To make the most of this opportunity, national NCSA teams should develop their own guidelines on synergies between the Rio Conventions. These guidelines should incorporate the following principles:

1. Duplication of efforts and resources should be avoided;
2. "Win-win" situations should be identified whenever and wherever possible;
3. Common challenges and barriers should be addressed in a cooperative and strategic manner;
4. Undermining or interfering with the implementation of other MEAs should not occur.

By encouraging countries to examine existing overlaps, identify potential synergies, and establish effective interlinkages, the NCSA process can promote a more integrated and cost-effective approach to national implementation of the Rio Conventions.

Step 6: Drafting the Assessment Report

Why prepare an assessment report?

The Assessment Report is a required by the GEF NCSA guidelines.

Drafting the Report will help ensure accountability in the final stages and follow-up of the NCSA. The Report can 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, and the challenges.

A key aspect of the NCSA projects is the focus on *process* over *product.* It is expected that the NCSA process will lead to benefits, for example increased coordination across departments, or new laws which grow out of project activities, or improved collaboration between government and NGOs. These *process* benefits may be of more value than the final documents including the capacity assessment. It is more difficult to demonstrate a good process than a good product. The Assessment Report is a key tool for capturing and communicating these process benefits.

What goes into the assessment report?

The NCSA report must include a summary and description of steps 1 through 5. To do this, it may suffice to collect the outputs from Steps 3 – 5 and add a cover note briefly describing the key points in Steps 1 and 2. In other cases, it may be necessary to restructure the existing documents and prepare an entirely new document.

Another part of the Assessment Report is a paper describing the *process by which the* NCSA report was prepared. Ideally, this step should be 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. This documentation can be summarised to help prepare the final document describing how the NCSA was prepared. Box 14 provides a possible table of contents for the 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 and lobbying are the best manner to present the Assessments. In such cases, it is even more important to determine indicators of success.

Which Tools may be useful?

The following tools may be useful when drafting the Report: studies and consultation. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.

Box 14: Possible Table of Contents for the Assessment Report[6]

1. Executive Summary

- Summary of the NCSA, including proposed next steps

2. Introduction and Background

- Rationale and context of the NCSA
- Overview of participation and preparation process

3. Identified Thematic Priority Issues

- Summary overview of the existing situation and identified, confirmed or reviewed priority issues for climate change, biodiversity and desertification/land degradation
- Detailed description of capacity constraints for the three thematic areas
- Presentation of project opportunities identified for building capacity in each of the three thematic areas

4. Opportunities for Synergistic and Cross-cutting Capacity Building Approaches and Projects

- Presentation of opportunities for synergistic and cross-cutting capacity building approaches and projects

5. Summary of the process for preparing the Assessment

- Description of the steps, the challenges, and the measures taken to overcome the challenges
- Description of the benefits emanating from the process. Section 2.5 provides a illustrative list of the potential benefits expected to emerge from an NCSA process. The project team may wish to refer to this list when reporting on process benefits in the Assessment Report.

[6] Adapted from UNITAR Guide, page ??

Step 7: Drafting the Action Plan for Capacity Development

Why prepare an Action Plan?

Preparation of an Action Plan is not an obligatory component of the NCSA. However, almost all countries undertaking an NCSA with UNDP support have opted to do this. An Action Plan can turn the results of the analysis into a clear understanding of what needs doing and how to do it, and so help ensure there is a follow-up to the NCSA process. It can also mobilise specific support to specific follow-up activities:

What should go into an Action Plan?

The Action plan should:

a) Clarify an overall strategy, providing the overall vision for capacity development to implement global environmental conventions, stating the guiding principles, the main approaches, the overall objectives and the key players and their general roles.

b) Identify concrete activities, projects, and initiatives to be undertaken to address the capacity constraints identified through Steps 1 – 5 and described in the Assessment Report. It should also indicate how these "actions" are to be integrated into existing national plans, such as the PRSP, Agenda 21, or sectoral and environmental plans. It should also indicate how other processes, such as PRSP, MDG or CAP2015 can be modified in order to contribute to capacity development for the global environment.

c) Set forth a mixture of short-term, medium-term, and longer-term objectives linked to specific responsible parties or combination of responsible parties.

d) include an implementation schedule, targets, implementation responsibilities and financing arrangements (including, if necessary, a resource mobilization plan).

d) Include a strategy for monitoring and evaluating capacity development.

Which tools may be useful?

A national workshop involving stakeholders is a useful tool for consultation and finalisation of the Action Plan. This will help generate ownership of and active support for its implementation. The following tools may also be useful when preparing the Action Plan: desk studies, consultation, logical framework analysis. More detailed information on these tools is provided in Annex 1.

It should be recalled that GEF finance can not be used for *implementing* the Action Plan, only preparing it.

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

Why is high-level approval needed?

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.

What is meant by high-level approval?

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 actions. A lot can be achieved at little or no cost. These parts of the Action Plan can be approved without the involvement of the departments responsible for budget allocations. Medium and high-cost actions will need to be approved by the budgetary bodies, and this may be a more complicated process.

How to do it?

This step is really a continuation of Step 2. Further consultation with the targeted high-level officials may be necessary.

Step 9: Monitoring Implementation of the Action Plan

Why monitor?

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

What is an appropriate monitoring system?

All 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 workplan, in order to discuss progress, to define constraints to progress and to identify measures for overcoming these constraints.

The UNDP supported NCSA process should be used to establish a monitoring mechanism. This should be fully described in the Action Plan, and the necessary resources identified and secured. At the country's request, it may be possible to use the GEF finance to cover monitoring activities ((this needs checking. Ove did not agree with this!!).

4. MANAGING THE NCSA PROCESS

This section provides a brief introduction to the UNDP project management framework with an emphasis on issues pertinent or unique to NCSA projects. This section does not attempt to replace existing UNDP management or execution Resource Kits.

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities

Project Steering Committee (PSC).

A PSC's role could include:

facilitating coordination and linkages with activities and processes in other Ministries, other sectors, and in NGOs etc. Endorsing the linkages study is key to this;

- providing a channel for securing high-level approval of major project outputs, such as the Action Plan;
- reviewing and commenting upon project inputs and outputs such as workplan, progress reports, consultants etc. In some cases the PSC may formally approve some of the major project inputs/outputs, such as the Assessment Report.

In some countries, existing bodies (such as National Councils for Sustainable Development) take on the role of the PSC. The PSC members should be sufficiently senior to be able to either grant or directly obtain approval of project outputs. Members should be committed and able to coordinate and develop linkages with other ministries and NGOs. At the first meeting, the PSC should review its own TOR and membership.

Membership and regularity of meetings will vary from country to country. In some countries, it would be reasonable for a PSC to have 10-15 members, both governmental and non-governmental, and to meet every 3 - 4 months.

A typical TOR for the Project Steering Committee is provided in Annex 4.

Project Coordinating Committee

At a senior level, the PSC is responsible for providing strategic guidance to the project. However, the PSC is a relatively bulky organisation and will only meet, at most, once every quarter. Hence, there is a need for an intermediary, agile mechanism to follow up more regularly on strategic management issues and to ensure that the NCSA project maintains its strategic focus between PSC meetings. This could be a formal sub-group of the PSC, at a minimum consisting of the Project Team and one other informed, independent individual (such as a representative of the donor community or the UNDP DRR).

In some countries, this intermediary management mechanism has been formalised as a Project Coordinating Committee (PCC).

The PCC, or its equivalent, should meet at least once each month and:

- comment on proposed project inputs and draft outputs;
- hold regular strategic overview (see Section 4.2 below).

The National Project Director (NPD)

The NPD represents the government in the execution of the project. The NPD, after appropriate consultation, takes all major project daily, weekly and monthly decisions, e.g. regarding work plans, the selection of consultants, timing and design of key activities. The NPD is also responsible for mobilising the PSC, and would typically act as Secretary to the PSC. The NPD should ensure the full support of his/her Ministry to the project, and that the government's contribution to the project is forthcoming.

The National Project Coordinator (NPC)

The NPC is funded by the project to work full time on the project, supporting the NPD in all tasks. Typically the NPC will manage all consultation processes, help organise key activities, prepare draft decisions to be approved by the NPD, oversee and guide consultants. For example, the NPC may process the recruitment of national consultants and may draft a workplan. In both cases, the NPC makes a recommendation and the final decision is taken by the NPD. In most cases the NPC will also play a technical role, for example, drafting the final Assessment Report. Model TOR for the NPC are provided in Annex 4.

The UNDP Country Office

One key role of the UNDP CO is to provide backstopping to the project. This includes strategic support, for example advising on how to operationalise each of the NCSA principles, and supporting inter-sectoral coordination and mobilisation of high-level support. The CO's backstopping role also includes technical support, for example, commenting on the design of project activities and on draft project reports. UNDP CO may be able to help identify suitable national consultants.

A second role for the CO is to monitor the project. This includes reviewing and approving work plans, progress reports and project revisions. This also includes organising the annual project review process.

UNDP Resident Representative

NCSA projects respond to several of UNDP's core corporate objectives.

First, NCSAs lie at the intersection between governance and environment, two of UNDP's practice areas. Second, they are catalytic, preparing the way for resource mobilisation and improved coordination and allocation of resources. Finally, they can contribute directly help country efforts to meeting global environmental commitments and other international objectives such as the MDGs.

Accordingly, UNDP Resident Representative can play three key roles in the NCSA projects. The first is by providing strategic guidance to the project team, ensuring that the overall vision is maintained, and that the project links adequately into national and UNDP country processes. This role may be partly achieved through the Project Steering Committee. The Second key role of the Resident Representative is to help secure high-level support for the NCSA. The Resident Representative's understanding of decision-making processes and his/her network enable him/her to help build this high-level support. Third, the Resident Representative can help the project exploit linkages in-country, for example by ensuring that the NCSA directly contributes to reporting on MDGs, to NEX capacity assessments and to the development of knowledge management networks.

UNDP/GEF (Regional Coordinator, and NCSA Unit in New York)

UNDP/GEF provides backstopping to the UNDP CO. UNDP/GEF are able to provide technical inputs, guidance on methodologies and to disseminate good practices and lessons learnt. Section 6 below provides more information on this.

Experts

National experts will undertake most of the work, collecting, reviewing and analysing information, and undertaking the consultation. Experts may be recruited as individuals or as teams. Some experts will

originate from the global environment sectors, but also, importantly, some experts should originate from the 'capacity assessment sector', such as experts in human resource development, organisational strengthening, change management or legal development. A typical TOR for such a 'Capacity Advisor' is provided in Annex 4.

Neutral Facilitator

A self-assessment requires that the bodies/individuals being assessed do the assessment themselves. However, in order to ensure objectivity, and to overcome any tensions amongst individuals, a *neutral facilitator* can be useful, to advise on methodologies and chair discussions and workshops. It may be desirable that such a facilitator has knowledge of *capacity* or *capacity assessment*. It may also be desirable that the facilitator has little knowledge of the three global conventions – this would ensure neutrality and objectivity. The neutral facilitator, by definition, is not a stakeholder – s/he has no stake in the project outputs and impact. A neutral facilitator can be helpful at all stages of the project. Model TOR for this position are provided in Annex 4.

4.2 Key Planning and Management Steps

Inception Report.

There is typically a period of several months between the preparation of the NCSA proposal and the start-up[7] of project activities. Many discussions take place during this period, and many decisions are taken. The Inception Report is the mechanism for recording and sharing all these discussions and decisions, so that all project stakeholders can equally contribute to project activities.

There is a great deal of planning activity at project outset. The Inception Report summarises the results of this planning, and sets out major issues for decision.

The Inception Report should be prepared just after activities start. The Inception Report should include:

- a short description and justification of all decisions taken regarding project management and approach during the gap period. This will include any changes to the activities, outputs or inputs listed in the project document;
- a detailed and justified workplan for the following three months;
- a proposed budget revision;
- detailed/revised ToR for all inputs to be mobilised in the first three months (including for the NPC and the PSC);
- A highlighting of any issues that require resolution.

Typically, the Inception report will be drafted by the NPC, discussed with the Focal Points, finalised by the NPD, and submitted to the PSC and UNDP CO for approval.

Work Plans

Work plans are useful for improving the usefulness of project activities, for facilitating technical and strategic discussions on the project, and for increasing the visibility of the project.

The project team should prepare work plans every three months. These quarterly work plans should set out: proposed activities, required resources, responsibilities and targets. The workplan should illustrate how the quarterly activities contribute to the overall project objectives. Work plans should be approved by the NPD and UNDP. Work plans should be broadly distributed as a way to communicate the project activities (See Module ## for further information).

Quarterly Progress Reports

Progress Reports are the basis for assessing progress and taking corrective action. They are also useful for recording project achievements and challenges, most likely by feeding into the final project report (The Assessment Report).
The period for progress reporting should correspond with that for work planning. At the end of each workplan period, a progress report should be prepared to describe progress in the period as compared to planned activities and indicators. Moreover, the progress reports for one quarter help justify the next quarter's workplan.

Progress reports should be distributed widely to communicate project successes and weaknesses.

[7] Project activities can be considered to commence when the national project coordinator takes up office or at the time of the first planning workshop.

Terms of Reference (TOR)

TOR can be considered a subset of work plans. They are useful for planning individual inputs, as a basis for strategic and technical discussions, and for communication intended actions.

Good TOR are essential for an activity to be successfully implemented.

A TOR should be prepared for all project inputs and all activities. TOR should be prepared for each project team member, each project expert, each group of consultants recruited by the project, each project workshops, each visit to a project site. The TOR should be a concise document giving information on: the objective, the timing, a description of the inputs or activities, the resource requirements, and the contribution to the overall project objective (see Module ## for further information).

Regular Strategic Overviews.

There is a danger that the project team and the main project stakeholders focus on technical issues. Whereas this is necessary, it is also necessary to periodically review the project from a strategic perspective.

A strategic review team (consisting of the PCC or its equivalent – see 4.1) should be established and meet, formally, each month to discuss strategic issues such as: *is the project fully owned by national organisations?; is the project to lead to concrete outputs of use to national and local organisations involved in implementing the global environment conventions?; is the project addressing synergies and issues which cut across the three conventions; is the project process sufficiently participatory and are there other entities that should be more involved*?

This work complements the work of the PSC, that that would typically meet each quarter.

Annual Project Reviews

In line with UNDP Procedures, an annual project review report should be prepared to describe achievements, successes, failures and issues. The review should be discussed at a formal review meeting between UNDP and the project implementing agency to assess project progress. Other partners may attend this meeting, as may the GEF/UNDP RC. The Review should resolve any problems, take outstanding decisions regarding budget and activities, and approve a workplan for the following year.

Annual Project Revisions In line with UNDP procedures, annual project revisions are mandatory, although the focus is usually limited to an update and revision of the project budget. This revision, prepared in close consultation with the UNDP office, and related closely to the quarterly progress reports and Annual Project Reviews, should typically be drafted by the NPC and submitted by the NPD to the UNDP CO. The UNDP/GEF Regional Coordinator may advise at this point.

Troubleshooting

The project team should seek help to resolve technical, procedural or administrative problems as soon as possible. The UNDP CO should play a key role in resolving problems. UNDP/GEF RC also stands by to help out in certain cases. Neutral Facilitators (national or international) may also be useful for helping the project team address challenges (*could give an hypothetical example based on Latvia experience*).

5. UNDP/GEF/NCSA SUPPORT MECHANISMS

The Regional Coordination Units are the first calling point for NCSA project teams for assistance on technical and administrative matters that cannot be addressed in-country. In each region, one 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 ar-

ranging and conducting the most appropriate implementation support activities for their region. In addition to the Regional Coordinators, each region will designate a professional to serve as the Regional Focal Point for the NCSA process.

The UNDP/GEF Headquarters Unit in New York and Mexico City 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 Resource Kit to reflect the experiences gathered from NCSAs at various stages of the implementation process. It will support, and, in many cases, participate in national and regional consultations (see "Implementation Missions" below). 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.

Regional E-Groups will be established in all regions, whereby national projects can communicate and learn from the experience of other countries. 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 methodologies, 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, Regional Technical Workshop(s) will be organized for project managers and other team members.

Implementation missions 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 Resource Kit.

Regional and International Experts. 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.

6. ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

UNDP and Capacity Development

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

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

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

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

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.

UNITAR, 2003. A Guide for Self-Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management – revised draft

Capacity Assessment and Assessment Tools

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

International Council on Management of Population Programmes (ICOMPP), Assessment Methodologies and Tools (see http://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 (see http://www.idrc.ca/books/focus/771/771.html)

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

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 (see http://magnet.undp.org/docs/cap/main.htm)

UNDP (BPPS/MDGD), Capacity Development Resource Book with Capacity Development Assessment Guidelines (see 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" Charles Lusthaus, Gary Anderson and Elaine Murphy

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

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

Other references

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

LIST OF ANNEXES

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Annex 2: Operationalising the Principles behind the NCSA Approach – Examples from Eastern Europe (RBEC) and Southern Africa (RBA)
Annex 2: Model Table of Contents for the Thematic Profiles
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ANNEX 1
GUIDANCE FOR THE USE OF ASSESSMENT TOOLS AND METHODOLOGIES

Introduction

In general, each step in the NCSA involves collecting and analysing information. Each step will require a tool or a combination of tools to *guide the process* and a tool to *structure the analysis*. The process tool will largely determine the nature of the participation. The analytical tool will largely determine the format of the outputs.

This annex provides detailed information on how and when these tools might be used in the NCSA process.

MODULE 1: DESK STUDY/REVIEW OF DOCUMENTATION

What is it?
In a desk study, project managers will commission (typically through a sub-contract) one or a small number of individuals to collect existing information related to a chosen subject. Or, members of the core project team may be asked to do the study. Detailed TOR are prepared to guide the work. Then, in line with a pre-agreed format, the individual(s) will prepare a document summarising and possibly analysing the information.

When should it be used?

- This could be useful at the starting off point of a process– 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 viewpoints are not important.
- When the origin of the information is not important.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES
This is rapid and easy to manage.
Ownership over the findings of the study will largely be limited to the individual(s) preparing the report and the project managers.
This is generally not very participatory. This is not good at generating new information.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS
Requesting desk studies can be used 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 them (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 carefully crafted, related, desk studies. They would be expected to present these at the workshop, hopefully opening a dialogue.

MODULE 2: QUESTIONNAIRE

What is it?
In its simplest form, it is a list of questions that is sent out to institutions/individuals for answering and returning. The project team may be responsible for chasing up to ensure that most questionnaires are actually completed and returned. A document compiling, assembling and analysing the information contained in the completed questionnaires should be prepared, and the project team may be responsible for this.

The participants may be selected randomly or based on criteria. The responses may be either anonymous or named. Anonymous responses may be more detailed, but in some cases it is important to know the source of information and viewpoints in order to fully understood them and their implications.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

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

HOW TO USE?

Questionnaires may be prepared by the project team. Great care and attention should be given to preparing the questions and the format: the questionnaire should be probing but it should not be leading. Questions should be focused, but should be flexible enough to allow related surprises to emerge. Questionnaires should be easy to complete, but provide sufficient information and detail. As for all survey techniques, experts should be contracted in order to assist the preparation of the questionnaire.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

This tool is not very participatory. It involves a limited number of persons, on a bilateral basis, and possibly only certain categories of stakeholders complete questionnaires in a serious manner. It 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;
- 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 interviews.

MODULE 3: WORKSHOPS

WHAT IS IT?

This is the general name for a wide range of activities involving the bringing together of a large number of stakeholders to one event, for a period between one half of a 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.

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 time for all participants to further reflect and provide additional information and viewpoints.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

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. Complex and multi-dimensional issues are also best addressed through workshops. Workshops are also useful when it is desirable to generate networks or improved connections amongst stakeholders.

HOW TO USE?

Workshops, to be successful, require a great deal of planning and organisation. This commences with a clear identification of the workshop objectives. Planning also includes:

- identifying and preparing participants in a timely manner;
- identifying and preparing resource persons;
- preparing the agenda with appropriate plenary and breakout sessions – and not being too ambitious. Objectives and outputs for each session should be identified;
- identifying capable chairpersons and note-takers (for plenary and for breakout sessions);
- distributing documentation to participants ahead of the workshop;
- allowing time and resources for discussion and questions.

Attention should be paid to the design of the coffee breaks and lunches – as these are an important part of the workshop.

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 also essential.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

This can be a cost effective way of generating information, discussion and ownership, and networks.

A workshop is not always the most participatory tool. In some contexts, only formal workshops may be possible. Some issues cannot be addressed in public and some stakeholders are unwilling or unable to participate fully in public events.

Some workshop participants may feel they were unable to participate and did not benefit significantly from the information shared.

The workload can be considerable, and many workshops fail because this has been underestimated.

Lack of clarity over the workshop objective is a common error in organising workshops.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Intensive preparation, planning and management of a workshop can make it far more focussed or far more participatory. Workshops can be managed to generate draft documents or draft decisions, and can really move forward a process. Effectiveness and participation can be increased by ensuring that workshop leads to a clear output – such as workshop findings and recommendations that are immediately presented to higher authorities in draft form.

CASE STUDIES

See Box 3

Box 3: Holding a National NCSA Planning Workshop*

Holding a National NCSA Planning Workshop early in the process can help to ensure that the NCSA process is accepted as a national activity that requires input from all affected and interested parties. A preliminary step will be to identify and agree on an agenda and background documents for agenda items. By the end of the workshop, agreement should be reached on:

- the objectives and anticipated benefits of preparing the NCSA;
- the selection of the overall co-ordinating mechanism;
- the need for, and establishment of, working parties responsible for developing the thematic assessments, if existing consultation mechanisms are not in place;
- a workplan for preparation of the NCSA;
- intermediate and final outputs; and
- a timeframe for completion of the NCSA.

Participants of the National Planning Workshop should include representatives of all interested national, regional and local ministries/agencies, universities and research institutes, industrial and professional organisations, labour organisations, and environmental, consumer and other interested community-based groups. In particular, the representatives of the various national ministries should be high-level officials with sufficient authority to ensure the required input of various ministries in the NCSA process. Countries may also consider inviting representatives of international and bi-lateral technical co-operation agencies and organisations which have interests and programmes related to
the thematic areas and which are present in the country.

*UNITAR Reference guide, page 18.

MODULE 4: STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

WHAT IS IT?

A specific form of workshop. The objectives are: generating information related to a specific issue; generating discussion and ideas around a specific issue; generating consensus on a recommendation; or generating ownership over a specific finding.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

When there is a need to increase dialogue on a key, focussed issue with an identifiable community. When there is a need to overcome resistance to a key issue or find a compromise.

HOW TO USE?

A report should be prepared prior to the consultation, either presenting information or several viewpoints. The report should be distributed (in the local language) to the stakeholders before the consultation. Several representative stakeholders should be contacted beforehand and asked to play a more active role in the consultation, for example by preparing an intervention.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Can be expensive.
It is very rare that all stakeholders can be consulted, so this can only work through representatives or delegates of the stakeholders.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

In some cases the consultation could really be a strategic manner to convince a doubting group of the merits of a proposed activity. By involving stakeholders, being seen to listen to their concerns and clearly responding to some of their concerns, it is possible to increase confidence and instil a sense of ownership in the stakeholders. This can help convince stakeholders of the benefits of something to which they were initially antagonistic.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION?

Whereas the output of the consultation or any resulting decision should reflect the consultation proceedings, and should be clearly seen to reflect the proceedings, it cannot incorporate everybody's viewpoint on everything. Hence, care should be taken to avoid raising expectations that all concerns can be addressed

MODULE 5: WORKPLAN

WHAT IS IT?

The workplan is a document 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;
- Communicates 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.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

Typically workplans are prepared annually and quarterly. Clearly, quarterly workplans have more detail than annual workplans. Annual workplans are typically the basis for approving the annual budget.

HOW TO USE?

The core project team, led by the National Project Coordinator, should prepare a draft workplan based on what they hope to achieve in the coming period, and respecting the activities and outputs listed in the project document. The draft workplan is discussed with the main project parties (financers and decision-makers) to ensure all inputs are available, timeframes are realistic, and outputs are appropriate. The workplan is then revised and formally submitted from the NPD to UNDP for approval.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

1. Workplans are useful tools for planning, for managing and for communicating. On occasions these three workplan uses may conflict;
2. Workplans are often considered as *inflexible*, leading to a situation whereby activities take place 'because they are in the workplan' and not because they are appropriate. It is necessary to *continuously* question and improve workplans. Likewise, flexibility, by all concerned partners, is required so that the project can adapt to opportunities as they arise - and support activities that were not initially in the workplan.
3. Initially, workplans take time to prepare, generating frustration on behalf of the project team. If well prepared, it should soon become apparent that the time spent was worthwhile, and that project progress has been improved by the workplan.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

Workplans can be shared with a broad group of people, eg: similar projects, NGOs, local authorities, etc, either for information or for comments.
Progress reports, prepared at the end of a reporting period, are the 'mirror' of workplans. A progress report can be quickly prepared using the workplan format.

MODULE 6: TERMS OF REFERENCE

WHAT IS IT?

Typically Terms of Reference (ToR) are used to plan and manage the roles and responsibilities of individuals and sub-contractors, either short-term or long-term. A ToR is a document that briefly describes the context to the position; the objectives of the position; the expected outputs of the position; 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.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

Apart from planning/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;

HOW TO USE?

ToR are prepared initially by the project team. Key project stakeholders may provide comments. The ToR are then used to identify/select experts. Once the expert has been selected, the ToR should be discussed through and possibly revised, in order to reflect the thoughts, insights and personal strengths of the expert.

First draft ToR should be prepared well in advance to allow for discussion and finalisation.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

As with ToR, workplans can be considered inflexible, meaning that opportunities may be missed, and activities still undertaken when no longer necessary.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

ToR can also be used for planning/managing other inputs and activities. For example, TOR are also useful when preparing a workshop or seminar, or when preparing a study or a research project.

ToR should also be prepared for the project team members (the NPD and the NPC) and the Project Steering Committee.

Project Steering Committee

Membership

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will work together as a team on management of the Project to ensure effective and timely implementation of the Project. PSC is co-chaired by the Ministries responsible for Finance/Planning and Environment. Other members include focal points of the three Conventions, GEF focal point, line ministries, local and regional authorities, NGOs, CBOs and educational institutions.

The National Project Director will act as the secretary of the NSC.

Duties

- Develop a common understanding of what is needed to expedite the preparation of a National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment;
- Oversee the preparation of the National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment and provide overall policy advice;
- Review and comment on the detailed work plan and budget produced by the drafting team;
- Review and give feedback on progress reports as submitted by the National Project Director;
- Mobilize necessary expertise, as needed for the proper execution of the National Project outputs;
- Assist in mobilising available data and ensuring a constant information flow between all concerned parties;
- Ensure that information on the implementation of the National Project as well as the National Pro-

ject outputs is disseminated among stakeholders;

- Assist effective communication and decision-making between the National Project Coordinator and other sectors;
- Facilitate coordination with other internationally funded projects, including GEF projects. This includes facilitating access to information, and facilitating the cooperation amongst project activities and inputs;
- Review and approve the NCSA outputs.

At the first meeting of the PSC, the PSC members will review this TOR and the PSC membership, and adopt changes as appropriate.

PSC Procedures:

Each 3 months, the National Project Coordinator will distribute to the PSC a progress report describing project progress.

The PSC shall meet at least four times during the project. The NPC/D will organise the meetings and act as Secretary. The National Project Team Leader (NPC) will facilitate the meetings. The NPC will prepare and distribute all concerned documents in advance of meetings, including the meeting agenda.

MODULE 7: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

WHAT IS IT?

A stakeholder analysis is an analytical tool to determine who should be involved in a project, an activity or a process, and how to involve each stakeholder. The stakeholder analysis is essential to ensuring that the *process* to prepare the NCSA is appropriate, and that there will be widespread ownership over the NCSA products.

Often presented in matrix form, a stakeholder analysis should list all stakeholders, list their connection to the NCSA (or to the relevant activity), state how to involve them in the NCSA, and list any other relevant information.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

Whenever an event or initiative is planned, it is necessary to reflect from an early stage on who should participate, and how each participant should participate.

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

HOW TO USE?

A stakeholder analysis can be prepared by an individual acting alone. It could be prepared by a team, or through a workshop session.

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

-Who makes/influences policy and decisions?
-Who could "champion" the capacity initiative?
-Who could provide financial and technical resources?
-Who would be impacted?
-Who are the direct/indirect beneficiaries?
-Who with no "voice" needs special attention?
-Who are the representatives of 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*)

The reader is referred to UNITAR, pages 11-16 for additional thoughts on the stakeholder analysis. Boxes 4 and 5 provide further thoughts and viewpoints on stakeholder analyses.

EXAMPLES, MODELS, AND OTHER GUIDANCE

Box 4: Conducting a Stakeholder Analysis[8]

In order to determine who should possibly be involved or might want to be involved, the following questions can be asked:

• Who is/might be interested in or affected by the thematic area?
• What are their interests and positions?
• Who has information and expertise that might be helpful?
• Who has been/is involved in similar initiatives or planning?
• Who has expressed interest in being involved in similar initiatives/efforts before?
• Who else might be interested in contributing to the NCSA?

A simplified table for categorising stakeholders, which may assist with the stakeholder analysis, is shown below. After identifying stakeholders, their interests, etc., it may be helpful to divide stakeholders into four categories: those who will likely want to participate fully or whose active involvement will determine the credibility of the process; those who would likely play a more limited role; those who likely will wish simply to be kept well informed; and those who will not want to be involved. This categorisation may help with organisational matters.

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

[8] UNITAR Reference guide, page 14.

What is a Stakeholder Analysis? (taken from CIDA 1996)

Stakeholder analysis is an analytical approach for assessing potential support or opposition to an issue among interested parties, including administrators, advisors and local champions. It is a basic first step in capacity assessment. A stakeholder is defined as persons, groups, organizations, systems, etc., that have a 'stake' in a change effort (eg. a development project) and that are either likely to be affected by the change, whose support is needed or who may oppose the change. Stakeholder analysis identifies the stakeholders and maps out their relative power, influence and interests in a given change effort. It identifies assumptions about each stakeholder and indicates the relative priority to be given to meeting the interests of the stakeholders, thus assessing the importance of each stakeholder to the success of the project.

What are some of the advantages of using a Stakeholder Analysis?

- Stakeholder analysis is a fairly simple analytical process which can be used by individuals or groups at any time during the unfolding of a project.
- If done early on, the information generated from a stakeholder analysis can inform project design as it identifies relative risks and potential coalitions of support for the project.
- Conducting a stakeholder analysis can assist in determining appropriate forms of stakeholder participation, and may enable coalitions to be formed.
- If carried out with the

participation of developing country partners, the process can build ownership and in some cases, develop the analytical capacity of the partners.

- The information may help to assess risk before funds are committed.
- Stakeholders, their interests, and relative influence or power may change significantly during the life of a project.

What are some of the limitations?

- The process often involves sensitive information. Covert and hidden interests and agendas may be difficult to uncover. In fact, there may be few benefits in trying to uncover such agendas in public.
- Assessing a stakeholder's influence is difficult, and involves interpreting a range of factors.

MODULE 8: PRIORITISATION MATRIX

WHAT IS IT?

This is an analytical tool for setting priorities amongst the issues. Criteria are chosen, and weight given to each criteria, and then priorities are set. UNITAR (page 23) provides additional guidance.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

When it is necessary to choose amongst options or select priorities.

HOW TO USE?

1. A selection panel should be established;
2. All the issues to be considered should be listed by independent experts ;
3. Selection criteria should be determined and agreed upon by all concerned;
4. A *weighting system* should be determined and agreed upon: it is unlikely that all criteria should be considered equal. Also, some criteria may be considered *essential*, and even if an issues scores high overall, if it does not succeed on essential criteria, it will not be selected as a priority.
5. Each member of a selection panel should, independently, allocate a score for each criteria, for each issue.
6. Points should be totalled, and those issues with the highest points can be considered priorities.

The prioritisation can also be done *qualitatively*.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

There is always a danger of political interference. To avoid this, the criteria and weighting should be carefully determined to reflect any likely political concerns. Also, the process should be transparent.

EXAMPLES, MODELS, AND OTHER GUIDANCE

Box 1:Issue Prioritisation Matrix

Ranking issues against the following criteria will allow a simple comparison of the relative importance of each and should thereby facilitate further group discussion on setting, confirming or reviewing priorities. Such a tool, however, should not be seen as an end in itself. It is first and foremost an evaluative tool. Simply adding values assigned to each issue will not take into account the different weighting assigned to particular criteria.

Issue	Scale of Problem[1]	Level of Concern[2]	Ability to Adequately address Issue[2]	Priority Ranking[3]
Respect for and preservation of knowledge, innovations…				
Ex-situ conservation of components…				
Issue 3….				
Issue 4….				

[1]Enter: local, regional, national or global

[2]Enter: low, medium or high

[3]Provide relative ranking from 1 to 5 of the problem faced by the country (1 = most severe problem, 2 = second most severe, etc. The same ranking can be given to different issues where appropriate)

*Adapted from UNITAR (page 23).

MODULE 9: PROBLEM TREE AND ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

WHAT IS IT?

A Root Cause is a cause that, if addressed effectively, will prevent recurrence of undesired outcomes. The root cause does not apply to only one problem, but has generic implications to a broad group of possible occurrences, and is the most fundamental aspect of the cause that can logically be identified and corrected.

A Root Cause Analysis is a tool for diagnosing fundamental problems and challenges and defining key interventions to address these issues. It is also useful for understanding the linkages between causes, problems and symptoms. It is a diagram representing all problems, causes, underlying causes and so forth.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

Within the context of the NCSA, it should be used in the priority setting exercise and in the in-depth analysis of both thematic and cross cutting issues. It will provide a clear understanding of the capacity constraints, help define priority areas, and assist the process of determining necessary actions to remove capacity constraints.

HOW TO USE?

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.

A root cause analysis includes the following steps:
1. Identify the problem
2. Determine the significance of the problem
3. Identify the causes (conditions or actions) immediately preceding and surrounding the problem
4. Identify the reasons why the causes in the preceding step existed, working back to the root cause (the fundamental reason which, if corrected, will prevent recurrence of the problem. This root cause is the stopping point in the identification phase.

In effect, a causal analysis is performed by asking a series of questions in order to probe to the fundamentals of a problem. It is important to keep asking *why?*, until the answer is an issue that can be addressed. The answers and findings are written on small pieces of card and pinned to a board. They are moved until all participants are satisfied that they accurately represent the actual situation.

The results may be best portrayed as a *problem tree,* a diagram linking all the root causes, causes and problems. This tree will illustrate clearly *bottlenecks.* A bottleneck is one cause that lies at the root of many problems, and removing this cause will 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.

Developing a Root Cause Analysis

One approach for identifying capacity constraints is to build on the information collected in the thematic profiles by thinking through further the reasons for the existence of identified gaps or weaknesses. This involves identifying the negative aspects of an existing situation and establishing the "cause and effect" relationships between the problems that exist. A "problem tree", which represents a comprehensive picture of the existing challenges and problems that require attention, is a useful tool that can be used for developing a root cause analysis. This involves identifying, for each priority issue, key problems (or causes and effects). A first step may be to identify a "starter" problem for the priority issue followed by a second problem related to it. Problems can then be identified for a number of additional levels. It is possible to work upwards and well as downwards to help with the identification. Once a considerable number of problems have been identified, the items can be reviewed and rearranged as necessary.

Developing this "root cause analysis" can be concluded when participants feel that the problems and their cause and effect relationships have been adequately explored.[21] Resulting from this exercise would be a list of problems (including the identification of focal or central problems) relevant to the thematic area.

Taken from UNITAR (p 31) .

MODULE 10: LOGICAL FRAMEWORK ANALYSIS

WHAT IS IT?

It is a tool for determining the necessary activities and inputs to achieve determined goals or to resolve problems.

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

- Logical framework analysis is a standard tool in preparing and discussing project activities and inputs.
- The LFA may be useful in moving from the assessment report to the Action Plan.

HOW TO USE?

In the framework of the NCSA, it is first necessary to determine a small number of objectives in terms of building capacity to implement global environment conventions. Once these goals have been determined, through appropriate involvement of a number of experts and stakeholders, the outputs and activities and inputs required to achieve the goals can be determined. At the same time, the sources of finance and other necessary resources can be determined.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

LFA is very powerful when there are clear and linear linkages between root causes, activities, outputs and objectives.

LFA is limited when applied to capacity development projects. In such projects, there are a large number of uncertainties and variables. Also the human factor plays a very important role. In capacity development projects, LFA can be used as an overall guidance framework. The management team should be flexible enough to adapt to changes.

EXAMPLES, MODELS, AND OTHER GUIDANCE

LOG FRAME MATRIX FOR GLOBAL NCSA TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Goal	**Output**	
To help countries undertaking an NCSA derive the greatest possible benefit from the exercise	Comprehensive understanding of priority capacity needs related to the Rio Conventions and the necessary information and commitment to effectively address them	
Objectives:	**Outputs**	**Activities**
1. Assist countries in the development and submission of technically sufficient NCSA proposals.	• Develop standard format for Orientation/Brief Formulation Missions • Roster of NCSA Consultants • Technical reviews of 116 NCSA proposals	1.1 Conduct orientation/capacity building missions with RC and consultants 1.2 Maintain NCSA Tracking Matrix 1.3 Provide technical backstopping to RCUs on process design and proposal development 1.4 Provide strategic policy guidance on capacity building aspects of EAs
2. To prepare and disseminate technical and policy materials, including methods and tools	• Up to 15 regional workshops held (2004-6) • Technical and policy materials prepared including an implementation Resource Kit and resource kit • Web-based technical support mechanism and distance learning tools developed	2.1. Hold regional technical workshops to provide targeted guidance on implementation methodologies and tools (2004-6) 2.1.1. 10 regional implementation workshops 2 regional workshops on integrated approaches implementing EAs. 2.1.2. 3 regional exchange workshops on synergies and mainstreaming (co-sponsored with IEPF, UNU, Cap2015, etc.) 2.1.3 Prepare technical and policy-relevant materials related to emerging issues 2.1.4 Design and launch web-based mechanisms
3. To enhance knowledge management, best practices, communication and outreach	• Five NCSA case studies prepared • Regional E-groups established and maintained • Identify and build partnerships with regional "centers of excellence" • Communications and outreach strategy prepared • Web site launched and maintained	3.1. Design and implement a methodology for conducting the case studies 3.2. Develop and circulate periodic bulletins through the regional E-groups 3.3. Establish a "help-desk" mechanism in coordination with our RCUs 3.4. Foster Mentoring relationships between "frontrunner" countries with model practices or results and those that follow 3.5. Analyze, capture and disseminate pertinent information
4. To ensure that the NCSA process is adequately integrated with other corporate activities and initiatives	• Focused briefing materials prepared • Active participation of key UNDP stakeholders in the NCSA process obtained	3.6. Conduct briefings and brown-bags for UNDP stakeholders 3.7. Participate in cross-practice dialogues and initiatives 3.8. Develop joint activities and materials with other programs and initiatives

MODULE 11: LINKAGES PLANNING

WHAT IS IT?

It is a tool for determining how to link one process with one or more others in strategic and mutually reinforcing ways

WHEN SHOULD IT BE USED?

- When there exist overlapping or complementary projects, initiatives, or processes.
- When there exists a related process that may determine or significantly influence the overall impact of the project or activity.

HOW TO USE?

The key to the development and implementation of an effective linkages plan is a thorough analysis of the current political and administrative landscape in which the project will operate over the course of its duration. This analysis can either be done independently or as part of an overall stock-taking exercise such as that required by the NCSA Operational Guidelines. Once this analysis has been performed, a determination of how related processes should be linked to the project can be made. A linkages plan will typically be a subsection of an overall workplan.

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- This planning exercise can help to define the relationship between related projects or activities and ensure that they are complementary rather than duplicative.
- Such an approach helps to take sometimes abstract and theoretical ideals or objectives about developing synergy between related processes and convert them into more concrete, operational tasks and actions.
- This analysis can be complex and implementation may require high administrative transaction costs.

EXAMPLES, MODELS, AND OTHER GUIDANCE

Linkages Planning Matrix

Institution/Initiative/Project	Primary Intersections/Overlaps	Linkages
National Sustainable Development Strategy of <Country>	• Incorporation of Convention obligations in National Legal Frameworks and institutional mandates • Strengthening the ability of local communities to develop sustainably	**Input:** • Consider the NSDS in stock-taking and priority-setting exercises **Process:** • Organize joint workshop on local Agenda 21 and the NCSA • Fund a joint study on legal issues related to the Rio Conventions **Output:** • Brief technical staff overseeing NSDS implementation on relevant NCSA outcomes
National Forestry Institute (NFI)	• Implementation of a sustainable forestry policy • Promoting agro-forestry initiatives that promote biodiversity conservation (i.e. shade coffee or organic banana plantations)	**Input:** • Review sustainable forestry policy as part of analysis of cross-cutting issues **Process:** • Include NFI representative on Cross-Cutting Issues Work Group **Output:** • Designate NFI as a responsible party for key activities in the NCSA Action Plan

Annex 2: 'Institutional', 'Organisational' or 'Entity' Assessment[9]

This assessment is of the capacity of a specific institution (formal or informal) or department to achieve its objectives.

Most technical assistance takes the form of capacity development at the entity level. Hence, within the framework of development cooperation, entity level capacity assessments are by far the most common, and arguably the most important, types of assessments. The more important the entity (or stakeholder) in the system, the greater the level of importance that is attached to the assessment. Entity level assessments in the public sector or with NGOs are the equivalent of management consultancy overhauls in the private sector.

There are many proprietary and conventionally accepted methodologies and techniques to carry out capacity assessments of a specific entity, whether the entity is a large formal organization (such as a government or department within a government), or an informal organization (such as a community based organization). It is certainly beyond the scope of this Annex to cover these various methodologies and techniques. What is important is that all dimensions of the entity's capacity are addressed, although some dimensions will invariably be more important than others. This analysis will help decision makers within the entity to set priorities for subsequent capacity development, and to channel resources accordingly.

Information generated from entity level assessments should include, at a minimum, assessments of existing and likely future capacity needs in each of the following major dimensions:

- *Mission, vision and direction(s)* of the entity, including its *priorities* and longer term *objectives*.
- *Performance* measures, clients/customers, success factors, service demands (and corresponding gaps).
- *Structuring* or organizational options, core *competencies*, and organizational *culture*.
- *Functions and Processes* (productivity and efficiency levels), service delivery, etc..
- *Management* of human resources, including addressing issues of motivation, performance, incentives and compensation.
- *Financial* management, cost performance, revenue generation, expenditure control and budgeting.
- *Information* management, *telecommunications* and other *infrastructure* needs.

There exists a good range of established management consulting, evaluation and audit approaches to carrying out these assessments (e.g. management audit/review, systems analysis, business re-engineering, strategic planning, operational review, and so on). It is these sorts of approaches that would be most appropriate, to be carefully selected and adapted to the specific capacity assessment needs of the target entity. Many of these approaches also emphasize the importance of internal processes and systems, and link them with the larger and wider systems in which these entities function. The extent and level of analysis for any one or combination of dimensions within the entity is a function of perceived priority and available resources. Care would need to be taken to ensure that such analyses do not become ends in themselves (paralysis through analysis), but are done at a sufficient level of detail and according to a timeline that generates results within a reasonable time frame.

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[9] Adapted from UNDP Technical Advisory Paper no. 3.

ENTITY LEVEL CAPACITY ASSESSMENTS	
2.1 Mission and Strategy Assessment	The failing of many organizations can be traced back to inadequate or absent missions, roles, mandates or raison d'etre. In formal organisations, such statements of mission and mandate are often reflected in a piece of legalisation or other form of charter. Often, the role of most organizations change and evolve over time, but this is not reflected in covering legislation or organisational charters. Many organizations do not develop and maintain their own strategic plans. Capacity assessments here would look for statements of mandate, mission and so on, their relevance to the current situation and possible relevance to meeting future needs. The strategy of an organization defines how it would achieve its mission in terms of definitions of products/services, its the clients/customers served, short-medium-longer term objectives and priorities, success factors, and interactions within the broader system and with other "stakeholders" and entities, among other operational dimensions. The mission and strategy of the organization can be co-related back to the systems factors and other assessments within the system to ensure relevance and appropriate fit (or lack of it) within the system. There exist various techniques to assess capacities of the organization at this level, including the capacity to carry out strategic or programme planning. These assessments most often focus on effectiveness improvements (*"doing the right thing"*). Another approach is from the perspective of performance - the outputs, outcomes, results and/or value added by the entity. Performance based management systems are being more commonly used in assessments and planning for organizations, as it is the measure of performance that is the true indicator of the relevance and effectiveness of the entity (and the capacity initiative). There exist various techniques to determine performance indicators and to measure against them, from both an internal operational perspectives (e.g. productivity) and from external client/recipient perspectives (e.g. value added, outcomes, client satisfaction).
2.2Culture/Structure Assessmen ***t***	This next dimension of capacity covers such diverse aspects as organizational and management values and standards, organizational structures and designs, and core competencies. Depending on the entity involved, both macro-structures (e.g. a government or large ministry which is organized into numerous departments, agencies, boards and so on) and micro structures (internal, lower levels such as divisions, units, work-groups - formal and informal) can be assessed in terms of their appropriateness to support the entity's overall mission and strategy. Almost invariably, major structural weaknesses will be uncovered - duplication, overlap, confusing mandates, excessive or insufficient authority. Softer but increasingly important dimensions of capacity are those associated with management and organizational values: defined through such notions as openness, honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability and pride. Each of these can be assessed, with measures attached to them - through surveys, consultations and workshops. Traditional and bureaucratic organizations are typically weak in these areas, and modern management practices encourage substantive strengthening. Core competencies are those activities, outputs or functions carried out by the organization that can only be carried out by that organization to support the mission/strategy. Typically, most organisations perform many other functions or services which are not core, which may be anachronistic, or which may duplicate those of other organisations. In these cases, capacities of the organization may be diluted, over-extended or mis-directed, thus limiting the organization's capability to deliver its mission.

2.3Process Assessment	Along with human resources, it is the internal processes of the entity which receive the greatest amount of attention in capacity assessments and development. Processes may be seen as supporting such organizational functions as planning (strategic, operational), client management, research/policy analysis/development, monitoring and evaluation, performance/quality management, financial/accounting, management reporting, human resources management and asset management. Processes are also directly aligned with internal "systems" (e.g. financial management and accounting systems) which may be Resource Kit and/or automated. Processes examine internal information and data flows, inputs and outputs. Internal communications processes (horizontal and vertical, formal and informal) are very important aspects of internal process capacity that need to be assessed. There are perhaps available in the world more methodologies and techniques to examine processes than all other areas combined (the very diverse universe of systems methodologies). And it is common that capacity assessments of processes focus on efficiency and economy (*"doing the thing right"*). Standards, policies, procedures and management practices are key areas to be examined in process capacity assessments. Some common methodological approaches to process assessments include: business process review and redesign, work-flow analysis, business process re-engineering.
2.5 Financial Resources Assessment	Depending on the entity, financial resources may be a strength (sufficient resources) or a weakness (insufficient resources). Financial resources consist of both operating and capital, required for the efficient and effective functioning of the entity. Increasingly, government entities and donors alike have considerable shortages of capital resources to support longer-term investments and must seek alternative sources of funding. Operating capital shortages are also becoming an increasing issue with almost universal public sector retrenchment, budget cut-backs and taxation reform. Capacity assessments in these areas would examine all aspects of financial resource availability, including alternative sources of financing. This would apply to financing the administrative or delivery apparatus of the entity involved, as well as "programme" funds to implement the capacity initiative. Each initiative would be unique in terms of the financial resource dimensions - existing and required to meet future needs. This is a highly specialized area of assessment, typically requiring skills and practices from accounting, capital investment and financial management disciplines. Certainly standard financial audits would serve the purposes of capacity assessments in the area of financial resources (and supporting processes).
2.6 Information Resources Assessment	Information resources are of increasing importance to all entities and individuals, and to the development and implementation of capacity initiatives. The information (all media, electronic & paper) that is available (or not available) and how it is managed are often key determinants of capacity development success at each stage of its life-cycle. Advances in globalization, communications and information technology are rendering many traditional organizations and "systems rules" obsolete and inefficient, and are indeed *transforming* entire structures, institutions and sectors, including the public sector. Capacities associated with information resource management are typically deficient in terms of needed policies and standards, legislation (access to and privacy of information), supporting technical skills, awareness and understanding. Various methodologies are available to assess weaknesses and needs associated with information management. Care will need to be taken in selecting and adapting the right methodology and tools, in consideration of existing human and technological capacity limitations to carry out such assessments.

2.7 Infrastructure Assessment	Infrastructure is the last formal internal dimension of capacity at the entity level and comprises all physical assets (real property, buildings and movable assets, equipment), computer systems and telecommunications infrastructures, productive work environments, special research facilities. The level of attention that needs to be paid to capacity assessment here should be commensurate with the importance of the infrastructure to the entity and its role in the capacity initiative. Assessments would cover such aspects as asset management (e.g. property and facilities management), investment management (e.g. capitalization and capital replacement, return-on-investment, valuation, costs relative to other entity costs, sustainability of assets), relationship to physical environmental concerns (e.g. energy consumption, waste management). Capacity assessments may reveal how major efficiencies might be gained, how costs might be reduced, how alternative sources of financing might be acquired, and how work environments might be made more productive. Such assessments might also uncover unexploited opportunities for co-sharing of facilities, co-location and consolidation, divestiture, and privatization. Many service related capacity initiatives are designed along the principle of delivery as close to the customer as possible, which implies a radical re-thinking in investment and management of the physical infrastructures of the entities involved in the initiative. Project and programme formulations often address infrastructure needs, but in a limited way (e.g. limited to purchase of vehicles, computer and office equipment). There are opportunities of looking at infrastructure related capacities in a much broader and longer term context, since the life-span of many such assets is typically far longer than the life of the capacity development initiative.

Annex 4 Operationalising the Principles behind the NCSA Approach – Examples from Eastern Europe and Sub-Saharan Africa

This Annex aims to give examples of how the principles set out in the Operational Guidelines can be put into practice.

1. Ensure country driven and Nationally owned

Eastern Europe

- Government's demonstrated their commitment to the NCSA process by providing 'in kind' persons to prepare the proposals.

- National consultants are working together to elaborate a methodology and implement the assessment.

- Reports and Action Plans will be written in the National language and then translated into English.

Malawi – Malawi intends to carry out the NCSA process with limited or no external assistance. Lessons learnt from developing the PRSP, particularly the consultation process, will help inform the NCSA methodology.

2. Utilise existing coordinating mechanisms and structures where appropriate.

Armenia – The National Commission for Sustainable Development will oversee the process. It is jointly chaired by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Nature Protection and is comprised of representatives from various Ministries (deputy Ministers) institutes and NGOs. This is to ensure that the assessment is fully responsive to the national situation and priorities and that activities identified in the action plan are in close co-ordination with the PRSP.

Slovakia – As parliament has to approve government spending plans at the start of the process the Project Manager will convene a meeting with the Environmental Committee for Parliament to inform them of the NCSA process and raise awareness of the global environmental conventions.

Malawi – aims to utilize existing steering committees established for the conventions to form a basis for the NCSA implementation.

3. Pay due attention to the provisions and decisions of the three Conventions, as they relate to capacity building.

4. Be participatory and involve multi-stakeholders

Bulgaria – Public participation and broad stakeholder involvement have been actively sought since the start of the process. It is ensured through project implementation by: firstly the members of the three thematic working groups were selected in close consultation with representatives of main stakeholder groups; secondly, stakeholders are all provided with an opportunity to review and comment on all draft reports and finally and, perhaps most importantly; stakeholders at the central, regional and local level all participate in the project surveys (verification of findings through questionnaires, telephone interviews, site visits and meetings).

Sub-Saharan Africa – unlike traditional environment initiatives which tend to only involve Ministries with linkages to the environment (e.g. agriculture, forestry), the NCSA aims to target a wider group of stakeholders including Ministries of Finance, Education, Planning etc. in addition to the Private Sector, NGO's and academia.

5. Build on existing work under the conventions – e.g. national reports to the conventions

Seychelles –a considerable amount of capacity need identification has already been carried out within the 3 focal areas in previous work so the NCSA focuses on synergies and cross cutting issues.

Swaziland – the NCSA will integrate with the biodiversity 'add on' under the CBD. This will enable a greater number of issues relating to biodiversity to be analysed.

Romania – The WRI and UNEP have already conducted a national assessment of the Convention on Biological Diversity. Rather than duplicate work already undertaken, the findings will be taken into account during the preparation of the action plan allowing resources to focus on the cross-cutting aspect of the assessment such as financing for the Conventions, public awareness, institutional arrangements and national and local linkages.

6. Adopt a holistic and multi-dimensional approach to capacity

Instead of focusing upon one aspect of capacity development, the NCSA aims to address all aspects of capacity - systemic, institutional and individual and at all levels – national, regional and local.

Namibia –addresses 'systemic' capacity issues e.g. HIV/AIDS, incentives and mechanisms for staff retention to avoid brain drain. In addition analysis is at the national, regional and local levels.

Malawi: - DANIDA's assistance in capacity development for environmental management has focused at the national level. There is a gap of addressing capacity at the local level which needs to be addressed particularly given the decentralisation process. NCSA fills this gap.

Latvia – sub-national seminars/workshops will be conducted in 5 regions. These are conducted by NGOs and mainly cover issues related to local and regional awareness.

7. Adopt a long term approach

The NCSA process aims to structure and focus discussions in government and with donors. It can be used as a strategic planning tool for the country and will encourage efficient and effective use of limited resources by targeting assistance in relation to needs identified by the action plan.

Seychelles - the NCSA process is used to reorient public sector financing to address priority capacity needs in a cost effective manner, to secure new funding and technical assistance, including from non traditional sources, and to inform capacity strengthening activities supported under the various GEF projects under implementation and preparation.

RBEC – A monitoring and evaluation strategy is an integral part of the Action Plan. Although the assessment will be completed, a workshop will be held 6 months after the project to assess progress in implementation of the Action Plan. This will provide an opportunity to discuss and adjust the Action Plan if necessary, lessons learned, signs of potential impact and sustainability of results.

8. Focus on issues cutting across the 3 Conventions

Armenia – the aim of the NCSA is to address the cross-cutting opportunities afforded by examining global environmental management in an integrated manner. This will include monitoring and access to information, environmental policy and legislation, institutional arrangements, public awareness and environmental education, financial instruments, national – local linkages, and intersectoral, integrated planning of Natural Resource use.

Belarus – An in-depth analysis of cross-cutting issues will be undertaken in the Polesye region, a large wetland area that has been subjected in the past to extensive drainage for agriculture. The purpose is to look at the multiple global benefits to be obtained through the conservation of globally significant biodiversity and the restoration of wetlands, thus increasing the carbon sequestration potential, and significantly reducing nutrient loads.

Swaziland – the NCSA aims to address a number of cross cutting issues that are specific to the country e.g. community level capacity, traditional structures, institutional management, technical training, sectoral policies and legislation, data information and political will.

9. Linked to existing processes and strategies and contributes to the integration of global environmental objectives into other development/sectoral plans

Macedonia – The NCSA will be undertaken at the same time as the review of the NEAP, Public Administration Reform (supported by DFID) and the approximation of legislation with the EU. The Head of the Department for EU integration is also the GEF Operational Focal Point, which facilitates coordination between these different processes.

Namibia – is undertaking a process of decentralization, the NCSA will review this process and identify how best the NCSA can assist.

Annex 5 - Model TOR for NCSA Team Members and Management Bodies

Project Steering Committee

Membership

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) will work together as a team on management of the Project to ensure effective and timely implementation of the Project. PSC is co-chaired by the Ministries responsible for Finance/Planning and Environment. Other members include focal points of the three Conventions, GEF focal point, line ministries, local and regional authorities, NGOs, CBOs and educational institutions.

The National Project Director will act as the secretary of the NSC.

Duties

- Develop a common understanding of what is needed to expedite the preparation of a National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment;
- Oversee the preparation of the National Capacity Needs Self-Assessment and provide overall policy advice;
- Review and comment on the detailed work plan and budget produced by the drafting team;
- Review and give feedback on progress reports as submitted by the National Project Director;
- Mobilize necessary expertise, as needed for the proper execution of the National Project outputs;
- Assist in mobilising available data and ensuring a constant information flow between all concerned parties;
- Ensure that information on the implementation of the National Project as well as the National Project outputs is disseminated among stakeholders;
- Assist effective communication and decision-making between the National Project Coordinator and other sectors;
- Facilitate coordination with other internationally funded projects, including GEF projects. This includes facilitating access to information, and facilitating the cooperation amongst project activities and inputs;
- Review and approve the NCSA outputs.

At the first meeting of the PSC, the PSC members will review this TOR and the PSC membership, and adopt changes as appropriate.

PSC Procedures:

Each 3 months, the National Project Coordinator will distribute to the PSC a progress report describing project progress.

The PSC shall meet at least four times during the project. The NPC/D will organise the meetings and act as Secretary. The National Project Team Leader (NPC) will facilitate the meetings. The NPC will prepare and distribute all concerned documents in advance of meetings, including the meeting agenda.

National Project Coordinator

The National Project Coordinator (NPC) takes a lead in assuring the effective and timely implementation of the Project. The NPC provides the administrative and technical support to the project activities. The NPC is a full time staff member, financed by the project, and reports directly to the National Project Director.

Tasks:

- Ensure the timely implementation of planned activities under the project as stipulated in the work programme;
- Prepare draft technical and other documents as required by the work plan according to the following reporting requirements;
  a) Monthly summary reports on work completed as per work plan from all consultant teams
  b) Monthly and quarterly financial statements of expenditure for the project
  c) Quarterly and annual project progress reports
  d) Final technical and financial report at the end of NCSA process
  e) Technical, policy and briefing papers as requested by the senior project management;
- Contribute to or directly undertake the Linkages Study and the Stakeholder Analysis;
- Develop scopes of work and terms of reference and other procurement documentation required to identify and facilitate recruitment of experts and consultants;
- Help identify national experts and consultancy teams, and facilitate the recruitment process;
- Help identify, recruit and manage administrative support to project;
- Help organize several national and local level workshops and ensure their success;
- Coordinate and support the work of all project experts and consultant teams;
- Coordinate, oversee and in some cases execute the preparation of the outputs of the NSCA;
- Help co-ordinate and facilitate meetings of the Project Steering Committee, and help ensure such meetings and other consultative sessions enhance support for and the achievement of the goals and objectives of the project;
- Interact closely with all relevant stakeholders and the Project Steering Committee and other partners to ensure involvement of all stakeholders in the activities of the NCSA;
- Foster/facilitate and establish and maintain links with other related national and international programmes and projects as well as with individuals and institutions;
- Closely liaise with donors to secure investment in the action plan as an ongoing activity through out the project as necessary.

Qualifications And Experience

- Preferably master's degree in environment-related studies and other related disciplines;
- Good understanding of the *Country* environment/development issues as well as the three thematic areas under investigations;
- At least six to eight years experience relevant to the project;
- Excellent communication (Written and Oral) Skills;
- Demonstrated experience in project management;
- Expertise in putting together costed, results-oriented action plans;
- Demonstrated experience in working with government, donors and the United Nations system;
- Appropriate experience working with government structures at local levels, and working with NGOs and private sector;
- Excellent inter-personal skills as well as working well within a team environment;
- Good command of English

Advisor on Capacity Development

Background

The overall aim of the *Country* NCSA project is to assess the capacity needs to manage the global environment in *Country*. Through a series of consultations, working groups, expert inputs and high level meetings, the principal outputs will include: a rapid, general assessment of needs; a detailed assessment of needs in selected critical or priority areas; and an action plan for responding to the needs.

A national expert on capacity development will be recruited to provide technical and substantive advice and facilitate all project activities. It is anticipated that this expert's input will be equivalent to approximately 3 months during the 12-15 month lifetime of the project.

In recent years, the concept and understanding of capacity and capacity development have been significantly broadened, for example as determined, defined and discussed by UNDP/GEF in its *Capacity Development Initiative.* Capacity development is now understood to cover a range of objectives, extending from the commonly accepted and understood needs of individuals in terms of training and material; through to the needs of institutions such as organisational change and internal reform; to take in the systemic capacity needs of the environmental management sector, in terms of legislative and institutional frameworks, inter-agent relations, integration into the broader sustainable development frameworks, and incentive structures.

Objective

The objective of this part-time position is to ensure that all project activities takes place within the context of a full and thorough understanding of 'capacity' and 'capacity development'. A closely related objective is to help concerned parties in *Country* operationalise this thorough understanding of capacity in their future capacity development initiatives. Moreover, where possible and appropriate, it is to help steer the project towards:

- focussing on system level capacity needs;
- focussing on capacity needs which apply to all three Conventions, or cut across the three Conventions;
- an appreciation and exploitation of the *holistic* and *dynamic* nature of capacity building.

Tasks

1. Review all related international documentation and prepare a short report discussing application in the *Country* context;
2. Brief the Project Staff, the Project Steering Committee, and if possible the National Council on Sustainable Development, on the approach of the project to capacity development and pertinent issues in *Country*;
3. Technically support the National Project Director and the National Coordinator in all tasks, providing guidance and inputs related to capacity development. This will include reviewing and substantively commenting on the project workplan and TOR for all activities;
4. Assist in the identification of national experts and institutions that can provide services to the project;
5. Participate in all meetings and project events, facilitating and advising the discussions, and raising awareness and understanding of capacity development. This will include the national consultative workshops, and may include missions to field sites;
6. Provide informal introductory coaching for all project experts and project sub-contractors;
7. Review all project outputs, and provide substantive comments, including drafting of additional sections related to capacity building. This will include contributing to the strategy and action plan prepared under the project;
8. Prepare a final report:
    - making recommendations related to capacity and capacity development in the context of managing the global environment in *Country*
    - providing guidelines on capacity development at the system and institutional level in *Country*.

Qualification

- Post graduate qualification related to human resource development or organisational change or administrative reform or institutional change and management or overall societal learning;
- Demonstrated experience in capacity building initiatives, notably at the *systemic* and *institutional* levels;

- An understanding of the in-country linkages between institutions;
- A demonstrated understanding of the institutional, legislative, and administrative dynamics and dimensions of sustainable development;
- Knowledge of the experts and institutions involved in capacity development, at all three levels, in *Country*;
- Demonstrated experience supporting reform of (for example) governmental processes, governmental structures, inter-organisational relations or legislative processes.
- Demonstrated experience working in international projects.
- Wood working knowledge of English would be an asset.

Neutral Facilitator

Background

A self-assessment requires that the bodies/individuals being assessed do the assessment themselves. However, in order to ensure objectivity, and to overcome any tensions amongst individuals, a *neutral facilitator* can be useful,

Objective

To ensure neutrality and objectivity. To ensure that there is a strong and open dialogue through the project. This expert plays a role in ensuring the project *process* is strong, and does not focus on outputs or products.

The neutral facilitator, by definition, is not a stakeholder – s/he has no *stake* in the project outputs and impact.

Tasks

A neutral facilitator can be helpful at all stages of the project

- advise on methodologies, notably by joining in project planning meetings, PSC meetings, and commenting on all workplans, TOR, and the design of all project activities and workshops;
- participate in all project workshops, chairing and facilitating discussions;
- determine institutional constraints to project success, and determining strategies to overcoming these constraints;
- ensure communications amongst project stakeholders are strong and clear;
- contacting key project stakeholders and ensuring they are familiar with the project, their role in the project, and ensuring that they have no serious concerns or reservations;
- keep a record of the project process, and keep a record of any secondary or unintended benefits of the project process, particularly if any benefits are considered unique in the country.

Qualifications

- Knowledge and demonstrated experience related to capacity development or capacity assessment. This may be in domains such as:
    - change or adaptive management;
    - public administration reform;
    - legal reform;
    - law;
    - organizational reform.
- Knowledge and demonstrated experience with participatory methodologies;
- Negotiation and conflict management skills are an asset;
- It may also be desirable that the facilitator has *little* knowledge of the three global conventions, in order to ensure neutrality.