



LDC 2050 VISION: TOWARDS A CLIMATE- RESILIENT FUTURE

SEPTEMBER 2019



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PEOPLE**



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OUR VISION **is for all Least Developed Countries to be on climate-resilient development pathways by 2030 and deliver net-zero emissions by 2050 to ensure our societies and ecosystems thrive.**

The Least Developed Countries (LDC) Initiative for Effective Adaptation and Resilience (LIFE-AR) is an LDC-led, LDC-owned initiative to develop a long-term vision for delivering a climate-resilient future. LIFE-AR outlines the ambitious commitments that we LDCs are making together to ensure we leave no LDC behind.

The climate emergency calls for a historic shift in the way LDCs and the international community respond to climate change. By working together better, we can align with and deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Paris Agreement, Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Sendai framework, implementing real action on the ground at national and local levels, to make climate resilience a reality. LIFE-AR charts out an effective, ambitious response to the climate challenge, with all countries and communities — from the least to the most vulnerable — working hand in hand for a climate-resilient future.

Challenge and opportunity

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services have both issued stark warnings: we are running out of time to avoid catastrophic runaway climate change and loss of nature.¹ In the context of rapidly escalating climate risks, we face unique and unprecedented challenges as we work to end poverty and achieve sustainable development. A long-term focus on building resilience is the only way to deliver the SDGs while also averting and addressing large-scale loss and damage.

Business-as-usual approaches to addressing climate change are not working. Evidence shows that the

adaptation financing gap in developing countries is still wide. Estimates suggest that LDCs will need US\$93.7 billion a year from 2020 to implement our nationally determined contributions (NDCs) alone.² Only 18% of global climate finance reaches LDCs; and less than 10% of climate finance from dedicated climate funds gets to the local level, where climate action is required.³

Climate finance is clearly not getting to where it is most needed. Short-term, projectised, sectoral climate responses have limited impact. And with external actors defining and leading most initiatives, these are failing to build capacity and deliver sustainability at national and local levels. 87% of the Green Climate Fund's investments are through international development partners, with just five LDC institutions accredited.

Recognising these challenges, we are taking decisive action to step up our own climate efforts and ambition, using LIFE-AR to drive this forward and promote a shift away from business as usual. LIFE-AR will engage with and benefit all LDCs — the first movers or 'front-runner' LDCs, regional clusters around these and the broader group — through providing long-term support in strengthening our institutions, structures and systems to achieve our vision.

We are joined in this initiative by our development partners, who share our ambitions and recognise that business as usual is no longer enough. We all need to step up and raise our ambition. We all need to strengthen climate action and our approaches to it if we are to minimise widespread climate impacts, protect nature and eradicate poverty.

Achieving our vision

To achieve our vision, we must deepen our climate knowledge and access predictable, reliable finance from domestic, private and international sources so we can develop our technology and capabilities to support the emergence of:

1. Climate-resilient people living in just, inclusive, happy and poverty-free societies.
2. Climate-resilient economies that are net-zero and prosperous, with vibrant and sustainable growth within ecological limits.
3. Climate-resilient landscapes and ecosystems that are sustainably managed, less vulnerable to climate shocks and stresses, and use nature-based solutions.

Our vision is guided by the principles of inclusion, participation, justice, equity and leaving no one behind, especially the most fragile LDCs and most vulnerable locations. We all aim to graduate from LDC status before 2050; some of us are on course to achieve this soon. But increasing climate risks present a critical threat to these aspirations and will significantly undermine our development efforts.

We will take a whole-of-society approach to secure a climate-resilient future and achieve our graduation goals. The LDCs of today are the G47 of tomorrow; and we commit to continue working together, as our members graduate, sharing our knowledge and capabilities to achieve our joint vision. We see our future in a resilient society that is happy, secure and self-reliant; where every person thrives despite climate change; where every person is empowered to participate in decision making; and where ecosystems flourish in a climate-conscious, vibrant green economy.

What sets our vision apart?

We, the LDCs, define, drive and lead our own vision. It charts out our journey towards a climate-resilient future by 2050, in line with our own needs and priorities. On this journey, we do not merely ask for planning and coordination support. We do not seek single-project funding. Instead, we aim to build the institutional systems and capabilities we need for long-term transformative change. To achieve this, we need LDC-focused delivery mechanisms that are flexible and forward-looking; that respond to changing circumstances, needs and new knowledge as they arise; and that are transparent and open, with predictable budgets rather than funds for prescribed activities. We want these mechanisms to be vertically integrated with government systems while also

enabling horizontal collaboration across different sectors. We are not chasing the money; we are following our mission and only accepting funding that is in alignment. And this mission is to develop a legacy that ensures institutions have a proven track record, where there is subsidiarity of decisions on action and finance as we adapt to our new, climate-resilient development pathway.

This vision supports our intention to develop long-term climate strategies under the Paris Agreement Article 4 paragraph 19 and to articulate our ambitious leadership on climate action. Through it, we can better address the long-term impacts of a changing climate and further define and update the adaptation priorities of our national adaptation plans (NAPs) and NDCs, in line with national development goals for climate resilience and poverty eradication.

We are in this together

From the beginning, the LDC Group has worked to 'join the dots' with existing initiatives.

We set up a network of LDC practitioners and resilience partners — resilience and adaptation experts from LDC governments, civil society, academia, international accredited entities, climate funds, the LDC Expert Group (LEG) and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change — to guide strategic linkages and learn from and build on existing practice. We also established LDC ministerial and advisory groups to guide the initiative's political and technical direction and ensure a governance structure that continues to be LDC-led and driven.

Our vision unites and draws on the knowledge, resources and work of three LDC initiatives — LDCs Universities Consortium on Climate Change (LUCCC), LDC Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Initiative for Sustainable Development (LDC REEEI) and LIFE-AR — and informs LDCs' national work on long-term strategies (LTS). We seek to learn from and support each other while we build climate resilience; and to also redefine relationships between LDCs, donors and wider development partners, so we can strengthen our own delivery systems.

OUR OFFER

We, the LDC governments, commit to ambitious, low-carbon, climate-resilient development. Despite being the most vulnerable to climate risks, we seek to take the lead in developing a more effective, ambitious climate response, recognising that business as usual is not enough to secure a climate-resilient future and our graduation from LDC status.

1. We will work with the whole of society to achieve a low-carbon, climate-resilient future by:

- Prioritising climate in our national development policies, plans, budgets and programmes.
- Ensuring horizontal and vertical integration across multiple levels and sectors, from government and private sector to civil society, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), academia and communities, with a focus on including youth, women, indigenous peoples and other traditionally excluded groups.
- Strengthening the role of local government and actors to revitalise existing decentralisation structures and ensure subsidiarity in climate decisions, cross-sectoral and jurisdiction coordination and clearer mandates in climate action, enabling participatory, bottom-up planning and ensuring national plans reflect local priorities.

2. We will develop strong climate finance architecture, with at least 70% of flows supporting local-level action by 2030, by:

- Strengthening our finance architecture and systems from national to local level with strong delivery mechanisms that put resources into local hands for local adaptation priorities to ensure the effective and efficient management and implementation of public resources. We will prioritise national institutions for accreditation and ensure they are matched appropriately to the national designated authority and national implementing entity roles.
- Delivering predictable and flexible climate finance to local level, with strong transparency, accountability and measurement, reporting and verification systems to track it, on LDC terms,⁴ adjusting approaches to respond to the context and needs through inclusive multi-stakeholder platforms at every level.
- Supporting these delivery mechanisms with diverse sources of international, national, private and public finance, leveraging existing funds such as tax revenue, 'polluter pays' regulations, household savings and domestic development budgets, and returning locally collected finance for local investment. We will use domestic finance to build co-financing opportunities and initiate more bilateral partnerships within the LDC Group.
- Recognising the value of ecosystem services — including natural capital accounting and payments for ecosystem services — as a source of domestic finance.

3. We will integrate adaptation, mitigation and resilience into our national and local development objectives by:

- Vertically and horizontally integrating the relevant frameworks — including NAPs, NDCs and long-term strategies for low emission and climate-resilient development (LTS) — with development strategies to ensure joint efforts at all levels.
- Innovating in developing technology and business models to ensure context-appropriate opportunities to access energy and environmentally sound technology, focusing on gender-responsive transformative outcomes.
- Delivering 100% access to productive energy services, renewable energy for electricity and use of best-in-class energy efficiency, reducing fossil fuel energy use and electrifying transport systems to achieve a low-carbon economy.
- Increasing our carbon sinks on land through natural forest management, protection and conservation measures such as bylaws to protect natural resources and increase community rights and engagement.

5. We will create more inclusive governance of climate decisions that are centred on gender transformation and social justice by:

- Strengthening multi-stakeholder, multi-level, multi-sector platforms where communities (especially the most excluded), national and local government, NGOs and private sector work together to improve climate decision making, build a strong foundation of trust, break down silos and encourage collaboration.
- Leading a new discourse on social inclusion that puts climate justice at its heart, involving the whole of society — especially youth, women, indigenous peoples and other traditionally excluded groups — in decisions, planning, programmes, finance and technology.
- Strengthening transparency and accountability in financing, results and learning and climate information sharing at all levels.
- Engaging in dialogue with the private sector to develop national investment plans, enabling policies and regulations to encourage investments in a clean, resilient future, supporting small enterprise and business through aggregation platforms.

4. We will strengthen our climate capabilities, institutions, knowledge, skills and learning by:

- Learning from, collaborating with and guiding our fellow LDCs — especially the most fragile — sharing good practice, advice and experience of what works and what does not.
- Developing our home-grown climate expertise, especially among women and youth, by integrating climate into our training and education systems at all levels, building on the LUCCC network and investing in curriculums and research for the current and next generation of leaders.
- Integrating technical and indigenous knowledge into climate planning and decision making to ensure we leave no one behind and transfer adequate and tailored climate information.
- Sharing our experience in resilience, adaptation, mitigation and sustainable development on the global stage, to become centres of excellence that support the international community's climate-resilience building efforts.

OUR ASK

Achieving a climate-resilient future and graduation across all LDCs by 2050 is an ambitious goal that requires partnership on both sides. We invite you, the international community, to join us in making our climate-resilient vision a reality. This is an opportunity to increase global climate effectiveness, align with and deliver the SDGs and Paris Agreement, and implement real action at national and local levels in the most vulnerable countries and communities. We urge you to be part of this historic shift by committing to this long-term collective response to the climate emergency with climate justice at its heart.

We ask the international community to...

1. Provide high-quality, predictable and accessible finance to help us deliver the SDGs and Paris Agreement. Support the LDCs' intention of at least 70% financial flows supporting local-level action by 2030

As well as meeting the 0.7% aid target and ensuring all overseas development aid is Paris-compatible, we need new and additional climate finance that meets the agreed 50:50 adaptation-mitigation balance. At least 50% of total flows should support the world's most vulnerable countries and communities.

We ask that 70% of all the climate finance received is committed with the principle purpose of supporting local climate action. This is fundamental to the whole-of-society response that we are seeking to deliver. When climate finance fails to reach the most affected — the women, the youth, the indigenous peoples and others who are historically marginalised — it exacerbates the inequities that drive poverty and vulnerability. Local actors are best able to develop creative, bottom-up solutions at the frontier of climate action, tackling the underlying drivers of poverty, climate change and degradation of nature coherently for sustainable development.

We also ask you to:

- Deliver flexible, longer-term support that will allow us to build holistic, cross-sectoral institutional mechanisms that deliver finance over a minimum of seven years for greater impact.
- Lengthen programme design phases to effectively involve government, communities and other key actors from the beginning to build a shared vision, principles, rules and decision-making criteria, and improve targeting and evidence to identify and support the most vulnerable.
- Agree to the principles of subsidiarity, radical transparency in aid flows and inclusive governance of decisions around investment, allowing us to determine how to spend funds at national and local levels.
- Support dedicated financial entities to channel finance from increasingly diverse sources into our national and local climate funds so we can implement our vision and plans.
- Build enabling environments that allow us to access climate finance and accreditation, with international accredited entities providing long-term support to our national and local institutions while we build capabilities, address gaps and establish a strong track record for accreditation.

2. Work together to reduce transaction costs and ensure mutual accountability behind LDC leadership

Finance flows must be trackable to their end use to achieve meaningful transparency by both donors and LDCs and enable learning of what works. But existing reporting and implementation requirements have high transaction costs and burdens for LDCs. Unified and coherent formats and reporting requirements between donors, climate funds and accredited entities and within donor programmes — developed through engagement with LDCs — will improve reporting and reduce the burden.

4. Invest in our climate-resilient net-zero economies and technology

To support the emergence of climate-resilient micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises, landscapes and people, we ask you to invest in our home-grown innovation to build and transfer green skills, knowledge, gender-responsive technology and infrastructure. Help us revitalise our ecosystems through nature-based solutions, building on our rich traditions and indigenous knowledge.

3. Work with us in the long term to strengthen our national and local institutional capabilities

We need adequate time and finance to build the knowledge and skills required to strengthen our national and local systems sustainably. Help us strengthen our in-country expertise by drawing in our home-grown experts and younger professionals to deliver technical support, investing in whole-of-society responses, with a special focus on women and youth and working closely with LUCCC and other LDC institutions in-country to develop tomorrow's leaders and national experts, investing in capabilities, curriculums, training, research and knowledge.

5. Develop your own ambitious strategies for 1.5°C low-carbon climate-resilient pathways by 2020

Last, but by no means least, we ask all countries to develop their own strategies, as invited under the Paris Agreement, to ensure a collective response to the climate challenge that does not undermine development efforts.

Endnotes

¹ IPCC (2018) Global Warming of 1.5°C. See www.ipcc.ch/sr15; and IPBES (2019) Global assessment report on biodiversity and ecosystem services. See www.ipbes.net/news/ipbes-global-assessment-preview

² Rai, N, Soanes, M, Norton, A, Anderson, S, Steele, P, Tenzin, J and MacGregor, J (2015) A fair climate deal in Paris means adequate finance to deliver INDCs in LDCs. IIED, London. pubs.iied.org/17333IIED

³ Oxfam (2018) Climate finance shadow report 2018; and Soanes, M, Rai, N, Steele, P, Shakya, C and MacGregor, J (2017) Delivering real change: getting international climate finance to the local level. IIED, London. pubs.iied.org/10178IIED

⁴ Only 7% of all climate finance comes from dedicated climate funds and is transparent enough for analysis. Greater transparency would allow us to track the effectiveness of all climate finance (Soanes et al. 2017).

LDC CLIMATE CHANGE 2050 Vision

The LDC Ministerial Group and LDC Chair officially welcomed and launched LIFE-AR at COP24. It has been a deliberative process across LDCs, guiding the development of this 2050 Vision, offer and ask. Under the direction, guidance and expertise of the LDC Ministerial Group, LDC Advisory Group, LDC Chair and LIFE-AR technical lead, six technical workshops with almost 200 experts across Anglophone and Francophone Africa and Asia Pacific — alongside more than 400 experts brought together at COP, CBA and the NAP expo, a public call for evidence eliciting 100 submissions and 80 interviews — have captured the rich insights and experience of LDC experts and resilience partners to shape this, our 2050 Vision.

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