Multilevel Governance Guidelines on
Integrated Climate Action Coordination in Lao PDR

GUIDELINES ON GOVERNANCE AND PLANNING STRATEGIES ON CLIMATE COORDINATION ENHANCEMENT

30 October 2020

URBAN LEDS
URBAN LOW EMISSION DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

MONRE

This Urban LEDS project is funded by the European Union.

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

Guidelines on Governance and Planning Strategies on Climate Change Coordination Enhancement

United Nations Human Settlements Programme
P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi 00100, Kenya
E-mail: infohabitat@unhabitat.org
www.unhabitat.org

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Abbreviations and Acronyms

BUR	Biennial Update Report
CBA	Community-based adaptation
COP	Conference of the Parties
CRF	Common Reporting Framework
DCC	Department of Climate Change
DONRE	District Office of Natural Resources and Environment
GCoM	Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GPC	Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emissions
ICI	International Cooperative Initiative
ICLEI	Local Governments for Sustainability
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LFNC	Lao Front for National Construction
LWU	Lao Women's Union
LDC	Least Developed Countries
MEM	Ministry of Energy and Mines
MICT	Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism
MoES	Ministry of Education and Sports
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoIC	Ministry of Industry and Commerce
MOLSW	Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
MOST	Ministry of Science and Technology
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPH	Ministry of Public Health
MPI	Ministry of Planning and Investment
MPWT	Ministry of Public Works and Transport
MRV	Measurement, reporting and verification
NAMA	Nationally appropriate mitigation action
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NAZCA	Non-state Actor Zone for Climate Action
NCCAP	National Climate Change Action Plan
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NEC	National Environment Committee
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NSA	Non-state and subnational actors
NSCCC	National Steering Committee on Climate Change
PONRE	Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment
RMC	Rajkot Municipal Corporation
TWGCC	Technical Working Group on Climate Change
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change

1. Introduction to the Guidelines

This is one of a set of four guidelines explaining multilevel governance processes related to climate change as they affect Laos. The guidelines have been developed under the aegis of the *Promoting Low Emission Urban Development Strategies in Emerging Economy Countries (Urban-LEDS)* project which is funded by the European Union under its Global Climate Change Alliance Plus initiative and implemented by UN-Habitat and ICLEI-Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI).

The Department of Climate Change (DCC) of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) is the focal point for climate change in Laos. DCC staff are active in global affairs and they drive the mainstreaming of climate change action within the country. At a sub-national level, the climate change mandate is carried by the Provincial Office of Natural Resources and Environment (PONRE) and the District Office of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE) in each province and district. As the focal point at their level for climate change-related governance processes and systems, it is important that the institutional knowledge in these offices is strengthened to enable staff to fulfil their role in implementing legislation, policies and plans, thereby ensuring that Laos has a cohesive multilevel climate change response. The purpose of these guidelines is to strengthen the technical and institutional knowledge of PONRE and DONRE staff. The guidelines focus on:

1. Measurement, reporting and verification (MRV);
2. Legal frameworks, policies and treaties;
3. Governance – climate coordination enhancement; and
4. Financing tools and mechanisms

The objectives of this guideline are to enhance the knowledge within the natural resources and environment sector in the areas of:

- Climate coordination at the global level, with an emphasis on developments relating to subnational governance, including the many transnational networks and coalitions which include subnational government members;
- Climate coordination in Laos, and the responsibilities allocated to different sectors and levels; and
- Lessons learned, with relevant case studies, and associated good practices.

2. Introduction to Governance and planning strategies on climate coordination enhancement

The ultimate goals of climate action are to (i) make changes in behaviours so that human activity does not continue to change the natural climate system, and (ii) build resilience in communities and environments to enable them to withstand the impacts that are already occurring as a result of human-induced climate change. In order to achieve these goals, complex technological, political and governance systems have evolved at every level from global to local. It has become increasingly obvious that all levels of governance need to participate, work together and contribute to combatting climate change.

Climate change is inextricably linked to sustainable development. At the core of climate change mitigation is the need to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions . Since the burning of fossil

Low emissions development or low carbon development: Development which is carried out in a manner which does not produce high GHG emissions.

Green growth emphasises environmental sustainability in development. This includes low emissions development.

fuels emits GHGs, there is a drive to find alternative sources of energy and to implement their use in all areas of life, including personal day-to-day life, industrial activity, large-scale transport and agriculture and forestry. However, this is not an easy or cheap switch to make and people in developing countries have less opportunity to make the change to cleaner energy sources than their counterparts in developed countries who have more financial resources at their disposal. Similarly, communities in developing countries are at greater risk from the impacts of climate change such as extreme weather events including floods, storms, droughts. Many of these communities which are at a higher level of risk do not have resources to build resilience in their communities against climate change impacts. Therefore, poverty exacerbates the effects of climate change. Poverty reduction, education, gender inclusiveness and robust infrastructure as well as sound planning, conducive legislation and strong and stable institutions all contribute to achieving the goals of mitigating and building resilience to climate change.

There is, therefore, a need to consider climate change in all areas of governance and development planning, a need to build capacity and a need to plan coherently across different sectors and levels. This need for both vertical and horizontal integration requires extensive coordination and planning. Figure 1 outlines the role of different levels in a vertically and horizontally integrated response to climate change. It shows a downward flow of support, including capacity, technical and financial, and an upward flow of inputs into decision making and reporting. Horizontally, there is an integrated effort to mainstream climate change into sectoral policies and to contribute sectoral data to the national MRV system. Climate change planning began with a high visibility at the global level, as seen in the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), to name two of a number of global level political and technical entities. Plans have been made to support countries in their climate change response through the provision of extensive capacity-building, technical and financial resources. In more recent times, the need has been recognised to support and build capacity at the subnational level. This has led to a plethora of transnational entities aiming to increase climate change mitigation and adaptation at the subnational level, many targetting cities since it is in cities that the highest proportion of GHGs are emitted.

Laos is not a high emitter of GHGs compared to other countries. However, there is the potential for emissions to rise as the population increases and with increased activity in sectors such as energy, industry and transport. It is, therefore, essential that the trajectory of emissions increase is changed by ensuring that development progresses in a way which does not emit high levels of GHGs. Laos is committed to combatting climate change, as evidenced by the commitments it has made, most recently through the Paris Agreement. Through its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC), Laos has pledged to reduce its GHG emissions by 57% by the year 2030 (Government of Lao PDR, 2020). This compares to a baseline scenario of reducing emissions by 34% by 2030. Laos has calculated that it will be able to achieve zero net emissions by 2050 upon receipt of an additional USD 4,762 million. While not being a major emitter, Laos is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and its considerable losses due to floods, droughts, storms and changing weather patterns have been widely documented. In order to build resilience to these ongoing impacts, the Government of Lao PDR developed the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA). There are many adaptation actions planned in climate change planning which includes the Climate Change Strategy (2010) and the Climate Change Action Plan 2013-2020. In order to achieve the aims of these documents to build resilience and reduce emissions, there is a need to enhance institutional capacity and both horizontal and vertical coordination.

2.1. Cities and climate change

Over half of the world's population lives in cities. The basic services, infrastructure, housing, human livelihoods and health, government facilities and assets in urban areas are already being significantly impacted by climate change and the impacts will continue to increase. Poor people are more vulnerable and are affected more than the wealthy. Not only are cities affected by climate change, but the United Nations Environment

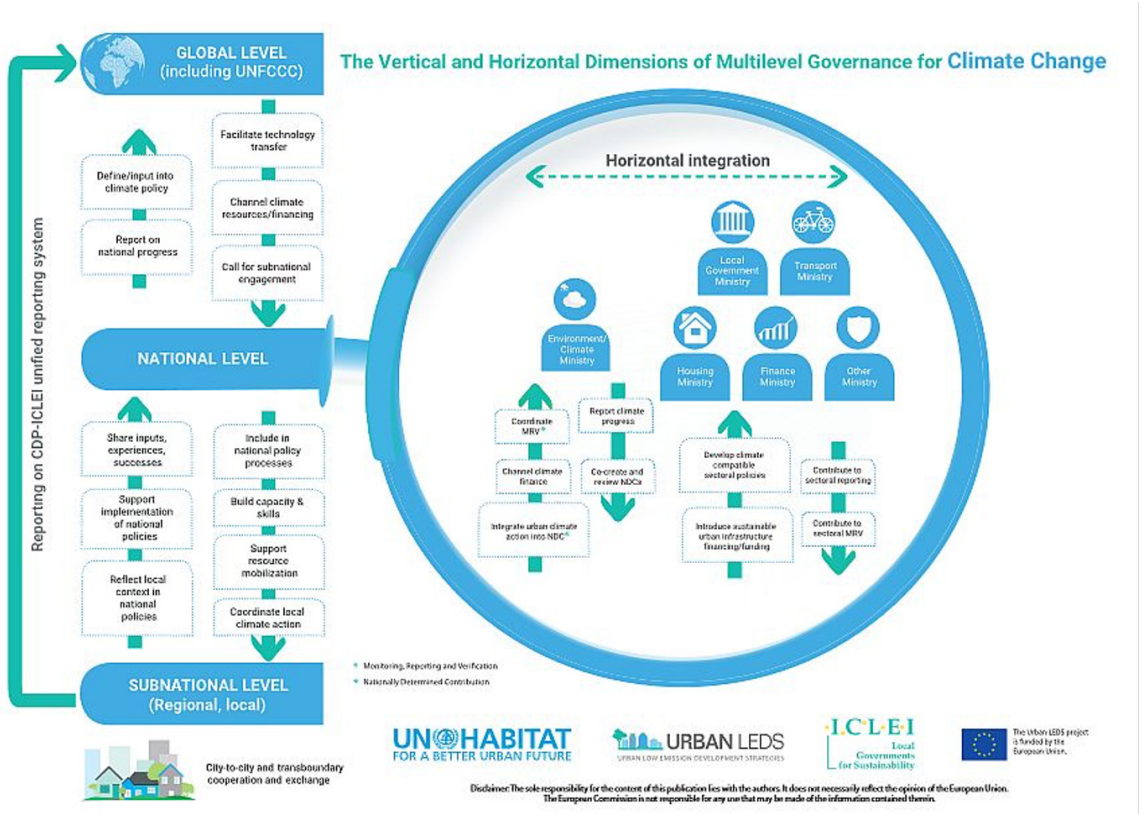

Figure 1. Vertically and horizontally integrated climate change governance

Programme (UNEP) estimates that cities account for 75 percent of global CO2 emissions from final energy use (United Nations Environment Programme, n.d.). The key role of cities in climate change has drawn an increasing focus at all levels of governance.

3. Transnational developments in subnational response to climate change

While the UNFCCC framework is structured around nation states, the increasing focus on the role of cities and subnational entities in climate change has resulted in actions to support a diverse range of non-state and subnational actors (NSA)s in their actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change. In recent years, the amount of climate activity by NSAs has notably escalated, as shown by the examples in Table 1. Current commitments by countries are not ambitious enough to achieve the Paris Agreement goal of keeping average temperature rise to 2°Celsius or 1.5° Celsius. However, an analysis of climate action from cities, regions and businesses showed that when the emission reduction commitments of local governments and companies are aggregated, the global community is on track to meet the 2° target (New Climate Institute, Data-Driven Lab, PBL, German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Blavatnik, 2019). It is therefore, critical that the commitments are met. A UNEP report (2018) also suggested that NSAs have the potential to play a significant role in reducing emissions. However, there will need to be a far greater level of commitment and action than had been recorded by individual actors and single initiatives at the time of the estimates. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has highlighted cooperation between actors as being crucial to halving emissions by 2030 in order to meet the 1.5°C goal (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, 2018). There have been calls to provide support, in the form of capacity-building, knowledge transfer and finance, directly to

subnational entities. The need for subnational and non-governmental action has given arise to numerous transnational coalitions and initiatives.

Actor group	2015	2017
Cities	7,025 from 99 countries, representing 11 percent of the global population	7,378 from 133 countries, representing 16.9 percent of the global population
States and regions	116 regions from 20 countries, representing 11 percent of the global population	245 regions from 42 countries, representing 17.5 percent of the global population
Companies and investors	4,431 companies from 88 countries and over 400 investors, with more than US$25 trillion in assets under management	6,225 companies and investors from 120 countries, representing at least US$36.5 trillion in revenue

Table 1. Examples of the growth in individual NSA actor participation from 2015 to 2017

Source: UNEP, Emissions Gap Report 2018

3.1. UNFCCC developments on subnational climate action

As far back as the 19th Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2013, technical expert meetings have been held with representation from NSAs. At COP 19. a technical expert meeting was held on urbanisation and the role of sub-national governments in facilitating climate action in cities (Sterk, 2013). The meeting was favourably received and succeeding COPs continued and developed the technical meeting process. COP 20 featured a high-level political event at which civil society representatives, subnational governments and business representatives were able to speak on good practices (Hermwille, 2018). The event provided a forum for the announcement of new initiatives and for the announcement of increased ambitions for existing initiatives.

Another initiative from COP 20 was the Non-state Actor Zone for Climate Action (NAZCA) (United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, n.d.). This database holds commitments from a wide range of NSAs. The type of data shown is demonstrated in the example of Indonesia. Figure 2 shows the overview of the number of actions, number of actors and the time frame of the actions. It shows that in 2020 there have been 89 actions registered in Indonesia by 51 different actors. While there are 28 actions registered in Indonesia for individual actors, the remaining 52 actions are cooperative actions.

Figure 2. Indonesian climate actions shown in the NAZCA

Figure 3 details the types of actors which have registered climate actions in Indonesia, and shows that almost half of the climate actions in Indonesia are registered by cities, with 16% registered by regions.

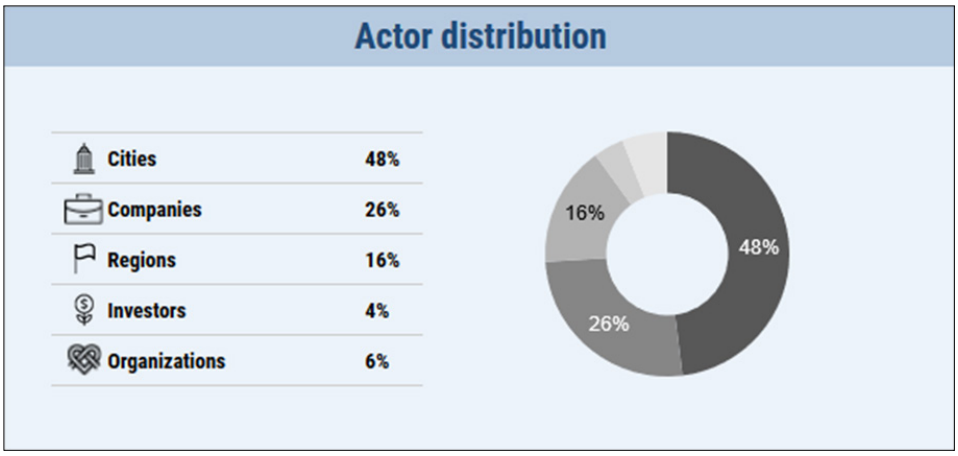

Figure 3. Types of actors which have registered climate actions in Indonesia

Two examples of city commitments are shown in Figure 4.

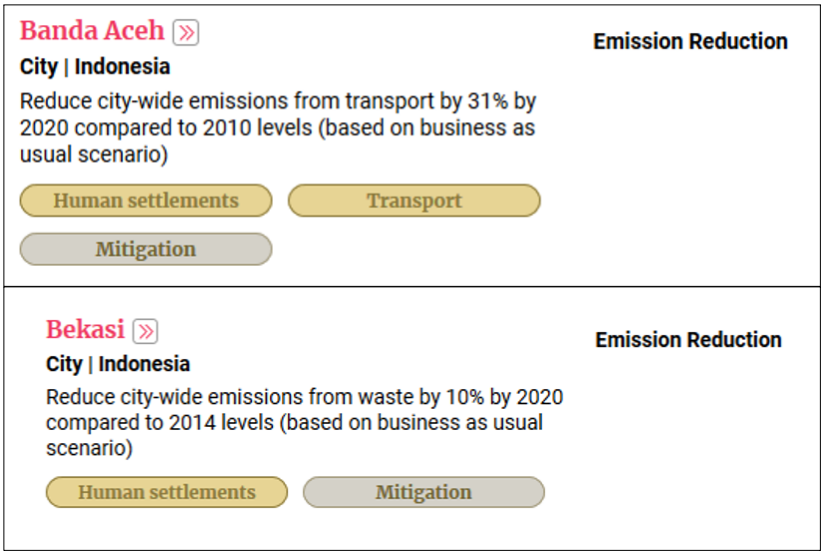

Figure 4. Climate actions by two cities in Indonesia

The Paris Agreement encourages the registration of climate actions in the NAZCA as one of the ways in which it supports and builds further on initiatives to engage NSAs. It also convenes a high-level event in conjunction with each COP from 2016-2020, and engages two high-level champions to coordinate this event, engage with stakeholders to further voluntary initiatives, and provide guidance on the technical expert meetings, which were to be continued as part of an enhanced technical process including adaptation as well as mitigation actions (United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change, 2015).

3.2. Subnational climate action outside the UNFCCC

With strengthened support, climate activity increased amongst NSAs. In 2018 a Global Climate Action Summit was organised in San Francisco, hosted by the Californian Governor. The summit was one of many actions by subnational US government entities following the 2017 announcement that the United States was to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. The summit

was attended by over 4,500 local and regional governments and business leaders (United Nations Environment Programme, 2018). Key outcomes included the formation of new coalitions, including a coalition of over 100 subnational leaders committed to becoming carbon-neutral by 2050, and a waste initiative whereby more than twenty subnational governments committed to achieving zero waste. The summit was followed by a UN Climate Summit in September, 2019 which was convened by the UN Secretary-General in a bid to increase the ambition of climate commitments.

3.3. Coalitions and networks

Multiple networks and coalitions have been formed to bring together subnational or non-state actors working to respond to climate change. Many of these networks offer support directly to subnational levels. These networks, coalitions and platforms have varying requirements in terms of membership and obligations regarding commitment to, implementation of and reporting of climate action. Members have gained benefits enabling them to escalate their climate action. An example was reported in a study of climate change action plans in Europe (Reckien, 2015) which found that climate networks provide very effective support for both mitigation and adaptation planning. Similarly, a study of how Latin American cities have integrated mitigation and adaptation planning (Kim, 2019) concluded that membership in climate networks was a positive influence.

The following sections identify some key networks and coalitions.

3.3.1. ICLEI - Local Governments for Sustainability

With its world secretariat based in Bonn, Germany, ICLEI is a network comprising more than 1,750 local and regional governments from 126 countries. ICLEI's focus is sustainable urban development which its strategic vision sees as being low emission, nature-based, circular, resilient and equitable. ICLEI members work with experts through peer exchange, partnerships and capacity building as well as policy processes concerning governance, innovation and finance. Resources produced by ICLEI and its partners include the Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GPC). This is a framework through which cities can report on GHG emissions in a standardised manner.

ICLEI works through regional secretariats. The ICLEI-Southeast Asia Secretariat opened in 1999. The ICLEI Laos Project Office of the Urban-LEDS II Project was established to implement the project in the country and to support and guide the review of climate action planning in the project's model cities, Pakse and Kaysone Phomvihane.

3.3.2. Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

The Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM) is an alliance of over 10,000 cities and local governments in 138 countries. Based in Brussels, Belgium, the GCoM has regional secretariats, with an office in Indonesia. There are 78 cities in Southeast Asia which have made a commitment.

The GCoM has a vision of "promoting and supporting voluntary action to combat climate change and move to a low emission, resilient society" (Global Covenant of Mayors Asia, 2019). Support includes technical and capacity building assistance through technical partners. As well as supporting individual cities, the GCoM has developed resources such as a Common Reporting Framework (CRF). The CRF allows cities to track progress and report climate data in a standardised way. The GCoM also operates a Data Portal for Cities , which is a free, online platform containing estimated city-scale data across sectors such as buildings, transportation and waste. Cities are able to download and use relevant data in their measuring and planning.

3.3.3. C40 Cities

A network of mega-cities committed to addressing climate change, the C40 network produces resources which are freely available to all cities, no matter what their size is.

3.3.4. Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance

The Cities Climate Finance Leadership Alliance is a multi-level, multi stakeholder coalition which includes banks, development agencies, climate coalitions, philanthropies, research institutes and multilateral organisations amongst its members. The aim of the Alliance is to close the investment gap for urban subnational climate projects and infrastructure.

3.3.5. Under2 Coalition

By signing the Under2 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), subnational governments commit to limiting emissions to 80-95% below 1990 levels, or to below 2 annual metric tons per capita, by 2050. This is the action required to keep global temperature rise under 2° by the end of the 21st century. The Coalition is global in nature, although the members are predominantly from Europe, North America and Latin America.

3.4. International cooperative initiatives

International cooperative initiatives (ICI)s are joint projects in which subnational and non-state actors work together across borders, often with national governments and international organisations (NewClimate Institute, Data-Driven Lab, PBL, German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Blavatnik, 2019).

An area of focus has been international cooperative initiatives (ICI)s. According to Blok et al., (2012), coalitions made up of countries, companies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), academics, international organisations or subnational government actors, such as cities and regions, form cooperative initiatives. When these coalitions cross borders they are "international cooperative initiatives" (Widerberg O. & Pattberg, P., 2015). Examples of ICIs include the Mobilise Your City Partnership or the Global Resilience Partnership. These joint efforts are seen to have a significant potential in not only reducing emissions, but also in transferring knowledge and resources, and in stimulating innovation. As of 2019, 60% of ICIs focussed on mitigation, 17% focussed on adaptation, and 23% had an equal focus on both (NewClimate Institute, Data-Driven Lab, PBL, German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Blavatnik, 2019). While there is plainly a high level of ambition amongst ICIs, their implementation is not well documented, and indeed, the progress on a number of monitored initiatives has been slower than was anticipated (Lui, 2020).

European countries are very active in ICIs. Developing country participants make up roughly a quarter of overall participants but half of the lead partners. In the NAZCA, there are six cooperative initiatives listed as being active in Laos.

4. Climate Change Coordination in Laos

There are many aspects to climate change governance, making it a complex matter to integrate into a national governance system. A country has many international links including in the form of finance flows, MRV requirements, knowledge transfer and capacity building arrangements, and other treaty commitments and ongoing negotiations. These commitments require participation

from all levels of governance, and multiple sectors within a country. The governance setup in each country will look different, depending on the country's overall system of government. This section explains how Laos is vertically and horizontally integrating climate change governance into the overall governance system.

Climate change initially came under the umbrella of the environment but it has increasingly been dealt with as a standalone issue, although still in the Environment sector. There have been many institutional changes as the climate change governance system evolves. In 2002 a National Environment Committee (NEC) was established which had cross-sectoral representation, and was chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. The NEC mandate was later extended to cover climate change. It is a non-standing committee which meets when there is a need to attend to an environmental matter. The NEC is the highest-level entity in Laos to provide guidance on policy and legal issues concerning climate change, as well as other environmental matters. The Committee members are:

Chairman	Deputy Prime Minister
Standing Vice-Chair	MONRE
Standing Vice-Chair	Minister, MAF
Members	Vice-Minister, Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM)
	Vice-Minister, Ministry of Public Works and Transport (MPWT)
	Vice-Minister, Ministry of Finance (MoF)
	Vice-Minister, Ministry of Industry and Commerce, (MoIC)
	Vice-Minister, Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES)
	Vice-Minister, Ministry of Science and Technology (MOST)
	Vice-Chair, Lao Front for National Construction (LFNC)
	Vice-Chair, Lao Women's Union (LWU)
	Deputy General Secretary, National Trade and Industry Council
	Vice-Chair, Lao Youth Union (LYU) (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, 2019b).

When the need arose to formulate strategies, programmes and projects which were specifically focussed on climate change, a National Steering Committee on Climate Change (NSCCC) was established. The NSCCC was established in 2008, along with eight cross sectoral working groups to assess climate change issues and to identify priority actions in preparation for a climate change strategy. Since the approval of the Climate Change Strategy in 2010, the NSCCC has evolved into the Technical Working Group on Climate Change (TWGCC), and has been more closely integrated into the NEC (MONRE, 2019). The TWGCC is the focal point for coordination between sectors. It meets as the need arises, and provides technical guidance on climate change strategies and action plans, adaptation plans, GHG inventories, and UNFCCC requirements such as National Communications, NDCs and Biennial Update reports (BUR)s. The TWGCC comprises technical experts from:

- Ministry of Energy and Mines
- Ministry of Science and Technology
- Ministry of Health
- Ministry of Industry and Commerce
- Ministry of Education and Sports
- Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry
- Ministry of Public Works and Transport
- Lao Women's Union (MONRE, 2019a).

Climate change is linked to development partners and other key stakeholders through the Round

Table process. The Round Table brings together government and national development agencies, United Nations and civil society organizations and the private sector to support the country's national development plans, providing a channel of communication for progress updates on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and other key indicators. It is chaired by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) and co-chaired by the UN. The Disasters, Climate Change and Environment Sub-Working Group, which comes under the Natural Resource Management & Environment Working Group, is the channel of communication that MONRE uses to report on their plans and strategies to the Minister and then to MPI. It is chaired by the Department of Climate Change, with UNDP as the co-chair, and it makes recommendations on policies, strategies and legal frameworks relating to environmental, climate change and disaster risk management.

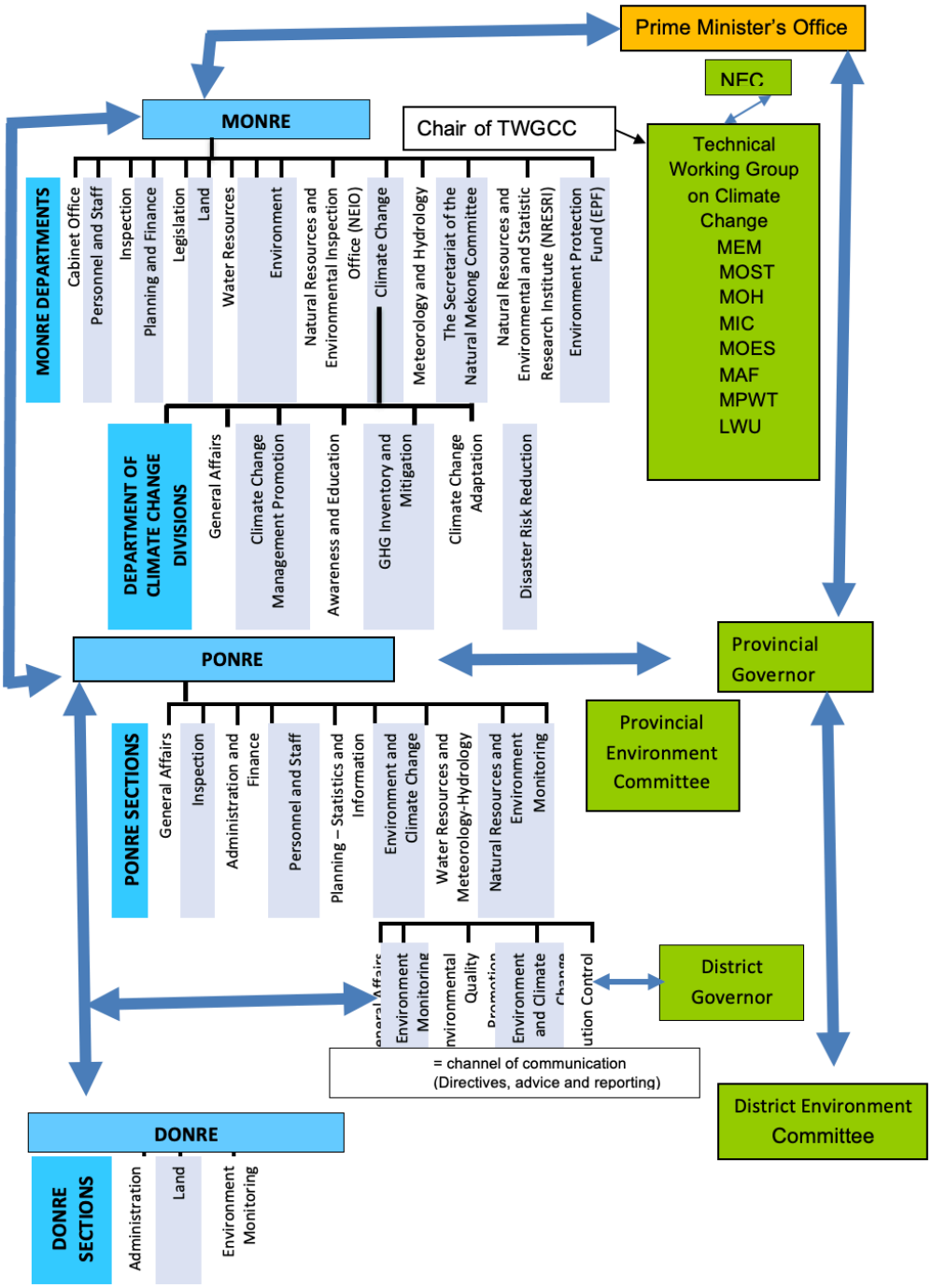

Figure 5. Institutional setup for natural resources and environment sector in Laos, with emphasis on climate change sections

With guidance from the NEC, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE) has the mandate for natural resources and environmental policies and plans. MONRE's Department of Climate Change (DCC) is specifically focussed on climate change. The DCC is also the national focal point for the UNFCCC and the National Designated Authority for the Green Climate Fund.

The natural resources and environment departments and divisions at the national, provincial and district levels are shown in Figure 5. Note that the provincial and district environment committees may have limited or no activity in some provinces.

4.1. Sector Responsibilities

As a cross-cutting issue, multiple sectors are required to collaborate to fulfil national commitments to the UNFCCC, and to coordinate an active climate change response. The responsibilities for each sector are laid out in the 2019 Climate Change Decree.

4.1.1. MONRE

The focal point is MONRE, specifically the DCC. Table 2 shows some of MONRE's key responsibilities. MONRE supervises and assists the provincial and district natural resources and environment sector.

Planning	MONRE is responsible for the development, improvement and dissemination of strategies, plans and regulations related to climate change mitigation through the reduction of GHG emissions and the increase of carbon sinks. MONRE is to take the strategies, plans and regulations to the stage of implementation plans, programmes, projects and activities
International commitments	The DCC is mandated as the coordinating entity for meeting UNFCCC obligations such as preparing National Communications, NDCs and other reports to submit to the Government for approval before submitting them to the UNFCCC.
Adaptation	Assess and map vulnerability and develop plans for adaptation which are to be mainstreamed into sector and local socio-economic development plans and programmes.
Data management	Develop a data and information system. Network with the national disaster data and information system and with the Lao Statistics Bureau. Conduct surveys and analyse data, making data available.
Monitoring	The monitoring of climate change related activities.
Awareness raising and mobilisation	It is MONRE's responsibility to educate staff about climate change, and to motivate the wider society to contribute to climate change action.
Coordination and liaison	MONRE's role is critical in vertical and horizontal integration. They are to coordinate with the ministries of other sectors, with local authorities and with other relevant organisations which have climate change duties. MONRE is also the point of contact for foreign, regional and international organisations.
Reporting	MONRE regularly reports to the Government on climate change related activities.
Monitoring of legislation	It is MONRE's duty to propose the suspension or termination of agreements, directions, and instructions which conflict with laws, and to notify the relevant authorities and local authorities that conflict with laws.

Table 2. MONRE key climate change responsibilities

4.1.2. PONRE

The Provincial Offices of Natural Resources and Environment (PONRE) are the focal point for climate change at the provincial level and an essential source of climate change knowledge for provincial offices in other sectors. Table 3 shows some of PONRE's key responsibilities.

Adaptation	Assess vulnerability and develop plans for adaptation.
Mitigation	Define alternatives to prevent and reduce GHG emissions.
Plans	Disseminate and implement strategic plans, decrees and regulations related to climate change.
Data management	Establish an information system. Conduct surveys, collect and provide information to MONRE.
Monitoring	Monitor the implementation of climate change activities.
Awareness raising and mobilisation	Educate staff about climate change, and facilitate relevant stakeholders in the wider society to contribute to climate change action.
Coordination and liaison	Coordinate with the provincial and district offices of other relevant sectors, and with local authorities in the implementation of climate change activities. Cooperate with foreign, regional and international organisations as directed by higher authorities.
Reporting	Regularly report on the implementation of climate change activities to MONRE and to the Provincial Governor.

Table 3. PONRE key climate change responsibilities

4.1.3. DONRE

At the district level, the focal point for climate change is the District Office of Natural Resources and Environment (DONRE).

Adaptation	Participate in assessing vulnerability and developing plans for adaptation.
Mitigation	Participate in defining alternatives to prevent and reduce GHG emissions.
Plans	Disseminate and implement strategic plans, laws and regulations related to climate change.
Data management	Collect and provide climate change information to PONRE.
Monitoring	Monitor the implementation of climate change activities.
Awareness raising and mobilisation	Advise village authorities and encourage them to implement climate change activities.
Coordination	Coordinate with village offices and Authorities in implementing climate change activities.
Reporting	Regularly report on the implementation of climate change activities to PONRE and to the District Governor, Urban Governor and City Governor.

Table 4. DONRE key climate change responsibilities

While natural resources and environment is the coordinating sector for climate change, other relevant sectors have responsibilities. The Climate Change Decree specifically allocates duties to MAF, MIC, MEM, MPWT, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare (MOLSW), MOST, the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICT), MOES and the Ministry of Public Health (MPH). Mainly, these sectors are to mainstream, study and conduct research on aspects of their sector which link to climate change. For example, MoIC is to promote the use of low emissions technologies in business and industries, and develop industrial infrastructure which is resilient to climate change. Ministries such as MEM and MPWT are required to set standards of climate

resilience on infrastructure in their sector. Most of the sectors are required to provide climate change related information to MONRE.

5. Lessons learned

Climate change governance has now been evolving over many years. During this time, lessons have been learned on the attributes which make successful practice. There are enduring principles which can be applied at any level. This is particularly so when considering the fact that climate change is a cross-cutting issue which requires coordination between all sectors and all levels, from global to village level. Some key lessons learned are highlighted through the case studies below. Although the cases studied are drawn from different governance levels and countries, they contain principles which have been found to be applicable in diverse contexts.

1. Climate activity needs to be planned so that it happens one step at a time

There are many different requirements to be met in the development of an effectively functioning climate governance system. These requirements will not be met all at once. It will often be necessary to prioritise the basic, essential aspects of an activity and add to it as time goes on.

Case study: Kenya's phased approach to monitoring and evaluating adaptation.

Kenyan climate change policy takes the approach of mainstreaming climate change considerations and actions into sector planning, budgeting and implementation. Kenya's NDC establishes adaptation as the priority response to climate change. A 2018-2022 National Climate Change Action Plan (NCCAP) identifies priorities from actions formulated for the Kenya National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2015–2030.

The first NCCAP (2013-2017) laid out a measurement, reporting and verification+ (MRV)+ system which was to be "an integrated framework for measuring, monitoring, evaluating, verifying and reporting results of mitigation actions, adaptation actions and the synergies between them" (Government of Kenya, 2013, p. 129). The MRV+ system had ambitious aims but it was difficult to develop due to being complex, costly and human-resource intensive (Mutimba, 2019). It was estimated that 100 people would be required to establish and run the MRV+ system (Government of Kenya, 2013).

A 2018 stakeholder workshop requested a "simple, integrated and multilevel M&E framework for adaptation" (Mutimba, 2019, p. 4). It was decided to do this, at the same time ensuring flexibility in the system to enable compliance with domestic and international regulations, using a phased approach to developing an adaptation monitoring and evaluation system, and showing, through the monitoring and evaluation system, that climate change adaptation actions deliver results.

The phased approach will first see a simple, budget-conscious system established. Subsequent phases will develop the system so that it is more complex and capable of achieving more results.

2. A plan is needed to ensure that all stakeholders, including vulnerable groups, are represented at all stages of the climate action process.

Climate change affects everyone in society. The Least Developed Countries (LDC) Expert Group of the UNFCCC identified this lesson from observations in many countries

Case study: Malawi's inclusive consultation process

Malawi is a landlocked LDC which is increasingly experiencing floods and droughts. Since most people depend on subsistence agriculture, these climate events adversely impact food and water security, and the livelihoods of rural communities.

A cross-sectoral team of 12 people leads Malawi's adaptation planning process (UNFCCC, 2015b). Three major categories were identified to be included in the planning process. These are sectors, stakeholders and levels. Each of the three categories was further divided into three sub-categories as shown below.

Sectors	Stakeholders	Levels
•Environment •Social •Economic	•Public sector •Private sector •Civil society	•International •National •Subnational/Local

Malawi used these categories in their adaptation planning process, in order to engage all three categories of stakeholder at every level and from each of the three identified sectors at every stage of the process. Using this strategy, extensive consultations were held with stakeholders from within and outside of the government. At the launch of its NAP process, a training workshop was held which included a stakeholder consultation to establish the institutional arrangements for the process. One aim of the workshop was to bring policymakers on board at the beginning of the process. At the international level, Malawi is engaging with a number of development partners. The strategy Malawi used highlighted the limited involvement of the private sector, which is seen as a potential source of investment in climate change management.

3. There are many benefits to having a champion for the climate change cause

In the Paris Agreement era, there are two champions appointed at the COP level to strengthen engagement. However, there are benefits in having a champion at any level, as the following case study shows.

Case study: Local champions in Indonesia

Tapak is a coastal village in Tugu District in the Indonesian city of Semarang. In recent years, there has been increased industrial development in Tugu which has resulted in river pollution, and has increased the demand on groundwater. In 2015 the village population was 1,389. Much of Tapak's area is taken up by fish ponds. The clearing of land to create fish ponds led to erosion but more recently, erosion has been exacerbated by high waves. Tapak is being impacted by extreme weather, rising temperatures and rising sea levels. A 2010 study found that 300 acres of land and 225 hectares of mangrove had been lost to the village as a result of coastal erosion (Septiarani, 2016). Rising sea levels and increased salinity in the water are causing a loss of mangroves and damage to fish ponds during high tides.

In 2009, Indonesian NGOs introduced community-based adaptation (CBA) to Tapak. Using a participatory approach, the organisations facilitated the mapping of problem areas in Tapak, the development of an action plan, and education around mangrove conservation. As a result of the community activities, villagers became active in selling mangrove seedlings and developing eco-tourism. Several new community groups were formed, including women's groups, tourism awareness group and youth groups. These groups are a key medium in transmitting knowledge to villages.

Despite the length of time in which Tapak villagers have been involved in adaptation activities, there is still a low level of understanding about climate change. A 2016 survey found that approximately 66% of respondents in Tapak did not know what climate change is (Septiarani, 2016). Villagers are involved with the adaptation activities because of the influence of a community leader who invites their involvement. The community leader, acting as a local champion of the adaptation programme, is knowledgeable about climate change. Lessons from Tapak are that a local champion is essential for the continuation of the adaptation process, however, it would be beneficial for the champions to share their climate change and other relevant knowledge with the wider community.

Figure 6. Mangrove surrounding a fish pond in Tapak Village

Source: Septiarani, S. & Handayani, W., 2016

4. It is advantageous to link climate goals to priority development goals

The case study below shows how it is possible to carry out activities which bring both climate benefits and development benefits.

Case study: Rajkot's linkages of climate change and development goals

Rajkot is a city of 1.3 million inhabitants in Gujarat, India. It is governed by the Rajkot Municipal Corporation (RMC), which administers the provision of basic urban services. Rajkot has become a leading city in India in terms of climate change action, and was, in 2017, the only city which belonged to the GCoM.

One of the ways in which Rajkot is succeeding in developing in a low emissions manner is through implementing activities which have multiple objectives. In Error! Reference source not found., Bhardwaj and Khosla (2017) show the projects and schemes that Rajkot was linking to climate change in 2017. Primary objectives are indicated by a black circle, while additional objectives are indicated by a hollow circle and triangles indicate the potential for further opportunities. For example, the primary objective of the Affordable Housing Scheme is to build affordable housing, but there are also environmental, including climate change, objectives as well as social and economic objectives.

RAJKOT'S MULTIPLE OBJECTIVES

	ENVIRONMENTAL			SOCIAL					ECONOMIC		GOVERNANCE
SCHEMES AND PROJECTS	PROVIDE CLEAN ENERGY	ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE	REDUCE ENERGY DEMAND	PROVIDE ENERGY ACCESS	BUILD AFFORDABLE HOUSING	ENHANCE SAFETY	IMPROVE TRANSPORT ACCESS	PROVIDE WATER ACCESS	INCREASE FINANCIAL SAVINGS	INCREASE REVENUE	ENHANCE IMPLEMENT -ABILITY
1. LED STREET LIGHTS PROJECT		○	●			○			●		○
2. URBAN-LEDS STRATEGIES	○	●	●	○				○	○		
3. SMART CITY PROPOSAL	●	△	●		●	●	●	●		●	●
4. SOLAR- CITY SCHEME	●	●	●	●					○	△	
5. AFFORDABLE HOUSING SCHEME	△	○	○	○	●	○	△	○		○	
6. JNNURM (BRT) & LOW CARBON MOBILITY PLAN	△	●	○			○	●			○	

● Primary objectives of the scheme or project ○ Additional objective addressed by the Municipal Corporation △ Potential opportunities for further action in the city

Figure 7. Rajkot's climate actions which have multiple objectives

Source: Bhardwaj, A. & Khosla, R., 2017

Rajkot uses three strategies to mainstream climate change.

1. Actions are carried out which have local urban development as the primary objective and climate objectives are secondary. By linking the climate action with more immediate urban priorities, it is more likely to gain political approval.
2. When there are multiple state and national level policies, Rajkot places a priority on those which have climate objectives.
3. Engineers extend climate actions by innovating to add extra climate features to urban development schemes.

These strategies have enabled Rajkot to successfully implement climate actions. A challenge has been a lack of incentive to work across sectors. This has placed constraints on multisectoral actions.

5. Much can be achieved through partnerships with multiple actors

Different actors bring different skills, experiences and resources. By partnering together, synergies develop which lead to more successful outcomes.

Case study: Rural electrification in Laos

Much has been written about the success of rural electrification in Laos, with over 95% of households across the country having access to electricity in 2020. Electrification has been commonly viewed as a development goal, and has brought many changes in the lives of its recipients. These include the ability to work at night with better lighting leading to increases in business activity and income; access to knowledge, including current market knowledge; and the ability for medical centres to keep medicines cool. As a means of mitigating climate change, rural electrification has often replaced heavily emitting fossil fuels with low emissions alternatives. For example, in the past many people used kerosene lamps but with the arrival of electricity they have cleaner forms of energy such as hydro or solar power.

There have been many challenges to providing electricity to rural areas of Laos, not least due to the rugged terrain and the isolation of many communities. These conditions have led to the use of off-grid and mini-grid technologies often using small-scale hydro or solar power.

A key element in the success of rural electrification has been the partnerships that have been developed. At the centre has been strong support from the Government. There have also been contributions from international actors such as development partners, national non-government actors such as private sector companies and village level participants such as villagers who have trained to operate local technology installations. An example is a 2017-2019 Project under the NDC Support Programme which included activities to implement a Rural Electrification Nationally appropriate mitigation action (NAMA). International participants included the German government, which funded the project, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). At the national level, MEM's Institute for Renewable Energy Promotion was involved. The private sector was represented through SUNLABOB, which was formerly based in Laos, and Swiss company Power Blox. One result of the project was a solar flexi grid which is providing energy to villages in Nakai District, Khammouane Province.

After many years of collaboration by a number of these partners, solutions have been developed to overcome challenges to electricity provision. For example, there have been innovative ways to ensure financial sustainability.

6. Good Practices

Attain buy-in and look for champions

As a cross-cutting issue, climate change action requires the participation of multiple sectors. The support of decision makers and people in positions of authority facilitates effective action. Many people do not yet have a good understanding of climate change. It is therefore, of vital importance, that awareness is raised amongst government authorities and other relevant sectors. The support of a champion can contribute greatly. A champion is a person of influence who is highly supportive of climate change action and who will bring others on board and see that progress is made.

Assess capacity and plan accordingly

New requirements are being introduced in the climate change sector. In each office, it is important to be aware of current capacity and the capacity needs in order to fulfil the office's mandate effectively. There are numerous technical skills involved with tasks such as MRV. It may be necessary to bring in experts to carry out some essential technical tasks, with a view to office staff taking over the tasks as capacity builds.

Start simple and build up

There is a lot to do in the climate change sector and it can not all be achieved at once. It is important to recognise that climate change action is an ongoing process. If tasks are prioritised, it will more likely ensure that essential activities are completed. Tasks that are carried out at a very basic level to begin with, can be increasingly more detailed in successive planned phases.

Establish a cross-sectoral climate change entity at each level

There is a need for representatives from relevant sectors to come together for climate change coordination. While there are specific bodies to do this at high levels, it is also necessary at provincial and district levels. In some provinces and districts there may be existing bodies such as an Environmental Committee which may be able to take on the increased work on climate change. Whatever form the climate change entity takes, it needs to be an active entity with identified sector representatives.

Allocate responsibilities to specific role holders

With few staff and new facets of responsibility, the organisation of climate change roles in local offices needs to be planned and widely understood.

Be inclusive

Climate change is increasingly affecting every community. Good climate action gives all people the opportunity to voice their view and to participate in decision making. Specific strategies of inclusion ensure that all vulnerable groups are involved in the process.

Mainstreaming into policy, institutions and practices

In Laos, climate change is mainstreamed into national sustainable development planning. There is a requirement for it to be mainstreamed into local and sector plans. The more it can be mainstreamed into plans, institutions and practices the more effective it will be.

Investment in knowledge transfer and retention

There is a wealth of knowledge on climate change at the global level. A barrier to accessing it for Laos and many other LDCs is that it is in the English language. Knowledge transfer has multiple benefits and strategies to access knowledge are worth developing. It is also important to ensure that knowledge is firmly anchored in institutions, particularly where there is a high staff turnover.

Linking to relevant sectors

Climate action can be advanced through linking to relevant sectors and policies. Examples are Green Growth Strategies and Disaster Management. People who are unfamiliar with climate change may have a better understanding when it is explained in terms of other policies. Other sectors may have the same objectives but access to different funding streams. There are, therefore, gains to be had through collaboration.

Partnership development

Different sectors and levels have different knowledge, skills and experience. The synergies which result from working together are conducive to furthering successful outcomes.

Private sector involvement

There is all too often limited private sector involvement in climate action. In terms of skills, financing models, networks and expertise, the private sector offers valuable potential to move forward on climate action. It is widely said that climate goals will not be achieved without the support of the private sector. While international private companies may be involved in climate action, there may be local private sector entities which are not yet knowledgeable about the ways in which they can contribute and the benefits available to them.

Bibliography

Bhardwaj, A. &. (2017). Mainstreaming climate actions in Indian cities: Case study of Rajkot. Policy Brief, Centre for Policy Research. Retrieved October 31, 2020, from https://www.cprindia.org/research/reports/mainstreaming-climate-action-indian-cities-case-study-rajkot

Global Covenant of Mayors Asia. (2019). About us. Retrieved October 28, 2020, from Global Covenant of Mayors Asia: https://www.asian-mayors.eu/about/

Government of Kenya. (2013). National Climate Change Action Plan 2013-2017. Retrieved November 1, 2020, from https://www.refworld.org/docid/5b3e30d64.html

Government of Lao PDR. (2020). Nationally Determined Contribution. Draft, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

Hermwille, L. (2018). Making initiatives resonate: how can non state initiatives advance national contributions under the UNFCCC? International Environmental Agreements: Politics, Law and Economics. Retrieved October 19, 2020, from https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10784-018-9398-9

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. (2018). Summary for policy makers. In Global Warming of 1.5°C. An IPCC Special Report on the impacts of global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways, in the context of strengthening the global response to the threat of climate change,. Retrieved October 28, 2020, from https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2019/05/SR15_SPM_version_report_LR.pdf

Kim, H. &. (2019). Which are the factors influencing the integration of mitigation and adaptation in climate change plans in Latin American cities? Environmental Research Letters, 14. Retrieved October 29, 2020, from https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1748-9326/ab2f4c/pdf

Lui, S. K. (2020). Correcting course: the emission reduction potential of international cooperative initiatives. Climate Policy. Retrieved October 28, 2020, from https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14693062.2020.1806021

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE). (2019a). Country Programme: Lao People's Democratic Republic. GCF Documentation. Retrieved October 30, 2020, from https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/lao-country-programme.pdf

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. (2019b). GEF-6 Request for project endorsement/approval. Department of Climate Change. Retrieved October 30, 2020, from https://www.cbitplatform.org/sites/default/files/projects/documents/ceo-lao-pdr.pdf

Mutimba, S. S. (2019). sNAPshot: Kenya's Monitoring and Evaluation of Adaptation: Simplified, integrated, multilevel. Retrieved October 31, 2020, from https://napglobalnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/napgn-en-2019-snapshot-kenyas-monitoring-and-evaluation-of-adaptation-simplified-integrated-multilevel.pdf

NewClimate Institute, Data-Driven Lab, PBL, German Development Institute/Deutsches Institut für Entwicklungspolitik (DIE), Blavatnik. (2019). Global climate action from cities, regions and businesses: Impact of individual actors and cooperative initiatives on global and national emissions. Research report . Retrieved October 27, 2020, from https://newclimate.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Report-Global-Climate-Action-from-Cities-Regions-and-Businesses_2019.pdf

Reckien, D. F. (2015). The Influence of Drivers and Barriers on Urban Adaptation and Mitigation Plans—An Empirical Analysis of European Cities. PLOS ONE, 10(8). Retrieved October 29, 2020, from https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0135597(n.d.). sectors, stakeholders and levels.

Septiarani, S. &. (2016, September). The Role Of Local Champion In Community - Based Adaptation In Semarang Coastal Area. Jurnal Pembangunan Wilayah dan Kota, 12(3), 263-276. Retrieved October 31, 2020, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326480325_The_Role_of_Local_Champion_In_Community_-_Based_Adaptation_In_Semarang_Coastal_Area

Sterk, W. A. (2013). Warsaw Groundhog Days: Old Friends, Positions and Impasses Revisited All Over Again at the 2013 Warsaw Climate Conference. Wuppertal. Retrieved October 26, 2020, from https://epub.wupperinst.org/frontdoor/deliver/index/docId/5194/file/5194_Warsaw_Report.pdf

United Nations Environment Programme. (2018). Emissions Gap Report 2018. Retrieved October 20, 2020, from https://www.unenvironment.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2018

United Nations Environment Programme. (n.d.). Cities and Climate Change. Retrieved October 26, 2020, from United Nations Environment Programme: https://www.unenvironment.org/explore-topics/resource-efficiency/what-we-do/cities/cities-and-climate-change

United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change. (n.d.). Retrieved 2020, from Global Climate Action NAZCA: https://climateaction.unfccc.int/

United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change. (2015a). Adoption of the Paris Agreement. Retrieved August 5, 2020, from https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2015/cop21/eng/l09r01.pdf

United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change. (2015b). Best practices and lessons learned in addressing adaptation in the least developed countries. LDC Expert Group. Retrieved October 31, 2020, from https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/NAPC/Documents%20NAP/UNFCCC_BPLL_vol3.pdf

Prepared by UN-Habitat Lao PDR

3rd Floor, UN House, Lang Xang Avenue
P.O. Box 345, Vientiane, Lao PDR
Tel: +856 (0) 21 267 777

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE

@UNHABITAT