In implementing Article 4.9 of the Convention, the COP, in 2001, established the least developed countries (LDC) work programme, that included the national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), to support LDCs to address the challenge of climate change given their particular vulnerability. The COP also established a Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF) to fund the preparation and implementation of NAPAs and an LDC Expert Group (LEG) to provide technical support and advice to the LDCs.

NAPAs provide a process for the LDCs to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to climate change - those needs for which further delay could increase vulnerability or lead to increased costs at a later stage. The rationale for NAPAs rests on the limited ability of the LDCs to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. In the NAPA process, prominence is given to community-level input as an important source of information, recognizing that grassroots communities are the main stakeholders. NAPAs use existing information and no new research is needed. They are action-oriented, country-driven, are flexible and based on national circumstances. To effectively address urgent and immediate adaptation needs, NAPA documents are presented in a simple format, easily understood both by policy-level decision-makers and the public.

As at December 2017, 51 countries\* had completed and submitted their NAPAs to the secretariat. The main content of the NAPA document is a list of ranked priority adaptation activities/projects, as well as short profiles of each activity, designed to facilitate the development of project proposals for implementation of the NAPA. Priority sectors/areas addressed in the NAPAs are agriculture and food security, water resources, coastal zones, and early warning and disaster management.  Most LDCs are in the process of implementing their NAPAs.

Once a NAPA has been submitted to the UNFCCC secretariat, the LDC Party is eligible to access funding under the [Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF)](https://unfccc.int/process/bodies/constituted-bodies/least-developed-countries-expert-group-leg/ldc-portal/least-developed-countries-ldc-fund), which is managed by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), for the implementation of the NAPA. To initiate the process of accessing funding, an LDC Party prepares a concept note and requests the assistance of a GEF implementing agency for submitting a project identification form and then a full project proposal to the LDCF. The GEF agency works closely with the country during each successive step of the LDCF cycle, and ultimately supports the country in implementing the project.