

Thailand's Effective Adaptation Planning Process based on Data Collection and Risk Assessments



Photo courtesy of SATREPS (JICA/JST)

Lessons Learned and Policy Recommendations

- ONEP has established an inter-ministerial working group to steer the overall planning for adaptation at the national level. This will make adaptation policies more effective and allow early mainstreaming.
- Adaptation plans can be more concrete and well-connected to subnational adaptation actions by conducting national and sectoral NAP processes in parallel.
- A mechanism has been made to collect necessary data and incorporate collected information into policy formulation and implementation.

Background

● Geographical characteristics

Thailand is one of the countries around the world that is most severely affected by the consequences of climate change. As an active member of ASEAN and a major economy in the region, Thailand can assume a leading role and become a reference point for its neighboring countries.^[1]

Climate change impacts in Thailand, namely prolonged droughts, decreased agricultural and fishery yields, more frequent heavy rainfall, sea level rise and health-related issues are already apparent. Especially, the poor are highly vulnerable to climate change due to their limited access to profitable livelihood opportunities and to areas fit for safe and healthy habitation. Also, a few centimeters of sea level rise would submerge the capital city and devastate coastal tourism.^[2]

● Basic policies

The National Economic and Social Development Plan (NESDP) functions as a national policy framework that provides a set of guidelines for policy-makers and government

agencies when drafting or revising specific sectoral development policies. The current 11th plan covers the period from 2012 to 2016 with the mission of achieving “a happy society with equity, fairness and resilience.”

A central component of the climate policy is the Climate Change Master Plan (CCMP 2015-2050). The elaboration of the CCMP was supported by the International Climate Initiative (IKI), and approved by the Cabinet on July 14th, 2015. It defines short-, medium- and long-term mitigation, adaptation and capacity development targets for different sectors. The adaptation components in CCMP are: 1) Flood, drought and water management, 2) Agriculture and food security, 3) Tourism, 4) Public health, 5) Natural resource management, 6) Human settlement and security.

In addition, the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP, formerly called the Climate Change Strategy) is currently being finalized with the support of GIZ. The action plan covers five years and defines measures to achieve the short- and medium-term targets of CCMP for this period.^[3]

NAP Process

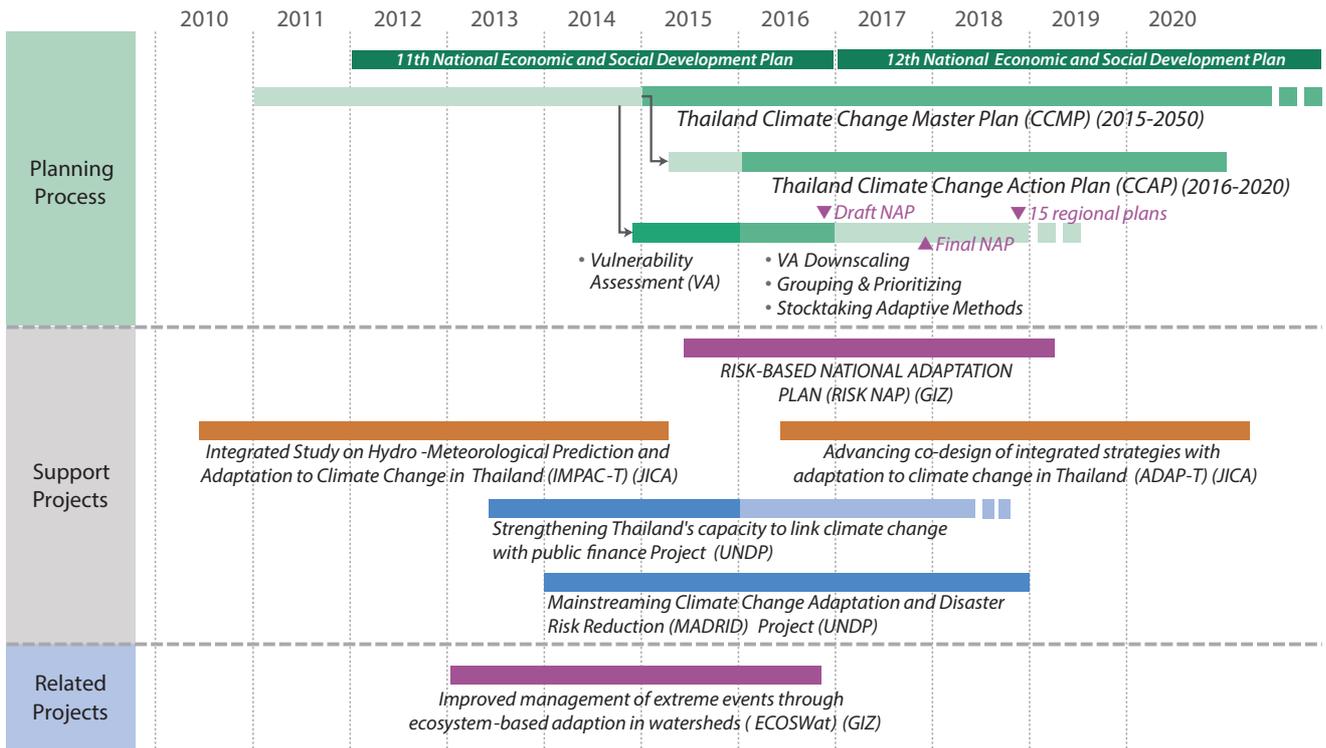


Figure 1-5-1 Timetable of NAP process and national development planning in Thailand

● Outline

In response to increasing extreme weather events, and their associated damage costs, the Office of Natural Resources & Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), under the Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment (MONRE), has initiated the development and implementation process for the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) based on a national Vulnerability Assessment (VA). In addition to the CCMP and CCAP, NAP represents the third central document of the climate policy in Thailand, and will complete the different policy instruments at the national level. Because there is no legal binding act or law on climate change issues, Thailand aims to define development-oriented adaptation measures in NAP.

The 1st Phase ended in January 2016 and the 2nd Phase is from February 2016 until the end of 2016 (See Figure 1-5-1). Outcomes of the 2nd Phase will be: 1) 1st NAP Draft: Guideline & Direction (Sector-based & Area-based), 2) Database of Existing Adaptation Measures/Options to reduce vulnerability (Learning Process, Implementing Procedures, Benefits (Social-Economic-Environmental)), and 3) Suggestions for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems.^[3]

In parallel, line ministries, such as the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives (MoAC), are working on the elaboration of Climate Change Strategies/Action Plans. In Phase 2 of the NAP development process, best practices, knowledge and technologies will be reviewed from national and local projects and programs.

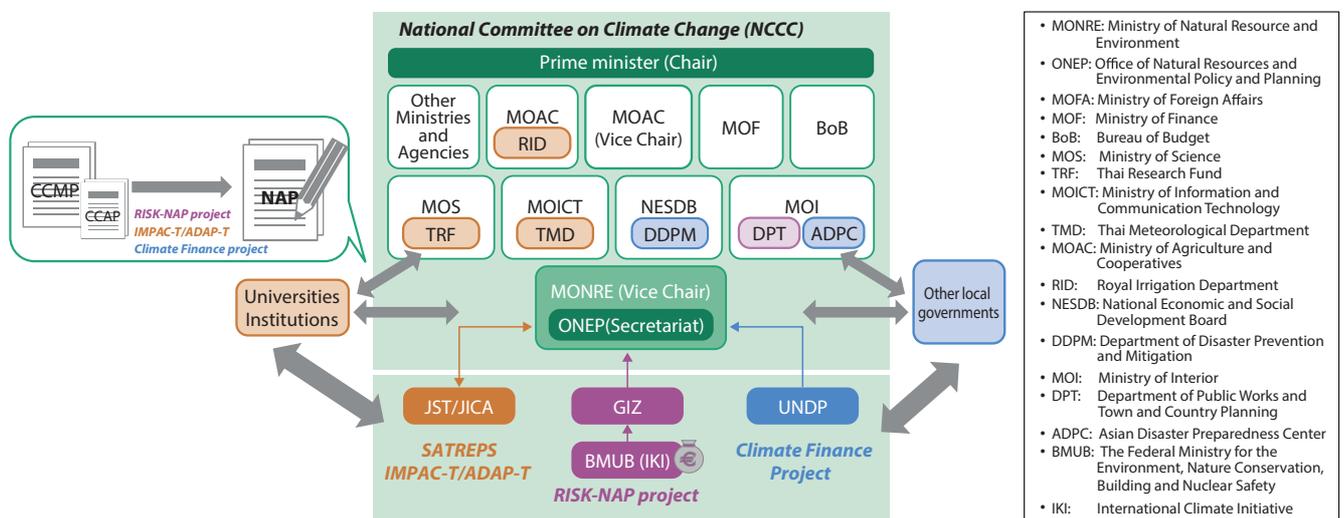


Figure 1-5-2 Institutional Arrangements

● Institutional arrangements

The body reviewing and approving climate change policy decisions in Thailand is the National Committee on Climate Change (NCCC), of which the Climate Change Management and Coordination Division (CCMC) of ONEP, MONRE, is the Secretariat.

Other stakeholders are: Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), other line ministries and agencies, local governments and universities (i.e. Kasetsart, Rajamangala, Naresuan etc.)

Supporting organizations are: GIZ (RISK-NAP), BMUB (IKI: International Climate Initiatives), UNDP (Climate Finance), FAO (NAP-Ag), JST and JICA (IMPAC-T, ADAP-T) etc. (See Figure 1-5-2)

Lessons Learned and Policy Recommendations

1 ONEP has established an inter-ministerial working group to steer the overall planning for adaptation at the national level. This will make adaptation policies more effective and allow early mainstreaming.

● Raising awareness of the relevant ministries through effective institutional arrangements

There are three Sub-National Committees under NCCC. Although they were not established for the NAP process only, each committee is responsible for a particular aspect during the NAP process (Political Process, Implementation, and Funding). [Prior to 2015, these committees put much effort on “mitigating” the effects of climate change. However, from 2015, they put more emphasis on “adaptation” to climate change.] These subcommittees help government officials in addressing issues specific to the particular process in the NAP process which each of them is responsible for, improving the NAP process/ strengthening the government’s institutional capacities to combat climate change.

● Raising Awareness of relevant ministries through quantitative impact analyses

The Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review (CPEIR), conducted with the support of the UNDP, revealed not only what has been done by preexisting policies, but also what needs to be done to leverage finance for climate change issues. The UNDP, together with the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, made the Climate Change Benefit Assessment (CCBA) General Guideline. Stakeholders should be better informed by conducting CCBA that addressing climate change is not a “choice” but a “responsibility” that needs to be fulfilled in order to conduct their business as usual.

In parallel, in the frame of the Risk based National Adaptation Plan (Risk-NAP) project (2015-2019), funded by IKI and implemented by GIZ, future climate risks will be assessed and quantified for all sectors and climate risk assessments will be conducted at the sub-national level in selected pilot sites.^[4] UNDP and GIZ have regular meetings to discuss how to utilize the assessment result.^[5]

● Benefits of dividing the NAP process into several phases

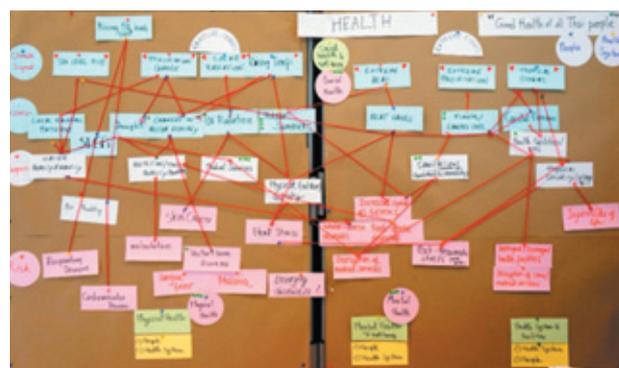
After starting the NAP process, government officials soon realized the lack of experts and expertise (local and international), money, and time to operate the NAP process. Therefore, they decided to divide the process into several phases, conducting each phase step by step/ in an orderly manner. During the 1st phase, a national Vulnerability Assessment was conducted. These assessments raised awareness among

the government officials of the importance of combatting climate change and consequently enabled the smooth and effective implementation of the NAP process. Identifying and acquiring the resources necessary to manage the process is also important for the strategic NAP process.

2 Adaptation plans can be more concrete and well-connected to subnational adaptation actions by conducting national and sectoral NAP processes in parallel.

ONEP is doing national and agriculture (sector level) planning simultaneously. It is necessary to integrate these activities to get consistent results. MOAC, supported by FAO and UNDP, is conducting NAP-Agriculture, i.e. Strategy and Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation in the Agricultural Sector. The main goal is to identify and integrate climate adaptation measures for agricultural sectors into the relevant national planning and budgeting processes. The Office of Agricultural Economics (OAE) of MOAC coordinates this process communicating with ONEP, and enhances the participation of implementing departments. By conducting NAP-Agriculture, the Climate Change Benefit Assessment (CCBA) Guideline has been improved to make it much easier for government officials and local stakeholders to understand. As a result, this can help develop an effective national plan. (See Figure 1-5-3)

GIZ Risk-NAP project supports the development of the NAP through conducting trainings and offering advice for the integration of adaptation into development planning, including sector strategies and policies as well as local planning processes of selected pilot areas. The workshops for Risk-based Climate Change Impact Chains offer the opportunity to develop in a participatory process a deeper understanding of key climate change impacts and risk factors in each sector.



The Health sector climate change impact chain elaborated in a joint ONEP-GIZ Workshop (June 2016)
Photo courtesy of GIZ Thailand

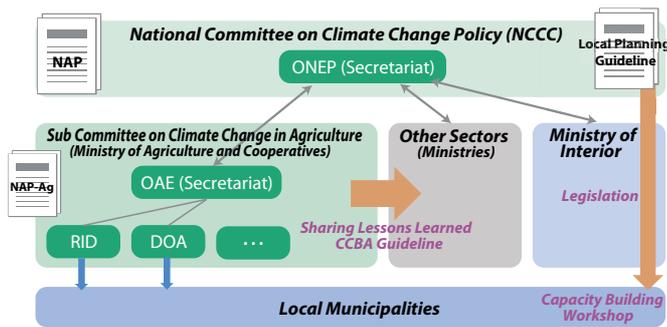


Figure 1-5-3 Adaptation planning in national, sectoral and local level

Feeding in lessons from subnational-level projects will be the key to expanding the NAP process locally. ONEP is in the process of building the local planning guideline, which describes the implementation on a regional scale. Local plans are being developed in 16 regions and will be completed in 2018. ONEP and the Ministry of Interior, with GIZ's support, conducted capacity building workshops for local municipalities.

3 A mechanism has been made to collect necessary data and incorporate collected information into policy formulation and implementation.

Collection and management system of pre-existing local data

As a result of the NAP Process, the Thai Government found that projects were scattered across the nation, each funded by different donors. Thus, the government founded the Thai Research Fund (TRF) which gathers and organizes data on climate change collected in respective projects.

The TRF, under the supervision of the Ministry of Science, and ONEP signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Based on the results of the vulnerability assessments, ONEP can ask TRF for necessary data on climate change. TRF will then collect the necessary data by contacting universities, research institutions, and local communities.

Data based policy planning and implementation

Recently, a mechanism has been made to incorporate data and information collected into policy formation and

implementation. The Advancing Co-design of Integrated Strategies with Adaptation to Climate Change (ADAP-T) project (2015-2019), supported by SATREPS, focuses mainly on adaptation methods for the local effects of climate change, including the following sectors: agriculture, water, natural environment, and health. The results of the ADAP-T project will be reported to ONEP, and be used in the planning process mainly for impact assessments and local planning.

ADAP-T seeks to use the data and networks among researchers from IMPAC-T. The project plans to do the following: build a knowledge base for climate change; create research committees consisting of members from ONEP and related government as well as research institutions; brainstorm potential adaptation measures; assess adaptation measures; and co-design action plans. The government will be informed of the outcomes of ADAP-T in order to revise the master plan for CC. (See Figure 1-5-4)

Regional-scale studies from IMPAC-T and ADAP-T are already available in some regions. Once sufficient data on a sector are made available, the study on the sector will be conducted accordingly.

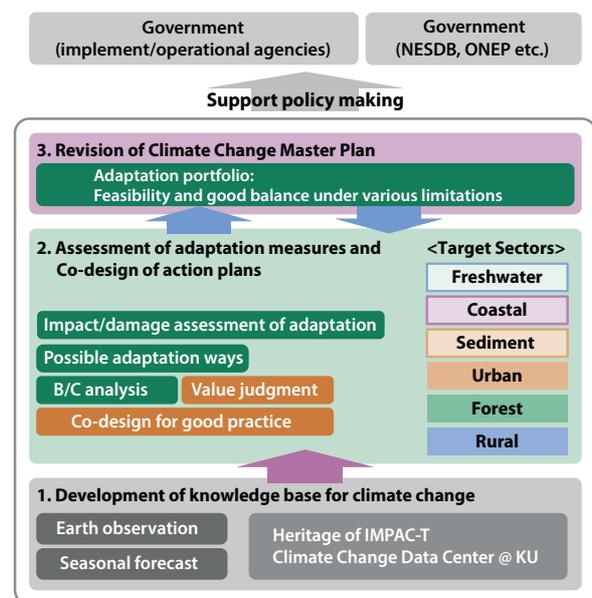


Figure 1-5-4 Data-based policy making process in ADAP-T

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