

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME



# NDC Insights Series

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Issue No. 2

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### About Issue No. 2:

This issue focuses on adaptation and the critical alignment between NAPs and NDCs, spotlighting Cuba, a Caribbean Small Island Developing State.

### About UNDP

UNDP is the leading United Nations organization fighting to end the injustice of poverty, inequality, and climate change. Working with our broad network of experts and partners in 170 countries, we help nations to build integrated, lasting solutions for people and planet. Learn more at [undp.org](https://undp.org) or follow at [@UNDP](https://twitter.com/UNDP).

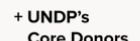
### About UNDP's Climate Promise

UNDP's Climate Promise is the UN system's largest portfolio of support on climate action, working with more than 140 countries and territories and directly benefiting 37 million people. This portfolio implements over US\$2.3 billion in grant financing and draws on UNDP's expertise in adaptation, mitigation, carbon markets, climate and forests, and climate strategies and policy. Visit our website at [climatepromise.undp.org](https://climatepromise.undp.org) and follow us at [@UNDPClimate](https://twitter.com/UNDPClimate).

Cover Photo: Asociación Natün, Guatemala

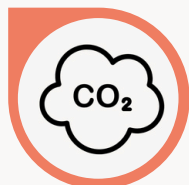
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# Latest trends and insights

Steady progress continues on NDC preparation, and the latest submission from Zambia represents the first submission from a Least Developed Country (LDC) in the 2025 cycle. Analysis shows many countries are taking time to align NDCs with other key processes, and pursuing inclusive approaches, to achieve greater development impact.



## One-fifth of the world's global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions covered by NDC submissions to date

As of 31 March 2025, **19 countries have submitted Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs)**, including five G20 countries, five Small Island Developing States (SIDS), two BRICS and one LDC, **representing 20.5 percent of global GHG emissions**. If all remaining anticipated NDCs are submitted by COP30, coverage would rise to 96.2 percent of global GHG emissions. Five countries from the **Latin America and the Caribbean** region have already submitted, indicating strong regional momentum as Brazil prepares to host COP30 this year.



## Policy coherence and whole-of-society approaches are top priorities in ongoing NDC preparation

Initial analysis of support under UNDP's Climate Promise reveals that 87 percent of countries are promoting alignment of NDCs with other strategies, particularly across the Rio Conventions, while 80 percent are enhancing gender equality and social inclusion through technical analyses, capacity-building and stakeholder engagement. An increasing number of countries are also assessing the economic and social development case for NDCs and strengthening alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



## Emerging trend: Countries gain tangible benefits from aligning NDC and National Adaptation Plan (NAP) processes

Many countries are leveraging the strategic opportunity of NDC preparation to also enhance alignment with their NAPs and communicate key adaptation priorities. Strengthening the synergy between NAPs and NDCs has been shown to reduce operational burdens on countries while increasing coordination, efficiency, visibility and political support. Alignment has also led to a strengthened case for investment in adaptation and helped unlock finance to invest in these adaptation priorities.



## Country spotlight: Cuba

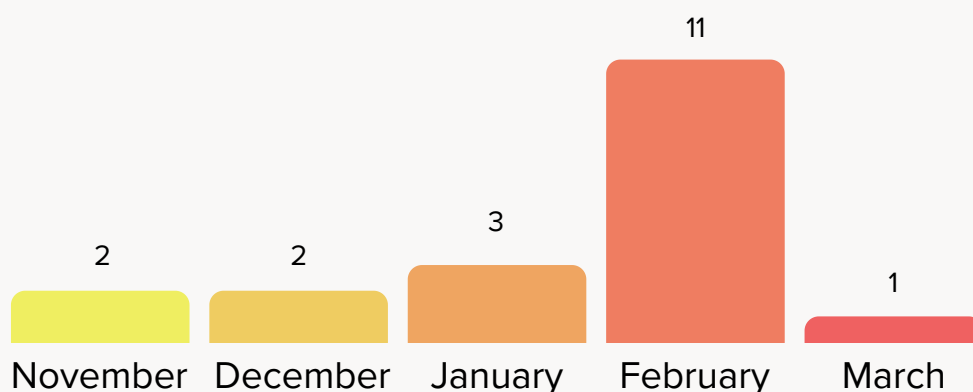
Showcasing adaptation, Cuba's new NDC highlights priority sectors and strongly aligns with the ongoing NAP process – demonstrating mutual benefits. Cuba is also making an ambitious push on renewable energy, demonstrating importance of just transition, expanding mitigation targets across sectors and emphasizing forest ecosystems as critical for raising ambition.

# NDC submission status

**Zambia has become the first LDC to communicate a NDC as part of the 2025 revision cycle.**

Submitted on 10 March 2025, Zambia's [provisional updated NDC](#) opens the door for a more complete submission later in the year. This makes a total of **19 countries**<sup>1</sup> (including five G20 countries, five SIDS, two BRICS and one LDC) (Figure 1). Twelve of the 19 submissions are from UNDP programming developing countries, including five from the Latin America and the Caribbean region – demonstrating the growing momentum and leadership of the region as Brazil gears up towards hosting COP30.

Figure 1: Number of NDC submissions, by month (November 2024-March 2025)



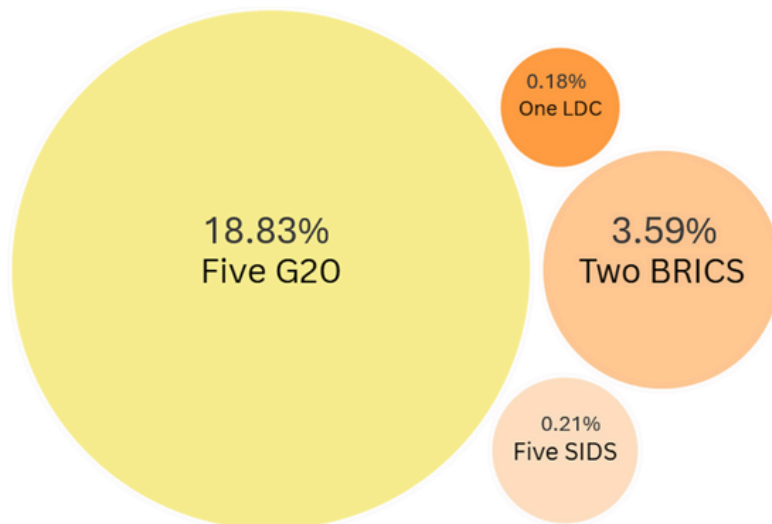
The pace of NDC submissions to date does not signal a lack of commitment and ambition. According to the insights from UNDP's engagement in countries, over 90 percent of countries plan to submit in 2025, with nearly 70 percent of them scheduled to submit in the second half of the year. While political leadership changes have caused delays in a few countries, most are actively dedicating time and resources to develop more robust and impactful NDCs. This includes: ensuring extensive consultations with key government and non-government stakeholders; undertaking detailed analyses and assessments within key sectors to inform new targets and measures; and identifying means of implementation through costing efforts and investment planning.

**Collectively, the 19 countries that have submitted NDCs account for 20.5 percent of total global GHG emissions.**<sup>i</sup> If all remaining anticipated NDCs are submitted by COP30, coverage would rise to 96.2 percent of global GHG emissions. Figure 2 disaggregates this total by country type and regional groupings.<sup>ii</sup>

[1] The 19 countries are: Andorra, Brazil, Canada, Cuba, Ecuador, Japan, Maldives, Marshall Islands, Montenegro, New Zealand, Saint Lucia, Singapore, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United Arab Emirates, Uruguay, United States of America, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The UNFCCC tracks new NDC submissions in the 2025 cycle on a dedicated [NDC 3.0 page](#).

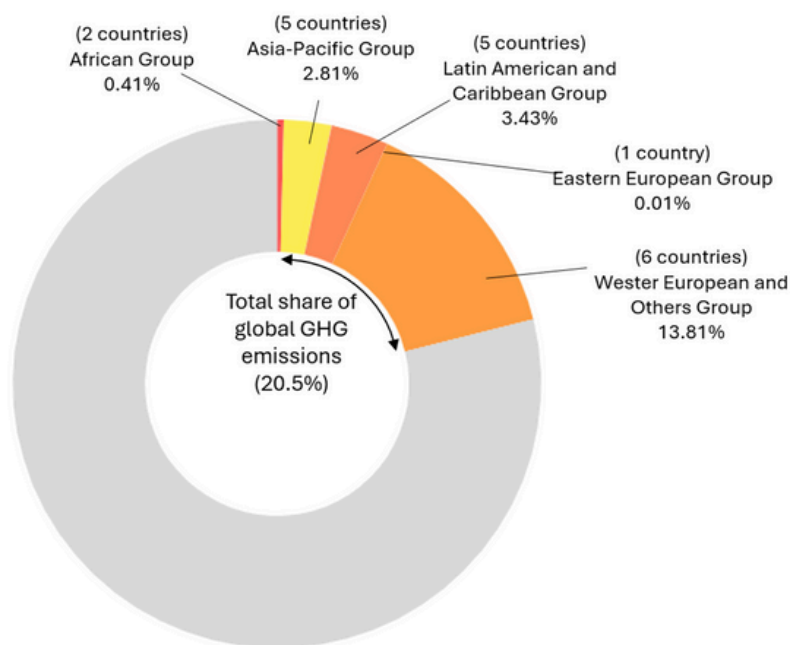
Figure 2: Total GHG emissions share of countries submitting NDCs in 2025 cycle, by country type and regional grouping

### Breakdown by country type



*Note: One country, Brazil, is both a G20 and BRICS, and its GHG emissions are represented in both categories. Seven countries, covering 0.75 percent of global total GHG emissions, are not represented in the graphic.*

### Breakdown by regional grouping



# Insights from Climate Promise 2025:

## Focus areas of NDC preparation

Support to countries under the [Climate Promise 2025](#) is progressing, with many countries undertaking important activities to inform the development of their new NDCs. Currently, UNDP is providing direct technical support to over 80 countries to deliver more ambitious and higher-quality NDCs. Analysing this support highlights several common areas of focus, revealing key needs and opportunities for strengthening NDCs.

### Policy coherence and alignment

# 87%

of countries supported are promoting alignment with national development plans, and other national and global policy instruments. This includes NAPs and Long-Term Strategies (LTS) or Long-Term Low-Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS), as well as other mechanisms under the Rio Conventions, including National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plans and Land Degradation Neutrality targets.

### Gender equality and social inclusion

# 80%

of countries supported are strengthening gender equality and social inclusion considerations through technical analyses, capacity-building, and whole-of-society engagement, with a particular focus on women, youth, Indigenous Peoples and local communities.

### Sector analysis and target setting

# 77%

of countries supported are conducting sectoral analyses, setting targets in priority sectors and defining measures including for adaptation and resilience. Most countries aim to cover all sectors and GHGs for economy-wide emission reductions, as per the guidance of the Global Stocktake. Many are also collating the information necessary to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding.

### Costing and finance

# 60%

of countries supported are strengthening financial aspects of NDCs to enhance implementation feasibility. This includes improved costings, financial gap assessments, the identification of financial instruments and investment opportunities, including carbon market mechanisms.

### NDC implementation stocktakes

# 52%

of countries supported are assessing progress of their current NDC implementation to identify gaps and opportunities for increased ambition and action in the new NDC.

The NDC Insights series provides deep dives into some of these areas of support. The [first issue](#) explored the climate-nature nexus. This current issue delves into adaptation and the critical alignment between NAPs and NDCs.



# Emerging trend:

## Strengthening synergies between NDCs and NAPs helps to scale up investment and accelerate adaptation action

As the global climate crisis intensifies and impacts become widespread, robust adaptation planning and implementation are increasingly critical for building resilience and safeguarding vulnerable communities and ecosystems. Globally, adaptation planning is making good progress, with 171 countries having at least one national planning instrument.<sup>iv</sup> Specifically, 62 developing countries have submitted a NAP<sup>v</sup> and 81 percent of countries' second generation NDC include an adaptation component.<sup>vi</sup> The COP28 Decision calling Parties to submit NAPs by 2025 and adopting the UAE Framework on Global Climate Resilience underscores the increased political support for accelerating adaptation.

Despite this progress, the financing to turn NAPs from plans to reality is grossly inadequate. Adaptation needs in the developing world are set to increase up to US\$387 billion per year by 2030 and expected to rise significantly by 2050. Even if the Glasgow Climate Pact goal of doubling adaptation finance is met this year, it would only reduce the adaptation finance gap by around five percent.<sup>vii</sup>

With most countries planning to submit new NDCs this year, many countries have a strategic opportunity to enhance alignment and communicate key adaptation priorities. Strengthening the synergy between NAPs and NDCs has proven to be mutually reinforcing and brings together ongoing efforts among partners and investors, leading to more strategic investments to scale and accelerate adaptation action. Processes for developing and delivering NDCs and NAPs are intertwined and complementary. While an NDC articulates the efforts each country will make to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change, the NAP offers a strategy to guide the implementation of adaptation actions.

Challenges remain in effectively aligning NAPs and NDCs. An analysis of the 2020 NDC submission cycle revealed that around two-thirds of countries (68 percent) had only partial alignment between NAPs and NDCs, with a further 16 percent showing no alignment at all. However, with the increasing political focus on adaptation, the 2025 cycle is demonstrating potential for stronger alignment.<sup>ix</sup>

## NAPs serve as:

- An overarching framework for coordinating and implementing adaptation activities across the country.
- A long-term, strategic approach to systematically assess, plan and execute adaptation measures.
- A foundation for informing the adaptation component in NDCs and Adaptation Communications.
- A key enabler for mobilizing essential public financial resources and unlocking private investments.



## UNDP's contribution to supporting NAP processes around the world:

*As the world's largest provider of technical support to adaptation planning, UNDP is currently helping over 50 countries with NAP formulation and implementation processes, working in partnership with a number of actors and development partners.*

*38 of the 62 NAPs submitted to date were supported by UNDP. Of these, 21 were from LDC or SIDS.<sup>viii</sup>*



# What does effective alignment between NAP and NDC look like?

Benefits of alignment	Indicators of effectiveness	Examples	<b>Reduce planning burden</b>	<b>Strengthen the case for investment</b>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated planning and coherent policy cycles with common frameworks and timeline</li> <li>Harmonized governance, including institutional arrangements and coordination mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthened evidence base for NDC delivery with robust adaptation analysis via the NAP process</li> <li>Increased investment opportunities through integrated measures delivering mitigation and adaptation co-benefits</li> <li>Coordinated financing strategy and complementary project pipelines for NDCs and NAPs</li> </ul>
			<p><b>Bhutan</b> achieved harmonized governance and integrated planning between the NAP and NDC processes through common frameworks, timelines and institutional coordination. The <a href="#">NAP</a> served as the foundation for adaptation priorities articulated in its second NDC and guided all national adaptation initiatives.</p>	<p><b>Ecuador</b> is using its NAP process to strengthen the investment case for adaptation action by generating robust climate risk assessments, identifying priority actions, and integrating data into a national information platform. Leveraging NAP-generated data on climate risks, Ecuador has secured <a href="#">funding from the Green Climate Fund</a> (GCF) to improve governance mechanisms and critical infrastructure for a national multi-hazard early warning system.</p>
Benefits of alignment	Indicators of effectiveness	Examples	<b>Increase synergies and efficiency</b>	<b>Increase visibility and political support</b>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Combined stakeholder consultations</li> <li>Shared assessments and unified data systems</li> <li>Consistent metrics or indicators</li> <li>Integrated monitoring and reporting systems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consistent and coherent messaging at highest political level</li> <li>Coordinated contributions to deliver the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience and to inform the Global Stocktake</li> </ul>
			<p><b>Côte d'Ivoire</b> is using its NAP to inform the adaptation component of its new NDC currently under development. This includes drawing on the comprehensive <a href="#">M&amp;E system for adaptation</a>. The NDC consultation process is also being leveraged to update and validate the draft NAP before submission of both documents later this year.</p>	<p><b>Uruguay's</b> sectoral NAPs have been pivotal in informing its third NDC, in line with the GGA and the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience. As the primary mechanism for adaptation implementation, these sectoral NAPs strengthen the coherence and institutional coordination between national adaptation efforts and the NDC through a <a href="#">National Climate Change Response System</a> (SNRCC). A comprehensive, publicly accessible <a href="#">system</a> has been developed to enhance transparency and boost political visibility.</p>

# How is adaptation being considered in NDC processes for the 2025 submission cycle so far?

Adaptation is gaining prominence in NDCs – including in the latest NDC submission cycle. Many countries are leveraging the detailed work from existing NAP processes to enhance adaptation ambition in their new NDCs. Where NAP processes do not yet exist, NDCs provide initial directions for further adaptation planning and budgeting that future NAPs can use to refine prioritizations and elaborate more detailed actions.

Key insights from the Climate Promise on adaptation in the ongoing NDC revision cycle include:

- Nearly all countries preparing new NDCs for submission this year are aiming to strengthen their **adaptation ambition**, particularly LDCs and SIDS where adaptation is a top priority and focus of their new NDCs.
- Countries are using the **NDC implementation stocktaking** process to identify barriers, gaps and opportunities for better alignment and integration with NAPs (e.g., **Liberia, Paraguay**). Conversely, some countries are leveraging NAP processes and systems to assess how implemented NDC measures have already improved climate resilience of populations and yielded co-benefits (e.g., **Angola, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi**).
- When **setting targets and defining the scope and coverage of adaptation sectors** in their NDCs, countries (e.g., **Mexico, Ghana, Sri Lanka**) are referencing NAPs and relevant adaptation planning instruments, including subnational plans, to ensure coherence and alignment.
- Several countries are leveraging **climate financing scoping opportunities** identified through the NAP processes to inform financing for NDCs. For example, **Uzbekistan** has developed a finance and investment plan for sectoral and regional adaptation through the NAP process, which is helping to identify climate finance opportunities for its new NDC. **Argentina** plans to incorporate NAP commitments and priorities into standardized methodologies and data collection templates that will be used for NDC implementation to estimate costs, identify funding sources and determine needs for means of implementation (finance, technologies and capacities).



Photo Credit: AB Rashid/UNDP Bangladesh

**Of the 19 new NDCs submitted to date, 13 enhanced the adaptation component.** Six have chosen not to do so, with some indicating that they will communicate adaptation goals in a separate instrument. For example, Montenegro's new NDC recognizes the critical importance of adaptation and its alignment with its NAP, following the EU's practice, the government will communicate its specific adaptation contributions in a separate submission. This approach could also be adopted by other EU accession countries in the region.

# Leveraging NAP and NDC processes to unlock adaptation finance

## **Costed NAPs and NDC adaptation components offer potential to unlock adaptation finance.**

This is critical for many countries, as the average total cost of NAP implementation is around \$12.7 billion<sup>x</sup> and the global adaptation finance gap is estimated between \$187 billion and \$359 billion annually.<sup>xi</sup> For example, **Bangladesh** has aligned its NAP and NDC, prioritizing climate-resilient infrastructure, water resource management, and agriculture, in line with the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, with an estimated annual cost of \$230 million. These priorities have been integrated into public financial systems through climate budget tagging, enhancing transparency and accountability. This has enabled the country to secure funding from the GCF to implement [critical projects](#), such as large-scale flood protection and resilient housing.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina** is leveraging municipal financing strategies to unlock climate finance from institutions like the [European Bank for Reconstruction and Development](#) by building a robust, risk-informed investment framework aligned with the EU's climate priorities. As part of the NAP process, selected municipalities were equipped with tailored financial planning tools, multi-year capital investment strategies and innovative financial instruments, such as climate insurance and green bonds. These innovations enhance municipal credit worthiness and project readiness, making them attractive to international financiers.

A **sectoral approach** can further unlock adaptation finance. **Agriculture and food security, water, ecosystems and biodiversity** are the most commonly featured NAP sectors and are often aligned with NDC priority sectors. For example, in **Cambodia**, sustainable agricultural value chains have been identified as a key solution to strengthen resilience in the country's NDC, adaptation plans and agriculture strategies. Following a climate-risk and gender-sensitive value chain analysis for cassava and cashews, that included an assessment of barriers, risks and opportunities for private sector engagement, digital platform solutions have been identified to facilitate knowledge sharing, help access to finance for agricultural cooperatives, develop processing plants and establish a deforestation-free crop traceability system. The [UNDP-FAO SCALA Programme](#) is supporting these actions with an aim to increase revenues and private sector investment, while making them more sustainable and resilient to climate risks. **Mozambique's** NAP focuses on ecosystem-based adaptation and disaster risk reduction, sustainable water management and food security, which are also identified in its NDC. With support from UNDP, Mozambique has successfully accessed funding from the Adaptation Fund and developed partnerships with the private sector to implement community-based adaptation projects. These include nature-based solutions such as mangrove restoration, which deliver co-benefits for biodiversity, livelihoods, and climate resilience.



# Country spotlight: Cuba

Cuba's third NDC demonstrates increased ambition in its mitigation targets and continues to center adaptation as a national priority



Photo Credit: Manglar Vivo Project, UNDP Cuba

**Despite its small contribution to global GHG emissions, Cuba is strengthening its climate mitigation efforts.** The [third NDC](#) outlines several mitigation targets aimed at reducing GHG emissions. This includes an ambitious push for renewable energy, targeting 26 percent of energy mix by 2035 and 100 percent by 2050, as well as expanding mitigation efforts to industrial processes, waste management, and transportation, which has specific electric vehicle targets. Notably, Cuba's third NDC emphasizes forest ecosystems, shifting from simple coverage targets to measurable carbon absorption and ecosystem health improvements. The commitment is to increase forest coverage to 33 percent of its territory by 2030, and to incorporate an additional 50kha of new forest area to this target while reducing the degradation rate of 75kha between 2031-2035. With this contribution, Cuba expects to increase its net carbon absorption rate to 150Mt CO<sub>2</sub> during the NDC implementation period.



**Adaptation has been highlighted as the most important priority for the country.** The NDC priority measures and actions are in line with Cuba's State Plan for Climate Management, known as "*Tarea Vida*" and the NAP, which is being finalized this year. The specific reference to the NAP's objectives and priority sectors – including agriculture, water and food security, reducing impacts from sea level rise, flooding and drought, and ecosystems protection – provide an opportunity for greater policy coherence and joint resource mobilization.

**A new section on just transition** has been included to signify the contribution of the NDC to sustainable development outcomes, while recognizing the impact of climate change on youth, children and women. It also highlights the opportunities that may be provided through green livelihoods as well as through Cuba's "One Health" vision. A strong focus on technological transitions is reflected throughout the NDC.



Photo Credit: David Estrada/Grupo Creativo Naturaleza Secreta

The NDC has included several elements to strengthen implementation feasibility, including quantified indicators and baseline, implementation timelines and cost estimates. It also identifies enabling policies and scenarios to advance NDC implementation, including making use of Article 6. UNDP provided support to the government during the NDC development process, along with other UN agencies, and will continue to support Cuba on its NDC implementation.



# Endnotes

- i) World Resource Institute's [Climate Watch Historical GHG Emissions](#) 2021 data.
- ii) Regional groupings are based on the [United Nations' regional groups of Member States](#).
- iii) UNFCCC (2018), [Decision 4/CMA.1, Annex 1](#) - Further guidance in relation to the mitigation section of decision 1/CP.21
- iv) UNEP (2024), [Adaptation Gap Report 2024](#).
- v) UNFCCC NAP Central accessible online at: <https://napcentral.org/submitted-NAPs>.
- vi) UNFCCC (2024), [2024 NDC Synthesis Report](#).
- vii) UNEP (2024), [Adaptation Gap Report 2024](#).
- viii) Developing countries and territories that have submitted a NAP with technical support from UNDP: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Costa Rica, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ecuador, Haiti, Kuwait, Liberia, Madagascar, Moldova, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Papua New Guinea, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Serbia, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, State of Palestine, Suriname, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.
- ix) UNEP (2024), [Adaptation Gap Report 2024](#) and NAP Global Network (2024), [Advancing Adaptation Action: Enhancing alignment between national adaptation plans and nationally determined contributions](#).
- x) NAP Global Network (2022), [Moving from Adaptation Planning to Implementation. Global Stocktake Submission from the NAP Global Network](#).
- xi) UNEP (2024), [Adaptation Gap Report 2024](#).



United Nations Development Programme  
304 E 45th Street, New York, NY 10017

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