

The draft NAP validated at 4 regional working meetings and 1 national political forum with the participation of more than 272 participants

During the whole process of the NAP preparation and elaboration the key role was taken into account of the local initiatives and communities as this is a Strategic Document to be realized on local level. Policy is defined on central level but its realization happens on local level and that is why each of these communities shall “recognize” itself in the NAP and “adopt” its Programs as one’s own. This imposed careful planning of the NAP validation process, involving key players, listening and considering their opinions.

The validation process continue 3 months and included 4 regional working meetings and one national political forum, series of discussions and exchange of opinions by e-mail, written statements, talks, etc. Furthermore, the draft NAP was accessible to NGOs through their information system BLUELINK.

Finally, the NAP was coordinated and agreed with the UNCCD National Coordination Committee at the MoEW. This committee includes representatives of all ministries, scientific institutions, NGOs and Municipalities Association..

Result: NAP widely accepted and validated



Adoption of NAP by the Government

This is the final step of the NAP elaboration. In compliance with the Government requirements for approval of strategic documents such as the NAP, the MoEW submitted the NAP for approval to the Council of Ministers with written coordinating statements and financial rationale through which each ministry confirmed that the programmed activities are incorporated in their planned budgets so guaranteed financial resource for realization is available.

The date fixed for reviewing of the NAP is September (at MoEW) and December (at Council of Ministers).

Results: NAP approved, accompanied with a realistic financial plan in compliance with the requirements of the Ministry of Finances ensuring that with the adoption of the NAP 100% of its financing will be secured.

NAP

implementation

The implementation of the NAP Programs requires not only financial resource secured but also mobilization of human resources, stimulating people’s desire to realize simple and wide-seized measures in their everyday lives, to perceive them as their own activity and conscious necessity.

Efforts are oriented at several directions:

- Increasing the capacity (and knowledge) of:
 - representatives implementing national and municipal policy (ministries - municipalities)
 - representatives providing extension services (NAAS, associations)
 - agricultural producers and foresters
- Awareness raising through information campaigns, publicity materials, info packages and messages
- Practical implementation of SLM options - demonstration object building
- Supporting the elaboration of projects and their successful financial with appropriate financial resources



National Action Program (NAP)

What is NAP and why was it elaborated?

The NAP was elaborated in accordance with Part III, article 9 and 10 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The member countries of the Convention, within the annex of the implementation of the Convention on regional level and taking into consideration the national specifics, have the obligation of elaborating National action programs (NAP). These action programs reflect the strategies and introduce the integrated approach to the physical, biological, social and economic aspects of the desertification processes. They contain measures for combating land degradation based on existing and active plans, programs, and regional and sub-regional action programs consistent with the national sustainable development program.

The NAP for sustainable land management and combating desertification creates the general strategic framework and development direction and offers realization of the most urgent measures and actions which should be basis of integrating and implementing long-run policy in this field. The NAP is not to be viewed as a restrictive strategic frame which offers practical possibilities to only a limited number of initiatives. This program gives a start-off point for applying a unified long term policy for sustainable land management, thus suggesting potential opportunities to stakeholder individuals and institutions to develop their own initiatives and ideas.

Supporting points

for NAP elaboration

Consistent unified and consolidated information base

The information base is of special importance, used in developing the strategic part of the NAP as well as in the formulating and prioritizing programs and options of activities.

Collecting information could be carried out through improved cooperation/ exchange of data maintained in different institutions and its processing, analyzing and assessment by highly qualified experts and scientific workers. The reports received on lands degradation processes in the country and the possible SLM options was discussed many times with leading experts by key topics (including international consultants, TTZ Bremenhaven) and their comments and recommendations were taken into account for finalizing the study. This approach ensured comprehensive information base for the team that elaborated the NAP which, to be emphasized, was prepared, coordinated and agreed with the participation of all stakeholders and institutions. By this way it was ensured that no theses needed to be defended and asserted, we only developed them further. .

Result: Comprehensive and high-quality technical *Baseline Stocktaking Report*, including analyses of options for sustainable land management using analyses of landscapes functionality with stakeholders involved in the process i.e. communication process started even at this stage



Team established for NAP elaboration comprising expert representatives of main stakeholder groups

In its strategic part the NAP should contain analyses of role and responsibilities of state administration, science community, NGOs, municipalities, civil society, etc. Based on these analyses strategic objectives, programs and measures are then defined. This approach predetermined the structure and composition of the team developing the NAP. It was adopted that experts of the particular thematic fields could best prepare the respective parts, determine objectives and means for their achievement, utilization of “functional financial mechanisms” as well as integration in the NAP of other strategic documents (integrating NAP in other strategic documents is also valid).

Result: The strategic parts as well as the Programs are presented in a language “understandable” for the respective groups, the definitions are clear and correct.

Additional preparation of the team elaborating the NAP

PMU planned additional qualification of the experts organizing 2-days training with German and Swiss consultants. The team was consulted on spot by a representative of UNCCD Secretariat. They were also provided with series of documents: guidelines for NAP elaboration of the UNCCD Secretariat, national programs of other countries close to Bulgaria geographically and with regard to development, profound analysis of strong and weak points of programs elaborated so far, recommendations, etc.

Result: Opportunity provided for the team to utilize the best done so far

The NAP was elaborated following strict order and schedule, with the direct participation of the UNCCD National Focal Point.

The team elaborated the NAP in a period of 2 months. The tight schedule has the purpose of prioritizing the process of validation as this is the only way to go out of the “study expert surveys” and reach the target groups which will later apply it depending on their powers as well the end users of the results of the programs and measures implementation. All the activities were conducted under the direct supervision of the UNCCD NFP.

Result: Valuable time was gained for prolonged discussion and validation of the NAP. The participation of UNCCD NFP as well as of representatives of the Ministry of Environment and Water, the institution responsible for submitting the NAP for official approval of the Government presupposes awareness and commitment with regard to the suggested Programs and measures and their motivated presenting to the other ministries.



NAP structure

It was adopted as the most expedient that the NAP should contain a strategic objective, several strategic directions and Programs with options. The proposed programs and options are not all-embracing and comprehensive with regard to all activities which need to be implemented in order the entire SLM policy to be reached and applied practically. Within the Programs the general direction of efforts is outlined. In this sense the Programs rely on the initiative on national, regional and local level for enriching the range of possible measures contributing to and enforcing NAP efforts for SLM.

Results: Opportunity is granted for further development with regard to local specifics and priorities.

Resources, economic mechanisms and schemes in support of implementation of the NAP for SLM and combating desertification

The National Action Program 2007 - 2013 as annual range was connected with the EU programming cycle which creates good prerequisites for overall coordination in time of the NAP and the other Bulgarian national strategic documents developed in the same time horizon. Other positive effect is the direct opportunity for utilizing funds which the country receives under the Structure Funds and National Strategic Plan for Rural Development. In their essence the included programs rely to a great extent on the financial and institutional support of existing strategies and economical mechanisms and because of that reason the active participation of stakeholders (institutions, administration on all management levels, civil society and business) for attracting alternative and additional financial resources is of considerable importance.

Horizontal principle and basic resource to be relied on for mobilizing additional and potential opportunities for developing the achievements and activating effective interactions is the partnership - between institutions, public-private, interregional and inter-municipal as well as evolving of the international cooperation.

Result: Commitment to national priorities and strategic financial resource (operative programs, NSPRD)