

St Kitts and Nevis

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# **National Capacity Self Assessment**

## **Final Report**

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## **ACRONYMS**

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CPACC	Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Climate Change
DPPE	Department of Physical Planning and Environment
DPPNRE	Department of Physical Planning, Natural Resources and the Environment
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
GIS	Geographic Information System
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCEMA	National Conservation and Environmental Management Act
NCEPA	National Conservation and Environmental Protection Act
NCSA	National Capacity Self-Assessment
NEMS	National Environmental Management Strategy and Action Plan
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
SKN	St. Kitts and Nevis
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

## **INTRODUCTION**

The National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) is a project that was funded by the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and executed by the Department of Physical Planning and Environment, Ministry of Sustainable Development. The purpose of the NCSA is to identify and analyse country level priorities and needs for capacity development related to the implementation of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD).

The outputs of the NCSA were the:

1. Stock Taking Report - a quick review of previous and ongoing activities related to each of the three conventions;
2. Thematic Assessments – a description of the capacity situation, priority constraints or barriers to implementation, and needs in relation to each of the three conventions;
3. Cross-cutting Assessment – a description of the priority capacity situation that cuts across the three conventions;
4. Capacity Development Action Plan – a plan of action based primarily on the cross cutting assessment, that is expected to meet priority needs and address key constraints in the implementation of the conventions;
5. Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines – a set of guidelines to assist in the monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the Capacity Development Action Plan;
6. NCSA Final Report – A summary report of the NCSA process and outputs.

## **PREPARATION OF THE NCSA**

The NCSA field work began in May 2005 with the establishment of the NCSA Steering Committee and the recruitment of the Project Team. This committee was comprised of 17 members, representing 14 agencies including two NGOs. The major approaches to gathering useful information were through the review of all relevant documentation, interviews with key government and NGO personnel, and national/sectoral consultations. Draft reports were also sent to key stakeholders for review and comments to ensure accuracy and completeness of the reports.

Monitoring of progress was done through periodic communication among the Department of Physical Planning and Environment, the Project Team and the UNDP Programme Officer. An inception report and quarterly reports and timely deliverables also assisted in recording progress during implementation of the project.

## **LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED THE RIO CONVENTIONS**

The Department of Physical Planning and Environment, Ministry of Sustainable Development (DPPE): The DPPE is responsible for national environmental management, protection, conservation including watershed protection, land-use planning and development control.

The Department of Physical Planning, Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of Communication and Works, Public Utilities and Posts, Physical Planning Natural Resources and Environment, Nevis Island Administration (DPPNRE): The DPPNRE is responsible for environmental management in Nevis as well as development control and forward planning.

Several other government departments in St Kitts and Nevis have potential roles in the implementation of the three conventions, but they have not been actively engaged to fully understand their roles and to assist with the discharge of national obligations under these conventions. Such departments include: the Meteorological Service, Dept of Agriculture, Dept of Fisheries, Dept of Public Works and Utilities, Dept of Environmental Health, and the Tourism Authority.

The St Christopher Heritage Society and the Nevis Historical and Conservation Society are active in projects related to biodiversity conservation and land degradation, however, their programmes of work (and those of the government departments) are not guided by prescriptions of the any of the three conventions.

## **STOCKTAKING REPORTS**

The Stock-Take for each of the conventions highlighted the key stakeholders with responsibility for or jurisdiction over or interest in the implementation of the Conventions. Previous and ongoing activities directly related to the three conventions are outlined below:

### ***UNCBD***

Some progress has been made toward the implementation of the articles of the UNCBD. A number of policies, plans, and legislation have been developed that could address the sustainable use of biodiversity. A number of sites have been proposed/identified for protection although none have been declared to date. Limited monitoring of elements of biodiversity takes place as part of existing mandates in the Agriculture, Fisheries and Environmental sectors. Enforcement of laws related to biodiversity in general is limited.

### ***UNFCCC***

The implementation of commitments under the UNFCCC has been largely restricted to the national communications, participation in UNFCCC meetings, and activities related to the Caribbean Project for the Adaptation to Climate Change project (CPACC). The completion of the Initial National Communications was a major achievement towards meeting the requirements under the UNFCCC. That document provided some baseline

information on local greenhouse gas inventory, vulnerability analysis of seven key sectors, and national response measures that will assist in compliance of obligations under the UNFCCC.

### ***UNCCD***

Little progress has been made towards meeting the requirements under the UNCCD in both St. Kitts and Nevis. There has been some attempt at the level of planning, but this has not yet been translated into implementation due to inadequate capacities among government agencies.

## **THEMATIC ASSESSMENT REPORTS**

The Thematic Assessment for each convention identified capacity constraints and barriers at the systemic, institutional and individual levels which were related to the implementation of the conventions. It also highlighted the capacity development needs in relation to implementation of articles of the convention that were considered as national priorities.

### ***UNCBD***

At the Systemic Level, there was no documented environmental policy. While it is reported that support for Government agencies has improved at senior political levels in some cases, environmental issues are still of lower priority in spite of official positions stated. At present it appears that decision-making is significantly weighted toward jobs, economic development and short-term gains, with limited weighting toward environmental considerations. Some legislation is in the process of upgrading but enforcement is generally low – either due to lack of support or limited resources. Some agencies reported adequate accountability but in general, mechanisms for accountability are not utilised or function poorly. Almost across the board, agencies indicated that there were inadequate human and financial resources; the situation seems more critical in Nevis. Processes that need to be improved in several areas include– relationships between St. Kitts and Nevis, coordination among agencies, dissemination of information, timeliness in delivery, involvement of civil society, influence of private sector and clear and documented policies or mechanisms.

At the Institutional Level, where mission statements exist, these seem not to be strong guiding forces. Strategic plans exist for some sectors; some have never been implemented or need updating. The operational structure and competencies need improvement in many instances; especially for the Environment section in the DPPE and DPPNRE, which would have primary roles for the CBD. Deficiencies in human resources, particularly among Nevis Government agencies – both numerically and in training were major constraints. Financial resources were generally inadequate to implement mandates either due to the national economic situation or national priorities. In the information sector, inadequacies were reported with regard to access or dissemination of information as well as the lack of adequate baseline information.

At the Individual Level, it was reported that there was a need for improved job definitions. Agencies were lacking in expertise in some important skill areas or needed enhancement of those skills. Attitude to work was reported to be a problem in some institutions. Few agencies had defined training programmes and in many instances training did not result in improvement. Opportunities for career progression vary across agencies and seem to be less in Nevis than in St. Kitts. Accountability mechanisms also vary and require improvement. Performance evaluation was thought to be inadequate.

Capacity development needs included: recognition and support at the senior levels for the value of biodiversity for socio-economic benefits; institutional structure and resources to implement the NBSAP and NEMS; policy formulation e.g. Environmental Policy; decision-making processes that adequately weight environmental issues; monitoring and data analysis; clear coordination mechanisms between St. Kitts and Nevis and between agencies, private sector and civil society; adequate human and financial allocations to fulfill mandates; training in relevant fields; valuation of ecological resources; improved legislation and enforcement; financial sustainability; awareness programmes; evaluation of impact of programmes and policies on biodiversity.

### *UNFCCC*

Capacity constraints at the systemic level included: lack of national policy on climate change; no legislative framework to incorporate UNFCCC obligations; insufficient human, financial and information resources; and a lack of a clearly defined and consistent process for collaboration.

Capacity constraints at the institutional level included: Lack of a written operational policy, collaboration policy, or policy manual at the departmental level; insufficient awareness of departmental mission and strategic objectives; lack of management audit to determine effectiveness of structure and competencies; ineffective institutional process such as quality management, monitoring and evaluation; insufficient staffing with appropriate skills and high staff turnover; delegated responsibilities exceed capacity of staff; insufficient budgets; lack of baseline data; and poor infrastructure especially, office space and equipment.

Capacity constraints at the individual level included: insufficient skills within the department to effectively manage or discharge national obligations under the UNFCCC and the environment in general; no formalised training procedures are in place for staff; limited career advancement opportunities; no clear process for holding individuals (or departments) accountable for delivery of annual work-programmes; and a lack of effective staff performance evaluation.

Capacity development needs included: database of expertise for climate related and environmental matters; a climate change sensitisation programme for senior decision makers; a management system and infrastructure for protected areas as Greenhouse Gas sinks/reservoirs; a clear national policy on the protection and rehabilitation of ghauts as well as a clearly defined process and agency for implementation of that policy and dealing with settlers within the ghauts; methods on how to integrate climate change considerations into social and economic development planning and the training of

persons in use of the methodology; a national scientific, research and monitoring agenda; additional personnel with suitable scientific/technical training and expertise; a multi-year climate change awareness programme; training of personnel in climatology, climate modeling, vulnerability and adaptation; a national policy on information access; increased funding and improved infrastructure.

### *UNCCD*

Major constraints at the systemic level included: the absence of a clearly defined National Environmental Policy, weak legislation (presently being reviewed) and insufficient regulations for effective implementation. There are inadequate human, financial and information resources available and competing demands for these resources amongst various arms of the government and between Civil Society Organisations and the government.

Institutional capacity constraints included: weak inter-agency programme coordination, insufficient clarity concerning lines of communication and command, inadequate formal systems of checks and balances to ensure that operational guidelines are fully utilised, inadequate financial and human resources, especially the unavailability of specific skills.

Individual capacity constraints included: a general lack of sufficient manpower, specific skills and training, and little effective measurement of individual performance.

Capacity development needs included: the promotion of environmental education and awareness targeted to senior decision-makers and the public, the use of a 'champion' for environmental management in the Cabinet, improved coordination and cooperation amongst various arms of the government, the private sector and Civil Society Organisations, promoting broader effective participation in national decision-making processes, a clearly outlined/integrated vision for the country that addresses land degradation, biodiversity and climate change issues, and a strategic plan for implementation are essential activities for meeting national priorities under the UNCCD.

### **CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES REPORT**

This report identified the issues that cut across the three conventions and was based on a synthesis of priority issues from the Thematic Assessment Report for each of the three conventions. Existing arrangements to coordinate across the three conventions involved the Focal Points for the three conventions who are three senior officers of the Department of Physical Planning and Environment. Each officer has other substantive duties and devotes a small percentage of their time towards administrative matters and international workshops/meetings related to the convention. Currently, departmental coordination in the discharge of national obligations under these three conventions appears to be weak.

The cross-cutting issues for priority attention were:

### National policy, legal and regulatory framework

There are no defined national environmental policy document, effective cooperation policy with Nevis on environmental and related administrative matters, or adequate regulations to ensure compliance with environmental obligations under the three conventions. However, the preparation of the NCEMA presents an opportunity for the development of an appropriate legal and regulatory framework that could potentially strengthen the implementation of the three conventions.

There is no policy manual at the departmental level that can serve as an easy reference to guide operations within a department, between departments, and between departments and third parties. Such a document would lead to consistency, clarity and accountability in programme delivery.

#### *Capacity needs*

A review and comparative analysis of policy related to the implementation of the three conventions is needed. This process should have high level support and should result in the development of appropriate policies.

### Monitoring and enforcement

Systematic monitoring of projects that impact on the environment or the monitoring of policy implementation and its effects on the environment and human livelihoods are essentially non-existent. Enforcement to ensure compliance with existing policies and laws or regulations related to the environment, is poor.

#### *Capacity needs*

Sufficient trained staff, dedicated to monitoring for compliance is needed. Institutionally, staff redeployed and dedicated to monitoring and compliance responsibility within the Ministry of Sustainable Development may be an option. This redeployment should also facilitate technical assistance to departments as needed, in the implementation of their programmes.

### Awareness and exchange of information

Senior decision makers, particularly politicians, are insufficiently aware of the national irreversible consequences of ignoring the prescriptions of the three conventions, or of the extent of sustainable benefits to be accrued from enlightened environmental stewardship. Detailed information on development projects that may have large negative impacts are not readily shared with many departments, NGOs or other civil society parties. There are opportunities to improve transparency in decision making and information exchange, including best practice in planning or impact mitigation.

### *Capacity needs*

Develop a programme on promoting information on the benefits of implementation of the three conventions and consequences of poor environmental stewardship needs to be appropriately packaged and presented in a stimulating audio-visual manner to all Ministers of Government, Permanent Secretaries, Heads of Departments, Boards and Chief Executives of all State companies. Private sector companies should also receive such an awareness development activity.

A policy on information sharing in decision making and related administrative framework is also needed.

### Institutional mandates and processes for interaction and co-operation

The institutional mandate with respect to the three conventions seems to be clear within the departments responsible for environmental management in St Kitts and Nevis. However, this is not the case with most of the other agencies that should have a significant role in the discharge of national commitments under these conventions. Active co-ordination and processes for informed and meaningful interactions and co-operation are weak or not well defined, leading to less than desirable outcomes. Inviting representatives from different agencies to a meeting to discuss issues does not necessarily lead to better co-ordination or co-operation.

### *Capacity needs*

In terms of process, the key elements of the three conventions that should be coordinated must be identified. Why and how these elements should be coordinated need to be clearly defined to all parties that have some jurisdiction in or responsibility for those elements. Roles (including terms of reference), targets, resources and sources of funds must be agreed upon. Wherever appropriate, the “coordination committee” should be Cabinet appointed or the committee could be established by statutory instrument to ensure that it has sufficient legitimacy.

### Institutional management and performance

Government departments generally report through the Permanent Secretary to the relevant Minister. However, there appears to be no clearly defined mechanism that ensures departments are held accountable for delivery of their annual work programmes. No routine performance evaluation of work programmes were carried out within most departments. In the context of the three conventions, inadequate or lack of implementation of the articles seem not to draw Ministerial attention.

### *Capacity needs*

Training in programme planning, including the preparation of work programmes and development of performance indicators are needed to improve efficiency. A system of

periodic performance measurement has to be developed and procedures put in place to help staff identify and overcome deficiencies.

#### Individual skills and motivation

No government department has sufficient skills in-house to adequately implement many of the articles of the three conventions. However, there is no database of the existing skills relevant to these conventions, within the Ministries of government or private sector; so the extent of potentially available skills is unknown. No structured training programme for key staff in areas related to implementation of the conventions, exist. Motivation within most government departments for implementation of the conventions also appears to be low, because of job dissatisfaction, excessive workload, external bureaucracies related to the conventions, inadequate facilities and resources, low morale, and inadequate expertise.

#### *Capacity needs*

The compilation of a database of personnel with skills relevant to the three conventions, within government agencies and the private sector, needs to be undertaken to determine the in-country human resources that could be harnessed. Priority training needs related to the three conventions should be defined and opportunities to address these needs should be identified and pursued. Additionally, recruitment of suitably trained staff will enhance the government's performance with respect to implementation of the conventions.

#### Information management and reporting

There is currently no efficient information management system for public access in which documents or information relating to the three conventions are organized within the Ministry responsible for these conventions. Some information is stored in filing cabinets and on the individual computer hard drive of the officer responsible for a particular convention. Some GIS and planning information on St Kitts and Nevis is organized and available in hard copy and digital format. Reporting the progress of implementation of the conventions is often delayed and is prepared only when requested by the Conference of Parties.

#### *Capacity needs*

All available information needs to be catalogued and stored in a centralized, systematic retrieval system. A digital cataloging system should be utilized to improve efficiency. A system for periodically compiling elements that will contribute to national reports needs to be developed so as to improve on the timeliness of report preparation.

The setting up of a clearing house facility is needed for the collection and cataloguing of environmental and related information, and the facilitation of public access to such information.

### Mobilisation of science in support of decision-making

It is not clear how many national decisions, if any, related to environment and development are based on relevant scientific information. The use of scientific information can further rationalize the range of available options that could lead to sustainable development, rather than short term economic gains.

#### *Capacity needs*

Identify and engage a network of scientific expertise related to the articles of the three conventions. Much of the scientific information needed to inform many development decisions already exists and much is freely available. Establish a mechanism for getting a broad range of scientific input into decision-making.

#### Financial resources

The government currently allocates financial resources to pay existing staff salaries at the agencies responsible for implementation of the three conventions, however the budget does not allow for capital or development costs associated with implementation of the articles. The government also makes some in-kind contributions towards implementation. Funds for enabling activities, reporting and limited implementation are usually through international donors such as UNDP, UNEP (also through GEF), through bi-lateral agreements with North American and European governments, and through sub-regional programmes with the OECS. The capacity to access and utilise the funds in a timely manner is often a challenge.

#### *Capacity needs*

Additional suitably qualified or experienced personnel are needed to improve the ability of the DPPE and the DPPNRE to access and manage funds efficiently.

#### Incentive systems and market instruments.

There are no incentive systems or market instruments that are currently applied to encourage the adoption of sound environmental technologies and practices. Perverse incentives often lead to environmental degradation, loss of biodiversity and increased vulnerability to coastal development. Such incentives are usually associated with foreign direct investments, particularly in the tourism and manufacturing industries.

#### *Capacity needs*

Identification and establishment of innovative means of generating public and private financial resources by means of fiscal incentives and market based instruments, needed to encourage sustainable environmental management.

The effectiveness of existing economic incentives needs to be critically assessed so that perverse incentives are identified and adjusted. The range of potential fiscal incentives that could encourage the private sector to adopt sound environmental technologies and practices also need to be identified; and at least one fiscal incentive should be developed and approved for implementation in the short to medium term.

## **CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN**

The cross cutting capacity needs identified in the preceding section were used as the priority elements for attention in the Capacity Development Action Plan (CDAP). This CDAP is expected to be implemented over a three year period. At the end of this period, a review of implementation is anticipated and a new action plan for capacity development with respect to the three conventions should be developed. The objectives of the CDAP are to:

1. Improve on the policy framework for implementation of multilateral environmental agreements.
2. Enhance the ability of selected government departments to monitor the impacts of development projects and compliance with prescribed measures.
3. Raise the awareness of key sectors of society on the benefits of implementation of selected multilateral environmental agreements.
4. Establish an improved coordination mechanism for environmental matters.
5. Enable staff to improve their performance with respect to implementation of the environmental conventions.
6. Develop a system to assist in human resources management.
7. Improve the system for information management within key government agencies.
8. Mobilize scientific opinion in support of decision making.
9. Increase the level of trained and qualified staff in key government agencies.
10. Establish at least one economic incentive to encourage environmental sustainability.

The lead agency for coordinating the implementation of the CDAP will be the Ministry of Sustainable Development.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION GUIDELINES**

Monitoring and evaluation of implementation of the Capacity Development Action Plan is needed to record successes and share information with stakeholders, detect weaknesses and take corrective action, to determine the extent to which the objectives are being achieved, and to provide the basis for future initiatives in capacity development.

The guidelines were prepared for the Ministry of Sustainable Development and the department or personnel that will have the lead responsibility for implementation of the CDAP. The guidelines could also be adapted as appropriate to meet local needs and may

serve as the framework for monitoring and evaluating other departmental project activities.

The guidelines utilise criteria proposed by the GEF Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and include:

- Impact: measures both the positive and negative, foreseen and unforeseen changes to and effects on society caused by the project(s) or program(s) under evaluation.
- Effectiveness: measures the extent to which the objective has been achieved or the likelihood that it will be achieved.
- Efficiency: assesses the outputs in relation to inputs, looking at costs, implementing time, and economic and financial results.
- Relevance: gauges the degree to which the project or program at a given time is justified within the global and national/local environment and development priorities.
- Sustainability: measures the extent to which benefits continue from a particular project or program after GEF assistance/external assistance has come to an end.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The Capacity Development Action Plan is perhaps the major tool for achieving capacity enhancement and improved departmental productivity within key Ministries of Government in St Kitts and Nevis. Cabinet endorsement of this action plan and the identification of an individual in the lead agency (Ministry of Sustainable Development), with responsibility for putting systems in place to ensure its implementation, are the immediate actions that are required. The establishment of the national coordination mechanism for environmental matters, including responsibility for implementation of the CDAP should also be given some urgency.

## **LESSONS LEARNT**

Lesson 1: Senior officers/executives require appropriate mechanisms that can assist them in providing timely reviews of project documentation.

Senior officers, especially those in under-staffed agencies, are faced with many (often overwhelming) competing demands for their time. These officers are not always able to provide timely and detailed comments on reports, especially when they are presented with several different and lengthy reports under the same project.

Solution: An interactive audio-visual presentation on the report under review should be conducted for several senior officers at the same time. This should be done within three weeks of submission of the draft document....the longer the time interval the greater the perception of low importance or urgency. Their comments and modifications are encouraged during the presentation and the appropriate adjustments are made during the presentation wherever feasible.

Lesson 2: Capacity issues that relate to environmental management, especially at the institutional level, require senior political interventions to ensure consistent, timely and needed action.

Environmental management, especially in the context of discharging national obligations under the multilateral environmental agreements, is generally not a priority among senior government decision makers. This is especially serious when there is no Minister of Cabinet who actively promotes and integrates environmental considerations into national decision-making.

Solution: Benefits from implementation of the multilateral environmental agreements, as well as environmental management in general, needs a ‘champion’ in the Cabinet. The Minister with responsibility for the environment should, at least, receive regular audio-visual orientations on various aspects and issues related to the environment, including the benefit of scientific expertise in national decision making as required.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The implementation of the Capacity Development Action Plan and Articles under the UNCBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD are sufficiently flexible to accommodate a range of partnerships from the government, private sector, NGOs/CBOs, as well as inter-governmental agencies. Timely implementation of the CDAP will lead to significant capacity development in St Kitts and Nevis in three to four years.

The reports generated from the NCSA should be publicized and made easily accessible to interested parties. The relevant Ministries should develop an appropriate website and upload the NCSA reports and other relevant information to assist in dissemination. The Articles of the conventions and the CDAP could also be consulted and used as a guide in planning the annual work programmes in key agencies.

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