

THE EXCHANGE SERIES

What Are Your Adaptation Priorities? Examples and Experiences

9th Exchange Email Discussion Report – Consolidated Replies | August 2015



The 9th APAN Exchange was raised by Dr. Peter King on 5 Aug 2015 to engage the APAN climate change adaptation community in Asia and the Pacific. The Exchange period lasted approximately two weeks (5 – 20 Aug 2015).

Dr. King is the Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Team Leader for the USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project. He is also the Senior Policy Advisor at the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Regional Centre based in Bangkok, Thailand.

[Dr. Peter King](#), Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Team Leader, [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#), and Senior Policy Advisor, [Institute for Global Environmental Strategies \(IGES\)](#) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 28 Aug 2015)

Dear friends and colleagues,

Thank you for another informative discussion on **“What Are Your Adaptation Priorities?”** that took place over this email *Exchange Series* and on the [‘live’ online chat](#) session held last Wednesday (19 August 2015). We are pleased to have over 25 participants – from Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Marshall Islands, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the UK, and the US – joining us virtually in the chatroom.

Please allow me to use this closing email to briefly summarize some of the key points coming out of our conversation. I would also like to share with you what I have personally found valuable from our discussion.

We heard from government officials in India ([V. S. Balasubramanian](#) and [Patrick Jasper](#)), Marshall Islands ([Jim Hicklin](#)), Philippines ([Mayor Alfredo Coro](#)), and Vietnam ([Ky Quang Vinh](#)). They provided us a glimpse of some of the pressing adaptation priorities in their home countries. These include climate proofing agriculture, flood control, and urban adaptation.

Significantly, we learned about how these priorities were identified – mainly through efforts from within national and/or local government units, in a largely consultative approach, involving NGOs and civil society organizations. But from the responses, we also found out that the NAPA/NAP processes have not been particularly helpful.

In terms of structural challenges, both country officials and development partner contributors ([Regan Suzuki Pairojmahakij](#) and [Elmer Mercado](#)) singled out a lack of capacity in government institutions as well as coordination issues as persistent barriers preventing priorities from becoming concrete adaptation projects.

This central question of turning priorities into full-scale projects resonated in our ‘live’ online chat session. In particular, the issues of taking pilot projects to scale after the priorities have been identified.

Participants agreed that strategic and planning frameworks for climate change adaptation *vis-à-vis* prioritization are already in place. Implementation, however, will require cross-institutional cooperation and coordination that can be challenging for many developing countries.

Other related issues were raised and discussed during our one-hour chat that concerned measuring project impacts for better private sector engagement, raising awareness on the importance of linking disaster risk reduction and

climate change adaptation, and integrating adaptation into countries' development investments.

I sincerely thank friends and colleagues at India's National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, Marshall Island's Ministry of Finance, Philippines' Provincial Government of Antique, International Water Management Institute, Hong Kong Red Cross, the East West Center – University of Hawaii, Abt Associates, Thomson Reuters Foundation, UNDP, USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, IGES and others, for joining and contributing so much to the discussion.

You can read the transcript of the chat here:

<http://www.asiapacificadapt.net/content/live-online-chat-what-are-your-adaptation-priorities>

You can also read the full responses of the email *Exchange* in this consolidated replies report.

Thank you all for your thoughtful contributions and for an insightful discussion during our 'live' chat session. I look forward to hearing your views again, and learning more, in our next *Exchange*.

Best regards,

Dr. Peter N. King

Team Leader

Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project

Senior Policy Advisor

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
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Bangkok, Thailand

Responses from the APAN Community

Contributors from the APAN Community to the 9th Exchange (5 – 20 Aug 2015).

1. **[Elmer S. Mercado](#), ADB-TA 8111 Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape Ecotown-Green Growth Framework Pilot Implementation Project, Philippines** (Posted on 21 Aug 2015)

[Elmer S. Mercado](#), ADB-TA 8111 Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape Ecotown-Green Growth Framework Pilot Implementation Project, Philippines (Posted on 21 Aug 2015)

Hi Dr. King,

I would just like to share our experiences in our work with the ADB-TA8111 on the application of the EcoTown Framework in the Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape Project, which aims to assist 5 upland towns, that straddles the main watershed that drains down to Metro Manila and contributes to the yearly inundation that affects the country's primary urban center of almost 15 million people. As team leader for this project, we have been working with these LGUs including upland stakeholders/framers and indigenous peoples, and the local protected area management council, to integrated climate change and disaster risk reduction, using scientific information and satellite-based technology, to improve both local development planning and resiliency planning in their areas.

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the

2. [Regan Suzuki Pairojmahakij](#), The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC), Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 20 Aug 2015)
3. [V. S. Balasubramanian](#), Asst. General Manager & I/C, UPNRM Programme Management Unit, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Bangalore, India (Posted on 20 Aug 2015)
4. [Mayor Alfredo M Coro](#), Municipality of Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, Philippines (Posted on 20 Aug 2015)
5. [Jim Hicklin](#), Grant Writer, Ministry of Finance, Republic of the Marshall Islands (Posted on 19 Aug 2015)
6. [Patrick Jasper](#), Asst. General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), India (Posted on 18 Aug 2015)
7. [Ky Quang Vinh](#), Director, Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City, Vietnam (Posted on 17 Aug 2015)
8. [Bruce Carrad](#), USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 14 Aug 2015)
- [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?
- Our priority adaptation projects have been geared towards addressing the primary CCA/DRR vulnerabilities identified by our baseline studies conducted by experts and community/stakeholder/LGU consultations. These are CCA/DRR vulnerabilities due to rain-induced landslides/erosion, drought and flooding. Based on this appreciation, the common adaptation measure identified (using also a multi-variate criteria analysis for the selection of proposed measures by representatives stakeholders from the 5 LGUs) were --- reforestation/rehabilitation of upland areas/watersheds, improved water-retention/flood water drainage systems (to address both flooding and drought), alternative livelihood programs for poor upland settlers, especially charcoal-makers. Other include improvement in land use/zoning policies, improvement in agriculture practices, stronger enforcement of forestry laws, and, improved infrastructure planning and solid waste management practices. On CC mitigation activities the priorities were directed towards reducing GhG emissions from mobile public transport systems, improving traffic movement, improved solid waste management collection - reduce, reuse and recycling, among others.
 - All of these efforts are consistent with the identified National Climate Change Action Plan adopted by the Philippines through the Climate Change Commission. In fact, our project is a piloting of the 'national strategy' adopted by the government to address climate change and disaster risk reduction in the country.
 - Key stakeholders from the local communities - LGUs, upland settlers, indigenous peoples, business/private sector groups, academic communities, village councils, and peoples organizations from each of the 5 LGUs where involved at the very start of this process. They were also provided training and capacity building on the different methodologies, particularly on cost-benefit analysis, vulnerability assessment, GIS-based satellite mapping/projection, and multi-variate criteria analysis that were conducted by the Project TA team for them to apply these tools of analysis in the decision-making process of identifying and preparing the local adaptation road maps in their respective jurisdictions. We also applied the integrated ecosystems management framework as main planning platform for the adaptation planning and local development planning and have these appreciated and understood by the local planners of the towns and communities.
2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?
- The priority adaptation measures identified above is currently (as of 15 August) being implemented by the local partners in the 5 towns, with the LGUs and local host communities as lead implementing partners. The priority adaptation projects - upland/riverbank rehabilitation and nursery development (using endemic/indigenous tree species and bamboo), charcoal bricketting-production using forest waste/materials, small water-

9. [Shom Teoh](#),
Programme Manager,
Sustainable Cities,
Institute for Global
Environmental
Strategies (IGES)
Regional Centre,
Bangkok, Thailand
(Posted on 13 Aug
2015)

10. [Mayor Alfredo M
Coro](#), Municipality of
Del Carmen, Siargao
Islands, Philippines
(Posted on 6 Aug
2015)

impounding/water retaining dams/systems. The project provided the technical assistance and funding for these projects as well as training/capacity building/guidance to the LGU staff and community groups who have taken responsibility of this adaptation projects.

- b. Some of the key issues/challenges encountered --- the long-process of engagement and involvement of local stakeholders both public, private and community, because of the other pressures and priorities occurring in their areas; absence of local expertise and maximization of local knowledge to expand and transfer these experiences and knowledge to other people outside of pilot areas; funding remains a continuing challenge for expansion and replication as well as support to local partners specially poor upland farmers/IPs, who are also implementers but also need 'substitute income' for losing time/participating in the adaptation projects in their areas.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

Yes. In this activity and what our local partners have seen and promoted that CCA/DRR adaptation and mitigation measures are part and parcel of their development programs and that the critical effect of CCA/DRR in their growth and development cannot be disregard or isolated in order to sustain whatever growth and gains they may achieve at both community and individual family levels.

**Elmer S. Mercado, EnP
Team Leader**

ADB-TA 8111 Upper Marikina River Basin Protected Landscape Ecotown-
Green Growth Framework Pilot Implementation Project

[Back to Top](#)

[Regan Suzuki Pairojmahakij](#), The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC),
Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 20 Aug 2015)

Dear Dr. King,

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion and hopefully we have made it in time before the Exchange on this topic is closed. RECOFTC – The Center for People and Forests, while not contributing from a national perspective per se, can draw on experiences with planning, development and climate change processes on a regional scale, as well as having worked closely with national, sub-national and community-level stakeholders. Hopefully inclusion of these perspectives will be of useful to the discussion. The priorities listed below are interlinked with considerable crossover between them.

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National](#)

Adaptation Plans (NAPs) processes under the UNFCCC been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

a. Capacity development for stakeholders at all levels to engage meaningfully in adaptation planning, particularly in national-level planning such as the NAPAs and NAPs. Skills and knowledge required for climate change adaptation are severely limited in many Asia-Pacific countries in sectors and agencies beyond those directly responsible for climate change or environment. This is particularly true as one moves vertically away from national levels to provincial, district and local levels. In addition to general awareness about climate change, the different streams of adaptation and mitigation are often poorly understood beyond disaster management or emissions reductions (in this region, REDD+). There is a pressing need to build capacities for multi-stakeholder engagement and other participatory approaches. Another area for urgent capacity development relates to the need for institutional capacities and channels to be established for effective cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration – essential for the integrated approaches highlighted in the following priority.

b. Integrated, ecosystem based adaptation has been indicated by IPCC AR5 as an important strategy in maximizing synergies and co-benefits. “Increasing efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change imply an increasing complexity of interactions, particularly at the intersections among water, energy, land use and biodiversity, but tools to understand and manage these interactions remain limited” (2014). RECOFTC has similarly observed the need for more models, approaches and examples of the application of principles into effective climate solutions. In addition to the financial and practical reasons for seeking to couple mitigation and adaptation, there is a growing interest at international levels in joint mitigation and adaptation (JMA) mechanisms and other alternative approaches to results-based mitigation. Some of the most obvious potential JMA options will involve land management options (i.e. Community forestry, agroforestry, mangroves management, forest restoration). However, there remains few existing models and little study of where these have been effectively applied and resulting outcomes.

c. Insufficient downscaled modeling data available and accessible in a number of countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Some countries, particularly in the Lower Mekong Basin have benefited from the climate modeling work conducted by the USAID ARCC project amongst others. However, there still remains significant climate modeling gaps in many countries and this seriously impedes the ability to conduct appropriate adaptation planning. The use of national level climate scenarios is often insufficient to work with and advise local communities on site specific climate trends and appropriate responses. This restricts the basis for adaptation planning to historic meteorological data which is often limited in time periods covered, offering a poor basis for anticipating future climatic trends. The technology exists to conduct downscaled climate modeling. It needs to be a priority for the international donor community to ensure that downscaled modeling is conducted for vulnerable countries and that the results are easily accessible and in appropriate formats for local level stakeholders.

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding

dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

RECOFTC has over the past several decades, through its Sustainable Livelihoods Approach, been indirectly supporting enhanced resilience of rural communities in the region. However, targeted activities determined through climate modeling informed vulnerability assessments is something RECOFTC has only begun to pilot in forested community-managed environments over the past several years. One such project in Nepal, supported by USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, has led to the development of a Community Forestry – Climate Change Adaptation framework and approach.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

We strongly agree that adaptation must be integrated into development planning processes. Closely linked to the priority issues above, the practical constraints associated with this are two-fold: first, capacities that exist within government and civil society at sub-national levels for understanding and planning adaptive measures, and second, horizontally, the existing mechanisms and institutional arrangements for cross-sectoral coordination and collaboration are insufficient. For us, this has led to some difficult choices. As we are essentially a sector specific agency (forestry), do we support integrated local or district level planning processes at the risk that there is no real institutional ‘home’ and possible sustainability to processes, or do we seek to support adaptive measure through sectoral channels such as line agencies recognizing that while greater institutionalization may result, this fails to strengthen national strategies for decentralized, integrated adaptation planning and implementation?

Regan Suzuki Pairojmahakij
The Center for People and Forests (RECOFTC)
Bangkok, Thailand

[Back to Top](#)

[V. S. Balasubramanian](#), Asst. General Manager & I/C, UPNRM Programme Management Unit, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), Bangalore, India *(Posted on 20 Aug 2015)*

Dear Dr. King,

I got lot of insight into reading the other experts' responses. Here are my responses.

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

Top three priorities sector-wise are:

(1) Adaptation in Agriculture Sector - as (a) close to 70% of the population are engaged in agriculture or depend on agriculture related livelihoods (b) 60% of those are "rainfed" agriculture and obvious we have to feed 1.2 billion population.

(2) Adaptation in Water Resources Sector - as (a) interlinked with other development goals, clean & safe drinking water, health, depleting water table, etc. As per World Resource Institute, more than 100 million people live in areas of poor water quality, 54% of India faces high to extremely high water stress and 54% of India's groundwater wells are decreasing.

(3) Adaptation in Coastal Ecosystem - as (a) long coast line (7600 km) and 3 of 4 metropolitan cities (Chennai, Mumbai and Kolkata) is on the coast (b) economic and livelihood dependence on coastal eco-system is huge.

These are top three most vulnerable sectors which are interlinked with other sectors as well and hence tops my list. NAPA and NAP are also helpful in identifying and defining these priorities. Multiple development agencies, line departments, research institutions in the country, NGOs and civil societies were all involved in the process of identifying these priorities. Central and State level designated climate change agencies coordinated various stakeholders. However, though National Action Plan on Climate Change has been prepared, the progress in respect of preparing State level (Regional Level) is not satisfactory.

As far as mitigation projects are concerned there are many on-going projects in energy efficiency, renewable energy sources (wind & solar), etc. In fact, the solar power programme has been expanded with highly ambitious targets.

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

The progress on converting those identified priorities in actual adaptation projects is very slow. Many Central and State schemes have in built adaptation practices (watershed, land development, sustainable agriculture programmes, restoration and renovation of water bodies, etc.) and hence few exclusive adaptation projects are under implementation. The clarity between business as usual cases and exclusive CCA projects integrated with developmental goals are missing.

The barriers are many, may be grouped as behavioral (Everyone understands climate change but not adaptation requirements, knowledge on regional scale climate change impacts, effectiveness of measures on perceived or future impacts etc.), Institutional (Mainly coordination among various agencies like policy planners and project implementers on a different platform, Capacity and guidance systems with Govt Institutions), Financial (So far may programme are driven on subsidy or grant based. Loan model financing is not yet effective due to long gestation periods, risk aversion among funding agencies, suitable financial products, etc.) and Technical side (data sets on regional climate models, cost of expertise and expertise availability, etc.).

However, mitigation plans do not face so many barriers and hence majority of funding supported Mitigation Plans.

Recently Central Govt has allocated specific quantum of money through budgetary resource under "National Adaptation Fund" with detailed priorities and guidelines. The progress on CCA is slow but expected to pick up pace in future.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

Yes, it can't be separated from developmental activities. Govt has made an attempt to integrate and mainstream adaptation activities into developmental planning and the same has been incorporated in the NAP and other strategies. But on ground it is not happening due to various reasons. High capital cost requirement, reliable data to incorporate climate change effect in designing transport infrastructure, knowledge and expertise, etc. prevents such mainstreaming especially in capital intensive transport infrastructures. But mainstreaming in Agriculture, Water and Sanitation is slowly getting integrated as "no regret measures" under mission mode.

Considering the huge and conflicting needs of the country, mainstreaming of climate change in all spheres would be a slow and a long drawn process.

Regards,

V.S.Balasubramanian
Asst. General Manager & I/C
UPNRM Programme Management Unit
NABARD
Bangalore, India

[Back to Top](#)

[Mayor Alfredo M Coro](#), Municipality of Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, Philippines (Posted on 20 Aug 2015)

Dear Ms. Shom Teoh,

Thank you very much for your questions. Below is my reply. I hope it helps you understand our limitations and our efforts to overcome those limitations.

We have always told our people: *"Climate Change is real and is here. All we can do is adapt as fast as we can to live a meaningful life and stop whatever we are doing that contributes to climate change. It may be little, from a small community, but if we compound the little contributions, they will soon become part of a bigger whole that made an impact."*

1) You mentioned that the lack of expertise to validate your "designed

programs will indeed address the identified issues we want to address" as one of the challenges faced. This is very interesting, can you explain more?

• **Do you mean that the priority issues (and corresponding programmes/projects to address these issues) identified through barangay-level consultations may lack accuracy/validity, because laypersons on the ground may not necessarily know enough?**

Yes this is true. A lot of our "barangays" have brain drain thus the need to capacitate and guide them on proper planning. For the record, our average age of migration is 23 years old or right after college, almost all of our students would flee to the city not simply to work but to also experience living in a city versus rural living. Their destinations could be within the Philippines or outside our country and this trend is very consistent especially with the current generation. Several of previously hired personnel were hired for political accommodation as well versus merit based evaluation thus lacked the expertise and commitment. This is already changing through human resource reforms as well being implemented in the local government.

• **Or, do you think that the priorities and corresponding programmes and identified are mostly valid/reasonable, yet you are having trouble convincing 'higher-ups' (those who approve the budget) to agree?**

This is also true but the convincing is related mostly to not having a "quality proposal" that is believable for the higher ups to appreciate implementation and sustainability due to lack of local expertise to support the program. We spend a considerable amount of energy, time and money for regular training and support to capacitate ourselves and the communities we serve.

• **When you propose such priority programmes/issues for central funding support, is it a largely 'smooth' or 'bumpy' process? 'Smooth' meaning not many rounds of proposal revisions are required before the final approved budget is granted.**

It has always been a bumpy ride if there is no clear funding source from the project inception. We are fortunate that the national government implemented a bottom up budget program and a separate National Community Driven Development Program which assures us of a fixed funding allocation every year which we are tapping for climate adaptation projects.

2) Related to the above, can you share what kinds of expert validation is most lacking for your city? (relating to specific problems faced in those 3 priorities mentioned). For example, what kind of expert validation is required for "camp management process" and "early warning process without high cost of operations"? Where do you usually try to source such expertise and what problems have you faced? How do you determine whether the expertise is trustworthy/credible?

Please refer below.

What kind of expert validation is required for "camp management process" and "early warning process without high cost of operations"?

Expert validation would be from national government agencies and non-government organizations which has mandate of specific field such as the Department of Agriculture for agriculture related programs, Office of the Civil Defense for Camp Management Process, etc. However, getting the time and

access to these limited national experts is the challenge for us.

Where do you usually try to source such expertise and what problems have you faced?

We used to request the experts from key national agencies depending on the problem faced which includes climate change commission, department of agriculture, department of science and technology, etc. Recently however, we are now heavily involving the local state college to be capacitated by the national and international experts with the state college capacitating the local people. This approach seems to have better long term retention of knowledge, better community cooperation and increases our access to having local experts.

How do you determine whether the expertise is trustworthy/credible?

We normally review the credentials of the expert and the results of their work in our programs. As a matter of practice, since we were able to build a good network of partners already, we often inquire about the expert or let their work be reviewed.

3) In terms of the three priorities mentioned, how do you differentiate between programmes/projects that are 'urgent and important' and 'not urgent, but important'?

The identification of priorities is based on a process of consultations and review of the final plan with experts using science based data. The top 3 area already considered urgent and important due to current experiences in climate changes to manage impact on our people and community considering our limited funds.

1. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management through Evacuation Center

Currently our programs are for strong evacuation centers to ensure survival for now as the typhoons passing through our area are getting stronger every year. We are construction 4 evacuation centers with 2 already being completed for the communities with highest population and targeting at least 1 center for each of the barangay units.

2. Food Security through Organic Farming and Environmental Management

We need to reduce cost of food production, reduce impact on soil, and better fisheries management to have a more sustainable food source. Based on our consultations, organic farming and marine protected area management are best methods to improve production without entailing heavy investment.

3. Capacity Building and Resiliency through Education and Health Services

Improvement of the education services to increase literacy to all people to have better understanding of IEC campaigns on climate adaptation programs to improve their choices. Health services are to ensure we are capacitated to respond during disasters especially that we are an island community and we also have our own island communities.

Alfredo M Coro

Municipal Mayor

Municipality of Del Carmen

Siargao Islands, Philippines

[Back to Top](#)

[Jim Hicklin](#), Grant Writer, Ministry of Finance, Republic of the Marshall Islands (Posted on 19 Aug 2015)

Dr. King,

Thank you once again for hosting this series and allowing those involved in climate change adaptation from Asia and the Pacific to share their knowledge, ideas, and experiences. Below, are my responses to your latest questions.

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

In November 2010, a review of the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Disaster Risk Management National Action Plan (DRM NAP) was completed, which highlighted the need to further extend the scope of the DRM NAP to incorporate the impacts and risks associated with climate change. The DRM NAP therefore provides much of the groundwork for an action plan for climate change, as many of the impacts associated with climate change will be an enhancement of existing risks and threats (e.g. water and food security, coastal erosion). A Joint National Action Plan (JNAP) for both disaster risk management and climate change was therefore deemed a practical and strategic way to address risk in the RMI holistically. The RMI's JNAP has strong foundations via the existence of the DRM NAP, it is updated with the additional risks and threats climate change is likely to bring, which are described in RMI's National Climate Change Policy Framework. In total, there are six JNAP goals, which were refined and revised over several rounds of national consultations, allowing for the national strategy for risk reduction to be country led and informed by all relevant stakeholders.

The top three goals of the Republic of the Marshall Islands according to the Joint National Action Plan (JNAP) for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management are:

Goal 1: Establish and support an enabling environment for improved coordination of disaster risk management/climate change adaptation in the Marshall Islands.

Goal 2: Public education and awareness of effective DRM/CCA responses from local to national level.

Goal 3: Enhanced emergency preparedness and response at all levels.

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

The RMI is lagging behind in creating an enabling environment for improved

coordination for climate change adaptation. Various government offices are engaged, but the endemic lack of communication and coordination of efforts continues. Various offices serve as the focal points for various outside development partners, and the external and internal efforts to address adaptation are not unified. Therefore, there are currently projects and proposals in the pipeline, but this lack of coordination continues to reduce the efficiency in adaptation efforts. A reorganization of offices and efforts with the assignment of clear responsibilities by the national government would be beneficial.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

Personally, I feel that national development should always be the priority, and that now climate change adaptation is just an added factor in planning that development. Human beings, cultures, governments must always adapt to change to progress. Our goal should be Sustainable and Resilient Development (SRD), not just climate change adaptation. In an atoll nation like the RMI, the effects of climate change must be factored in on all plans for infrastructure and services. This is beginning to happen as people have become more aware of climate change and adaptation measures, and a better mindset is developing in this regard.

Best regards,

Jim Hicklin
Grant Writer
Ministry of Finance
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[Back to Top](#)

[Patrick Jasper](#), Asst. General Manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), India (Posted on 18 Aug 2015)

Dear Dr. King,

Thank you once again for inviting me to be a part of this exchange and for sharing my views. I have read with interest some of the views of my fellow participants. Sorry for the late reply but here goes.

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

India is the seventh-largest country in the world, with a total area of 3,166,414 sq. km and measures 3,214 km from north to south and 2,933 km

from east to west. It has a land frontier of 15,200 km and a coastline of 7,517 km. Simply put, it is huge and as such the priorities are different from region to region.

I reproduce below from an article by Bruce Jones and Samir Saran which puts India's Dilemma perfectly.

"But India faces a predicament all previous countries that used energy to reduce poverty did not. It stands on the verge of industrialization just as the world may finally be willing to take multilateral action to reduce carbon emissions. Possessing vulnerable coastlines and reliant on the monsoon and glacial melt, India is as vulnerable as any to the consequences of collective action failure on climate. But for India, the tradeoffs between environment and growth are harsher than perhaps anywhere else. India's overall size in both population and emissions accords it unique attention for a low-income country in the global climate debate; yet its relative poverty and low per-capita energy use compared to every other large emitter creates what Indians view as a justified overriding imperative for poverty elimination."

With this in mind I will try and address what I believe should be our three top priorities:

a. Climate proofing agriculture

It is estimated that of the 144 million hectares of arable land in India, 94 million hectares fall under dry lands constituting 65% which produces about 40% of the total food grains that feeds 40% of the total population. Agriculture in these dry lands depend upon the vagaries of the Monsoon and is directly related to the food security of our country. As Climate change marches on, these lands bear the brunt of its effects. Climate proofing these lands and enhancing the collective resilience of the farmers who cultivate this land is the first priority for our country. The task is daunting.

b. Protecting our coastlines and flood control

India has a coastline of 7,517 km. It has twelve rivers which are classified as major rivers, with the total catchment area exceeding 2,528,000 km². The mangrove area covers a total of 4,461 km² which comprises 7% of the world's total mangrove cover. As such India is highly prone to flooding and sea level rise. Protecting our coastlines and river systems and communities which live on them and developing effective counter measures through properly managed disaster recovery systems is our next priority.

c. Urban Adaptation

By 2025, an estimated 70 Indian cities are expected to have a population size of over one million. In addition, Delhi, Mumbai and Kolkatta are set to become mega urban regions and will be among the largest urban concentrations in the world. Without effective adaptation to climate change there will be very serious consequences for the most people residing in the cities in India. Effective Urban Disaster Management Plans, water supply, affordable housing etc. are some of the major priorities in urban areas.

How did we identify these priorities? My Organisation NABARD is working with millions of small and marginal farmers across the country who are directly affected by climate change. We have been engaged in adaptation related activities for over two decades and these farmers and tribal

communities have helped us to understand the priorities and provided us with a wealth of knowledge and experience.

The National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), was prepared by the Prime Minister's Council on Climate Change and published in June 2008. The plan formulates the government's climate strategy and addresses both adaptation and mitigation issues. The focus will be on promoting understanding of climate change, adaptation and mitigation, energy efficiency and natural resource conservation. The NAPCC plans to institutionalize the identified eight national missions by the respective ministries. The eight missions are, i) National Solar Mission ii) National Mission for Enhanced Energy Efficiency iii) National Mission on Sustainable Habitat iv) National Water Mission v) National Mission for Sustaining the Himalayan Ecosystem vi) National Mission for a Green India vii) National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture and viii) National Mission on Strategic Knowledge for Climate Change. In addition each state of the country prepares its own State Action Plan. India has also established the National Adaptation Fund which is being operationalised during the current year.

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

Over the last two years as the National Implementing Entity to the Adaptation Fund, NABARD has submitted five projects amounting to US\$ 7.3 million. The AF Board has recently sanctioned the first set of two projects with an outlay of US\$ 5.0 million for promoting climate resilient agriculture systems in West Bengal, enabling the mangroves & fisheries sector in Andhra Pradesh and inland fisheries in Madhya Pradesh. We are also preparing projects for drought proofing and improving the resilience of dry land farmers.

However for a country the size of India this is too small and the barriers are many. Capacity building of the Government Sector is a big challenge. More often than not they tend to migrate towards mitigation projects because the concept is simpler and the impacts are clearer and quantifiable. Developing an adaptation project is more complex and involves dynamics which are not readily quantifiable. But the Government Sector with its numerous line departments and ground level staff has the reach and the network needed for formulation and implementation of adaptation projects provided their capacities are built.

Involvement of the private sector is also a challenge as the profit motive is not so easily justifiable vis-a-vis the costs and the efforts involved. Here also the long term benefits of adaptation need to be explained in terms which business in India understand. We are already engaging corporates in India through their vast CSR funding.

Civil Society though numerous is still not geared up to access finance for adaptation activities. Accessing Finance especially from International sources requires skill and dedication if quality project reports are to be prepared. Here also NABARD has taken a lead.

Progress is slow but we believe we are making an impact and in the next few years with more funding support for capacity building we will be able to make

a significant impact.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

Yes that is true, that is what should happen. Ideally. For example a road is being built. Planners must take into account expected climate over the next 20 years to plan the height of the road if it is to be long lasting. Building a sea wall should also follow the same parameters. In fact any infrastructure at all must follow a climate lens approach. Detailed guidelines have been issued for infrastructure climate proofing by agencies like the ADB which can be dovetailed into local planning processes.

However this is not happening. In most places it is business as usual and the fact that climate change could play a vital part in planning cost considerations has not yet seeped in the planning process. We are to see a synergy of climate change research and planning for climate change in all spheres of the country. It is left to NGOs and innovators in government and private sector to come up with engaging projects which can fit into the adaptation framework.

Thank you,

Patrick Jasper
Asst. General Manager
NABARD, India

[Back to Top](#)

[Ky Quang Vinh](#), Director, Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City, Vietnam (Posted on 17 Aug 2015)

Dear Dr. King,

I have some ideas want to discuss as following:

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

In the Mekong Delta, we have three priority issues that need to be solved are: The ground is sinking deeper cause flooding; water scarcity; and thunderstorms tornado. To determine the priorities and action plans compiled adapt municipal government established the Climate change Coordination Office of Can Tho City (CCCO). This office is specializing in responding both to raise awareness and capacity and measures to support research and implementation activities.

NAPAs or NAPs are not much help in detecting these problems. We only

discovered thanks to the statistics locally and specialized studies from abroad.

To mobilize all stakeholders, including community to participate in selecting priority issues, we apply the method "From bottom up to incorporate the support of scientist and top down". Tools to implement this method is HCVA Survey (Hazards, Capacity, Vulnerability Assessment) and the SLD conference (Share, Learning, Dialog) and at the same time basing on the real local data and statistics.

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

The problems: land subsidence cause deeper flooding; scarcity of clean water and tornado are new issues have been summarized and accepted in recent times. We are proposing to research and find the best methods, the most properly for solving them to perform locally.

These problem was slow finding out and acceptance for several reasons. Which may mentioned: the lack of knowledge of local leaders; interests of local leadership team; politicizing the local development activities. The local leaders want to take advantage of investment from outside the city to take the vote, despite the failure or the loss may have.

The foregoing does not mean that priorities are ignored. It just shows that the disaster of local reality is not the top priority, which is the economic benefit, or the political benefit of a group of local leaders.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

In my opinion the development activities is also the adaptation activities in the era of climate change. Development activities and response activities in the era of climate change is just one.

For example, instead of your normal build a house, you build a saving energy house; or it may even be energy self-sufficiency. It is the progress of science and technology building. These jobs sometimes do not need to invest more than a house built in the old way. Please do not use the word "mainstreaming" since this term makes the development and adaptation are two separate activities, even contradictory.

We can see many constructions which can meet development goals has to cope done on many countries. In Can Tho we built river embankments combine road for erosion control as a way to meet the needs of human transportation or flood control when necessary.

Development activities and adaptation activities in the future must be one activity, which is the correct view. Because when you think this way, the

economy will grow thanks to adaptation activities instead of you spend money just for adaptation.

Thank you,

Ky Quang Vinh

Director

Climate Change Coordination Office of CanTho City

Vietnam

<http://www.biendoikhihau.cantho.gov.vn/>

[Back to Top](#)

[Bruce Carrad](#), USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 14 Aug 2015)

Dear Mayor Coro,

I have read your note and see that you are looking for some practical examples & suggestions of how to prepare concrete proposals for adaptation financing.

Can I suggest that you take a look at the projects that have been funded by the global Adaptation Fund -- these are available on <http://adaptation-fund.org>. Look under *projects and programmes* and see the various types of projects that have been funded.

With regards to the specific three topics you are interested in you will find examples of *sustainable agriculture* projects, and many components within projects that cover *capacity and resilience building/training*. I'm not sure what you will find on *evacuation centres* but you can look. In the project documents you will find examples of clearly presented documentation, backed up by facts/photos/maps, as well as examples of the costs and benefits of the proposed activities and the implementation arrangements.

If you wish to prepare projects for international financing then there are active bilateral, NGO and multilateral agencies in the Philippines, all contactable both direct and formally via the GOP. All require good quality proposals -- hence the suggestion to look at projects that have been funded as a guide to the quality of documentation that is required.

There are other websites as well but the above will give you a good start.

I work with Peter, Lee and the team on adaptation in the Asia Pacific region.

All the best,

Bruce Carrad

[USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#)

Bangkok, Thailand

[Back to Top](#)

[Shom Teoh](#), Programme Manager, [Sustainable Cities](#), Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand (Posted on 13 Aug 2015)

Dear Mayor Alfredo,

Thank you for your sharing once again! Your replies always help me unveil some previously unknown 'black holes' of knowledge in the curious galaxy of my mind.

Please allow me to pick your brains (as well as our friends' in this *Exchange* list) to examine some issues further.

1) You mentioned that the lack of expertise to validate your "designed programs will indeed address the identified issues we want to address" as one of the challenges faced. This is very interesting, can you explain more?

- Do you mean that the priority issues (and corresponding programmes/projects to address these issues) identified through barangay-level consultations may lack accuracy/validity, because laypersons on the ground may not necessarily know enough?
- Or, do you think that the priorities and corresponding programmes and identified are mostly valid/reasonable, yet you are having trouble convincing 'higher-ups' (those who approve the budget) to agree?
- When you propose such priority programmes/issues for central funding support, is it a largely 'smooth' or 'bumpy' process? 'Smooth' meaning not many rounds of proposal revisions are required before the final approved budget is granted.

2) Related to the above, can you share what kinds of expert validation is most lacking for your city? (relating to specific problems faced in those 3 priorities mentioned). For example, what kind of expert validation is required for "camp management process" and "early warning process without high cost of operations"? Where do you usually try to source such expertise and what problems have you faced? How do you determine whether the expertise is trustworthy/credible?

3) In terms of the three priorities mentioned, how do you differentiate between programmes/projects that are 'urgent and important' and 'not urgent, but important'?

I would love to hear your frank and deep thoughts on the above.

Thank you and regards,

Shom Teoh (Ms.)

Programme Manager, Sustainable Cities

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

[Back to Top](#)

[Mayor Alfredo M Coro](#), Municipality of Del Carmen, Siargao Islands, Philippines (Posted on 6 Aug 2015)

Hi Dr King,

Warm greetings. I am privileged to share our experience in brief. Thanks for these exchanges as it helps us understand if we are doing things right and efficient.

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

The projects of the Municipality of Del Carmen undergo a planning process which includes various stakeholders from our villages or “barangays” through a series of consultations. Based on their submitted list of priorities, it will then be reviewed with the data obtained from the ECOTOWN Program of the Climate Change Commission for necessary climate adaptation measures. The completed list will be presented back to the community through the Municipal Development Council Meeting which we do twice a year.

Currently our top 3 priorities being in an island ecosystem and as a regular path of the strong typhoon from the Pacific includes:

1. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management through Evacuation Center
2. Food Security through Organic Farming and Environmental Management
3. Capacity Building and Resiliency through Education and Health Services

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

The top 3 priority programs of our community are to ensure sustainable development and survival of our people and all are designed to support climate adaptation:

1. Disaster Risk Reduction and Management through Evacuation Center: We should be able to accommodate 2000 families during super typhoons as we normally evacuate our smaller island communities towards the main island. We are still improving our camp management process during times of evacuation and additional measures in terms of ensuring early warning process without high cost of operations.

2. Food Security through Organic Farming and Environmental Management: Organic Farming will maintain our yield but increase income of farmers allowing them extra funds to support their other needs to be climate adaptive and resilient. Environmental Management is necessary to ensure balance in development and have sustainable ecosystem economic returns include better fish stock and marine products for fisher folks, ecotourism opportunities for small business, etc.

3. Capacity Building and Resiliency through Education and Health Services: Education and Health basic public services that has to evolve also with new

threats brought by climate changes. We need to maximize technology through TV / Internet Based learnings for Education, and improved health management through computerization for efficient client care and telemedicine for fast access.

Limitations:

- Expert Support to validate our designed programs will indeed address the identified issues we want to address
- Funding Support to execute some of the programs thus we have to carefully plan out biggest possible impacts of the proposed programs for priority funding.

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

Being in the local government and absorbing directly the impact of climate change in all public service areas, I strongly recommend to mainstream adaptation activities in development planning. All governments have limited resources to ensure sustainability of each community thus putting in the necessary climate adaptation measures to improve the success of the programs will really help. We have done this in our community and some are already adapting but lack of experts to validate if the processes done are correct is our challenge.

Yours in public service,

Alfredo M Coro
Municipal Mayor
Municipality of Del Carmen
Siargao Islands, Philippines

[Back to Top](#)

E-DISCUSSION LAUNCH EMAIL (posted on 5 Aug 2015)

[Dr. Peter King](#), Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Team Leader for the [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#) project, and Senior Policy Advisor, [Institute for Global Environmental Strategies \(IGES\)](#) Regional Centre, Bangkok, Thailand
(Posted on 5 Aug 2015)

Dear friends and colleagues,

Thank you for participating in last June's [Exchange](#) discussion and 'live' [online chat](#) session where we discussed extensively the issue of financing urban adaptation projects in Asia-Pacific and the challenges of getting money and resources to city-level governments that many so urgently need. I am constantly getting feedback that you enjoy these *Exchanges* and value the opinions and suggestions raised by participants.

Throughout our discussion, the questions of governance (*i.e. ensuring efficient flow of money*) and prioritization (*i.e. matching national and local needs*) have resonated. We touched on two very important issues. So as a follow-up, I would like us to deliberate further on one of them in this *Exchange* – the critical question of prioritization.

Many of you might already know, among the many hats that I wear, I serve as Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance Team Leader for the [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific](#) project. In that role, we work closely with government officials to help them develop solid, bankable project proposals for adaptation financing. A key component of good project preparation is first determining each country's adaptation priorities and actions. Financing is scarce so the highest priority projects should be funded first.

I am interested to learn more about the adaptation priorities in your countries and communities, how you went about defining them, and the successes you have had in focusing resources on addressing those priorities (*i.e. translating priorities into actual projects*). Please consider the questions below:

1. What are your top three priorities for climate change adaptation in your country or community? How did you identify these priorities? Have the [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) and [National Adaptation Plans \(NAPs\)](#) processes under the [UNFCCC](#) been helpful to define those priorities? How were the key stakeholders engaged in the prioritization process?

2. Have you been able to turn your top adaptation priorities into actual climate change adaptation projects? If so, how has that been done? Please share an example. If not, what are the barriers preventing those priorities from becoming concrete, implemented projects? Has available funding dictated which projects are given priority, possibly meaning that the top priority projects are still languishing?

3. Many have argued that adaptation activities cannot be divorced easily from development. Adaptation should not happen in parallel; it must be mainstreamed into development planning. Is this what is happening on the ground? Is adaptation being integrated within other development investments in your country – whether in transport infrastructure, agriculture, sanitation, etc.? Or is adaptation normally treated as stand-alone projects?

Like the previous *Exchange*, I will be hosting a 'live' online chat session on **Wednesday, 19 August 2015, 10:30am-11:30am (UTC+07:00) Bangkok time** to answer any questions and discuss in greater detail the important points coming out of this discussion. Joining me is USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific's Chief of Party, Lee Baker, who will also be taking your questions.

To participate, simply visit the APAN web portal: <http://www.asiapacificadapt.net/live-chat> and log on to our virtual chat room. We will share more details on how to participate shortly.

I look forward to receiving your responses to the questions above and to another robust and informative *Exchange*.

Thank you once again.

Dr. Peter N. King

Team Leader

Adaptation Project Preparation and Finance
USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific

Senior Policy Advisor

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)
Regional Centre
Bangkok, Thailand

Admin matters: For each *Exchange*, community members have about 2 weeks to share any thoughts, ideas, and experiences via the-exchange@adapt-asia.org with the group. At the end of the *Exchange* period, a consolidated summary of the discussion will be shared.

The Exchange Series on Climate Change Adaptation is facilitated by the APAN Knowledge Management Team and supported by the [USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project](#). The team moderates the exchanges and ensures that members receive a maximum of one email a day. Messages posted reflect the personal views of the contributors and not the positions of their organizations.

If you would like to opt-out of the *Exchange* at any time, please contact Augustine Kwan, Programme Manager (Knowledge Management and Outreach) at the IGES Regional Centre at kwan@iges.or.jp

The Exchange Series on Climate Change Adaptation is made possible with the generous support of the USAID Adapt Asia-Pacific project. To learn more about APAN and our partners, visit: <http://www.asiapacificadapt.net/>



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