

Addressing Climate Change Through Integrated Responses: Linking adaptation and mitigation

May 4, 2021

Session 1: Integrated Climate Policy Making: Framing the issue

Key Messages

- Sustainable development, healthy ecosystems, and climate change mitigation/adaptation are inextricably connected. **There is an increasing interest and need for more integrated solutions**, which can be achieved by identifying linkages and designing policies that maximize synergies and enhance the effectiveness of climate resilience efforts.
- The global pandemic has caused challenges and delays in climate action. Importantly, **countries' adaptation and mitigation priorities can guide investment priorities if we want COVID-19 recovery to be green, fair, and resilient**. COVID-19 recovery and climate adaptation and mitigation should go hand in hand—they offer a crucial opportunity to plan for more integrated approaches, capitalize on synergies, and strive to achieve climate resilience.
- Examples of **integrated approaches** can be found in many different sectors, including **energy, infrastructure, agriculture, water, or cities**. **Nature-based solutions (NbS)** provide both mitigation and adaptation benefits (e.g., green roofs, greenways, mangrove restoration) and a path for sustainable and inclusive growth, offering significant co-benefits for human well-being and the environment.
- Despite the multiple benefits, **attention must be paid to identifying synergies and trade-offs** among mitigation and adaptation actions. Decision-support tools can play an essential role for planners and decision-makers.
- Further, critical challenges may be overcome by including **a high-level mandate to plan and implement climate-related policy processes** in an integrated and coordinated way, **addressing power balances between ministries** through strong and functioning coordination mechanisms, and **recognizing the interconnectedness** of policy processes.
- However, many integrated solutions (such as NbS) are often implemented on an ad hoc basis and **are not to scale**. Integrating those solutions in more comprehensive planning efforts **requires coordination** and **functioning institutional settings**. Building on **previous experience with ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA)** and **partnering with the private sector** can help leverage the potential.

Challenges to overcome include:

- **The need for a high-level mandate to plan and implement climate-related policy processes in an integrated way**
- Breaking down silos and **addressing power imbalances between ministries** through strong and functioning coordination mechanisms

- Resources to respond to competing commitments
- **Recognizing the interconnectedness** of policy processes.

Integrated solutions in wider planning efforts require:

- **Strong coordination and well-functioning institutional settings**
- Better understanding of assessing synergies and trade-offs
- Better information to make synergies visible
- **Promotion and scale-up of integrated solutions such as NbS**
- **An improved understanding of how to blend adaptation and mitigation solutions—“*Adaptigation.*”**