

## Viet Nam's Approach to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of the National Adaptation Plan

Briefing Note

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### Introduction

Viet Nam is among the most vulnerable countries to climate change impacts in the world. Germanwatch ranked it the 13th most affected by extreme weather events between 2000 and 2019 (Eckstein, 2021), and the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index ranked it 126th most vulnerable out of 182 countries (University of Notre Dame, 2023).

In order to adapt, Viet Nam's government has multiple policies and actions to respond to climate change impacts—including tropical depressions, floods, droughts, and increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events—that pose serious threats to the country's stability and its ability to achieve climate-resilient development.

Viet Nam has ratified the National Adaptation Plan for 2021–2030 with a vision to 2050<sup>1</sup> (NAP), which is accompanied by a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system<sup>2</sup> to track progress toward the plan's implementation. This country brief provides an overview of Viet Nam's NAP M&E system and lessons learned from initial experiences with its implementation.

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<sup>1</sup> The NAP was issued by Viet Nam's Prime Minister in Decision 1055/QĐ-TTg, dated July 20, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> The M&E system for the NAP was issued by the Prime Minister in Decision No. 148/QĐ-TTg on January 28, 2022. The M&E system was developed with technical and financial assistance from the United Nations Development Programme.

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## Viet Nam's NAP M&E System

Viet Nam's 2020 NAP aims to reduce the country's vulnerability to and risk from the impacts of climate change.

The NAP sets out 142 priority actions in seven sectors (see Box 1) under three specific objectives:

- i) Improve the effectiveness of climate change adaptation by strengthening the state management of climate change, including through climate change adaptation activities, while promoting its integration into the strategy and planning system.
- ii) Strengthen resilience by enhancing the adaptive capacity of communities, economic sectors, and ecosystems through investment in adaptation actions, science and technology, and raising awareness of preparedness to adjust to climate changes.
- iii) Reduce disaster risk and damage reduction and increase preparedness to respond to natural disasters and extreme climate increases due to climate change (Government of Viet Nam, 2020).

### Box 1. Viet Nam's NAP at a glance

**Time horizon:** 2021-2030, with a vision to 2050

**Lead ministry:** Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MONRE)

**Priority sectors:**

- 1) Strengthening state management and resources
- 2) Agriculture
- 3) Natural disaster prevention
- 4) Environment and biodiversity
- 5) Water resources
- 6) Infrastructure
- 7) Public health; labour and society; culture, sports, and tourism

**Number of identified priority adaptation actions:** 142

The NAP process aims to implement Viet Nam's nationally determined contribution (NDC) commitments on climate change adaptation to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

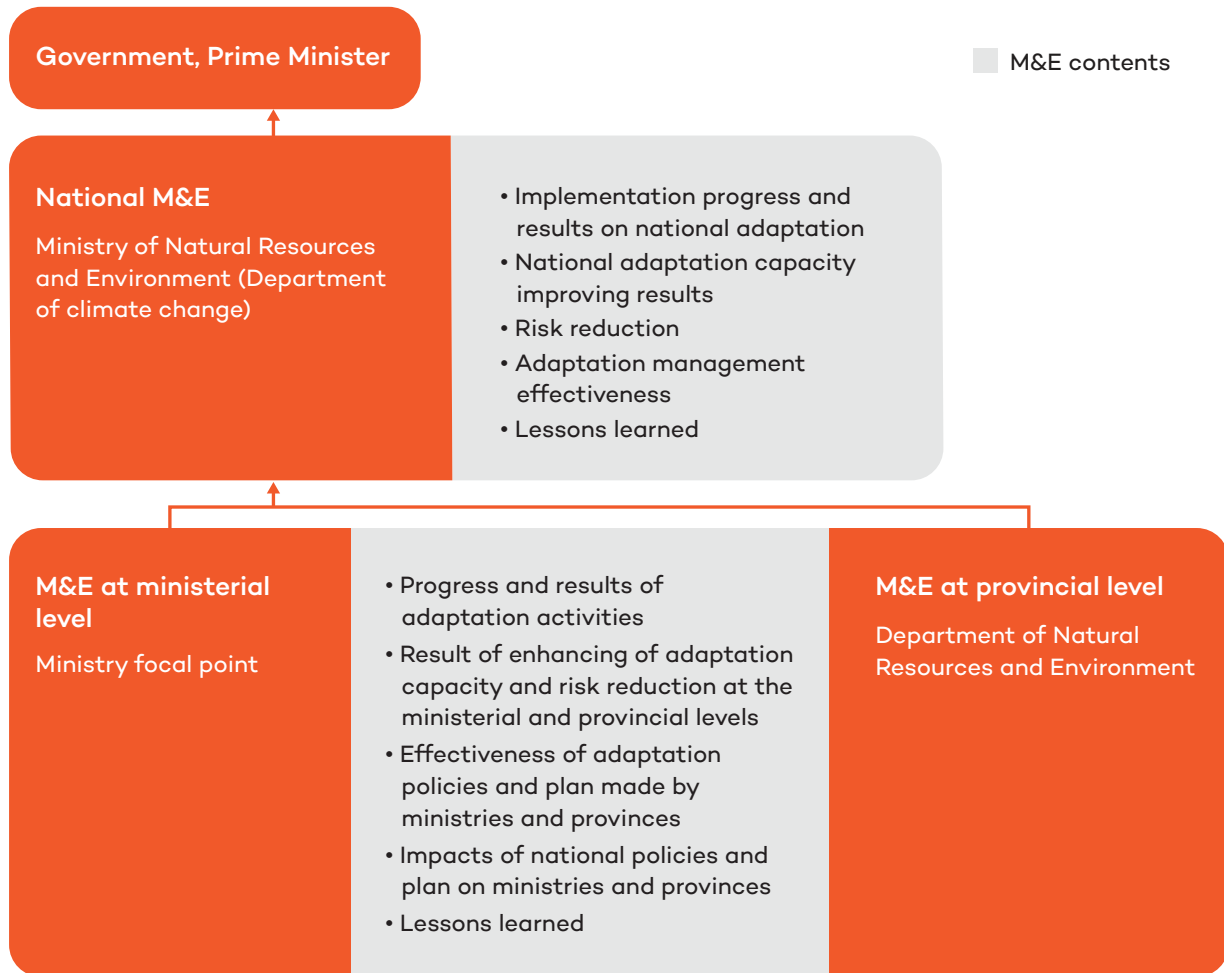
Based on the NAP's objectives and priority actions, Viet Nam's national climate change adaptation M&E system was developed and launched in January 2022<sup>3</sup>. The objectives of this M&E system are to monitor and evaluate the progress and achievements of adaptation activities; provide information to monitor the achievement of national adaptation goals and the implementation of international commitments; and improve the efficiency of adaptation activities and state management of climate change adaptation.

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<sup>3</sup> Viet Nam's NAP M&E system was developed with technical support from the United Nations Development Programme, with financial assistance from the Green Climate Fund.

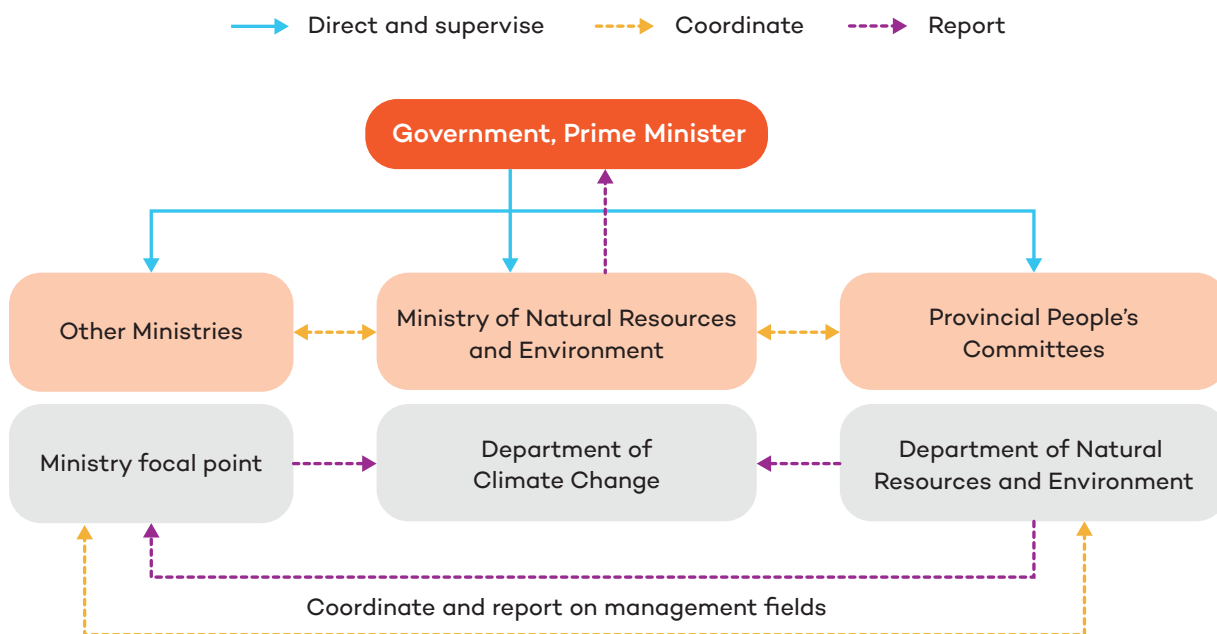
This system sets out M&E contents (see Figure 1), accompanied by a set of specific M&E indicators of climate change adaptation activities. The M&E system also establishes responsibilities for its implementation among different actors, including ministries, ministerial-level agencies, and provincial-level People’s Committees (Figure 2).

**Figure 1.** A summary of M&E contents and report flow



Source: Nguyen et al., 2022.

**Figure 2.** Organization, supervision, and coordination of the implementation of the M&E system



Source: Nguyen et al., 2022.

## Establishing a Platform for M&E Data and Information

To coordinate the reporting of M&E results on adaptation, the Department of Climate Change (DCC) has developed an online M&E system that is available in English and Viet Namese. The system uses a database connected to a website to share news, data, and information on climate change adaptation (<http://adaptation.dcc.gov.vn>).

The system is designed to fulfill MONRE's responsibility to report M&E results online and to guide ministries, ministerial-level agencies, and provincial-level People's Committees in implementing the M&E system. The system's objectives are to:

- Allow management staff to collect and synthesize data and more quickly develop reports on the M&E of climate change adaptation activities.
- Allow ministries, ministerial-level agencies, and provincial-level People's Committees to update and report basic information on M&E online.
- Ensure information protection in development and online operations.

Each ministry or locality is provided with an account to access the system and share its reporting. MONRE will consolidate and synthesize the results of M&E and prepare both an annual and a 5-year report for the national government.

The M&E report that is produced will be a source of information for evaluating the achievement of related SDG targets, including:

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- SDG 1, “End poverty in all its forms everywhere,”
  - SDG 6, “Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all,”
  - SDG 11, “Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,”
  - SDG 13, “Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,” and
  - SDG 15, “Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss” (United Nations, 2015).

It also supports an evaluation of the priorities of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, especially the priorities “Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk” and “Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience.” Similarly, SDG and Sendai Framework reporting will provide information for upgrading and finalizing the M&E indicators.

## Capacity Building, Training, and Guidance on the M&E System

With a NAP M&E system established, the DCC provided capacity building for line ministries and local authorities to support their implementation of the NAP M&E system. This support included a series of consultations and training workshops to introduce the M&E system to stakeholders and consult about developing a NAP M&E manual (Nguyen et al., 2022)

The workshops for ministries, sectors, and localities identified some common challenges for NAP M&E, including how to mobilize the funds needed for local actors to undertake the M&E of adaptation and the challenges related to collecting information for specific indicators. The events collected stakeholders’ input for the NAP M&E manual, raised awareness about the NAP M&E approach, and established a dialogue to be taken forward as ministries, sectors, and localities monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of climate change adaptation activities in their work.

## Key Lessons

The following key lessons have emerged through the process of establishing Viet Nam’s NAP M&E system and the associated M&E capacity-building efforts.

- **Build on existing M&E approaches.** The NAP M&E system builds on M&E approaches to climate change adaptation undertaken for previous programs and projects—for example, the 2013 *Impact Assessment of the Climate Change Response Support Program* (SP-RCC Program).
- **Start small: implementing the M&E system requires time and practical experience.** For the initial set of M&E indicators, a moderate number should be selected to allow time to pilot the M&E system and test that the first steps are heading in the right direction. Highly aggregated indicators can be quite complex and difficult to implement but are also essential for addressing complex questions that need to be answered through NAP M&E—for example, assessing the effectiveness of adaptation activities, assessing the

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benefits of adaptation actions for vulnerable groups, and assessing progress toward gender equality and broader sustainable development. Difficulties and obstacles in implementing the M&E system need to be studied and overcome to create a complete and comprehensive M&E system in the future.

- **An M&E online system is worth the investment.** The system allows M&E reporting to be carried out quickly and easily. The public interface shares data and information that can help ministries and localities access and learn from each other, complemented by a password-protected database for information submitted by ministries, sectors, and localities.
- **Capacity building, consultation, and training are essential.** The series of capacity-building workshops aiming to share the M&E system will play an important role in guiding its implementation. Such consultations and training sessions are opportunities to reflect on and clarify M&E activities, helping ministries and localities to identify how the M&E system fits into their work plan while also building their capacity. The ideas and suggestions based on the actors' work are valuable for the process to continue to supplement and improve the national M&E system, as well as the NAP.

## Conclusion

Despite the important role that NAP M&E plays in tracking the progress of the NAP's implementation, many countries that have developed NAPs have yet to develop M&E systems (Leiter, 2021).

Viet Nam has achieved a significant milestone by developing a NAP M&E system and beginning to implement it. Understanding the experiences of peer countries—in the region and around the world—on NAP M&E may provide lessons for Viet Nam as it continues to build on and refine the system over time. One question to explore will be how to formalize the role of “learning,” recognizing that many countries are also adopting monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) systems.

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## References and Further Reading

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