

**STATEMENT OF WORK**  
**Interim Evaluation of Support**  
**for the International Institute for Sustainable Development**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The work of the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) is currently guided by its 2020–2025 strategic plan, [\*Tomorrow Needs Us Today\*](#), which spells out a vision for a “world where people and the planet thrive.” IISD is funded from diversified sources, a core of which is through bilateral government grants.

Since July 2023, IISD has received support from the Government of Ireland’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, represented by Irish Aid, to advance priorities in IISD’s 2020–2025 strategic plan, with a particular focus on adaptation to climate change in developing countries. Through a grant agreement under a 3-year Memorandum of Understanding (2023–2026), IISD has received two 1-year tranches of financial support for activities implemented under three workstreams:

- IISD’s Resilience program
- National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Global Network Secretariat (hosted by IISD’s Resilience program)
- IISD Earth Negotiations Bulletin

This statement of work frames the parameters for a performance evaluation of these three workstreams between July 2023 and June 2025. As part of the performance evaluation, the Evaluator will assess the extent to which IISD has achieved its strategic priorities as defined by programmatic documents and strategies. The evaluation will therefore examine:

- The extent to which the three IISD workstreams have achieved the goals and objectives;
- The effectiveness of the three workstreams in their different areas of activity;
- Factors that have led to the successes and/or failures of the three workstreams.

As IISD will continue with a third tranche of funding from the Government of Ireland from July 2025 to June 2026, the evaluation is expected to inform the implementation of activities under the remainder of its current support window and inform the future strategic direction of IISD’s work under each workstream. The evaluation is expected to be informed by a combination of desk-based document review and interviews with key informants. If necessary, field visits can be considered.

## Summary of Information

<b>Workstream names</b>	NAP Global Network Resilience program Earth Negotiation Bulletin
<b>Donor</b>	Government of Ireland, Ministry for Foreign Affairs
<b>Contract recipient</b>	International Institute for Sustainable Development
<b>Funding period</b>	July 1, 2023–June 30, 2025
<b>Active geographic regions</b>	Global
<b>External or internal evaluation?</b>	External
<b>Estimated ceiling of the evaluation</b>	EUR 65,000

## 2. BACKGROUND

This section provides information regarding the background, objectives, and structure of the three workstreams to be evaluated.

### 2A. The NAP Global Network

The NAP Global Network supports developing countries to advance their NAP processes to help accelerate climate change adaptation efforts around the world. It was established in 2014 at the 20th session of the UN Climate Change Conference (COP 20) in Lima, Peru, initiated by adaptation practitioners from 11 developing and developed countries. Today, it is a multi-funder initiative, with financial support for the Network currently provided by Canada, Germany, Ireland, and the ClimateWorks Foundation. It connects over 3,000 participants from more than 170 countries working on national adaptation planning and action, delivering direct support to more than 90 countries. The NAP Global Network Secretariat is hosted by IISD.

The NAP Global Network is in the final year of implementing its 2020–2025 strategic plan and will release its new strategic plan for the period 2025 to 2030 in July 2025. The Network’s goal is to advance national adaptation planning and action in developing countries through the following objective areas:

- supporting national-level action on NAP development and implementation
- facilitating sustained South–South peer learning and exchange on NAP processes
- generating, synthesizing, and sharing knowledge on NAP processes

The NAP Global Network’s strategic direction is guided by an international Steering Committee that meets annually and is comprised of adaptation experts and practitioners from developing countries and development cooperation agencies. Day-to-day activities are managed by the NAP Global Network Secretariat, hosted by IISD’s Resilience program. The Secretariat works closely with a Management Team committee consisting of representatives of each of the donors that have provided initial financial support to the Network—Canada, Germany, and Ireland—in coordinating activities.

The NAP Global Network represents approximately 50% of the evaluation focus and program budget.

## **2B. The Resilience Program**

Under a second workstream, Irish Aid has supported investments in **IISD's Resilience program**, which leads IISD's work on [climate change adaptation](#) and its links to nature, equity, and peace. The program is built around the recognition that to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, societies must address the impacts of shocks and stresses, as well as what creates vulnerability to them in the first place. Within this context, the Resilience team works with governments, civil society, and communities to build resilience through three entry points:

- planning: developing and implementing strategies to prepare for a different and uncertain future
- people: advancing gender equality and social inclusion to strengthen resilience
- nature: harnessing the role of ecosystems to reduce risks

Irish Aid has provided core funding for the Resilience program to track and be responsive to policy research opportunities across these three entry points, as well as enhance its internal capacities. Specifically, investments in this workstream under the two tranches of funding have supported the following:

- expanding on and undertaking new knowledge creation and capacity-building activities to advance its work on climate change adaptation in the following three strategic thematic areas:
  - trade policy in support of climate resilience (under the Planning pillar): working with governments and policy researchers in climate-vulnerable countries to understand how trade policy settings can advance implementation of national adaptation priorities;
  - gender, intersectionality and climate change adaptation (under the People pillar): working with civil society partners, particularly from the Global South, to research and operationalize intersectional approaches to adaptation planning and policy-making;
  - leveraging behavioural sciences to scale-up gender-responsive and socially inclusive ecosystem-based adaptation solutions (under the Nature pillar): exploring what it looks like to develop effective (behaviourally informed) climate adaptation policy.
- amplifying contributions to international processes, with a focus on:
  - engagement in and analysis of international policy processes, such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to advance adaptation priorities at the global level;
  - contributions to the documented evidence base on adaptation through activities such as the production of peer-reviewed journal articles or involvement in flagship publications like the United Nations Environment Programme's Adaptation Gap Report and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change global assessments;
- strengthening capacity within the Resilience program to tell its own story by updating and consolidating the Resilience program's internal theory of change and by amplifying its reach through more strategic and innovative communications.

The Resilience program represents approximately 40% of the evaluation focus and program budget.

### 3C. The Earth Negotiation Bulletin program

For over 30 years, IISD's [Earth Negotiations Bulletin](#) (ENB) has provided neutral and authoritative accounts of international negotiations on the environment and sustainable development. Its work supports a transparent and equitable multilateral system that enhances sustainable development. The ENB team provides free daily coverage at sustainable development negotiations and events around the world, including the UNFCCC, as well as analysis of their outcomes. Its work is particularly important for stakeholders with limited capacity; ENB serves both as a resource for negotiators and a record of the policy preferences of both large and small delegations. This ensures that all delegations have a voice inside and outside negotiating rooms, contributing to robust participation in negotiations and greater equality in decision making.

The following activities were supported through the first two tranches of support from the Government of Ireland:

- coverage of the UNFCCC climate meetings, specifically the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body meetings (SB60 and SB62) and COP 28 and COP 29;
- knowledge products for stakeholders engaged in the UNFCCC process, namely a glossary and a handbook for new negotiators.

The ENB workstream represents approximately 10% of the evaluation focus and program budget.

## 3. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND QUESTIONS

Through completion of the evaluation, IISD is looking to assess the performance of the activities of the three workstreams in achieving their objectives and expected results, and to receive guidance on the priority and design of its activities until 2026 and beyond. The evaluation will focus on the following:

- **relevance** of the work completed under the workstreams
- **coherence** between the interventions made and other interventions in a country, sector, or within IISD
- **effectiveness** of the interventions in achieving their objectives
- **efficiency** with which resources were used
- **impact** that the workstreams have generated or are expected to generate
- **sustainability** of the benefits derived from the workstreams over time
- **gender equality and social inclusion** gains achieved through the interventions.

The evaluation should focus on answering the following questions related to each of the three workstreams, taking into consideration activities from July 2023 to June 2025. The questions below (as well as the approach for the evaluation) are expected to be revised and refined during the inception phase of

the evaluation. The Evaluator will review and finalize these and other questions, as needed, in collaboration with IISD before finalizing the evaluation design.

### **NAP Global Network Evaluation Questions**

1. *Technical assistance:* Through its provision of tailored short- and longer-term technical assistance identified through engagement with developing country governments:
  - To what extent has the NAP Global Network delivered its technical assistance in a country-driven manner that met the expectations and needs of participating developing country governments?
  - To what extent has the technical assistance provided by the NAP Global Network advanced the NAP processes in participating developing countries, for example, by improving in-country coordination and capacity consistent with the project's objectives?
2. *Peer learning:* By facilitating sustained peer learning and exchange opportunities for developing country representatives:
  - To what extent has the NAP Global Network provided peer learning events and exchange opportunities that deepened participants' technical knowledge of specific elements of the NAP process and enabled learning from peers in other countries?
  - How have the knowledge and experiences gained through peer learning and exchange activities subsequently led to concrete changes or next steps in the participants' NAP processes?
3. *Knowledge products:* Through its preparation and dissemination of knowledge products in various formats and languages:
  - To what extent have the knowledge products been used by developing country participants to inform the development and implementation of their NAP processes? How?
  - To what extent have knowledge products contributed to the positioning of the NAP Global Network as a thought leader on NAP processes? Which formats or products are most impactful?
4. *Engagement, coordination, and organization of work:* With respect to the structure and operation of its Secretariat:
  - Is the NAP Global Network's approach to programming relevant to deliver on the needs of developing countries?
  - Does the NAP Global Network successfully engage and collaborate with other bilateral and international organizations to support developing countries in advancing their NAP processes?

### **Resilience Program Evaluation Questions**

1. *Knowledge generation and sharing:* Through its thematic research and capacity-strengthening activities, as well as its engagement in international processes:

- To what extent are the selected thematic areas of work on trade policy, gender and intersectionality, and leveraging behavioural change, addressing the climate adaptation needs of developing countries?
- How have the research, engagement activities, and/or knowledge products advanced the knowledge of target audiences? Are the products reaching their intended audience?
- Have the activities undertaken integrated gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) considerations? Are they contributing to knowledge and actions in developing countries that advance GESI?

2. *Core capacity strengthening:* With respect to its efforts to tell its story better:

- Are supported communications capacity-strengthening activities relevant to the needs of the program? Are they effective in achieving their intended outcomes?
- Are core resources used and managed efficiently?

### **Earth Negotiation Bulletin**

1. *Negotiation coverage and knowledge products:* In relation to its coverage and analysis of the UNFCCC process, as well as its development of additional knowledge products:

- Has ENB coverage informed and advanced transparency in negotiations and equality in stakeholder participation for negotiators and observers involved in UNFCCC processes?
- Are the modalities of work and communication channels used by ENB for sharing coverage relevant, effective, and efficient? What are recommendations for improvements, including reaching broader audiences and newcomers to climate negotiations?

## **4. EVALUATION DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

The Evaluator will develop a tailored methodology for achieving the objectives of this evaluation and answering its key questions as part of the inception report. It is expected that the methodology used by the Evaluator can include the following:

- analytical and qualitative desk-based review of existing information and literature, including but not limited to strategies and internal documents; annual work plans and communications strategy; information from monitoring, evaluation, and learning systems; narrative and financial reports; project information; publications; internal and external reviews and evaluations;
- interviews with key staff within IISD;
- interviews and/or focus group discussions with Steering Committee members, project partners, contractors, and participants;
- a field visit to a partner country (not required but can be considered).

Potential site visits to two countries where activities supported by the Government of Ireland have been implemented, to be selected by the Evaluator with an emphasis on Small Island Developing States and least developed countries.

As much as possible, a standardized methodology should be applied across similar components within and across workstreams to ensure a consistent collection of the breadth and depth of information required to complete the evaluation. We recognize that due to the diversity of the activities under each workstream, the specific approach and methodologies can vary.

Due to the nature of the evaluation questions, using mixed methods is expected, along with a heavy focus on qualitative results. Theory-based approaches are encouraged. Qualitative data should be supplemented by quantitative data where possible, as well as by direct quotes and examples to illustrate summative qualitative findings.

IISD will support the collection of documents and provide contact information for key individuals. The documents provided will form the initial basis for the evaluation. However, the Evaluator is expected to go beyond existing material provided by IISD to consult all available documents and, importantly, gather new and original data from various sources to provide full and complete answers to the evaluation questions and to complete all required deliverables.

The Evaluator is expected to keep notes, documents, correspondence, etc., to support descriptive details of the research outcomes. It is anticipated that a strong administrative system will be needed to organize and keep track of this and other information collected as part of the evaluation. In particular, it is anticipated that the evaluation team will need regular tracking of communication with IISD, key implementing entities, and stakeholders to collect and analyze the complexity of the data and information collected through this evaluation.

## **5. DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The selected Evaluator is expected to provide the following deliverables to answer the evaluation questions guiding this statement of work:

- evaluation work plan
- evaluation design
- presentation summarizing draft key findings
- draft evaluation report
- final report.

Further information on the requirements for each deliverable will be shared with the successful team.

### **6A. Evaluation Work Plan**

Within 3 weeks of the contract being awarded, the lead Evaluator shall complete and present a draft work plan for the evaluation to designated contacts at IISD and Irish Aid. The work plan will clearly lay out the detailed steps to be taken to gather and analyze the data and information necessary to provide full and complete answers to the evaluation questions.

### **6B. Evaluation Design**

Within 3 weeks of the contract being awarded, the lead Evaluator shall provide a detailed evaluation design to the designated leads from IISD for review. The design should confirm the evaluation approach, criteria, and questions to be applied for the three workstreams. The design should also identify the research methodology (or methodologies) or data collection instruments that will be used to fully answer each evaluation question.

The evaluation design could identify criteria for determining Network participants to be interviewed, draft interview protocol(s), and a process for selecting and evaluating technical knowledge products developed by the three workstreams. The methodologies and proposed data collection instruments identified should be time- and staff-efficient as well as the most effective methodologies for achieving complete, reliable, and valid data to answer the evaluation questions.

Draft data collection questions for questionnaires, interviews, etc., should be shared with the designated leads from IISD to ensure accuracy and appropriateness prior to data collection. However, it will be the Evaluator's responsibility to design the questions and structure the data collection in a manner that allows for all evaluation questions to be fully answered in the final report.

#### **6C. Presentation Summarizing Draft Key Findings**

The evaluation team should provide a presentation to IISD and Irish Aid summarizing the draft findings contained in the draft evaluation report. This presentation should occur no later than 4 weeks before the end date of the contract. This will enable the Evaluator and IISD to consider any necessary revisions in advance of completion of the draft evaluation report.

#### **6D. Draft Evaluation Report**

The evaluation team should provide a complete initial draft of the evaluation to the designated leads at IISD no later than 3 weeks before the due date for the final report to allow time for an iterative process with the IISD. IISD and Irish Aid will be expected to provide feedback on the draft report within 1 week of receiving it. Feedback received is expected to be incorporated into the final report.

#### **6E. Final Evaluation Report**

The final report will be comprehensive in nature, providing top-line findings, conclusions, and any actionable recommendations that the NAP Global Network, the Resilience program, and the ENB could implement as they relate to the evaluation questions. It should explain the methodology that was employed and provide supporting data for each of the recommendations offered. The report should be clear, concise, and empirically grounded.

The Evaluator will transmit all draft and final report materials in electronic format (MS Word and Excel) to the designated leads at IISD.

### **6. EVALUATION TEAM COMPOSITION**

The evaluation team is expected to have one or more members with significant experience with and knowledge of the NAP process and developing country efforts to adapt to the impacts of climate



change. The evaluation team is also expected to have at least one member with considerable GESI expertise. National and/or local consultants may be utilized, as appropriate, to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the evaluation.

Representative evaluation team members should consist of

- senior-level personnel (one or more), who should have extensive experience with multi-country climate change adaptation initiatives, international climate policy, UNFCCC negotiations, and NAP processes. They must have proven experience in conducting evaluations of global climate change programming and supervising data collection and analysis. They must have excellent research, writing, analytical, and presentation skills.
- mid-level personnel (one or more), who should have significant experience conducting evaluations on international climate change programming, climate policy, and/or climate change adaptation in developing countries. Completion of a relevant master's degree is desirable. They must have excellent research, writing, analytical, and presentation skills.

At least one individual should have expertise in advancing GESI in developing countries, preferably in the context of climate change adaptation efforts.

- junior-level personnel (one or more), who should have experience working on evaluations and analyzing data. They must have excellent research, writing, analytical, and presentation skills.
- national/local consultants, to the extent that the inclusion of these individuals will aid in an effective and cost-efficient evaluation. Such consultants may be utilized, but are not required.

Reflecting the composition of the Network's countries of engagement, the evaluation team should include members with oral, reading, and written fluency in English, French, and Spanish.

Any substitutions to the proposed evaluation team key personnel must be vetted and approved by the designated leads from IISD before they begin to work.

## **7. EVALUATION SCHEDULE**

The period of performance for this evaluation is 5 months from the date of contract being awarded, with the expected period of performance being July 1, 2025, to December 19, 2025. As previously noted, key milestones are expected to be:

- delivery of the draft evaluation work plan and evaluation design document no more than 3 weeks following completion of contractual arrangements;
- delivery of the presentation summarizing draft findings no later than 4 weeks before submission of the final report;
- delivery of the draft evaluation report no later than 3 weeks before submission of the final report;
- delivery of the final report on or before the final date of the contract, which shall be no later than December 19, 2025.

Of key importance in this evaluation is the ability of the Evaluator to adhere to agreed timelines across

all activities. The project deliverables described above must be submitted according to the agreed upon timeline proposed by the Evaluator in its draft evaluation work plan, finalized in agreement with IISD, and included in the final evaluation work plan.

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