

NAP GLOBAL NETWORK TERMS OF REFERENCE

Early-Career Professionals to provide targeted support on NbS for the National Adaptation Plan Process in Panama

May 2025–January 2026

The National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Global Network supports developing countries in advancing their NAP processes to help accelerate climate change adaptation efforts around the world. The Network was established in 2014 at the 20th session of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 20) in Lima, Peru. Currently, the Network connects over 2,700 individual members in over 170 countries involved in developing and implementing NAPs. Financial support for the Network has been provided by Austria, Canada, Germany, Ireland, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) hosts the Secretariat.

1. Background

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change states that Parties shall “(b). Cooperate in and promote, at the international level, and, where appropriate, using existing bodies: (ii) The development and implementation of education and training programs, including the strengthening of national institutions ... in particular for developing countries.”

Engaging and empowering young professionals presents an important opportunity to strengthen their capacity for climate action. However, due to multiple barriers, youth often remain underrepresented in national-level decision-making processes.

To bridge this gap, the Early Career Professionals Program aims to enhance human and institutional capacities in partner countries by strengthening the skills and technical knowledge of early-career professionals to support the NAP process.

Within the structure of this program model, early-career professionals are placed in government host organizations, allowing them to work directly with decision-makers, develop key competencies, and contribute to specific tasks related to the NAP process.

The Early Career Professionals Program will foster intergenerational collaboration and deliver mutual benefits. For professionals, it offers valuable personal and professional development opportunities. For government institutions, it strengthens long-term capacity by developing a new generation of skilled climate change adaptation practitioners and policy-makers.

2. Objectives

General Objective

Through this program, the NAP Global Network and the Ministry of Environment of Panama are seeking to engage an early-career professional to support adaptation planning teams to advance the NAP process.

Specific Objectives

1. **Assist in the integration of nature-based solutions (NbS):** Ensure that the NAP process incorporates NbS and ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches, promoting both climate resilience and ecosystem restoration and conservation. This role includes ensuring that selected adaptation measures align with the principles of restoring and conserving natural ecosystems.
2. **Align Nature Pledge commitments:** Help identify and establish adaptation commitments under Panama's Nature Pledge, aligning them with the NAP priority actions and measures.
3. **Strengthen synergies:** Build synergies between existing and upcoming NAP sectors, such as marine–coastal and biodiversity, to avoid duplicating efforts and ensure coherence in adaptation strategies.
4. **Document and create a repository of adaptation prioritization:** Document the process of establishing and prioritizing adaptation measures, creating a systematic repository that consolidates information on methodologies used for the selection and prioritization of adaptation actions.

3. Activities

- **Integrate NbS and EbA into adaptation measures:**
 - Ensure that the adaptation measures developed and selected are consistent with the principles of NbS and EbA, contributing to both climate adaptation and the restoration of natural ecosystems as part of the adaptation solutions.
- **Document and systematize the prioritization process of adaptation measures:**
 - Develop a guide documenting the process of establishing and prioritizing adaptation measures, ensuring that methodologies such as multicriteria analysis (MCA), cost-benefit analysis (CBA), and other technical methods are applied.
 - Create a structured repository that collects and organizes information on how adaptation measures are prioritized, facilitating future updates and decision making.
- **Support the improvement and alignment of adaptation commitments:**
 - Identify opportunities to improve the alignment of adaptation measures with national and international standards, especially with the goals and indicators of the UAE Framework for Global Climate Resilience.
 - Support the development of the adaptation commitments under Panama's National Biodiversity strategies and Action Plan (NBSAP) and Nature Pledge.
- **Support stakeholder engagement and consultation:**
 - Engage with key stakeholders at local, national, and sectoral levels to support the establishment and implementation of adaptation actions.
 - Facilitate workshops and consultations to enhance understanding of adaptation processes, with a focus on the roles of Indigenous and local communities, as well as gender inclusion.
- **Aid in knowledge sharing and capacity building:**
 - Support the creation of a platform to share adaptation knowledge, tools, and best practices with government agencies and local communities according to the NAP Project deliverables in this matter.
 - Organize training sessions, as needed, for early-career professionals and local stakeholders to build capacity in climate change adaptation and resilience.

- Support activities related to the NAP process in accordance with the needs of the Adaptation and Resilience Department in the Climate Change Directorate.

4. Expected Results

- **Strengthened coordination:** Clear mechanisms to ensure the alignment of sectoral NAPs and synergies between the different adaptation initiatives, particularly in the integration of NbS.
- **Increased capacity:** Improved technical and institutional capacity for adaptation planning within the Ministry of Environment and other government agencies.
- **Inclusive adaptation:** Increased stakeholder engagement, with a focus on gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) in the adaptation process.
- **Integration of NbS:** Effective incorporation of NbS and EbA approaches into Panama's adaptation strategies, ensuring that ecosystem-based measures are prioritized and well-integrated into the broader adaptation framework.

Payments will be made upon delivery of monthly reports and receipt of compliance from the NAP Global Network/IISD and the Ministry of Environment of Panama.

The work should consider GESI. How this will be done should be detailed in the work plan and agreed upon in the inception phase.

6. Required Profile

A person with knowledge in climate change adaptation strategies, with experience in designing and implementing activities on integrating NbS and creating synergies across diverse sectors.

MANDATORY

- A university degree in environmental studies, engineering, geomatics engineering, geography, social sciences, public policy, international development, or another related field.
- Volunteer or formal experience in supporting NbS initiatives or assisting in national or sub-national planning or policy processes.
- Knowledge of the NAP process and its goals, as well as policies and the institutional landscape related to climate change.
- Strong writing and synthesis skills to produce briefs, reports, and summaries.
- Strong organizational and communication skills, with the ability to work in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary team.
- Ability to work from Panama City.

DESIRABLE

- A certificate showing participation in the Academy for Young Leaders on Climate Change of Panama.
- A master's degree in a related field would be an asset.

- Ability to be based in Panama City and regularly attend in-person meetings at the Ministry of Environment.
- Knowledge of NbS concepts, principles, and standards and understanding of how NbS contribute to climate adaptation.
- A good understanding of GESI in relation to adaptation.
- Proven ability to facilitate stakeholder consultations and workshops.

LANGUAGES

- An advanced level of Spanish is required.
- An advanced level of English is desired.

7. Reporting

The early-career professional will report to the NAP Global Network through its Senior Policy Advisor, Mauricio Luna Rodríguez, and its Policy Advisor, Angela Prias Mahecha, and to the Climate Change Directorate of Panama through its Head of the Adaptation and Resilience Department, Katherine Martínez. Regular process updates will occur throughout the service period, providing opportunities for feedback and revision. To receive the corresponding payments, the NAP Global Network must approve the monthly reports.

8. Application Process

ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS

- a. CV (2 pages maximum)
- b. Letter of interest (2 pages maximum)

In the letter of interest and CV, you should explicitly indicate activities and experiences relevant to this work, describe how your selection could add value to this task and provide insight into the technical approach you will use to achieve the objectives of the contract.

To apply, send the administrative requirements to info@napglobalnetwork.org, copying mluna@iisd.org and aprias@iisd.org. Please mention “NAP Early Career Program – NbS - Panama” in the subject line.

Application deadline: June 9th, 2025

Start date: June 16, 2025

End date: 8 calendar months after the start of the service

Location: Ministry of Environment of Panama, Panama City



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