



TERMS OF REFERENCE

Short-term Consultancy

Preparation of Climate Resilient and Risk Informed Land Use Guideline to Facilitate Implementation of National Adaptation Planning Process under the National Land Use Planning Regulations (Maldives)

February 2026

Background

The NAP process is a strategic process that enables countries to identify and address their medium- and long-term priorities for adapting to climate change. Led by national governments, the NAP process involves analyzing current and future climate change and assessing vulnerability to its impacts. This provides a basis for identifying and prioritizing adaptation options, implementing these options, and tracking progress and results. Importantly, the NAP process puts in place the systems and capacities needed to make adaptation an integral part of a country's development planning, decision making and budgeting while ensuring it is ongoing practice rather than a separate ad hoc exercise.

The Government of Maldives, through the Climate Change Department (CCD) of the Ministry of Tourism and Environment, is advancing its NAP process with technical and strategic support from the Green Climate Fund, UN Environment, and the NAP Global Network. As part of this effort, the Government aims to strengthen communications, awareness, and documentation around the impacts of climate change and the resilience-building efforts taking place across the country.

The Urban Planning and Management Act (Act no. 15/2024) mandates infrastructure planning that sustainably develops and maximises economic and social benefits from land use. Additionally, the 13th Amendment to the Decentralization Act (Act no. 07/2010) integrates the land use plans developed by the City and Island Councils into the broader Physical Development Plan, as outlined in the Urban Planning and Management Act. Under this new amendment, the island councils are required to align the Physical Development Plans of the island with the Island Development Plans as well. Finally, these plans also need to be aligned with the Climate Emergency Act (Act No. 09/2021) and the Environmental Protection and Preservation Act (Act No.04/93) to ensure consideration of the Maldives' fragile environment, land scarcity in the development of resilient infrastructure and efficient land management while also meeting the needs of the people without compromising the needs of the future generations.

The currently available instruments and guidelines for land use management and planning are not sufficient to address environmental and climate adaptation, long term resilience building and disaster risk mitigation. To strengthen subnational engagement in the NAP process, this assignment will focus on development of a multi-sector climate change adaptation guidance document to support Island Councils in the Maldives to integrate climate change adaptation into the planning documents stipulated in the Acts mentioned above following the local council elections scheduled for 2026.

This assignment is being undertaken with the support of the NAP Global Network Secretariat hosted by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), as part of a NAP support program for Maldives.

Objective

The objective of this assignment is to develop a practical, multi-sector climate change adaptation guideline to support Island Councils in the Maldives in integrating climate change adaptation into their Island Development Plans, Physical Development Plans, land use planning, infrastructure development, and sectoral decision-making.

The guidance will serve as an operational tool providing clear, council-friendly checklists and decision-support guidance to help avoid maladaptation and ensure that climate risks are systematically considered across sectors. The document will be aligned with existing national adaptation frameworks and tailored to the institutional mandates and planning responsibilities of Island Councils under the Decentralisation Act.

Scope of Work

Preparation of climate resilient and risk informed land use Guideline to strengthen national adaptation planning process and long-term resilience building needs of islands. The consultant is expected to carry out the following tasks:

A. Inception and Scoping

- Preparation of methodology of work in consultation under the guidance of CCD
- Hold a scoping meeting as agreed by the CCD
- Prepare the scoping report

B. Conduct a Situation Analysis

- Review of the existing literature including national regulatory and policy frameworks,
- Conduct key informant interviews (policy, practitioners, planners, selected and where possible local council members
- Conduct light-touch consultations as required
- Draft and finalise a situation analysis report

C. Development of Draft Guidelines

- Based on situation analysis report draft the guideline
- Considering the gaps, challenges and priorities of the situation analysis
- Consult with key informants while drafting guidelines
- The guidelines will also consider climate risks, resilient features, hazards and long-term impacts and green growth
- Stakeholder Workshop – Presentation of Draft Guideline and validation bringing in stakeholders from different government and non-governmental agencies, practitioners, councillors

D. Final Guideline

- Based on stakeholder workshops and consultations prepare the final guideline
- Submit the final guideline to CCD and NAP GN

E. Core Content Elements

The guidance should include:

- A clear explanation of Island Councils' roles and mandates in adaptation
- Practical sector-specific adaptation checklists
- Guidance on integrating adaptation into:
 - IDPs
 - Land use and zoning decisions – Physical Development Plan
 - Infrastructure and service planning
- Prompts to ensure coordination with:
 - National ministries and agencies
 - Existing data, risk assessments, and standards
- Explicit identification of maladaptation risks and how to avoid them
- Visual elements (tables, diagrams, checklists) to improve usability

D. Language, Format, and Length

The guidance should include:

- Primary language: Dhivehi
- Secondary language: English (presented directly underneath Dhivehi text)
- Target length: approximately 20–25 pages, excluding annexes
- Annexes may be used for extended checklists or technical notes

D. Stakeholder Engagement

The firm will:

- Work closely with the In-Country Advisor and relevant government counterparts
- Conduct light-touch consultations as required to validate content (virtual or in-person as feasible)
- Incorporate feedback from relevant stakeholders prior to finalisation

Deliverables and Timeline

Deliverable	Description	Indicative Due Date
Inception and Scoping Report	Confirmation of approach, structure, priority sectors, and workplan	Within 2 weeks of contract start
Situation Analysis and Outline	Review of existing literature including national regulatory frameworks and identification of gaps through interviews and stakeholder consultations	Within 2 weeks of Inception Report
Draft Guidance Document (Dhivehi & English Language)	Full draft including multisectoral checklists	Within 4-6 weeks of Situation Analysis
Final Guidance Document (Dhivehi & English)	Finalised, formatted guidance (Dhivehi with English underneath), ready for dissemination, incorporating	By end of Assignment

	feedback from stakeholders, IISD, In-Country	
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Working Approach, Reporting, and Coordination

- The consultancy firm will work technically with the Climate Change Division (CCD) and the in-country advisor (Maldives).
- For contractual and administrative matters, the consultant will report to the NAP Global Network Secretariat (IISD).
- Regular coordination check-ins will be held to ensure alignment with national processes and timelines.
- Draft outputs will be shared for review and validation prior to finalisation.
- The firm will be responsible for:
 - Content development
 - Visual presentation and layout
 - Integration of feedback
- Any required meetings, copy-editing, publishing, and printing-related costs will be covered separately by IISD, where applicable.

Required Qualifications

The team leader/consultant working with the consultancy firm should demonstrate:

- BA in land management or related field, preferences will be given to a consultant holding a Master's Degree in related area or field with extensive experience in land use planning process and related policy developments in the Maldives
- A minimum of 7 years of experience in land use and policy planning
- Familiarity with decentralised governance systems and local council mandates
- Fluent in Dhivehi and English
- Application and familiarity with AutoCAD and other software applied in Urban Planning is an added advantage
- Able to travel if required
- Ability to deliver within tight timelines and coordinate closely with government counterparts

Application Process

To apply for this consultancy, please submit the following materials to: info@napglobalnetwork.org

- Up-to-date CV of team leader/consultant
- Financial Proposal
- Company profile

In your application, please clearly demonstrate how you meet the qualifications listed above.

Application Deadline: February 16, 2026 (4PM, Male Time)

Location: Maldives-based

Expected Start Date: February 20, 2026

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