

## **Guiding Principles for Climate Change Adaptation: South-South Cooperation, Practice and Legislation**

On 2-4 July 2013, policymakers, experts and legislators from 35 countries met in Beijing, China to:

- Enhance the understanding of policy makers and legislators of mainstreaming climate change adaptation into development planning across sectors.
- Learn about China's and other countries' experience relating to National and Subnational Adaptation planning and responses.
- Explore opportunities for international & regional cooperation to strengthen adaptation responses.

The participants developed and agreed a set of Guiding Principles for Climate Change Adaptation: South---South Cooperation, Practice and Legislation.

1. Recognising that mitigation is the best form of adaptation, that there are limits to adaptation, and that response-driven adaptation is unlikely to be enough, anticipatory adaptation processes should be initiated, including assessing and building on existing response processes and strategies in governments, local communities, civil society and business to climate and weather-related shocks, and ensuring top political and official level long-term leadership, commitment, management and follow up.
2. Scale up knowledge mechanisms, underpinned by multi-dimensional research, accurate data and robust methodologies, in order to mainstream institutional and operational climate change adaptation and to foster South-South Cooperation.
3. Underpin climate change impact, vulnerability and adaptation assessments with broader risk management processes that include uncertainty and that identify threats and opportunities.
4. Design cost-effective and inclusive adaptation strategies and responses, taking into account the local context.
5. Go beyond technical and engineering adaptation options by recognizing, assessing and appropriately implementing a wide range of adaptation options that include consideration of social and economic measures and that ensure the incorporation of traditional knowledge.
6. Utilize and strengthen natural ecosystem functions as an effective long---term solution to reduce the vulnerability of people and infrastructure to climate change impacts.

7. Take into account long term and slow onset threats as part of a strategy to minimize the likelihood of implementing mal-adaptive responses.
8. Promote and support monitoring and evaluation feedback mechanisms for adaptation strategies to maximize the impact of lessons learned and ensure appropriate and effective implementation of good practices at the local, national, regional and global levels.
9. Although the public sector will remain an important source of funding for adaptation strategies, the creation of an enabling environment to enhance public-private partnerships will be critical.
10. Encourage private investment, corporate responsibility and business practices consistent with socio-environment protection and climate resilience.
11. Reinforce the existing normative and legal framework to maximize the institutional adaptation response and, where appropriate, develop and pass amendments to existing or new policies and legislation, combined with effective enforcement.
12. South-South Cooperation should provide opportunities to share lessons learnt, to demonstrate the links between adaptation, economic and social development and growth, and to explore how the resulting understanding can be contextualized to be consistent with different national and sub-national circumstances.
13. Recognise that developed countries have an important role to play in encouraging and enabling South-South Cooperation, in line with existing international commitments, to support the efforts of developing countries, with special emphasis on the Least Developed Countries.

*The principles are based on an agreed need to establish a principled and flexible model of climate change adaptation in order to pursue the goals of increasing the resilience and adaptive capacity of societal and ecological systems. The principles reflect the four stages of successful adaptation: planning, implementation, evaluation and dynamic refinement.*