



ADAPTATION FUND

Adaptation Fund Board Approves New Projects and Advances Transition Process to Serve Paris Agreement Smoothly

Projects in Armenia, Dominican Republic, Bangladesh, Western Balkans Approved

Washington, D.C. (March 21, 2019) -- In a busy 33rd meeting in Bonn, Germany last week, the Adaptation Fund Board approved new project [proposals](#) totaling about US\$ 32.5 million, and advanced the transition process forward to help the Fund serve the Paris Agreement in a smooth manner.

The Board also accredited the Ministry of Water and Environment of **Uganda** as the Fund's 29th national implementing entity (NIE) under its pioneering [Direct Access](#) modality, which empowers country ownership in climate change adaptation.

The Board approved new Direct Access projects in **Armenia** and the **Dominican Republic**, as well as a project in **Bangladesh** and the Fund's first regional project in Eastern Europe -- in **Albania, Montenegro** and **North Macedonia**. The Board additionally endorsed 11 project concepts and pre-concepts, and approved US\$ 170,000 in project formulation grants to help further develop them.

While it technically cleared three full additional regional projects, since it reached the US\$ 60 million cap for regional project funding for the current fiscal year the Board deferred formal approvals of those projects until the start of the next fiscal year on July 1st when another US\$ 60 million in new funding for regional projects becomes available. The Board established a waitlist in the meantime for regional projects recommended for approval.

The other three regional projects that were recommended for approval by the Board will be considered for funding in July by remote intersessional decision. They total about US\$ 39.5 million across projects in **Benin, Burkina Faso** and **Niger**; another in **Comoros, Madagascar, Malawi** and **Mozambique**; and one in **Argentina** and **Uruguay**.

The start of the Board meeting featured its annual change in leadership as Ms. **Sylviane Bilgischer** of Belgium [became the new Chair](#) and Mr. **Ibila Djibril** of Benin the Vice-Chair. Bilgischer congratulated outgoing Chair Mr. **Victor Viñas** of the Dominican Republic for the leadership he showed over the past year. She praised the Fund's excellent results at COP 24 in December, which included decisions where the Fund is [now formally serving](#) the Paris Agreement and a [record amount](#) of new pledges raised. Several new Board members and alternates joined the meeting, as well, from the **Bahamas, Fiji, Germany, Italy, Malawi, Spain** and **Sweden**.

"This was a very full agenda and the Board accomplished a lot as a new group," said Bilgischer. "The Adaptation Fund now has tangible projects for the first time in climate vulnerable countries of the Dominican Republic and Bangladesh, and its first regional project in Eastern Europe. We also enhanced climate access in Uganda by accrediting a new Direct Access entity there. Importantly, we made progress with the transition process from Kyoto to Paris and made steps



ADAPTATION FUND

forward so that the Fund will continue to serve both in the meantime and eventually just the Paris Agreement in a smooth and seamless manner.”

Among other key decisions by the Board, it decided to explore in consultation with civil society and draw on lessons from other climate funds, various options to further enhance civil society participation and engagement in the work of the Board and prepare an analysis for the next Board meeting. It also decided to consider extending the reaccreditation process for national implementation entities that are actively engaged in concrete projects to allow more time to comply with the process while those projects are being completed.

The key decisions by the Board related to the Paris Agreement followed the recent landmark decisions at the COP 24 climate change conference in Poland in December, where the 197-member Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA) decided the Fund “shall serve” the Agreement in a formal manner starting on January 1st, 2019. The decision recognized the Fund’s concrete adaptation work to the most vulnerable and its effectiveness in building national capacities to adapt to climate change through Direct Access. Among those decisions, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) requested the Adaptation Fund Board to consider the Board’s rules of procedure, institutional arrangements of the Fund with respect to the Paris Agreement and any other matters to ensure the Fund serves the Agreement smoothly.

In advancing that matter, the Board decided to request the Fund to prepare for inclusion in the Board’s report to CMP 15 at COP 25 in Chile in December 2019 possible Board recommendations on those tasks and submit a draft for consideration at the October 7-11 Board meeting in Bonn later this year. It also asked the Secretariat to consult in the process with the Global Environment Facility (which currently hosts the Fund), World Bank (which serves as the Fund’s trustee) and UNFCCC Secretariat. It further established a task force composed of eight Board members to provide further guidance to the Fund in defining the scope of the elements to be included, and scheduled an abbreviated Board meeting for June 28-29 at the end of the upcoming UNFCCC [Subsidiary Bodies meeting](#) in Bonn to help propel the work forward in an efficient manner.

“Despite a very full agenda, it was great to see the progress made with the new projects funded to benefit vulnerable communities across a variety of adaptation sectors such as forestry (Armenia), water management (Dominican Republic), coastal zone management (Bangladesh), and disaster risk reduction (first regional project in Eastern Europe),” said Adaptation Fund Manager **Mikko Ollikainen**. *“The Board decisions will also support the Adaptation Fund in moving forward smoothly as it serves the Paris Agreement through its tangible adaptation projects on the ground and building country capacities through Direct Access.”*

A Dialogue with Civil Society was also held at the meeting, featuring presentations from [Adaptation Fund NGO Network](#) representatives from Benin, Ecuador and Germanwatch. **Patricia Velasco**, of Futuro Latinoamericano in Ecuador, said the Adaptation Fund [project in Ecuador](#) implemented by the World Food Programme in coordination with the Ecuador government is empowering vulnerable communities to build resilience to climate change through measures such as reforestation, natural protection of water resources, water storage, improving water supply



ADAPTATION FUND

infrastructure, flood defense and food security in the Pinchincha Province and Jubones River Basin. *“We can see positive changes in these two areas,” Velasco said. “Adaptation measures were directed to the most vulnerable communities. We want to change the quality of life there.”*

ABOUT the ADAPTATION FUND

Since 2010, the Adaptation Fund has committed about US\$ 532 million for climate change adaptation and resilience projects and programmes, including 80 concrete localized adaptation projects in the most vulnerable communities of developing countries around the world with approximately 5.8 million direct beneficiaries. It also pioneered Direct Access, empowering countries to access funding and develop projects directly through accredited national implementing entities.

Communications: Matthew Pueschel, mpueschel@adaptation-fund.org or +1-202-473-6743