

LEBANON

VOICES FROM THE FIELD



Key Messages

- The NAMA concept was explained to the country's highest inter-ministerial decision-making body, the Council of Ministers.
- The 6 NAMA ideas will greatly contribute to the 2009 commitment to increase renewable energy use to 12% in Lebanon by 2020.
- There are many win-win opportunities where NAMAs can be used to rally national stakeholders and to leverage international financial and technical assistance.
- The NAMAs are expected to yield social and economic benefits and provide a unique opportunity to address emissions challenge and a development issue at the same time.



Clear process helps put Lebanon on track to meet renewable energy target

More than 35 experts and stakeholders from public, private and academic institutions have agreed to pursue an initial set of six climate change mitigation ideas in Lebanon, thanks to an inclusive process elaborated under the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Low Emissions Capacity Building (LECB) programme.

Climate change forecasts for Lebanon suggest the country will see more intense rainfall and unprecedented flash floods. In some areas, people are already faced with regular damage to roads, infrastructure and livelihoods. More extreme weather conditions, including longer periods of dryness, are also expected to severely affect the country's third biggest industry – agriculture – which employs 15% of the population.

The LECB Programme helps to build the public and private sector capacities needed to scale up country-driven climate-change mitigation actions in 25 countries, primarily by providing focus in five areas: GHG Inventory Systems; Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS); Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs); Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV); and strategies for including the private sector. More information can be found at www.lowemissiondevelopment.org.

Lebanon, with a population of just over four million people, contributes only 0.07% towards global greenhouse gas emissions. Even so, per capita emissions are on the rise and have almost reached global averages, and the government is determined to take action. This determination was made clear at the 2009 global climate talks when Lebanon committed to increasing renewable energy use from 4% to 12% by 2020.

Once developed, Lebanon's six new ideas for Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) will help the country meet its 2009 renewable energy commitment, says LECB Project Manager at the Ministry of Environment, Vahakn Kabakian.

“The NAMA ideas include proposals for hydropower, a wind energy farm, and opening the market for hybrid and fuel efficient cars, and the door is still open for more concepts to come through,” he said. “By 2015, we aim to have identified at least eight NAMAs across five sectors: energy, transport, agriculture, forestry and industry.”

NAMAs are voluntary actions taken by developing countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to levels below those of “business as usual”, while still working towards national development goals such as reducing poverty, creating jobs or increasing people's access to energy.

In Lebanon, where half the country's emissions are created through energy production (53%), but few people have access to a reliable and affordable energy source, NAMAs offer a unique opportunity to address an emissions challenge and a development issue at the same time. For example, regular electricity shortages force many households and businesses to use costly community-based generators. Powered by diesel, these generators pump out a lot of pollution. By boosting the government's power service, Lebanon stands to reduce air pollution and increase productivity by providing people and

industries with a more affordable and reliable source of electricity.

Mr Kabakian says there are many “win-win” opportunities like this in Lebanon where NAMAs can be used to rally national stakeholders and to leverage international financial and technical assistance.

The key to success, though, is having a clear and dedicated process that genuinely brings a wide range of stakeholders – many of whom are new to NAMAs and climate change efforts – onboard.

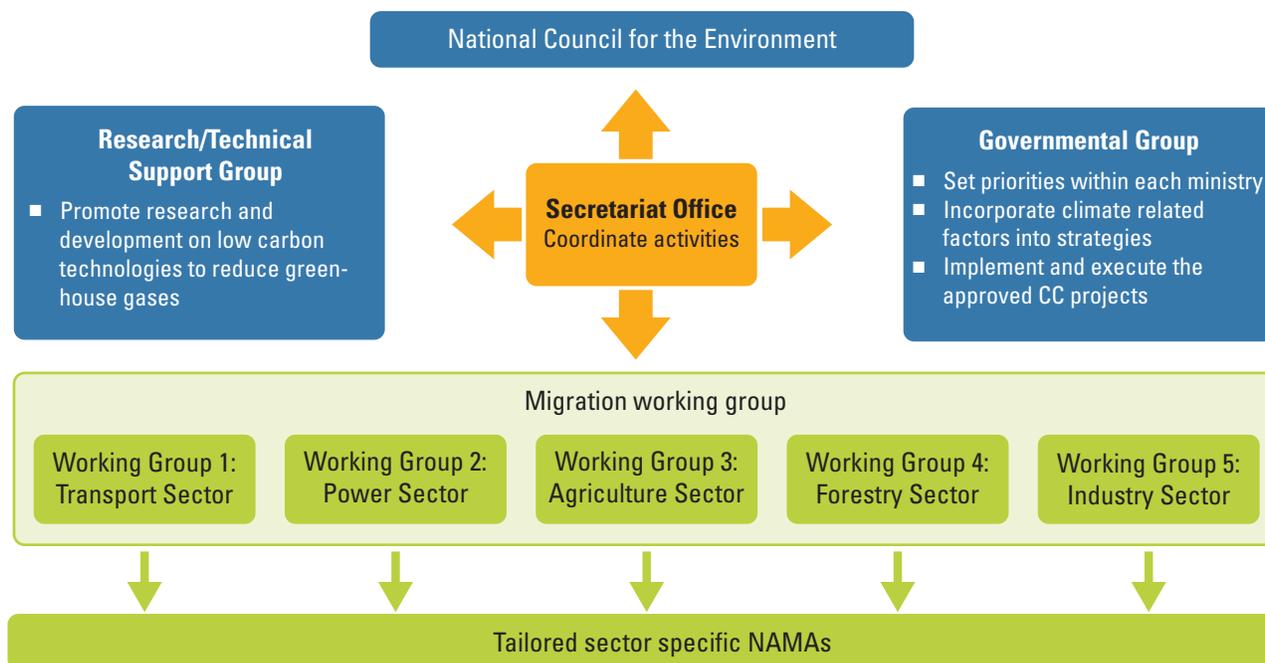
“From the outset, we wanted to move away from the ‘single ministry’ model where the Ministry of Environment ends up taking all the decisions and responsibilities,” he said. “So, we decided to approach it differently and make the NAMA development process here as inclusive as possible.”

One of the Project's first actions was to explain the concept of NAMAs to the country's highest inter-ministerial decision-making body, the Council of Ministers. Getting their support was crucial for engaging different arms of government – from transport to finance – in the process. The Ministry of Environment now plays a coordination role in the NAMA development process.

As the Ministry of Environment was one of the few to have knowledge about NAMAs, the Project also made a concerted effort from the beginning to explain the scope and benefits of NAMAs through a series of briefings and factsheets consistently shared with a growing range of interested government and private sector stakeholders.

Once awareness and buy-in had been fostered, the Project invited stakeholders to put forward their ideas for NAMAs. It was agreed that these ideas would proceed through a six-step selection and implementation process, involving all relevant stakeholders in deciding on the NAMAs to pursue as well as implementing and monitoring the agreed NAMAs as they unfolded.

By May 2013, stakeholders had tabled 13 NAMAs. “It became clear that we needed solid selection



criteria to make sure everyone understood and agreed on what constituted a ‘NAMA-ble’ idea,” Mr Kabakian said. A workshop brought 35 experts and stakeholders together to discuss the needed criteria and to use it to prioritize the 13 ideas.

The resulting criteria stated that NAMA ideas had to demonstrate a clear potential for reducing emissions and be in-line with national priorities; but the stakeholders also wanted the NAMAs to do more. “It was important that they were also transformational,” Mr Kabakian said. “By this we mean that ideas had the potential to improve people’s lives by delivering economic or social benefits,” he said.

On a practical note, the criteria also required that sources to finance ideas, whether national or international, had to be identified from the outset, and this would bring the Ministry of Finance into play very early on. “We were careful to involve the Ministry of Finance in the entire process. Because this is a government owned process, they need to be aware and often part of the negotiation of the financial structure of a NAMA,” Mr Kabakian said.

After applying the criteria, five ideas were left standing. These included two proposals from the Ministry of Environment – one to transform waste into 75.5 MW of energy and another to promote

fuel efficient and hybrid vehicles. Meanwhile, the Lebanese Center for Energy Conservation was successful in having their idea to scale-up energy efficiency in the building sector adopted. Likewise, the Ministry of Energy and Water will seek to enhance hydropower under its approved NAMA idea. The fifth proposal came from the CEDRO project, another UNDP-supported energy effort, to develop a large wind farm producing 500 MW of energy.

A sixth proposal has subsequently also been accepted. This NAMA aims to tackle a major barrier that Lebanon needs to overcome if the country is to significantly increase its renewable energy use by 2020. The public electricity provider currently lacks the required grid code that would allow renewable energy produced to enter and be distributed through the national electricity network. The newest proposal would work with the national provider to set-up the required grid codes.

All of these efforts are expected to yield social and economic benefits and are in line with existing national plans and policies. At the same time, as part of the wider LECB Project in Lebanon, each NAMA will be underpinned by measuring, reporting and verification systems to assess progress towards their stated emissions and development goals.



Reflecting on how Lebanon's NAMA development process has emerged, Mr Kabakian said that "because developing a NAMA is very country-specific, there is no document out there that will tell you how and what to do. You need to just start and not be afraid of making mistakes ... we are still learning by doing," he said.

On what has been learned so far, Mr Kabakian said the Lebanon Project found it was critical to foster wide awareness and buy-in from the outset. Establishing a clear and agreed process with the associated basic information, selection criteria and clear roles and responsibilities in place has enabled the LECB Project to keep stakeholders fully engaged.

The challenge now is to maintain this engagement, especially as some of the lead agencies embark on actually developing their NAMAs. "During our most recent workshop, participants stressed the importance of continuing to foster 'ownership' of the proposed NAMAs, and the importance of institutional support to bring NAMAs from initial concepts to solid proposals," he said.

Lebanon is among the 25 developing countries working with UNDP through the LECB Programme to identify ways to reduce (or mitigate) climate change causing greenhouse gas emissions, while still delivering development benefits to citizens, which are in line with national development priorities.

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