



Moving forward on climate change planning - Lessons from Orissa

Key messages

- Orissa has become the first State in India to produce a Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP).
- Lessons learned from Orissa's success include the need for political engagement and leadership in the development of a CCAP.
- Broad consultation is important, to include a wide range of stakeholders.
- Information gaps are a problem and must be filled, but need not necessarily prevent planning and prioritisation.

Orissa has become the first Indian state to produce a climate change action plan (CCAP). The CCAP is the blueprint to reduce climate change risk in Orissa for the next five years. This policy brief outlines the process that produced the CCAP in just six months, using a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to kick start the process. The SEA was followed by discussion on potential action by 11 working groups drawn mostly from Departments, initial discussions with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and five sub-regional stakeholder consultations. The CCAP was published online in June 2010 to generate comments from a wider group of stakeholders. The implications from the Orissa experience include the need for political engagement and leadership; high-level administrative coordination and inter-departmental consultations; broad stakeholder consultation; and integration with regular planning and budgetary processes.

The implementation of climate change policy needs to take place at all scales of governance as action on climate change expands from the project to programme level and becomes mainstreamed across sectors. In India, the national government has recognised the threat of climate change to the country's natural resources and to livelihoods and has called on all states to undertake climate change action plans that are consistent with the National Climate Change Action Plan (NAPCC).¹ The states are responsible for delivering a wide range of policy and regulation at the local level.

Orissa has become the first state to decide to produce a comprehensive state climate change action plan (CCAP). This is a response to the Government's call, but also to pressing issues in Orissa, which faces recurring droughts, floods and cyclones that have had a crippling effect on the economy. In 1999 a super-cyclone lashed the entire coast causing large scale loss

of life. Whilst the extent to which climate change will exacerbate floods and droughts is not fully understood, one thing is clear: their frequency and intensity will increase.

Orissa, one of the poorest and most vulnerable states in India, is on an aggressive pathway to becoming a major energy supplier to the grid from an expansion of coal-fired generation and significant mineral-based, energy intensive industrialisation. Growing metal and mineral industries are putting pressure on the environment through land use change and forest degradation in a state where 38% of the land area is forest. Unplanned urbanisation and rapid industrialisation have resulted in traffic congestion and scarcity of water and electricity. There is recognition that climate change could derail the current growth strategy and deepen poverty, and CCAP aims to lead Orissa towards a carbon-conscious, climate resilient development path.

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Overview of plan and process

The first integrated, comprehensive state plan on climate change was produced for consultation in just a few months, starting from limited awareness amongst decision-makers, and without conventional detailed assessments of the anticipated impacts of climate projections.

Tools and methods: The initial scoping report used Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to kick-start a rapid assessment. The departmental structure of the Government of Orissa (GoO) fitted the bottom-up sector by sector approach that was adopted. Templates of actions were developed by each sector, and may be transferable to additional sectors in the future. GoO expanded the brief from an adaptation focus to include energy issues. SEA had already been re-interpreted by the OECD to cover climate change adaptation assessment,² but the Orissa process revealed that it could be extended to also cover the low carbon agenda, being a rapid, flexible assessment methodology that matched the cross-cutting nature of climate change.

Box: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

SEA has been identified as a useful tool to use in relation to the principles of harmonisation and alignment. Because climate change is so cross-cutting there is a need to address risks and opportunities in the development and appraisal of many policies, plans and programmes. SEA provides a framework to assess and manage a broad range of issues that contribute to the integration or mainstreaming of climate change in development planning.

More specifically, it aims to:

- Identify key climate vulnerabilities and risks likely to affect development
- Assess institutional and planning capacities to manage these, identifying key institutional and planning gaps at the state level and their linkages with national and local level planning
- Facilitate the development of improved strategic and sector plans for continued sustainable development and economic growth, recognising changing climatic conditions
- Facilitate better coordination, integration, and enhancement of various existing programmes
- Assess and recommend specific measures to strengthen the policy and incentive framework, including the knowledge base for supporting the process of adaptation.

Source: OECD/DAC 2008

Internal development: Initial discussions were held during preparation of the scoping report. As the preparation of the draft plan commenced, these became longer and more formal as the state organisations involved in each sector reviewed the necessary policy actions. The GoO established 11 working groups from the different sectors drawn from departments to discuss various actions and work with the National Missions where appropriate. The groups had multiple consultations with experts and officials and worked with standard templates to identify high, medium and low priorities. The GoO established a High Level Coordination Committee, headed by the Chief Secretary, with the Principal Secretary Forest and Environment acting as convenor to steer preparation of the CCAP.

The draft CCAP projected a budget of Rs 17000 crore (equivalent to £2.4 billion, over five years) to cover adaptation, mitigation, knowledge building and policy reform. Some funding is already available for priority actions that mesh with ongoing programmes, but new and additional funds will be needed for others.

Key features: The CCAP is the blueprint to reduce climate change risk for the next five years. Actions have been identified across 11 sectors and 287 priorities have been validated. Potential financial sources have been identified for each from the state, national government and donors. A loose categorisation shows that 136 actions relate to adaptation, 123 to mitigation and 28 are common to both. Most (190) actions have state-wide repercussions whilst 66 actions relate to specific areas. The major thrusts - on energy, forestry, agriculture and coastal disasters - constitute about 80% of the total budget. A new Orissa Climate Change Agency is to be established in the first year of implementation to provide information, advice, supervision and coordination. This Agency will be a single-window contact to deal with the Government of India and external funders.

External consultation: The draft Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP) 2010-2015 was published on 5 June 2010.³ The report has been shared with stakeholders and is on the web to generate comments from a wider group of stakeholders, given criticisms of the tight initial timetable. Initial discussions were, however, held with key civil society organisations during the preparation of the scoping study. Five sub-regional stakeholder consultations were organised as the draft plan was being prepared, with about 500 people participating to help GoO finalise the action plan. Sector-based stakeholder

consultations gave the CCAP a solid practical grounding and identified cross-cutting emerging issues related to organic agriculture practices, fisheries research, and watershed management. The Ministry of Environment and Forests suggested additional sections on vulnerability and an emissions inventory of the State.

The Government of India is now finalising allocations to the NAPCC Missions for work at national and state level. The Ministry of Environment and Forests is keen to replicate the Orissa CCAP process and principles for the other states. A workshop in August 2010 pushed this process along, generating support from donors for other state plans.

Key lessons:

Leadership and engagement

Leadership and engagement have been critical to the success of the CCAP process. The Secretary of Environment and Forests initiated the draft CCAP and drove it towards completion. He was supported by commitment from colleagues at top level in the GoO administration. Stakeholders have provided detail and depth. In addition, there have been good relationships between the State and the UK Department for International Development and the World Bank, who supported the initial scoping study and the plan's development by providing international and national experts.

State Governance and finance

The main feature of the CCAP is the high commitment of the state, with priority policy actions falling within the state budgetary process.

The plan is being finalised, as comments are addressed. The draft CCAP has paved the way for the establishment of a new Agency that should be able to work in a cross-cutting way, rather than being embedded in any one sectoral department. There is, however, much work to do, given the large number of GoO departments and organisations

that need to be mobilised to deal with climate change.

The CCAP, for example, creates distinct priorities under agriculture, water, basin development, rural development, and places disasters within a coastal context. It also, however, recognises that these are cross-cutting issues and lists additional cross-cutting activities.

Climate change could be the impetus to develop new ways of working in an integrated way in the GoO, or it might add another strand of activities. Much will depend on the strength of the new Agency, the commitment to CCAP implementation, and the resources available.

Information needs

The State Government of Orissa could draw on enough information and data available to start planning, despite the lack of detailed climate projections and vulnerability assessments. It recognised, however, that the plan should be a dynamic and changing document as approaches to climate change response are fast changing. Given the lack of detailed data and lack of knowledge about the issues at all State levels, a major cross-cutting area for action is improving technical knowledge and awareness, and increasing access to climate change information. National and State professional networks are weak and better connections could be forged with universities and other educational institutes.

Timetable

The process moved from inception and scoping to study to draft plan stage in just six months, including prioritisation, and the incorporation of actions into the formal GoO planning process. Orissa was keen to be the first of India's states to complete this process, and this mobilised and incentivised those involved on the Plan's production. This CCAP's strength is that it is related integrally to GoO's Annual Plan process. However, the very tight timetable for the production of the Plan caused some difficulties for the wider stakeholder engagement process.

Implications

- Institutional arrangements for Climate Change Action Plan preparation should ensure: political engagement and leadership; high-level administrative coordination and inter-departmental consultations; broad stakeholder consultation; and integration with regular planning and budgetary processes.
- An established plan can go beyond risk management to look at actions that address climate change and deliver benefits for growth and development.
- Using a detailed sector by sector approach, it is possible to search for adaptations and mitigation options that offer substantial development benefits – e.g. health, energy security, energy efficiency, growth, jobs and income generation
- There are major gaps in knowledge, and better mechanisms are needed to share current knowledge. Investments are also needed in knowledge and research to reduce uncertainty and improve knowledge about appropriate responses.
- It is vital to understand the limits of scientific predictions, the nature of uncertainties and how to interpret climate data. Capacity to grasp and have confidence to handle the uncertainties should be built up at all levels (state, district and *panchayat*).
- Information gaps must be filled, but they need not prevent planning.
- Addressing climate change is about interacting with complex systems, so broad stakeholder engagement is required to maximise perspectives and increase robustness of analysis.
- A key challenge is to tackle specific sub-national priority issues, whilst creating the appropriate enabling environment for the implementation of national planning priorities at state level.

References, sources and notes

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Notes:

1. National Action Plan on Climate Change. Government of India, 2008
2. OECD/DAC 2008
3. www.orissa.gov.in/forest&environment/ActionPlan/CAP_Report_Draft.pdf

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