



SECTION 6.

MONITORING & EVALUATION

6 HOW DOES MY ORGANISATION MEASURE AND ASSESS PROGRESS? (MONITORING AND EVALUATION)

Adaptation is an iterative process that requires monitoring and evaluation to measure progress towards actions and outcomes. It is an essential component of taking action, especially where an understanding is required of the success or failure of past actions.

However, while monitoring and evaluation are often referred to in adaptation plans, they are rarely resourced effectively and undertaken. For this reason, a standalone monitoring and evaluation plan should be developed following the preparation of your organisation's implementation plan.

Monitoring and evaluation can be undertaken for a range of reasons, including to (10; 14):

- Evaluate the effectiveness of actions;
- Assess efficiency of actions;
- Provide accountability for budget management or to funding bodies;
- Assess outcomes of actions;
- Improve learning from implementation activities;
- Inform when decisions should be taken to implement new options;
- Improve future interventions; and
- Compare with other similar interventions.

Once the purpose is established, a monitoring and evaluation framework can include the following elements (17):

- An outcome statement;
- Key contextual factors: important factors (climatic and non-climatic) that can influence the chance of achieving the expected outcome;
- Indicators: identify indicators to monitor and the timing of monitoring;
- Baseline: describe the baseline situation (e.g., currently, there are 70 llamas);
- Target: set a specific target or goal that can be measured by your indicator;
- Responsibilities: assigning responsibility for undertaking monitoring and evaluation; and
- Resourcing: determining resource requirements for monitoring and evaluation.

Where possible, monitoring and evaluation should be embedded within your organisation's reporting cycle, either on an annual basis for more operational actions or every 3-5 years for broad scale strategic adaptation.

Examples of indicators that can be used for monitoring and evaluation are provided in the LGA SA Climate Adaptation Planning Guidelines (1).

Your organisation should be aware that there can be significant delays between the time that a monitoring and evaluation framework is developed, when monitoring of indicators occurs, and the resulting information evaluated. As such, documentation of the approach is essential.

Compared with monitoring and evaluation for standard planning process, monitoring and evaluation for adaptation faces the additional challenges that many of the outcomes will need to be monitored over a long period of time (e.g. decades).

Has your organisation already established a monitoring and evaluation approach? Be sure to check the climate change adaptation plan for your region, industry adaptation plans and see if monitoring and evaluation is covered in your organisation's own adaptation plan.

See Step 7 of the LGA SA's Climate Adaptation Planning Guidelines for further general information on monitoring and evaluation.

6.1 Scan

The focus of monitoring and evaluation at the **Scan** level should be on progress with the process of developing and implementing broad actions. This should consider whether:

- Stakeholder engagement has occurred, how effective it was and how effective the approach to engagement was;
- The steps identified at the start of the adaptation action cycle have been completed (e.g. was a risk assessment undertaken? was there an options appraisal step?);
- The extent to which actions have been implemented in the manner outlined in the implementation plan (i.e. key responsibilities were appropriate, resources were available); and
- The partnerships required to develop and implement the monitoring and evaluation plan are in place.

An explicit review of limitations is warranted to ensure that monitoring and evaluation addresses financial constraints, time constraints (total days available and timeframe for delivery) and limitations of scope, linked to resources or the interest and responsibilities of the commissioning body (2).

Tracking emerging climate futures for your region is also relevant at the **Scan** level. This does not need to be a detailed assessment of local scale projections, but can instead draw on regional trend information. A

useful source of this information is the Summary for Policy Makers Synthesis Reports that are produced by the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* (IPCC) every 5-6 years.

Some important evaluation questions include:

- Has the framing of the approach been effective?
- Are key stakeholders sufficiently engaged?
- Have any of the barriers been effectively addressed and diminished or removed?
- Does the *Scan* level of planning or steps within it need to be repeated to achieve greater buy-in from key stakeholders? and
- What is required to move onto the *Scan* level of adaptation planning?

The need to undertake steps from the *Scan* level again does not equate to a lack of success, but instead may reflect the complexity of stakeholder groups being engaged and issues being addressed.

6.2 Plan

Monitoring and evaluation at the *Plan* level should begin with the same focus as that of the *Scan* level, that is, assessing progress with the process of developing and implementing a broad range of actions.

However, it also extends into understanding changes in *thresholds* and *triggers*, which are relevant to the implementation of an adaptation pathways approach.

An adaptation pathways approach requires regular monitoring of *triggers* and *thresholds*. Indicators for these *triggers* and *thresholds* should already have been identified in earlier stages, such as the climate risk assessment or options appraisal. The indicators are likely to cover climate, physical, social, economic and/or environmental factors. Monitoring *triggers* and *thresholds* can contribute to tracking emerging climate futures for your region.

Some key evaluation questions should include:

- Are key stakeholders sufficiently engaged?
- Have any of the barriers been effectively addressed and diminished or removed?
- Are the processes that are being followed achieving intended outcomes?
- What has been learned about the process? Is the framing of the selected adaptation approach appropriate for the intended stakeholders?
- Has investment been committed/spent wisely?
- Are actions and outputs still likely to result in desired short, medium and long term outcomes?
- Does the *Plan* level of planning or steps within it need to be repeated to achieve greater buy-in from key stakeholders? and
- What is required to move onto the *Plan* level of adaptation planning?

6.3 Delve Deeper

Monitoring and evaluation at the *Delve Deeper* level should begin with the same focus as that of the *Scan* level and *Plan* level, that is, assessing progress with implementation of the adaptation plan and actions within it, and monitoring of *triggers* and *thresholds*. However, it is more quantitative than for previous levels of adaptation and extends into understanding whether planned outputs, and short, medium and long-term outcomes have been achieved.

Ensuring that the desired objectives of the adaptation plan have been met, as set out during the initial Scoping step, is important for determining overall effectiveness of the adaptation plan. However, while monitoring and evaluation of outputs such as on-ground actions is more straightforward, understanding whether outcomes have been achieved can prove more difficult. For example, understanding whether outcomes have been achieved may require an understanding of whether human health is being maintained,

Therefore, effective monitoring and evaluation of outcomes is likely to evolve over a series of monitoring and evaluation iterations. It may also be aided by differentiating between desired short (0-5 years), medium (5-20 years) and long term (over 20 years) outcomes in the knowledge that medium and especially long-term outcomes will prove challenging for your organisation to effectively monitor, and may require support from other partner organisations such as state agencies and research organisations.

Some key evaluation questions should include:

- Are key stakeholders supportive of the on-ground actions that have been taken and aware of the short, medium and long-term outcomes?
- Do new partnerships need to be brokered to support implementation?
- Have the barriers that were identified been effectively addressed or are they impacting implementation?
- Are the *triggers* and *thresholds* that were identified at the start of the project effective at informing decision making?
- Are the actions and outputs supporting the short-, medium- and long-term outcomes? and
- Has investment been committed or spent wisely?