

# Non-state subnational action guide and associated CAAT tool training

June 2024



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# ICAT South Africa

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## **Non-state subnational action guide and associated CAAT tool training**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION OVERVIEW

The South African government has passed and signed into law the Climate Change Act as a crucial step towards a unified national response to climate change and a fair transition to a low-carbon economy. Provincial governments will play a key role in setting these targets to help the country achieve the objectives outlined in the updated NDC. South Africa's monitoring and evaluation system collects data from local governments and stakeholders, but there are capacity limitations at the local level.

The Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment (DFFE) has received support from the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) with the Initiative for Climate Action Transparency (ICAT) supporting the implementation and training of provincial officials for maintaining their Greenhouse gas inventories. The South African ICAT project seeks to provide training to technical experts from all provinces on the Global Protocol for Community-Scale GHG Emission Inventories (GPC). Part of this GHG training included providing capacity on the Climate Action Aggregated Tool (CAAT).

The non-state and subnational action guide, along with the associated Climate Action Aggregated Tool training, is essential in empowering provincial and local governments to effectively contribute to South Africa's climate goals. By providing targeted training on the Global Protocol for Community-Scale GHG Emission Inventories (GPC), these initiatives ensure that technical experts across all provinces have the skills needed to accurately maintain greenhouse gas inventories and set informed emission reduction targets. This impact-related information can inform & improve the development of national GHG trajectories and climate relevant policies and targets, such as those in the NDCs.

Proper training ensures continuous support to national policymakers and analysts in assessing the potential aggregate impact of non-state and subnational actions. The guide can also provide principles, concepts and procedures applicable to all types of non-state and sub-national climate mitigation actions. By building capacity and expertise among provincial governments through these training workshops, including CAAT, the ICAT project seeks to empower provinces in target setting and the formulation of emission reduction strategies, ultimately contributing to the fulfilment of national NDC commitments. This collaborative effort underscores South Africa's commitment to effective climate action and sustainable development.

## 2. OBJECTIVE OF THE WORKSHOP

The specific objective of the workshop was to:

1. Assist the provinces in making use of the Climate Aggregation Tool (CAAT) to obtain a better understanding of mitigation actions and potential impact of climate actions

## 3. WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

The online workshop, held on June 5th, 2024, was focused on the non-state and subnational action guide and associated CAAT tool training within the provinces. Discussions centred on primary functions of the tool and overview of the NSA guide.

## 4. PARTICIPANTS

The target audience for the workshop were representatives of relevant government ministries, departments, and agencies at both national and sub-national level. A majority of the invited participants were from Provincial Government, and consultants from Gondwana Environmental Solutions International (GESI). The invitation for this training was also extended to some attendees from local or municipal government who requested to be part of the training going forward. A detailed workshop register has been attached as Annexure 1.

Of the 33 participants who attended, only 19 that completed the registration form which 9 were female and 10 were male.

## 5. WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

### 5.1. OPENING SESSION

The workshop was opened at 09:00 am by Brett Cohen who provided an overview of the previous training sessions and set the stage for today's discussion, which centred on the Climate Action Aggregation Tool and the Non-State and Sub-National Action Guide, which were developed by WRI and the New Climate Institute as part of the ICAT project. The tool is Excel based an open source. Luanne Stevens, a consultant from Gondwana, shared her specialization in GHG at the national level. She highlighted the growing significance of provincial-level initiatives and emphasized today's focus on providing capacity at provincial level.

### 5.1.1. Introduction to the Climate Aggregation Action Tool and NSA Guide

Luanne Stevens started by encouraging active participation and interaction, expressing the desire for a collaborative and informative session. The tools aim to gain a better understanding of mitigation actions and their potential impacts in a country or region. Luanne provided an overview of the tools' methodological foundation and practical application through Excel spreadsheets, as well as the availability of accompanying documents, user guides, and video training.

The meeting also covered the practical utilization of the climate change impact assessment tool, with an emphasis on its application at both provincial and national levels. Participants explored how the tool could aid in evaluating the impact of provincial programs designed for climate change mitigation and how it could facilitate a comparison between provincial and national targets. The discussion also underscored the significance of defining the assessment boundary, including the selection of sectors, actors, and action types based on the objectives of the assessment.

Luanne Stevens note that there are a few impact assessment methodologies for greenhouse gas impacts, looking at renewable energy, building efficiency, transport, agriculture and forestry. As well as sustainable development, transformational change, and then the one that covered today is the non-state and sub-national action guide. This tool aids in following the step-by-step process outlined in the guide. Working together, the guide offers the methodological basis, while the tool provides user-friendly Excel spreadsheets to support the assessment.

One of the primary functions of the tool was noted as bookkeeping of sub and non-state actions. So, the list of activities is where you can create a list of all the activities that are going on in the region. One can also conduct a landscape analysis of these actions and be able, with the tool, to aggregate the impacts of multiple actions to average the overall impact of these non-state or sub-national actions.

Figure 1 shows the primary functions of the tool with dark blue and the yellow indicating the kind of information that will be needed for the tool.

Additional notes from the first part of Luanne's presentation to the provinces:

- The CAAT website includes a data template for users to utilize.
- A methodological note is available, detailing the calculations and methods used within the tool.
- Video training is provided for further clarification, with two sets of videos guiding users through the tool's various actions.
- A working paper by WRI offers additional insights, including examples from different countries and explanations on the tool's functionality.
- The working paper provides further information and context on the tool's application.



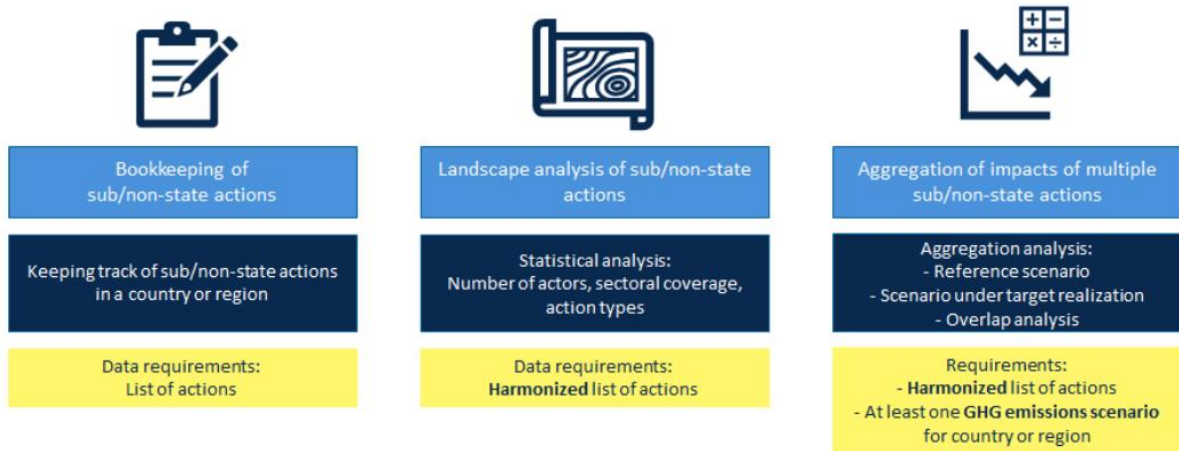


Figure 1: Overview of the CAAT tool

Luanne Stevens went on to discuss more on the non-state and sub-national action guide. The non-state and sub-national action guide focus on identifying and evaluating actions taken at the non-state and sub-national levels within a country or region. It aims to understand how these actions contribute to the overall impact and to integrate them into broader assessments. The guide also helps in comparing these actions with national targets and suggests ways to enhance their additionality and improve national initiatives.

The guide is divided into five sections (Figure 2). The first section provides an introduction, outlines the objectives, and explains key concepts. The second section focuses on defining the assessment. The third section covers the impact assessment and the procedures for conducting it. The fourth section addresses reporting the results. The fifth section is about decision-making and utilizing the results. Each slide in the presentation from Luanne Stevens aligned with the steps in the guide, making it easy to cross-reference. Additionally, a copy of the presentation will be sent to everyone at the end of the session (Presentation shared with participants).

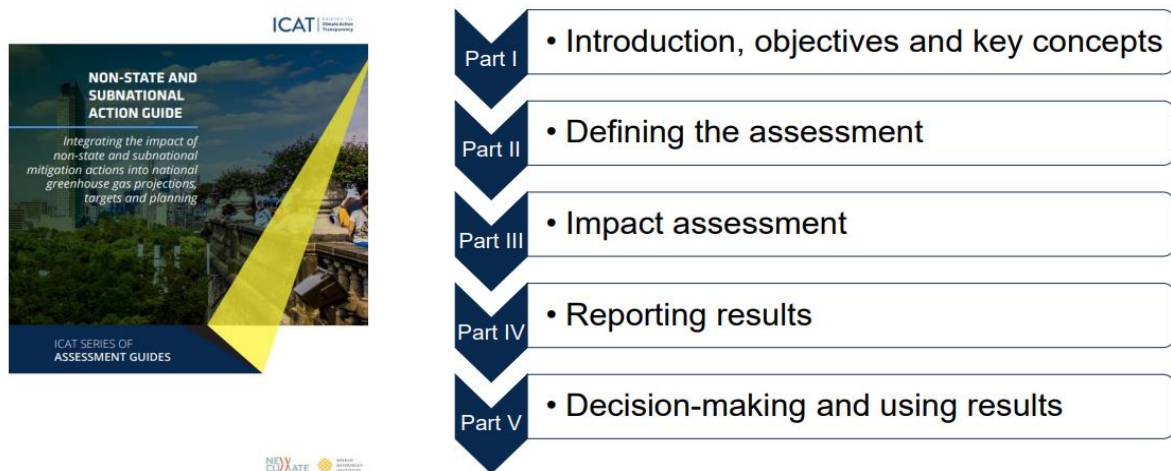


Figure 2: Overview of the NSA Guide

In the first part, there is a chapter focusing on the purpose and applicability of the guide, setting assessment objectives, and understanding key concepts before beginning the assessment process. The guide aims to help national policymakers and analysts evaluate the aggregated impacts of non-state and sub-national actions. This evaluation supports the development of greenhouse gas trajectories and climate policies, particularly concerning NDC (Nationally Determined Contributions) targets. While the guide is mainly intended for national governments, it is also useful for provincial authorities, agencies, research institutes, and NGOs. Provincial governments can utilize the guide to identify and assess the mitigation potential of various non-state and sub-national actions within their regions. This assessment can then be compared to national targets, a process further detailed in the tool.

Luanne Stevens also noted that the NSA guide outlines principles, concepts, and procedures relevant to all non-state and subnational actions. It is important to note that the guide does not address adaptation-related impacts due to the different metrics and approaches required compared to mitigation. Currently, both the guide and the tool focus on ex ante, or forward-looking assessments, and do not provide details on post-assessment evaluations. She encouraged the participants or users to be mindful of these boundaries. The guide is designed to integrate seamlessly with the tool, which has an introductory page explaining its purpose and key principles. This information is clearly outlined in the tool's introductory section, ensuring a coherent link between the guide and the tool. The NSA guide includes various illustrative examples that elucidate concepts like the NSA's operational scope, impact assessment across countries, and contributions to national and NDC targets. These examples play a crucial role in defining the assessment's parameters and content.

### 5.1.2. Discussion

The discussion emphasized the importance of assessing additionality and incorporating non-state and sub-national actions to enhance national targets.

Comment from Western Cape: some of the things noted was the bookkeeping of sort of actions that are happening at sub or non-state actions. Luanne mentioned the landscape analysis to understand commitments, comparing those also to national and aggregation of impacts.

Answer from Luanne: we can do landscape where we just get an overview of their missions. It also looks at aggregating the activities and looking at overlaps. That was a good assessment of what you would use the tool for.

Comment from KZN: I would like to check that provinces that have done or that are in the process of sorting out their provincial inventories are putting in place programs that respond to the needs that are indicated in the inventories. Could this tool in any way then help to assess the impact that the programs that are being implemented for climate change mitigation are having?

Answer from Luanne: if you are implementing actions to mitigate and reduce your emissions, then you can use the tool to input the information and to track to see what kind of impact those mitigations are. The aim is to have a list of your actions, to make sure you're including those actions, looking at their then potential impacts and including that in the targets. So, if you're having a lot of actions and if you have projections, then you can also use the tool to compare with those projections.

*Brett Cohen took the participants through the CAAT Excel document:*

He started by cautioning the participants that it's crucial to consistently include references to your data and clarify how you arrived at it. This tool version also has limitations, though not all versions acknowledge them. However, it highlights the three limitations previously mentioned by Luanne Stevens. Lastly, it provides a link to the ICAT guidance. This outlines the structure of the introduction page for this tool version.

Luanne Stevens and Brett Cohan use this part of the session to take a deep dive into the CAAT. This involved showing and discussing the tabs under the Excel spreadsheet into more detail.

## **5.2. WAY FORWARD AND CLOSE OF WORKSHOP**

After a productive Q&A session, Luanne Stevens outlined the next steps. The participants were given a brief look at the timelines for the upcoming workshops and will await on future workshop dates which will be communicated by the team.

Luanne emphasised on the one-on-one trainings to the provinces and the importance of doing the hands-on training with the different provinces. The plan is to spend a day or two with each of the provinces to assist them with their inventories. This will allow for more tailored assistance to each of the provinces. A follow up workshop will be organised to discuss with all the provinces the main lessons learned from the different visits.