

**U.S. Department of State
FY13 Climate Change Adaptation Plan**

1. Policy Framework for Climate Change Adaptation

Vision & Mission

As the lead institution for the conduct of American diplomacy, the U.S. Department of State advances freedom for the benefit of the American people and the international community by helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world composed of well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty, and act responsibly within the international system.

The Department recognizes the potential for climate change to be a “threat multiplier.” As underscored by the 2008 National Intelligence Assessment, “global climate change will have wide-ranging implications for US national security interests over the next 20 years because it will aggravate existing problems—such as poverty, social tensions, environmental degradation, ineffectual leadership, and weak political institutions—that threaten state stability.” The 2010 Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review highlights the importance of rapid and effective action to address the global challenge of climate change.¹

The Department therefore seeks to play a leadership role in enhancing understanding of climate change risks and strengthening capacity to build resilience in responding to those impacts, particularly among the most vulnerable countries. It understands that doing so will help preserve hard-won development gains in developing countries, enhance the resilience of weather-sensitive economic sectors to changes in climate, reduce risks of dislocation with implications for U.S. national security, and preserve the health of the planet.

¹ *Leading through Civilian Power: The First Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review, 2010.*
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/153142.pdf>

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Principles

The Department will apply the framework and principles adopted by the Interagency Climate Change Adaptation Taskforce. It will advance policies and programs to prepare for and adapt to the impacts of climate that:

- Are designed, implemented, monitored and evaluated with meaningful involvement from a diverse representation of society, including women and vulnerable populations;
- Incorporate the best available science and technology;
- Prioritize the most vulnerable communities and populations; and
- Integrate adaptation into development plans and programs in a way that maximizes benefits, reduces risks, and increases ecosystem resilience.

Goals

The Department seeks, over the long-term, to:

1. Integrate adaptation considerations into its domestic and overseas operations through reporting, planning and training;
2. Develop and implement effective international adaptation policies and programs and promote the integration of adaptation considerations into diplomatic and development initiatives in sectors that will be impacted by climate change, such as agriculture, water and disaster risk management; and
3. Ensure that efforts in multilateral bodies, such as the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, U.N technical agencies, and multilateral funding agencies, are pursuing effective adaptation strategies.

Approaches

To achieve these goals, the Department will:

- Leverage existing resources among federal agencies, such as those of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and U.S. Global Climate

Research Program, to measure and monitor the Department's global facilities in order to conduct long-term planning and minimize operational disruptions caused by climate change.

- Establish and maintain a dialogue with interagency partners in order to exchange information on operational challenges and solutions related to the management of climate impact.
- Coordinate with other agencies, in particular USAID, which has overall responsibility for bilateral assistance, and the U.S. Department of Treasury, which leads multilateral finance efforts, and leverage their technical expertise and financial resources to design and implement effective international adaptation policies and programs and promote the integration of adaptation considerations into broader diplomatic and development initiatives.
- Coordinate with international partners, including other bilateral and multilateral donors, governments, and civil society, to promote effectiveness, exchange best practices and lessons learned, reduce duplication and inefficiencies, and achieve transformative change across geographic scales and levels of governance.

Responsible Offices

M/PRI, OES/EGC, and SECC are responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the Department's Adaptation Plan.

2. Agency Vulnerability: Analysis of Climate Change Risks and Opportunities

Operations

The Department has facilities at 269 posts in 168 countries around the world. Some of these facilities and assets may be vulnerable to climate variability and change, particularly those that are located in areas already vulnerable to weather-related extreme events. In some cases, transportation routes may be affected,

particularly by weather-related extreme events, e.g., flooding and storms can wash out critical roads and bridges.

Potential climate change can and will effect mission operations overseas. Flooding in posts like Bangkok, Dublin, Phnom Penh; landslides in Caracas, Singapore, Tirana; and tropical storms that ravaged areas like Rangoon, Manila, Kingston are recent examples of extreme weather events that may be exacerbated by climate change and that may directly affect the safety and health conditions of personnel and facilities.

Promoting Stability and Forging Partnerships

While climate change in and of itself does not cause instability or threaten security, like other environmental stresses, it can contribute to or exacerbate instability and threaten security. The specific impacts of climate change on conflict, migration, terrorism and complex disasters are still uncertain, therefore so too are the specific impacts of climate change on the ability of the Department to promote peace and stability in regions of vital interest to the United States.

Nevertheless, climate change has been identified as a threat multiplier², and is expected to have a range of adverse impacts on communities and states around the world. Consequently, the Department is actively engaged in numerous diplomatic and development initiatives to reduce impacts and enhance resilience to climate change.

People

People are the most critical factor to the success of diplomacy and development. Together with USAID, the Department is implementing a long-range strategy to build a cadre of employees with the right skills and support, who are in the right place at the right time. It relies on the creativity, knowledge, skills, and integrity of our dedicated employees to carry out our mission. Their attitudes and actions are key to mobilizing the shared effort needed to solve problems on a global scale and build a more peaceful and prosperous future for our children and for children around the world.

² See Busby, J., 2007. *Climate Change and National Security: An Agenda for Action*, Council on Foreign Relations.

As climate change poses potential challenges to the ability of the Department to achieve its mission and strategic goals, the Department may need to assess whether it is building a cadre of employees with appropriate skills and support to respond to such challenges. The Department may also need to further strengthen communication and coordination with – and draw upon the expertise of – technical agencies like USAID and NOAA.

3. Process of Agency Adaptation Planning and Evaluation

Resources

In identifying climate change risk and vulnerabilities and actions to better understand and address those vulnerabilities and risks, the Department uses a wide range of resources. These resources include, but are not limited to:

- **U.S. Global Change Research Program.** USGRP’s 2009 National Climate Assessment report documents the impacts of global changes on livelihoods, infrastructure, ecosystems, food production, energy supply, national security, and the cultural heritage of populations and communities.
- **The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Fourth Assessment Report.** Published by thousands of authors, editors, and reviewers from dozens of countries in 2007, the report is the fourth in a series intended to assess scientific, technical and socio-economic information related to climate change, its potential effects, and options for adaptation and mitigation. The fifth assessment report is currently underway and will be finalized in 2014.
- **The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s Special Report on Extreme Events.** Published in 2011, the Special Report assesses the effect that climate change has on the threat of natural disasters and how countries can better manage an expected change in the frequency of occurrence and intensity of severe weather patterns.
- The U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change’s **Cancun Adaptation Framework**, which provides broad guidance to encourage actions, both inside and outside the Convention, to meet the needs that all

Parties have indicated as urgent. Those needs include preparing impact and vulnerability assessments – to better understand which populations and sectors are vulnerable and why – and strengthening climate-related disaster risk reduction strategies.

- The U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change’s **Nairobi Work Program**. The Nairobi Work Program helps improve understanding and assessments of impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation to climate change through expert meetings, workshops, publications and an online database.
- **The Adaptation Partnership**. Together with Spain and Costa Rica, the United States co-chairs the global Adaptation Partnership to catalyze action by improving coordination and communication among an increasing number of stakeholders engaged in adaptation. As part of the Partnership, the Department commissioned a regional and country-by-country inventory of planned and existing adaptation actions in Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia and the Pacific. The reports also highlight key adaptation priorities and identify gaps and opportunities for further collaboration and scaling up.
- **Office of the Director of National Intelligence** evaluates and disseminates pertinent security reviews including its recent Intelligence Community Assessment on Global Water Security, which highlights global water challenges that have implications for Department operations and programs.
- The **Sustainability Activities Inventory** is an annual survey conducted by the Department’s management officers which provides updates from field managers, including sustainability and adaptation challenges and actions.
- The Department’s **Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO)** receives on-going data from post managers on issues related to sustainability at the post, compound, and building levels. This data is compiled into an annual trend report related to the Department's overseas missions.

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- The Department's Bureau of Administration receives **regular updates and communications with domestic field manager**.

The Department's top operational priorities in planning for and evaluating climate change risk include setting up the information infrastructure to solicit and disseminate planning requirements between headquarters and the field and understanding immediate to near-term impacts of climate change on operations, determining their implications for Department resources and budgetary requirements.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of Department activities will be conducted when sufficient relevant action warrants regular review and assessment. Annual reporting on the Department's progress will be included in Department's Annual Sustainability Plan submissions to OMB.

4. Programmatic Activities

Operations

In 2005, the Department created the Natural Hazards Program to provide engineering resources to identify and reduce risk to Department of State personnel and property from destructive natural events: earthquakes, floods, landslides, and tropical cyclones (hurricanes). The program advises and educates those responsible for life safety and acquisition decisions and assists in facility improvements to mitigate future damage from natural hazards. The Department will continue to explore the risk posed by extreme weather events to its operations and, where appropriate, further integrate climate change considerations into the Natural Hazards Program.

Promoting Stability and Forging Partnerships

The Department is the lead federal agency engaged in partnering with countries to achieve substantive and effective outcomes at negotiations of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. It is one of three agencies

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implementing the U.S. Global Climate Change Initiative, which helps promote stability by supporting developing countries in their efforts to transition to sustainable, clean energy economies, conserve forests and manage natural resources, and adapt to climate variability and change. A substantial portion of activities under this initiative supports enhanced resilience in countries that are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with associated implications for stability.

The Department also forges partnerships with other countries to advance adaptation in developing countries. In collaboration with USAID, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, for example, the Department established a global Adaptation Partnership with Spain and Costa Rica as our co-chairs and more than 50 developed and developing participating countries. Through the Partnership, it has catalyzed action and fostered better communication among institutions and actors engaged in the effort to scale up adaptation and resilient development around the world.

People

The Office of the Special Envoy for Climate Change and the Department's Office of Global Change in the Bureau of Oceans, Environment and Science have sought to build the capacity of missions and employees to better understand the science of climate change and its impacts, adaptation, and the UNFCCC negotiations. They develop and disseminate regular climate science updates, climate digests, cables, and talking points to meet general and country-specific needs, as well as convene interagency briefings and develop papers and guidance for other State negotiators and officials engaged in discussions or negotiations about adaptation and climate change outside the UNFCCC. The State Department also draws upon the technical expertise of other federal agencies as well as from other governments and institutions to support our adaptation policy and programs overseas.

5. FY13 Actions to Better Understand Climate Change Risks and Opportunities

A. Natural Hazard Program

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The Department will continue to solicit from its facilities managers and engineers potential natural hazard risks and opportunities when planning for and designing Department operations.

Agency Lead: Civil/Structural Engineering Division of the Office of Design and Engineering(OBO/PDCS/DE/CSE)

Risk or Opportunity: Opportunity to reduce risk through better informed engineers and facilities managers

Scale: Global

Timeframe: Present – Indefinite

Implementation methods:

- Site Surveys
- Workshops
- Communities of practice
- Management Conferences
- Internal communications

Performance metrics:

- Number of people receiving advice and training
- Facilities and operational resistance to extreme weather

Activities to date:

All posts are encouraged to report non-seismic natural-hazard related problems (chronic and historic flooding, windows, doors and exterior structures vulnerable to high winds or flying debris, unstable or eroding slopes, etc.) which might constitute a threat to life safety and which might qualify for assessment and mitigation under the program.

The Natural Hazards Program has ongoing studies in an attempt to determine expected hazards and their severity for the above events at each of our overseas

locations. The results of these studies are used to match budgeted mitigation funds with posts which might benefit most from such measures being implemented.

B. Multilateral Partnerships

The Department will continue to partner with other federal agencies and countries to strengthen the ability of institutions and actors engaged in the effort to scale up adaptation to better understand climate change risks and opportunities.

Lead Agency: OES/EGC and SECC

Risk or Opportunity: Opportunity to catalyze adaptation action by improving communication and coordination in the context of “fast start finance”

Scale: Global and regional

Timeframe: September 2012-August 2013

Implementation methods:

- Technical papers
- Communities of practice

Performance metrics:

- Number of institutions that have made available to its constituents the Partnership’s regional and country reports.
- Number of stakeholders with improved capacity to understand climate change risks and opportunities.

Collaborating agencies: USAID, NOAA

Accomplishments to date:

As part of the Adaptation Partnership, the Department has completed an extensive review of planned and existing adaptation activities in twelve sub-regions across

Asia and the Pacific, Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean. The review includes an inventory of regional and country-level adaptation activities, as well as summaries of key climate risks and adaptation priorities.

The Department has disseminated the reports to numerous institutions and organizations. Large-scale knowledge platforms like the UNDP's Adaptation Learning Mechanism and the World Bank's Climate Change Knowledge Portal are integrating the data from these reports into their interactive databases. An Action Pledge has been submitted to the UNFCCC's Nairobi Work Programme. Regional- and sector-focused knowledge platforms like PacificIslandsClimate.org and UNISDR's PreventionWeb have integrated the information from the reports into their online databases. USAID is using the review's country specific profiles as a resource to help train their staff before going out on mission. Outreach has also been conducted through 'new media' like Facebook, blog posts, and various list-serves like Climate-L.

In addition, through the Adaptation Partnership, the Department has helped foster the development of a Climate Services Partnership, a community of practitioners working together to improve climate information services in developing countries.

C. International Organizations

The Department will remain engaged in the development of the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's fifth assessment report and negotiations over its executive summary for policymakers. It will continue contributing to the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS).

It will also continue to contribute to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's Nairobi Work Program (NWP), which seeks to improve understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation to climate change and strengthen the capacity of countries to make informed decision on practical adaptation actions and measures based on sound scientific, technical, and socioeconomic information.

Lead Agency: OES/EGC and SECC

Risk or Opportunity: Opportunity to improve understanding of climate risks

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Scale: Global

Timeframe: September 2012-August 2013

Implementation methods:

- Reports
- Workshops
- Expert meetings
- Online products
- Calls for action

Performance metrics:

- Number of partner organizations
- Number of action pledges

Collaborating agencies: NOAA

Accomplishments to date:

The Department played a critical role in the development, review, and approval of the IPCC Special Report on Managing the Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation, which was released in late 2011.

Department funding to GCOS assists in creating an international framework for observing the climate system, particularly with respect to articulating and developing observing requirements. Our funding helps support the Secretariat, which plays a critical role in coordinating global climate observations systems, with a focus on developing and at-risk nations. Additionally, funding to GCOS has supported hand-on workshops that educate and train nations in establishing climate monitoring sites, as well as collecting, maintaining, and archiving data from these stations. Department funding also goes towards bilateral capacity-building agreements that have strengthened our ties with nations such as China, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.

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Within the context of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Department participates in the NWP, which has made significant progress in achieving its objectives. The NWP has attracted more than 200 partner organizations, which have made over 140 action pledges to advance adaptation by assessing risk and vulnerability, raising awareness of climate impacts and adaptation solutions, building capacity, delivering climate information and services to decision makers, facilitating the sharing of knowledge and good practices, and providing financial and technical support for adaptation planning and activities.

6. Actions to Address Climate Change Risks and Opportunities

A. Natural Hazards Program

The Department will continue to advise and educate its facilities managers and engineers on how to identify potential natural hazard risks and opportunities when planning for and designing Department operations.

Agency Lead: Civil/Structural Engineering Division of the Office of Design and Engineering (OBO/PDCS/DE/CSE)

Risk or Opportunity: Opportunity to reduce risk through better informed engineers and facilities managers

Scale: Global

Timeframe: Present – Indefinite

Implementation methods:

- Workshops
- Communities of practice
- Management Conferences
- Internal communications

Performance metrics:

- Number of people receiving advice and training

- Facilities and operational resistance to extreme weather

Activities to date:

Since 2005, the Natural Hazards Program has included assessments and mitigations of natural hazards, including tsunamis, flooding, high winds, hurricanes, typhoons, volcanoes, landslides, and other naturally-occurring events. The Program has integrated countermeasures to natural hazards into Department training and communications for its facilities managers and engineers, identifying and implementing reasonable measures which can be taken to reduce or eliminate damage to U.S. diplomatic facilities and reduce the threat to life safety from any expected natural hazard.

B. Multilateral Partnerships

The Department will continue to partner with other federal agencies and countries to strengthen the ability of institutions and actors engaged in the effort to scale up adaptation to address climate change risks and opportunities.

Lead Agency:	Varies
Risk or Opportunity:	Opportunity
Scale:	Global and regional
Timeframe:	September 2012-August 2013

Implementation methods:

- Workshops
- Communities of practice

Performance metrics:

- Number of people receiving training in global climate change

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- Number of institutions with improved capacity to address climate change issues as a result of USG assistance.

Collaborating agencies: USAID, NOAA, EPA, NSF, NASA

Accomplishments to date:

Many Department offices and technical agencies have been partnering and will continue to partner with other federal agencies and countries to plan for and implement adaptation actions. For example, together with USAID and NOAA, the Department has convened eight Adaptatin Partnership workshops that have brought hundreds of key actors from across the globe together exchanging lessons learned and good practices and identifying areas for further collaboration.

For example:

- **West Africa Regional Adaptation Workshop -- Climate Services for Development** (Senegal, 2011): The workshop brought together some 20 hydro-meteorological information providers with about 70 governmental and non-governmental policymakers and practitioners from various sectors, including agriculture, disaster risk management, natural resource management, and coastal management. It improved understanding of these information providers of what users need in order to make better decisions in the face of climate variability and change. As a follow-up activity, State and USAID are seeking to disseminate and replicate good practices, which emerged from the workshop, in the rest of the region.
- **Andean-Himalayan Knowledge Exchange** (Nepal, 2011): Not only did this workshop succeed in bringing Andean experts on glacier management to the Himalayas to share their knowledge, it also created a new global community of practice – namely, the High Mountain Glacial Watershed Partnership. This new community of practice will develop innovative tools and practices for adapting to climate change in particularly remote, high altitude mountain ecosystems. It includes collaboration with UNDP on a \$7 million GEF-funded glacier lake management project in support of Nepal’s NAPA.

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- **Western Indian Ocean Workshop for Coastal and Marine Protected Areas (South Africa, 2012):** This workshop brought together 39 participants from nine countries bordering the West Indian Ocean to identify climate change capacity building needs for coastal and marine protected areas in the region. The workshop organizers are working in collaboration with existing regional initiatives such as the work of the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association and the UNDP/GEF Agulhas and Somali Current Large Marine Ecosystems Project to scale-up and implement activities to address identified needs.

The workshops have fostered the development of two new partnerships – the High Mountain Glacial Watershed Partnership and the Climate Services Partnership. Currently, the Department and USAID are considering support for other communities of adaptation practice.

C. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

The Department will coordinate with other federal agencies and partner with other countries to implement the adaptation elements of the Copenhagen Accord, Cancun agreement, and Durban outcome through effective negotiations of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Lead Agency: OES/EGC and SECC

Risk or Opportunity: Opportunity to enhance global action on adaptation

Scale: Global

Timeframe: Ongoing

Implementation methods:

- Negotiations
- Submissions
- Expert meetings
- Workshops

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Performance metrics:

- Cancun and Durban agreements on adaptation, including with respect to the Adaptation Committee, operationalized

Collaborating agencies: USAID, NOAA, EPA, DOI, USDA

Accomplishments to date:

The Department has been actively engaged in adaptation negotiations under the UNFCCC. It helped establish an Adaptation Framework, which provides broad guidance to encourage actions, both inside and outside the Convention, to meet urgent adaptation needs, including: preparing impact and vulnerability assessments and strengthening climate-related disaster risk reduction strategies. It helped establish an Adaptation Committee to promote the implementation of enhanced action on adaptation in a coherent manner under the Convention. It also helped establish a process for Least Developed Countries to develop and implement medium and long-term national adaptation planning.

D. Programming

As one of lead three agencies implementing the U.S. Global Climate Change Initiative, the Department will help vulnerable countries and communities reduce climate risks and damages, lower the long-term costs of responding to climate change, safeguard investments in the longer-term, and achieve sustainable, climate-resilient development.

Lead Agency:	Varies
Risk or Opportunity:	Opportunity
Scale:	Global and regional (varies)
Timeframe:	September 2012-August 2013
Implementation methods:	Varies

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Performance metrics: Varies

Collaborating agencies: USAID, NOAA

Accomplishments to date:

The Department supports many adaptation efforts through its diplomatic and programmatic engagement. Below are a few illustrative examples of accomplishments to date:

Least Developed Countries Fund and Special Climate Change Fund. The Department has supported the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) through the LDC Fund in implementing activities identified in the National Adaptation Programs of Action, which are country-driven strategies that identify urgent and immediate adaptation needs. The Department has also supported developing countries more broadly, including small island developing states and glacier-dependent countries, through the Special Climate Change Fund, to help strengthen the resilience of key national development sectors to the adverse impacts of climate change.

Assistance to the two funds has leveraged other donor assistance. Average adaptation funding available per country has grown from about \$3M in 2010 to \$10M in 2011 to now \$15M as of January 2012. As the average funding available per country has grown, countries have been increasingly able to integrate adaptation into larger development programs that address multiple sectors and are therefore anticipated to result in more substantial and long-lasting resilience to climate risks.

Pacific Small Island Developing States. The Department has designed a program with USAID to advance adaptation in the Pacific Small Island Developing States.

Over a three-year period, the program will:

- Enhance the institutional and human capacity in the region to access adaptation funds and to understand, forecast and use climate information to strengthen adaptive capacity in key development sectors.

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- Strengthen food security in the context of climate change among farming communities in Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Island, Tonga and Vanuatu.
- Improve the ability of communities in the outer islands of Kiribati to address the impact of climate change and variability on water resources.
- Promote healthy ecosystems such as mangroves, coral reefs, and wetlands that can form natural barriers against extreme weather events in the Solomon Island.

Maldives. The Department has designed a program with USAID to enhance climate resiliency and water security in the Maldives. The program will strengthen analysis of projected climate change and vulnerability, improve decision making based on sound science, analysis and information, and provide select climate-resilient water, sanitation and solid waste infrastructure, supplies and training to communities.

Central America. The Department has designed a program with USAID to support regional climate change programming in Central America. The adaptation component of the program will (1) build partnerships, capacity, and governance structures at the regional level in support of national efforts in responding to the threats and potential impacts of climate change, (2) support the development of science analyses of climate change impacts in Central America and the Dominican Republic, and (3) develop and implement sustainable options for investments in climate change related information and tools.

Chile. Under the framework of the U.S.-Chile Environmental Cooperation Agreement, the Department is supporting the U.S. Department of the Interior and U.S. Geological Survey to work with the Government of Chile and Centro de Estudios Científicos to improve understanding of the role of glaciers in contributing to hydrological resources and strengthen Chile's glacier management strategy. Partners have brought together over 50 glacier experts to discuss glacier monitoring strategies to assist in predicting long term water storage and availability.

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