

New Zealand submission to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

Revision of the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories for Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

May 2013

Introduction

1. This submission responds to the CP.17 invitation to Parties to submit their experiences in using the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines and the upgraded or new CRF Reporter software (15/CP.17, paragraph 3).
2. We note the COP has invited the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to consider this information submitted by Annex I Parties at its thirty-eighth session.

Context

3. New Zealand welcomes the progress Parties made at Durban in adopting the revised UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines and new common reporting format tables for trial use by Parties.
4. The UNFCCC Secretariat provided Parties with a new version of the CRF reporter software to trial between November 2012 and May 2013. This submission highlights issues found during this trial period.

Relevant issues

CRF reporter software

5. New Zealand notes with concern the serious underfunding for this project. The version of the CRF reporter software made available to Parties for testing had very limited functionality. New Zealand provided some additional funding to support the development of the software but feels strongly that such an essential tool for reporting national greenhouse gas inventory estimates should be funded out of the core budget rather than relying on supplementary funding.
6. Because of the severe lack of funding, the CRF reporter software version sent to Parties for testing was not able to support key category analysis, recalculations, unit conversions, use of documentation and commenting boxes were not enabled. The user and submission management functions also did not work and the display of the CRF tables in their final format prior to submission was not possible.

7. With these limitations New Zealand tested the CRF reporter software and our findings are summarised below.

Importing and exporting data

8. Several New Zealand experts tested the software and all experienced difficulties in exporting data, including at the sub tree and grid level. These difficulties were communicated to the UNFCCC helpdesk and we are currently working with them on possible solutions.

9. The ability to import data using MS Excel format was mixed with some success for some sectors (for example sub categories in the agriculture sector) and not for others (for example the cement sub category in the industrial processes sector). The successful import message was displayed for the industrial processes data from a MS excel workbook but the data did not appear in the appropriate rows in the software.

10. The ability to import data using the xml format was not successful using data from various sectors (energy, agriculture and industrial processes). New Zealand recognises the different xml architecture requirements between the current reporting requirements and the updated requirements may be causing these current difficulties.

Manual data entry

11. Data was able to be entered manually for all sectors except in the industrial processes sector. In the industrial processes sector data was able to be entered in the emissions rows but not for activity data for all categories. The cells for the activity data rows were a light grey colour and were un-editable. For the category "2.F Product Uses as Substitutes for ODS" category all of the cells were showing up as light blue cells. The CRF reporter user manual says this means the data is automatically copied from elsewhere but it is not clear where this data is copied from.

General functionality

12. The web interface was clearly laid out in a logical navigation tree format. It is very helpful having links to the user guide, reporting guidelines and IPCC guidelines within the interface.

13. Moving from different nodes on the navigation tree and waiting for files to load was quite slow but we expect this may be the result of an early version of the software and would expect performance to improve with later versions of the software.

14. Testing in the agriculture sector revealed difficulties in inserting additional nodes under specific sub categories, e.g. "3F3 Tubers and Roots". Additional nodes could be added under the "other" category but not under the specific categories.

15. It is not clear how the new CRF reporter software will be backed up. It would be good in the next version of the manual accompanying the software to explain how the backup procedures will work.

Incorporating Kyoto Protocol activities

16. New Zealand notes there will need to be additional functionality added to the CRF reporter software once agreement on the common reporting tables for land use, land-use change and forestry activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4 of the Kyoto Protocol are made.

17. New Zealand is of the view that the work on integrating these additional tables into the new CRF reporter software is crucial to enable Annex I Parties to report beginning in 2015. New Zealand notes the current budget shortfall for completing the CRF Reporter upgrade. Budget needs for the additional LULUCF tables need to be identified early to enable the resources to be secured.

Conclusion

18. New Zealand appreciates the work by the developers of the CRF reporter software to produce the new CRF reporter with such limited funding. The new web based interface and the proposed functionality has great potential but there is still a good deal of work needed for the CRF reporter to be fully functional in time for the inventory submissions in 2015.

19. New Zealand strongly encourages future development of the new CRF reporter software to be funded from the core budget.

20. New Zealand looks forward to the further development of the CRF reporter software and the chance to provide further input into future testing to ensure the software is fully functional and ready for the 2015 inventory submission.