

**Annotated Guidelines for the Review of Greenhouse Gas Inventories,
Biennial Reports and National Communications under the Convention**

Discussion paper for the

First technical workshop on the revision of the guidelines for the review of
biennial reports and national communications

Bonn, Germany, 7 – 9 October 2013

Introduction

According to the work programme on the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs), including national inventory reviews, the SBSTA invited Parties to submit additional views on the overall approach to, and the structure, outline, key elements and content of, the review guidelines for NCs and BRs by 15 July 2013, and requested the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report and draft revised review guidelines for NCs and BRs based on Party submissions. These will be used as inputs to discussions at the first technical workshop on the revision of the guidelines for the review of BRs and NCs to be held in Bonn during 7–9 October 2013.

Scope and structure of this note

The synthesis report, containing the draft of the review guidelines in its annex, is published on the UNFCCC website.¹ This note presents an annotated draft of the review guidelines, taking into account all options included in Parties' submissions as reflected in the synthesis report and the secretariat's suggested options based on the existing review procedures and guidelines and the experiences in coordinating reviews.

This note aims to bring more clarity to the text of the draft review guidelines contained in the annex to the synthesis paper, ensure continuity and consistency with the approaches and language used in the existing guidelines and facilitate the discussions on the revised review guidelines. This note should be read in conjunction with the synthesis report, in which Parties' views on the overall approach to reviews, scope, structure, and key elements of the review guidelines, and timing and format of reviews are synthesized.

Approach

The annotated draft of the review guidelines is developed on the basis of the draft review guidelines contained in the annex of the synthesis report. Where the secretariat's suggestions are provided, two options are developed. The first option (Option A) is taken from Parties' submissions as contained in the draft review guidelines, and the second option (Option B) is the suggestion from the secretariat. The secretariat's suggested options are highlighted in each case, followed by an explanation on the reasons for the proposed changes. Similar to the synthesis report, square brackets are used to capture various options when Parties' views are divergent. In addition, whereas the formulations or original views are from Parties, the names of those Parties are in brackets, in order to ensure the transparency and traceability of information.

The annotated draft review guidelines contained in this note will be used as an input for discussions at the first technical workshop on the revision of the guidelines for the review of BRs and NCs.

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2012/INF.5. Available at: <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/sbsta/eng/inf05.pdf>.

Annotated draft of the Guidelines

Option 1 for the review guidelines: this option envisages a single set of guidelines with an overarching section, followed by sections on specific guidelines for each of the three types of report.

Draft guidelines for the review of information reported under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

PART I: GENERAL APPROACH TO THE REVIEW

A. Applicability (JPN, NZ)

1. Option A (Parties' submissions) Each Party included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Party) will be subject to a review of the information submitted by it under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) Each Party included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Party) ~~will~~ **shall** be subject to a review of the information submitted by it under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines.

Rationale: The change is proposed to be consistent with the language used in the existing review guidelines (i.e. decision 22/CMP.1), and also to ensure internal consistency in the sense that the proposed text by Parties for the review guidelines below contain "shall" requirements for each type of report submitted under Article 4 and 12 of the Convention.

B. Objectives (EU, JPN, NZ)

2. The objectives of the review of information submitted under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP are:

(a) To provide, in a facilitative, non-confrontational, open and transparent manner, a thorough, objective and comprehensive technical assessment of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(b) Option A (Parties' submission) To promote the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties;

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) To promote ~~the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties~~ consistency, comparability and transparency in the review of information submitted by Annex I Parties under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention;

Rationale: These guidelines are for reviews, not for reporting of information.

(c) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(d) To ensure that the COP has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.

C. General approach (EU, JPN, NZ)

3. The provisions of these guidelines shall apply to the review of information submitted by Annex I Parties under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP.
4. Option A (Parties' submissions) The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its biennial report (BR), national communication (NC) and national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory shall be reviewed only once, by an expert review team (ERT).

Option B (Secretariat's suggestion) The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its biennial report (BR), national communication (NC) and national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory shall be review only once **during the same review cycle, by an expert review team (ERT).**

Rationale: Option A lacks clarity on whether the information once reviewed will never ever be reviewed again, or that it will simply not be reviewed in the same review cycle.

5. Option A (Parties' submissions) The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical assessment of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties [and identify any potential issues and factors influencing the fulfilment of their commitments and reporting requirements]. (EU, NZ) The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical assessment of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties [and identify any potential issues and factors influencing the fulfilment of their commitments and reporting requirements **under the Convention]. (EU, NZ) The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.**

Rationale: Option A lacks clarity on the type of commitments that need to be fulfilled.

6. [Option A (Parties' submissions) At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding identified issues. The ERTs should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to [resolve] (NZ) [correct] (JPN) such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review. The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.]

[Option B (secretariat's suggestion) At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding identified issues. The ERTs

should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to [resolve] (NZ) [correct] (JPN) such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review. ~~The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.]~~

Rationale: The last sentence does not define when to provide such advice and on what and it is not clearly linked to the identification of issues. The whole paragraph is bracketed because the concept of “identification of potential issues” is in brackets in the previous paragraph, so if this option is deleted in the previous paragraph, the current paragraph would be deleted as well.

7. Option A (Parties’ submissions) The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. [The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information relating to identified issues and [resolve] (NZ) [correct] (JPN) any issues within the time limits set out in these guidelines.]

Option B (secretariat’s suggestion) The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant **reporting** guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. [The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information relating to identified issues and [resolve] (NZ) [correct] (JPN) any issues within the time limits set out in these guidelines.]

Rationale: Option A lacks clarity on what type of guidelines it refers to.

Confidentiality (JPN, NZ)

8. Option A (Parties’ submissions) In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the inventory, an Annex I Party may indicate whether such information and data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the ERT, shall submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information and data for the assessment of conformity with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) guidelines as elaborated by the IPCC Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories and any good practice guidance adopted by the COP. Any confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.

Option B (secretariat’s suggestion) In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the inventory, **BR and NC reports**, an Annex I Party may indicate whether such information **or** data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the

ERT, shall submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information or data for the assessment of **the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by Annex I Parties** and the conformity with the relevant methodological guidance as agreed by the COP. Any confidential information or data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.

Rationale: There are two changes introduced in Option B. One is on the scope of confidential data or information that cover all three types of reports. The other change is that “data or information” is used consistently, as “and” and “or” have different meanings, with “or” providing a broader scope.

9. An ERT member’s obligation not to disclose confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with paragraph 8 above shall continue after the termination of his or her service on the ERT.

D. Timing and procedures (CHN, JPN, LIE, NZ)

I. Placeholder for annual review (greenhouse gas inventory)

10. Each GHG inventory report submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to review, in accordance with part II of these guidelines.
11. Option A (Party submission) Reviews of annual GHG inventory submissions shall be completed no later than one year after the date of their submission. (JPN)

~~Option B (secretariat’s suggestion) Reviews of annual GHG inventory submissions shall be completed no later than one year after the date of their submission.~~

Rationale: This sentence pre-judges further discussions on the revised review guidelines for GHG inventories.

II. [Biennial review] (NZ) [Biennial reports] (JPN)

12. Each BR submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled review by an ERT, in accordance with part III of these guidelines.
13. A Party’s BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

Option 1 (paragraphs 14–16) (JPN)

14. In the years in which the BR is submitted in conjunction with the NC, each BR submitted in accordance with decision 2/CP.17 by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled in-country review in conjunction with the review of that Party’s NC.
15. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂ eq) (excluding land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF)) according to their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their BRs.

16. In the years in which the BR is submitted alone, a centralized review will be conducted to review it.

Option 2 (paragraph 14) (NZ)

14. Each BR is subject to a centralized review.

Option 3 (paragraph 14) (CHN)

14. Each BR is subject to an in-country review.

III. [Quadrennial review] (NZ) [National communications] (JPN)

17. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled in-country review by an ERT, in accordance with part IV of these guidelines. (CHN)
18. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 Mt CO₂ eq (excluding LULUCF) in accordance with their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their NCs. (JPN, LIE)

E. Expert review teams and institutional arrangements (EU, JPN, NZ, US)

I. Expert review teams

19. Each submission under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP shall be assigned to a single ERT, which shall be responsible for performing the review thereof in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in these guidelines. The submissions of an Annex I Party shall not be reviewed in two successive review years by an ERT with identical composition.
20. Option A (Parties' submissions) Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical assessment of the information submitted under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party [and identifying any [potential] (NZ) issues and factors influencing the fulfilment of its [commitments and] (NZ) reporting requirements]. (EU, JPN, NZ) The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical assessment of the information submitted under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party [and identifying any [potential] (NZ) issues and factors influencing the fulfilment of its [commitments **under the Convention and] (NZ) reporting requirements **under the Convention**]. (EU, JPN, NZ) The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.**

Rationale: Option A lacks clarity on the type of commitments that need to be fulfilled.

21. The ERTs shall be coordinated by the secretariat and shall be composed of experts selected on an ad hoc basis from the UNFCCC roster of experts and

include lead reviewers. The ERTs formed to carry out the tasks under the provisions of these guidelines may vary in size and composition, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review and the different needs for expertise for each review task. Additional experts may be added to a review team where necessary.

22. Participating experts shall serve in their personal capacity.
23. Experts shall be nominated by Parties to the Convention to the UNFCCC roster of experts and, as appropriate, by intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with relevant guidance provided by the COP.
24. Participating experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines. The training to be provided to the experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training² and/or any other means needed to ensure the necessary competence of the experts for their participation in ERTs, shall be designed and operationalized by the secretariat in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP. (JPN, NZ, US)
25. Experts selected for a specific review activity shall neither be nationals of the Party under review, nor be nominated or funded by that Party.
26. Option A (Parties' submissions) Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities for participation in the UNFCCC review activities indicated in these guidelines. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.

Rationale: Existing procedures do not allow the funding of some non-Annex I Parties and economies in transition, and this has caused problems in funding review experts from these Parties. Hence the suggested deletion.

27. In conducting reviews, the ERTs shall adhere to these guidelines and work on the basis of established and published procedures agreed upon by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including quality assurance and control and confidentiality provisions.

II. Competences of the expert review teams

28. Option A (Parties' submissions) The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the review of GHG inventories are in the areas to be covered in part II of these guidelines.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the **technical** review of GHG inventories are in the areas to be covered in part II of these guidelines.

² The experts that opt not to participate in the training have to undergo a similar assessment successfully to enable them to qualify for participation in ERTs.

Rationale: First, the review of GHG inventories is technical in nature. Second, GHG inventory review report will be one of the inputs to multilateral assessment, and therefore the wording “technical review of GHG inventories” better reflects the two stages of IAR with technical review being the first stage of IAR.

29. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of BRs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 61 below in part III of these guidelines.
30. Option A (Parties’ submissions) The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the in-depth review of NCs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 78(b) below in part IV of these guidelines.

Option B (secretariat’s suggestion) The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the ~~in-depth~~ technical review of NCs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 78(b) below in part IV of these guidelines.

Rationale: First, the review of NCs is technical in nature. Second, NC review report will be one of the inputs to multilateral assessment, and therefore the wording “technical review of NCs” better reflects the two stages of IAR with technical review being the first stage of IAR.

III. Composition of the expert review teams

31. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs to review the [annual and biennial information] (NZ) GHG inventories, BRs and NCs submitted under Articles 4 and 12 of the Convention and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP in such a way that the collective skills of the ERTs address the areas mentioned in paragraphs 28, 29 and 30 above, respectively.
32. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs with a view to achieving a balance between experts from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties in the overall composition of the ERTs, without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 31 above. The secretariat shall make every effort to ensure geographical balance among the experts selected from non-Annex I Parties and among those selected from Annex I Parties.
33. The secretariat shall ensure that in any ERT one co-lead reviewer shall be from an Annex I Party and one from a non-Annex I Party.
34. Without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 28, 29 and 30 above, the formation of ERTs should ensure, to the extent possible, that at least one member is fluent in the language of the Party under review.
35. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the composition of ERTs, including the selection of experts for the review teams and the lead reviewers, and on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 31 and 32 above.

IV. Lead reviewers

36. Lead reviewers shall act as co-lead reviewers for the ERTs in accordance with these guidelines.
37. Lead reviewers should ensure that the reviews in which they participate are performed by each ERT according to the relevant review guidelines and consistently across Parties. They should also ensure the quality and objectivity

of the thorough and comprehensive technical assessments in the reviews and provide for the continuity, comparability and timeliness of the reviews.

38. Lead reviewers may be offered additional training to that referred to in paragraph 24 above to enhance their skills.
39. With the administrative support of the secretariat, lead reviewers shall, for each review:
 - (a) [Prepare a brief workplan for the review;] (JPN, NZ)
 - (b) Verify that the reviewers have all of the necessary information provided by the secretariat prior to the review;
 - (c) Monitor the progress of the review;
 - (d) Coordinate the submission of queries of the ERT to the Party under review and coordinate the inclusion of the answers in the review report;
 - (e) Provide technical advice to the members of the ERT, if needed;
 - (f) Option A (Parties' submissions) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with the relevant guidelines;

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with **these** guidelines;

Rationale: This is to make the language more concrete.

- (g) Option A (Party submission) For GHG inventory reviews, verify that the ERT gives priority to individual categories for review in accordance with the relevant guidelines.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) ~~For inventory reviews, verify that the ERT gives priority to individual categories for review in accordance with the relevant guidelines.~~

Rationale: This is too specific for the review guidelines and only related to GHG inventories, and can be discussed during the lead reviewers' meetings and included in their conclusions.

40. Option A (Party submission) Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines and advice on the standardized data comparisons of inventory information (JPN) referred to in paragraph **XX** below, in part II of these guidelines.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA **as part of the annual report referred to in paragraph 35 above**, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines ~~and advice on the standardized data comparisons of inventory information (JPN) referred to in paragraph XX below, in part II of these guidelines.~~

Rationale: Advice on the standardized data comparisons of inventory information can be further discussed and included in the inventory review guidelines (i.e. Part II of these guidelines, which is currently a placeholder).

This report can be incorporated into the annual report to the SBSTA prepared by the secretariat (see paragraph 35 above).

41. Lead reviewers shall be experts from Parties to the Convention nominated to the UNFCCC roster of experts by Parties, and their collective skills shall address the areas mentioned in paragraphs 28, 29 and 30 above for reviewing GHG inventories, BRs and NCs, respectively.
42. Option A (Party submission) The pool of lead reviewers shall be used on a rotational basis, in order to ensure the continuity and consistency of the review process. The terms of service of lead reviewers for a given period of service shall be designed and operationalized in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP. (NZ)

~~Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The pool of lead reviewers shall be used on a rotational basis, in order to ensure the continuity and consistency of the review process. The terms of service of lead reviewers for a given period of service shall be designed and operationalized in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP.~~

Rationale: Based on the experiences with the reviews, using the pool of lead reviewers on a rotational basis has created problems due to the shortage of review experts and great pressure on new review experts who have to act as lead reviewers despite their lack of experience. This caused problems with timeliness and decrease in quality of the reviews.

43. Lead reviewers shall fulfil all requirements for the role of experts mentioned in chapter E.I above.

V. Ad hoc review experts

44. Ad hoc review experts shall be selected by the secretariat from those nominated by Parties or, exceptionally and only when the required expertise for the task is not available among them, from the relevant intergovernmental organizations belonging to the UNFCCC roster of experts for specific [annual, biennial or quadrennial] (NZ) reviews. They shall perform individual review tasks in accordance with the duties set out in their nomination.
45. Review experts shall, as necessary, perform desk review tasks in their home countries and participate in in-country visits and centralized reviews.

VI. Role of the secretariat (EU)

46. Option A (Party submission) The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including [the preparation of a workplan for the review] (NZ), the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.

~~Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including [the preparation of a workplan for the review]~~ **the preparation of a schedule for the review activities**, the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.

Rationale: It is unclear in Option A if the work plan is for each single review, which is the responsibility of lead reviewers.

47. The secretariat shall develop review tools and materials and templates for review reports under the guidance of the lead reviewers.
48. The secretariat shall coordinate, together with the lead reviewers, the communication during the review between the ERT concerned and the Party under review and shall maintain a record of communications between ERTs and Parties.
49. The secretariat, together with the lead reviewers, shall compile and edit the final review reports.
50. The secretariat shall facilitate annual meetings of the lead reviewers for GHG inventories, BRs and NCs. It shall summarize information on issues raised in the reviews to facilitate the work of lead reviewers in fulfilling their task to ensure consistency in the reviews across Parties.
51. Option A (Party submission) The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the implementation of the reviews.

~~Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the implementation of the reviews.~~

Rationale: Lack of clarity on what aspects of the reviews should be included in the annual report to the SBSTA. More clarity is needed if this sentence is kept and further, issues covered in the report suggested here will be anyway covered in the annual report referred to in paragraph 35 above.

52. The secretariat shall design and implement training activities for review experts and the subsequent assessment of the experts' qualifications, under the guidance of the SBSTA (see paragraph 24 above).

VII. Guidance provided by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (JPN, NZ)

53. The SBSTA shall provide general guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs, and to the ERTs on the expert review process. The reports mentioned in paragraphs 35 and 40 above are intended to provide the SBSTA with inputs for elaborating such guidance.

F. Reporting and publication (EU, JPN, NZ, US)

54. The ERTs shall, under their collective responsibility, produce relevant review reports. The review of the same information (see paragraph 4 above) could be reflected in one report. The following review reports should be produced for each Annex I Party:

(a) For the [annual review] [review of GHG inventories], a final report on the review of the GHG inventory, in accordance with part II of these guidelines;

(b) For the [biennial review] [review of biennial reports], a technical report on the review of the BR, in accordance with part III of these guidelines;

(c) For the [quadrennial review] [review of national communications], a report on the review of the NC, in accordance with part IV of these guidelines.

55. The review reports for each Annex I Party shall follow a format and outline comparable to that set out in [paragraph 56 below] (NZ) [the annex to these

guidelines] (JPN) and shall include the specific elements described in parts II–IV of these guidelines.

56. All review reports prepared by ERTs shall use non-confrontational language and include the following elements:

- (a) An introduction and a summary;
- (b) A description of the technical assessment of each of the elements reviewed according to the relevant sections on the scope of the review detailed in parts II–IV of these guidelines, [including:

- (i) Option A (Parties' submissions) A description of any [potential issues] (NZ) [problems] (EU) identified in accordance with paragraphs 65, 80 and 81 below and factors influencing the fulfilment of commitments and reporting requirements identified during the review;

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) A description of any [potential issues] [problems] identified in accordance with paragraphs 65, 80 and 81 below and factors influencing the fulfilment of commitments and reporting requirements **under the Convention** identified during the review;

Rationale: This clarifies the type of commitments.

- (ii) Any [suggestions] (NZ) [recommendations] (EU) provided by the ERT to [correct] (JPN) [resolve] (NZ) the [potential issues] (NZ) [identified problems] (EU);
 - (iii) An assessment of any efforts made by the Annex I Party under review to address any [potential issues] (NZ) [problems] (EU) identified by the ERT during the current review or during previous reviews that have not been addressed;]

- (c) Possible suggestions made by the ERT concerning the conduct of the review in subsequent years, including which parts may need to be considered in more depth;

- (d) Information on any other issue of concern deemed relevant by the ERT;

- (e) The sources of information used in the formulation of the final report.

57. Option A (Parties' submissions) Following their completion, all review reports, including status reports on initial checks of GHG inventories, shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with any written comments on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) ~~Following their completion, all review reports, including status reports on initial checks of GHG inventories, shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with any written comments on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.~~

Rationale: This prejudices Part II of the review guidelines (GHG inventory reviews) which will be discussed in 2014.

58. Option A (Party submission) Final review reports shall be no longer than 20 pages for NCs, 15 pages for BRs and 15 pages for GHG inventories. (JPN)

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) ~~Final review reports shall be no longer than 20 pages for NCs, 15 pages for BRs and 15 pages for GHG inventories.~~

Rationale: Based on the existing review practice and experience, and given the amount of mandatory reporting requirements to be covered, it is very difficult to set limits defined in Option A.

PART II: REVIEW OF ANNUAL INVENTORIES

Placeholder for guidelines for the review of greenhouse gas inventories

PART III: REVIEW OF BIENNIAL REPORTS

There are two options for part III – option A and option B below

Option A for part III (JPN, NZ)

A. Purpose of the review

59. Option A (Party submission) The overall objectives of the international assessment and review (IAR) process are to review the progress made by developed country Parties in achieving emission reductions and to assess the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties, as well as to assess emissions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets under the SBI, taking into account national circumstances, in a rigorous, robust and transparent manner, with a view to promoting comparability and building confidence. In addition, the IAR process aims at assessing the implementation of methodological and reporting requirements. (JPN)

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) **The technical review of biennial reports is the first step of the international assessment and review (IAR) process.** The overall objectives of the international assessment and review (IAR) process are to review the progress made by developed country Parties in achieving emission reductions and to assess the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties, as well as to assess emissions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets under the SBI, taking into account national circumstances, in a rigorous, robust and transparent manner, with a view to promoting comparability and building confidence. In addition, the IAR process aims at assessing the implementation of methodological and reporting requirements.

Rationale: The proposed addition set the scene for the technical review of BRs, which is the subject of PART III of the review guidelines.

60. The purposes of the technical review of BRs from Annex I Parties are: (NZ)
- (a) To provide a thorough and comprehensive technical assessment of the parts of BRs that are not otherwise covered in the annual GHG inventory review;
 - (b) Taking into account paragraph 60(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties” adopted by the COP;³
 - (c) To promote consistency in the review of the information contained in BRs submitted by Annex I Parties;
 - (d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

³ Decision 2/CP.17, Annex I; Decision 19/CP.18.

(e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party.

B. General procedures

61. Each Annex I Party's BR will be reviewed, where relevant in conjunction with the review of the NC, which will include: (JPN)
- (a) A technical review of the BR, where relevant in conjunction with the review of the Party's NC, which will result in an individual review report for each developed country Party;
- (b) A multilateral assessment of the Party's progress towards achieving emission reductions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target.
62. Prior to the review, the ERT shall conduct a desk review of the BR of the Annex I Party under review. The ERT shall notify the Party concerned of any questions the team has regarding the information provided in the BR and of any focal areas for the review. (NZ)
63. Option A (Party submission) The output of the technical review will be a technical review report, building on existing reporting standards and including an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target. (JPN)

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The output of the technical review will be a technical review report, ~~building on existing reporting standards~~ **that covers the assessment of the reporting requirements and include** an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.

Rationale: It is not clear what existing reporting standards refer to.

C. Scope of the review

64. The individual review shall:
- (a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the BR, in accordance with the reporting requirements contained in decisions 2/CP.17 and 19/CP.18, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;
- (b) Check the consistency of the BR and NC with the annual GHG inventory;
- (c) Provide a detailed technical review of only those parts of the BR that are not included in the annual GHG inventory review, as well as of the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein, such as:
- (i) All emissions and removals related to the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target; (JPN)
- (ii) Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
- (iii) Progress the Party has made towards achieving its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;

(iv) The Party's provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties;

(d) In the years in which a NC is submitted at the same time as the BR, serve as part of the review of the NC, where there is an overlap between the content of the BR and that of the NC. (NZ)

Identification of issues (JPN, NZ)

65. The issues identified during the assessment of individual sections of the BR shall be identified as relating to:
- (a) Transparency;
 - (b) Completeness;
 - (c) Timeliness.

D. Timing

66. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the timeliness of its BR submission, it should inform the secretariat thereof before the due date of the submission. If the BR is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.] (JPN, NZ)
67. Option A (Parties' submissions) The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs [within six months] (NZ) [within nine months for the group of Annex I Parties undergoing centralized reviews and 11 months for the group of Annex I Parties undergoing in-country reviews⁴] (JPN) of the due date of the BR submission for each Annex I Party.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs **within a year and a half at a maximum** of the due date of the BR submission for each Annex I Party.

Rationale: A maximum of a year and a half to complete the BR review is based on the timeline defined by the modalities and procedures of the IAR and on the experiences with previous reviews. The above dead-lines presented in option A are difficult to meet given the existing and planned resources in the secretariat and the availability of review experts.

68. If additional information is requested during the review, it should be provided by the Annex I Party concerned within four (NZ) weeks of the request.
69. The ERT for the review of the BR of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft technical review report following the format detailed [in paragraph 72 below] [in appendix II to these guidelines], to be finalized within [four] (JPN) [eight] (NZ) weeks after the review.
70. Option A (Parties' submissions) Each draft technical review report of the BR will be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party

⁴ Japan suggests that Annex I Parties should be split into two groups in the years in which both BRs and NCs are submitted and reviewed in conjunction, so that the multilateral assessment can be carried out in two SBI sessions during one IAR cycle. One group of Annex I Parties could undergo centralized reviews, so that they are ready for the multilateral assessment at the first SBI session, which implies the completion of the individual review of BRs and NCs within nine months of the due date of their submission. The other group of Annex I Parties could undergo in-country reviews, so that they are ready for the multilateral assessment at the second SBI session, which implies the completion of the individual review of BRs and NCs within 11 months from the due date of their submission.

concerned shall be given four weeks⁵ from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) Each draft technical review report of the BR **shall** be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks⁶ from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

Rationale: Editorial suggestion for the language used in the context of guidelines.

71. Option A (Parties' submissions) The ERT concerned shall produce the final version of the technical review report of the BR, taking into account the Annex I Party's comments, within four weeks of the receipt of the comments. Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the secretariat will ensure that the comments of the Party are incorporated in a separate section of the technical review report of the BR.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The ERT concerned shall produce the final version of the technical review report of the BR, taking into account the Annex I Party's comments, within four weeks of the receipt of the comments. Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, ~~the secretariat will ensure that~~ the comments of the Party **should be** ~~are~~ incorporated within a separate section of the review report.

Rationale: The review report is a collaborative effort of the ERT instead of an output from the secretariat. The suggested changes ensure the accuracy of the language here.

E. Reporting

72. The following specific elements shall be included in the technical review report referred to in paragraph 54(b) above:
- (a) A technical assessment of the elements specified in paragraph 64(c) above;
 - (b) An examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target. (NZ)
73. The secretariat shall produce a report on the compilation and synthesis of BRs from Annex I Parties, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP. (JPN)

Option B for part III – no need for biennial report review guidelines⁷ (EU)

⁵ Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

⁶ Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

⁷ According to the European Union, the review guidelines for BRs should follow the modalities and procedures for IAR (decision 2/CP.17), including the technical review of the information submitted in BRs. Parties have already agreed that the modalities and procedures of the IAR process will be revised no later than in 2016 (COP 22), having gained experience from the first round of reviews. The European Union believes that any revision of the review guidelines for BRs as included in decision 2/CP.17 should follow that agreed timetable.

PART IV: REVIEW OF NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. Purpose (EU, JPN, NZ)

74. The purposes of the review of NCs from Annex I Parties are:

(a) To establish a process for a thorough and comprehensive technical assessment of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a group;

(b) Taking into account paragraph 74(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of NCs by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on NCs” adopted by the COP;

(c) To promote consistency in the review of the information contained in the NCs of Annex I Parties;

(d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information under Article 12 of the Convention and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(f) To assist the COP in carrying out its responsibilities relating to the following tasks: (JPN)

(i) To assess the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties, the overall effects and cumulative impacts of the measures taken and the extent to which progress towards achieving the objective of the Convention is being made (Article 4, paragraph 2(a) and (b), Article 7, paragraph 2(e), and Article 10, paragraph 2(a), of the Convention);

(ii) To contribute to the review of the adequacy of commitments and to decide on follow-up action (Article 4, paragraph 2(d), and Article 10, paragraph 2(b), of the Convention);

(iii) To examine the obligations of Annex I Parties under Articles 4, 5, 6 and 12 of the Convention;

(iv) To examine the institutional arrangements under the Convention;

(v) To promote and guide the development and refinement of methodologies (Article 7, paragraph 2(d), of the Convention) and guidelines to enhance the comparability and focus of further communications;

(vi) To promote and facilitate the exchange of information on measures adopted by Annex I Parties (Article 7, paragraph 2(b), of the Convention);

(vii) To assess progress made in achieving emission reductions;

(viii) To assess the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to non-Annex I Parties.

B. General procedures

75. Each Annex I Party's NC will be reviewed, where relevant in conjunction with the review of the BR.
76. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled centralized or in-country review.
77. Prior to the review, the ERT shall conduct a desk review of the NC of the Annex I Party under review. The ERT shall notify the Party concerned of any questions the team has regarding the NC and of any focal areas for the [centralized review or] (JPN, NZ) in-country visit.

C. Scope of the review

78. The individual review shall:
 - (a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the NC in accordance with the "Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications" adopted by the COP, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;
 - (b) Provide a detailed examination of [only those parts of the NC that are not included in the review of GHG inventories and biennial reports (NZ) [each part of the NC] (EU, JPN), as well as of the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein, such as:
 - (i) National circumstances relevant to GHG emissions and removals;
 - (ii) [Policies and measures;]
 - (iii) [Projections and the total effect of policies and measures;]
 - (iv) Vulnerability assessment, climate change impacts and adaptation measures;
 - (v) [Financial resources;]
 - (vi) [Transfer of technology;]
 - (vii) Research and systematic observation;⁸
 - (viii) Education, training and public awareness;
 - (c) Option A (Parties' submissions) [Giving consideration to national circumstances, identify any [potential issues] (NZ) [problems] (EU) and factors influencing the fulfilment of commitments and reporting requirements related to [those parts] (NZ) [each part] (EU) of the NC.]

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) [Giving consideration to national circumstances, identify any [potential issues] (NZ) [problems] (EU) and factors influencing the fulfilment of commitments and reporting requirements **under the Convention** related to [those parts] (NZ) [each part] (EU) of the NC.]

79. The review process should undertake six major tasks: (JPN)
 - (a) Review key qualitative information and quantitative data contained in NCs;

⁸ Information provided under this heading includes a summary of the information provided on global climate observing systems.

- (b) Review policies and measures described in NCs;
- (c) Assess the information contained in NCs regarding the Party's Convention commitments, and assess the extent to which progress towards achieving the objective of the Convention is being made;
- (d) Describe expected progress in the limitation of emissions by sources and the enhancement of removals by sinks of GHGs, on the basis of information contained in NCs;
- (e) Describe expected progress in cooperation on the preparations for adaptation;
- (f) Aggregate data across NCs with respect to inventories, projections, effects of measures and financial transfers, but without adding up the individual national totals for projections and the effects of measures.

Identification of [issues] (JPN, NZ) [problems] (EU)

80. The issues identified during the assessment of individual sections of the NC shall be identified as relating to:
- (a) Transparency;
 - (b) Completeness;
 - (c) Timeliness.
81. Only when issues of transparency prevent the ERT from performing the review should this be considered a problem. Failure to submit any section of the NC shall be considered a problem. (EU)

D. Timing

82. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the timeliness of its NC submission, it should inform the secretariat thereof before the due date of the submission. If the NC is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.] (JPN, NZ)
83. Option A (Parties' submissions) The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within [one year] (EU) [two years] (NZ) [fifteen months] (JPN) of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs **within a year and a half at a maximum** of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

Rationale: A maximum of a year and a half to complete the NC review is based on the timeline defined by the modalities and procedures of the IAR (where the NC review report is one of the inputs to IAR) and on the experiences with previous reviews. The above dead-lines in option A are difficult to meet given the existing and planned resources in the secretariat and the availability of review experts.

84. If additional information is requested during the review, it should be provided by the Annex I Party [as soon as possible and within two weeks after the review] (EU) [within six weeks of the request] (NZ).
85. The ERT for the review of the NC of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft of the review report following the

format detailed in paragraph 88 below, to be finalized within [eight] (NZ) [four] (EU) weeks after the review.

86. Option A (Parties' submissions) The draft of each NC review report will be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks⁹ from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The draft of each NC review report **shall** be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

Rationale: Editorial suggestion for the language used in the context of guidelines.

87. Option A (Parties' submissions) The ERT shall produce the final version of the NC review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the secretariat will ensure that the comments of the Party are incorporated within a separate section of the review report.

Option B (secretariat's suggestion) The ERT shall produce the final version of the NC review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, ~~the secretariat will ensure that~~ the comments of the Party **should be** ~~are~~ incorporated within a separate section of the review report.

Rationale: The review report is a collaborative effort of the ERT instead of an output from the secretariat. The suggested changes ensure the accuracy of the language here.

E. Reporting

88. The following specific elements shall be included in the report referred to in paragraph 54(c) above:
- (a) A technical assessment of the elements specified in paragraph 78(b) above;
 - (b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 78(c) above.
89. The secretariat shall produce a report on the compilation and synthesis of NCs from Annex I Parties, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP.

⁹ Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

Appendix I

Outline for reports on the technical reviews of individual greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

(to be discussed in 2014)

Appendix II

Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual biennial reports from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary

- Convention ratification date
- Date of receipt of BR
- Dates of review and dates of comment period
- Members of the expert review team
- Summary and findings
 - Compliance with guidelines
 - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
 - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)

2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends

3. Quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

4. Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

- Mitigation actions and their effects
- Emission reductions and removals and the use of units from the market-based mechanisms and land use, land-use change and forestry activities

5. Projection

- Implementation of Convention commitments
- Approaches used
- Review of key data points

6. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support

- Review of key data points
- Implementation of Convention commitments

Appendix III

Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary

- Convention ratification date
- Date of receipt of NC
- Dates of review and dates of comment period
- Members of the expert review team
- National circumstances
- Summary and findings
 - Compliance with guidelines
 - Review of key data points
 - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Approach to adaptation
 - Expected progress in adaptation
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
 - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)

2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends

3. Policies and measures

- Implementation of Convention commitments
- Overview of measures by gas, sector and policy instrument
- Effects of individual measures, where possible
- Policies and measures under consideration or requiring international cooperation

4. Projections

- Implementation of Convention commitments
- Approaches used
- Review of key data points

- Projected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
- 5. Expected impacts of climate change
- 6. Adaptation measures
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
- 7. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support
 - Review of key data points
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
- 8. Research and systematic observation
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
- 9. Education, training and public awareness
 - Implementation of Convention commitments

Option 2 for the review guidelines: this option envisages three sets of guidelines on reviewing GHG inventories, BRs and NCs (CHN)

Part I: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

Placeholder, to be developed in 2014

Part II: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

A. Objective

- The objective of the guidelines

B. Purpose of the review

- The purpose of the review

C. General approach

- The stages of the review process
- The relationship of these stages

D. Initial check

- Scope
- Status reports
- Timing

E. The scope of the review

- The scope of the technical review
- Operational approaches
- The frequency of the in-country review

F. The expert review team

- The tasks of the expert review team
- The composition of the expert review team
- The organization of the expert review team
- Lead reviewers

G. Review report

- The preparation of the individual review report
- Outline of the individual review report
- The publication of the individual review report

H. Timing

- Timing

Part III: UNFCCC guidelines for the international assessment and review of biennial reports

A. Objective

- The objective of the guidelines

B. Purpose of the international assessment and review of BRs

- The overall objectives of the international assessment and review process
- The purpose of international assessment and review

C. General approach

- The stages of the international assessment and review process
- The relationship of these stages

D. Technical review

- The scope of the technical review
- The adequacy of mitigation targets and comparability of mitigation efforts
- Operational approaches
- The frequency of the in-country review
- The tasks of the expert review team
- The composition of the expert review team
- The organization of the expert review team
- Lead reviewers
- The publication of the individual review report
- Outline of the individual review report
- Timing

E. Multilateral assessment

- The scope of the multilateral assessment
- The adequacy of mitigation targets and comparability of mitigation efforts
- Operational approaches
- The organization of the multilateral assessment
- The publication of the individual assessment record
- Outline of the individual assessment record
- Timing

F. Conclusion of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

- The preparation and publication of the conclusion of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation