

**Conclusions and recommendations**  
**Ninth meeting of inventory lead reviewers**  
**Bonn, Germany**

*27–29 March 2012*

1. The ninth meeting of inventory lead reviewers (LRs) was held in Bonn, Germany, from 27 to 29 March 2012. A total of 33 experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and 35 experts from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) were invited to the meeting. Of the 42 experts that attended, 17 were from non-Annex I Parties and 25 were from Annex I Parties. In addition, a member of the enforcement branch and a member of the facilitative branch of the Compliance Committee attended the meeting as observers.

2. In accordance with decisions 12/CP.9, 22/CMP.1 and 24/CMP.1, the meeting addressed both procedural and technical issues relating to the annual review of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories from Annex I Parties under the Convention and the annual reviews under the Kyoto Protocol.

**Statistics and follow-up of the eighth lead reviewers' meeting**

3. The LRs noted, as in the eighth meeting of LRs, that there is a need to continue to improve the efficiency and timeliness of the review process. The starting point for improving the efficiency is to conduct better planning of and preparation for the reviews.

4. The LRs noted with concern the decrease in the number of experts participating in the 2011 review cycle. Compared with the 2010 review cycle, when 165 experts participated in the review activities, the number of experts has decreased by 24 per cent, as only 126 experts participated.

5. The LRs noted that the decrease in the number of participating experts was especially marked in the centralized reviews and, as a consequence, most of the expert review teams (ERTs) in centralized reviews in the 2011 review cycle were incomplete in the sense that for one or more sectors there was only one sectoral expert.

6. The LRs recognized that incompleteness of review teams had a negative impact on the reviews. The LRs also recognized the importance of the review process for the objectives of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. Therefore, the LRs requested the secretariat and the Parties to increase their efforts to ensure that a sufficient number of review experts participate in the 2012 review cycle.

7. The LRs welcomed the secretariat's improvement of the introductory presentation to ERTs, including specific guidance for ERTs on using the words "recommend" and "encourage" when advising a Party on how to resolve an identified problem.

8. The LRs also welcomed the secretariat's provision, in response to a request from the eighth LR meeting, of a tool that examined the recalculations.

9. The LRs noted that the total number of issues identified as potential problems during the review process is decreasing. The LRs also noted with concern that issues related to national systems were still identified as potential problems and that these may not be solved until late in the first commitment period.

**Consistency and timeliness in reviews**

10. The LRs welcomed the information provided by the secretariat on the analysis of consistency of reviews under the Kyoto Protocol during the 2011 review cycle and noted that the general consistency across reviews is increasing. The LRs also noted that there are still issues of consistency with respect to the review of the completeness of estimates, transparency and estimates not in line with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change *Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (hereinafter referred to as the IPCC good practice guidance), which show that ERTs, under the LRs' guidance and with the support of the secretariat, must continue their efforts to achieve consistency as a matter of priority.

11. The LRs recognized that there are concerns over the consistency in identifying problems in national systems from individual and isolated potential problems related to estimates of emissions or removals, and noted that these would be better handled by the application of adjustments. The LRs noted that the existence of significant and unresolved multiple, recurrent and cross-cutting potential problems in the inventory may be an indicator of problems in the national system. The LRs recommended that ERTs, on identifying a potential problem in a national system, make every effort to establish good and early communication with the Party and take into consideration the plans of the Party to solve these potential problems, including feasibility, prioritization and timeliness.

12. The LRs recommended that ERTs ensure that the issues identified are reported in a transparent, thorough and objective manner in the list of potential problems and further questions (“Saturday paper”), and that the recommendations are clear and comprehensive, and provide several options, where applicable and possible, for the Party to solve the issue in the six-week period as defined in the *Guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol* (hereinafter referred to as the Article 8 review guidelines).

13. The LRs noted that it is important that the quality assurance activities performed by the secretariat start as early as possible during the review process, as a way to increase the efficiency of the work by the ERT.

14. The LRs noted with concern that the finalization of annual review reports (ARRs) was late in both the 2010 and the 2011 review cycles and in many cases ARRs were finalized after the one-year deadline as included in the Article 8 review guidelines.

15. The LRs agreed on the need to deliver ARRs on schedule, as agreed by Parties. One of the main objectives of the planned improvements for the 2012 review cycle is to live up to that commitment.

16. The LRs agreed that it is desirable to have the complete zero order<sup>1</sup> draft review reports available at the end of the review week for both in-country and centralized reviews, while noting that achieving this is challenging for centralized reviews.

17. The LRs requested the secretariat to provide the review report template to the review experts no later than one week prior to the start of the review week.

18. The LRs welcomed the questionnaire prepared by the secretariat to enquire about review experts’ availability for the 2012 reviews. The LRs requested the secretariat to invite review experts to the reviews as early as possible and provide information on which Parties they will review.

### **Planning and preparation for 2012 reviews**

19. The LRs noted that the 2012 review cycle of the annual submissions of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol will focus on 2010, which is the middle year of the first commitment period. This means that there is not much time left for Parties to resolve issues identified by the ERTs, such as potential problems with the national system or related to activities of land use, land-use change and forestry emissions and removals under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol (KP-LULUCF), before the end of the first commitment period. In that respect, the LRs encouraged ERTs to identify the remaining problems and, as appropriate, to strongly recommend that Parties solve these issues as a matter of priority and that Parties report on their plans and actions to solve these issues in their next annual submissions.

20. The LRs also noted that there is limited time available during centralized reviews. Therefore, the LRs reiterated their recommendation from the eighth meeting of LRs that during centralized reviews special attention should be paid, by review experts and LRs, to follow up on the recommendations made in previous review reports and on recalculations, while still ensuring that all review requirements are covered during the review.

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<sup>1</sup> The complete zero order ARR contains the ARR sections for all sectors compiled together.

21. The LRs agreed to take a stronger role in leading ERTs, to ensure proper time management and that all review requirements are covered. This could be done by developing an explicit stepwise approach to the review by providing more clarity with regard to what needs to be done and when. The stepwise approach could also help to integrate new review experts in the teams and the review work. The LRs requested the secretariat, together with a group of LRs, to develop a stepwise approach to the reviews and to trial it during the 2012 review cycle.
22. The LRs requested the secretariat to decrease the number of Parties reviewed by one ERT to be no more than four, subject to availability of a sufficient number of experts. The LR also requested the secretariat to explore the possibility of having an ERT reviewing two Parties.
23. The LRs stressed the need for good preparation by review experts prior to the actual review week, and the role of LRs in such good preparation; this should be considered within the stepwise approach.
24. The LRs agreed to continue the practice of the last two years with regard to the preparation of draft status reports. This means that LRs provide comments to the draft status report prepared by the secretariat within one week of receipt of the draft.
25. The LRs endorsed the overall approach to the annual reviews in 2012, as presented by the secretariat during the meeting. This includes the priorities for choosing Parties to have an in-country review, namely, Parties with remaining potential problems with the national system and/or KP-LULUCF, Parties that have been adjusted two years in a row, Parties that have requested an in-country review and Parties to the Convention that had their last in-country review five years ago.
26. The LRs encouraged the ERTs, with the assistance of the secretariat, to record all communication with the Parties in order to enhance the documentation of the review.
27. The LRs agreed to the procedure presented by the secretariat for the preparation of the annual report by the LRs to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in 2012, which is the same as that followed in 2010 and 2011, including suggestions on how to improve the review process in accordance with the Article 8 review guidelines.

## **Improvements in documents**

### ***Annual review report templates***

28. The LRs noted that the instructions provided in the 2011 review report templates were updated and made more clear. They requested the secretariat to further improve the instructions provided in the review report templates and, if possible, develop short checklists providing tips to the review experts when drafting the report.
29. The LRs also requested the secretariat to continue to streamline the review report template, with a view to avoiding any duplication of information in the review report and unnecessary repetition of information provided by Parties in their national inventory report, and preventing any technical difficulties encountered by review experts when using the review report templates.
30. They also requested the secretariat to continue developing standard language for the review report templates, with options where relevant, to further improve consistency across the review reports.
31. The LRs encouraged the secretariat to further explore the option of providing information in the ARR in a tabular format. The LRs noted that this would facilitate the drafting of the review reports for review experts and improve their readability.
32. The LRs requested the secretariat to include a table at the end of the review report where all recommendations, sector by sector, will be included. This will replace the current section on recommendations in the review report.
33. The LRs recommended that review experts carefully follow up on inventory problems that led to adjustments or a question of implementation in previous reviews, and analyse what actions

Kyoto Protocol Parties have implemented to provide recalculations and replace the adjustments and to remedy the question of implementation. They requested the secretariat to include a new section in the review report template for such cases.

### **Synthesis and assessment report**

34. The LRs welcomed the information provided by the secretariat on the questionnaire on the usefulness of the tables and graphs in the Synthesis and Assessment (S&A) part I report. The LRs concluded that although the S&A was found useful there is a strong interest in revising its structure in order to make it more flexible and focused on the data that ERTs mostly use.

35. The LRs encouraged the secretariat to revisit the tables that are part of S&A part I report, with a view to reducing the number of tables, such as trend tables, while maintaining consistency with the requirements set out in the Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part I: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories. The LRs also encouraged the secretariat to explore other alternatives for displaying the information in tables and graphs, such as the use of the GHG data interface.

36. The LRs noted that information in the S&A part II for Kyoto Protocol Parties could be streamlined taking into consideration the information that is already included in the annual status reports.

### **Review tools**

37. The LRs welcomed the work undertaken by the secretariat to further develop the review tools in order to meet the needs under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. They noted that this work facilitates the annual review by the ERTs and the consistency of this review, and also noted that providing feedback on the review tools is crucial for the further development of the tools. The LRs requested the secretariat to provide more guidance to ERTs on the review tools by preparing a list of the review tools available and giving a presentation at the beginning of the review on available review tools and a short description of their use, aiming for full utilization of the review tools by the ERT during and after the review week.

38. The LRs concluded once again that the review transcript is a useful tool however, it is not always filled in by review experts and not always updated after the Party's comments to the draft review report have been provided. The LRs noted the need to raise this and the importance of the review transcript with the review experts during the whole review cycle.

39. The LRs reiterated request from the eighth meeting that the secretariat include recommendations from the previous year's in the review transcripts to be used in the 2012 review cycle.

40. The LRs requested the secretariat to explore options to improve the Locator tool by including some basic graph options to make it easier to copy from the Locator, the possibility export a sector to Excel and the search options.

### **Virtual team room**

41. The LRs noted the work undertaken by the secretariat on the redesign of the virtual team room (VTR) to support the review activities, and welcomed the new guidance for its development, in particular the requirement to simplify its structure and use and to increase the efficiency of its use by ERTs. The LRs welcomed the version of the Reference Library component of the VTR that was shown during the LRs' meeting, noting that it is a valuable tool to support the review process and GHG inventories in general. The LRs encouraged the secretariat to share the Reference Library with all ERTs as soon as possible, preferably for the next review cycle. However, the LRs recommended that the secretariat take into consideration the specific circumstances of some Parties, such as limited access to the Internet, older versions of Internet browsers and word-processing documents, in the design and development of later phases of the VTR, such as the ERT workspace, the review issues tracking system and the document management system, in order to guarantee its functionality and efficiency. The LRs noted that the funding for this project is not

secured in its totality, and emphasized the importance of Parties contributing to this work with financial resources.

### **Suggested further improvements to the review process**

42. The LRs noted the need for better communication between the secretariat, the LRs and the Party that will undergo an in-country review, to make sure that enough time will be provided for the review experts to work with the Party experts on the issues that need further clarification during the review.

43. The LRs agreed that having an experienced review expert participating in a review as a desk reviewer could be a fallback option when there are difficulties with having complete review teams.

44. The LRs encouraged the use of telephone conferences and web-based tools to facilitate the review, especially prior to the review week.

45. The LRs welcomed the draft decision trees on notation keys, derived from the *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*, the IPCC good practice guidance and from the guidance to European Union member States for reporting carbon pools which are not a net source. These draft decision trees were presented during the refresher seminar (see para. 46 below). The LRs agreed that these draft decision trees are a good starting point but they need further elaboration. They agreed to take on work to develop the decision trees further. The revised decision trees will be sent to the secretariat by 2 May 2012 and will be provided to all LRs attending the meeting for comments. The LRs further agreed that these decision trees, if agreed to by the LRs, could be a useful tool for the 2012 review cycle under the Convention and Kyoto Protocol, separately if appropriate.

### **Training of review experts**

46. The LRs welcomed the information on ongoing and planned training activities in 2012, including the organizing of annual and regional training seminars, the launch of a new training course for the review of higher-tier methods and complex models, and the organizing of a refresher seminar for experienced reviewers. The LRs noted the success of the refresher seminar that was held on 27 March 2012, back-to-back with the ninth meeting of inventory LRs, with the participation of LRs and experienced reviewers of all sectors. They noted that the seminar, with its focus on the good practice approaches to inventory issues identified during the review process, helped to refresh and further develop common understanding of some issues and problems that ERTs face during the review process. The LRs recommended that the secretariat continue organizing regional training and refresher seminars, subject to the availability of resources, and encouraged Parties to provide such resources and, in particular, continue supporting regional training seminars.

47. Given the complexity of the annual review process, the LRs reiterated the need to further enhance the approach for the integration of new reviewers into the work of the ERTs. The LRs requested the secretariat to continue to take into account the need for smooth integration of the new reviewers into the work of the ERTs when planning the composition of ERTs, and agreed that LRs would continue to take this into account when allocating and supporting tasks within the team, in particular by guiding new experts in the preparation for the centralized reviews and encouraging mentoring by more experienced reviewers. To support this effort, the LRs noted the information provided by the secretariat on which experts are participating in the review process for the first time was helpful in fulfilling the above-mentioned need, and requested the secretariat to continue to provide such information to the LRs.

48. The LRs noted a need for increasing the number of review experts who actively participate in the review process, to ensure the completeness and balance of expertise of the ERTs, in particular review experts from non-Annex I Parties and Parties with economies in transition. The LRs reiterated the need for the governments that nominate experts to the UNFCCC roster of experts and agree on their participation in reviews to ensure that these experts are fully available during the whole review process. The LRs also reiterated the need for Parties to update the

UNFCCC roster of experts on a regular basis and requested the secretariat to remind all Parties once a year to update it.

49. The LRs noted a need for the training courses to be updated to meet future requirements of the ERTs.

#### **Development of the new CRF Reporter**

50. The LRs noted the information provided by the secretariat on the work to develop the new CRF Reporter software. The LRs noted that this work is in accordance with decision 15/CP.17 adopting the revised UNFCCC “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part I: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual greenhouse gas inventories” (hereinafter referred to as the Revised UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines), which incorporate methodologies of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories. The LRs also noted that in accordance with decision 15/CP.17, paragraphs 3 and 5, the Revised UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines and the new CRF Reporter will be used on a voluntary trial basis from October 2012 to May 2013 and fully implemented from 2015.

51. The LRs noted that the funds currently available for this work are not sufficient for the completion of the project. The LRs emphasized the importance of advancing the development of the new CRF Reporter and the need for Parties to contribute to this work with supplementary financial resources in order to ensure completion in the allotted time.

#### **Issues related to the second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol**

52. The LRs welcomed the presentation by the secretariat on the preparations for a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol and the post-2012 phase under the first commitment period. The LRs noted that decisions adopted by Parties at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa, in particular decisions 2/CMP.7 to 5/CMP.7, will have a significant impact on processes and systems operated by the secretariat, such as the international transaction log.

53. The LRs noted the request by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the SBSTA contained in decision 1/CMP.7 to assess and address the implications of the implementation of decisions 2/CMP.7 to 5/CMP.7 on previous decisions on methodological issues related to the Kyoto Protocol, including those relating to Articles 5, 7 and 8 of the Kyoto Protocol.

54. The LRs further noted that the related work on the revision of the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines will offer an opportunity for Parties to improve their reporting, taking into consideration, inter alia, the lessons learned and the recommendations provided by LRs and ERTs.

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