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Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The 8th meeting of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) took place in Bonn, Germany, on 25 and 26 February 2013. This report summarizes the outcome of the meeting with regard to the implementation of the mandate of the CGE and includes the work programme of the CGE for 2013.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 5/CP.15, reconstituted the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) for three years, from 2010 to 2012, in order to improve the process of, and preparation of, national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties).

2. The COP, by decision 18/CP.18, decided to extend for a term of one year the CGE, including its current membership. The COP also decided that the CGE, in fulfilling its mandate, shall function in accordance with the terms of reference contained in the annex to decision 5/CP.15. It requested the CGE to develop, at its first meeting in 2013, a work programme for 2013, taking into account the current and future needs of non-Annex I Parties, the provisions under the Convention and the relevant decisions of the COP.¹

3. By decision 5/CP.15, the COP requested the secretariat to facilitate the work of the CGE by organizing its meetings and workshops and compiling reports of its meetings and workshops for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI).

B. Scope

4. This report contains the proceedings of the 8th meeting of the CGE. At the meeting, the CGE formulated its work programme for 2013 and agreed on the organization of its work for the year.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

5. The SBI, having considered this report, is invited to take note of the work programme of the CGE for 2013 and to provide further guidance to the CGE for the implementation of its mandate, as appropriate.

6. In addition, the SBI may wish to invite Parties in a position to do so to provide financial resources to enable the CGE to implement the activities planned in accordance with its work programme and to invite multilateral and bilateral support programmes to collaborate with the CGE in the provision of technical support to non-Annex I Parties in preparing their national communications and biennial update reports (BURs).

II. Proceedings of the 8th meeting of the Consultative Group of Experts

7. The 8th meeting of the CGE was held in Bonn, Germany, on 25 and 26 February 2013. One of the objectives of the meeting was to develop a work programme for 2013, taking into account the current and future needs of non-Annex I Parties, the provisions under the Convention and the relevant decisions of the COP.

¹ Decision 18/CP.18, paragraphs 1–3.

8. The meeting was attended by 18 members of the CGE.² In addition one member from an international organization³ attended remotely using WebEx videoconferencing.

9. Ms. Ruleta Camacho (Antigua and Barbuda), the outgoing Chair of the CGE, opened the meeting on 25 February 2013 by welcoming the members.

A. Election of the Chair and the Rapporteur

10. The outgoing Chair reminded the CGE that pursuant to rule 6 of the rules of procedure for the CGE, representatives of the three regional groups of non-Annex I Parties serve as Chair and Rapporteur on a rotational basis. The Chair serves for a period of one year. The Rapporteur succeeds in serving as the Chair, at which time a new Rapporteur is nominated.

11. In keeping with this rule, the CGE members from Africa thus elected Mr. Kamel Djemouai (Algeria) as the new Chair of the CGE, and Mr. Qiang Liu (China), representing the Asia-Pacific States, was elected as the Rapporteur.

12. In his remarks, the newly elected Chair of the CGE recognized the work done by his predecessor and expressed his appreciation for the work of the CGE in the fulfilment of its mandate of assisting non-Annex I Parties in the preparation of their national communications. He indicated his expectation to implement a mandate that will take into consideration the provisions under the Convention and the relevant decisions of the COP.

B. Organization of the work for the meeting

13. The Chair outlined the organization of the work for the meeting, which included the following:

(a) A briefing by representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on their work related to support for the preparation of national communications and BURs;

(b) The development of the work programme of the CGE for 2013;

(c) The organization of the work of the CGE for 2013;

(d) The submission on long-term finance;

(e) The progress report on the work of the CGE for consideration by the SBI at its thirty-eighth session.

14. In addition, the CGE updated annex II to document FCCC/SBI/2010/INF.2, which contains a table listing the areas of expertise of the CGE members in thematic groups (national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessment, and mitigation assessment). The grouping is used to organize and undertake the thematic work of the CGE under its work programme. The revised composition of the thematic groups for 2013 is given in annex I.

² Members from Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Brazil, Canada, China, Ethiopia, European Union, Gabon, Japan, Kenya, Mexico, Netherlands, Peru, Thailand, United States of America and Uruguay. In addition, two experts representing international organizations (the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme) attended the meeting.

³ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories.

C. Briefing by the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme on their work related to support for the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports

1. National Communications Support Programme

15. The representative of UNDP made a presentation on the evaluation of the National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), which is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The presentation focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the NCSP, including lessons learned and good practices, and recommendations for a future programme of a similar nature. In his presentation, the UNDP representative indicated that the evaluation of the NCSP focused on the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and appropriateness of the programme.

16. The evaluation was performed by sending a survey questionnaire to the national communication project coordinators and by conducting telephone interviews with representatives of implementing agencies, the GEF, the UNFCCC secretariat, donors and selected countries. The evaluation found that the NCSP was effective in delivering products and services in a responsive manner and had met the needs of countries that requested assistance for the preparation of their national communications.

17. Noting that the NCSP was overly ambitious in its design, the UNDP representative recommended that the design of the subsequent support programme outline realistic goals and outcomes, including the budget and availability of technical resources.

18. Furthermore, recommendations from respondents to the survey included the development of a more effective and tailored approach for enhanced capacity-building activities specific to national contexts. The delivery of the next global support programme should ensure technically sound national communications that are linked to national policies, assisting in informing policymakers and creating an enabling environment for mainstreaming climate change at the national level.

19. Outreach was indicated as one of the key components of the delivery of the NCSP. Available online tools were found to be a low-cost and efficient means of engaging a large number of countries.

2. Global Support Programme for the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports by non-Annex I Parties

20. The representative of UNEP presented the CGE with information on the proposed Global Support Programme (GSP) for the preparation of national communications and BURs by non-Annex I Parties. This is a five-year project that will be administered jointly by UNDP and UNEP and is scheduled to commence by September 2013.

21. The effectiveness of, and previous experience with, implementing support programmes, such as the NCSP, the national capacity self-assessment for global environment management, and the national adaptation programmes of action, were highlighted in the presentation. The representative noted that those programmes were important for generating comprehensive, policy-relevant data and information and mobilizing climate action and the necessary financing.

22. In the light of this, the GSP was designed with the primary objectives of improving the quality of national communications and BURs and assisting non-Annex I Parties in the preparation and submission of those two reports in a timely manner by addressing some of the key weaknesses identified by the NCSP. Those weaknesses include the lack of

harmonized national institutional frameworks for GHG inventory preparation, limited access to data and weak stakeholder consultation processes.

23. The proposed technical assistance to be provided through the GSP will be based on individual country needs and/or priorities in meeting reporting requirements under the Convention. The representative of UNEP outlined specific activities under the programme, including the focal areas for technical assistance, such as the following:

- (a) Facilitating the preparation of national communications and BURs by:
 - (i) Assisting countries in building stronger national teams;
 - (ii) Strengthening national institutional frameworks;
- (b) Providing technical backstopping to national teams;
- (c) Preparing technical and policy-relevant guidance materials and tools;
- (d) Enhancing knowledge management, best practices, communication and outreach.

24. The implementation strategy of the GSP is based on the framework used for the NCSP and will involve collaboration and inter-agency consultation between UNDP and UNEP.

D. Work programme of the Consultative Group of Experts for 2013

25. As an input to the discussion of the CGE on the development of its work programme for 2013, the secretariat provided an overview on the implementation of the mandate of the CGE for 2010–2012, highlighting its major achievements over that period. Furthermore, the secretariat identified some activities that could be implemented by the CGE under its work programme for 2013.

26. Guided by decision 18/CP.18 and cognizant of the importance of, and need to have, a pragmatic and realistic work programme, the CGE agreed that the focus of the provision of technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties should be on the preparation of BURs by non-Annex I Parties. Accordingly, the CGE engaged in an in-depth constructive discussion and successfully developed its work programme for 2013. The agreed work programme is contained in the table below.

Work programme of the Consultative Group of Experts for 2013

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Implementation time frame</i>
1. Conduct a mini survey to assess the needs of Parties in the preparation of biennial update reports (BURs) and participation in a training workshop on BURs	May 2013
2. Develop BUR training materials	May 2013 (development) June 2013 (finalization)
3. Revise the tables on cross-cutting issues contained in document FCCC/SBI/2007/3	June 2013

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Implementation time frame</i>
4. Organize BUR training workshops, including an expert workshop and a training workshop	May 2013 September/October 2013
5. Enhance the training materials on mitigation in relation to non-energy sectors ^a	June 2013
6. Follow up on other activities:	
(a) The translation of the existing updated Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) training materials into the other official United Nations languages ^b	June 2013
(b) The development of e-learning programmes ^c	December 2013
7. Collaborate with intergovernmental organizations, multilateral programmes and other constituted expert bodies under the Convention	Ongoing activity
8. Hold meetings of the CGE:	
(a) 9 th meeting of the CGE	4 and 5 May 2013
(b) 10 th meeting of the CGE	Back to back with the training workshop to be held in September/October 2013
9. Organize two CGE side events	On the margins of the thirty-eighth sessions of the subsidiary bodies On the margins of the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol

^a FCCC/SBI/2012/28, paragraph 58.

^b FCCC/SBI/2012/33, paragraph 21.

^c FCCC/SBI/2012/33, paragraph 22.

27. The implementation details of some of the key activities are described in paragraphs 28–38 below.

1. Conduct a mini survey to assess the needs of Parties in the preparation of biennial update reports and participation in a training workshop on biennial update reports

28. The CGE will conduct a short survey to better understand the needs and requirements of non-Annex I Parties in response to decision 2/CP.17, paragraph 41(a). It is anticipated that the output of the survey will yield useful guidance for the CGE in ensuring that the planned activities target and respond to the needs and requirements of non-Annex I Parties.

2. Development of the training materials on the preparation of biennial update reports by non-Annex I Parties

29. As a part of the provision of technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties for preparing their BURs, the CGE agreed to develop training materials addressing the scope of BURs, as outlined in decision 2/CP.17, annex III. The CGE recognized that a significant amount of the training materials on the preparation of national communications are directly relevant to the preparation of BURs, in particular those on national GHG inventories, mitigation assessment and other cross-cutting issues. Accordingly, the CGE agreed to develop supplementary training materials covering the following:

- (a) Institutional arrangements for the preparation of national communications and BURs on a continuous basis;
- (b) Mitigation actions and their effects, including associated methodologies and assumptions;
- (c) Constraints and gaps and related financial, technical and capacity needs, including a description of the support needed and received and information on the level of support received to enable the preparation and submission of BURs.

30. The supplementary training materials will be developed by the three working groups of the CGE.⁴

3. Revision of the tables on cross-cutting issues contained in document FCCC/SBI/2007/3

31. In 2007, the CGE developed a set of tables as a template⁵ on cross-cutting themes based on the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention” (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties).⁶ The template was aimed at facilitating the reporting of information on research and systematic observation, technology transfer, capacity-building, education, training and public awareness, and information and networking in the national communications.

32. The CGE agreed to revise the template to take into account developments in the areas of reporting requirements for non-Annex I Parties under the Convention since 2007. This mainly relates to information on technology, finance and other relevant elements, which can be useful for the preparation of the national communications and BURs by non-Annex I Parties.

4. Organization of training workshops for 2013

33. The CGE agreed to conduct two workshops in 2013: an expert workshop and a training workshop for non-Annex I Parties.

34. The expert workshop is planned to be held on 6 and 7 May 2013, back to back with the 9th meeting of the CGE in Bonn. The CGE plans to invite relevant national experts from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention and from non-Annex I Parties, experts from intergovernmental organizations and multilateral programmes and other experts to engage in peer review and to seek additional input to further enhance the draft training materials on the preparation of BURs referred to in paragraph 29 above.

⁴ The work on the development of training materials on the preparation of BURs will be undertaken by the three working groups listed in annex II.

⁵ FCCC/SBI/2007/3.

⁶ Decision 17/CP.8.

35. The training workshop involving national experts from non-Annex I Parties and covering all elements of BURs will aim to enhance the capacity of non-Annex I Parties for the preparation of their BURs. The CGE also aims to use the opportunity to seek feedback on the BUR training materials and on the design and content of the future training workshops.

5. Enhancement of the training materials on mitigation in non-energy sectors

36. During the period 2010–2012, the CGE updated its training materials on GHG inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessment, and mitigation assessment as part of its mandate to provide technical support to non-Annex I Parties. The training materials were designed to facilitate the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties in accordance with the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties.

37. The CGE, in its progress report to the SBI at its thirty-seventh session, recommended that the training materials be improved through the inclusion of more information on the non-energy sectors and additional country-related examples.⁷ In that regard, the CGE decided to revise, with the assistance of the secretariat, the updated training materials on mitigation assessment by enhancing the information provided on the non-energy sectors.

6. Other relevant activities

38. As part of its work programme for 2010–2012, the CGE, in its progress report⁸ to the SBI at its thirty-seventh session, outlined a number of activities that, with the assistance of the secretariat, are ongoing in 2013. The CGE requested the secretariat to provide the CGE with regular updates on the following activities:

(a) The further development and implementation of the e-learning programme on the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties based on the updated CGE training materials;

(b) The translation of the updated CGE training materials that are currently available only in English into the other official United Nations languages and other languages.

E. Collaboration with intergovernmental organizations, multilateral programmes and other expert groups

39. The CGE discussed ways to enhance collaboration and coordination with intergovernmental organizations, multilateral programmes and other expert groups.

40. Representatives of UNDP and UNEP described their approach to assisting non-Annex I Parties and requested the CGE, in the implementation of its work programme, to explore synergies and areas of collaboration. In that regard, the CGE agreed to work with those organizations during the implementation of its work programme in anticipation of the work ahead, including holding training workshops, conducting training of trainers, drafting publications and other activities related to the national communications and BURs of non-Annex I Parties, in order not to duplicate the ongoing work of those groups.

⁷ FCCC/SBI/2012/28, paragraph 58.

⁸ FCCC/SBI/2012/28.

F. Date and venue of the next meeting of the Consultative Group of Experts

41. The 9th meeting of the CGE will be held back to back with the second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action, on 4 and 5 May 2013 in Bonn.

III. Any other business

A. Submission on long-term finance

42. The COP, at its eighteenth session, invited⁹ Parties and the thematic and expert bodies under the Convention to submit to the secretariat, by 21 March 2013, their views on long-term finance, taking into account the report on the workshops of the work programme on long-term finance,¹⁰ with a view to the secretariat preparing an information document for consideration by the co-chairs of the work programme.

43. In the light of this, the CGE, recognizing the relevance of long-term finance to the work of the CGE, agreed to submit its views on the following:

(a) The further development and funding of projects identified by non-Annex I Parties in their national communications;

(b) Long-term finance to fund capacity-building activities at the national level aimed at assisting support programmes, such as the GSP, to supplement the work of the CGE at the national level;

(c) Long-term management plans for the CGE in order to adequately and effectively support the continuous capacity-building needs of non-Annex I Parties as a result of enhanced reporting under the Convention.

B. Development of the management strategy

44. With a view to responding efficiently to the continuous capacity-building needs of non-Annex I Parties as a result of enhanced reporting under the Convention, the CGE recommended that the SBI request the CGE, in the future, to develop long term management/business plan to cover the activities of the CGE. The management plan should also include the communication and outreach strategy of the CGE.

C. Communication and outreach

45. The CGE discussed possible ways of further enhancing its outreach to Parties and multilateral and intergovernmental agencies to ensure that the outputs of the initiatives of the CGE reach relevant stakeholders, including national policymakers, in a timely manner.

46. Against this background, the CGE decided to hold a side event during the thirty-eighth sessions of the subsidiary bodies and on the margins of the nineteenth session of the COP and the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, with a view to briefing Parties on the implementation of its work programme and engaging in an exchange of views with them. In addition, the CGE

⁹ Decision 4/CP.18, paragraph 5.

¹⁰ FCCC/CP/2012/3.

agreed to further explore the use of other options, such as online newsletters and an e-network for national communications and BURs, as communication tools to reach a wider audience.

Annex I

Consultative Group of Experts thematic groups for 2013

<i>National greenhouse gas inventories</i>	<i>Vulnerability and adaptation assessment</i>	<i>Mitigation assessment</i>	<i>Other issues</i>
Mr. Kiyoto Tanabe	Mr. Graham Sem	Mr. Haroldo De Oliveira Machado Filho	Mr. Abias Moma Huongo
Mr. Takahiko Hiraishi	Mr. Jan Verhagen	Ms. Sangchan Limjirakan	Mr. Yamil Bonduki
Ms. Tania Zamora Ramos	Ms. Anoja Kumari Herath	Mr. Qiang Liu	Ms. Ruleta Camacho
Ms. Anne Nyatichi Omambia	Mr. George A. Manful	Mr. Mohammed Asaduzzaman	Ms. Julia Martinez
		Ms. Ana Danila	Mr. Rodrigue Abourou
		Mr. Elan Strait	Ms. Magdalena Preve
		Ms. Selam Kidane Abebe	Ms. Hilary Hove
			Mr. Kamel Djemouai

Annex II

Working groups for the development of the biennial update report training materials

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Members of the Consultative Group of Experts</i>
Institutional arrangements	<p>Ms. Hilary Hove (co-lead)</p> <p>Mr. Kamel Djemouai (co-lead)</p> <p>Ms. Anne Nyatichi Omambia</p> <p>Ms. Julia Martinez</p> <p>Mr. Rodrigue Abourou</p> <p>Mr. Yamil Bonduki</p> <p>Mr. Kiyoto Tanabe</p> <p>Ms. Anoja Kumari Herath</p> <p>Mr. Abias Moma Huongo</p>
Mitigation actions and their effects	<p>Ms. Tania Zamora Ramos (co-lead)</p> <p>Mr. Elan Strait (co-lead)</p> <p>Ms. Anne Nyatichi Omambia</p> <p>Ms. Julia Martinez</p> <p>Mr. Jan Verhagen</p> <p>Ms. Ana Danila</p> <p>Ms. Magdalena Preve</p> <p>Ms. Selam Kidane Abebe</p> <p>Mr. Haroldo De Oliveira Machado Filho</p> <p>Ms. Sangchan Limjirakan</p> <p>Mr. Qiang Liu</p> <p>Mr. Takahiko Hiraishi</p> <p>Mr. Mohammed Asaduzzaman</p>
Constraints and gaps and related financial, technical and capacity needs, including a description of the support needed and received	<p>Mr. Jan Verhagen (co-lead)</p> <p>Mr. George A. Manful (co-lead)</p> <p>Ms. Ana Danila</p>
Information on the level of support received to enable the preparation and submission of biennial update reports	<p>Ms. Ruleta Camacho</p> <p>Mr. Rodrigue Abourou</p> <p>Ms. Hilary Hove</p> <p>Ms. Selam Kidane Abebe</p> <p>Mr. Elan Strait</p> <p>Mr. Kamel Djemouai</p> <p>Mr. Graham Sem</p>