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## Subsidiary Body for Implementation

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**Reporting from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention**

**Work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties  
not included in Annex I to the Convention**

## **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*

This report summarizes the proceedings and outcomes of the two meetings held by the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) in 2015. During these meetings, the CGE revised its 2015–2018 work programme based on its long-term strategy, and took stock of the progress made in the implementation of its workplan for 2015. The CGE also assessed the achievements and lessons learned in implementing its work programme and provided relevant recommendations for 2016.

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Mandate**

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 19/CP.19, decided to continue the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) for a period of five years, from 2014 to 2018.
2. The COP, also by decision 19/CP.19, requested the CGE to submit a progress report annually on its work to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), for consideration at the sessions of the SBI held in conjunction with the sessions of the COP.<sup>1</sup>
3. By the same decision, the COP requested the secretariat to facilitate the work of the CGE by organizing its meetings and workshops and compiling reports on them for consideration by the SBI.<sup>2</sup>

### **B. Scope of the note**

4. This report contains a summary of the proceedings and outcomes of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> meetings of the CGE.
5. At these meetings, the CGE revised its work programme for 2015–2018,<sup>3</sup> discussed the progress made in the implementation of its workplan for 2015, agreed on the organization of its work for the last quarter of 2015 and held preliminary discussions on its workplan for 2016.
6. In addition to this report, two reports capturing the outcomes of the following key activities of the CGE undertaken in 2015, as part of its workplan for 2015, have been prepared for consideration at SBI 43:
  - (a) Report on the regional hands-on training workshop for the African States on the preparation of biennial update reports (BURs) from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) (see paras. 21 and 22 below);<sup>4</sup>
  - (b) Report on the three regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment (see paras. 23 and 24 below).<sup>5</sup>

### **C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation**

7. The SBI, having considered this document and the two reports referred to in paragraph 6 above, is invited to take note of the work programme of the CGE for 2015–2018 and the progress of its implementation in 2015, and provide further guidance, as appropriate, to the CGE.
8. In addition, the SBI may wish to invite developed country Parties included in Annex II to the Convention and other developed country Parties in a position to do so to provide financial resources so as to enable the CGE to implement the activities planned in its work

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<sup>1</sup> Decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 7.

<sup>2</sup> Decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 9(a).

<sup>3</sup> The work programme of the CGE for the period 2015–2018 is available at <[http://unfccc.int/national\\_reports/non-annex\\_i\\_natcom/cge/items/2608.php](http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/cge/items/2608.php)>.

<sup>4</sup> FCCC/SBI/2015/17.

<sup>5</sup> FCCC/SBI/2015/20.

programme, and to invite multilateral programmes and organizations to collaborate with the CGE, as appropriate, in the provision of technical support to non-Annex I Parties in preparing their national communications (NCs) and BURs.<sup>6</sup>

## II. Meetings of the Consultative Group of Experts

9. The 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CGE was held in Bonn, Germany, on 10 and 11 March 2015. Nineteen members of the CGE participated in the meeting,<sup>7</sup> as well as an observer from Azerbaijan, representing non-Annex I Parties from the Eastern European region, who was invited in accordance with the conclusions of COP 19.<sup>8</sup> At the meeting, Ms. Rhianna Neely (Bahamas), was elected as the Chair of the CGE and Mr. Stephen Mutua King'uyu (Kenya) as the Rapporteur, both for a term of one year. During the meeting, the CGE reviewed and revised its two-tiered, broad work programme for 2015–2018, and its more detailed annual workplan for 2015.<sup>9</sup> The progress on the planned activities for 2015, including the operational details of some of the key planned activities, is described in detail below.

10. The 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CGE was held in Marrakesh, Morocco, on 5 and 6 October 2015. The meeting was attended by 13 members<sup>10</sup> of the CGE. At that meeting, the CGE took stock of the progress made on the implementation of the workplan for 2015 and engaged in preliminary discussions on its workplan for 2016.

11. The CGE members present at the meeting were informed by the Chair that the quorum required to hold a meeting had not been met, as only 13 members were present. The Chair sought agreement from the members present to continue the work as proposed in the provisional agenda of the meeting. Based on a proposal by the Chair, the members agreed, on an exceptional basis, to seek confirmation from members who were not present that they agreed with the understanding reached at that meeting, as presented in this report to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation.

12. At the same meeting, the group expressed great concern regarding the issue of low levels of attendance at the CGE meetings in 2015. The group requested the CGE Chair, in accordance with rule 5, paragraph 9, of the CGE rules of procedure,<sup>11</sup> to inform the SBI Chair of this matter to seek clarification from the regional groups that nominated members on the status of their membership, with a view to avoiding the recurrence of such a situation in future.

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<sup>6</sup> The estimated resource requirements to implement the CGE work programme for 2016–2018 are available at <[http://unfccc.int/files/national\\_reports/non-annex\\_i\\_natcom/cge/application/pdf/cge\\_work\\_programme\\_and\\_work\\_plan.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/cge/application/pdf/cge_work_programme_and_work_plan.pdf)>.

<sup>7</sup> Members from Algeria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Ethiopia, the European Union, Gabon, India, Japan, Kenya, Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Peru and the United States of America participated in the meeting, as well as three experts representing international organizations (the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

<sup>8</sup> See document FCCC/CP/2013/10, paragraph 131.

<sup>9</sup> The detailed workplan of the CGE for 2015 is available at <<http://unfccc.int/2608.php>>.

<sup>10</sup> Members from the Bahamas, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, the European Union, the Netherlands, Gabon, India, Japan, Kenya, and Peru participated in the meeting, as well as two experts representing international organizations (the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme).

<sup>11</sup> Available at <[http://unfccc.int/files/national\\_reports/non-annex\\_i\\_natcom/cge/application/pdf/revised\\_rules\\_of\\_procedure\\_cge\\_2014.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/cge/application/pdf/revised_rules_of_procedure_cge_2014.pdf)>.

### III. Progress of implementation of the workplan for 2015

#### A. Training materials

##### 1. Training programme for the team of technical experts

13. The COP, by decision 20/CP.19, adopted the composition, modalities and procedures of the team of technical experts under international consultation and analysis. It requested the CGE to develop and organize appropriate training programmes for nominated technical experts taking into account annexes III and IV to decision 2/CP.17, based on the most up-to-date training materials of the CGE.<sup>12</sup> As mandated, the CGE developed the training programme in 2014–15 as per its workplan.

14. The CGE, in 2015, conducted two rounds<sup>13</sup> of the training programme for 203 technical experts nominated to the UNFCCC roster of experts. As at 30 September 2015, 88 experts – 31 from Annex I Parties and 57 from non-Annex I Parties – had successfully completed the training programme.

15. With a view to improving the accessibility of the training programme, the training materials are being converted into a web-based interactive product. The web-based training programme is expected to be available by December 2015.

##### 2. Update of the Consultative Group of Experts training materials for the preparation of national communications

16. The CGE, as a part of its work programme for 2014–2018, agreed to update its existing training materials on NCs<sup>14</sup> (covering national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessment and mitigation assessment), which were released in 2012. These training materials are designed to facilitate the preparation of NCs by non-Annex I Parties in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”.<sup>15</sup>

17. The CGE training materials on vulnerability and adaptation assessment were updated during the course of 2015 to take into account the recent developments under the Convention as well as the latest science, in particular, the relevant findings of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), which became available in 2014.<sup>16</sup>

18. The most advanced versions of the updated vulnerability and adaptation assessment training materials were used at the three regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment conducted by the CGE in 2015.<sup>17</sup> At these workshops, the CGE sought feedback on these training materials with a view to improving them further before their final release in November 2015.

19. The CGE noted with appreciation the in-kind contribution from Canada, which translated the draft revised training materials into French.

20. The completed training materials, subject to the availability of financial resources, will be translated from English into other United Nations official languages, in

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<sup>12</sup> Decision 20/CP.19, paragraph 4.

<sup>13</sup> At the time of publishing, two rounds of training had been completed and a third is planned for November 2015.

<sup>14</sup> The training materials are available at <<http://unfccc.int/349.php>>.

<sup>15</sup> Decision 17/CP.8, annex.

<sup>16</sup> The IPCC report is available at <<http://ipcc.ch/report/ar5/index.shtml>>.

<sup>17</sup> See document FCCC/SBI/2015/20 for the workshop proceedings.

collaboration with the Global Support Programme for Preparation of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports by non-Annex I Parties (GSP) (see para. 47 below). These training materials will also be disseminated through the UNFCCC website and electronic media storage devices for wider use, including conversion into the e-learning course (see para. 25 below).

## **B. Regional hands-on training workshops**

### **1. Regional hands-on training workshop on the preparation of biennial update reports**

21. The CGE conducted a regional hands-on training workshop on the preparation of BURs for the African States from 23 to 25 February 2015 in Bonn. This completed an initial series of regional training workshops on the preparation of BURs initiated in 2014.

22. The objective of the workshop was to enhance the capacity of the national experts in using the “UNFCCC biennial update reporting guidelines for Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”<sup>18</sup> to facilitate the preparation of the first BURs. The workshop also served as a platform to exchange views, lessons learned and experiences relating to the process of, and preparation of, BURs.<sup>19</sup>

### **2. Regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment**

23. Between June and October 2015, the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, conducted three regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment aimed at enhancing the capacity of national experts from non-Annex I Parties involved in the process of, and preparation of, NCs, namely:

(a) Hands-on training workshop on vulnerability and adaptation assessment for the Asia-Pacific and the Eastern European States, held in Vientiane, Lao People’s Democratic Republic, from 29 June to 3 July 2015;

(b) Hands-on training workshop on vulnerability and adaptation assessment for the Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Asunción, Paraguay, from 27 to 31 July 2015;

(c) Hands-on training workshop on vulnerability and adaptation assessment for the African States, held in Marrakesh from 28 September to 2 October 2015.

24. The workshops, which were conducted on the basis of the updated CGE training materials referred to in paragraphs 16–20 above, also served as a platform for an exchange of views among the national experts and the resource persons, and generated feedback used for the finalization of the updated training materials by the CGE.<sup>20</sup>

## **C. Online training programmes**

### **1. E-learning courses**

25. The secretariat developed e-learning courses based on the CGE training materials, for the preparation of NCs from non-Annex I Parties.<sup>21</sup> These courses were released in March 2015 and are accessible through open and free registration on the secretariat’s

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<sup>18</sup> Decision 2/CP.17, annex III.

<sup>19</sup> The detailed workshop report is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2015/17.

<sup>20</sup> The detailed workshop report is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2015/20.

<sup>21</sup> FCCC/SBI/2012/33, paragraph 22.

Learning Management System.<sup>22</sup> The courses include training materials on (1) vulnerability and adaptation, (2) mitigation assessment and (3) GHG inventories.

26. The architecture of each e-learning course is designed to allow flexibility and facilitate subsequent substantive revision of the materials, to include any new and/or additional content, such as information pertaining to BURs.

27. The total number of participants registered in the e-learning courses, as of 1 October 2015, is 103, from 49 countries.

28. The CGE proposed to disseminate the e-learning courses also on electronic media storage devices for wider use, especially in places where Internet connectivity may be an issue.

## **2. Interactive electronic database**

29. In response to decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(e–f), the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, created an interactive electronic database containing information on:

(a) Existing activities and programmes to facilitate and support the preparation of NCs and BURs;

(b) Steps to integrate climate change considerations into relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions.

30. The CGE upgraded its interactive electronic database, the e-Network, in 2015. The new e-Network is freely accessible, which will enable a larger number of experts to access the site. The improvements include a library of documents relevant to the preparation and finalization of NCs and BURs from non-Annex I Parties and an online forum, to be launched in 2016, in the form of discussion boards accessible to all experts from the network.

31. The CGE will update this information on a regular basis, in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

32. In addition, the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, launched a web-based network of experts and practitioners involved in the process of, and preparation of, NCs and BURs, to serve as a vehicle for the dissemination of relevant information from the CGE to stakeholders.

## **3. Webinars**

33. The CGE conducted four thematic regional webinars,<sup>23</sup> on national GHG inventories and mitigation assessment, aimed at keeping the momentum of its capacity-building initiatives. The webinars provided a platform for national experts and practitioners to interact with CGE members; they were also aimed at reaching out to a larger group of national experts to enhance their awareness and allow them to gain targeted knowledge in these thematic areas.

34. A total of 89 persons participated in the GHG inventory webinars and 71 participated in the mitigation webinar. The webinar allowed users to learn and to engage with experts remotely. Participants were able to submit questions and experts provided detailed responses immediately. The presentations were also made available online to users.

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<sup>22</sup> The e-learning programme is accessible at <<https://climate.csod.com/client/climate/default.aspx>>.

<sup>23</sup> At the time of publishing. Another two webinars are planned for mid-November 2015.

35. CGE members participated in the webinar, either from Bonn or remotely, as a resource person for the session. One webinar on mitigation assessment was given by a secretariat staff member.

36. The regional webinars will be continued in 2016 with a proposed focus on vulnerability and adaptation assessment and mitigation assessment. The CGE also envisaged webinars in official United Nations languages other than English.

#### **D. Other ongoing activities of the workplan for 2015**

##### **Recommendations on elements to be considered in a future revision of the guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties**

37. In response to decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(d), the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, conducted a survey in 2015 to garner feedback from non-Annex I Parties on the possible challenges and improvements to the elements of the guidelines for the preparation of NCs from non-Annex I Parties. The CGE also took into consideration the relevant reports prepared by the CGE, including workshop reports and other technical reports.

38. The CGE will continue to gather further feedback from non-Annex I Parties on this matter in 2016, when a technical document on this issue will be issued.

#### **IV. Cooperation with other expert groups and intergovernmental organizations, and participation in other relevant mandated activities under the Convention**

39. The CGE noted that its participation in the activities of other expert groups is important in helping to link the various activities that are cross-cutting in nature and to explore opportunities for conducting activities jointly and/or complementing each other's work, especially with those related to the capacity-building of non-Annex I Parties.

##### **A. Least Developed Countries Expert Group**

40. A member of the CGE, Mr. Jan Verhagen (Netherlands), participated in the NAP Expo held on 14 and 15 April 2015 in Bonn, which was organized by the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) with the support of the secretariat.

##### **B. Adaptation Committee**

41. Mr. Verhagen also participated in a workshop on experiences, good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs in the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans organized by the Adaptation Committee (AC) in collaboration with the LEG and held on 16 and 17 April 2015 in Bonn.

42. In addition to the CGE participation in the workshop mentioned in paragraph 41 above, the group also collaborated extensively with the AC in updating the CGE training materials on vulnerability and adaptation assessment. Participation of one of the Co-Chairs of the AC at the CGE regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment was planned, but was not possible owing to unforeseen circumstances.



### C. Fourth meeting of the Durban Forum on capacity-building

43. A CGE member, Mr. Takeshi Enoki (Japan), participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Durban Forum on capacity-building for in-depth discussion on capacity-building, which was held during SBI 42, on 3 June 2015.

44. The CGE presented its work on concrete and innovative solutions tailored to build and/or enhance the capacity of developing countries to address specific needs, such as the preparation of web-based tools and learning products in various languages for preparing NCs and BURs.

45. The report on the meeting<sup>24</sup> was made available to Parties and other stakeholders.

### D. Global Support Programme for Preparation of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports by non-Annex I Parties

46. At the 15<sup>th</sup> CGE meeting, the CGE members from UNDP and UNEP provided an update on the GSP. The CGE was informed that the new GSP project was established in May 2015 and would continue until December 2019.

47. The CGE identified areas for collaboration with the GSP, which included translation of training materials for the preparation of NCs and BURs, webinars, disseminating existing CGE training workshops at the subregional and national levels, and outreach activities for preparing NCs and BURs.

## V. Planned events of the Consultative Group of Experts in 2016

48. In accordance with its work programme for 2015–2018, in 2016 the CGE will conduct a series of regional workshops on the preparation of biennial update reports.

49. The tentative venues and dates for the planned events in 2016 are contained in the table below, which is the basis for the secretariat to initiate the necessary administrative, logistical and technical arrangements and support.

#### Tentative venues and dates for the planned events of the Consultative Group of Experts in 2016

<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Date</i>
16 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the CGE	Bonn, Germany	16–18 February 2016
Regional training workshop for the African States on the preparation of BURs	TBD	22–24 February 2016
Regional training workshop for the Asia-Pacific and the Eastern European States on the preparation of BURs	TBD	11–14 April 2016
Regional training workshop for the Latin American and Caribbean States on the preparation of BURs	TBD	4–6 July 2016

<sup>24</sup> FCCC/SBI/2015/14.

<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Date</i>
17 <sup>th</sup> meeting of the CGE	TBD	7–8 July 2016

*Abbreviations:* BURs = biennial update reports, CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, TBD = to be determined.

## **VI. Conclusions**

50. The CGE plans to revisit its work programme at its first meeting of 2016 and make the necessary adjustments, including incorporating the relevant elements from its long-term strategy.

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**Annex****Estimated resource requirements to implement the Consultative Group of Experts work programme for 2016–2018**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirements (USD)</i>
2016	1 579 000
2017	1 336 000
2018	347 000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 262 000</b>

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