



United Nations

FCCC/SBI/2016/16



Framework Convention on
Climate Change

Distr.: General
14 September 2016

Original: English

Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Forty-fifth session

Marrakech, 7–14 November 2016

Item 4(b) of the provisional agenda

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

Report by the secretariat

Summary

This report summarizes the progress of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) in implementing its workplan for 2016. It covers the proceedings and outcomes of the two meetings of the CGE held in 2016. During those meetings, the CGE revised its work programme for 2016–2018 on the basis of its long-term strategy and took stock of the progress made in the implementation of its workplan for 2016. In addition, the CGE assessed the achievements and lessons learned in implementing its work programme and provided relevant recommendations for 2017.

GE.16-15834(E)



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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. By the same decision, the COP requested the CGE to submit a progress report on its work annually to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) for consideration at the sessions of the SBI held in conjunction with the sessions of the COP.¹
3. The COP also requested the secretariat to facilitate the work of the CGE by organizing its meetings and workshops and compiling reports thereon for consideration by the SBI.²

B. Scope of the report

4. This report provides an overview of the implementation of the 2016 workplan of the CGE, covers the proceedings of its 16th and 17th meetings and takes stock of the work programme for 2014–2016.
5. In addition to this report, two reports capturing the outcomes of key activities of the CGE undertaken in 2016 have been prepared for consideration at SBI 45:
 - (a) A report on the regional training workshops on the preparation of biennial update reports (BURs) from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) (see paras. 16–21 below);³
 - (b) A report containing recommendations on elements to be considered in a future revision of 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 NCs from non-Annex I Parties) (see paras. 35 and 36 below).⁴

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

6. The SBI, having considered this report and the two reports referred to in paragraph 5 above, is invited to take note of the work programme of the CGE for 2016–2018 and the progress of its implementation in 2016 and to provide further guidance, as appropriate, to the CGE.
7. In addition, the SBI may wish to reiterate its urging of developed country Parties included in Annex II to the Convention and other developed country Parties in a position to do so to provide financial resources⁵ that would enable the CGE to implement the activities planned in its work programme, and to invite multilateral programmes and organizations to

¹ Decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 7.

² Decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 9(a).

³ FCCC/SBI/2016/15.

⁴ FCCC/SBI/2016/17.

⁵ FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraph 40.

collaborate with the CGE, as appropriate, in the provision of technical and financial support to non-Annex I Parties for preparing their national communications (NCs) and BURs.

II. Proceedings of the 16th and 17th meetings of the Consultative Group of Experts

8. The 16th meeting of the CGE was held in Bonn, Germany, from 2 to 4 February 2016. Eighteen members of the CGE attended the meeting,⁶ where Mr. Stephen King'uyu (Kenya) was elected as the Chair of the CGE and Mr. Sachidananda Satapathy (India) as the Rapporteur, both for a term of one year. The CGE reviewed and revised its two-tiered, broad work programme for 2016–2018 and finalized its more detailed annual workplan for 2016.⁷ In the overall discussion of its work programme, the CGE addressed the key elements of the Paris Agreement.

9. The 17th meeting of the CGE was held in Bonn from 30 August to 1 September 2016. Sixteen members attended the meeting⁸ along with an observer from Azerbaijan representing non-Annex I Parties from the Eastern European region, who was invited in accordance with the conclusions of COP 19.⁹ The CGE took stock of the progress made in the implementation of its workplan for 2016, reflected on its work in the period 2014–2016 and engaged in preliminary discussions on its work programme for 2017–2018.

10. At the same meeting, the CGE amended rule 10, paragraph 29, of its rules of procedure.¹⁰ The group agreed to maintain the two-thirds quorum, whereby at least half of the members plus one must be physically present and the rest may participate remotely.

11. The progress made in implementing the activities planned for 2016 is described in detail in chapter III below, including the operational details of some of the key activities.

III. Progress in the implementation of the workplan for 2016

A. Training materials

1. Training programme for the team of technical experts

12. The COP, by decision 20/CP.19, adopted the composition, modalities and procedures of the team of technical experts (TTE) under international consultation and analysis (ICA). It requested the CGE to develop and organize appropriate training programmes for nominated technical experts, taking into account annexes III and IV to

⁶ Members from Algeria, Bangladesh, the Bahamas, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, the European Union, Gabon, Germany, India, Kenya, Singapore, the United States of America and Uruguay, and three experts representing international organizations (the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change).

⁷ The detailed workplan of the CGE for 2016 is available at <<http://unfccc.int/2608.php>>.

⁸ Members from Algeria, Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Japan, Kenya, Peru, Singapore, the United States of America and Uruguay, and two experts representing international organizations (UNDP and UNEP).

⁹ FCCC/CP/2013/10, paragraph 131.

¹⁰ Available at <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/cge/items/2608.php>.

decision 2/CP.17, based on the most up-to-date training materials of the CGE.¹¹ As mandated and as per its workplan, the CGE developed a training programme in 2014–2015.

13. The CGE training programme for experts undertaking the technical analysis of BURs from non-Annex I Parties was rolled out in April 2015 and converted to a web-based e-course training programme¹² in June 2015. The courses of the training programme have been offered to experts from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) and non-Annex I Parties since April 2015, resulting in a significant number of experts who have successfully completed the training to date (see para. 68 below).

14. The third round of the training programme was offered from January to May 2016. As at 15 August 2016, 12 experts from Annex I Parties and 12 experts from non-Annex I Parties had successfully completed the training programme and 4 experts who had previously completed the training programme had successfully expanded their field of expertise on the technical analysis of BURs. The fourth round of training has been ongoing since July 2016 and will be completed by November 2016.

2. Update of the training materials for the preparation of national communications

15. The CGE completed the update of its training materials on vulnerability and adaptation assessment in December 2015. The materials were made available in the form of e-learning courses¹³ in September 2016. The completed training materials have been translated into French with support from Canada, and will be translated into other official United Nations languages, subject to the availability of financial resources.

3. Update of the training materials for the preparation of biennial update reports

16. In response to feedback received on the first round of regional training workshops on BURs in 2014–2015, the CGE, under its workplan for 2016 and supported by the secretariat, revised the existing training materials on BURs. The training materials were consolidated in order to focus on the key elements of the reporting provisions of the “UNFCCC biennial update reporting guidelines for Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention” (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BURs), approaches to reporting and examples extracted from submitted BURs.

17. Further, additional supplementary training materials covering domestic measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) in BURs and on the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement were prepared and used at the regional training workshops referred to in paragraph 18 below.

B. Regional hands-on training workshops

1. Regional training workshops on the preparation of biennial update reports

18. As part of the second round of training on the preparation of BURs under its current work programme for 2014–2018, the CGE conducted three regional training workshops on the preparation of BURs, for the African, Asia-Pacific and Eastern European, and Latin American and Caribbean regions.¹⁴

¹¹ Decision 20/CP.19, paragraph 4.

¹² Available at <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/expert_training/training_for_the_technical_analysis_of_burs/items/9279.php>.

¹³ Available at <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/cge/items/2608.php>.

¹⁴ The report on the workshops is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2016/15.

19. The objective of the workshops was to enhance the capacity of national experts to use the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BURs in order to facilitate their preparation. The workshops also served as a platform for the exchange of views, lessons learned and experience relating to the BUR preparation process.

20. All three regional workshops were conducted following a similar agenda and were designed to cover all of the core elements of reporting in BURs using an interactive approach. They included technical presentations in plenary sessions, question and answer sessions and interactive hands-on mock exercises in breakout groups.

21. The participants appreciated the workshops and recognized that BURs are useful tools for identifying and presenting countries' needs in order to solicit regional and international support. They identified that, at the national level, BURs can also serve as an important tool for national policymaking and planning. The participants suggested ways to improve the training, such as by including more practical examples in the presentations and undertaking mock exercises and discussions on key challenges in reporting and ways to overcome them, including guidance on how to identify capacity needs of institutions and national agencies. They also saw the sharing of case studies, best practices, experience and lessons learned as being useful for those in the initial stages of the ICA process. In addition, the participants suggested that training at the subregional level would enable the CGE to provide more targeted technical support tailored to the needs of the subregions.

2. Regional training workshops on the building of sustainable national greenhouse gas inventory management systems and the use of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories

22. At its 16th meeting, the CGE agreed to contribute as a resource to the three UNFCCC regional hands-on training workshops on the building of sustainable national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory management systems and the use of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (hereinafter referred to as the 2006 IPCC Guidelines). The workshops were held in 2016 for the African, Asia-Pacific and Eastern European combined, and Latin American and Caribbean regions, in collaboration with the Technical Support Unit of the IPCC Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories. The CGE made a presentation on the transition from the use of the *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* to the use of 2006 IPCC Guidelines.¹⁵

23. The workshop participants expressed their appreciation to the secretariat for organizing the regional training workshops. The level of satisfaction of the participants was high regarding both the content and the organization of the three workshops. They acknowledged the usefulness of the training, especially with regard to the application of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines. Further, they requested additional training opportunities, in particular hands-on training.

C. Online training programmes

1. E-learning courses

24. The secretariat assisted the CGE in developing new e-learning courses based on the latest CGE training materials for the preparation of NCs by non-Annex I Parties.¹⁶ The e-learning courses were released in March 2015 and are accessible via open and free

¹⁵ The report on the workshops is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2016/INF.17.

¹⁶ As requested in document FCCC/SBI/2012/33, paragraph 22.

registration on the secretariat's online Learning Management System.¹⁷ The e-learning courses address: (1) vulnerability and adaptation assessment; (2) mitigation assessment; and (3) national GHG inventories.

25. The e-learning courses were upgraded in order to incorporate the updated materials on vulnerability and adaptation assessment developed by the CGE in 2015. The architecture of the courses is now designed to allow flexibility to select one or multiple courses, to facilitate subsequent substantive revision of the materials and to include any new and/or future additional content. In addition, the participants would be able to receive a certificate upon completion of the course.

26. The total number of participants registered on the e-learning courses as at 15 August 2016 was 172.

2. Interactive electronic database

27. In response to decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(e) and (f), the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, created an interactive electronic database called the eNetwork.¹⁸

28. The eNetwork allows users to access relevant information on the preparation of NCs and BURs, search a database of experts, pose questions to the CGE and participate in online discussion forums.

29. The CGE continued to update the eNetwork in 2016. It is now freely accessible, which will enable a larger number of experts to access the site and benefit from its content.

30. The CGE will continue to update the information on the eNetwork on a regular basis, in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the IPCC.

3. Webinars

31. The CGE, at the time of the preparation of this report, had conducted five thematic webinars of 90 minutes each in English, three on vulnerability and adaptation assessment and two on mitigation assessment, aimed at keeping the momentum of its capacity-building initiatives. Additional five webinars are planned for 2016, including one in French on mitigation assessment and one in Spanish on vulnerability and adaptation assessment.

32. The vulnerability and adaptation assessment webinars focused on the framework for assessment, climate change scenarios and water resources. The mitigation webinars focused on the key steps in conducting a mitigation assessment and the key challenges and barriers faced in relation to mitigation in the energy supply sector.

33. There were 164 participants in the three vulnerability and adaptation assessment webinars and 80 in the two mitigation assessment webinars, including national government representatives, researchers and technical specialists. The webinars allowed the participants to learn from and engage with experts remotely and to submit questions, to which the experts immediately provided detailed responses. The presentations were made available online to users.

34. The webinars will be continued in 2017, with a proposed focus on vulnerability and adaptation assessment and national GHG inventories.

¹⁷ Available at <<https://climate.csod.com/client/climate/default.aspx>>.

¹⁸ Available at <<https://process.unfccc.int/sites/eNET/SitePages/Home.aspx>>.

D. Other activities in the workplan for 2016

1. Recommendations on elements to be considered in a future revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”

35. In response to decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(d), the CGE conducted a survey, with the assistance of the secretariat, to identify challenges in the use of, and improvements to, the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of NCs from non-Annex I Parties.

36. The CGE prepared an analytical paper that provides recommendations for future guidelines as well as suggestions aimed at clarifying the guidelines in the light of recent developments under the Convention in order to facilitate reporting by non-Annex I Parties.¹⁹ In preparing the paper, the CGE took into consideration the inputs provided by non-Annex I Parties through the survey conducted between September 2015 and January 2016 and information in relevant reports prepared since 2011, including workshop reports and other technical reports.

2. Composition of the team of technical experts

37. In response to decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(h), the CGE noted the report provided by the secretariat consolidating experience in composing the TTEs conducting the technical analysis of BURs submitted by non-Annex I Parties.

38. As at August 2016, the secretariat had organized five rounds of the technical analysis, covering the BURs of 27 non-Annex I Parties. A total of 69 experts from both Annex I and non-Annex I Parties, including current and former members of the CGE, participated in the technical analysis as TTE members.

39. The composition of the TTEs, in addition to being guided by relevant COP decisions and guidance provided by the CGE, was influenced by the languages in which the BURs were submitted.

40. The CGE, at its 16th meeting, noted and discussed the report provided by the secretariat in accordance with decision 20/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2, on challenges faced and lessons learned in composing the TTEs in 2015. These challenges include, among others:

(a) Limited availability of experts to form the TTEs taking into account the requirements for qualification and expertise, knowledge of a language other than English, geographical distribution and Annex I Party/non-Annex I Party representation;

(b) High demand for experts participating in similar UNFCCC processes, the timing of which occasionally overlaps with that of the technical analysis of BURs.

41. In this context, the CGE decided to establish a task force to undertake in-depth analysis of the challenges faced in composing the TTEs to undertake the technical analysis of BURs from non-Annex I Parties and to identify and recommend solutions that respond to or mitigate those identified constraints and challenges.

42. The task force consisted of 10 CGE members, with two members each from Asia-Pacific, Latin American and Caribbean, and African States, three members from Annex I Parties and one expert from an intergovernmental agency.

¹⁹ FCCC/SBI/2016/17.

43. At its 17th meeting, the CGE learned that the task force was preparing a preliminary report and requested it to complete the report for its consideration at the next meeting.

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

44. The CGE noted that its participation in the activities of other expert groups is important in helping to create linkages with other activities that are cross-cutting in nature and to explore synergies and opportunities for collaborating on their respective activities and/or complementing each other's work, especially related to the capacity-building of non-Annex I Parties.

45. As part of the outreach to other expert groups, the Chair of the CGE shared the group's 2016 workplan and work programme for 2016–2018 and sought to explore possible areas of collaboration with other constituted bodies under the Convention in order to maximize the provision of assistance to non-Annex I Parties.

A. Adaptation Committee

46. The Adaptation Committee agreed to select one of its members to serve as a resource person at the upcoming CGE webinar on vulnerability and adaptation assessment in September 2016.

B. Durban Forum on capacity-building

47. The Chair of the CGE participated on behalf of the CGE in the 5th meeting of the Durban Forum on capacity-building, held on 20 May 2016, during SBI 44. The meeting was dedicated to enhancing capacity to implement the Paris Agreement

48. 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 related to preparing NCs and BURs.

49. The report on the meeting of the Durban Forum²⁰ was made available to Parties and other stakeholders.

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

50. The Chair of the CGE participated in the 1st meeting of the project advisory committee of the UNEP/UNDP Global Support Programme for Preparation of National Communications and Biennial Update Reports by non-Annex I Parties (GSP), held on 1 February 2016 in Bonn.

51. At the 16th and 17th meetings of the CGE, the CGE members from UNDP and UNEP provided an update on the progress made in the implementation of the GSP.

²⁰ FCCC/SBI/2016/14.

52. The CGE identified areas for collaboration with the GSP, which include the translation of training materials for the preparation of NCs and BURs into other United Nations languages, webinars, the dissemination of existing CGE training materials through workshops at the subregional and national levels and outreach activities for the preparation of NCs and BURs.

D. Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency

53. The CGE Chair participated in the consultative dialogue on the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency held on 11 April 2016 and presented the work of the CGE, with a focus on the technical assistance provided to non-Annex I Parties for the fulfilment of their reporting requirements under the Convention.

V. Planned activities for 2017

54. In accordance with its work programme for 2016–2018, in 2017 the CGE will conduct a series of regional training workshops on mitigation assessment.

55. The group reflected on the conclusions of SBI 44²¹ on financial and technical support, in which the SBI urged 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 for the implementation of the CGE work programme. The CGE estimated the financial resources required to support the implementation of its work in 2017–2018 (see annex II). It noted that currently very limited funds are available.

56. The tentative venues and dates for the planned events of the CGE in 2017 are contained in table 1, which is the basis for the secretariat to initiate the necessary administrative, logistical and technical arrangements and support.

Table 1

Tentative venues and dates for the planned events of the Consultative Group of Experts in 2017

<i>Event</i>	<i>Venue</i>	<i>Date</i>
18 th meeting of the CGE	Bonn, Germany	14–16 February 2017
Training workshop on mitigation assessment for African States	TBD	TBD
Training workshop on mitigation assessment for Asia-Pacific and Eastern European States	TBD	TBD
Training workshop on mitigation assessment for Latin American and Caribbean States	TBD	TBD
19 th meeting of the CGE	TBD	TBD

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

²¹ FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraph 40.

57. Further, the CGE, at its 17th meeting, tentatively identified some of the activities that the group wishes to undertake in 2017–2018. These include:

- (a) Revising the training materials on national GHG inventories to address the use of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines;
- (b) Developing supplementary training materials on the methodologies for assessing and reporting mitigation actions and their effects;
- (c) Developing supplementary training materials with further guidance on assessing and reporting support needed and received;
- (d) Developing a toolkit aiming at providing technical guidance on the preparation, presentation and participation in the ICA process;
- (e) Conducting targeted webinars.

58. The CGE requested the secretariat to prepare, for its consideration at its 18th meeting, concept notes on these activities, outlining, among other things, options and proposals for taking them forward and further improving and/or enhancing them (see paras. 82 and 83 below).

VI. Stocktaking: implementation of the work programme of the Consultative Group of Experts for 2014–2016

A. Background

59. COP 19 decided to continue the CGE for a period of five years, from 2014 to 2018. At its 11th meeting, held on 27 and 28 January 2014 in Bonn, the CGE developed its work programme for 2014–2018 and agreed to review and revise it on an annual basis, starting from 2015, in order to take into account the progress of the implementation of the planned activities as well as relevant elements of the long-term strategy²² to be developed in 2014.

60. SBI 41²³ commended the CGE for developing and implementing its work programme for 2014–2018.²⁴

B. Provision of technical advice to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

61. With a view to reporting on the progress of the implementation of its work programme and providing relevant technical advice to the SBI, the CGE has prepared, from 2014 to 2016, several technical reports for consideration by the SBI. A list of the reports is provided in annex I.

C. Provision of technical advice and support to non-Annex I Parties

62. The CGE, in accordance with decision 19/CP.19, annex, paragraph 2(a) and (g), prepared a technical report²⁵ compiling and synthesizing available information on problems

²² FCCC/SBI/2014/INF.15.

²³ FCCC/SBI/2014/21, paragraph 19.

²⁴ Contained in document FCCC/SBI/2014/17, annex I.

²⁵ FCCC/SBI/2014/INF.16.

and constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process and preparation by non-Annex I Parties of NCs and BURs.

63. The report informed the work of the CGE on the identification and provision of technical assistance to address the needs of non-Annex I Parties and served as a source of lessons learned and best practices for those Parties. In addition, the report served as a guidance tool for the CGE in developing its work programme and activities.

64. The CGE has continued to provide technical advice and support to non-Annex I Parties, including through hands-on training workshops, e-learning courses and webinars on national GHG inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessment and mitigation assessment.

65. The CGE, as part of its work programme for 2014–2018, updated the existing CGE training materials on vulnerability and adaptation assessment in 2014–2015 in order to make the new materials available ahead of the regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment scheduled to take place in 2015. The update took into account the recent developments under the Convention and the latest science, in particular the findings contained in the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, which became available in 2013 and 2014. The updated CGE training materials are available on the UNFCCC website.²⁶

66. Since 2014 the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, has organized the following nine hands-on training workshops, with financial and technical support provided by Parties and international organizations:

(a) Training workshop for the Latin American and Caribbean region on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, held in Panama City, Panama, from 16 to 18 July 2014;

(b) Training workshop for the Asia-Pacific and Eastern European regions on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, held in Yerevan, Armenia, from 8 to 10 September 2014;

(c) Training workshop for the African region on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, held in Bonn from 23 to 25 February 2015;

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

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

(f) Hands-on training workshop for the African region on vulnerability and adaptation assessment, held in Marrakech, Morocco, from 28 September to 2 October 2015;

(g) Training workshop for the African region on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, held in Lomé, Togo, from 22 to 24 February 2016;

(h) Training workshop for the Asia-Pacific and Eastern European regions on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, held in Colombo, Sri Lanka, from 4 to 6 April 2016;

²⁶ <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/training_material/methodological_documents/items/349.php>.

(i) Training workshop for the Latin American and Caribbean region on the preparation of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, held in Rodney Bay, Saint Lucia, from 4 to 6 July 2016.

67. CGE members participated as resource persons in the three regional hands-on training workshops organized by the secretariat in 2016 in collaboration with the IPCC on the building of sustainable national GHG inventory management systems and the use of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines (see para. 22 above).

68. A total of 516 non-Annex I Party national experts have been trained through these regional workshops (see table 2). These regional training workshops were effective in building the capacity of the national experts from non-Annex I Parties involved in the processes and preparation of NCs and BURs. In addition, the training provided an opportunity for the participants to share experience and views and to build a network of experts. Furthermore, the workshops served as a platform to generate feedback on the training materials in order to improve them further.

Table 2

Number of non-Annex I Party national experts trained at workshops of the Consultative Group of Experts, by region and subject, between 2014 and 2016

<i>Region</i>	<i>Vulnerability and adaptation</i>	<i>National greenhouse gas inventories</i>	<i>Preparation of biennial update reports</i>	<i>Total</i>
Latin America and Caribbean	32	41	69	142
Asia-Pacific and Eastern Europe	31	56	90	177
Africa	44	57	96	197
Total	107	154	255	516

69. Between January 2014 and May 2016, the CGE held five side events at United Nations Climate Change Conferences, covering MRV, the latest NCs and BURs submitted and elements of the CGE work programme.

70. COP 19 adopted the composition, modalities and procedures of the TTE under ICA. 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. As mandated and as per its workplan, the CGE developed a training programme in 2014–2015.

71. A total of 163 experts (71 from Annex I Parties and 92 from non-Annex I Parties) have successfully completed the training for technical experts, in three rounds of training (two in 2015 and one in 2016) (see table 3). In June 2015, in order to improve the accessibility of the training, it was converted to a web-based system.²⁷

²⁷ See <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/expert_training/training_for_the_technical_analysis_of_burs/items/9279.php>.

Table 3
**Consultative Group of Experts training programme for technical team of experts:
 number of experts clearing examinations by round, 2015–2016**

<i>Round</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>Annex I</i>	<i>Non-Annex I</i>	<i>Total</i>
Round 1	2015	29	41	70
Round 2: experienced experts ^a	2015	14	21	35
Round 2: less-experienced experts ^b	2015	16	18	34
Round 3	2016	12	12	24
Total		71	92	163

^a Experienced experts were those experts nominated to the UNFCCC roster of experts and had participated, at least once, in the review of national communications, biennial reports, greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories or supplementary information submitted by Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol or had successfully completed the relevant training programme offered by the secretariat related to the review of any of the themes covered in national communications, biennial reports, GHG inventories or supplementary information submitted by Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol.

^b Less-experienced experts were those with no experience of participating in the review of national communications, GHG inventories, biennial reports or supplementary information submitted by Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol or limited or no prior knowledge on any of the subjects covered in the BURs submitted by non-Annex I Parties.

D. Cooperation with other expert groups and intergovernmental organizations and participation in other relevant mandated activities under the Convention

1. Other relevant bodies under the Convention

72. In 2016 the CGE reviewed the mandates and work of the various constituted bodies under the Convention and, through its Chair, reached out to them; consequently, they exchanged their workplans and work programmes.

73. One representative of the CGE is also a member of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG). This has facilitated an exchange of information between the two groups on overlapping issues. In addition, the CGE participated in the national adaptation plan (NAP) Expos in 2014 and 2015, which was seen as a good opportunity to explore opportunities for conducting activities jointly and/or complementarily. The NAP Expo also provides an important platform for exchanging ideas and experience in relation to NAPs.

74. CGE members participated in the 3rd, 4th and 5th meetings of the Durban Forum between 2014 and 2016. The CGE was thus able to share its experience in the area of capacity-building and also to highlight the training materials developed, which are largely used at the national level, including through UNEP and UNDP.

75. The CGE was a member of the interim Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts. The CGE noted that this arrangement enabled the two bodies to foster closer collaboration on vulnerability and adaptation assessment related activities.

76. The CGE has also collaborated with the Adaptation Committee on a number of activities. The committee provided comments on the training materials on vulnerability and adaptation assessment updated in 2015. In addition, the committee agreed that one of its members will participate as a resource person in the remaining CGE webinar in 2016

dedicated to vulnerability and adaptation assessment. Finally, a CGE member participated in the workshop organized by the Adaptation Committee on experience, good practices, lessons learned, gaps and needs in the process to formulate and implement NAPs.

2. Technical assessment of submissions from Parties on proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels

77. The guidelines and procedures for the technical assessment of submissions from Parties on proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels (FREL/FRL)²⁸ were adopted at COP 19.²⁹ Parties, in particular developed country Parties, and relevant international organizations were invited to support capacity-building in relation to the development and assessment of FREL/FRL, taking into account the work of the CGE.

78. In addition, COP 19 invited the CGE to nominate one of its experts from a developing country Party with relevant expertise to participate in the technical assessment as an observer.³⁰ A CGE member participated as an observer in the technical assessment in 2014 and 2016. The CGE noted that its participation contributed to enhancing its knowledge and understanding of FREL/FRL.

3. Intergovernmental organizations

79. The CGE has continued its collaboration with the GSP, which has the overall objective of providing financial and technical support to non-Annex I Parties with a view to facilitating the timely preparation and submission of their NCs and BURs and the preparation and submission of intended nationally determined contributions.

80. The GSP held the 1st meeting of its project advisory committee back-to-back with the 16th meeting of the CGE, where it adopted its work programme to coincide with that of the CGE with the aim of maximizing synergies between the two bodies. In addition, a representative of the GSP contributed as a resource person to the CGE workshops on the preparation of BURs and webinars held in 2016.

81. The CGE collaborated with the Technical Support Unit of the IPCC Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories. A representative of the CGE served as a resource person at the three UNFCCC regional hands-on training workshops held in 2016 on the building of sustainable national GHG inventory management systems and the use of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines.

E. Lessons learned and observations

82. Guided by the mandate and terms of reference contained in decision 20/CP.19 and its annex, and its long-term strategy developed in 2014, the CGE, between 2014 and 2016, implemented a number of activities that are geared towards enhancing the capacity of Parties to effectively participate in the current MRV arrangements for developing countries. Some of the key achievements include continued efforts to:

(a) Enhance and strengthen the training materials on the preparation of NCs and BURs, and those for the TTE undertaking technical analysis of BURs. This resulted in number of additional supplementary and/or updated training materials;

²⁸ More information on those submissions is available at <<http://unfccc.int/8414.php>>.

²⁹ Decision 13/CP.19, paragraph 3.

³⁰ Decision 13/CP.19, annex, paragraph 9.

(b) Improve and conduct the regional hands-on training workshops. This resulted in 516 experts from non-Annex I Parties (see table 2 for details) being trained in the preparation of BURs, vulnerability and adaptation assessment and national GHG inventories;

(c) Prepare technical documents capturing the outcomes of the technical work undertaken by the group, such as a synthesis of challenges, lessons learned and best practices in the preparation of NCs and BURs,³¹ and recommendations on elements to be considered in a future revision of the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of NCs from non-Annex I Parties (see paras. 35 and 36 above).

83. These efforts were well received by Parties and experts who undertook the TTE training programme, and those that participated in the hands-on training workshops and targeted webinar sessions provided very positive feedback. They indicated that these training activities were highly relevant and have enhanced their knowledge base and understanding of the subjects and issues covered by the BURs and the technical analysis under the ICA process. With a view to further enhancing the effectiveness of such training activities in future, the participants suggested the following:

(a) Dedicating more time for presenting and discussing those elements with a greater volume of technical content (e.g. national GHG inventories and mitigation actions);

(b) Including more practical examples in the presentations and mock exercises;

(c) Focusing on the gaps, actual challenges in reporting the required elements, and on how to overcome them.

F. Recommendations

84. The CGE, while noting that the technical assistance provided in different forms contributed to enhancing the capacity of developing countries, recognized that a number of developing countries still continue to face challenges in applying guidelines for the preparation of their NCs and BURs as well as meeting the evolving needs under the Convention.

85. To that effect, the CGE identified the areas of improvement and/or enhancement which the group intends to take into consideration, subject to the availability of financial resources, in its workplan for 2017 and 2018. These include:

(a) Capacity-building:

(i) Translating the training materials on the preparation of NCs and BURs and those for the TTE undertaking technical analysis of BURs into other United Nations languages;

(ii) Preparing a good practice guidance document for the TTE undertaking technical analysis of BURs;

(iii) Increasing focus on preparing for participation in the ICA process through hands-on training workshops and webinar sessions;

(iv) Evaluating the training programme and the proficiency assessment process for the TTE;

(v) Using capacity-building needs reported by countries to refine and adjust the contents of the CGE training materials and activities;

³¹ FCCC/SBI/2014/INF.16.

- (vi) Ensuring that experiences, lessons learned and best practices from developing countries that have gone through the BUR/ICA process feature more prominently in the training materials, workshops, webinars, etc.;
- (vii) Encouraging, through relevant training activities, participants and Parties to use the support available for reporting to strengthen their internal capacities/institutional arrangements;
- (viii) Broadening the target audience for the training activities to include agencies and major data providers outside the environment ministries;
- (ix) Exploring other options to make the CGE training materials widely available and strengthen in-country expertise (e.g. universities);
- (b) Resources and optimal working arrangements:
 - (i) Ensuring that the results/impacts of the CGE activities are documented to demonstrate their value;
 - (ii) Considering means such as virtual participation to lower the costs associated with holding the CGE meetings;
 - (iii) Encouraging countries to host or organize workshops or training activities using the available CGE training materials;
- (c) Collaboration:
 - (i) Identifying suitable partners and specialized entities and mapping out area/topics for specific collaboration;
 - (ii) Strengthening collaboration and interaction with other relevant groups as appropriate, such as the Adaptation Committee, the LEG and the Standing Committee on Finance;
 - (iii) Engaging other initiatives on the ground to assist developing countries in taking advantage of available technical support;
- (d) Communication and outreach:
 - (i) Enhancing the visibility of the role of the CGE in facilitating reporting and capacity-building, such as through the use of social media;
 - (ii) Raising awareness of the CGE to national practitioners and other stakeholders, for example by developing a simplified message or presentation to show the opportunities of technical support available through the CGE;
 - (iii) Organizing side events on the margins of the sessions of the COP and the subsidiary bodies;
 - (iv) Encouraging the CGE members to enhance awareness of the CGE in different events;
 - (v) Promoting eNetwork and e-learning materials.

86. The CGE also acknowledged that there is a critical need for financial resources to enable the group to effectively implement its work programme, noting that SBI 44 had urged Parties included in Annex II to the Convention and other developed country Parties in a position to do so to provide such resources.³²

³² FCCC/SBI/2016/8, paragraph 40.

VII. Conclusions

87. The CGE concluded that it has achieved the outcomes with regard to the strategic priorities as indicated in its long-term strategy. At the same time, the group also identified a number of areas for further improvement and/or enhancement. Subject to the availability of resources, the CGE is fully committed to taking these elements into consideration in programming its work for 2017–2018. The group plans to revisit its work programme at its 18th meeting, to be held in February 2017, and develop its workplan for 2017.

Annex I

Technical reports prepared by the Consultative Group of Experts since 2014

<i>Report</i>	<i>Document symbol</i>
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention	FCCC/SBI/2014/17
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: report on the regional training workshops on the preparation of biennial update reports from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention	FCCC/SBI/2014/18
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: report on the workshop on the peer review of the materials for the training of the team of technical experts	FCCC/SBI/2014/19
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: long-term strategy of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention	FCCC/SBI/2014/INF.15
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: technical report on problems and constraints, as well as lessons learned and best practices, in the process of and the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports by Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention	FCCC/SBI/2014/INF.16
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: report on the training workshop for the African region on the preparation of biennial update reports	FCCC/SBI/2015/17
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention	FCCC/SBI/2015/18
Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: report on the regional training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment	FCCC/SBI/2015/20
Progress of work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention	FCCC/SBI/2016/16
Regional training workshops on the preparation of biennial update reports from non-Annex I Parties	FCCC/SBI/2016/15

Report

Document symbol

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

FCCC/SBI/2016/17

Annex II**Estimated resource requirements to implement the
Consultative Group of Experts work programme for
2017–2018**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Estimated resource requirement (USD)</i>
2017	927 500
2018	782 300
Total	1 709 800
