



Subsidiary Body for Implementation

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National communications 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: report on the hands-on training workshop for the Asia and the Pacific region on mitigation assessment

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE), in collaboration with the National Communications Support Programme, conducted a hands-on training workshop for the Asia and the Pacific region on mitigation assessment, in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27 February to 2 March 2012. This report outlines the proceedings of the workshop; it summarizes the presentations, and the feedback on and recommendations regarding the workshop received from its participants, the updated CGE training materials, and other issues relating to the preparation of the national communications.

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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 the period 2010–2012 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 terms of reference of the CGE are operationalized through its work programme for 2010–2012 developed at its first meeting, held in March 2010, in Bonn, Germany. The work programme was welcomed and taken note of by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) at its thirty-second session.¹

3. In accordance with its work programme referred to in paragraph 2 above, the CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat and in collaboration with the National Communications Support Programme, held a hands-on training workshop for the Asia and the Pacific region² on mitigation assessment, in Bangkok, Thailand, from 27 February to 2 March 2012 with a view to enhancing the capacity of national experts from the region to prepare their national communications and, particularly, the mitigation assessment component.

4. By decision 5/CP.15, the COP requested the secretariat to facilitate the work of the CGE by organizing meetings and workshops and compiling reports of these meetings and workshops for consideration by the SBI.

B. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

5. The SBI, having considered this report, may wish:

(a) To note the recommendations of the workshop participants and provide further guidance to the CGE on the implementation of its mandate relating to paragraph 2(a) of its terms of reference, contained in the annex to decision 5/CP.15, on the provision of technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties in preparing their national communications;

(b) To invite Parties and/or those relevant organizations, including bilateral and multilateral organizations, in a position to do so, to continue to provide financial resources to support the work of the CGE in the implementation of its mandate relating to paragraph 2(a) of its terms of reference.

¹ FCCC/SBI/2010/10, paragraph 21.

² Together with non-Annex I Parties from Eastern Europe.

II. Proceedings of the workshop

A. Opening of the workshop

6. The hands-on training workshop for the Asia and the Pacific region on mitigation assessment was hosted by the Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning, Thailand, from 27 February to 2 March 2012, in Bangkok. The Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment of Thailand, Mr. Pithaya Pookaman, delivered the keynote address. He welcomed the participants and stated that the Government of Thailand was delighted to be hosting this important workshop. He encouraged the participants to use the opportunity provided by the workshop to exchange experiences and expressed hope that new technical knowledge gained through the workshop would improve the process of the preparation of national communications in the region.

7. Ms. Sangchan Limjirakan (Thailand), Chair of the CGE, gave the opening statement. She welcomed the participants and informed them that the CGE is in the process of updating its training materials on national greenhouse gas inventories, vulnerability and adaptation assessment and mitigation assessment. She added that the draft updated training materials on mitigation assessment would be used for the hands-on training workshop in Bangkok and that the CGE would welcome any suggestions or feedback from participants on ways to further improve the content and structure of the training materials as well as on the organization and structure of future workshops. She thanked the secretariat for facilitating remote participation through the use of the web conferencing tool, WebEx, and hoped that online participants would also be able to benefit from the workshop despite the inadequate Internet facilities in some countries of the region.

8. A representative of the secretariat outlined the objectives of the workshop and provided a brief overview of the organization of the workshop.

9. The objectives of the workshop were as follows:

(a) To build the capacity of the national experts of non-Annex I Parties in the Asia and the Pacific region to undertake mitigation assessment, and to report it in their national communications, by introducing them to recent scientific knowledge and various tools and methodologies;

(b) To seek feedback on the draft updated CGE training materials on mitigation assessment in order to improve them further;

(c) To serve as a platform for the exchange of views among participants and with the experts.

10. A total of 33 national experts from 32 non-Annex I Parties,³ eight members of the CGE, one representative of the United Nations Environment Programme and one representative of the United Nations Development Programme also attended the workshop.

11. The workshop was held with the financial support of the Government of Canada.

12. Nine online participants took part in the workshop through the use of WebEx.

³ Armenia, Afghanistan, Albania, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, China, Georgia, Israel, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nauru, Nepal, Palau, Pakistan, Republic of Moldova, Samoa, Serbia, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam and Yemen.

B. Organization of the work

13. The hands-on training workshop, conducted over five days, comprised seven modules as follows:

(a) The first module was an introductory one, which provided a general overview of the scientific basis of climate change and the context for addressing climate change;

(b) The second module focused on mitigation in the context of the national communications of non-Annex I Parties and shared with participants past experiences and lesson learned in conducting mitigation assessment. This module also consisted of country presentations in which representatives of six countries from the region presented their experience in conducting mitigation assessment in the context of the preparation of their national communications;

(c) The third module presented participants with the purpose and objectives of mitigation assessment and a step-by-step approach to conducting it. It also consisted of a group exercise in which participants developed mitigation cost curves and mitigation potential for various greenhouse gas (GHG) mitigation policies in a fictitious country;

(d) The fourth module consisted of lectures on mitigation options, issues and barriers by sector. It also consisted of a group exercise in which participants performed screening of GHG mitigation options using multicriteria analysis;

(e) The fifth module introduced participants to commonly used methods and modelling tools that can be applied when undertaking mitigation assessment. The participants again worked in groups to construct a simple mitigation scenario using the Long-range Energy Alternatives Planning System (LEAP);

(f) The sixth module consisted of presentations on reporting mitigation assessment in national communications as per 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);

(g) The last module presented participants with examples of documentation kits that interested countries may use for developing and maintaining the mitigation assessment process;

(h) Finally, there was an interactive discussion moderated by a CGE member in which participants discussed and raised points about the organization and content of the workshop. They also provided recommendations on possible ways to further improve the CGE training materials and on how future regional workshops could be conducted.

14. The training, which included hands-on practical sessions, was conducted by resource persons and the CGE members using the draft updated CGE training materials.⁴

⁴ The current CGE training materials, available on the UNFCCC website at <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/training_material/methodological_documents/items/349.php>, are being updated.

III. Summary of presentations

A. Mitigating climate change

15. The first module provided a general overview of the scientific basis of climate change and the context for addressing climate change. It consisted of presenting information on climate change, GHG emission sources and sinks, and the potential benefits of mitigation activities, including interaction between mitigation, adaptation and development.

B. Mitigation in the context of national communications

16. This module consisted of two presentations. The first, entitled “National communications and the mitigation component”, provided the context for undertaking and reporting mitigation assessment in the national communications from non-Annex I Parties. In doing so, the presentation outlined the benefits of the process of, and preparation of, national communications and the national communication report itself. It also provided an overview of the main components of national communications from non-Annex I Parties. The presentation also provided some examples of information contained in the mitigation chapters of the national communications from some Parties in the region. Lastly, the presentation provided an overview of decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session in Durban, South Africa, that are relevant to mitigation assessment, such as the biennial update reports, international consultation and analysis, nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) and NAMA registry.

17. The second presentation of this module, entitled “Experiences and lessons learned in conducting mitigation assessment”, presented participants with information on key points that should be considered in designing and implementing mitigation assessment and in communicating its results.

C. Mitigation assessment: concepts, structure and steps

18. This module focused on providing participants with step-by-step guidance with regard to conducting mitigation assessment, which is used to assess the scale and timing of GHG emission reductions, as well as financial, economic and other impacts of mitigation strategies. The main steps presented included:

- (a) Determining and prioritizing the objectives of the assessment and defining the key participants and stakeholders;
- (b) Defining the scope of the assessment;
- (c) Selecting the assessment methodology;
- (d) Collecting and calibrating data and assumptions;
- (e) Developing baseline scenarios;
- (f) Identifying and screening mitigation options;
- (g) Developing and assessing mitigation scenarios.

19. The presentation also consisted of a brief overview of the result of using mitigation assessment to develop national climate plans. Participants were provided with a list of resources for planning a mitigation assessment.

D. Mitigation options, issues and barriers by sector

20. This module provided the participants with an overview of GHG emission sources, trends and drivers by sector and region; technologies and practices that reduce GHG emissions; policies and measures that lead to adoption and implementation of these technologies and practices; and common barriers and potential solutions.

E. Mitigation analysis: methods and tools

21. This module introduced participants to commonly used methods and modelling tools that can be applied when conducting mitigation assessments. It discussed the advantages, limitations, and data and technical requirements of each approach/model. Participants were also introduced to software tools that could be useful for GHG mitigation analysis. The module also provided participants with information that may be useful in choosing an appropriate tool for their own assessments.

F. Reporting mitigation in national communications

22. This module provided participants with an overview of reporting mitigation in national communications in accordance with the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties contained in decision 17/CP.8. The presentation outlined the principal objectives of the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties and the reporting of mitigation-related information in the national communications. In addition, the presentation also included a few examples of good practices on reporting, including illustration of the different ways of presenting the results of the GHG inventory, mitigation options that could be considered and associated marginal abatement cost curves.

23. The presentation also included information on biennial update reports, and particularly the scope of these reports.

G. Building the mitigation component of a national development plan

24. The last module presented participants with an example of a documentation toolkit that interested Parties may use for developing and maintaining the mitigation assessment process covering the following: institutional arrangements, reporting, quality control, data management, documentation and improvement plans. The expected benefits of this toolkit are reducing the effort required by future teams to develop the mitigation assessments and promoting consistency within and among reports over time.

IV. Feedback and recommendations

25. During this interactive discussion session, participants provided feedback on ways of enhancing the provision of capacity-building support to non-Annex I Parties in improving the process of, and preparation of, their national communications. In addition, participants were also requested to fill in a short feedback form at the end of the workshop

every day to find out what they viewed to be useful with regard to the day's training and the training materials used.

26. Participants found the following to be useful aspects of the workshop:

(a) Country presentations, which contained specific national examples of how mitigation assessments were conducted, the results of those assessments, lessons learned from them, and the challenges and opportunities experienced;

(b) Interactive discussion among participants and with the resource persons and other experts was encouraged;

(c) Introduction to the state of the present scientific knowledge on climate change, GHG emissions, and mitigation concepts such as mitigation assessment, mitigation actions and their potential benefits, and integration of mitigation actions into the national development plans and policies;

(d) The overview of the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of biennial update reports from non-Annex I Parties that were adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session;

(e) Undertaking a simple GHG mitigation assessment exercise as shown below:

(i) Firstly, conducting a simple static screening of mitigation options which consisted of two basic parts: calculating, using a simple spreadsheet, some of the main quantitative indicators used in a mitigation screening, including the GHG emission reductions potential from each mitigation option and the costs and examining these results carefully with a qualitative assessment of various screening criteria in order to develop an overall screening matrix;

(ii) Secondly, using the LEAP model to create a simple GHG mitigation scenario;

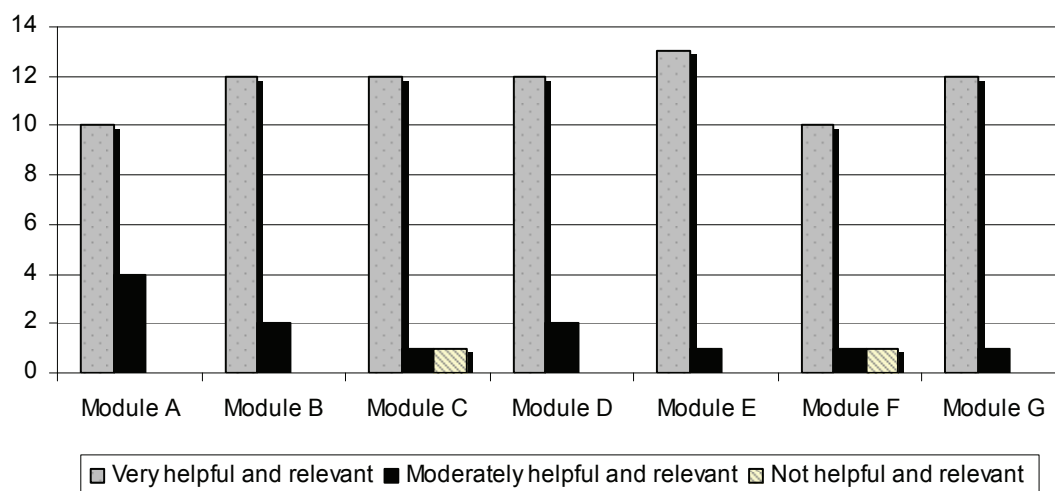
(iii) Finally, quantifying the costs and benefits of the scenario within LEAP;

(f) An overview of the sectoral mitigation options, issues and barriers; the list of models available for mitigation assessment, including the advantages and disadvantages of each model, was also identified as one of the useful parts of the hands-on training workshop.

27. In addition to the daily feedback received from the participants, an online survey was conducted at the end of the workshop to gather general feedback from participants, including those who took part remotely. Seventeen participants responded to the online survey, with 14 participants providing a complete response.

28. The online survey results showed that the majority of participants undertaking the survey found the content of the workshop to be helpful and relevant to their area of work, as shown by the figure below.

Evaluation of presentations on cross-cutting issues



Module A = Mitigating climate change; Module B = Mitigation in the context of national communications; Module C = Mitigation assessment: concepts, structure and steps; Module D = Mitigation options, issues and barriers by sector; Module E = Mitigation analysis: methods and tools; Module F = Reporting mitigation in national communications; Module G = Building national arrangements for the mitigation assessment.

A. Recommendations

29. The participants made the following recommendations to improve the training materials and the structure of future workshops:

(a) Include examples that are more relevant to the region and also applicable to a smaller context, for example in the context of a small country where dependency on fossil fuel for energy is close to 100 per cent;

(b) Encourage participants making country presentations to exclude detailed information on national circumstances, but rather focus the presentation on the mitigation assessment experiences and results, lessons learned, challenges and recommendations on how to overcome the challenges or further strengthen the good practices;

(c) Strengthen the material on integrating mitigation into national development plans and policies by providing examples and case studies;

(d) Include detailed outlines and objectives in each presentation; add unit conversions, particularly for energy values in the mitigation assessment exercise spreadsheet;

(e) Provide training at the request of non-Annex I Parties, at the time of initiation of the process of preparation of their national communications, in order to train the right people at the right time;

(f) Provide more adaptable calculation models free of charge;

(g) Allocate more time to hands-on training exercises;

(h) Gauge the expectations and the level of expertise of participants before the start of the workshop to better meet the needs of all participants;

- (i) Provide training on the use of models in non-energy sectors.
- (j) Provide a recording of the workshop to online participants because this is useful for countries that do not have advanced Internet facilities.

B. Conclusion

30. Ms. Limjirikan closed the workshop by thanking the participants, the trainers, and the other CGE members for a successful workshop. She said that she was encouraged by the active participation of all participants and sincerely hoped that the workshop met the participants' expectations. She also thanked the participants for their daily feedback, which she mentioned was very valuable and would serve as useful guidance to the CGE in delivering its mandates successfully.
