

Strengthening engagement of the TEC with national designated entities

9 November 2023

At its 27th meeting, the TEC endorsed the note to strength its engagement with national designated entities (current document), as it implements the TEC rolling workplan for 2023 – 2027.

I. Scope

1. This note is structured as follows:

- (a) Section II offers a brief introduction to the role of NDEs;
- (b) Section III provides an overview of the ongoing efforts of the TEC and CTCN to engage NDEs in their respective workplans and programmes of work;
- (c) Section IV considers recent evaluation findings and recommendations that are relevant to NDEs; and
- (d) Section V presents initial options that the TEC may consider to strengthen its engagement with NDEs.

2. The options presented in this note should be considered in conjunction with other essential elements of TEC's engagement with stakeholders, namely the TEC's strategy for collaborative partnerships and engagement¹, as well as ongoing efforts of the CTCN under the joint work programme of the Technology Mechanism, with a view to strengthening the Technology Mechanism “ecosystem” that supports technology development and transfer under the Convention. Possible actions taken should also inform the TEC’s communication and outreach activities and monitoring and evaluation efforts.

3. In responding to the guidance contained in decision 18/CP.27, paragraph 7, and decision 19/CMA.4, paragraph 10, it may be helpful to define what is understood as technical and logistical support within the context of the TEC’s mandate and functions:

(a) Technical support can consist of a variety of activities that seek to strengthen the policy interface on climate technology development and transfer. These can include supplying guidelines and written materials to address the needs of NDEs; providing policy advice to NDEs; facilitating access to knowledge and information; enhancing learning and engagement; and supporting efforts to promote the development and use of TEC recommendations and knowledge outputs;

(b) Logistical support in the context of the UNFCCC can include support to facilitate participation in meetings and conferences organised by constituted bodies of the Convention and Paris Agreement, as mandated by Parties. This typically includes travel and subsistence allowances and, in some cases, may include assistance in obtaining invitation letters, in compliance with UNFCCC rules. Additionally, logistical support can include extensive liaison with stakeholders on matters related to NDEs and facilitation of coordination and collaboration between the Technology Mechanism and its actors.

4. Expected impacts of the TEC's strengthened engagement with and outreach to NDEs include greater information flow on technology-related work on both sides and the development of TEC outputs that are better tailored to the needs of NDEs, resulting in increased uptake of the work of the Technology Mechanism. Additionally, NDEs may gain enhanced knowledge and capacities on

¹ Available at: <https://unfccc.int/tclear/tec/documents.html> (under ‘strategies and guidelines’)

climate technology development and transfer, which will positively impact country-level technology actions.

II. Introduction to the role of NDEs

5. Decision 4/CP.13 invited each Party to identify and designate a national entity for the development and transfer of technologies. Given this, NDEs serve as national focal points to facilitate technology development and transfer-related communications and activities in both Annex I and non-Annex I countries. When creating the Technology Mechanism, the Parties built on the concept of the NDEs and decision 2/CP.17 further noted that requests for technical assistance from developing country Parties should be submitted to the CTCN through the country's NDE. As of December 2022, 165 Parties have nominated their NDE.²

6. With limited guidance provided by COP decisions, the positioning, roles, and responsibilities of NDEs within their national government structures vary from one country to another. While most NDEs are located in the Ministries of Environment, others sit in specialised agencies, university research centres, or the private sector.

7. The CTCN's operating manual for NDEs,³ developed in 2014, provides some guidance on the functions and operational requirements of developing country NDEs, including to:

- (a) Serve as a focal point for CTCN activities in their country;
- (b) Manage the national request submission process and support the articulation and implementation of CTCN assistance in response to the requests from the country;
- (c) Identify priority technology and capacity-building needs in line with national development and climate strategies and design collaborative programmes with the CTCN;
- (d) Facilitate the creation of a consultative process to enhance public sector / government actors / private sector coordination and collaboration in the definition of country strategies on technologies for adaptation and mitigation; and
- (e) Provide feedback on the quality of CTCN assistance and procedures.

8. For 31% of non-Annex I Parties, NDEs also serve as focal points for the technology needs assessment process (TNA coordinator). The role involves providing vision and leadership for the overall TNA effort; facilitating communication tasks with stakeholder groups; forming networks; information acquisition; and coordinating and communicating all work products.⁴

III. Current engagement of the Technology Mechanism with NDEs

9. Since the establishment of the Technology Mechanism, both the TEC and the CTCN have engaged with NDEs to varying degrees and in line with their respective mandates and functions. Some examples are detailed below.

1. TEC engagement with NDEs

10. The TEC produces policy and knowledge briefs on key climate technology issues, the findings of which are relevant to NDEs. Several briefs are prepared in collaboration with NDEs or actively collect their inputs.

11. To disseminate these products to NDEs and other stakeholders, the TEC regularly organises and participates in events where it presents its work findings, often as side events to the June Subsidiary Bodies (SB) meetings or during the COP. For example, at COP27, the TEC presented the results of its technical paper on deep decarbonisation for sustainable mobility. Another modality

² NDEs are nominated by the UNFCCC Climate Change Focal Point, which communicates this to the UNFCCC Secretariat. A complete list of NDEs by Party is available at: <https://unfccc.int/tclear/support/national-designated-entity.html>.

³ Available at: <https://www.ctc-n.org/about-ctcn/national-designated-entities>.

⁴ See the TEC's publication on enabling environments and challenges to technology development and transfer available at: <https://unfccc.int/tclear/tec/enablingenvironments.html>.

used by the TEC has been the organisation of thematic dialogues organised in conjunction with TEC meetings to inform the development of policy briefs.

12. Although TEC products and events are not systematically targeted at NDEs, their dissemination on the TEC's website is intended to provide useful information about technology development and transfer to NDEs and other technology stakeholders.

2. Joint TEC and CTCN engagement with NDEs

13. For the past several years, the TEC and CTCN have collaborated on regional and collaborative Technology Mechanism events, such as those organised during the June SBs and COPs, during which NDEs are frequently invited to share country experiences as speakers.

14. Moreover, the two organizations collaborate on developing and disseminating a biannual NDE survey to collect feedback and evaluate the impact of activities undertaken under the Technology Mechanism. To date, two surveys have been conducted, one in 2020 and the other in 2022.

3. CTCN engagement with NDEs

15. In addition to technical assistance projects, the CTCN engages with NDEs through a wide range of activities, including regional NDE forums,⁵ where TEC members are often invited to participate, capacity building programmes⁶ and other regional events targeting NDEs.

16. The CTCN also publishes a newsletter sent to over 10,000 subscribers, including NDEs who have subscribed, on technical assistance projects, webinars, events, publications, networking, and funding opportunities. As part of their joint activities for 2022–2023 (see document TEC/2022/24/13), the TEC and CTCN agreed to utilize the CTCN newsletter to promote joint activities and contributions from the TEC.

IV. Evaluations and assessments findings on NDEs

17. The following section provides an overview of key findings and insights from recent evaluations and surveys of the Technology Mechanism relevant to the TEC's engagement with NDEs, such as those from the First periodic assessment of the effectiveness and adequacy of the support provided to the Technology Mechanism (see FCCC/SBI/2022/13, herewith referred to as the Periodic assessment) and the Report on the second independent review of the effective implementation of the CTCN (see FCCC/CP/2021/3, herewith referred to as the Second independent review of the CTCN), as well as feedback from the NDEs through the biannual NDE surveys developed jointly by the TEC and CTCN.

1. NDEs express having limited awareness of the TEC and its work

18. While most respondents to the NDE surveys were familiar with the CTCN, citing involvement in technical assistance projects and/or information received through the CTCN e-newsletter and CTCN website, only some were familiar with the TEC and its work. For one respondent, the NDE survey was their first introduction to the TEC, while another shared their perception of the TEC as a political entity. One NDE suggested a brief on the CTCN and the TEC would be helpful. Similar views were shared in the Second independent review of the CTCN, where stakeholders interviewed noted a need for more clarity and outreach of the TEC's Terms of Reference and mandate.

19. At COP24 in 2018, Parties invited the TEC to continue enhancing its communication and outreach strategy to increase the reach of its outputs to NDEs and other regional stakeholders (see decision 13/CP.24). Recent evaluations of the Technology Mechanism have made similar observations. The Periodic assessment found that limitations in the dissemination and use of TEC products by the CTCN, NDEs and Parties were some of the main challenges to the effectiveness and adequacy of the support provided to the Technology Mechanism. In addition, the assessment

⁵ See <https://www.ctc-n.org/capacity-building/regional-forums>.

⁶ These include the CTCN's vision to concept programme, the CTCN incubator programme for LDCs, and other thematic workshops and webinars organised by the CTCN.

highlighted the key role of NDEs in enhancing the outreach of TEC products, thanks to their valuable knowledge and understanding of local and national stakeholders.

20. According to the NDE survey conducted in 2022, the majority of NDEs indicated that TEC policy recommendations and publications were poorly disseminated in their countries (69% indicated low dissemination and 31% moderate dissemination), and only a limited number of respondents to the 2020 and 2022 surveys indicated having used TEC products to prepare CTCN technical assistance requests. Survey responses suggest that NDEs generally feel that TEC publications do not adequately address their specific needs. In addition, stakeholders from Francophone countries cited language barriers in using and disseminating TEC publications and reports.

21. NDEs familiar with the TEC referenced work on technology needs assessment, technology action plan guidance and TEC recommendations, which were used to inform national stakeholders on key issues related to climate technology. In addition, some cited CTCN capacity-building and knowledge-sharing events as forums through which NDEs obtained information on TEC recommendations which could be used as inputs to CTCN technical assistance requests.

22. Feedback from NDEs surveyed points to a keen desire to learn more about the TEC and its work. NDEs suggested that the TEC enhance its efforts to disseminate its work better and make its work more accessible to its different stakeholders. NDEs also suggested that the TEC engage further through the CTCN regional NDE forums and share information about TEC activities through email.

2. While some efforts have been made, the collaboration between NDEs and other focal points within the UNFCCC process still needs to be improved

23. Several COP and CMA decisions have called for strengthened engagement and collaboration, as well as enhanced information sharing, between NDEs and other national focal points within the UNFCCC process, as highlighted in the COP decisions 15/CP.22 (2016), 13/CP.24 (2018) and 14/CP.24 (2018).

24. Perceptions on whether sufficient progress has been made in this respect are mixed. For example, the Second independent review highlighted efforts made by the CTCN to strengthen partnerships with UNFCCC country focal points, including with the Financial Mechanism through, for example, a series of regional focal point meetings held at the subregional level in 2016, as well as connections made between NDEs and NDAs to prepare GCF readiness proposals. In contrast, the Periodic assessment revealed the general view of CTCN Advisory Board members surveyed that collaboration among NDEs, GCF National Designated Authorities (NDAs), GEF operational focal points and other donors (MDBs, bilateral banks, United Nations entities) had not increased.

3. NDEs have limited visibility and legitimacy outside the UNFCCC process

25. The Second independent review of the CTCN revealed that stakeholders' awareness of the NDE role was limited to representatives of UNFCCC-related institutional arrangements. Only 44% of beneficiaries surveyed who were not involved in technical assistance requests considered that the NDEs' functions, contacts, and roles were clear.

26. The same review highlighted the continued need to raise the profile of NDEs vis a vis their national governments and the private sector, noting that 34% of NDEs surveyed considered national institutions and the private sector did not sufficiently support them in performing their NDE role.

27. The Periodic assessment highlighted similar findings. It noted that one of the main challenges in terms of the effectiveness and adequacy of the support provided to the Technology Mechanism was that "NDEs lack the political support and visibility in order to raise their profile within government and the private sector, and would benefit from additional financial, material and human resources from both the Technology Mechanism and their national host institutions in order to fulfil their roles."

4. Capacity building continues to be a priority for NDEs

28. NDE survey responses indicate that capacity-building gaps include limited guidance on the role of NDEs and limited training opportunities. If an NDE leaves their position, there is no basis for the continuation of activities, stated one respondent, while another noted the absence of questions relating to NDEs' personal capacity-building needs in the survey, citing examples such as working

conditions, the increasingly weak relationship with the CTCN, and the lack of training and financial support for participation in COPs.

29. Nevertheless, the Periodic assessment noted that the CTCN continues to train NDEs regularly and facilitates the development of technical assistance requests through regional forums and the CTCN incubator programme.⁷

30. The importance of building NDE capacity was also highlighted in the TEC's publication on endogenous capacities and technologies (2021),⁸ particularly building capacity to assess technology needs, identify appropriate technologies, develop endogenous technologies, understand the demands and implications of existing processes and engage stakeholders. NDEs and TNA focal points surveyed also described more than 60 personal capacity-building, skills and knowledge needs.

V. Options to strengthen the TEC's engagement with NDEs

31. As the designated point of contact for technology development and transfer between the Technology Mechanism and national stakeholders, a functioning global NDE network, active in communicating and addressing priorities, needs and opportunities, is key to successfully implementing the Technology Mechanism activities. For the TEC, NDEs represent a key stakeholder with respect to identifying appropriate climate technology policy options and disseminating technology-related recommendations.

32. Several proposals to strengthen the TEC's engagement with NDEs are presented below. They build on ongoing initiatives and efforts of the TEC and CTCN and take into account feedback from NDEs and recommendations from external evaluations. While some options may be considered "low-hanging fruit" that are easily implementable, others may require greater collaboration with the CTCN in the medium term.

33. To strengthen its engagement with NDEs and increase the reach of its outputs to NDEs, the TEC could:

1. Engage NDEs in the implementation of TEC workplan activities

34. Create opportunities for NDEs to contribute to the scoping of TEC activities and/or provide early feedback on the direction of planned activities as part of its new 2023–2027 workplan. For example, similar consultations could be envisioned with NDEs as those taking place with potential partners ahead of TEC27 to help define the scope and direction of planned activities.

35. Engage NDEs more systematically in the implementation of TEC activities. The TEC could systematically integrate their participation in events, workshops, and consultations, whether as speakers, participants, or experts contributing to knowledge products. For example, this could be envisaged for the NSI regional meetings planned under the TEC's workplan or for the dialogues planned at TEC30. Even though the TEC's new workplan mentions the need to engage with NDEs more systematically, NDEs are only mentioned once as possible partners for activities (activity B.2.1). The TEC may wish to elaborate on the role NDEs can play in supporting the implementation of its activities when updating its workplan. NDEs could also participate in TEC taskforces as observers (by rotation, for instance, or through other modalities to keep the process manageable) in the same way that observer organisations and UNFCCC constituency groups are invited to participate.

36. Disseminate information regarding upcoming TEC meetings to NDEs proactively and provide opportunities for NDEs to participate in TEC meetings (online, for example, with the option of interacting). Additionally, the TEC may consider providing opportunities for NDEs to present on country case studies more frequently during its meetings to strengthen the grounding of the TEC's work in national experiences. Presentations by NDEs could also demonstrate how TEC outputs have been used to inform work at a national level.

⁷ See para 33 (b) of the Periodic assessment.

⁸ Available at: <https://unfccc.int/tclear/endogenous/index.html>.

2. Increase communications with NDEs through accessible formats and communication channels

37. Consider different modalities to promote and disseminate TEC outputs (emails, newsletters, webinars, blog posts, communities of practice, etc.) as well as alternative and innovative formats for presenting the findings in an attractive and communicative way (briefs, short summaries, creative report, infographics, videos, etc.). A few examples include:

(a) Develop brief write-ups or presentations of key findings and recommendations of relevant TEC outputs that can be shared with NDEs by email or through the CTCN newsletter;

(b) Organise online webinars to launch TEC outputs and disseminate key findings and recommendations relevant to NDEs. Similar presentations are carried out during the TEC meetings, whereby consultants and technical experts are often called upon to provide an overview of the main findings of draft publications. Webinars could also guide NDEs on methods to disseminate the outputs further;

(c) Proactively invite NDEs to join and contribute to the UN Climate Change Technology LinkedIn group as a community of practice. NDEs could be solicited to develop brief posts or blogs on technology issues nationally; and

(d) Explore modalities that can contribute towards overcoming language-related barriers, such as privileging the translation of outreach materials, one-pager summary documents and main findings and recommendations.

38. Consider evaluating what vehicle(s) meets the needs of NDEs, as one of the target audiences, most effectively and appropriately.

3. Develop and disseminate a clear brief targeting NDE on the Technology Mechanism's role, mandate, and functions

39. The NDE surveys indicate that not all NDEs are aware of or understand the mandate and objectives of the TEC and the Technology Mechanism. The TEC and CTCN may wish to ensure clarity among the NDEs about the Technology Mechanism, its entities and who is dealing with whom, what information is being communicated and how it is being communicated. Additionally, the Technology Mechanism brief could be used by NDEs for advocacy purposes in order to raise awareness about the mechanism and their role and to gain legitimacy within the institutional system. This activity is in accordance with the joint TEC-CTCN activity agreed to as part of the joint activities for 2022–2023 (see activity 4.3) to "develop joint messaging on the strategic added value of the Technology Mechanism as well as the work of the Technology Mechanism for 2022–2023."

40. The TEC and CTCN could also use a standard template to introduce the Technology Mechanism at their respective events in order to ensure coherence and jointly raise awareness about the mechanism as a whole, including in connection with NDEs.

41. In addition, the TEC and the CTCN may consider updating the NDE guidance documents developed by the CTCN to reflect, among other things, the role of NDEs in disseminating knowledge outputs and policy recommendations of the TEC.

4. Enhance the participation in regional events targeting NDEs, such as regional NDE forums and regional climate weeks

42. Engagement and participation of the TEC in the regional NDE forums organised by the CTCN have been sporadic. The TEC could collaborate more closely with the CTCN on the organisation of the regional NDE forums, seeking opportunities to add value to the CTCN's efforts both in terms of the logistical arrangements (supporting with on-site logistics and engagement with the regional collaboration centres) and technical inputs (supporting the agenda as relevant, mobilisation of TEC representatives and other speakers/ resources). The regional NDE forums could be an opportunity for the TEC and CTCN to raise the visibility of the Technology Mechanism and share updates on their activities while also helping to shape their outputs.

43. Furthermore, to enhance networking opportunities and visibility of NDEs, the TEC and CTCN could collaborate to support efforts to further mainstream technology considerations across the different thematic tracks of the Regional Climate Weeks (RCW), where NDEs are also invited to participate in RCW events and discussions. The TEC and CTCN could jointly organise a side

event with NDEs and regional stakeholders, including, for example, focal points of the financial mechanism and other financing institutions, to engage on thematic topics of mutual interest in line with the themes of the RCW.

44. This activity is aligned with the joint TEC-CTCN activity for 2022–2023, which consists of conducting joint outreach to enhance the visibility of the work of the Technology Mechanism and seek feedback on the work of the Technology Mechanism, including by utilising the NDE Regional Forums organised as part of UNFCCC Regional climate weeks.

5. Facilitate linkages between NDEs and other focal points under the UNFCCC Process

45. To enhance the scope of technology actions and the likelihood of implementing technology policy recommendations, it is integral to the NDE's role to establish effective coordination with stakeholders, including other national focal points of the UNFCCC Mechanism and funding partners. NDEs frequently cite the lack of organisational resources as a barrier to effective stakeholder coordination.

46. The TEC could nurture a robust communication channel as part of its ongoing engagement with UNFCCC constituted bodies, as well as the Green Climate Fund, the Global Environment Facility, and the Adaptation Fund secretariats, in order to support information-sharing efforts between designated focal points.

47. In order to increase awareness of the role and mandate of NDEs and facilitate links between focal points, the TEC could circulate the Technology Mechanism brief, once developed, to other UNFCCC bodies and entities of the financial mechanism for distribution throughout their networks and national focal points. Furthermore, the TEC could showcase successful examples of collaboration between NDEs and other focal points as a roadmap for establishing similar collaborations at the national level.

6. Report on the TEC's engagement with NDEs in order to measure progress

48. In addition to the NDE Survey and anecdotal evidence, the TEC could establish a more sustainable baseline for NDEs' use of TEC products and resources. For example, the TEC could explore technical solutions to track the use of TEC publications and products by stakeholder type on its website.

49. Furthermore, TEC could more systematically report on progress in strengthening its engagement with NDEs through existing means such as the Joint Annual Report of the TEC and CTCN to the COP and the TEC's monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. To facilitate this, a new indicator on NDE engagement has been proposed as part of the TEC's update to its M&E system (see document TEC/2023/26/14). In addition, and as mandated by decision 18/CP.27, paragraph 11 and decision 19/CMA.4, paragraph 10, a proposal has been made as part of the update to the M&E system to improve the usefulness and effectiveness of the NDE survey in order to enhance the response rate and quality of the data and insights.

7. Develop capacity-building activities and knowledge products for NDEs

50. As part of the Technology Mechanism work programme for 2023–2027, the TEC and the CTCN could explore opportunities to pool resources and expertise to jointly develop capacity-building activities and knowledge products that respond to the practical needs of NDEs and developing countries. The Technology Mechanism's current joint activities and common work areas do not, as of yet, specify modalities for engaging NDEs.

51. Joint knowledge products that are in the pipeline as part of the joint work programme could ensure early engagement of NDEs in the scoping and outline of the knowledge product (for example, on technology roadmaps) to ensure outputs meet the needs of NDEs as one of the targeted stakeholders.

8. Strengthen the engagement of the Technology Mechanism with Annex I NDEs

52. In collaboration with the CTCN, the TEC could organize a regional NDE forum for Annex I NDEs to meet and discuss key issues related to the Technology Mechanism, taking into account the important role Annex I NDEs play in facilitating regional and global networking, peer learning and collaboration efforts, as well as promoting synergies and partnerships with initiatives in their own

countries. The CTCN tested this model during the pandemic, where it organised a series of online virtual regional meetings, including one dedicated to Annex I NDEs.

53. To foster and enhance collaboration among Annex I and non-Annex I NDEs, meaningful engagement opportunities could also be facilitated by the TEC and CTCN. For example, aside from using larger events such as SBs as a means of bringing together participating NDEs in person, other modalities, such as informal and virtual "coffee and conversation meetings", could be considered inter-sessionally.
