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COMMUNICATIONS FROM PARTIES NOT INCLUDED
IN ANNEX I TO THE CONVENTION

SECRETARIAT ACTIVITIES TO FACILITATE THE PROVISION OF
FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Progress report

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The activities of the secretariat to facilitate the provision of financial and technical support to non-Annex I Parties for the preparation of national communications are mandated by stipulations in the Convention, decisions by the Conference of the Parties (COP) and requests by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). (See Article 8.2(c), decisions 3/CP.2 and 10/CP.2 and document FCCC/SBI/1997/6, para. 21).

2. Decision 10/CP.2, in particular, requests the secretariat, in accordance with Article 8.2(c), "to facilitate assistance to Parties, particularly developing country Parties, in the preparation of their initial communications, through the organization of workshops at the regional level; to provide a forum for the exchange of experiences in the development of emission factors and activity data for the preparation of the inventory, as well, on request, for other elements of information in the initial communications"; and to report to the SBI and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at each of their sessions.

3. This document contains a progress report on the activities undertaken by the secretariat since the sixth session of the subsidiary bodies. In part II. A and in the table attached as annex I, updates are provided on the state of preparation of initial national communications by Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention. They reflect information available to the secretariat by 10 October 1997. Parts II. B to F summarize secretariat activities related to Regional and Inter-Regional Workshops and Expert Group Meetings, CC:FORUM, Information Exchange, Training, and Other Activities. Conclusions are drawn in part III, where a number of problems common to many non-Annex I Parties in preparing their initial national communications are also listed. In part IV are proposals for possible action by the SBI.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

A. State of preparation of initial national communications

4. At the sixth session of the SBI, the secretariat provided information on the state of preparation of the initial national communications of non-Annex I Parties (FCCC/SBI/1997/13). Updates to that information are provided in annex I to this document. The status is as follows:

(a) Communications submitted: the initial national communications of two Parties, Argentina and Jordan, have been received by the secretariat so far;

(b) Communications under preparation: since July 1997, another eight non-Annex I Parties are engaged in preparing their national communications, bringing the total number of countries in this advanced category to 40. Several of these Parties have indicated that their national communications would be available before the end of 1997;

(c) Newly approved projects: in addition, 44 Parties have recently received approval by the GEF, half of them within the past three months, for projects for the preparation of communications;

(d) Projects under preparation: another six Parties have, since July 1997, joined the ranks of those countries which are preparing projects, bringing their total number to 18; and

(e) No activities reported: no activities relating to the preparation of communications have been reported by nine Parties, and no information whatsoever is available from 15 Parties (two of which have recently ratified the Convention).

5. As initial national communications are beginning to be received by the secretariat, specific guidance, complementing the one contained in the guidelines for the communications adopted at COP 2, needs to be provided with regard to their reproduction, translation and dissemination.

B. Regional and Inter-Regional Workshops and Expert Groups

6. The secretariat, in co-operation with a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations and multilateral programmes, including the Governments of Senegal and Brazil, the GEF secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), co-organized two regional workshops on the preparation of national communications since the sixth session of the subsidiary bodies. In addition to the earlier workshop for the Asia-Pacific region in Japan (Fujiyoshida, 7-10 July 1997), hosted by the Government of Japan, one workshop on the preparation of national communications was held for African countries in Senegal (Dakar, 28-30 August 1997) and one for Latin America in Brazil (Foz do Iguacu, 29 September- 2 October 1997). The Governments of Senegal and Brazil hosted these two regional workshops.

7. On the occasion of the sixth session of the subsidiary bodies, the secretariat had also co-hosted with the GEF a workshop on the preparation of national communications of non-Annex I Parties for delegations at which the representatives of Argentina and Jordan first presented summaries of their national communications. In order to address issues raised by delegations in an effective manner, the GEF and its implementing agencies were available for bilateral consultations throughout the sixth sessions of the subsidiary bodies.

8. The secretariat also attended the Second Expert Group Meeting on Regional Co-operation for Climate Change in Bangkok, Thailand (22-24 September 1997). The meeting had been organized jointly by the Government of Japan and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

9. The workshops and the expert group meeting allowed the secretariat to interact with representatives of more than 100 Parties and provided an effective means for increasing awareness of the guidelines and of the technical details regarding essential components for the preparation of national communications. They further gave non-Annex I Parties the opportunity to share experiences in the preparation of communications. Based upon these, a number of issues and concerns were expressed and recommendations made. These are summarized in the Conclusions in part III of this document.

C. CC:FORUM

10. The seventh meeting of CC:FORUM was held in conjunction with the sixth sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies. CC:FORUM, as an informal consultative group, aims at co-ordinating the exchange of views on technical and financial support to developing countries and economies in transition for the implementation of the Convention and the preparation of the initial national communications.

11. Bilateral and multilateral programmes reported on their activities in support of the preparation of the communications. The need for continued co-ordination and exchange of information was stressed. The secretariat presented an analysis of the responses to a questionnaire sent to CC:FORUM participants on the usefulness and future of the CC:INFO

Activity Report. It emerged that the report provides a useful service and should be continued by the secretariat. The need to regularly update the information and improve the distribution of the report was emphasized.

12. The meeting agreed that among future technical support activities the feasibility of practical linkages among the Conventions, in particular concerning reporting obligations, should be explored. The forum decided to take up the matter at its eighth meeting.

D. Information Exchange

13. The secretariat has continued to expand its information activities in support of the Convention process. Since July 1997, an increasing number of Parties have requested from the secretariat copies of the CC:INFO/Web Tutorial Kit 1.0 on CD-ROM. This CD-ROM contains tools for governments wishing to develop a national web site on climate change and the implementation of the Convention, including a step-by-step tutorial kit and key software. Through CC:INFO/Web, the secretariat is seeking to foster the growth of a network of sites for sharing information and ideas. To date, 11 non-Annex I Parties have established national web sites in collaboration with CC:INFO/Web.

14. An updated CC:INFO Activities Report, which had been distributed to delegates at the subsidiary bodies' meetings in February, has subsequently been sent to other users. Results of a survey for evaluating the usefulness of the Report, initially distributed in May 1997, are still being received and indicate the users' appreciation of the product. The responses further show that demand for hard copies of the Report remains strong, even though updates are regularly posted on the web site of the secretariat.

15. The secretariat is digitizing the full text of the first national communications by Annex I Parties in order to make them available on its web site, thus also providing a set of examples that will complement the official guidelines for the preparation of national communications. This project has received considerable support from Parties and is also likely to become a useful resource to non-Annex I countries which are preparing their initial national communication.

16. In order to contribute to capacity-building for the preparation of national communications, the training material developed by the CC:TRAIN project (see E. below) has been digitized in a joint effort between CC:TRAIN, the Global Environmental Information Center (UNU) and the secretariat. It is intended to make the CC:TRAIN material available on the web site of the secretariat in English, French and Spanish, thus underscoring the importance the secretariat is attaching to disseminating information electronically in several UN languages.

17. Through the UNFCCC site on the World Wide Web, information relevant to the intergovernmental process is being disseminated to an ever larger community of users. Information products include notifications to governments, pre-session and in-session documents, summaries and in-depth reviews of national communications from Annex I Parties. The results of a questionnaire distributed during the sixth sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies showed that about half of the respondents are relying on the Web site for obtaining official

documents. Two-thirds expressed satisfaction with the information content provided on the Web.

18. The secretariat is compiling the second edition of the Who's Who in the UNFCCC Process, a directory of delegates and observers who have participated in sessions of the COP and the subsidiary bodies. The volume is intended to provide an up-to-date and user-friendly resource of contact information.

19. Conscious of the fact that the World Wide Web is not universally accessible, the secretariat will publish the third edition of its "UNFCCC Web site on CD-ROM". The novelty of the forthcoming version is that it includes the full text of Annex I national communications and the training material developed by CC:TRAIN.

E. Training

20. CC:TRAIN is a UNDP-implemented project that supports the efforts of developing countries in various regions to implement the Convention, particularly in preparing their initial national communications. CC:TRAIN is funded by the GEF and bilateral donors, and executed by the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), in collaboration with the secretariat and the Information Unit on Conventions of UNEP. Phase I of CC:TRAIN ended with the completion of activities in September 1997. Phase II is an 18-month project which began in April 1997.

21. CC:TRAIN has developed workshop packages aimed at strengthening the institutional capacity of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to pursue the objectives of the Convention. Currently, six training packages are available. They include a "Workshop Package on Climate Change and the UNFCCC: Challenges and Opportunities (Version 2)", a "Training Package on Preparing a Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment", a "Training Package on Preparing a National GHG Inventory", a "Training Package on Preparing a Mitigation Analysis", and a "Training Package on Preparing a National Implementation Strategy". In addition, the secretariat has commissioned CC:TRAIN to prepare a workshop package designed to inform national decision- and policy-makers of the guidelines for the initial national communications by non-Annex I Parties. The package contains detailed information material such as transparencies, group exercises and speaker's notes needed to conduct awareness-raising workshops. All packages will be available in English, French and Spanish (the latter package as of December 1997).

22. CC:TRAIN had co-organized earlier workshops in Zimbabwe on Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment (26 May-6 June 1997) and on Preparing National Communications (10-11 June 1997), followed in September 1997 by one on Preparing a Climate Change Mitigation Analysis. These workshops are based on the above-mentioned training packages and are the first in a series of workshops scheduled to take place in 1997 in Africa and Latin America.

23. In early 1998, CC:TRAIN will begin a five-month Certificate Programme on Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment for training specialists in these areas. This

programme, initially available only to applicants from the Pacific region, will be carried out with the International Global Change Institute (IGCI) at the University of Waikato (New Zealand), in co-operation with the Pacific Island Climate Change Assistance Programme (PICCAP).

F. Other Activities

24. The secretariat has continued to provide comments on the consistency of GEF project proposals with the Convention and the guidance provided by the COP. To date, the secretariat has provided comments on more than 250 such proposals. The secretariat has also continued its participation in the GEF Operations Committee (GEFOP), the Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel (STAP) and the Quarterly Review Meetings. The latter are monitoring the progress in preparation of national communications.

III. CONCLUSIONS

25. While efforts are being undertaken by the various actors involved – non-Annex I Parties on the one hand and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its implementing agencies on the other – overall progress towards the completion and submission of national communications needs to be further accelerated and supported. In preparing their initial communications, non-Annex I Parties should refer to the guidelines contained in decision 10/CP.2, in order to ensure that the objectives stated by the COP are indeed achieved.

26. Parties further need to ensure that appropriate institutional arrangements are in place for carrying out the activities leading to the preparation of national communications and, if necessary, to avail themselves of the technical and financial resources which the financial mechanism of the Convention and bilateral support schemes provide, as well as of training material specified under E.

27. The GEF and its implementing agencies will need to ensure that the expedited procedures are being fully implemented and that, if bottlenecks persist, further procedural streamlining is envisaged. In order for approved projects to go ahead rapidly, Parties must, for example, be able to avail themselves of 15 per cent of the total project funds, as provided for under the expedited procedure facility, without delay.

28. Through workshops, expert group meetings, CC:FORUM and other events, described in part II of this document, non-Annex I Parties exchanged experiences and identified common problems encountered in preparing initial national communications. These can be summarized and addressed as follows:

(a) At national level

(i) Specific national action plans and strategies for the implementation of the Convention need to be developed;

(ii) National institutional arrangements allowing for effective cross-sectoral consultation and inter-agency coordination should be strengthened, where necessary;

(iii) Awareness-raising activities, information material and public and media campaigns need to be improved.

(b) At regional level

(i) Methodologies and models for the elaboration of the inventory and the assessment of the socio-economic impacts of climate change, and mitigation and adaptation measures need to be adapted to local (regional and sub-regional) conditions;

(ii) Regional workshops, as cost-effective and efficient means for Parties to share experiences, should be continued and be complemented by a series of thematic workshops;

(iii) Existing regional and sub-regional institutions and centres of excellence need to be strengthened so as to develop a sufficient capacity to provide technical assistance.

(c) At international level

(i) A co-ordinated and proactive technical support programme for the national communication process needs to be implemented without delay. This would contribute to the timeliness and quality of the communications, in accordance with the components specified in the guidelines on the communications from non-Annex I Parties adopted at COP 2;

(ii) A forum for the exchange of experiences in the development of emission factors and activity data for the compilation of the inventory needs to be provided;

(iii) Provisions need to be made for ensuring that the initial national communications and their executive summaries are translated, reproduced and widely disseminated;

(iv) Adequate financial and technical resources for information exchange and networking activities, including for access to the Internet and the World Wide Web, should be provided to non-Annex I Parties (hardware and software). One workshop, taking note of the provisions on information exchange and the clearinghouse mechanism available under the

Convention on Biological Diversity, concluded that the adoption of similar provisions in the context of the Climate Change Convention would improve Parties' access to information;

(v) Understanding of and awareness about activities implemented jointly (AIJ) as viable sources of funds for climate change activities (including activities carried out by the private sector) need to be improved;

(vi) A coordinated strategy and effective effort by the international community for the transfer and development of technologies for mitigation and adaptation is required.

IV. ACTION BY THE SBI

29. The SBI may wish to:

(a) Take note of the activities of the secretariat and of the conclusions contained in part III and bear the latter in mind in taking other relevant action; and

(b) In the context of the decision on the process for considering communications from non-Annex I Parties, recommend to the COP specific guidance on the reproduction, translation and dissemination of the initial national communications from non-Annex I Parties.

Annex I

Status of Preparation of National Communications

(*Countries in italics: Least Developed Countries)

Party	Ratification Date	Indicated Date of Submission of National Communication	Status of Preparation of National Communication			Institutional Arrangements		
			General Status	GHG Inventory	General Description of Steps	National Focal Point	Climate Change Committee	Expert Technical Team
Antigua and Barbuda	2 Feb 1993		Project underway			✓		
Armenia	14 May 1993		Ongoing (project under implementation)					Established
Azerbaijan	16 May 1995		To be initiated (project underway)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: March 1998)	Completed (January 1997)		Established	Proposed
Bahamas	29 Mar 1994		To be initiated (expected duration of the work: 18 months - project underway)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 12 months)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: July 1997)	✓		
Bahrain	28 Dec 1994	July 1999	Project under preparation					
Barbados	23 Mar 1994		To be initiated (project under preparation)	To be initiated	To be initiated			
Belize	31 Oct 1994		To be initiated (project under preparation)					
Bhutan*	25 Aug 1995	September 1999	Ongoing (project under implementation)			✓	Established	Established
Brazil	28 Feb 1994	Early 1998	Ongoing (project under implementation)			✓		
Burkina Faso*	2 Sep 1993		To be initiated (expected duration of work: two years)	To be initiated	To be initiated	✓	Established	Established
Cambodia*	18 Dec 1995		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 2 years)	✓	Proposed	Proposed
Cameroon	19 Oct 1994	Expected date of presentation: COP3	Ongoing (project under implementation)			✓		
Central African Republic*	10 Mar 1993		To be initiated - (expected duration of work: 2 years - project underway)	To be initiated	To be initiated	✓	Established	Proposed
Comoros*	31 Oct 1994	August 1999	Project under preparation					

Annex I
(Continuation)

(*Countries in italics: Least Developed Countries)

Party	Ratification Date	Indicated Date of Submission of National Communication	Status of Preparation of National Communication			Institutional Arrangements		
			General Status	GHG Inventory	General Description of Steps	National Focal Point	Climate Change Committee	Expert Technical Team
Congo*	14 Oct 1996	August 1999	Project under preparation			✓		
Cook Islands	20 Apr 1993		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	To be initiated (as part of PICCAP, expected duration of work: 1997-99)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 1997-99)			
Costa Rica	26 Aug 1994	Early 1998	Ongoing (project under implementation)			✓	Established	Established
Côte d'Ivoire	29 Nov 1994	August 1999	Project under preparation					
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	5 Dec 1994		Ongoing (expected duration of work: 15 months - project under implementation)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: Dec 1997)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 2 months)	✓	Established	Established
Djibouti*	27 Aug 1995	August 1999	Project under preparation					
Egypt	5 Dec 1994	End of July 1999	Ongoing (project under implementation)			✓	Established	Established
Fiji	25 Feb 1993		Ongoing (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: end 1997)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: Jan-Jul 1997)			
Guinea*	7 May 1993		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 2 years - project underway)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 6 months)	- Completed in Feb-May 1997 - A study is currently on-going and another one is to be initiated	✓	Established	Proposed
Kiribati*	7 Feb 1995		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	Completed (February 1996)	To be initiated			
Lao People's Democratic Republic*	4 Jan 1995		Ongoing (project under implementation)				Established	Established
Lebanon	15 Dec 1994	October 1999	Ongoing (project under implementation)			✓		

Annex I
(Continuation)

(*Countries in italics: Least Developed Countries)

Party	Ratification Date	Indicated Date of Submission of National Communication	Status of Preparation of National Communication			Institutional Arrangements		
			General Status	GHG Inventory	General Description of Steps	National Focal Point	Climate Change Committee	Expert Technical Team
Mali*	28 Dec 1994		Ongoing (project under implementation)					
Marshall Islands	8 Oct 1992		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	Completed	To be initiated			
Mauritania*	20 Jan 1994	July 1999	Project underway					
Mauritius	4 Sep 1992	Expected date of completion: 31 July 97	Ongoing (project under implementation)	Completed for 1990 data (31 October 1996)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: 30 June 1997)	✓	Established	Established
Mexico	11 Mar 1993	February 1997	Completed May 1997 (not submitted yet)	Completed (date of completion: 1985)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: end of 1997)	✓	Established	Established
Moldova, Republic of	9 Jun 1995		Project underway			✓	Proposed	Proposed
Namibia	16 May 1995	1998	Ongoing (project underway)					
Nauru	11 Nov 1993		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway - PICCAP)	To be initiated (as part of PICCAP)				
Niger*	25 Jul 1995		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 2 years - project underway)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: two years)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: two years)	✓	Established	Established
Niue	28 Feb 1996	August 1999	Ongoing (expected duration of work: 3 years project underway - PICCAP)	To be initiated (as part of PICCAP, expected duration of the work: Jan-May 97)				
Pakistan	1 Jun 1994	August 1998	Ongoing (project under preparation)	Completed	Ongoing			
Panama	23 May 1995		Project underway			✓	Established	

Annex I
(Continuation)

(*Countries in italics: Least Developed Countries)

Party	Ratification Date	Indicated Date of Submission of National Communication	Status of Preparation of National Communication			Institutional Arrangements		
			General Status	GHG Inventory	General Description of Steps	National Focal Point	Climate Change Committee	Expert Technical Team
Paraguay	24 Feb 1994		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 1 year). A request for financial assistance is expected to be made in December 1997	To be initiated	To be initiated		Proposed	Proposed
Philippines	2 Aug 1994		Ongoing (project underway)	Completed: September 1996 (still being updated)	To be initiated	✓	Established	Established
Saint Lucia	14 Jun 1993	March 1999	Project underway					
Samoa*	29 Nov 1994		Ongoing (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	Ongoing	Ongoing (expected date of completion: November 1997)	✓	Established	Proposed
Senegal	17 Oct 1994	December 1997	Ongoing (expected duration of work: 15 months - project under implementation)	First Inventory completed in July 1994; second inventory is ongoing (expected date of completion: end of May 1997)	Ongoing (expected date of completion : May-June 1998)	✓	Established	Established
Seychelles	22 Sep 1992	First half of 1998	To be initiated (project under implementation)	July 1997	Ongoing	✓	Established	
Singapore	29 May 1997							
Slovenia	1 Dec 1995		Project underway			✓	Proposed	
Solomon Islands*	28 Dec 1994		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	To be initiated (as part of PICCAP)	To be initiated	✓		
South Africa	29 Aug 1997					✓		

Annex I
(Continuation)

(*Countries in italics: Least Developed Countries)

Party	Ratification Date	Indicated Date of Submission of National Communication	Status of Preparation of National Communication			Institutional Arrangements		
			General Status	GHG Inventory	General Description of Steps	National Focal Point	Climate Change Committee	Expert Technical Team
Sri Lanka	23 Nov 1993	Expected date of completion: 1998	Ongoing (project underway)	Ongoing	To be initiated	✓		
Tunisia	15 Jul 1993	August 1999	Ongoing (project under implementation)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: August 1997)	To be initiated (expected date of completion: March 1998)		Established	Established
Turkmenistan	5 Jun 1995		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 2 years - project under implementation)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 1 year)	To be initiated (expected duration of work: 1 year)	✓	Established	Established
Tuvalu*	26 Oct 1993		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway / PICCAP)	To be initiated (as part of PICCAP, expected duration of work: 1997-8)	To be initiated	✓		
United Republic of Tanzania*	17 Apr 1996		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 1-2 years - project under implementation)	Completed (Date of completion: 1994)	Ongoing		Established	Established
Uruguay	18 Aug 1994	During COP3	Ongoing (project under implementation)	Ongoing	Ongoing			Established
Uzbekistan	20 Jun 1993	October 1998	Ongoing (project under implementation)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: December 1998)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: June 1998)	✓	Established	Established
Vanuatu*	25 Mar 1993		To be initiated (expected duration of work: 3 years - project underway - PICCAP)	To be initiated (as part of PICCAP)	To be initiated	✓		
Venezuela	28 Dec 1994			Completed (May 1996)		✓		
Viet Nam	16 Nov 1994	February 1998	To be initiated (project under preparation)	Completed (March 1996)	Ongoing (expected date of completion: December of 1997)		Established	
Zambia*	28 May 1993	April 1999	To be initiated (project under implementation)				Established	Established
