

Submission by the United States of America

Agenda Item 3.2.1 - Possible elements of modalities and procedures for international assessment and review

Comments for incorporation into the draft text are included below:

I. Objectives of the international assessment and review process

- Paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 are redundant. A solution would be to keep a very broad focus for the objectives for the entire IAR process, and then include more specific objectives for each step of the process. Either way, these objectives should follow the agreed language in Cancun, which is reflected in paragraphs 42 and 44 of Decision 1/CP.16.
- Paragraph 1 should therefore state only: “To enhance guidelines for the review of information in national communications on progress made in achieving emission reductions and provision of financial, technology, and capacity building support to developing country Parties, and to assess emissions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets under the SBI, taking into account national circumstances, in a rigorous, robust, and transparent manner, with a view to promoting comparability and building confidence.” The other provisions should be deleted.
- Paragraph 2 which refers the existing system of in-depth expert review should only include the language from paragraph 42, “To enhance guidelines for the review of information in national communications on progress made in achieving emission reductions and provision of financial, technology, and capacity building support to developing country Parties.” We also note that the objectives other than those in sub-paragraphs (a), (c), and (f) should particularly be deleted as redundant or inconsistent with this agreed text.

Paragraph 3 on the second step of international assessment under the SBI should only include the language from paragraph 44, “To assess emissions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets under the SBI, taking into account national circumstances, in a rigorous, robust, and transparent manner, with a view to promoting comparability and building confidence.” The current sub-paragraphs could then be deleted as redundant or inconsistent with the agreed text.

II. Process and scope

- It is redundant to have the section on scope here for overall IAR, when the scope for each step, both review and assessment, are clearly defined below. This section should focus instead on the overall process for IAR, and remove the section on scope.
- Paragraph 4 should be amended to reflect the existing in-depth review process and to better track with the language of paragraph 44 of 1/CP.16, as follows, with deletion of all other sub-paragraphs:

(a) A technical expert review [assessment] of biennial reports, [where relevant in conjunction with] based on the existing in-depth review procedures and taking into account the results of the in-depth reviews of the annual inventory and national communications [review process for developed country Parties], which would result in an individual review report for each developed country Party;

(b) An assessment [review] of [implementation] emission reductions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reductions targets conducted under the auspices of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation;

- As noted above, paragraph 5 is redundant and should be deleted.

III. Technical Expert Review

- It is clear from Decision 1/CP.16 that we are not to abandon the extensive existing system for in-depth review of national reports, including national communications and annual inventories, and that this process should be enhanced to apply also to biennial reports. This is clearly part and parcel of the IAR process.
- Because in-depth review of annual inventory reports and national communications will proceed as they do currently, the provisions for IAR should apply primarily to the biennial update reports (which also include summaries of the national inventories). Paragraph 6 should therefore be made clearer by replacing the current text with:
 - (a) Biennial reports, whether submitted as a sub-set of the national communication or submitted separately in intervening years.
 - (b) For additional information, the review team may also consider previously submitted annual inventory reports, national communications and in-depth review reports from past national inventories or national communications.
 - (c) Any additional information provided by the Party before or during the review;
- Paragraph 7 (a) Delete the reference to provisions under the Kyoto Protocol, as they are not applicable here.
- In Paragraph 7(b), to make consistent with the existing review procedures and to make consistent with 1/CP.16, we would suggest deleting sub-paragraphs (ii) and (iii) and inserting before sub-element (i): “Review key qualitative information and quantitative data points contained in biennial reports;”
- In Paragraph 7(b), revise (i) to read: “[Assessing] Review overall progress in the implementation of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;]”
- And paragraph (iv) “Review [Assessing] of provision of financial, technology and capacity-building support to developing country Parties.”
- We are open to several of the options posed in paragraph 8, and do not see them as mutually exclusive. It is clear that we must build on the existing in-depth review structure, utilizing national experts and the Secretariat, and where possible, finding ways to add capacity from both.

IV. Assessment

- Paragraph 10 – the primary inputs should be the most recent biennial report and the expert review report, but secondary information from previous reports and reviews. Questions from other Parties or stakeholders should also be available assuming they are also available in international consultations and analysis. Paragraph 10 should be split into two paragraphs and be revised to read:
 - 10 (a) Technical expert review report referred to in paragraph 9; and (b) Biennial report;

10 bis. Other inputs to the assessment process may include:

(a) Previously submitted national GHG inventory, national inventory report and, where relevant, national communication, as well as any other relevant review reports; and

(b) Other information provided by the Party before or during the review;

- Paragraph 11 – each developed country party should be assessed individually. There are no provisions in 1/CP.16 for aggregate assessment as part of the IAR process.
- Paragraph 12 – we would see that all of these could be elements of the assessment process under the SBI, assuming similar transparency under international consultations and analysis, considering that broader participation of Parties and observers allows for increased transparency of the process.
- Paragraph 13 – we would be open to either a dedicated session of the SBI or a dedicated body under the SBI for conduct of the assessment, but we would not see any relationship to a compliance system which is not part of what was agreed in 1/CP.16. The word “shall” should read “will” for consistency with the rest of the text.
- Paragraph 14 – we would see the only outputs of the IAR process would be a summary report containing the in-depth review report and an objective summary of the assessment under the SBI, which should be provided by the Secretariat. We would not see any outputs related to compliance, again, as this was not an element agreed in Cancun. Thus, only (a) and (b) should be retained.
- Paragraph 15 – this section does not seem necessary. The relationship of IAR to other process may be decided in the elaboration of the other processes, but there should be no provision here for relationships with other processes or bodies. We would suggest deleting this section.