



Working paper No. 11 (2000)

**WORKSHOP OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP OF EXPERTS ON
NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM NON-ANNEX I PARTIES
FOR THE LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN REGION**

Mexico, 8-12 May 2000

WORKING GROUP ON FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL NEEDS

Working paper

PARTICIPANTS:

Luis Càceres (Ecuador), Chairman
Emilio Sempris (Panama), Rapporteur
Brian Challenger (Antigua and Barbuda)
Oscar Paz (Bolivia)
Jose Antonio Vitri (Nicaragua)
Antonio Medina Netto (Paraguay)
Carlos Grezzi (Uruguay)
Jacqueline Mendoza (Venezuela)
Jack Fitzgerald (United States of America)
Dominique Revet (UNFCCC)

I. BACKGROUND

1. The working group responsible for deliberating on financial and technical needs related to the preparation of national communications was requested to:

(a) Identify the needs for and availability of financial resources and technical support for the region, as well as the barriers to and gaps in the support. Make specific recommendations for improving the provision of financial and technical assistance in order to facilitate the national communication process;

(b) Review existing activities and programmes to facilitate and support the preparation of national communications by the countries of the region. Make recommendations to better coordinate these activities and programmes in order to enhance the preparation of national communications;

(c) Identify the capacity-building needs of the region including technology transfer and the process of preparing second national communications by non-Annex I Parties.

II. MAIN FINDINGS

2. The availability of adequate financial resources is an overarching requirement for the comprehensive strengthening of national capacity for the preparation of national communications and the institutional sustainability of the process. Taking this as a basic need, the workshop identified a number of priority requirements for improving national communications.

3. The workshop noted that financial and technical needs encompass many cross-cutting issues, and that, given time constraints, there was a need to prioritize areas for attention. Therefore, the workshop decided to focus on the following priority items, as outlined in decision 8/CP.5:

- (a) Guidelines for the preparation of initial national communications (decision 10/CP.2, annex)

In many instances, funds allocated to the preparation of national communications did not allow Parties to address all the components included in the current guidelines. This problem will be exacerbated if revised guidelines are expanded to include a more comprehensive range of issues.

- (b) Strengthening of national capacity

It was recognized that the lack of support for activities subsequent to the submission of initial national communications has seriously disrupted the implementation of the Convention at the national level. The sustainability of institutional arrangements and processes established within the framework of the preparation of the initial national communication is a main concern for the region.

(c) Information exchange

There is a need for strengthening regional technical information exchange related to the preparation of national communications to address climate change issues in order to optimize the use of the limited resources available.

The distribution of information through networks related to climate change, in general, and national communications, in particular, is not a common practice in the region.

(d) Education, awareness and training

It was recognized that the implementation of education, awareness and training programmes on climate change is needed. Generally, so far these tend to be weak or, in some cases, non-existent.

Public awareness is an important means to disseminate information related to climate change issues and has often not been addressed adequately or not addressed at all, including within some ongoing enabling activities projects.

(e) Methodologies and models

There is a need to improve the methodologies and models for assessing vulnerability and adaptation as well as mitigation in the non-energy sectors.

III. PROBLEMS TO BE ADDRESSED

4. The workshop identified a number of critical financial and technical issues and constraints. These included the technical and other weaknesses of national institutions responsible for the preparation of the national communications; the inadequacy of available methodologies and models; the inadequacy of programmes relating to climate change education and awareness; the difficulties associated with the dissemination of reports and other technical information to the relevant agencies; the need for strengthening of, and support to, regional climate change centres; as well as the problem of inadequate regional exchange of information and expertise among the countries of the region.

5. The workshop further identified certain specific endogenous and external barriers to accessing the resources offered by the main financial and technical support programmes currently available. Among the principal endogenous barriers were the lack of national expertise for preparing proposals in the formats requested by international climate change support agencies. There was also a need for greater political will and priority in relation to climate change issues at the national level.

6. Other barriers identified included the long response time of some funding agencies; the fact that information on the availability of support from some international climate change support agencies is not easily accessible in some countries. The complicated formats and guidelines for submission of proposals often required for accessing financial and technical resources for climate change programmes and projects is also a constraint.

IV. MAIN FINANCIAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT PROGRAMMES

7. The workshop identified a number of ongoing programmes aimed at providing support to Latin America and the Caribbean countries in the area of climate change. These included the UNFCCC related programmes through its financial mechanism (GEF), bilateral programmes (Canada, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, and the United States of America) and multilateral programmes (Inter American Development Bank (BID), Andean Development Corporation (CAF), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (BCIE), Caribbean Planning for Adaptation to Global Climate Change (CPACC), Inter American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI), and Climate Technology Initiative (CTI)).

8. Having inventoried and analysed the existing financial and technical support programmes, the workshop concluded that they are insufficient to meet the necessities of the region.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP

9. Participants adopted the following recommendations and follow-up actions:

(a) Institutional strengthening

- (i) Obtain effective financial support from bilateral and multilateral organizations to ensure the continuous improvement and sustainability of the national communications processes, as well as strengthening of national structures and mechanisms, and the effective implementation of the Convention.
- (ii) Support the implementation of research and systematic observation stations in all countries of the region, and strengthen research on climate sciences. Also, provide the regional information network in climate change data.
- (iii) Building on the consultative group of experts, establish a regional process for exchanging information and experiences in the preparation of national communications in order to identify common problems, areas for improvement, and the means to achieve these improvements.
- (iv) Establish or strengthen access to the Internet and the UNFCCC, IPCC, and other web sites in order to facilitate the receipt, provision and updating of information on climate change, including national communications.
- (v) Request funding agencies to assist countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the identification of regional capacity building needs, including transfer of technologies.
- (vi) Make greater effort to promote synergies among programmes and activities related to the UNFCCC, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the Convention to Combat Desertification, and the Montreal Protocol.

(b) Methodologies and models

- (i) Request international support for enhancing knowledge transfer related to assessments in vulnerability and adaptation and mitigation in non-energy sectors.
 - (ii) Develop and disseminate regional climate models and scenarios that reflect the regional climatic pattern.
- (c) Education and dissemination of information
- (i) Strengthen support to countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the preparation of national action plans in education that encourage the introduction of climate change topics in the formal and informal education systems.
 - (ii) Strengthen national institutions through provision of equipment, technical support, training, and information systems.
 - (iii) Encourage support to public awareness efforts outside the framework of the enabling activities.
 - (iv) Encourage the inclusion of components on public awareness in national communications.
- (d) Regional climate change centres
- (i) Identify the regional training needs, elaborate a programme, and implement it.
 - (ii) In the mid-term, and with international financial support, a regional climate change centre network should be implemented, based on the existing institutions, subregional organizations and national expertise.
 - (iii) Support for identification, strengthening and establishment of regional climate change centres.
- (e) Regional exchange
- (i) Strengthen the coordinating mechanisms to improve the exchange of information among scientific and technical institutions.
 - (ii) Improve coordination among the existing programmes providing support to the national communication process.
 - (iii) Create a directory of national communication country coordinators.
 - (iv) Implement regional hotlines and teleconferences to address technical issues.

- (v) Establish continuous communication with existing support programmes (e.g., the National Communications Support Programme and CC:TRAIN).

VI. SUPPORTING MATERIAL

10. UNFCCC official references

(a) Decision 10/CP.2 - Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: guidelines, facilitation and process for consideration (FCCC/CP/1996/15/Add.1).

(b) Decision 8/CP.5 - Other matters related to communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (FCCC/CP/1999/6/Add.1).

11. Other documents

(a) GEF - Operational guidelines for expedited financing of climate change enabling activities. Part II. Expedited financing for (interim) measures for capacity building in priority areas. October 1999.

(b) GEF - Information note on the financing of Second National Communications to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (GEF/C.15/INF.12; May 3, 2000).

12. Other supporting material

(a) "National communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention - Provision of financial and technical support - Activities to facilitate the provision of financial and technical support to non-Annex I Parties for the preparation of national communications - Note by the secretariat" (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.1; 8 May 2000).

(b) Presentation on capacity-building needs in Latin America (based on FCCC/SB/2000/INF.1).

(c) UNFCCC - Compilation of regional capacity-building needs and priorities from the transfer of technology regional workshop, 29-31 March 2000, El Salvador.

(d) UNFCCC - Compilation tables on capacity-building needs mentioned in the national communications of Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Uruguay.

(e) UNFCCC - Compilation tables on enabling activities in Latin America and the Caribbean.
