

(unedited version)

**Draft guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention**

*Option 2 for the review guidelines: this option envisages three sets of guidelines on reviewing GHG inventories, BRs and NCs*

**Part I: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention**

*Placeholder, to be developed in 2014*

**Part II: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention**

**A. [Applicability]**

1. Information provided by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) in their greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs) will be subject to reviews pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines. ]

**B. Objectives and purposes**

2. The objectives of the review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP are:

(a) To provide, in a facilitative, non-confrontational, open and transparent manner, a thorough, objective and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(b) To promote the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties;

(c) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information contained in GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(d) To ensure that the COP has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.

3. The objectives of the review guidelines are to promote consistency, comparability and transparency in the review of [information reported under the Convention related to NCs].

4. The purposes of the review of NCs from Annex I Parties are:

(a) To establish a process for a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a group;

(b) Taking into account paragraph 4(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” adopted by the COP;

(c) To promote consistency of the information contained in the NCs of Annex I Parties;

(d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information under Article 12 of the Convention and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party and Annex I Parties as a whole.

### **C. Scope of the review**

5. The individual review shall:

(a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the NC in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” adopted by the COP, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;

(b) Check the consistency of information contained in the NC with that contained in the BR and GHG inventory. If the same information is reported elsewhere, the information should be reviewed only once;

(c) Undertake a detailed technical examination of the unique information contained in the NC and the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein, noting that the outline of NC is included in the list below:

- (i) National circumstances relevant to GHG emissions and removals;
- (ii) GHG inventory information
- (iii) Policies and measures;
- (iv) Projections and the total effect of policies and measures;
- (v) Vulnerability assessment, climate change impacts and adaptation measures;
- (vi) Financial resources;
- (vii) Transfer of technology;
- (viii) Research and systematic observation;<sup>1</sup>
- (ix) Education, training and public awareness.

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<sup>1</sup> Information provided under this heading includes a summary of the information provided on global climate observing systems.

(d) Giving consideration to national circumstances, identify any potential issues referred to in para. 7 below.

6. [The review process should undertake six major tasks:

(a) Review key qualitative information and quantitative data contained in NCs;

(b) Review policies and measures described in NCs;

(c) Assess the information contained in NCs regarding the Party's Convention commitments, and assess the extent to which progress towards achieving the objective of the Convention is being made;

(d) Describe expected progress in the limitation of emissions by sources and the enhancement of removals by sinks of GHGs, on the basis of information contained in NCs;

(e) Describe expected progress in cooperation on the preparations for adaptation;

(f) [Aggregate data across NCs with respect to inventories, projections, effects of measures and financial transfers, but without adding up the individual national totals for projections and the effects of measures.]]

#### Identification of issues

7. The issues identified during the technical review of individual sections of the NC shall be identified as relating to:

(a) Transparency;

(b) Completeness;

(c) Timeliness[.][of implementation;]

(d) [Consistency and accuracy overtime;]

(e) [Comparability.]

8. [[Only] when [issues of] [the lack of] transparency prevent[s] the ERT from performing the review this should be considered [a problem][an issue]. Failure to submit any section of the NC shall be considered [a problem][an issue].] (Further discussions needed)

#### **D. General procedures**

9. Each Annex I Party's NC will be reviewed[, where relevant] in conjunction with the review of the BR.

10. The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its BR, NC and GHG inventory shall be reviewed only once, by an expert review team (ERT).

11. The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties and identify any potential issues [referred to in para. 7 above]. The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.

12. At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding identified issues. The ERTs should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to resolve such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party

under review. The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.

13. The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant reporting guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information.

### Confidentiality

14. In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the GHG inventory, BR and NC reports, an Annex I Party may indicate whether such information or data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the ERT, shall submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information or data for the assessment of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by Annex I Parties and the conformity with the relevant methodological guidance as agreed by the COP. Any confidential information or data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.

15. An ERT member's obligation not to disclose confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with paragraph 14 above shall continue after the termination of his or her service on the ERT.

## **E. Expert review teams and institutional arrangements**

### **I. Expert review teams**

16. Each submission of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP shall be assigned to a single ERT, which shall be responsible for performing the review thereof in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in these guidelines. The submissions of an Annex I Party shall not be reviewed in two successive reviews by an ERT with identical composition.

17. Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party and identifying any potential issues [referred to in paragraph 7 above]. The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.

18. The ERTs shall be coordinated by the secretariat and shall be composed of experts selected on an ad hoc basis from the UNFCCC roster of experts and include lead reviewers. The ERTs formed to carry out the tasks under the provisions of these guidelines may vary in size and composition, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review and the different needs for expertise for each review task. Additional experts may be added to a review team where necessary.

19. Participating experts shall serve in their personal capacity.
20. Experts shall be nominated by Parties to the Convention to the UNFCCC roster of experts and, [as appropriate,] by intergovernmental organizations[, in accordance with relevant guidance provided by the COP].
21. Participating experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines. The training to be provided to the experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training<sup>2</sup> and/or any other means needed to ensure the necessary competence of the experts for their participation in ERTs, shall be designed and operationalized by the secretariat in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP.
22. Experts selected for a specific review activity shall neither be nationals of the Party under review, nor be nominated or funded by that Party.
23. Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded [according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities]. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.
24. In conducting reviews, the ERTs shall adhere to these guidelines and work on the basis of established and published procedures agreed upon by the COP and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including quality assurance and control and confidentiality provisions.

## II. Competences of the expert review teams

25. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of NCs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 5(c) above.

## III. Composition of the expert review teams

26. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs to review the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs submitted under the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP in such a way that the collective skills of the ERTs address the areas mentioned in paragraphs 25 above, respectively.
27. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs with a view to achieving a balance between experts from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties in the overall composition of the ERTs, without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 26 above. The secretariat shall make every effort to ensure geographical balance among the experts selected from non-Annex I Parties and among those selected from Annex I Parties.
28. The secretariat shall ensure that in any ERT one co-lead reviewer shall be from an Annex I Party and one from a non-Annex I Party.
29. Without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 25 above, the formation of ERTs should ensure, to the extent possible, that at least one member is fluent in the language of the Party under review.
30. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the composition of ERTs, including the selection of experts for the review teams and the lead reviewers, and

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<sup>2</sup> The experts that opt not to participate in the training have to undergo a similar assessment successfully to enable them to qualify for participation in ERTs.

on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 26 and 27 above.

#### IV. Lead reviewers

31. Lead reviewers shall act as co-lead reviewers for the ERTs in accordance with these guidelines.

32. Lead reviewers should ensure that the reviews in which they participate are performed by each ERT according to the relevant review guidelines and consistently across Parties. They should also ensure the quality and objectivity of the thorough and comprehensive technical [examinations] [review] in the reviews and provide for the continuity, comparability and timeliness of the reviews.

33. With the administrative support of the secretariat, lead reviewers shall, for each review:

(a) Ensure that the reviewers have all of the necessary information provided by the secretariat prior to the review;

(b) Monitor the progress of the review;

(c) Coordinate the submission of queries of the ERT to the Party under review and coordinate the inclusion of the answers in the review report;

(d) Provide technical advice to the members of the ERT, if needed;

(e) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with these guidelines;

(f) [Ensure the ERT gives priority to the areas that had changed since the previous submissions and issues raised in previous review reports.]

34. Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA as part of the annual report referred to in paragraph 30 above, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines.

#### V. Ad hoc review experts

35. Ad hoc review experts shall be selected by the secretariat from those nominated by Parties or, exceptionally and only when the required expertise for the task is not available among them, from those nominated by relevant intergovernmental organizations belonging to the UNFCCC roster of experts for specific reviews. They shall perform individual review tasks in accordance with the duties set out in their nomination.

36. Review experts shall, as necessary, perform desk review tasks in their home countries and participate in in-country visits and centralized reviews.

#### VI. Role of the secretariat

37. The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including the preparation of a schedule for the review, the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.

38. The secretariat shall develop review tools and materials and templates for review reports under the guidance of the lead reviewers.

39. The secretariat shall coordinate, together with the lead reviewers, the communication during the review between the ERT concerned and the Party under review and shall maintain a record of communications between ERTs and Parties.

40. The secretariat, together with the lead reviewers, shall compile and edit the final review reports.

41. The secretariat shall facilitate annual meetings of the lead reviewers for GHG inventories, BRs and NCs. It shall summarize information on issues raised in the reviews to facilitate the work of lead reviewers in fulfilling their task to ensure consistency in the reviews across Parties.

42. The secretariat shall design and implement training activities for review experts including lead reviewers and the subsequent assessment of the experts' qualifications, under the guidance of the SBSTA (see paragraph 21 above).

## **VII. Guidance provided by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice**

43. The SBSTA shall provide general guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs, and to the ERTs on the expert review process. The reports mentioned in paragraphs 30 and 34 above are intended to provide the SBSTA with inputs for elaborating such guidance.

## **F. Timing and procedures**

44. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within fifteen months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

Option 1 (paragraph 45)

45. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled in-country review by an ERT.

Option 2 (paragraph 45)

45. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a centralized review by an ERT. A Party can request an in-country review for its national communication.

Option 3 (paragraphs 45 and 46)

45. The reviews of NCs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of BRs.

46. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq (excluding LULUCF) in accordance with their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their NCs.

47. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the [timeliness of its] NC submission [by due date], it should inform the secretariat thereof by the due date of the submission[.]], in order to facilitate the arrangements of the review process and to make the delay of the submission of the report public.[If the NC is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.]]

48. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within fifteen months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

49. If additional information is requested during the review week, the Annex I Party should make every reasonable effort to provide the information within two weeks after the review week.

50. The ERT for the review of the NC of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft of the review report following the format detailed in paragraph 57 below [and appendix I to these guidelines], to be finalized within eight weeks after the review week.

51. The draft of each NC review report shall be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks<sup>3</sup> from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

52. The ERT shall produce the final version of the NC review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. [The Party could provide a written comment on the final review report and if provided, the secretariat shall include the comment in a separate section of the final review report.] [Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the comments of the Party should be incorporated within a separate section of the final review report.]

## **F. Reporting and publication**

53. The ERTs shall, under their collective responsibility, produce review reports. The review of the same information (see paragraph 10 above) [[shall][could] be reflected in one report [only]] [shall be reflected in each individual review report for GHG inventory, BR, and NC, respectively]. For the review of NCs, a report on the review of the NC should be produced.

54. The review reports for each Annex I Party shall follow a format and outline comparable to that set out in [paragraph 55 below] [the appendix I to these guidelines] and shall include the specific elements described in these guidelines.

55. All review reports prepared by ERTs shall include the following elements:

- (a) An introduction and a summary;
- (b) A description of the technical review of each of the elements reviewed according to the relevant sections on the scope of the review detailed in parts II–IV of these guidelines, including:
  - (i) A description of any potential issues identified [in accordance with para. 7 above];
  - (ii) Any suggestions provided by the ERT to resolve the potential issues;
  - (iii) An assessment of any efforts made by the Annex I Party under review to address any potential issues identified by the ERT during the current review or during previous reviews that have not been addressed;
- (c) The sources of information used in the formulation of the final report.

56. Following their completion, all review reports shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with a written comment on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.

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<sup>3</sup> Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.



57. The following specific elements shall be included in the report referred to in paragraph 53(c) above:

- (a) A technical review of the elements specified in paragraph 5(c) above;
- (b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 7 above.

58. The secretariat shall produce a report on the compilation and synthesis of NCs from Annex I Parties, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP.

# Appendix I

## Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary
  - Convention ratification date
  - Date of receipt of NC
  - Dates of review and dates of comment period
  - Members of the expert review team
  - National circumstances
  - Summary and findings
    - Compliance with guidelines
    - Review of key data points
    - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
    - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
    - Approach to adaptation
    - Expected progress in adaptation
    - Implementation of Convention commitments
    - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)
2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends
3. Policies and measures
  - Implementation of Convention commitments
  - Overview of measures by gas, sector and policy instrument
  - Effects of individual measures, where possible
  - Policies and measures under consideration or requiring international cooperation
4. Projections
  - Implementation of Convention commitments
  - Approaches used
  - Review of key data points
  - Projected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
5. Expected impacts of climate change
6. Adaptation measures
  - Implementation of Convention commitments
7. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support
  - Review of key data points
  - Implementation of Convention commitments
8. Research and systematic observation
  - Implementation of Convention commitments
9. Education, training and public awareness
  - Implementation of Convention commitments

### **Part III: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of BRs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention**

#### **A. [Applicability]**

1. Information provided by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) in their greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs) will be subject to reviews pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines. ]

#### **B. Objectives and purposes**

2. The objectives of the review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP are:

(a) To provide, in a facilitative, non-confrontational, open and transparent manner, a thorough, objective and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(b) To promote the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties;

(c) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information contained in GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(d) To ensure that the COP has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.

3. The objectives of the review guidelines are to promote consistency, comparability and transparency in the review of [information reported under the Convention related to BRs].

4. The technical review of BRs is the first step of the international assessment and review (IAR) process. The overall objectives of the IAR process are to review the progress made by developed country Parties in achieving emission reductions and to assess the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties, as well as 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. In addition, the IAR process aims at assessing the implementation of methodological and reporting requirements.

5. The purposes of the technical review of BRs from Annex I Parties are:

(a) To provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the parts of BRs that are not otherwise covered in the annual GHG inventory review;

(b) Taking into account paragraph 5(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties” adopted by the COP;<sup>4</sup>

(c) To promote consistency of the information contained in BRs submitted by Annex I Parties;

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<sup>4</sup> Decision 2/CP.17, Annex I; Decision 19/CP.18.

- (d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;
- (e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party.
- (f) [To examine the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.]

### **C. Scope of the review**

6. The individual review shall:

- (a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the BR, in accordance with the reporting requirements contained in decisions 2/CP.17 and 19/CP.18, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;
- (b) Examine the consistency of the BR with the annual GHG inventory and NC but it will not include in-depth examination of the inventory itself;
- (c) Undertake a detailed technical examination of only those parts of the BR that are not included in the annual GHG inventory review, [as well as of the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein,] such as:
  - (i) All emissions and removals related to the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
  - (ii) Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
  - (iii) Progress the Party has made towards the achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
  - (iv) The Party's provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties;
- (d) In the years in which an NC is submitted at the same time as the BR, serve as part of the review of the NC, where there is an overlap between the content of the BR and that of the NC.

### Identification of issues

7. The issues identified during the technical review of individual sections of the BR shall be identified as relating to:

- (a) Transparency;
- (b) Completeness;
- (c) Timeliness[.][of implementation;]
- (d) [Consistency and accuracy overtime;]
- (e) [Comparability.]

[Examination of progress]

8. [The ERTs shall make an examination of the Parties' progress in achieving their economy-wide emission reduction targets.]

**D. General procedures**

9. Each Annex I Party's BR will be reviewed. A Party's BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

10. The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its BR, NC and GHG inventory shall be reviewed only once, by an expert review team (ERT).

11. Prior to the review, as part of its preparation, the ERT shall conduct a desk review of the BR of the Annex I Party under review. The ERT, through the secretariat, shall notify the Party concerned of any questions the team has regarding the information provided in the BR and of any focal areas for the review.

12. The output of the technical review will be a technical review report, building on existing reporting standards and including an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.

(Placeholder to reflect the composition and competence of the ERT for the BR review to cope with the requirement contained in decision 2/CP.17.) (Brazil)

13. The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties and identify any potential issues [referred to in para. 7 above]. The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.

14. At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding identified issues. The ERTs should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to resolve such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review. The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.

15. The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant reporting guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information.

Confidentiality

16. In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the GHG inventory, BR and NC reports, an Annex I Party may indicate whether such information or data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the ERT, shall

submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information or data for the assessment of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by Annex I Parties and the conformity with the relevant methodological guidance as agreed by the COP. Any confidential information or data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.

17. An ERT member's obligation not to disclose confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with paragraph 16 above shall continue after the termination of his or her service on the ERT.

## **E. Expert review teams and institutional arrangements**

### **I. Expert review teams**

18. Each submission of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP shall be assigned to a single ERT, which shall be responsible for performing the review thereof in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in these guidelines. The submissions of an Annex I Party shall not be reviewed in two successive reviews by an ERT with identical composition.

19. Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party and identifying any potential issues [referred to in paragraph 7 above]. The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.

20. The ERTs shall be coordinated by the secretariat and shall be composed of experts selected on an ad hoc basis from the UNFCCC roster of experts and include lead reviewers. The ERTs formed to carry out the tasks under the provisions of these guidelines may vary in size and composition, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review and the different needs for expertise for each review task. Additional experts may be added to a review team where necessary.

21. Participating experts shall serve in their personal capacity.

22. Experts shall be nominated by Parties to the Convention to the UNFCCC roster of experts and, [as appropriate,] by intergovernmental organizations[, in accordance with relevant guidance provided by the COP].

23. Participating experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines. The training to be provided to the experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training<sup>5</sup> and/or any other means needed to ensure the necessary competence of the experts for their participation in ERTs, shall be designed and operationalized by the secretariat in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP.

24. Experts selected for a specific review activity shall neither be nationals of the Party under review, nor be nominated or funded by that Party.

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<sup>5</sup> The experts that opt not to participate in the training have to undergo a similar assessment successfully to enable them to qualify for participation in ERTs.

25. Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded [according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities]. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.

26. In conducting reviews, the ERTs shall adhere to these guidelines and work on the basis of established and published procedures agreed upon by the COP and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including quality assurance and control and confidentiality provisions.

## II. Competences of the expert review teams

27. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of BRs are in the areas referred to in para. 6(c) above of these guidelines.

## III. Composition of the expert review teams

28. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs to review the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs submitted under the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP in such a way that the collective skills of the ERTs address the areas mentioned in paragraph 27 above.

29. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs with a view to achieving a balance between experts from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties in the overall composition of the ERTs, without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 28 above. The secretariat shall make every effort to ensure geographical balance among the experts selected from non-Annex I Parties and among those selected from Annex I Parties.

30. The secretariat shall ensure that in any ERT one co-lead reviewer shall be from an Annex I Party and one from a non-Annex I Party.

31. Without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 27 above, the formation of ERTs should ensure, to the extent possible, that at least one member is fluent in the language of the Party under review.

32. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the composition of ERTs, including the selection of experts for the review teams and the lead reviewers, and on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 28 and 29 above.

## IV. Lead reviewers

33. Lead reviewers shall act as co-lead reviewers for the ERTs in accordance with these guidelines.

34. Lead reviewers should ensure that the reviews in which they participate are performed by each ERT according to the relevant review guidelines and consistently across Parties. They should also ensure the quality and objectivity of the thorough and comprehensive technical [examinations] [review] in the reviews and provide for the continuity, comparability and timeliness of the reviews.

35. With the administrative support of the secretariat, lead reviewers shall, for each review:

- (a) Ensure that the reviewers have all of the necessary information provided by the secretariat prior to the review;
- (b) Monitor the progress of the review;
- (c) Coordinate the submission of queries of the ERT to the Party under review and coordinate the inclusion of the answers in the review report;
- (d) Provide technical advice to the members of the ERT, if needed;
- (e) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with these guidelines;
- (f) [Ensure the ERT gives priority to the areas that had changed since the previous submissions and issues raised in previous review reports.]

36. Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA as part of the annual report referred to in paragraph 32 above, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines.

#### V. Ad hoc review experts

37. Ad hoc review experts shall be selected by the secretariat from those nominated by Parties or, exceptionally and only when the required expertise for the task is not available among them, from those nominated by relevant intergovernmental organizations belonging to the UNFCCC roster of experts for specific reviews. They shall perform individual review tasks in accordance with the duties set out in their nomination.

38. Review experts shall, as necessary, perform desk review tasks in their home countries and participate in in-country visits and centralized reviews.

#### VI. Role of the secretariat

39. The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including the preparation of a schedule for the review, the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.

40. The secretariat shall develop review tools and materials and templates for review reports under the guidance of the lead reviewers.

41. The secretariat shall coordinate, together with the lead reviewers, the communication during the review between the ERT concerned and the Party under review and shall maintain a record of communications between ERTs and Parties.

42. The secretariat, together with the lead reviewers, shall compile and edit the final review reports.

43. The secretariat shall facilitate annual meetings of the lead reviewers for GHG inventories, BRs and NCs. It shall summarize information on issues raised in the reviews to facilitate the work of lead reviewers in fulfilling their task to ensure consistency in the reviews across Parties.

44. The secretariat shall design and implement training activities for review experts including lead reviewers and the subsequent assessment of the experts' qualifications, under the guidance of the SBSTA (see paragraph 23 above).



## VII. Guidance provided by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

45. The SBSTA shall provide general guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs, and to the ERTs on the expert review process. The reports mentioned in paragraphs 32 and 36 above are intended to provide the SBSTA with inputs for elaborating such guidance.

### F. Timing and procedures

46. Each BR submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a review by an ERT, in accordance with these guidelines.

47. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs within fifteen months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

48. A Party's BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

*Option 1 (paragraph 49)*

49. Each BR is subject to a centralized review.

*Option 2 (paragraph 49)*

49. Each BR is subject to an in-country review.

*Option 3 (paragraphs 49 and 50)*

49. The reviews of BRs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of NCs. In the years in which the BR is submitted alone, the review of BRs should be conducted as a centralized review. In addition, each Party included in Annex I shall be subject to one in-country review by an ERT that is to occur in the years where the BR and NC are submitted in conjunction.

50. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO<sub>2</sub> eq) (excluding land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF)) according to their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their BRs.

51. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the [timeliness of its] BR submission [by due date], it should inform the secretariat thereof by the due date of the submission[.], in order to facilitate the arrangements of the review process and to make the delay of the submission of the report public.][If the BR is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.]]

52. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs within [fifteen months] of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

53. If additional information is requested during the review week, the Annex I Party should make every reasonable effort to provide the information within two weeks after the review week.

54. The ERT for the review of the BR of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft technical review report following the format detailed in paragraph 59 below [and in appendix II to these guidelines], to be finalized within eight weeks after the review week.

55. The draft technical review report of each BR shall be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks<sup>6</sup> from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

56. The ERT shall produce the final version of the BR technical review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. [[The Party could provide a written comment on the final technical review report and if provided, the secretariat shall include the comment in a separate section of the final technical review report.] [Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the comments of the Party should be incorporated within a separate section of the technical review report.]]

(Placeholder: Need to revisit the timing in light of time requirement under IAR with two groups of reviews being conducted (NZ))

### **G. Reporting and publication**

57. The ERTs shall, under their collective responsibility, produce review reports. The review of the same information (see paragraph 4 above) [[shall][could] be reflected in one report [only]] [shall be reflected in each individual review report for GHG inventory, BR, and NC, respectively]. For the review of BRs, a technical report on the review of the BR should be produced.

58. The review reports for each Annex I Party shall follow a format and outline comparable to that set out in [paragraph 59 below] [appendix II to these guidelines] and shall include the specific elements described in these guidelines.

59. All review reports prepared by ERTs shall include the following elements:

- (a) An introduction and a summary;
- (b) A description of the technical review of each of the elements reviewed according to the relevant sections on the scope of the review detailed in parts II–IV of these guidelines, including:
  - (i) A description of any potential issues identified [in accordance with para. 7 above];
  - (ii) Any suggestions provided by the ERT to resolve the potential issues;
  - (iii) An assessment of any efforts made by the Annex I Party under review to address any potential issues identified by the ERT during the current review or during previous reviews that have not been addressed;
- (c) The sources of information used in the formulation of the final report.

60. Following their completion, all review reports shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with a written comment on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.

61. The following specific elements shall be included in the technical review report referred to in paragraph 57(b) above:

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<sup>6</sup> Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

- (a) The results of the technical examination of the elements specified in paragraph 6(c) above, including an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target;
- (b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 7 above.

## Appendix II

### Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual biennial reports from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary
  - Convention ratification date
  - Date of receipt of BR
  - Dates of review and dates of comment period
  - Members of the expert review team
  - Summary and findings
    - Compliance with guidelines
    - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
    - Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
    - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
    - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)
2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends
3. Quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
4. Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
  - Mitigation actions and their effects
  - Emission reductions and removals and the use of units from the market-based mechanisms and land use, land-use change and forestry activities
5. Projection
  - Implementation of Convention commitments
  - Approaches used
  - Review of key data points
6. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support
  - Review of key data points
  - Implementation of Convention commitments