

Conclusions and Recommendations
Fifth meeting of inventory lead reviewers
Dublin, Ireland
21–22 April 2008

The fifth meeting of inventory lead reviewers (LRs) was held in Dublin, Ireland, from 21–22 April. 23 experts from non-annex I Parties and 23 experts from Annex I Parties were invited to the meeting. 35 experts attended: 14 experts from non-Annex I Parties and 21 experts from Annex I Parties. In addition, one representative of an intergovernmental organization (the IPCC national greenhouse gas inventories programme) attended the meeting as an observer.

The meeting addressed both procedural and technical issues relating to the annual review of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention and the initial and annual reviews under the Kyoto Protocol. The conclusions and recommendations of the meeting are presented below.

Review process in 2007

The LRs noted the large amount of in-country reviews conducted during 2007, including both the reviews of the initial report and the 2006 GHG inventory submission, and recognized the substantial effort undertaken by experts, Parties and the secretariat to finalize them in a timely, consistent and transparent manner. This was achieved notwithstanding the insufficient number of experts needed for the review process and the complexity of the tasks involved. The LRs expressed their appreciation to all experts who participated in the 2007 review process, in particular experts who participated in several reviews. LRs also expressed their appreciation to the secretariat for coordinating and supporting the review process in an efficient way.

LRs acknowledged that the experience gained and lessons learned from the reviews of the initial reports and the 2006 GHG inventory submissions provide a solid basis for future reviews under both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

LRs acknowledged that, notwithstanding the lack of resources, each Expert Review Team (ERT) consistently applied the Article 8 review guidelines and procedures across Parties. Even where differences have been identified in the final review reports, they do not necessarily mean inconsistencies in the approaches applied. Differences could reflect, among others, different national circumstances across Parties. LRs noted that the review tools and the review report templates prepared by the secretariat helped to facilitate a consistent approach across Parties. LRs recognized that strengthening the capacity of expert reviewers and involving more secretariat staff in future reviews is required to ensure consistency.

Training

LRs noted with concern that, due to limitations in both human and financial resources, no instructed training courses were offered during 2007 and no such courses are planned for 2008. The LRs further noted that only a limited number of experts undertook and passed the training course exams (10 experts under the Convention and 12 experts under the Kyoto Protocol).

LRs reiterated the need for the secretariat to update and improve the training courses under the Convention, and to update and further develop the training courses under the Kyoto Protocol, as indicated in the SBSTA and SBI conclusions at their twenty-seventh

sessions, with the view to take into account experiences gained during the reviews. LRs specifically noted the need to develop a training course on activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol, and to update and complement the training course on the modalities for the accounting of assigned amounts under Article 7, paragraph 4, in particular the national registry and the standard electronic format. LRs noted that all these activities are subject to supplementary funding which is currently insufficient and that the lack of progress in undertaking these activities will increase the risk of not maintaining the rigour of the review process under both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol in the future.

LRs requested the secretariat to continue to provide access to the training courses for experienced reviewers and inform them on such access. This will support continuous learning and enhance the expertise of the reviewers.

LRs noted the need for additional review experts to be nominated to the roster of experts and trained, in particular from non-Annex I Parties. The LRs requested the secretariat to explore further options to identify new review experts, in particular from non-Annex I Parties.

LRs encouraged the secretariat to raise awareness of the importance of the review process and the work of the experts reviewers by informing decision makers and relevant institutions at the national level. LRs further encouraged the secretariat to inform decision makers at the national level of the implications of the review process in regard to the implementation of and eligibility under the Kyoto Protocol.

Adjustments

Experience gained during the initial reviews has proven that the technical guidance on adjustments provides an adequate body of methods and approaches to calculate adjustments. LRs acknowledged that the implementation of adjustments entails a significant amount of work.

LRs noted that the ERTs identified 124 potential problems relating to inventories during the initial report reviews, which is an indication of the rigour of the review process. Good communication and cooperation between national experts and ERTs were crucial for solving 117 of the identified potential problems. This resulted in seven applied adjustments for two Parties.

LRs also noted that, following the recommendations of the fourth meeting of LRs, in addition to potential problems of overestimates in the base year that could lead to adjustments, ERTs could identify other potential problems that could have implications for a Party's accounting of emissions during the commitment period and requested Parties to resolve them. This includes issues relating to compliance with agreed methodologies, transparency and completeness of the inventory.

LRs further noted that the ERTs should continue to apply the agreed guidelines for adjustments in a consistent manner across reviews. To that end, LRs reaffirmed that all experts should continue to enhance their understanding of decision 20/CMP.1 (Good practice guidance and adjustments under Article 5, paragraph 2, of the Kyoto Protocol), as well as the technical guidance on methodologies for adjustments contained in its annex. LRs recommended that the secretariat and LRs encourage all experts to continue to enhance their understanding of the guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol (decision 22/CMP.1), in particular the procedures and timing related to adjustments.

The LRs also recommended that the ERTs provide, in the review report and the review transcript, a transparent, thorough and clear description of potential problems and how they

were resolved during the review, as this is crucial for the review process and the adjustment process in particular.

Reporting, data management and review tools

LRs welcomed the work undertaken by the secretariat to facilitate reporting of Parties and the review process by further developing the CRF Reporter and the review tools.

LRs requested the secretariat to finalize the development of the new CRF Reporter module for reporting activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol by end March 2009 in line with decision 6/CMP.3, but noted with concern that this development is dependent on supplementary funding.

The LR also requested the secretariat to release the next version of the CRF Reporter early enough to facilitate timely reporting by Parties in their next inventory submission. They further requested the secretariat to continue to facilitate Parties' reporting using the CRF Reporter, including support through the helpdesk and by providing guidance to Parties on how to address the potential remaining problems in the CRF Reporter.

LRs expressed support for the work undertaken or planned by the secretariat to further develop the review tools, such as the annual status report; key category analysis, including a finer disaggregation of categories in the secretariat's key category assessment; synthesis and assessment part I, including the handling of an increased number of reported years in the tables as well as inclusion of data reported on activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol; synthesis and assessment part II, including an expansion of the review transcript to cover reporting of activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol and improving of the statistical outlier detection tool, and prepare relevant reports¹ for the reviews of the standard electronic format. LRs requested that the secretariat consider ways to further improve the utility of the review transcript in consultation with interested LRs.

Reviews in 2008

LRs took note of the SBSTA and SBI conclusions, at their twenty-seventh sessions, that noted the need for continued flexibility in the timing of the review activities for the 2007 inventory submissions and, for those Parties where an in-country review of the 2006 inventory submission was conducted in 2007, that the review of the 2007 inventory submission should be conducted in conjunction with the review of the 2008 inventory submission, with a focus on the most recent submission. Both the SBSTA and SBI requested LRs to consider this issue at their next meeting and to make recommendations on how to implement this flexibility.

During the meeting the secretariat presented the approach for conducting the reviews of the 2007 and 2008 GHG inventory submissions, under both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol and the LRs acknowledged that the integrity of the review process will not be compromised as ERTs will have available all standard review tools for review of both the 2007 and 2008 inventory submissions. LRs noted that the updated review report templates adequately cover the 2007 and 2008 inventories reviews with a focus on the 2008 inventory and offers a pragmatic solution for reflecting the outcome of the two reviews being conducted together. The LRs endorsed this approach.

¹ This includes the comparison, discrepancy and unfulfilled notifications reports.

LRs reiterated that the review transcript remains an important tool for the review process. LRs agreed that the review transcript should be used during all stages of the individual reviews, including preparation of the review and the review week, and reflecting the final outcome of the review, clearly indicating whether an issue included in the review transcript has been resolved or not.

For the review of GHG inventories, the LRs reiterated that both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol require reporting Parties to continuously improve these GHG inventories as part of the established QA/QC system and to continuously work on the implementation of the recommendations for improvements arising from the inventory review. The ERTs should ascertain that methodological changes are carried out only to improve accuracy, completeness and/or time-series consistency and should be well justified and documented, in accordance with the UNFCCC reporting guidelines.

LRs noted that for Parties that are also Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and that had the review of their initial reports in 2007, the 2008 and 2009 inventory submissions could be voluntary Kyoto Protocol submissions and that, by decision 22/CMP.1, paragraph 5, the review guidelines under Article 8 should be used when reviewing these submissions.

For the review of GHG inventories under the Kyoto Protocol, the LRs noted that in cases where problems relating to meeting the methodological requirements have been identified, the ERTs should clearly indicate these problems in the review report and should clearly formulate recommendations on how and when these problems should be resolved by the Party. The ERTs should also clearly indicate the possibility for Parties to submit revised estimates, with the view of addressing identified potential problems within the six week deadline established in Article 8 review guidelines. When major potential problems relating to methodological requirements remain unresolved and can be attributed to the functions of the national system, the ERT may raise a question of implementation on how the national system performs its functions.

LRs requested the secretariat to explore the possibility for the ERTs to apply procedures for adjustments, where relevant, on a trial basis during the 2007 and 2008 reviews for activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol, subject to the consent of the Party concerned in accordance with the SBSTA conclusions at its twenty-second session.

LRs recommended that ERTs, when reviewing possible methodological changes in inventories, ascertain that recalculations are performed with the view to having consistent time series. Such recalculations may require the recalculation of base year emissions, which will not be reflected in the assigned amount established for the Party concerned as a result of the initial report review under the Kyoto Protocol.

For the review of national systems, the LRs noted that in cases where the review of the initial report recommended that Parties provide updated information on their national systems, the ERTs should assess whether such information is provided and whether the outstanding problems have been resolved.

For the review of changes of national registries, the LRs noted that the scope of this review will be defined by the scope and nature of changes in the registry, including changes in the software, platform and change of host of the database. In the case of major changes of the national registry, the ERT may use additional expertise from the Registry System Administrators Forum (RSAF) for the review, and may use a standardized technical assessment of these changes, including the independent assessment report.

Long-term issues relating to the review process

LRs noted with concern that to effectively and efficiently implement the review process, more than 40 new review experts are needed in addition to the experts included in the roster of experts who have passed the mandatory training under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. They also noted that a number of activities relating to the process such as training, and preparation of reporting and review tools are subject to supplementary funding, and that such funding is currently very limited. LRs recommended that to implement the review process under Article 8 review guidelines, these problems be addressed by the SBSTA, as a matter of urgency, to ensure the current level of quality and consistency as well as timeliness in the review process.
