UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Twenty-fifth session
Nairobi, 6–14 November 2006

Item 7 of the provisional agenda
Article 6 of the Convention

Views on advancing work on the prototype information network clearing house for Article 6 of the Convention

Submissions from Parties

1. At its twenty-third session, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) welcomed the launch by the secretariat of the prototype information network clearing house (CC:iNet) for Article 6 of the Convention (Education, training and public awareness), and noted that the clearing house was one of the many tools for promoting the further implementation of Article 6.

2. The SBI requested Parties to submit to the secretariat, by 4 August 2006, their views on advancing work on the clearing house and on making it fully functional, multilingual and user-friendly, and requested the secretariat to compile these views into a miscellaneous document for consideration by the SBI at its twenty-fifth session (FCCC/SBI/2005/23, paragraph 77).

3. The secretariat has received nine such submissions. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions are attached and reproduced* in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

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* These submissions have been electronically imported in order to make them available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.
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\(^*\) This submission is supported by Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Views on advancing work on the Article 6 information clearing house

The twenty-third session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, held in December 2005, invited Parties to submit their views on advancing work on the Article 6 information network clearing house (CC:iNet) and on making it fully functional, multilingual and user-friendly. Australia welcomes the opportunity to provide its views on this item, for compilation into a miscellaneous document to be considered by the SBI at its twenty-fifth session.

The development and exchange of educational and public awareness material on climate change and its effects is an important requirement for all Parties under Article 6 of the Convention. Australia is pleased that since the launch of the prototype information clearing house in November 2005, Australia and many other Parties have taken the opportunity to upload relevant and practical information to the site. As the amount of useful information available through CC:iNet increases, the site’s importance as a resource for assisting education, training and public awareness initiatives – for policy-makers, educators and citizens alike – will increase considerably.

As Parties may be aware, there are numerous international, regional and national web sites which contain information relevant to Article 6, often focusing on specific issues or targeted at particular audiences. CC:iNet’s ‘Links’ page provides a useful platform to access such external sites and information of specific interest to the reader. As the number of web links and regional nodes on this page increases, it may be useful to more clearly categorise these links according to region, subject matter, and/or target audience.

There are a number of multilateral and bilateral assistance programmes which provide support for the development and implementation of education, training and public awareness activities related to climate change. One suggestion for enhancing the appeal of CC:iNet is to include a new page within the site containing information on such support programmes. This is likely to increase the number of people who access the site and in turn lead to additional uploads of practical information to the site. If this suggestion is agreeable to other Parties, the addition to CC:iNet should entail little, if any, funding.

Other administrative suggestions that Parties may wish to consider include:

- adding a disclaimer on CC:iNet that the UNFCCC secretariat and its Parties do not endorse the content of the links provided on the site, but merely provide them as a compilation of sources;

- enhancing the left-hand menu bar to ensure it is more intuitive, for example by expanding those headings with additional pages underneath or simply indicating where there are multiple pages, throughout the site. If the menu bar should remain consistent with the rest of the UNFCCC site, a separate menu could be added to the CC:iNet home page to
indicate the range of information on the site (we note that while the site map provides this function, it is not immediately obvious to first-time users); and

- cross-linking (or highlighting the availability of) relevant issue-specific information available within the UNFCCC site, such as climate change technology materials on TT:Clear, information on individual Parties’ efforts within the ‘national reports’ section, and inventory data contained in the ‘GHG’ section of the wider site.

Australia would like to express its gratitude to the secretariat and donor countries that have made the development of the prototype information clearing house possible. As the necessary technical infrastructure has been established, it is now up to Parties to make use of CC:iNet, by populating it with practical information and by promoting wider awareness of this important information source within their country. Australia looks forward to discussing with other Parties at the upcoming session of SBI practical ways to enhance the utility of CC:iNet and the quality of information available through this information clearing house.
Submission of views from the People’s Republic of Bangladesh to UNFCCC

Article 6 of the Convention

Views on advancing work on the clearing house and on making it fully functional, multilingual and user friendly

Bangladesh recognizes that substantial progress has taken place in implementing Article 6 of the Convention, and would like to draw attention to the Report on the Asia and the Pacific regional workshop on Article 6 of the Convention: Note by the secretariat* (FCCC/SBI/2005/21, 20 October 20051).

Bangladesh draws particularly on paragraph 67 of this report which states that “It was acknowledged that although some countries in the region are making every effort to be self-reliant in implementing activities relating to Article 6, many of the countries’ efforts on implementation are hampered by limited financial, technical and human resources.”

Further in Paragraph 68 of the same document, the secretariat notes that “Some of the useful resources for international cooperation have included hands-on training on Article 6 activities, involving university students working with civil servants to learn about climate change; translation and dissemination of technical information from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and UNFCCC; mobilization of media, educational and religious institutions, as well as other regional and national groups; promotion and use of e-learning; and development of climate change curricula for higher education.”

Finally Paragraph 69 of the same document, it is stated that “Financial and technical support from international financial institutions has contributed immensely to the implementation of activities relating to education, training and public awareness in many countries in the region. Nevertheless, there remain unmet needs. Also, greater clarity is needed on the processes of the GEF relating to funding of Article 6 activities and a need for greater consistency, coherence, and synergy around Article 6 activities.”

In the same document, under section IX, conclusions and issues for further considerations, Bangladesh would like to draw attention to the following paragraphs

Para 74: Given that there are limitations in communications due to slow and sometimes irregular Internet services in many countries of the region, consideration should be given to how to complement the Article 6 clearing house with a version that is accessible for these countries and for the least developed countries that have similar problems.

1 SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR IMPLEMENTATION, Twenty-third session, Montreal, 28 November to 6 December 2005, Item 7 of the provisional agenda, Article 6 of the Convention
Para 75. To overcome current barriers to education and training, including inadequate funding resources, lack of expertise/personnel, and lack of political/institutional support, it was recommended that the continuation of donor support be assured for developing programmes that include “training of trainers” and mentoring programmes, and for identifying opportunities for high-level dialogue on climate change concerns.
China’s views on the relevant work of Article 6 of the Convention

The 23rd session of Subsidiary Body for Implementation adopted FCCC/SBI/2005/L.18, inviting Parties to submit to the Secretariat their views on advancing the work on the clearing house and on making it fully functional, multilingual and user-friendly. China welcomes and takes the opportunity to submit its views as follows.

It is the view of China that education, training and public awareness of climate change are extremely important. China notices that the information network clearing house, one of many tools for promoting the further implementation of Article 6 of the Convention, has been launched at SBI 23 in November 2005. China considers that there are many ways to implement Article 6 of the Convention, including via electronic, video and paper media. The clearing house is a good platform for Parties, especially for developing country parties to have access to information on climate change. In order to advance the clearing house, China believes that the following fields should be strengthened:

- **Enhancing the content of the clearing house**
  - Basic scientific information on climate change, national strategies and communications;
  - Training courses in different fields of climate change on the website;
  - Popular scientific readings and videos on climate change for the public;
  - Experts’ views on climate change;
  - Climate change forum.

- **Coordination with Parties**
  - Capacity building on the establishment of national contact points in developing countries;
  - Multilingual mirrors of the clearing house in different countries, especially in developing countries.

- **Cooperation with international and regional research programs**
  - Cooperative training program, especially in developing countries for their capacity buildings;
  - Exchange of information the latest climate science research progress.
Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) requested the Secretariat to collect views from the Parties on advancing work on the clearing house and on making it fully functional, Egypt welcomes the opportunity to submit the following views on the issues to be discussed in the SBI at its twenty-fifth session (November 2006):

1. Egypt welcomed at SBI twenty-third session the launch of the prototype information network clearing house (CC:iNet) as one of the powerful tools for promoting the implementation of Article 6.

2. Egypt acknowledges the importance of advancing work on the clearing house and on making it fully functional.

3. We believe that user friendly system is more convenient and easy to be used by different computer users. Retrieving information should be simple to ensure the success of the network.

4. Egypt believes that supplying the network with multilingual system would enhance the benefits of information exchanges between Parties.

5. Egypt recommends organizing an On-Hand training workshop for regional Parties in order to gain the required experiences of using the network.
SUBMISSION BY FINLAND ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY AND ITS MEMBER STATES

This submission is supported by Bulgaria, Romania, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina

Subject: Article 6 of the Convention
Views from Parties on advancing work on the prototype information network clearing house on climate change and on making it fully functional, multilingual and user-friendly

Finland, on behalf of the EU and its Member States, welcomes this opportunity to share its views on advancing work on the prototype information network clearing house on climate change (CC:iNet) and on making it fully functional, multilingual and user-friendly.

The EU welcomes the adoption of the prototype information network clearing house on climate change (CC:iNet). It is one of the practical steps taken to help implement the New Delhi work programme on Art 6 of the Convention.

Internet-based solutions for sharing information on climate change are commonly used. This is highlighted also in the sixth compilation and synthesis of initial national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (FCCC/2005/SBI/18/Add6.).

The prototype has been in use since November 2005. The EU views CC:iNet as fairly good first prototype. It is relatively simple, the material submitted is not plentiful, but generally it contains useful elements and topics that meet the aimed purpose.

Although the prototype is a promising one, unfortunately it may not be well known or widely used by Parties. The EU is very interested in learning about the user statistics of CC:iNet, possibly grouped by different country users. This information would also be needed to guide further work with CC:iNet.

There is a clear need to work on the promotion of CC:iNet and to develop ideas on how to do this and to provide more material, in particular in other languages than English and French. The UNFCCC brochures could possibly be used in promotion, also links on national web sites to CC:iNet and vice versa could be installed. Also a more friendly and attractive name should be developed for CC:iNet. This might bring more visitors to the clearinghouse.

Experiences gained in submitting material to CC:iNet have been generally good among the EU users, and material has been added to the website without any delays.
It is very important to have the moderator to control the information. In addition to a single moderator, it might be later useful to create an advisory group for the moderators, with scientist or teachers for example, for the clearing house.

Current CC:iNet acts as a data base. One possible way to further develop it and to make it more interesting is to have a section on 'Current issues or News' at the front page. News could deal with some on-going campaigns, information about new material or interesting research relevant to outreach and information sharing, etc.

New criteria for the search could be developed, like the language and also the kind of material (brochures, films, pictures, logos, advertising…). It could be useful to develop specific information for special target groups, like teachers, journalists etc.

Material for education, training and public awareness is often country-specific and target group-specific. However, different country users do learn from each other's experiences and they can obtain practical ideas for their own work. Developing multilingual versions can be expensive, and care should be taken not to spend resources into translating several texts that basically contain the same idea for outreach. Ideas for visuals can also be communicated through material in foreign languages.

Further work in developing CC:iNet should be guided, i.a. by experiences and needs of users. The EU is looking forward to the discussions with other interested Parties and to a specific side event from the Secretariat dedicated to CC:iNet at SBI 25. This would provide an opportunity to go into detail of learning how active users have utilised the system and to discussing the ideas that the Parties and the UNFCCC Secretariat have for developing CC:iNet further. The EU has noted with interest that the Secretariat has recently started a process to expand the Climate Change Information Network.
Article 6 of the Convention

Submission by the Government of Japan

The Government of Japan welcomes the opportunity to submit its views regarding further elaboration on the clearing house to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation.

The Government of Japan would like to commend the efforts made by the Convention Secretariat to prepare for the launching of the prototype of the information network clearing house (CC:iNet) for Art.6 of the Convention in a smooth manner. Japan expresses its hope that the work to develop and operate CC:iNet will be continued in an efficient and effective way.

Japan would like to suggest the following elements to be considered for further elaborating and operating CC:iNet in a user friendly manner.

More information to be included as contents

While the number of initiatives introduced at CC:iNet has been increasing gradually, Japan expects more content information should be posted at the clearing house by Parties and organizations which are in a position to do so.

Feedback to trigger dynamic use of CC:iNet

(1) Submission functionality
Effective functioning of a clearing house, and wide dissemination of information, as well as the frequency with which such vehicle is utilized, may be affected by how much users feels they are part of the information network. Though a website-based vehicle at first glance seems to provide only a one-way type of information flow, a greater use will be encouraged if two-way communication between users and the administrator is established. In this regard, Japan regards it useful that CC:iNet has been successfully equipped with “submission” functionality, including rating and provision of users view on information posted on the website. Japan also suggests this submission functionality should be reviewed after a certain period for further elaboration of the vehicle.

(2) Posting users’ experiences of using CC:iNet
Users’ voices may also encourage others to visit and use the clearing house. As the current prototype has already been utilized by several stakeholders, their feedback may be noted regarding what kind of impact it had on their own activities when they used the clearing house. This may be done through individual users submission of their opinions or the secretariat’s providing of a questionnaire at the website.
A “users guideline” for increased user-friendliness

In principle, the structure of the clearing house should remain simple to keep its user-friendliness. However, when its function becomes larger and information contents more populated, users should be guided with additional explanations. In this regard, it may be helpful if a user guideline is prepared and uploaded. Also, to assist users to use CC:iNet in a sound and proper manner, such a users guideline may include its operation policy as well.

Synergies with other relevant efforts

Though CC:iNet as an information clearing house for Art.6 of the Convention itself is unique undertaking, there are a number of similar clearing houses and websites related to climate change, and/or environmental education and awareness raising. To promote its synergy effect, as well as to ensure its cost effectiveness, further linkages with such initiatives may be sought, which may help increase CC:iNet content information, as well as the clearing house’s publicity. Also, Japan is aware that there are ideas of having regional nodes for CC:iNet, which may assist the clearing house in this context. This idea could be elaborated, with a view to realizing synergy effect and avoiding unnecessary duplication. This may include the Asia-Pacific Network on Climate Change/the Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change (AP-Net/AP Seminar, www.ap-net.org), which are major regional vehicles in the Asia-Pacific, for exchange of information, including on efforts related to Art.6 of the Convention.
Malawi’s Submission on “Views on Advancing Work on the Clearing House and on Making it Fully Functional, Multilingual and User-friendly as it Relates to Article 6 of the Convention.

Malawi welcomes the opportunity to submit its views on ways to improve the Article 6 clearing house to make it more useful and more user-friendly.

Malawi notes that a clearing house is necessary in order to facilitate implementation of Article 6 by Parties to the Convention in carrying out commitments under Article 4, paragraph 1 (i), and welcomes the work done so far on the prototype CC:iNet, and look forward to contributing content and to using the information that is there now, especially on outreach and education. Our institutions of higher learning have established graduate programmes on climate change, and would greatly benefit from an exchange of teaching materials from other countries. We especially welcome materials that we can directly download from CC:iNet.

Malawi further notes that the clearing house will have its greatest utility at the regional level, since there is great potential for cross-fertilization of ideas between countries in the same region. We would welcome a regional node especially for Africa, where there has been no central information system or web site that specializes in climate change as it relates to Africa. We welcome the opportunity during SBI 25 to discuss how such a regional node could be implemented, to enable Parties to make maximum use of CC:iNet at the national and regional level.

We note further that the clearing house shall act as a depository of information on what Parties are doing in the implementation of the Convention. We therefore call upon the COP to consider making the node a multilingual and user-friendly unit that shall host information on emissions, mitigation and adaptation measures.

In addition, Parties would transfer such information through formal and non-formal education establishments and the mass media to communities in order for them to appreciate the socio-economic impacts of environmental degradation due to climate variations.

We are aware, however, that limited efforts have been made to relate environmental problems with climate change issues especially in the rural areas. Information on CC:iNet should be packaged in such a way to facilitate this further use of the information at the national level, such as through bundling of similar items for easy download, and through clusters of information on the front page to facilitate access to similar types of information and materials.

We are also aware of the constraints that many developing countries face in accessing and contributing to CC:iNet. We welcome any efforts that will address this, including any appropriate training on its use and special events to encourage developing countries to contribute content. We welcome the progress made in identifying Article 6 National Points of Contact, and look forward to efforts to make these points active partners in the further development of CC:iNet.
PAPER NO. 8: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

U.S. Submission: Views on Advancing Work on the Article 6 Clearinghouse and on Making it Fully Functional, Multilingual, and User-Friendly

Pursuant to FCCC/SBI/2005/L.18 paragraph 6, the United States is pleased to have the opportunity to provide views on advancing work on the Article 6 Clearinghouse and on making it fully functional, multilingual, and user-friendly.

We appreciate the Secretariat’s efforts to develop a clearinghouse on Article 6, now known as CC:iNet. Recognizing the site is still in its early stages, we remain hopeful that it ultimately will fulfill its potential to be a useful tool for those seeking to implement Article 6 of the UNFCCC. The United States has some general comments on advancing work on the clearinghouse, as well as some more specific suggestions on making the clearinghouse fully functional, multilingual, and user-friendly to highlight for consideration of the Parties under this agenda item at COP-12.

Advancing Work on the Clearinghouse

While discussions have taken place on the clearinghouse for some time, it appears that we are merely in the beginning phases of the site in terms of achieving its potential. We are pleased that the clearinghouse now rests within the www.unfccc.int site, as we believe that it the most logical location for a tool for UNFCCC implementation. In addition, an ongoing issue with the clearinghouse has been the challenge of financing it on a long-term basis through contributions from Parties. This matter is not easily resolved in view of tight budgets and increasing demands on Parties’ resources. Nonetheless, we expect that the clearinghouse’s incorporation into the UNFCCC site should enable it to benefit from the main site’s existing website team and draw upon those resources more readily, thus lowering costs substantially from those of a stand-alone site, while also ensuring the sustainability of the clearinghouse.

We believe that the UNFCCC Secretariat has made an adequate start at building a set of materials for site visitors’ use. We note that FCCC/SBI/2005/L.18 paragraph 5 urges contributions of materials to the clearinghouse from a variety of groups. That said, it is unclear to us how materials for the site are being acquired - i.e., is the Secretariat actively searching the internet and other sources, such as national communications, for relevant information, or simply waiting for submissions from Parties and others per the aforementioned conclusions text to generate materials for the site? There is an assortment of materials currently on the site; however, we believe the clearinghouse will be most useful when the materials it contains fit within the scope of CC:iNet. To this end, we anticipate that this necessary screening function will be the responsibility of the UNFCCC Secretariat.

Site maintenance is a key component of making websites functional. In order for the clearinghouse to meet its potential, it should be organized carefully, updated often, and monitored regularly to ensure functionality of links and documents, and that information is relevant and useful. A cursory visit to the site reveals a number of links that are not functioning, and many that are not included but which exist and are easily located.
We believe it will be useful to draw upon the lessons learned and experiences gained by other similar sites (TT CLEAR, CTI Website, US CTC Gateway) regarding how they have addressed matters related to quality control/quality assurance and search functions.

As the clearinghouse matures, it will be useful to obtain information on web visitors and to track website usage to determine what parts of the site are being accessed most often in order to improve the usefulness of the site.

Making the Clearinghouse Fully Functional, Multilingual, and User Friendly

Functionality and user-friendliness of the site would be enhanced by revisiting the categorizing of information of the six key elements of Article 6. For example: On the training element page http://unfccc.int/cc_inet/six_elements/training/items/3531.php, many of the items listed are not directly related to training. While the introduction on this page indicates that it provides links to a wide range of training opportunities, experts, materials and programs, it does not do so. Instead, it lists many of the same links (to Article 6 focal points, CDM websites, etc) that are listed on other element pages.

Functionality and user-friendliness of the element pages would be enhanced by re-indexing them, perhaps by keyword, e.g., “curriculum” or “handbook.” The current organization and categories available make it difficult to find material, and the “date of posting” default for organization of the materials presented is not conducive to finding information easily. As a result of this approach to organization, information gets lost once other materials are uploaded to the site. This will become more problematic as the site becomes populated with additional information.

Functionality would be enhanced by initially focusing on items for which it is easiest to acquire information. While it is recognized that the clearinghouse is still in a prototype phase, it is unclear why some portions of the site, e.g., the calendar, do not contain much information. This returns again to the question of whether the Secretariat is waiting for information to be submitted or is actively seeking such information.

Functionality and user-friendliness would be enhanced with a dedicated tab on the left side bar for the Article 6 focal points – this would ensure that this information is readily available and not lost within the various links on the element pages.

Access to multilingual information on the site could be undertaken in various ways, ranging from pages and/or navigational options in the UN languages. An example of this is found at the UNCSD’s Biosafety Protocol Clearinghouse site http://bch.biodiv.org/. On that site, navigation is available in the UN languages, and many of the pages are at least partially translated into UN languages. We recognize that fully translating a site requires significant resources; however, other smaller undertakings could also be useful, e.g., navigational panes in multiple languages.

Another means to enhancing access to multilingual information on the site could be to recognize information available in other languages – UN or non-UN languages. Regardless of the approach taken for UN languages as described in the previous paragraph, documents are also available on the site in non-UN languages. An approach to improving access to these or any non-English language documents could be a dedicated tab as described previously for Article 6 focal points
for “other languages” which could contain a drop down menu of languages in which materials are available so users interested in materials in those languages could click to find them. An example of this is found within the main United Nations site, where information is available in non-UN languages: http://www.un.org/aroundworld/unics/english/non-un-language.htm.

User-friendliness of the clearinghouse can be enhanced by keeping in mind the varying computer and modem capabilities of the audience. Whenever possible it is useful for different options to exist for materials requiring significant downloading capacity. Alternatively, these items can be marked so that prior to attempting downloading, the user would be aware that a file is very large so they can determine whether they wish to try to open it.

Ultimately the United States believes that the clearinghouse continues to show promise, and we look forward to working with other Parties to explore means to help advance work on this potentially useful tool for implementing the UNFCCC.
The Republic of Uzbekistan supports the efforts of Secretariat on the creation of the network information centre on the Article 6 and its improvement.

It is necessary to note a successful implementation of the first stage of activities on the creation and introduction into practice the model comprised of “Education” and “Public awareness” blocks. CC:iNet Portal based on UN FCCC gives the user the possibility for the advanced and qualitative access to the information sources on the problem of climate change for the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention.

To our opinion, to provide for the access to information, especially in the Asian-Pacific region there is a need for compilation of a reference-book on the regional experts involved to the issues of climate change and catalogue of the educational materials on the problems of climate change. As it was emphasized at the regional workshops (on the African continent, Latin America and Caribbean basin the information-and-communication infrastructures are widely used. However, the main problems related to their exploitation and further developments are as follows:

- Absence of sufficient funds
- Weak information networks
- Insufficient number of the international workshops, training and attestation programs for the on-site training
- Necessity of improving the access to information as the element of the information exchange mechanism with the most advanced methods.

Evidently, it is necessary to take the due measures and elaborate the plan of activities on using the available regional grounds for the fruitful cooperation with the information-and-coordination mechanism of UN FCCC which is on the way.

We propose to include the existing regional networks to the range of the information exchange sources and provide for the access to these networks from CC:iNet web-site.

At the second stage during the improvement of coordination-and-information centre of UN FCCC on the Article 6 of Convention besides the introduction to practice of the following:

- the rubrics which are marked on the portal but not are in use
- planned components of the data base of the full-scale centre
- planned and facultative sub-sites (FCCC/SBI/2004/14),

The following options should be considered:

- opening the regional portals in CC:iNet site
- opening the rubric “Advanced experience” or “The best practice” where the following countries will share their experience in the following:
  - the Asian-Pacific network of the global studies - in the field of climate change
  - Latin American and Caribbean countries – in the area of using Internet as the component of the remote education and organization of the discussions on the climate change problems.
We think that the presentation of information in the main UN languages (and not only in English as basic) will enable more frequent visiting the portal and sub-site of the coordination-and-information CC:iNet centre and improving the public awareness.