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Methodological issues under the Convention

Annual report on the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from

Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

**Annual report on the technical review of greenhouse gas
inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the
Convention**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This report describes activities relating to greenhouse gas inventory reviews conducted during the period November 2009 to October 2010 and to activities planned for 2011. It also provides information on the training activities under the Convention and under the Kyoto Protocol, the meeting of inventory lead reviewers, progress made in updating the roster of experts and progress made in the development of CRF Reporter in relation to the reporting of activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 12/CP.9, requested the secretariat to prepare an annual report on inventory review activities, including any recommendations resulting from meetings of lead reviewers (LRs) participating in the technical review of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties), for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). The COP also requested the secretariat to include in this report information on its inventory review training programme, in particular on examination procedures and on the selection of trainees and instructors.

2. In addition, the SBSTA, at its twenty-fourth session, requested the secretariat to continue to prepare annual reports on inventory review activities, pursuant to decision 12/CP.9, for consideration by the SBSTA, and to include in these reports information on progress made in updating the roster of experts.¹

B. Scope of the note

3. This report provides information on activities relating to GHG inventory reviews conducted from November 2009 to October 2010 and on planned activities for 2011. It also provides information on the meeting of inventory LRAs, progress made in updating the roster of experts, training activities under the Convention and under the Kyoto Protocol, and progress made in the development and maintenance of the GHG information system.

4. In accordance with the “Guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol” (hereinafter referred to as the Article 8 review guidelines), the review under the Kyoto Protocol encompasses the existing review of GHG inventories under the Convention. The lessons learned and problems encountered in the review process in 2010 under the Convention and under the Kyoto Protocol have many common elements. This report focuses on the elements of the review process that are specific to the Convention and should be read in conjunction with the “Annual report on the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories and other information reported by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention that are also Parties to the Kyoto Protocol under Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Kyoto Protocol”² prepared by the secretariat in accordance with decision 22/CMP.1.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

5. The SBSTA will be invited to take note of the information contained in this report.

II. Review activities

6. The Guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC review guidelines) adopted in 1999 (decision 6/CP.5) and revised in 2002 (decision 19/CP.8) help to ensure that the COP is provided with objective, consistent, transparent, thorough and

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2006/5, paragraph 95.

² FCCC/SBSTA/2010/INF.9.

comprehensive information and technical assessments of GHG inventories from Annex I Parties, that these inventories are consistent with the agreed reporting guidelines and that the quality of these inventories improves over time. In addition, the review guidelines help to ensure that the COP is provided with a technical assessment of the implementation of the commitments of Annex I Parties under Article 4, paragraph 1 (a), and Article 12, paragraph 1 (a), of the Convention.

7. The technical review of national GHG inventories from Annex I Parties commenced in 2000, in accordance with decision 6/CP.5. Following completion of the trial period established in that decision, annual reviews of the individual inventory of each Annex I Party became mandatory in 2003, in accordance with decision 19/CP.8.

8. The GHG inventory review activities – along with the training of review experts and the organization of lead reviewers’ meetings that until 2009 have been funded through voluntary contributions to supplementary funds – are funded from the UNFCCC secretariat core budget. Some other related activities, such as the development of the GHG information system, continue to be funded through voluntary contributions to supplementary funds.

A. Individual inventory reviews

9. In 2010 the secretariat received 42 annual submissions³ from Annex I Parties (see table below). In accordance with decision 19/CP.8, the secretariat coordinates the review of national GHG inventories of Annex I Parties. The inventory review process is conducted in three stages: initial check; synthesis and assessment (parts I and II); and individual review. The initial check stage provides an immediate quality assurance (QA) aimed at verifying the completeness of the inventory submission and the correctness of its format. Status reports for all 42 submissions were prepared and published on the UNFCCC website⁴ by June 2010. Part I of the synthesis and assessment compiles and compares basic inventory information, such as emission trends, activity data and implied emission factors, across Parties and over time. Part I of the synthesis and assessment report was published on the UNFCCC website⁵ on 15 July 2010. Part II provides a preliminary assessment of the inventory of individual Parties and identifies any potential inventory problems, which are then explored during the individual review stage. Part II of the synthesis and assessment report is not published.

10. During the individual review, an international team of experts, nominated by Parties, conducts a technical review of each inventory. As of October 2010, individual inventory reviews had been conducted for all 42 Annex I Parties, as follows:

(a) In-country reviews were conducted between 16 August and 9 October for Australia, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, the Russian Federation and Switzerland. The reports of these reviews are expected to be finalized and published in between November 2010 and March 2011.

³ On 17 September 2009, Kazakhstan became a Party included in Annex I to the Convention for the purposes of the Protocol, while remaining a Party not included in Annex I to the Convention for the purposes of the Convention. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, at its fifth session, requested the secretariat to conduct, as soon as possible and subject to the availability of resources, an annual technical review of the latest GHG inventory submission of Kazakhstan in accordance with the UNFCCC review guidelines contained in the annex to decision 19/CP.8. Kazakhstan indicated that its 2010 annual submission is made under the Kyoto Protocol.

⁴ <http://unfccc.int/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/inventory_review_reports/items/5688.php>.

⁵ <<http://unfccc.int/resource/webdocs/sai/2010.pdf>>.

(b) Centralized reviews were organized between 30 August 2010 and 25 September 2010 in Bonn, Germany, for Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Estonia, the European Union, Finland, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. The reports from these reviews are expected to be finalized and published in February to March 2011.

Submission of annual information required under the Kyoto Protocol, review dates and status of review reports

<i>Annex I Party</i>	<i>NIR and CRF submission dates</i>	<i>Language of NIR</i>	<i>Report symbol</i>	<i>Review dates</i>	<i>Status of review report</i>
Australia	NIR – 26 May 2010 CRF – 26 May 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/AUS	23–28 Aug. 2010	In preparation
Austria	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/AUT	30 Aug to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Belarus ^a	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 8 Apr. 2010	Russian	FCCC/ASR/2010/BLR	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Belgium	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/BEL	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Bulgaria	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/BGR	4–9 Oct. 2010	In preparation
Canada	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/CAN	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Croatia	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/HRV	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Czech Republic	NIR – 14 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/CZE	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Denmark	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/DNK	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Estonia	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/EST	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
European Union	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/EU	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Finland	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/FIN	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
France	NIR – 12 Apr. 2010 CRF – 12 Apr. 2010	French	FCCC/ASR/2010/FRA	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Germany	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/DEU	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Greece	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/GRC	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Hungary	NIR – 26 May 2010 CRF – 25 May 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/HUN	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation

<i>Annex I Party</i>	<i>NIR and CRF submission dates</i>	<i>Language of NIR</i>	<i>Report symbol</i>	<i>Review dates</i>	<i>Status of review report</i>
Iceland	NIR – 27 May 2010 CRF – 23 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/ISL	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Ireland	NIR – 14 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/IRL	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Italy	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/ITA	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Japan	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/JPN	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Kazakhstan ^b	NIR – 25 May 2010 CRF – 9 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/KAZ	16–21 Aug. 10	In preparation
Latvia	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/LVA	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Liechtenstein	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/LIE	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Lithuania	NIR – 14 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/LTU	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Luxembourg	NIR – 27 May 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/LUX	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Monaco	NIR – 30 Mar. 2010 CRF – 23 Mar. 2010	French	FCCC/ASR/2010/MCO	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Netherlands	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/NLD	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
New Zealand	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/NZL	30 Aug. to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Norway	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/NOR	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Poland	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/POL	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Portugal	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/PRT	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Romania	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/ROU	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Russian Federation	NIR – 25 May 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	Russian	FCCC/ASR/2010/RUS	27 Sep. to 2 Oct. 2010	In preparation
Slovakia	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/SVK	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Slovenia	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/SVN	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Spain	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	Spanish and English	FCCC/ASR/2010/ESP	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation

<i>Annex I Party</i>	<i>NIR and CRF submission dates</i>	<i>Language of NIR</i>	<i>Report symbol</i>	<i>Review dates</i>	<i>Status of review report</i>
Sweden	NIR – 14 Apr. 2010 CRF – 14 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/SWE	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Switzerland	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/CHE	6–11 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Turkey ^c	NIR – 13 Apr. 2010 CRF – 13 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/TUR	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation
Ukraine	NIR – 12 Apr. 2010 CRF – 13 Apr. 2010	Russian	FCCC/ASR/2010/UKR	30 Aug to 4 Sep. 2010	In preparation
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/GBR	13–18 Sep. 2010	In preparation
United States of America	NIR – 15 Apr. 2010 CRF – 15 Apr. 2010	English	FCCC/ASR/2010/USA	20–25 Sep. 2010	In preparation

Abbreviations: CRF = common reporting format, NIR = national inventory report.

^a Belarus indicated that the 2010 annual submission is made under the Convention.

^b Kazakhstan is a Party included in Annex I for the purposes of the Kyoto Protocol. Kazakhstan indicated that its 2010 annual submission is made under the Kyoto Protocol.

^c Turkey indicated that the 2010 annual submission is made under both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

11. In 2009 eight in-country reviews and eight centralized reviews covering 41 Parties were conducted. Reports of these reviews were published between the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010. Of the eight in-country review reports, one was completed on time and one was completed two weeks before the dates established in the inventory review guidelines. Two reports were completed two weeks late and four reports were late by one month or more. Of the 33 centralized review reports, three were completed on time or earlier than the due dates established in the inventory review guidelines. Fifteen reports were delayed by between some weeks and two months and the remaining 15 were delayed by more than two months. The delay in the publication of the reports was mainly because experts participating in these reviews had, owing to other commitments, difficulties in finalizing the review reports within the established deadlines. It is too early to draw any conclusions on the timeliness of the reviews conducted in 2010, as the review reports are in preparation and because, with a very few exceptions, the inventory submissions have to be reviewed following the requirements established under the Article 8 review guidelines, since 2010 is the first year for the mandatory annual submission under the Kyoto Protocol for Annex I Parties that are also Parties to the Kyoto Protocol.

12. After each stage of the review process, the Party under review has an opportunity to comment on the different draft reports (status report, synthesis and assessment parts I and II, and individual review report); the timelines for providing comments are established in the review guidelines contained in the annex to decision 19/CP.8. However, Parties do not always respond to the invitation to provide comments, or provide their comments late, which could have an impact on the quality of the review process, the deadlines for the stages in the review process and the publication of the final reports.

13. For 2011 the secretariat is planning to review eight inventory submissions through in-country reviews, while the others will be reviewed through eight centralized reviews. Reviews of all Parties are planned for the end of August and during September 2011.

B. Other inventory review procedures

14. In accordance with decision 12/CP.9, the secretariat developed and put in place procedures to implement the code of practice for the treatment of confidential information during the inventory review. These procedures cover submission, processing and handling by the secretariat of any information designated as confidential by an Annex I Party and the granting of access to such information by experts.

15. During in-country reviews, Parties often provide the review teams with access to confidential information. This is possible as the reviews are conducted in the countries and thus the Parties' own procedures on how to share confidential information with the review teams can be followed. During the 2010 reviews, only two Parties under centralized reviews submitted to the secretariat information designated as confidential. There has been a tendency by some Parties to increase the number of categories considered as confidential without a clear explanation for this approach, which in the absence of submission of information that clarifies emission estimates for these categories, makes the review of this information during centralized reviews almost impossible.

16. Decision 12/CP.9 further requires that all members of expert review teams (ERTs) sign an agreement for expert review services, which specifies the responsibilities, expected time commitment and appropriate conduct for ERT members, in particular with respect to the protection of confidential inventory information. All experts participating in the inventory reviews from 2004 onwards have signed this agreement, and this practice will be continued in the future.

III. Meeting of inventory lead reviewers

17. The UNFCCC review guidelines require that expert review teams be led by two experts with substantial inventory review experience. For each team, one LR should be from a Party not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Party) and the other from an Annex I Party. LRs have a special role in guiding the review teams to ensure the consistency, quality and objectivity of the reviews. Recognizing this role, the COP, by its decision 12/CP.9, requested the secretariat to organize meetings of LRs to promote a common approach by ERTs to methodological and procedural issues encountered in the inventory reviews, and to make recommendations to the secretariat on ways to further improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the review process.

18. LRs have a critical role in the review process, in which they ensure the consistency, quality and objectivity of the reviews in accordance with the requirements of the review guidelines. The annual meetings of the LRs helped in fulfilling this role. The most recent, 7th, meeting of inventory LRs took place in Bonn, Germany, from 10 to 12 March, 2010. Sixty-three experts, 33 from Annex I Parties and 30 from non-Annex I Parties, were invited to the meeting, which was attended by 44 experts, 26 from Annex I Parties and 18 from non-Annex I Parties. In addition, two review experts, who are representatives of the European Union, attended the meeting as observers. The secretariat has tentatively scheduled the 8th meeting of LRs for March 2011.

19. The 7th meeting addressed both procedural and technical issues relating to the annual review of GHG inventories of Annex I Parties and similar reviews under the Kyoto Protocol. The issues addressed by the LRs related to reviews under the Convention are cited below.

A. Procedural issues, including actions by the secretariat

1. Review process in 2009, including consistency issues

20. The LRs acknowledged that ERTs consistently applied the UNFCCC review guidelines during the 2009 reviews, as well as the relevant procedures. The LRs also acknowledged that the secretariat, in response to a request by the SBSTA at its thirtieth session,⁶ performed QA of the review activities in the 2009 review cycle. This further enhanced the consistency of the reviews. The LRs noted that attention to consistency in reviews will continue to require monitoring; they also noted that the SBSTA, at its twenty-ninth session, requested the secretariat to include the consideration of consistency as a permanent agenda item for the meeting of LRs.⁷

21. The LRs acknowledged the importance of ensuring consistency at each stage of the annual technical review. They noted that consistency at each stage of the annual technical review has improved in recent years, based on experience gained over 10 years of reviews and the work by LRs, ERTs and the secretariat.

22. The LRs noted that the work undertaken by the secretariat on the annual review report template, the review tools and the implementation of QA procedures for the review activities facilitated the work of the LRs in enhancing consistency in the review process. The LRs concluded that the annual review report template is an important tool for enhancing consistency across reviews.

2. Training and experts' participation in reviews

23. The LRs welcomed the implementation by the secretariat of the updated training programme under the Convention adopted by the COP. The LRs also welcomed the information on ongoing training activities, as well as the information on possible new activities, such as regional training seminars, the development of a new training course for the review of higher-tier methods and complex models, and the implementation of refresher seminars for experienced reviewers.

24. The LRs noted that these updated training programmes would enhance the expertise of the reviewers and hence contribute to the quality and consistency of the review process. The LRs recommended that the secretariat continue organizing refresher seminars, subject to the availability of resources.

25. The LRs reiterated their conclusions of previous meetings, which recognized that strengthening the capacity of expert reviewers by increasing the number of available experts and enhancing their training, and involving more secretariat staff in the reviews, is required to enhance consistency.

26. The LRs noted that some activities under the updated training programme are subject to supplementary funding and that these activities are necessary to make further progress in the training of experts and to strengthen the rigour of the annual review process under the Convention.

27. Given the increased complexity of the annual review process, the LRs noted that there is a need for enhanced and smooth integration of the new reviewers into the work of the ERTs. The LRs requested the secretariat to take this into account when putting together ERTs and agreed that LRs would take this into account when allocating and supporting tasks within the team. In addition, the LRs requested the secretariat to explore options to enhance the preparation of the new experts by involving them in a desk review in the lead-

⁶ FCCC/SBSTA/2009/3, paragraph 74.

⁷ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/13, paragraph 64.

up to the week of the centralized review, to guide the new experts in their preparation for the reviews and to encourage mentoring by more experienced reviewers.

28. The LRs noted the continued need for additional review experts for the review process, in particular from non-Annex I Parties, to be nominated to the roster of experts and to participate in the training courses. They expressed concern that there are still some Annex I Parties that have nominated only one expert to the roster of experts. The LRs requested the secretariat to intensify its efforts to identify new review experts, in particular from non-Annex I Parties and from Annex I Parties that have nominated only one expert to the roster. They also noted the need for the governments that nominate experts to the roster of experts and that agree to their participation in reviews to ensure that these experts are available to ensure timely completion of the reviews, in accordance with the decisions under the Convention.

3. Reporting, data management and review tools

29. The LRs welcomed the work undertaken by the secretariat to further develop the GHG information system, including CRF Reporter software, and the review tools to cover the needs under the Convention. They noted that this work facilitates the annual reporting by Parties, as well as the processing of this information and its subsequent review by ERTs.

30. The LRs took note of the information provided by the secretariat on activities relating to the upgrade of the GHG information system, including the CRF Reporter software, subject to the availability of supplementary funding, in order to support reporting and reviews. The LRs requested the secretariat to continue improving the functionality and utility of the CRF Reporter software in anticipation of the future needs for reporting, which are under consideration by the SBSTA, and to ensure that Parties are allowed sufficient time to adapt to these new needs before full implementation of the new reporting requirements. They noted that the necessary work on CRF Reporter could be undertaken in the context of the activities of the work programme established by the SBSTA, at its thirtieth session, on the revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part I: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories” (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC reporting guidelines) and the use of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) *2006 Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*, including consideration of the new reporting format tables.

31. The LRs expressed support, subject to the availability of funding, for the development of the virtual team room (VTR) to support expert review activities, with a focus on developing the review issues tracking system (RITS) and the discussion forum element of the communication management system for LRs. The LRs requested the secretariat to explore opportunities to provide a discussion forum for LRs and land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) experts for the 2010 annual reviews. They also requested the secretariat to consider organizing a trial of the RITS with selected 2010 ERTs and to provide LRs at their 8th meeting with information on the outcomes of this trial and an update on the development of the remaining elements of the VTR.

4. Reviews in 2010

32. The LRs requested the secretariat to further elaborate the guidance included in the annual review report template and, where appropriate, include references to relevant COP decisions. The LRs recommended that this guidance be based on the experience gained and examples of good practice from previous reviews. This guidance could be developed in the form of checklists for specific review issues such as higher-tier methods.

33. The LRs acknowledged the steps taken by the secretariat to assist the LRs during the 2009 reviews in their role of ensuring that reviews are performed in accordance with the review guidelines and are performed consistently across Parties by each ERT. This includes performing QA of review activities, in accordance with the conclusions of the SBSTA at its thirtieth session. The LRs requested the secretariat to continue to perform QA of review activities during the 2010 review, subject to the availability of resources, and to ensure that information on experience with QA activities is provided to the LRs at their 8th meeting.

34. The LRs requested the secretariat to provide the ERTs with a list containing, by category and by gas, information as to whether methodologies exist for these categories in the *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* and/or the *Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (hereinafter referred to as the IPCC good practice guidance), with a view to ensuring that correct and appropriate information on completeness is included in the annual review reports.

5. Long-term issues relating to the review process

35. The LRs took note of the conclusions of the SBSTA and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) at their thirtieth sessions relating to the review process, including the training of experts, the organization of the meetings of LRs and the planning and conducting of reviews, as well as the further development of the GHG information system, including the CRF Reporter software, which are planned and prioritized during 2010 and 2011. The LRs acknowledged that a number of review activities that were previously funded through supplementary resources are funded for 2010 and 2011 from the UNFCCC secretariat core budget, which provides for stable and predictable funding for these core activities.

36. The LRs welcomed the steps taken by the secretariat in the planning and setting of priorities for activities that underpin the management of the reporting and review processes and the planning of related activities that meet the requirements of a robust process under the Convention for 2010 and 2011. In order to maintain and enhance the current level of quality, consistency and timeliness of the review process, the LRs noted that most of the planned activities that will be supported by the supplementary budget must be implemented. Among the priority activities in this context are the development of VTR in order to enhance communication among reviewers and the tracking and resolution of review issues, increasing the number of new experts that participate in the reviews as trainees and organizing regional training seminars that, in addition to strengthening the capacity of experts for reviews, should enhance the capacity of experts from developing countries to prepare their national inventories. The LRs noted the need for Parties to support these activities by providing supplementary funding.

B. Methodological, technical and other issues, including actions by lead reviewers and expert review teams

1. Cross-cutting issues

37. The LRs agreed that they need to pay special attention to the consistency of the expert reviews, by, for example, informing ERTs of the conclusions and recommendations of the meetings of LRs and ensuring that the agreed approach is communicated to ERTs and adhered to thereafter. They also agreed that ERTs need to consider national circumstances in their endeavour to address consistency issues.

38. For the review of GHG inventories, the LRs reiterated that the Convention requires reporting Parties to continuously improve their GHG inventories and systems to reflect the

enhanced understanding of the methodological and scientific basis of the GHG inventories and to continuously work on the implementation of the recommendations for improvements arising from the inventory review. The LRs recommended that when changes in methodologies are identified during the review, the ERTs should ascertain whether they are in accordance with the UNFCCC reporting guidelines and the IPCC good practice guidance.

39. The LRs expressed concern that the review transcript that records the findings of a review, including those on problems that have been resolved, are not necessarily complete and that the secretariat does not always receive complete review transcripts from ERTs after the review has been finalized. As in previous meetings, the LRs reiterated that the review transcript remains an important tool for the review process and should be used during all stages of individual reviews: the preparation for the review, throughout the review week and when reflecting on the final outcome of the review, including a clear indication on whether an issue included in the transcript has been resolved. The LRs again expressed support for the secretariat's work on developing the RITS, which will streamline issue identification, recording, tracking and resolution, and interactions between Parties, ERTs and the secretariat, thus superseding the review transcript.

2. Methodological issues

40. The LRs noted that the IPCC good practice guidance encourages the use of higher-tier methods, including country-specific methods and data, for key categories. They concluded that ERTs should encourage Parties to move to higher-tier methods, especially for key categories, as a part of their improvement plans. In specific cases, taking into account the Party's national circumstances, the LRs acknowledged that using a default method or data could be in line with the decision trees of the IPCC good practice guidance.

41. The LRs reaffirmed that ERTs, when reviewing higher-tier/country-specific methods or models, need to follow the approach agreed at the 6th meeting of LRs.⁸

42. The LRs recommended that the ERTs ensure that the category-specific information discussed in the annual review report includes the applied method and an assessment of whether it is in line with the IPCC good practice guidance.

3. Previous recommendations

43. The LRs noted the need for enhancing the way ERTs track how Parties, in their annual submissions, address the recommendations included in annual review reports. The LRs requested the secretariat to include in the review transcript the recommendations of the previous year's annual review report in order to help ERTs with this assessment. The LRs agreed that they need to ensure that the ERTs, in the annual review reports, identify issues that remain unresolved. Further, the LRs welcomed the work of the secretariat on developing the RITS, the objective of which is to streamline identification, storage, tracking and resolution of review issues and recommendations.

4. Inventory review

44. The LRs noted that the annual review report template will help to minimize the repetition of information, will facilitate consistency across review reports and will improve the presentation of the key information resulting from reviews. The LRs also noted the need for ERTs to clearly distinguish between mandatory and non-mandatory reporting requirements in their recommendations in the annual review reports to Parties on how to

⁸ <http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/review_process/application/pdf/sixth_meeting_of_inventory_lead_reviewers.pdf>.

solve any issues identified during the review. The LRs further noted the need for consistency between the in-country review and centralized review templates, but also noted the need for the template to reflect the differences between the in-country and centralized reviews in the level of detail of some elements, and the need for the review reports to be concise, in particular for centralized reviews.

45. The LRs endorsed the overall approach for the reviews in 2010, including the review template.

46. The LRs agreed to provide guidance to the ERTs to improve preparation for the reviews in order to be able to use time effectively during the review week, with a view to discussing and, when possible, resolving any possible problems. The LRs requested the secretariat to strive to provide the ERTs with materials, including the appropriate review report template, for the review one month before the review.

47. The full text of the conclusions of the 7th meeting of LRs is available on the UNFCCC website.⁹

IV. Roster of experts

48. Currently, the roster of experts contains 689 GHG inventory experts, 369 from Annex I Parties and 320 from non-Annex I Parties. From September 2009 to October 2010, 162 new experts were nominated to the roster, 65 from Annex I Parties and 97 from non-Annex I Parties.

49. A limited number of experts listed in the roster participate currently in the review process. In 2010, a total of 163 individuals from 63 different Parties served as inventory experts on review teams. Of these experts, 25 were from Annex I Parties with economies in transition, 79 were from other Annex I Parties and 59 were from non-Annex I Parties. One of the reasons for the huge discrepancy between the number of nominated experts and the number participating in reviews is that only some Parties regularly update the list of experts nominated by them to reflect, inter alia, the fact that many of the experts on the roster have moved on to other positions and are no longer available to participate in the review process. Another reason is that some experts nominated to the roster have not yet taken the mandatory training courses, or have not passed the relevant examination. This means that the roster from which the secretariat could select eligible experts contains only approximately 233 experts who could participate in the reviews.

50. The secretariat has developed an online form, available on the UNFCCC website,¹⁰ to facilitate the nomination of experts to the roster and the updating of the list of nominees by a Party. The secretariat also periodically invites Parties to update the roster and to nominate new experts and has improved the accessibility and friendliness of the web pages of the roster and the training programmes on the UNFCCC website.

V. Training of experts

51. The training activities are of crucial importance for ensuring the required quality and consistency of the review process. This is particularly true for experts from non-Annex I Parties, as they usually do not work on inventories on a daily basis. In addition, they are not

⁹ <http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/review_process/application/pdf/con_rec7.pdf>.

¹⁰ <http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/roster_of_experts/application/msword/roster_nomination_2006new.doc>.

involved in activities for which Annex I Parties report supplementary information under Article 7, paragraph 1, of the Kyoto Protocol, related to national registries and assigned amounts, which are subject to annual reviews. Experts participating in the training activities and the reviews would be able to use the experience gained to improve the quality of their own national inventories.

52. The secretariat continues to strongly encourage all experts on the UNFCCC roster of experts nominated for inventory review activities to take the relevant Convention and Kyoto Protocol training courses and examinations, because only experts that pass these examinations are able to participate in the reviews under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol.

A. Training programme for greenhouse gas inventory review experts for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

53. Decision 12/CP.9 called for the secretariat to establish a training programme, including a requirement for testing, under the Convention that comprises both technical and skill-building courses for new ERT members. Development of the basic course, covering the general and cross-cutting issues and all inventory sectors except LULUCF, was completed in 2004, and since then only experts who have successfully passed the examination can participate in an inventory review. The course for the LULUCF sector was completed in 2005 and was incorporated into the training programme. The basic course was offered with an instructor and a final seminar once a year, resources permitting, or as a non-instructed online course throughout the year.

54. The SBSTA, at its twenty-fifth session,¹¹ requested the secretariat to continue to offer the training programme online, to make instructors available for the online training programme and to organize a seminar relating to the programme, subject to the availability of resources.

55. The basic training course developed in 2003 and completed in 2005 was outdated, owing to developments in the GHG inventories and experience gained in the review process. Following the request by the SBSTA at its twenty-seventh session,¹² the secretariat updated the training programme, taking into account, for example, the IPCC *Good Practice Guidance for Land Use, Land-Use Change and Forestry*, and updated the contents, self tests and final examinations for the online courses for all sectors. The updated training courses were offered online for the first time in 2009.

56. By its decision 10/CP.15, the COP requested the secretariat to develop and implement the updated training programme for GHG inventory review experts for the technical review of GHG inventories from Annex I Parties, including the examination of experts, and to give priority to organizing an annual seminar for the basic course. It also encouraged Annex I Parties which are in a position to do so to provide financial support for enhancing the training programme. This training programme consist of the updated basic course, covering the general and cross-cutting issues and all inventory sectors, the course on improving communication and facilitating consensus in ERTs, the course on review of complex models and higher-tier methods (to be implemented in 2011) and an annual refresher seminar for experienced GHG inventory review experts, subject to the availability of resources.

¹¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2006/11, paragraph 107.

¹² FCCC/SBSTA/2007/16, paragraph 63.

57. The secretariat had two rounds of instructed courses in 2010, owing to major contributions to supplementary funding by Australia, Belgium, the European Union, Finland, Japan, New Zealand, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The first course took place between 22 February and 11 April and the second course between 30 August and 18 October. Both rounds of instructed courses were offered online, with two instructors available to provide guidance and to respond to questions from the trainees, and ended with a three-day seminar held in Bonn, Germany (12–14 April 2010) and Seoul, the Republic of Korea (19–21 October 2010). The instructors, one from a non-Annex I Party and one from an Annex I Party, were highly experienced and capable sectoral experts and LRs.

58. During the seminar the trainees participated in a simulation of a centralized review and on the last day took their examinations. In 2010, 225 invitations were sent to Parties to nominate experts for the two courses. Twenty-nine experts participated in the first instructed course; of these, 25 experts participated in the final seminar and 16 experts passed the examinations. In the second instructed course, 36 experts participated in the online course and 29 participated in the final seminar and took the examinations. In addition, five experts from the Republic of Korea who completed the non-instructed online courses took the examinations during the training seminar in Seoul. The results of the examinations are not yet available. During the second instructed course that focused in experts from Asian countries, a large number of experts from two major Parties, the Republic of Korea and Japan, participated. This will help to strengthen the review process and will help both countries to enhance their capabilities for preparing GHG inventories.

59. In addition to the instructed course, the secretariat makes the inventory training courses available for inventory experts throughout the year and provides access for new trainees upon request by a Party. In 2010, 17 experts completed the non-instructed online course and made relevant arrangements to take the examinations under the supervision of the secretariat, without incurring additional costs to the Secretariat.

60. In 2010, the secretariat organized a one-day refresher seminar during the 7th meeting of LRs on the review of the LULUCF sector and activities reported under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol, to which almost all LULUCF review experts who have participated in a review or passed the mandatory training were invited. The discussion at the seminar facilitated understanding by the experts of critical issues relating to the review of LULUCF activities, and as a result facilitated consistency in the review of these issues.

B. Training programme for members of expert review teams participating in annual reviews under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol

61. Decision 24/CMP.1 requested the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources, to develop and implement the training programme for members of ERTs participating in the initial reviews under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol, including testing of experts and a final seminar for the course on application of adjustments. The courses covered important aspects for the review of the initial reports, such as national systems, application of adjustments and modalities for the accounting of assigned amounts under Article 7, paragraph 4, of the Kyoto Protocol. These courses have been offered to experts online since 2006. The majority of experienced experts completed the training courses and passed the mandatory examination online in 2006 and had the support of an instructor for the course of adjustments.

62. At its twenty-seventh session, the SBI requested the secretariat¹³ to develop two new training courses under the Kyoto Protocol, covering activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, and the modalities for accounting of assigned amounts, in particular in relation to the national registry, including the standard electronic format. The secretariat developed these training courses during 2009 and between July and August of the same year offered them online for experienced and new experts. Fifty-six experts enrolled for these courses and 51 passed one or more examinations in August 2009.

63. By its decision 8/CMP.5, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol requested the secretariat to develop and implement the updated training programme for members of ERTs participating in annual reviews under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol, including the examination of experts. It also encouraged Annex I Parties that are also Parties to the Kyoto Protocol which are in a position to do so to provide financial support for enhancing the training programme. The training programme is intended to train members of ERTs for the review of information submitted under Article 7 of the Kyoto Protocol. All training courses are offered online and the examinations are offered online three to four times a year. All courses are available, without an instructor, to trainees throughout the year. This training programme was developed on the basis of the existing courses; some are mandatory for all reviewers, while some are mandatory for LRs and some other experts qualified for the review of particular aspects of the information submitted under Article 7 of the Kyoto Protocol. The training programme consists of the course on national systems, the course on application of adjustments, the course on modalities for accounting of assigned amounts under Article 7, paragraph 4, the course on review of national registries and information on assigned amounts and the course on review of activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol.

64. Nine experts passed one or more examinations in 2007 and nine experts passed one or more examinations in 2008. In 2009, 37 experts passed one or more examinations. In 2010, 194 experts participated in the online training courses and 144 experts passed one or more examinations. In 2010, a highly experienced expert and LR from a non-Annex I Party was invited to be the instructor for the course on application of adjustments.

VI. Greenhouse gas information system

65. The SBSTA, at its twenty-seventh session, requested the secretariat,¹⁴ subject to the availability of supplementary funding, to develop a module to the CRF Reporter software for the tables for reporting activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol. It further requested the secretariat to release this module by 1 April 2009, at the latest, after the testing of a trial version of the module in cooperation with the reporting Parties, in order to facilitate the mandatory submission of the tables by Parties in 2010.

66. In 2010, Parties successfully made use of the CRF Reporter software for preparing and submitting their GHG inventories, including the tables for reporting activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol. No major issues were identified in the reporting process, which is an indicator of confidence in the use of the CRF Reporter software and in the quality of the software itself.

67. The secretariat is planning a release of the CRF Reporter software with minor changes in December 2010. This will not adversely affect the timely preparation and submission by Parties of their GHG inventories in 2011.

¹³ FCCC/SBI/2007/34, paragraph 100.

¹⁴ FCCC/SBSTA/2007/16, paragraph 103.

68. In 2010, the secretariat continued to develop the GHG information system, including implementation of the changes in the compilation and accounting database and review tools to support the management of information provided in the tables for reporting activities under Article 3, paragraphs 3 and 4, of the Kyoto Protocol. Also, the secretariat made the effort to include new inventory data in the GHG data interface¹⁵ application as early as July 2010, in order to make it available for inventory review teams and to have the latest information available for negotiations at the additional sessions of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA), AWG-KP 13 and AWG-LCA 11, held from 2 to 6 August 2010, and AWG-KP 14 and AWG-LCA 12, held from 4 to 9 October 2010. Finally, other parts of the GHG information system, such as the GHG data warehouse and business intelligence components, have been maintained and supported in order to ensure continued quality and to address some issues identified by Parties and review experts.

¹⁵ <http://unfccc.int/ghg_data/items/3800.php>.