



Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

Thirty-eighth session

Bonn, 3–14 June 2013

Agenda item 10(a)

Methodological issues under the Convention

Work programme on the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties

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Draft conclusions proposed by the Chair

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) continued its discussion on the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties (hereinafter referred to as the review guidelines), with a view to:

(a) Completing the revision of the review guidelines for national communications and biennial reports by the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) (November 2013);

(b) Completing the revision of the “Guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention” by COP 20 (December 2014).

2. SBSTA 37 requested the lead reviewers to discuss, at their meeting in 2013, options to improve the cost-effectiveness, efficiency and practicality of the review process. SBSTA 38 took note of the information contained in the conclusions and recommendations of the 10th meeting of inventory lead reviewers in response to this request.¹

3. The SBSTA noted that the appropriate streamlining² of the review process could improve its efficiency and cost-effectiveness. The SBSTA also noted that potential and appropriate streamlining of the review process will be considered, while ensuring the transparency and quality of the review process.

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2013/INF.2, paragraphs 9–14.

² The need to have the cost effective, efficient and practical review processes without compromising the quality.

4. The SBSTA concluded that the review of national communications should be conducted in conjunction with the review of biennial reports in the years when both reports are submitted. The SBSTA agreed that the same information submitted by Parties in national communications, biennial reports and national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories would be reviewed only once.

5. The SBSTA noted that reviews of national communications and biennial reports could be conducted through a combination of in-country and centralized reviews, only through centralized reviews, or only through in-country reviews. The SBSTA also acknowledged the concerns raised by Parties with small-scale economies with respect to the format of the reviews and that further discussions on the specific format and combination of reviews could be carried out during the workshop to be held in October 2013, referred to in paragraph 8 below.

6. The SBSTA concluded that the option of supplementing the current expert review teams (ERTs) with a standing group of experts, or introducing service fees for review experts, could be explored with respect to the impact on the quality, efficiency and costs of the review process.

7. The SBSTA identified two alternatives to detailing and structuring the work on the revision of the review guidelines:

(a) Alternative 1: the revision of the review guidelines for national communications, biennial reports and GHG inventories envisages that the structure and key elements of the review guidelines would comprise the following:

(i) The general approach to the review, including, inter alia, the overall objectives, timing and procedures, ERTs and institutional arrangements, reporting and publication;

(ii) Specific requirements for the review of national communications, including, inter alia, the purpose and scope of reviews, timing and reporting;

(iii) Specific requirements for the review of biennial reports, including, inter alia, the purpose and scope of reviews, timing and reporting;

(iv) Specific requirements for the review of GHG inventories, including, inter alia, the purpose and scope of reviews, timing and reporting.

(b) Alternative 2: the review guidelines for national communications, biennial reports and GHG inventories should be three separate review guidelines.

8. The SBSTA concluded that the technical workshop to be held in October 2013³ should focus first on mapping information requirements contained in the biennial report and national communication reporting guidelines to identify overlapping reporting requirements (e.g. substantively common and duplicated information) and unique information in the biennial reports and national communications. Reporting information identified as unique to biennial reports could serve as the starting point for a discussion for developing biennial report review guidelines. Information identified as overlapping to national communication and biennial report reporting guidelines could serve as input to a discussion on streamlining of the review process. Parties concluded that both discussions should take place at the October 2013 workshop to be organized by the secretariat under the guidance of the SBSTA Chair.

9. The SBSTA invited Parties, in accordance with the work programme on the revision of the review guidelines agreed upon at SBSTA 37, to submit to the secretariat, by 15 July 2013, additional views on, inter alia, the scope, structure, timing, outline and publication of

³ FCCC/SBSTA/2012/5, annex I.

review reports, and specific views on key elements and content and proposed texts, of the review guidelines for national communications and biennial reports. It requested the secretariat to prepare, by 15 September 2013, a synthesis report of Parties' views and a draft of the review guidelines based on the Parties' submissions, in which the options proposed by Parties should be traceable in a transparent manner, as inputs to the discussions at the October 2013 workshop.

10. The SBSTA highlighted the importance of training for the review of biennial reports and national communications, in particular for experts from developing countries. The SBSTA further requested the secretariat to begin the development of new training materials and procedures before the review of the next submission of the national communications and the submission of the first biennial reports. The SBSTA requested the secretariat to present developed training materials and procedures at SBSTA 39 (November 2013). The development of training materials should cover the reporting requirements and the procedures for the general aspects of the review process. The SBSTA agreed to consider, at SBSTA 39, the next steps in the development of the training materials.

11. The SBSTA requested the secretariat to review and, if necessary, to make changes to the nomination form for the UNFCCC roster of experts. Furthermore, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to inform Parties of any changes to the nomination form, including of a request to nominate experts for the reviews of biennial reports. The SBSTA recommended that Parties update and expand the UNFCCC roster of experts by September 2013 in order to meet the particular expertise needs of the reviews of biennial reports and national communications.

12. The SBSTA took note of the estimated budgetary implications of the activities to be undertaken by the secretariat as referred to in paragraphs 8 and 10 above.

13. The SBSTA requested that the actions of the secretariat called for in these conclusions be undertaken subject to the availability of financial resources.