



United Nations

FCCC/SBI/2016/17



Framework Convention on
Climate Change

Distr.: General
25 October 2016

Original: English

Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Forty-fifth session

Marrakech, 7–14 November 2016

Item 4(b) of the provisional agenda

Reporting from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

**Work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications
from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention**

Recommendations on elements to be considered in a future revision of the guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

This analytical paper, prepared by the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE), contains an analysis of recent developments in reporting requirements and constraints, challenges and lessons learned by Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) in preparing their national communications. The document is based on an analysis of the inputs provided by non-Annex I Parties through a survey conducted by the CGE between September 2015 and January 2016, and other relevant reports prepared by the CGE since 2011, including workshop reports and technical reports. The document contains the recommendations of the CGE on elements to be considered in a future revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”.

* This document was submitted after the due date in order to take into account the outcomes of the 17th meeting of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, held in Bonn, Germany, from 30 August to 1 September 2016.

GE.16-18544(E)



* 1 6 1 8 5 4 4 *

Please recycle



Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	1–7	3
A. Mandate	1–4	3
B. Scope of the note	5–6	3
C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation	7	3
II. Context	8–17	4
A. Recent developments	8–12	4
B. Experiences in using the existing guidelines for the preparation of national communications	13–17	4
III. Recommendations	18	5

Annex

Recommendations of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention on elements to be considered in a future revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”	6
---	---

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 19/CP.19, decided to continue the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) for a period of five years, from 2014 to 2018.
2. The terms of reference of the CGE¹ specify that it shall provide recommendations, as appropriate, on elements to be considered in a future revision of the guidelines for the preparation of national communications and biennial update reports (BURs) from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties), taking into account the difficulties encountered by non-Annex I Parties in the preparation of their national communications and BURs.
3. The CGE, in response to this mandate, agreed to prepare, as a part of its work programme for 2016, an analytical paper compiling and synthesizing available information on the problems, constraints, lessons learned and best practices in the process of and the preparation of national communications by non-Annex I Parties.
4. The CGE also agreed to conduct a survey to gather more up-to-date feedback from non-Annex I Parties, as well as multilateral agencies involved in the process of and the preparation of national communications, with a view to complementing the compiled and synthesized information.

B. Scope of the note

5. The analytical paper analyses and synthesizes the past CGE reports on challenges and lessons learned and best practices in applying the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”,² the feedback from non-Annex I Parties on their experiences, challenges faced and suggestions for improvements in using those guidelines,³ as well as from multilateral agencies involved in the process of and the preparation of national communications, and the reports of CGE training workshops on the preparation of national communications and BURs.
6. This paper contains the recommendations of the CGE on elements to be considered in a future revision of the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

7. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation, having considered this report, may wish to provide further guidance to the CGE on the implementation of its mandate relating to paragraph 2(d) of its terms of reference⁴ on the provision of recommendations, as appropriate, on elements to be considered in a future revision of the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties, taking into account the difficulties encountered by non-Annex I Parties in the preparation of their most recent national communications.

¹ Decision 19/CP.19, annex.

² Decision 17/CP.8, annex.

³ All non-Annex I Parties were invited to participate in an online survey. See paragraph 14 for further details.

⁴ As footnote 1 above.

II. Context

A. Recent developments

8. In accordance with Article 4, paragraph 1, and Article 12, paragraphs 1 and 5, of the Convention, each non-Annex I Party shall make its initial communication within three years of the entry into force of the Convention for that Party, or of the availability of financial resources in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 3. Parties that are least developed countries may make their initial communication at their discretion. The communication shall include information on anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases (GHGs) not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, steps taken or envisaged by the Party to implement the Convention and any other information that the Party considers relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention and suitable for inclusion in its communication, including, if feasible, material relevant for the calculation of global emission trends.

9. Further, with a view to enhancing reporting in national communications, COP 16 decided that non-Annex I Parties should submit their national communications every four years or in accordance with any further decisions on frequency by the COP, taking into account a differentiated timetable and the prompt provision of financial resources to cover the agreed full costs incurred by non-Annex I Parties in preparing their national communications.⁵

10. Non-Annex I Parties prepare their national communications following the guidelines contained in decision 17/CP.8 and its annex.

11. COP 16 also decided that developing countries, consistent with their capabilities and the level of support provided for reporting, should also submit BURs⁶ as an update⁷ to the most recently submitted national communication. COP 17 adopted the “UNFCCC biennial update reporting guidelines for Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”.⁸

12. Further, COP 21 adopted the Paris Agreement. Article 13 of the Paris Agreement established an enhanced transparency framework for action and support with built-in flexibility which takes into account Parties’ different capacities and builds upon collective experience. The modalities, procedures and guidelines of this transparency framework shall build upon and eventually supersede the measurement, reporting and verification system established by decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 40–47 and 60–64, and decision 2/CP.17, paragraphs 12–62, immediately following the submission of the final biennial reports and BURs.⁹

B. Experiences in using the existing guidelines for the preparation of national communications

13. In 2014, the CGE prepared a technical report¹⁰ on problems and constraints, as well as lessons learned and best practices, in the process of and the preparation of national communications and BURs by non-Annex I Parties.

⁵ Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 60(b).

⁶ Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 60(c).

⁷ Decision 1/CP.17, annex III, paragraph 2.

⁸ Decision 2/CP.17, annex III.

⁹ Decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 98.

¹⁰ FCCC/SBI/2014/INF.16.

14. The CGE, with support from the secretariat, conducted an online survey, from 7 September 2015 to 26 January 2016, seeking to identify challenges and improvements in the elements of the guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties. A total of 42 respondents from 28 non-Annex I Parties and one multilateral agency responded to the survey. The non-Annex I Party respondents comprised 20 from African States, 3 from Asia-Pacific States, 4 from Latin American and Caribbean States, 1 from Eastern European States, 5 additional respondents who did not provide information on their country representation and 4 respondents who provided more than one response.

15. The survey results reconfirmed most of the challenges identified in the technical report referred to in paragraph 13 above.

16. In general, while acknowledging the different national circumstances and capacities of non-Annex I Parties, there appears to be some commonly encountered challenges in using the guidelines for the preparation of national communications, such as:

(a) Understanding the level and format of information to be reported across different areas covered in the national communications;

(b) A lack of specificity in some areas, for example on what exactly needs to be reported on national circumstances and institutional arrangements. In that regard, the templates for documenting the institutional arrangements disseminated by the CGE were noted to be a very helpful tool by many participants of the 2016 workshops on the building of sustainable national greenhouse gas inventory management systems, and the use of the 2006 *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* organized by the secretariat in collaboration with the IPCC and the CGE;

(c) Choice and use of *IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* – many experts from non-Annex I Parties have expressed confusion on which guidelines should be used for their national GHG inventories;

(d) Reconciling the preparation of national communications with other information being prepared and submitted, for example on national adaptation plans, nationally appropriate mitigation actions, intended nationally determined contributions and technology needs assessments.

17. The hands-on regional training workshops on BURs¹¹ conducted by the CGE in 2016 further substantiated the observations mentioned in paragraph 16 above. In addition to capacity and data constraints, the participants have highlighted the following issues: the need for reporting templates, harmonization between the information reported on the intended nationally determined contributions, and the mitigation actions and their effects reported in the BURs. They also emphasized the benefits of undertaking work on the preparation of national communications and BURs on a continuous basis.

III. Recommendations

18. The CGE decided at its 17th meeting, taking into account the recent developments with regard to reporting from non-Annex I Parties and the CGE survey results, as well as the lessons learned by non-Annex I Parties in applying the guidelines for the preparation of their national communications, to develop recommendations on elements to be considered in a future revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties”. The recommendations are contained in the annex.

¹¹ See document FCCC/SBI/2016/15.

9 **Annex**

Recommendations of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention on elements to be considered in a future revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”

The following tables summarize the recommendations provided by the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention at its 17th meeting on elements to be considered in a future revision of the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention”.

Table 1
National circumstances

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on national circumstances

5	Use templates to report on the institutional arrangements established at a high level, with the aim of describing the relationships between the key stakeholders involved in or leading the preparation of the various components of a national communication
---	---

Abbreviation: CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

Table 2
National greenhouse gas inventories

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on national greenhouse gas inventories

5 and 13	Use templates to report information relevant to national GHG inventory
5, 6, 13 21	Provide, in an annex, a description of institutional arrangements, methods, emission factors and activity data used in Parties’ estimation of emissions/removals, quality assurance/quality control, archiving, and improvement plan, as appropriate

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on national greenhouse gas inventories

7	Report GHG inventory not older than four years prior to submission Provide consistent annual time series from 1990 and/or 1994
8, 11, 12, 22, 23 and tables 1 and 2	Use the <i>2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories</i> , or any future IPCC guidelines agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties on this matter
12	Application and report of: key category analysis and uncertainty assessment

Abbreviations: CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, GHG = Greenhouse gas, IPCC = Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Table 3
Vulnerability and adaptation

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on vulnerability and adaptation

5, 30, and 31/35	Use templates to report in detail on the institutional arrangements established to sustain the development and submission of vulnerability and adaptation assessment and action on a continuous basis Apply, as appropriate, the conclusions from the IPCC in its latest assessment report agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties on this matter
33	Use the latest IPCC and national climate scenarios and, as appropriate, socioeconomic scenarios for assessment of impacts of climate change: (a) In conducting the analysis of climate change impacts and vulnerability, Parties should use, as appropriate, historical and current climate data, as well as projected climate scenarios, building on the experience gained during the preparation of previous national communications and the preparation and implementation of, as appropriate, national adaptation plans, national adaptation programmes of action and other national plans; (b) Report on the implementation of adaptation programmes and measures and, as appropriate, lessons learned since the previous national communication Identify the capacity needs for adaptation actions, and include, as appropriate, any reference to the technology

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on vulnerability and adaptation

	needs arising from the technology needs assessment and technology action plans
	Report on the implementation of adaptation plans, programmes and measures and, as appropriate, lessons learned and best practices since the last national communication
35 and 36	<p>Report on the implementation of the Convention, and use of policy frameworks, such as national adaptation programmes, plans and policies for developing and implementing adaptation strategies and measures:</p> <p>(a) Reference to documented best practices and lessons learned in developing national strategies, plans and programmes for climate change adaptation, taking into account experience gained from the preparation of previous national communications;</p> <p>(b) Evaluation and prioritization of adaptation measures to assist Parties in prioritizing adaptation measures, including, as appropriate, the cost and co-benefits associated with prioritized adaptation actions and measures, when available</p>
30 and 36	<p>Conduct a vulnerability assessment, including through the use of methodologies/tools for the evaluation of adaptation strategies and measures. In doing so, Parties should:</p> <p>(a) Have flexibility to select methods/scenarios particularly suitable for specific sectors;</p> <p>(b) Use tools/models suitable for assessment across sectors, such as integrated assessment models</p>

Abbreviations: CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, IPCC = Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

Table 4
Mitigation

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on mitigation

37	<p>Use templates to report in detail on the institutional arrangements established to sustain the development and submission of mitigation assessment and action on a continuous basis</p> <p>Allow flexibility for different national circumstances</p>
38	Include an explanation of the methodology and/or assumptions used in assessing socioeconomic and

environmental impacts of mitigation measures, and a description of the results:

- 39
- (a) Provide information on mitigation actions and their effects, gases and sectors covered;
 - (b) Use appropriate technical resources; but a list of available tools would be too long and might not cover all possible activities

Abbreviation: CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

Table 5

Other information relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention

Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8

Recommendations of the CGE on other information relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention

- 41
- Report on steps taken to integrate climate change considerations into policy development
- Provide a brief description of:
- (a) Ways in which climate change issues (adaptation, mitigation and national greenhouse gas inventories) are considered/intended to be considered in relevant planning frameworks at the national and sectoral levels;
 - (b) National climate change policies, strategies and programmes that have been enacted, including the institutional structures for their implementation
- 43 and 44
- Take into account the latest implementation plan of the Global Climate Observing System when reporting on research and systematic observation
- Provide information on the current status of national plans, programmes and support for ground-and-space-based climate observation systems
- Provide information on climate change research programmes:
- (a) Information on climate change research programmes in the areas of mitigation and adaptation, and on the development of emission factors and activity data at the national and/or regional level, including opportunities for strengthening these programmes;
 - (b) Details of bilateral and multilateral support received for the implementation of projects and programmes in the above-mentioned areas;
 - (c) A brief description of specific needs and priorities identified for strengthening research programmes

- 45 Take into account the latest developments on Article 6 of the Convention related to reporting from non-Annex I Parties
- Provide a brief description of:
- (a) Activities undertaken to implement Article 6 of the Convention, including the institutional and/or legal frameworks, and the means to monitor and assess their effectiveness;
 - (b) Existing activities and plans to incorporate climate change issues into national (formal and non-formal) educational programmes;
 - (c) Existing and/or planned public awareness programmes and campaigns and the level of involvement of relevant stakeholders;
 - (d) Identified gaps, needs and priorities in relation to climate change education, training and public awareness, including international assistance needed
- 48 Provide information on information and networking
- Provide a brief description of:
- (a) Efforts to facilitate information-sharing within countries, including existing channels, to ensure the efficient flow of information to the grass-roots level;
 - (b) Efforts to facilitate information-sharing between developing countries and regions;
 - (c) The level of participation in international information networking, including centres of excellence;
 - (d) Constraints encountered in facilitating the sharing and dissemination of information and in networking arrangements as described above
- Consider the use of tables/graphs to categorize the information and facilitate its preparation
- To address the repetitiveness of information over several national communications, non-Annex I Parties could provide an update on the actions they have taken since the previous national communication (a simple tabular format could be: “Progress since the previous national communication”)
- Non-Annex I Parties could provide further avenues they will explore to enhance their action during the upcoming period (e.g. seek support, collaborate regionally, etc.)

Abbreviation: CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.

Table 6

Constraints and gaps, and related financial, technical and capacity needs

<i>Reference to paragraph(s) of the annex to decision 17/CP.8</i>	<i>Recommendations of the CGE on constraints and gaps, and related financial, technical and capacity needs</i>
49	Draw language from the BUR guidelines in order to allow non-Annex I Parties to provide information on financial resources, technology transfer, capacity-building and technical support
51	Consider the use of tables and graphs to categorize the information and facilitate its preparation, as well as methodological approaches to undertake this reporting Consider providing options for Parties to reflect the evolution of needs and the support received over the period covered by the report
52	Reporting on projects proposed for financing: encourage the inclusion of an annex and a template to enable the provision of more detailed information relating to the list of climate-related projects proposed, by category, for which financing is required, to the extent that Parties' capacities permit
53	Present information on finance, technology transfer and capacity-building needs for mitigation and adaptation actions identified as a priority in a holistic manner
55	Link to specific capacity-building needs to be addressed for the preparation of subsequent national communications

Abbreviations: BUR = biennial update report, CGE = Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention.