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Reports on other activities

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

Technical review of greenhouse gas inventories of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

Annual report by the secretariat

Summary

This report provides information on the greenhouse gas inventory reviews conducted in the 2015 and 2016 review cycles, including on the selection of experts and lead reviewers, the composition of the expert review teams and plans for the 2017 review cycle. It also provides information on review training activities under the Convention, the 13th meeting of inventory lead reviewers and progress made in updating the UNFCCC roster of experts and revising the standardized data comparisons, tools and other materials used in the reviews.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP) requested the secretariat to prepare an annual report on greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory review activities, including any recommendations resulting from the meetings of inventory lead reviewers (LRs) participating in the technical review of 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).¹ More recently, the COP requested the secretariat to report annually to the SBSTA on the composition of expert review teams (ERTs), including the selection of experts and LRs, and on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria for ERTs.² The collective annual report to the SBSTA prepared as part of that report at the 13th meeting of inventory LRs, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews,³ is contained in the annex.

2. The COP requested the secretariat to include in the report on the meeting of inventory LRs referred to in paragraph 1 above any revised set of the standardized data comparisons, for consideration by the SBSTA, as well as information on the development of new and revised review tools and materials that support the tasks of the ERTs.⁴

3. Furthermore, the COP requested the secretariat to include in its report information on the training programme for review experts for the technical review of GHG inventories of Annex I Parties, in particular on examination procedures and the selection of trainees and instructors, in order to allow Parties to assess the effectiveness of the programme.⁵ In addition, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to include in that report information on progress made in updating the UNFCCC roster of experts.⁶

B. Scope of the report

4. This report provides information on activities relating to GHG inventory reviews conducted in the 2015 and 2016 review cycles and plans for the 2017 review cycle.⁷

5. The report focuses on the elements of the GHG inventory review process that are specific to the Convention and should be read in conjunction with the annual report on the technical review of GHG inventories and other information reported by Parties included in Annex I, as defined in Article 1, paragraph 7, of the Kyoto Protocol.⁸ The lessons learned from and problems encountered in the review process under the Convention have many elements in common with those in relation to the reviews under the Kyoto Protocol.

¹ Decision 12/CP.9, paragraph 10.

² Decision 13/CP.20, annex, paragraph 40.

³ Prepared in accordance with decision 13/CP.20, annex, paragraphs 44 and 78.

⁴ Decision 13/CP.20, paragraph 6, and annex, paragraph 78.

⁵ Decision 14/CP.20, paragraph 3.

⁶ FCCC/SBSTA/2006/5, paragraph 95.

⁷ For the 2016 review cycle, information as at 21 September 2016 only is available.

⁸ FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.12.

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

6. The SBSTA will be invited to take note of this report.⁹

II. Review activities

7. The GHG inventory review activities, along with some activities for the training of review experts and the organization of the meetings of LRs, are funded from the UNFCCC core budget. Some other related activities, such as refresher seminars for experienced reviewers, the strengthening of the secretariat's capacity to support review and training activities and the development of the GHG information system, continue to be funded by voluntary contributions to supplementary funds.

Individual greenhouse gas inventory reviews

1. 2015 review cycle

8. Following the adoption 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 greenhouse gas inventories" (annex to decision 24/CP.19) (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines), the software for preparing the common reporting format (CRF) tables, CRF Reporter, had to be redesigned. COP 20 noted that the version of CRF Reporter available at that time (version 5.0.0) was not fully functioning and, accordingly, reiterated that Annex I Parties in 2015 could submit their CRF tables after 15 April 2015, but no later than the corresponding delay in the availability of CRF Reporter.¹⁰ The delay in the release of fully functioning software for the submission of the CRF tables resulted in delayed GHG inventory submissions for many Annex I Parties. Despite those challenges, the secretariat organized the reviews of four 2015 GHG inventory submissions in 2015 (see para. 9 below). The reviews of the 2015 GHG inventory submissions of the rest of the Annex I Parties were organized in conjunction with the reviews of their 2016 GHG inventory submissions.¹¹

9. In 2015, one in-country review, one centralized review (covering two Parties) and one desk review, covering a total of four Annex I Parties, were conducted. The reports on those reviews were published between 30 March and 13 April 2016.¹² Table 1 provides information on the 2015 review cycle and the publication date of each review report.

10. There have been delays in the preparation and publication of review reports observed in the 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 review cycles.¹³ However, the efforts to improve timeliness resulting from the relevant recommendations arising from LR

⁹ In accordance with decision 13/CP.20, annex, paragraph 53.

¹⁰ Decision 13/CP.20, paragraphs 12 and 13.

¹¹ As requested in decision 20/CP.21, paragraph 1.

¹² The published review reports are available at <<http://unfccc.int/9477>>.

¹³ For more information on the delays in the 2010 review cycle, see document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/INF.13, paragraphs 9–11; for the 2011 review cycle, see document FCCC/SBSTA/2012/INF.10, paragraphs 9–14; for the 2012 review cycle, see document FCCC/SBSTA/2013/INF.8, paragraphs 9–11; for the 2013 review cycle, see document FCCC/SBSTA/2014/INF.17, paragraphs 9–12; for the 2014 review cycle, see document FCCC/SBSTA/2015/INF.9, paragraph 9 and table 1; and for the 2015 review cycle, see paragraph 9 above and table 1.

meetings have started to show their effects: in the 2011 review cycle, only 8 review reports were published within one year of the due date of the annual submissions, whereas 16 were published in 2012, 22 in 2013, 26 in 2014 and 4 (i.e. for all of the reviews that took place in 2015) in 2015.

Table 1
2015 greenhouse gas inventory review cycle, including publication dates of annual review reports

<i>Party</i>	<i>Review week dates (review type and number)</i>	<i>ARR publication date (number of weeks after review week)</i>
Australia	14–19 September 2015 (ICR1-2015)	13 April 2016 (28)
Austria	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR10)	In preparation
Belarus	26 September to 1 October 2016 (ICR7)	In preparation
Belgium	12–17 September 2016 (CR5)	In preparation
Bulgaria	10–15 October 2016 (ICR9)	In preparation
Canada	12–17 October 2015 (CR1-2015)	30 March 2016 (24)
Croatia	19–24 September 2016 (CR8)	In preparation
Cyprus	12–17 September 2016 (ICR2)	In preparation
Czechia	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR2)	In preparation
Denmark	26 September to 1 October 2016 (ICR6)	In preparation
Estonia	19–24 September 2016 (CR7)	In preparation
European Union	19–24 September 2016 (CR8)	In preparation
Finland	5–10 September 2016 (CR3)	In preparation
France	19–24 September 2016 (ICR4)	In preparation
Germany	19–24 September 2016 (ICR5)	In preparation
Greece	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR2)	In preparation
Hungary	19–24 September 2016 (ICR3)	In preparation
Iceland	19–24 September 2016 (CR8)	In preparation
Ireland	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR2)	In preparation
Italy	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR10)	In preparation
Japan	17–22 October 2016 (DR2)	In preparation
Kazakhstan	5–10 September 2016 (CR3)	In preparation
Latvia	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR1)	In preparation
Liechtenstein	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)	In preparation
Lithuania	5–10 September 2016 (CR4)	In preparation

<i>Party</i>	<i>Review week dates (review type and number)</i>	<i>ARR publication date (number of weeks after review week)</i>
Luxembourg	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR10)	In preparation
Malta	10–15 October 2016 (ICR8)	In preparation
Monaco	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)	In preparation
Netherlands	19–24 September 2016 (CR7)	In preparation
New Zealand	28 September to 3 October 2015 (DR1-2015)	13 April 2016 (28)
Norway	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR1)	In preparation
Poland	12–17 September 2016 (CR5)	In preparation
Portugal	12–17 September 2016 (CR6)	In preparation
Romania	12–17 September 2016 (CR5)	In preparation
Russian Federation	17–22 October 2016 (DR1)	In preparation
Slovakia	5–10 September 2016 (CR4)	In preparation
Slovenia	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)	In preparation
Spain	12–17 September 2016 (CR6)	In preparation
Sweden	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR1)	In preparation
Switzerland	5–10 September 2016 (ICR1)	In preparation
Turkey	17–22 October 2016 (DR2)	In preparation
Ukraine	12–17 October 2015 (CR1-2015)	6 April 2016 (25)
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	12–17 September 2016 (CR6)	In preparation
United States of America	19–24 September 2016 (CR7)	In preparation

Abbreviations: ARR = annual review report, CR = centralized review, DR = desk review, ICR = in-country review.

2. 2016 review cycle

Annual submissions

11. Between 15 April and 21 September 2016, the secretariat received submissions of annual GHG inventories from 43 Annex I Parties¹⁴ (see table 2).

12. In accordance with decision 20/CP.21, the secretariat continued to make improvements to the CRF Reporter functionality, prioritizing the resolution of outstanding issues related to transparency and accuracy. The recovery plan proved to be successful, as the version of CRF Reporter made available on 3 May 2016 (version 5.14) enabled almost

¹⁴ As at 21 September 2016, Monaco's CRF tables and national inventory report had not been submitted.

all Parties to submit their GHG inventories under both the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol.

Table 2

Submission of greenhouse gas inventories in 2016 and review dates and types

<i>Party</i>	<i>Original submission date</i>		<i>Review dates (review type and number)</i>
	<i>NIR</i>	<i>CRF tables</i>	
Australia	7 May 2016	27 May 2016	5–10 September 2016 (CR4)
Austria	14 April 2016	14 April 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR10)
Belarus	10 June 2016	10 June 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (ICR7)
Belgium	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (CR5)
Bulgaria	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	10–15 October 2016 (ICR9)
Canada	14 April 2016	14 April 2016	17–22 October 2016 (DR1)
Croatia	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (CR8)
Cyprus	13 April 2016	13 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (ICR2)
Czechia	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR2)
Denmark	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (ICR6)
Estonia	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (CR7)
European Union	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (CR8)
Finland	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	5–10 September 2016 (CR3)
France	14 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (ICR4)
Germany	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (ICR5)
Greece	25 April 2016	15 April 2016	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR2)
Hungary	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (ICR3)
Iceland	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (CR8)
Ireland	15 June 2016	15 June 2016	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR2)
Italy	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR10)
Japan	14 April 2016	14 April 2016	17–22 October 2016 (DR2)
Kazakhstan	2 September 2016	15 April 2016	5–10 September 2016 (CR3)
Latvia	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR1)
Liechtenstein	27 May 2016	15 April 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)
Lithuania	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	5–10 September 2016 (CR4)
Luxembourg	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR10)
Malta	19 April 2016	14 April 2016	10–15 October 2016 (ICR8)

Party	Original submission date		
	NIR	CRF tables	Review dates (review type and number)
Monaco			26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)
Netherlands	14 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (CR7)
New Zealand	20 May 2016	20 May 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)
Norway	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR1)
Poland	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (CR5)
Portugal	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (CR6)
Romania	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (CR5)
Russian Federation		15 April 2016	17–22 October 2016 (DR1)
Slovakia	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	5–10 September 2016 (CR4)
Slovenia	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	26 September to 1 October 2016 (CR9)
Spain	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (CR6)
Sweden	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	29 August to 3 September 2016 (CR1)
Switzerland	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	5–10 September 2016 (ICR1)
Turkey	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	17–22 October 2016 (DR2)
Ukraine	24 May 2016	24 May 2016	5–10 September 2016 (CR3)
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	12–17 September 2016 (CR6)
United States of America	15 April 2016	15 April 2016	19–24 September 2016 (CR7)

Note: Blank cells indicate that no submission had been received as at 21 September 2016. Once the submissions have been received, they will be available on the UNFCCC website at <<http://unfccc.int/9492>>.

Abbreviations: CR = centralized review, CRF = common reporting format, DR = desk review, ICR = in-country review, NIR = national inventory report.

Organization of reviews and composition of expert review teams

13. In accordance with the “Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part III: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention” (annex to decision 13/CP.20) (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC Annex I inventory review guidelines), the GHG inventory review process is conducted in two stages: initial assessment by the secretariat, which results in status reports and assessment reports, and individual review by ERTs, which results in annual review reports.

14. The initial assessment stage provides an immediate quality assessment aiming to verify that the GHG inventory submission is consistent, complete and timely and its format

correct. As at 21 September 2016, status reports for all 43 GHG inventory submissions received in 2016 had been prepared and published on the UNFCCC website.¹⁵ Assessment reports provide a preliminary assessment of the inventory of an individual Party and identify any potential inventory problems, which are then assessed during the individual review stage. Assessment reports are not published but are provided to the ERTs for further assessment.

15. In the 2016 review cycle, the secretariat coordinated the review of the GHG inventories of 44 Parties by means of 9 in-country reviews, 2 desk reviews and 10 centralized reviews. Table 2 shows the review dates and type of review for each Party. The reports on the reviews conducted in 2016 are in preparation.

16. In accordance with annex I to decision 12/CP.9 and the annex to decision 14/CP.20, new experts who have taken the training courses for reviews under the Convention and have passed the corresponding examinations can participate in an ERT.¹⁶ In 2016, the secretariat invited 289 experts to participate in the GHG inventory reviews, 72 of whom declined on account of being unavailable due to previous commitments, a heavy workload, a lack of financial resources or other reasons. In addition, 45 experts informed the secretariat of their availability on dates other than the scheduled review dates on which they were invited to participate or of their availability only on particular dates, which introduced additional challenges for the planning of the reviews.

17. In selecting members of ERTs, the secretariat seeks to ensure an overall geographical balance in the number of experts from Annex I Parties and Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties). In the 2016 review cycle, a total of 217 individuals from 78 Parties served as inventory experts on review teams. Of those experts, 101 were from non-Annex I Parties, 32 from Annex I Parties with economies in transition and 84 from other Annex I Parties.

18. Between 2000, when individual reviews of GHG inventory submissions were first conducted during the trial period, and 2016, 495 individual experts from 100 Parties (41 Annex I Parties and 59 non-Annex I Parties) participated in GHG inventory review activities.¹⁷

19. Table 3 provides a breakdown of the participation of experts by nominating Party in the 2016 review cycle (the participation of the same expert in multiple reviews is considered as different experts participating in those reviews in the counting). It shows that experts from the following Annex I Parties were not involved in the review process in 2016: Belarus, Croatia, Cyprus, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Portugal and Slovenia. In general, there were several reasons for experts not participating in the 2016 review cycle: (1) some Annex I Parties, for example Liechtenstein and Monaco, had not nominated any experts; (b) some Parties had nominated experts only recently and those experts had not yet taken the training courses and passed the relevant examinations; (3) some Parties had not fully updated their nominations to the UNFCCC roster of experts and some nominated experts included on the roster were not available for the reviews; (4) some experts had a heavy workload and other job obligations during the review period; and (5) some Annex I Parties were experiencing a shortage of financial resources for supporting experts' participation in the reviews; for example, in the course of the preparations for the 2016 review cycle, the secretariat received 25 requests from experts nominated by Annex I

¹⁵ <<http://unfccc.int/9492>>. The status report for Monaco had not been prepared because Monaco's submission had not been received as at 21 September 2016.

¹⁶ For more information on the training of review experts, see chapter V of document FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.12.

¹⁷ These totals do not include 12 observers that participated in the reviews between 2000 and 2008.

Parties for exceptional funding. Table 3 also shows that many Parties continued to strongly support the review process by providing multiple experts and that experts from the following Parties participated in seven or more reviews in 2016: Brazil, China, Germany, Ghana, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Russian Federation and Romania. Such strong support is a key factor in making the reviews successful.

20. According to the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines, Parties may submit their national inventory reports (NIRs) in any of the official languages of the United Nations. The UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines also encourage Parties to submit, where relevant, an English translation of their NIR, which is the working language of the secretariat. Submitting NIRs in a language other than English may limit the accessibility of Parties' GHG inventory information to the COP and other interested Parties and puts an additional burden on the secretariat to process the information provided and to find review experts with knowledge of that language in addition to English. In addition, many experts have to review the same Parties' submissions year after year because of their language skills, reducing the valuable perspective and expertise gained by different experts reviewing a GHG inventory in successive years and limiting to a certain extent the scope and focus of the review activities. Further, those experts are not able to use their experience and contribute to the review of other Parties' submissions. These issues are especially relevant in the case of centralized reviews.

21. When inviting experts to participate as LRs, the secretariat seeks to ensure an overall geographical balance in the number of experts from Annex I Parties and non-Annex I Parties. It also takes into consideration the experts' experience in the preparation and management of GHG inventories, previous participation in reviews, technical expertise in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) sectors and successful completion of the training courses. In 2016, a total of 42 individuals from 30 Parties served as inventory LRs. Of those experts, 21 were from non-Annex I Parties and 21 from Annex I Parties (of which 7 were from Annex I Parties with economies in transition).

22. For each centralized review, the secretariat invited two or three review experts to cover each sector and two generalists to cover cross-cutting issues. In accordance with the conclusions of the 11th meeting of inventory LRs, the secretariat ensured that no land use, land-use change and forestry expert acted as an LR.¹⁸

23. The secretariat continues to reinforce ERTs undertaking centralized reviews with new review experts. In 2016, 37 new experts, who had taken the training courses and passed the examinations, participated in the centralized review, assuming full responsibility as reviewers with some support from the LRs and experienced reviewers.

24. The secretariat is making efforts to further improve the timeliness of the publication of the review reports during the 2016 review cycle, while maintaining the required quality level; in particular by increasing the number of experts per team and updating the review materials.¹⁹

¹⁸ See paragraph 24 of the conclusions, available at <http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/review_process/application/pdf/11th_lhrsmeeting_conclusionsrecommendations.pdf>.

¹⁹ For example, the secretariat updated the *Handbook for Review of National GHG Inventories*, a guide provided to every GHG expert participating in a review. The document is not available publicly.

Table 3

Number of experts participating in the 2016 greenhouse gas inventory review cycle, by nominating Party

<i>Party</i>				
<i>Annex I Parties</i>		<i>Annex I Parties with economies in transition</i>	<i>Non-Annex I Parties</i>	
Australia – 6	New Zealand – 8	Bulgaria – 5	Algeria – 2	Malaysia – 1
Austria – 2	Spain – 1	Czechia – 2	Argentina – 3	Mauritius – 1
Belgium ^a – 4	Sweden – 4	Estonia – 2	Armenia – 1	Mongolia – 3
Canada – 6	Switzerland – 3	Hungary – 2	Azerbaijan – 1	Montenegro – 2
Denmark – 3	Turkey – 4	Kazakhstan ^b – 5	Bahamas – 1	Pakistan – 2
European Union – 1	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – 5	Latvia – 1	Benin – 3	Papua New Guinea – 1
Finland – 5	United States of America – 5	Lithuania – 2	Bhutan – 1	Paraguay – 1
France – 2		Poland – 1	Brazil – 14	Peru – 1
Germany – 5		Romania – 7	Burundi – 1	Philippines – 2
Greece – 4		Russian Federation – 7	Chile – 3	Republic of Korea – 1
Ireland – 3		Slovakia – 1	China – 10	Republic of Moldova – 5
Italy – 8		Ukraine – 6	Colombia – 3	San Marino – 2
Japan – 8			Costa Rica – 1	South Africa – 3
Netherlands – 3			Cuba – 1	Sudan – 4
			Egypt – 1	Swaziland – 1
			Ethiopia – 1	Thailand – 5
			Gambia – 1	The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – 3
			Georgia – 4	United Republic of Tanzania – 2
			Ghana – 7	Uruguay – 2
			India – 3	Venezuela – 1
			Indonesia – 1	Viet Nam – 1
			Lebanon – 1	Zambia – 1
			Malawi – 3	Zimbabwe – 2

^a One expert was supported by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

^b Kazakhstan is a Party included in Annex I for the purpose of the Kyoto Protocol.

3. 2017 review cycle

25. Annex I Parties will submit their 2017 GHG inventory submissions in accordance with the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines by 15 April 2017. The inventories will be reviewed according to the UNFCCC Annex I inventory review guidelines. The secretariat will organize the review of the 2017 GHG inventory submissions under the Convention for all Annex I Parties to be held in the third quarter of 2017.

III. Meeting of inventory lead reviewers

26. The 13th meeting of GHG inventory LRs was held in Bonn, Germany, on 1 and 2 March 2016. A total of 39 experts from non-Annex I Parties and 43 experts from Annex I Parties were invited to the meeting. Of the 57 experts who attended, 29 were from non-Annex I Parties and 28 from Annex I Parties. Before the meeting, on 29 February 2016, the secretariat held a refresher seminar for LRs and experienced reviewers, attended by 55 experts (29 from non-Annex I Parties and 26 from Annex I Parties). The focus of the refresher seminar was on experience gained from the review of GHG inventories in 2015.

27. In accordance with decisions 13/CP.20, 22/CMP.1 and 24/CMP.1, the meeting facilitated the LRs' task of ensuring the consistency of reviews across Parties and provided conclusions and recommendations on how to improve the quality and efficiency of the reviews. Such conclusions and recommendations are reported to the SBSTA,²⁰ in accordance with the annexes to decisions 13/CP.20 and 22/CMP.1, in order to provide the SBSTA with input for providing further guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs and the expert review process. In addition, the annex to decision 13/CP.20 stipulates the provision of guidance from LRs on matters such as review tools, materials and templates as well as suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews.

IV. UNFCCC roster of experts and availability of nominated experts

28. As at 21 September 2016, the UNFCCC roster of experts (hereinafter referred to as the roster) contained 913 GHG inventory experts, 435 from non-Annex I Parties and 478 from Annex I Parties. In August 2016, the secretariat informed national focal points (NFPs) that the roster had been redesigned with new features and was available for new nominations and updating of information, including online self-nomination of experts, allowing experts to fill in the nomination form, which can be subsequently reviewed, approved or rejected online by the corresponding NFP. The whole process is managed online and the expert is automatically added to the roster once the nomination has been approved by the NFP (see para. 31 below).

29. Following the communication by the secretariat, some Parties updated their part of the roster, nominated new experts and deleted obsolete records. However, the roster still contains unrevised data and there is still a need for more experts to be nominated. As at 21 September 2016, the roster from which the secretariat could select eligible experts to participate in the GHG inventory reviews contained only 485 experts that had taken the

²⁰ See the annex for the conclusions and recommendations resulting from the 13th meeting of inventory LRs.

mandatory examinations of the relevant training programmes. It is very important that a sufficient number of available experts be nominated by Parties, that the nominations on the roster be regularly updated and that those experts be readily available. Taking account of this situation, and in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol and conclusions of the subsidiary bodies, NFPs are encouraged to nominate new experts who can actively participate in the processes indicated above, to regularly check and, where necessary, update the information on experts already nominated to the roster, and to remove experts from the roster who are no longer available for cooperation with the secretariat.

30. As a result of the issues described in paragraph 29 above, a limited number of experts listed on the roster currently participate in the GHG inventory review process. One of the main reasons for the significant discrepancy between the number of nominated experts and the number of those participating in reviews is that only a few Parties regularly update the list of experts nominated by them to reflect, inter alia, the fact that many experts on the roster have moved to other positions or have retired and are no longer available. However, another important reason is the significant workload of the nominated experts at their respective offices, increased by their participation in international climate change negotiations and related activities as well as their participation in other environment-related activities, which prohibits most of them from devoting time to the training activities and subsequent annual GHG review activities. This problem has been exacerbated in recent years and seems unlikely to be resolved as climate change negotiations and activities continue to intensify. Another reason is that some experts nominated to the roster have not yet taken the mandatory training courses or passed all the relevant examinations for both the training programme for reviews under the Convention and the training programme for reviews under the Kyoto Protocol.²¹ Therefore, only a limited number of experts on the roster are currently able to participate in the GHG inventory review process.

31. In 2016, the secretariat continued to make an online form available on the UNFCCC website to facilitate the nomination of experts to the roster and the updating of the list of nominees and their information by Parties.²² At the same time, it continued to process the nominations of experts received via e-mail, mail and fax to further facilitate nominations by Parties. The secretariat also improved the accessibility and user-friendliness of the information on the training programmes on the UNFCCC website and updated its content to reflect the latest developments.²³

32. In 2015, the secretariat initiated the development of a new software platform for the roster, with the objective of developing an integrated information management and communication solution that would allow for the efficient management and assessment of the nomination of experts for all review and analysis processes and the updating of information by NFPs, the selection of experts for various training processes, the tracking of information and the allocation of review experts and technical experts to the different review and analysis processes under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. That development was completed in August 2016 and the new version of the roster is available on the UNFCCC website.²⁴

²¹ See chapter V of document FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.12.

²² See <http://unfccc.int/files/parties_and_observers/roster_of_experts/application/msword/new_form_as_of_19_may_2014_clean_version_for_the_web_doxc.doc> and <<http://www4.unfccc.int/sites/roe/Pages/Home.aspx>>.

²³ See <<http://unfccc.int/2763>>.

²⁴ <<http://www4.unfccc.int/sites/roe/Pages/Home.aspx>>.

V. Training of experts

A. Overview

33. Training activities are of crucial importance for ensuring the required quality and consistency of the GHG inventory review process. Such training is particularly valuable for experts from non-Annex I Parties, who need to further strengthen their expertise because most do not work on GHG inventories on a daily basis. One of the positive impacts of the training programmes is that experts, from non-Annex I and Annex I Parties alike, participating in training activities and subsequent reviews can use the experience gained from those activities to improve the quality of their national GHG inventories.

34. The secretariat continues to strongly encourage and invite all available experts listed on the roster nominated for GHG inventory review activities to take the relevant training courses and examinations under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol, because only experts having passed those examinations are able to participate in the reviews under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. The secretariat facilitates the access of experts to the relevant training programmes, periodically invites Parties to nominate new experts for the training programmes (see para. 28 above) and provides relevant information and updates on the organization of the training courses on the UNFCCC website²⁵ and by other electronic means, such as the secretariat's newsletter.

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

35. The COP requested the secretariat to implement the training programme for review experts for the technical review of GHG inventories of Annex I Parties, including the examination of experts, and to give priority to organizing an annual training seminar for the basic course as well as to organizing an annual refresher seminar for experienced GHG inventory review experts, subject to the availability of resources. It encouraged Annex I Parties in a position to do so to provide financial support for the implementation of the training programme.²⁶ The basic course of the training programme provides a comprehensive introduction to the UNFCCC Annex I inventory review guidelines, an overview of the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines, guidance on procedures and approaches for the technical review of GHG inventories, general IPCC inventory guidance on the application of the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* and detailed information on the specific aspects of the review of the IPCC inventory sectors.

36. In accordance with the annex to decision 14/CP.20, the basic course of the training programme was formally offered online for the first time in September 2015. The basic course consists of: an overview course covering general and cross-cutting review issues and general IPCC methodological guidance; five sectoral courses on the review of all IPCC inventory sectors; a course on improving communication and facilitating consensus within ERTs; and a course on the review of complex models and higher-tier methods.

37. In 2016, the basic course facilitated by instructors was offered online in March and April, with three instructors available to provide guidance and respond to questions from the trainees, and it concluded with a three-day training seminar with examinations. At the

²⁵ As footnote 6 above.

²⁶ Decision 14/CP.20, paragraphs 1 and 2.

training seminar, which took place in Bonn from 19 to 21 April 2016, the trainees participated in a simulated centralized review using a real annual GHG inventory submission over two and a half days. On the last half day of the seminar, the trainees took the corresponding written exams for the overview course and the sectoral course that they completed online. The secretariat invited as instructors three highly experienced LRs and skilled GHG inventory review experts from non-Annex I Parties from three different regions. All three instructors were experienced LRs selected for their recognized capabilities and extensive experience in such training activities. All instructors were on the UNFCCC roster of consultants.²⁷

38. In 2016, for the first training cycle, a total of 51 invitations (15 to experts from Annex I Parties and 36 to experts from non-Annex I Parties) were sent to new experts on the roster who had been nominated by Parties that did not have review experts participating in the review process.²⁸ Of those experts, 30 participated in the online training courses and training seminar. A total of 18 experts from non-Annex I Parties and 11 experts from Annex I Parties took the exams and 4 experts from non-Annex I Parties and 7 experts from Annex I Parties passed the exams of the basic course (overview course and one sectoral course).

39. In addition to organizing the basic course of the training programme facilitated by instructors (see paras. 37 and 38 above), the secretariat has made the basic course available online (without instructors) to experienced inventory experts since late September 2015. In that regard, and in accordance with the annex to decision 14/CP.20, the secretariat invited 289 LRs and experienced reviewers to take the basic course online and to sit the relevant examinations. The secretariat held examinations for those experts during COP 21, before the 13th meeting of inventory LRs (on 29 February 2016), during the forty-fourth sessions of the subsidiary bodies, during review and analysis activities held in Bonn, during in-country reviews and on individual dates agreed with trainees during the year. Thus, 46 experts participated in the exams and 44 experts passed one or more examinations of the basic course.

40. In 2016, the secretariat organized a half-day refresher seminar for experienced GHG inventory reviewers in conjunction with the 13th meeting of inventory LRs, focusing on experience gained from the review of GHG inventories during the 2015 review cycle. The refresher seminar helped the LRs and experienced reviewers to identify review approaches and good practices that may be used and replicated in future reviews. A total of 55 experienced experts (29 from non-Annex I Parties and 26 from Annex I Parties), including LRs, participated in the refresher seminar.

41. Since June 2012, the secretariat has offered the course on the review of complex models and higher-tier methods online. In early 2012, the secretariat invited more than 300 experienced and new experts to take the course. Since then, of those experts, 119 have been registered and have requested access to the course. In addition, since 2012, new experts participating in the online training courses have also been invited to take, and have been provided access to, the course on an optional basis. To date, 25 experts have passed the optional examination.

VI. Review tools and materials

42. Providing support to the UNFCCC reporting and review processes requires a number of information technology systems, which differ in purpose, scope, size and degree

²⁷ See <<https://unfccc.int/secretariat/employment/consultancy.html>>.

²⁸ In accordance with decision 14/CP.20, annex, paragraph 10.

of support. They vary from extensive, complex databases, such as the GHG Locator tool, to smaller, focused ‘review tools’ serving particular analytical purposes in the review process.

A. Greenhouse gas data warehouse and review tools

43. In 2006, the secretariat developed and put in place a data warehouse to manage the storage and management of data related to GHG inventories and submissions. Such a complex software and database system is needed to enable the processing of extensive sets of GHG data reported by Annex I Parties and it allows the generation of key reports and review tools using the GHG data interface. The data warehouse is currently being upgraded to reflect the changes stemming from the revised reporting and review inventory guidelines and to address technology obsolescence issues. The upgrade is a major, challenging information technology project being undertaken by the secretariat.

44. The data warehouse upgrade is necessary not only for the GHG data interface and the production of streamlined aggregate GHG information, but also for the redesign of the existing review tools. The update covers all the existing review tools, such as the GHG Locator, the Statistical Outlier Detection Tool, the Submission Comparison Tool and the Recalculation Data Analysis Tool.

45. At the 13th meeting of inventory LRs, the development of the data warehouse and the demonstration of the progress made on the reviews tools and in particular the GHG Locator were noted.²⁹ Although the development is still in progress because the financial resources made available were highly insufficient to complete the work, key review tools were initially released, in a timely manner, to experts for their use in the 2016 GHG inventory reviews.

B. Aggregate information on greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks

46. The secretariat was requested³⁰ by the COP to compile and tabulate aggregate information and trends concerning GHG emissions by sources and removals by sinks from the latest available GHG inventory submissions of Annex I Parties, and any other inventory information, and to publish that information on the UNFCCC website as well as in a stand-alone document.

47. Following a recommendation resulting from the 12th meeting of inventory LRs,³¹ the secretariat circulated a questionnaire to experienced reviewers in order to streamline the aggregate GHG information. The results were presented at the 13th meeting of inventory LRs. The LRs recommended that the secretariat provisionally implement its streamlining proposal for the 2016 review cycle, and the associated aggregate GHG information was published accordingly on 4 August 2016.³²

²⁹ See paragraph 15 of the conclusions of the 13th meeting of inventory LRs, contained in the annex.

³⁰ Decision 13/CP.20, paragraph 8.

³¹ See paragraph 15 of the conclusions of that meeting, available at <http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/application/pdf/draftconclusions_mda_ghg_inventory.pdf>.

³² FCCC/WEB/AGI/2016.

C. Greenhouse gas data interface

48. The GHG data interface is an online portal on the UNFCCC website³³ that allows public access to GHG data reported by Parties under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol. The interface is currently being upgraded, as mandated at SBSTA 38,³⁴ following the adoption of the UNFCCC Annex I inventory reporting guidelines. The upgrade is being undertaken together with the overhaul of the data warehouse. However, the financial resources received to date have been insufficient to complete the necessary changes. A demonstration of progress was made at the 13th meeting of inventory LRs and key modules of the GHG data interface were released on the UNFCCC website³⁵ in 2016.

D. Standardized set of data comparisons

49. The COP requested the secretariat to develop and implement a standardized set of data comparisons and to include information on those data comparisons in its annual report to the SBSTA.³⁶ Information on the standardized set of data comparisons was presented at the 12th meeting of inventory LRs.

50. Regarding the standardized set of data comparisons, the LRs agreed with the practical proposal to implement the consistency checks in the status reports. In addition, the LRs emphasized the need for LRs to have experience in the use of the UNFCCC Annex I inventory review guidelines before being able to adequately recommend further changes to the standardized set of data comparisons. Therefore, a group of experienced reviewers among the LRs will be invited, after the 2016 review cycle, to conduct an assessment of the standardized data comparisons.

³³ <<http://unfccc.int/3800>>.

³⁴ FCCC/SBSTA/2013/3, paragraph 121.

³⁵ <<http://unfccc.int/9560>>.

³⁶ Decision 13/CP.20, paragraphs 4 and 6.

Annex

Conclusions and recommendations from the 13th meeting of greenhouse gas inventory lead reviewers, held in Bonn, Germany, from 29 February to 2 March 2016

1. The 13th meeting of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory lead reviewers (LRs) was held in Bonn, Germany, from 29 February to 2 March 2016. A total of 39 experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and 43 experts from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) were invited to the meeting. Of the 57 experts who attended, 29 were from non-Annex I Parties and 28 were from Annex I Parties. The secretariat held a refresher seminar for LR's and experienced reviewers on 29 February 2016, before the lead reviewers meeting, which was attended by 55 experts (29 from non-Annex I Parties and 26 from Annex I Parties). The focus of the refresher seminar was on experiences from reviews of GHG inventories in 2015.

2. In accordance with decisions 13/CP.20, 22/CMP.1 and 24/CMP.1, the meeting facilitated the work of LR's in fulfilling their task to ensure the consistency of reviews across all Parties and provided suggestions on how to improve the quality and efficiency of the reviews. These conclusions and recommendations will be reported to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), in accordance with the annexes to decisions 13/CP.20 and 22/CMP.1, in order to provide the SBSTA with inputs for providing further guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the expert review teams (ERTs) and the expert review process. In addition, decision 13/CP.20 invites LR's to provide guidance on such matters as review tools, materials and templates,¹ as well as to provide suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews.²

I. Coordination and planning of the 2016 review cycle

3. The LR's noted the plans of the secretariat for 2016 reviews, taking into consideration the need to follow agreed decisions (decision 13/CP.20, 4/CMP.11, 20/CP.21 and 10/CMP.11), in particular, the number and type of reviews. The LR's recognized the importance of pursuing the timeliness of review in accordance with decisions 13/CP.20 and 4/CMP.11, in spite of the challenges for 2016.

4. The LR's recognized that the 2016 review cycle may be particularly challenging for Parties, reviewers, LR's and the secretariat because, for most Parties, the reviews of the 2015 and 2016 submissions under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol and of the report to facilitate the calculation of the assigned amount for the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol will happen in conjunction during 2016.

5. The LR's also recognized that the 2016 review cycle will be particularly challenging owing to the late delivery of the CRF Reporter. They noted the secretariat's plan to deliver a new release of the CRF Reporter by 3 May 2016 and that this release may still not be considered a functioning version. The LR's noted that this may result in some Parties facing difficulties in submitting their 2015 and 2016 Kyoto Protocol submissions on time and, consequently, will have an impact on the organization of reviews under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol by the secretariat in 2016.

¹ Decision 13/CP.20, annex, paragraph 48.

² Decision 13/CP.20, annex, paragraph 44.

6. The LRs noted the importance of communicating the status of the development of the CRF Reporter to all review experts, so that they are aware of the problems associated with the software development and the implications on the planning and reviews.
7. In order to manage the 2016 review cycle, the LRs requested the secretariat to send questionnaires by 1 April 2016 to all reviewers on their availability for the 2016 review cycle.
8. The LRs also requested the secretariat to send questionnaires by 3 May 2016 to Annex I Parties on their submission plans, availability for the 2016 review cycle, and the types of review in which they are willing to participate.
9. The LRs recognized the uniqueness of the 2016 review cycle and agreed that the reviews could be facilitated if they would start with the 2016 submission.
10. The LRs noted the information provided by the secretariat on the reviews of the reports upon expiration of the additional period for fulfilling commitments for the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol (the true-up period reports), and recognized that the support of the secretariat in preparing the materials for the reviews has significantly contributed to the high efficiency and timeliness of the process.

II. Training and availability of review experts

11. The LRs welcomed the information on training activities undertaken by the secretariat in 2015 and planned training activities in 2016, in particular, the launch of the new “Training programme for review experts for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention” (annex to decision 14/CP.20) (hereinafter referred to as the new training programme) and the organization of the refresher seminar held prior to the 13th meeting of LRs, focusing on experiences from reviews of GHG inventories in 2015, which helped LRs to identify review approaches and good practices that may be used and replicated in future reviews.
12. The LRs noted the scope and focus and the examination requirements of the basic course of the new training programme, which new review experts must pass. The LRs considered that the training courses are also useful for experienced review experts and LRs to acquire new practical skills for the reviews because of the use, since 2015, of the new “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part I: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual greenhouse gas inventories”, the “Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention” (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC Annex I inventory review guidelines) and the methodological guidance of the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National GHG Inventories* (hereinafter referred to as the 2006 IPCC Guidelines), and to facilitate consistent review approaches by ERTs. The LRs noted that only a few experts had participated and passed the relevant examinations of the basic courses to date, and welcomed the organization of examinations for experienced review experts by the secretariat prior to the 13th meeting of LRs. The LRs reiterated their strong encouragement that experienced review experts and LRs undertake the relevant courses and examinations of the new training programme at their earliest convenience and use the examination sessions for experienced review experts planned by the secretariat in 2016. The LRs noted the need for further development and enhancement of the new training programme.
13. The LRs welcomed the information by the secretariat on the updating and implementing of the “Training programme for members of expert review teams participating in annual reviews under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol” (annex to decision

5/CMP.11) as requested by decision 5/CMP.11. The LRs stressed the importance of making these courses available online, if possible in time for the first review under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, and strongly encouraged experienced reviewers and LRs to undertake the relevant courses and examinations of this updated training programme.

14. The LRs reiterated the need to continue to increase the number of review experts who can actively participate in the review process with the support of their nominating Parties, in order to ensure the completeness and balance of expertise of the ERTs. The LRs also reiterated the importance of the support from Parties to ensure that experts are fully available for the complete review process and required training activities, and further stressed the importance that Parties nominate experts with experience in GHG inventories and robust sectoral technical expertise to the UNFCCC roster of experts (ROE) and regularly update their nominations. The LRs encouraged the secretariat to finalize the development of the new platform for the ROE as soon as possible.

III. Guidance on the development of review tools, materials and templates

Review tools and materials

15. The LRs noted the development of the data warehouse, including existing review tools and the production of status reports under both the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, and the aggregate GHG information.

Status report

16. Regarding the standardized set of data comparisons, the LRs agreed with the practical proposal to implement the consistency checks in the status reports.³ The LRs also recommended that the secretariat highlight or insert in the status reports the missing information identified in the report. In addition, the LRs emphasized the need for LRs to have experience in the use of the UNFCCC Annex I inventory review guidelines before being able to adequately recommend further changes to assess the standardized set of data comparisons. Therefore a group of experienced reviewers among the LRs will be invited, after the 2016 reviews, to conduct an assessment of the standardized data comparisons.

Aggregate GHG information

17. In order to streamline the aggregate GHG information, the secretariat circulated a questionnaire to experienced reviewers, and compiled and presented the results. Owing to the low response rate to the questionnaire and time limitations to prepare material for the 2016 review, the LRs recommended that the secretariat provisionally implement its streamlining proposal for the 2016 review cycle. However, the LRs recommended that the same process of consultations be extended until December 2016, encouraging the LRs to fill in the questionnaire, prioritizing their relevant area of expertise in order to minimize the efforts. The LRs also recommended that the secretariat compile the results, in order to support an informed discussion and possible recommendations on this issue at the 14th meeting of LRs.

18. The LRs noted that the secretariat is redesigning the review tools in line with the recommendations resulting from the 11th and 12th meetings of LRs. The functionality of the tools remains unchanged while they are being integrated into the new data warehouse. The

³ <http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/annex_i_ghg_inventories/review_process/application/pdf/asr_sample_template_from_lr13.pdf>.

LRs noted the roll-out plan of the comparison tool and the Locator, and supported the proposed procedure for involving a group of LRs/ERTs in the testing of the updated tools. The LRs noted that user manuals are being developed in line with the recommendations of the 12th meeting of LRs and that these manuals will be made available at the same time as the comparison tool and Locator deployment.

Annual review report template

19. The LRs stressed that there will be heavy workload in conducting the reviews in 2016 and emphasized the importance of drafting the annual review reports (ARRs) efficiently, and ensuring that identical information is only reviewed once and reflected using the same language in multiple reports, where applicable, as provided in decisions 20/CP.21 and 10/CMP.11.

20. The LRs noted that a new ARR template for the Convention was used for the 2015 review cycle, and accepted its continued use during the 2015/2016 review cycles, noting that some modifications may be needed to reflect the combined 2015/2016 review cycles. LRs welcomed the new ARR template, which considerably enhances the efficiency of producing the ARR through the use of more tables for the review findings. The LRs noted, in particular, the following further improvements:

(a) Streamlined templates should include the possibility to express differentiated judgements for complex assessments. There should be consistent language for such differentiated judgements in the instructions provided with the template;

(b) The importance of having an efficient connection between the review transcript and the revised ARR template, but detailed recommendations from the LRs may only be possible after the ARR template has been used in the 2015/2016 review cycle.

21. LRs stressed the importance of finalizing a zero order draft of the review report by the end of the review week. LRs should make use of the daily wrap-up meetings to assess the status and any obstacles that may prevent the finalization of the zero order draft.

22. If LRs note during the review week that there are areas not sufficiently clear in the new ARR templates or that are inconsistently addressed by review experts, they should discuss these issues in the wrap-up meeting and try to provide additional guidance.

23. The LRs endorsed the proposals by the secretariat for the ARR template under the Kyoto Protocol and the template for the review of the report to facilitate the calculation of the assigned amount. The LRs agreed that the secretariat should finalize these templates and include them in the package of review materials delivered to ERTs at least one month prior to the start of the 2016 review cycle, taking into consideration any comments received from LRs by 1 April 2016.

24. The LRs recommended that the secretariat include the templates for the 2015 and 2016 review cycles, as well as the template for the review of the report to facilitate the calculation of the assigned amount, in the review materials available one month prior to the review, and further recommended that all LRs familiarize themselves with the updated templates prior to the review cycle. The LRs also recommended that the secretariat provide the revised templates to the focal points of Parties to raise their awareness of the changes in the templates.

Other review materials

25. The LRs welcomed the update of the *Handbook for Review of National GHG Inventories* (hereinafter referred to as the Review Handbook), to reflect decisions 24/CP.19 and 13/CP.20, and agreed that it will be a useful resource for both new and experienced reviewers. The LRs recommended that the secretariat strive to make the document as

concise as possible, bearing in mind that the Review Handbook is one of many materials available to ERTs during the review week. The LRs further recommended that the secretariat finalize the Review Handbook and include it in the package of review materials delivered to ERTs at least one month prior to the start of the review weeks in 2016.

26. The LRs also welcomed the progress made in the compilation of all reporting, review and accounting requirements relating to the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol in a user-friendly document (i.e. the consolidated decisions from the second commitment period). The LRs recommended that the secretariat finalize this document, including a summary, and include it in the package of review materials delivered to ERTs at least one month prior to the start of the review cycle in 2016. The LRs are encouraged to provide feedback to the secretariat on the structure and content of the compilation by 18 March 2016.

27. The LRs are also encouraged to provide comments on the Kyoto Protocol Reference Manual for the second commitment period, at most two weeks after the draft is circulated by the secretariat. The LRs recommended that the secretariat finalize the documents in a user-friendly way and include them in the package of review materials delivered to ERTs at least one month prior to the start of the review weeks in 2016.

28. The LRs agreed to encourage ERTs to use these materials and recommended that these materials be made available to Parties.

IV. Improvements to the quality, efficiency and consistency of reviews, in accordance with decisions 13/CP.20 and 4/CMP.11

29. The LRs recognized that the promotion of consistency of reviews is a primary responsibility of LRs in the reviews in which they participate, with support from the secretariat. The LRs recognized, however, that the ERTs need to exercise some level of judgement in implementing the reviews, taking into account the relevant decisions and the 2006 IPCC Guidelines, including the identification of issues, progress in addressing previous recommendations and prominent paragraphs.⁴

30. The LRs noted that consistency within and across reviews should be ensured as far as possible, but recognized that some inconsistencies may be inevitable, including those resulting from national circumstances, and should be acceptable. These inconsistencies do not necessarily indicate a problem with the overall review process.

31. The LRs agreed that findings related to non-mandatory language are important to meeting the objectives of the review process to improve national GHG inventories and therefore agreed that they should continue to be reflected in the annual review report and included in the review transcript.

32. The LRs also discussed specific ways to improve the consistency and efficiency of the review process, including the consideration of experiences from the 2015 reviews. In particular, the LRs recommend that LRs promote the following procedures during the 2016 review:

(a) The list of provisional main findings should focus on issues and recommendations, including the assessment by the ERT of the progress in addressing recommendations in previous review reports;

⁴ Paragraph 83 of the annex to decision 13/CP.20.

(b) Interacting with the Parties is fundamental in assessing whether sufficient progress has been made in the implementation of previous recommendations for the purposes of including the issue in a prominent paragraph.⁵

33. The LR^s considered the experience with desk reviews and concluded that more experience needs to be gained with desk reviews before making any specific recommendations on how the desk reviews are to be conducted, in accordance with paragraph 15 of decision 13/CP.20.

⁵ Ibid.