

A6.4-SBM014-A02

Procedure

Direct communication with stakeholders

Version 01.0



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1. Background

1. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), at its third session, adopted rules, modalities and procedures (RMPs) for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement (the Article 6.4 mechanism).¹
2. The Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA), at its fourth session, adopted the rules of procedure of the Supervisory Body for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement (hereinafter referred as the rules of the procedure of the Supervisory Body).²
3. According to the RMPs, the Supervisory Body shall support the implementation of the mechanism by facilitating dialogue with host Parties and other stakeholders.³
4. At its sixth meeting, the Supervisory Body requested the secretariat to prepare a draft procedure to enhance communication with stakeholders for consideration at a future meeting.⁴ In accordance with this request, the draft procedure on stakeholder communication has been prepared for the Supervisory Body's review.
5. This procedure replaces Procedure: Consideration of unsolicited letters to the Supervisory Body, the content of which is addressed within.

2. Objective

6. The objectives of this procedure are to:
 - (a) Allow the Supervisory Body, secretariat, Methodologies Expert Panel (MEP), and Accreditation Expert Panel (AEP) to communicate with stakeholders as necessary for the effective functioning of the Article 6.4 mechanism;
 - (b) Support the Supervisory Body in identifying areas in the Article 6.4 mechanism's regulatory framework where the development of new or revision of existing regulatory documents would enhance objectivity and clarity, and/or ensure environmental integrity;
 - (c) Enhance stakeholders' understanding of the Article 6.4 mechanism rules and enable them to better comply with relevant rules, thus improving overall efficiency of the mechanism;
 - (d) Ensure transparency by providing relevant information to stakeholders and opportunities for them to provide supplementary information or explanations in a timely manner regarding their submissions within the registration, issuance, methodologies, and accreditation workstreams.

¹ Decision 3/CMA.3, annex, as contained in document FCCC/PA/CMA/2021/10/Add.1. Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2021_10a01E.pdf#page_25.

² Annex II of Decision 7/CMA.4. Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_10a02E.pdf#page=33

³ Section 25(c)(iv) of the RMPs.

⁴ Paragraph 39 of SBM 006 meeting report. Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/a64-sb006_0.pdf.

3. Scope

7. This procedure provides means of communication for the following stakeholders of the Article 6.4 mechanism to communicate with the secretariat, the Supervisory Body, or the MEP and AEP: either by providing clarity on communication provisions in the rules and regulations of the Article 6.4 mechanism, or establishing additional means of communication:
 - (a) Designated national authorities (DNAs) of host Party and other participating Parties;
 - (b) Designated operational entities (DOEs);
 - (c) Activity participants;
 - (d) Indigenous Peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities and people in vulnerable situations;⁵
 - (e) Other stakeholders.
8. Accordingly, the procedure establishes two broader categories of means of communication for the Supervisory Body, the MEP and the AEP with stakeholders:
 - (a) **Process-based communication**⁶, this includes communication provisions incorporated into approved governance, activity cycle, accreditation, and methodology processes and procedures. Stakeholders should adhere to the designated communication channels stipulated for each procedure pertaining to Appeal and grievance processes under the Article 6.4 mechanism⁷, Article 6.4 accreditation⁸, Article 6.4 activity cycle procedure⁹, Development, revision and clarification of methodologies and methodological tools¹⁰, and Development, revision, clarification and update of standardized baselines¹¹.
 - (b) **Non-process-based communication**¹², this includes communication provisions outside the approved governance, activity cycle, accreditation and methodology processes and procedures.

⁵ In recognition of Section 24(a)(ix) of the RMPs.

⁶ Process-based communication provides means of communication for stakeholders of the Article 6.4 mechanism to communicate with the secretariat, the Supervisory Body, or the MEP and AEP by providing clarity on communication provisions in the rules and regulations of the Article 6.4 mechanism.

⁷ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/A6.4-PROC-GOV-006.pdf>.

⁸ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/A6.4-PROC-ACCR-001.pdf>.

⁹ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/A6.4-PROC-AC-002.pdf>.

¹⁰ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/A6.4-PROC-METH-001.pdf>.

¹¹ <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/A6.4-PROC-METH-002.pdf>.

¹² Non-process-based communication provides means of communication for stakeholders of the Article 6.4 mechanism to communicate with the secretariat, the Supervisory Body, or the MEP and AEP by establishing additional means of communication in the implementation of the rules and regulations of the Article 6.4 mechanism.

9. This procedure addresses these means of communication by either providing clarity on communication provisions in adopted rules and regulations of the Article 6.4 mechanism or establishing additional means of communication.

4. Entry into force

10. This procedure enters into force 9 October 2024.

5. Terms and definitions

11. The following terms apply in this procedure:
- (a) “Shall” is used to indicate requirements that must be followed.
 - (b) “Should” is used to indicate that, among several possibilities, one course of action is recommended as particularly suitable.
 - (c) “May” is used to indicate what is permitted.

6. Process-based communication

6.1. Communication initiated by the secretariat, Supervisory Body, Methodology Expert Panel and Accreditation Expert Panel

12. The secretariat, the Supervisory Body, the MEP and the AEP may initiate communication with stakeholders through various processes of the activity cycle (e.g., requests for registration, issuance, post-registration changes, or renewal of crediting periods). This can occur during the development, revision, clarification, and updating of methodologies and/or standardized baselines, or during the accreditation cycle of DOEs in accordance with the applicable procedures.

6.1.1. Calls for input and targeted workshops or webinars

13. When preparing a new regulatory document or a major revision of a regulatory document that has a significant impact on stakeholders, the secretariat, at the request of the Supervisory Body, may:
- (a) Launch a call for public inputs to seek inputs from stakeholders on the areas to be covered or revised in the document and the concerns that it should address;
 - (b) Organize a workshop or webinar, including those for practitioners, to have inputs from stakeholders;
 - (c) Undertake any other form of targeted engagement as instructed by the Supervisory Body.
14. Should the Supervisory Body decide to launch a call for input and/or a workshop, it shall determine at which stage of the development of the regulatory document it seeks the views of stakeholders (i.e., at the concept stage, or specific to a draft document).
15. The duration of a call for input shall be decided on a case-by-case basis, depending on the complexity and urgency of the issue for which input is being sought, allowing reasonable time for comments to be submitted.

16. Calls for input shall be directed to the public at large through notifications on the dedicated Article 6.4 webpages and social media pages, the A6.4 mechanism newsletter, and notifications to relevant established mailing lists, as appropriate.
17. In relation to a call for input, the Supervisory Body may request the secretariat to undertake additional outreach to DNA's, including through the DNA forum, host Parties, and/or the UNFCCC National Focal Points, DOEs or any relevant stakeholders with the aim of soliciting inputs on specific matters.
18. The secretariat may invite selected stakeholders to a workshop to seek further or elaborated views on a regulatory document or other relevant issue. In selecting invitees, the secretariat shall balance the interests of the stakeholders with the composition of participants and strive for appropriate gender balance and regional balance to ensure an effective outcome of the workshop.
19. Once inputs are received from stakeholders, whether from a call for inputs, or from a workshop, the secretariat shall:
 - (a) Consider the inputs with a focus on matters related to the topic under consultation and, in line with its agreed workplan, prepare a summary of the inputs received for the Supervisory Body. This summary should provide the rationale for accepting inputs in the documents under development or revision and justify why any inputs were not incorporated;
 - (b) Revise the documents under development or revision and submit them for the consideration of the Supervisory Body.

6.2. Communication initiated by stakeholders

20. Stakeholders may initiate communication with the Supervisory Body, the secretariat, the MEP and the AEP in accordance with provisions included in the applicable procedures.¹³
21. In accordance with paragraph 54 of the rules of procedure of the Supervisory Body¹⁴, the meetings of the Supervisory Body shall be open to attendance, as observers, by any Party or UNFCCC admitted observer organization, unless closed for reasons of confidentiality.
22. At each of its meetings, the Supervisory Body shall, subject to time constraints, allocate a time slot for interaction with registered observers. The Supervisory Body may limit the number of observers able to speak or the time allowed for observers to speak based on time limitations.
23. The Supervisory Body shall receive public comments on the meeting documentation up until one week prior to the meeting, unless otherwise decided by the Chair.
24. Any stakeholder may submit written input regarding a meeting of the Supervisory Body. All written inputs received at least one week prior to the first day of the meeting shall be made available for the Supervisory Body's consideration.

¹³ For example, paragraph 64 of the activity cycle procedure specifies that the DOE or the activity participants may request a call with the secretariat to provide clarifications on the issues identified when a request for review is raised for a request for registration.

¹⁴ Annex II of Decision 7/CMA.4. Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/cma2023_10a02E.pdf#page_46.

25. The secretariat shall compile the comments received up until one week prior to the meeting, as per paragraph 52 of the rules of procedure of the Supervisory Body and bring the compilation to the attention of the Supervisory Body for its consideration at the start of the meeting. The secretariat shall integrate the comments from stakeholders into the presentations it makes to the Supervisory Body under the relevant agenda item.
26. Written inputs received after the one-week deadline, as specified in paragraph 25 above, will not be considered by the Supervisory Body. These inputs shall be made available for consideration by the Supervisory Body at a future meeting, as appropriate.
27. The Supervisory Body shall consider input received from the observers, whether during interactions or through written submissions, at the same meeting or at a future meeting, as appropriate.

7. Non-process-based communication

7.1. Interaction with designated national authorities forum

28. The secretariat shall, on behalf of the Supervisory Body, organize DNA forum meetings as per the terms of reference of DNA forums to facilitate communication between the Supervisory Body and DNAs, and among DNAs themselves.
29. The Supervisory Body shall allocate time during its meetings for interaction with the DNA forum (through its co-Chairs) at least twice a year. The Supervisory Body shall specify the dates of the two meetings designated for interaction at its first meeting of each year.
30. The Supervisory Body may invite the co-Chairs of the DNA forum to any of its meetings in addition to the two referred to in paragraph 29 above, as necessary, or if requested by the co-Chairs of the DNA forum.

7.2. Interaction with designated operational authorities or accredited independent entities (DOEs/AIEs) forum

7.2.1. Supervisory Body interaction with DOEs/AIEs coordination forum

31. The Supervisory Body shall allocate time for interaction with the DOE/AIE Coordination forum through its Chair on issues of interest to DOE/AIEs at each meeting of the Supervisory Body.
32. The Chair of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum should submit a presentation to the secretariat to be used during the interaction with the Supervisory Body at its meeting, four days prior to the meeting. The presentation shall include the views of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum on issues included in the annotated agenda of the Supervisory Body meeting and any other matters of interest to be raised by the AE/DOEs.
33. The Supervisory Body shall take note of the input received from the DOE/AIE Coordination forum during the interaction and shall consider the input at the same meeting or at a future meeting, as appropriate.
34. The Supervisory Body may, through the secretariat, communicate with the DOE/AIE Coordination forum to obtain the views of AEs/DOEs on topics that impact them. In this case, the secretariat shall communicate with the DOE/AIE Coordination forum at a timing that allows sufficient time for AEs/DOEs to prepare their views. The DOE/AIE Coordination forum shall coordinate with its members to prepare consolidated views on the topics for consideration by the Supervisory Body. The Chair of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum

shall include these consolidated views in the presentation referred to in paragraph 32 above.

7.2.2. Secretariat interaction with DOEs/AIEs

35. The secretariat shall, as required, provide opportunities to liaise with members of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum to help ensure they are informed about decisions taken by the Supervisory Body and have opportunities to seek clarifications on relevant regulations. Such opportunities may include conference calls with members of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum who wish to participate for this purpose. The dates for such conference calls may be determined at the beginning of each year based on the Supervisory Body's workplan and may be revised as necessary based on the outcomes of Supervisory Body meetings. The week following any such call, the secretariat shall circulate minutes to the DOE/AIE Coordination forum and share the minutes or other summarised information, as appropriate, with Supervisory Body.
36. The secretariat may also organize, periodically and subject to the availability of resources, annual and regional calibration workshops for AEs/DOEs to discuss decisions of the Supervisory Body, share good practices among AEs/DOEs, and ensure a common understanding of the Article 6.4 rules and regulations.
37. The secretariat, as deemed appropriate, shall support the forum by establishing necessary communication channels to facilitate interaction among its members.

7.2.3. Accreditation Expert Panel interaction with DOEs/AIEs forum

38. AEP may allocate time during its meetings for interaction with the DOE/AIE Coordination forum through its Chair and, if the forum wishes, with a limited number of AEs/DOEs. The subject of this interaction shall be limited to policy issues relevant to the respective accreditation and methodological standards and procedures and shall not include case-specific issues.
39. In addition, the DOE/AIE Coordination forum may request additional interactions with the AEP. The DOE/AIE Coordination Forum shall substantiate such a request and submit it to the secretariat at least three weeks before the relevant meeting in which the interaction is requested.
40. The Chairs of the AEP should accept such request if the workload of the meeting allows time for the interaction. The secretariat shall inform the DOE/AIE Coordination forum of the chairs' decision at least two weeks before the meeting.
41. The Chair of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum should submit any relevant presentation to be used in the interaction with the AEP at its meeting, at least one week before the AEP meeting to the secretariat.

7.2.4. Methodological Expert Panel interaction with DOE/AIEs

42. The MEP may interact with the DOE/AIE Coordination forum through its Chair during its meetings. The subject of this interaction shall be limited to policy issues relevant to the respective accreditation and methodological standards and procedures and shall not include case-specific issues.
43. In addition, the DOE/AIE Coordination forum may request additional interactions with the MEP. The DOE/AIE Coordination Forum shall substantiate such a request and submit it

to the secretariat at least three weeks before the relevant meeting in which the interaction is requested.

44. The Chair of the MEP should accept such request if the workload of the meeting allows time for the interaction. The secretariat shall inform the DOE/AIE Coordination Forum of the chairs' decision at least two weeks before the meeting.
45. The Chair of the DOE/AIE Coordination forum should submit any relevant presentation to be used in the interaction with the MEP at its meeting, at least one week before the MEP meeting to the secretariat.

7.3. Methodological Expert Panel interaction with forums of project developers and UNFCCC admitted observer organizations

46. The MEP may interact with the forums of project developers through its Chair and any other interested UNFCCC admitted observer organizations during its meetings. The subject of this interaction shall be limited to policy issues relevant to the methodological standards and procedures and shall not include case- specific issues.
47. In addition, the Chair of the forums of project developers and any UNFCCC admitted observer organization may request additional interactions with the MEP. In this case, the request shall be submitted to the secretariat at least three weeks before the relevant meeting in which the interaction is requested.
48. The Chairs of the MEP should accept such request if the workload of the meeting allows time for the interaction. The secretariat shall inform the Chairs' decision at least two weeks before the meeting.
49. The Chair of the forums of project developers or any UNFCCC admitted observer organizations who wish to interact with the MEP should submit any relevant presentation to be used in the interaction with the MEP at its meeting, at least one week before the MEP meeting to the secretariat.

7.4. Interaction with other stakeholders

7.4.1. System-wide consultation and calibration

50. The secretariat may periodically organize general consultation workshops for stakeholders, such as round tables, as per the resources available in the Resource Allocation Plan of the Supervisory Body.
51. These general consultation workshops should provide opportunities for sharing good practices, enhancing understanding of the Article 6.4 mechanism rules, exchanging ideas, and facilitating free discussion between Supervisory Body members, the secretariat and stakeholders on general policy issues, as well as exchanging experiences in the implementation of various Article 6.4 mechanism rules.
52. The secretariat shall prepare agendas for such events in consultation with stakeholders to ensure that issues of stakeholders' interest are discussed when appropriate.
53. When selecting invitees to such events, the secretariat shall consider the representation of all interested parties, space limitations and topics included on the agendas of the events. In doing so, the secretariat shall pay particular attention to the regional balance of invitees and ensure that participants have the option of virtual participation.

54. At the beginning of each year, the secretariat shall provide the Supervisory Body with the recommended number of general consultation workshops, if any, based on the workplan of the Supervisory Body and the forecasted need for consultation with stakeholders. The Supervisory Body shall consider the secretariat's recommendation in deciding whether to request the organization of such workshops.
55. The secretariat shall ensure that the outcomes of these consultations with stakeholders are formally documented, made publicly available on the UNFCCC website, and brought to the attention of the Supervisory Body for its consideration in conjunction with the relevant regulatory document or concept note under consideration.

7.4.2. Interaction initiated by stakeholders

56. A channel of communication shall be available to stakeholders to facilitate understanding, application, and development of the Article 6.4 mechanism rules, as well as the implementation of project activities and programmes of activities.
57. Stakeholders may initiate communications on matters that do not fall within the scope of a dedicated process procedure (e.g. technical or operational explanation, suggestions/proposals for new regulations) using the "Stakeholder communication form".¹⁵
58. Depending on whether stakeholders wish to receive a fast-track response from the secretariat or a formal response from the Supervisory Body, they may submit:
 - (a) Communication to the secretariat for a fast-track response; or
 - (b) Communication to the Supervisory Body for a formal response.

7.4.2.1. Interaction initiated by stakeholders to the secretariat

59. Stakeholders may communicate to the secretariat via a dedicated interface on the UNFCCC website.
60. The secretariat shall respond to a communication addressed to it as soon as possible and within 15 days of receipt. Neither the communication nor the response will be published on the UNFCCC website.
61. All responses provided by the secretariat through this process shall include a disclaimer stating that the responses are not endorsed by the Supervisory Body, and do not supersede or pre-empt decisions and regulations of the Supervisory Body, or the validation/verification opinions of DOEs on specific project activities or programmes of activities.
62. A communication directed to the secretariat may be redirected to the Supervisory Body track referred to in section 7.4.2.2 below if the secretariat finds that it requires the attention of or further guidance from the Supervisory Body. If the secretariat decides to do so, it shall inform the submitter and provide a justification for redirecting the communication to the Supervisory Body.

7.4.2.2. Interaction initiated by stakeholders to the Supervisory Body

63. Stakeholders may communicate directly with the Supervisory Body via a dedicated interface on the UNFCCC website. The secretariat shall make all communications to the

¹⁵ The secretariat may develop an electronic interface for the form.

- Supervisory Body available to the Supervisory Body. Unless the submitter requests confidentiality, communications with the Supervisory Body by stakeholders shall be made publicly available on the UNFCCC website.
64. The secretariat shall prepare a draft response, providing relevant information and an analysis of the content of the letter to the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Body. Based on this information and analysis, the Chair and Vice-Chair shall jointly decide on one of the following courses of action for each communication:
- (a) The Chair and Vice-Chair respond to the submitter on behalf of the Supervisory Body;
 - (b) The Chair and Vice-Chair forward the communication for consideration by the Supervisory Body;
 - (c) The secretariat responds to the submitter on behalf of the Supervisory Body in accordance with a draft response approved by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Body.
65. If the course of action decided by the Chair and the Vice-Chair is that outlined in paragraph 64(b), the communication shall be considered by the Supervisory Body either through electronic means or at a meeting, depending on the timing of the next meeting. If a communication is received more than 28 days before the next meeting, it shall be placed on the agenda of that meeting; otherwise, it shall be placed on the agenda of the subsequent meeting unless the Chair of the Supervisory Body decides otherwise. If a communication is placed on the agenda of a meeting, the Supervisory Body should aim to finalize its consideration at that meeting
66. The secretariat, in consultation with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Body may also refer communications directly to an expert panel for consideration at its next meeting.
67. The secretariat should respond to a communication addressed to the Supervisory Body as soon as possible, and within 35 days of receipt, by:
- (a) Providing a response to the request or feedback in accordance with paragraph 64 above; or
 - (b) Informing the submitter that the request or feedback will be referred to the Supervisory Body or a panel or its consideration in accordance with paragraph 64 above; and/or
 - (c) Informing the submitter that the request or feedback will be forwarded to another relevant institution or body (e.g. DNA), if deemed appropriate by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Body. However, such forwarding shall not constitute an endorsement by the Supervisory Body of the communication's content.
68. The secretariat shall make publicly available the response to the submitter, subject to the confidentiality provisions in paragraphs 69 and 70 below.
69. Stakeholders may make a confidential communication and request a confidential response from the Supervisory Body. The secretariat, on behalf of the Supervisory Body, may decide to make its response publicly available if it is considered that it is in the common interest of all stakeholders. In such cases, confidential information shall be removed from the response to be made available.

70. If a communication from a stakeholder raises matters relating to the personal identity of Supervisory Body members, secretariat staff, panel members, or any stakeholders relevant to an activity, or gives rise to potential legal implications; or if there is a similar public interest in withholding the information from being made publicly available, the secretariat shall consult with the Supervisory Body Chair and Vice-Chair and may treat the communication as confidential.
71. The secretariat shall not redirect communications addressed to the Supervisory Body to the secretariat track referred to in paragraph 58 above.
72. Any communication received through alternative processes than those detailed in this procedure shall be actioned according to the appropriate process detailed in this procedure.

8. Parties

73. Parties DNAs shall serve as the primary focal contact point for communications between Parties and the Supervisory Body and/or secretariat.
74. A channel of communication shall be available on the UNFCCC website to DNAs of Parties to facilitate the understanding and application of the Article 6.4 mechanism rules, as well as the implementation of activities and programmes of activities.
75. Parties may initiate communication with the Supervisory Body regarding any matters within or outside the defined steps of a specific Article 6.4 process, as outlined in the dedicated procedure for that specific case, in accordance with provisions stipulated under section 7.4.2.2 above.¹⁶
76. Parties may participate in any meetings of the Supervisory Body and its expert Panels as observers, in accordance with relevant provisions stipulated in this procedure. Parties may be invited to a meeting of the Supervisory Body to provide their views on specific agenda items and may be invited to make presentations relating to matters under consideration by the Supervisory Body at its meetings.
77. Parties may also initiate communication with the secretariat regarding any matters in accordance with provisions stipulated under sections 7.4.2.1.¹⁷
78. Parties may provide their written submissions to calls for inputs and public comments referred to in sections 6.1 and 6.2 above.
79. Parties may address any general inquiries that do not require substantive or in-depth analysis related activity cycle and methodology processes and procedures to the secretariat through dedicated channels.

¹⁶ Examples of such communication channels include prioritization of the development or approval of a new methodology or methodological tool or the revision of an approved methodology or methodological tool as contained in paragraphs 25, 36, 69, and 81 of the “Procedure on development, revision, clarification and modification of methodologies and methodological tools.

¹⁷ Examples of such communication channels include insolvency and/or disputes over the designation of the focal points in accordance with paragraph 113 of the activity cycle procedure and completion of outstanding matters in relation to the deregistered A6.4 project as per paragraph 219.

9. Reporting on communications and feedback to stakeholders

80. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report on all communications received through the dedicated interface on the UNFCCC website and inputs received during workshops and events in relation to:
- (a) The number and type of stakeholder inputs;
 - (b) The issues addressed in these communications;
 - (c) Statistics on responses (type/outcome/timelines) provided to these inputs;
 - (d) The impact of the stakeholder inputs on the regulatory framework and/or operations of the Article 6.4 mechanism.

Document information

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