

Informal forum of the Consultative Group of Experts
Summary

26 November 2020, 14:00–15:30 CET

UNFCCC Climate Dialogues 2020

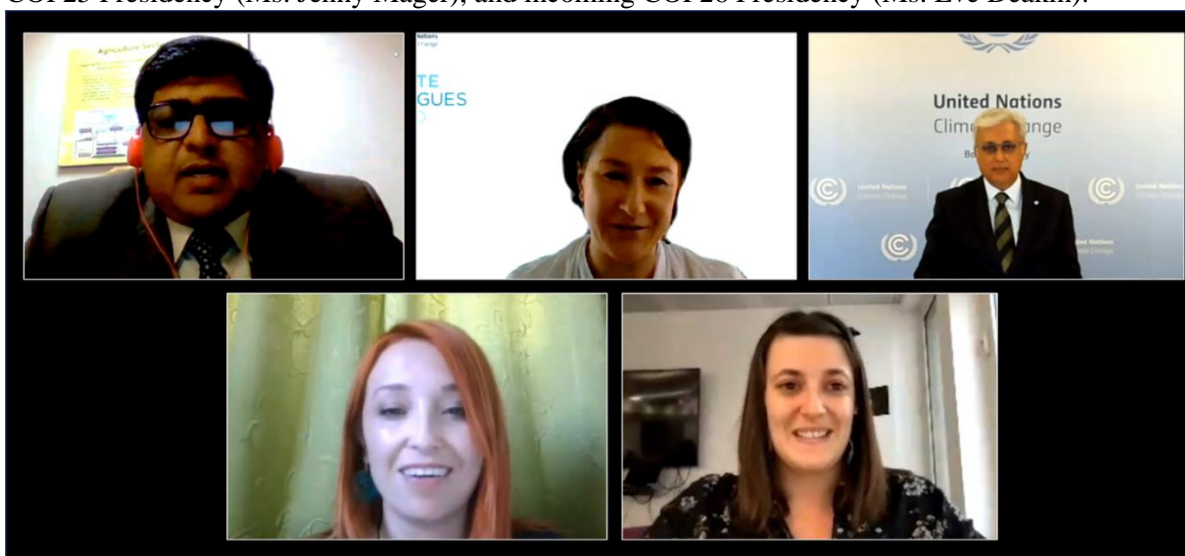
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I. BACKGROUND

1. The [Consultative Group of Experts](#) (CGE), at its third meeting held on 18–19 February 2020, agreed to organize informal forums on the margins of regional climate weeks as part of its work plan for 2020. However, due to the impact of the on-going COVID-19 pandemic, the CGE concluded that it was not possible to organize the informal forums as in-person events in 2020. As a result, it agreed to organize its informal forum as a virtual event at the Climate Dialogues held from 23 November to 04 December 2020.
2. The objective of the third informal forum of the CGE was to showcase the work undertaken and achievements of the CGE in 2020, and engage with and seek feedback from its key stakeholders involved in national efforts of developing countries on the existing measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) arrangements under the Convention and the enhanced transparency framework (ETF) under the Paris Agreement.
3. The forum further aimed to provide a platform for relevant stakeholders to informally reflect and exchange views around the country experiences and evolving needs and priorities in the implementation of the existing MRV arrangements and preparation for the transition to the ETF. The feedback gathered from the event will help the CGE inform the design of its work plan for 2021.
4. The forum convened around 300 participants connecting from across the globe. This report contains a summary of the proceedings and discussions at the third informal forum of the CGE during the UN Climate Change Dialogues 2020.¹

II. PROCEEDINGS

5. The third informal forum kicked off with opening statements by the Chair of the CGE (Mr. Arif Goheer) and introductory remarks by the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) (Ms. Marianne Karlsen), the Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC secretariat (Mr. Ovais Sarmad), COP25 Presidency (Ms. Jenny Mager), and incoming COP26 Presidency (Ms. Eve Deakin).



Opening session speakers (L-R): Mr. Arif Goheer (CGE Chair), Ms. Marianne Karlsen (SBI Chair), Mr. Ovais Sarmad (Deputy Executive Secretary – UNFCCC secretariat), Ms. Jenny Mager (COP25 Presidency), and Ms. Eve Deakin (Incoming COP26 Presidency).

¹ The presentation and recording of the informal forum are available at: <https://unfccc.int/event/informal-forum-of-the-cge-on-mrv-and-etf>.

6. The technical session of the forum consisted of five segments dedicated to different elements of the CGE work of 2020, including cross-cutting element, knowledge products, knowledge delivery, peer exchange and needs assessment, and a segment dedicated to discussion on the CGE work plan. Each segment was comprised of an introductory presentation by a CGE member and plenary discussion guided by predefined questions, with the aim of seeking feedback on the outputs of the CGE work in 2020 from the end-users' point of view and gathering inputs on the additional and/or evolving needs of developing countries and their priorities.
- **Cross-cutting element of CGE work 2020:** The CGE Chair provided an overview of how the CGE guided their work in 2020. The CGE, at its third meeting held in February 2020, prepared its [vision, mission and strategic priorities](#) for 2020-2026, with a view to ensuring that its annual work plan aligns with its mandate and objectives and responds to the evolution of the existing MRV arrangements and the ETF as well as needs identified by developing country Parties in the lead up to 2026. Based on the vision, mission and strategic priorities, the CGE developed its [work plan for 2020](#). Further, the CGE held three ad-hoc virtual meetings in light of global impacts of COVID-19 and adopted a dynamic rolling plan to make necessary adjustments to deliver on its mandate.
 - **Knowledge products:** Ms. Alyssa Ng (CGE member from Singapore) introduced knowledge products developed in 2020, including *Technical handbook for developing country Parties on preparing for implementation of the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement* (or [ETF handbook](#)) and *Handbook on institutional arrangements to support MRV/transparency of climate action and support* (or [IA handbook](#)). The versions in different UN languages, including Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish are under development. Further, the CGE published *Handbook on MRV for developing country Parties* in different UN languages, including Arabic, French, Russian and Spanish; these are available [here](#). The guiding questions for plenary discussion included:
 - Have you already used the knowledge products? Did you find them useful? How did it help?
 - Do you foresee additional need for guidance on the topic? If so, what is it?
 - **Knowledge delivery:** Mr. Kadir Aksakal (CGE member from Turkey) provided an overview of two regional [webinar series](#) and seven [virtual regional hands-on training workshops](#) that the CGE offered in 2020. Further, the training materials developed for the virtual training workshops were introduced, including [a series of four introductory videos](#) and technical presentations and homework/break-out-group exercise tool. One of the workshop participants, Ms. María Luz Fernández (MRV expert from Argentina), shared her reflections on how the virtual training workshop has helped her prepare for the implementation of the ETF. The guiding questions for plenary discussion included:
 - Do you foresee additional area for capacity-building?
 - How can the CGE improve its capacity support? (e.g. in terms of modality, focus of area, etc.)
 - **Peer exchange:** Mr. Athmane Mehadji (CGE member from Algeria) highlighted that the CGE intends to promote sharing of country experiences and lessons learned via various channels. One of concrete examples of such efforts is the [CGE toolbox on institutional arrangements](#). As part of the toolbox, the CGE have compiled country experiences and lessons learned in the form of written inputs and video interviews. The CGE plans to continue to do so and invites all interested stakeholders to share their country perspectives.

- **Needs assessment:** Ms. Virginia Sena (CGE member from Uruguay) introduced the workstream to better identify and understand the existing and emerging needs and gaps of developing country Parties in implementing the existing MRV arrangements and preparing for the ETF. The CGE conducts the needs and gaps assessment and publishes an annual technical paper on problems, constraints, lessons learned and capacity-building needs, with a view to providing technical assistance and support in a targeted and strategic manner. This year, the CGE launched a new communication series called *CGE Technical Paper Distilled*, a visual summary of the annual technical paper. Ms. Sena further shared key findings from the assessment of 2020, drawing information from the most recent 152 national communications and 58 biennial update reports (BURs) from 152 developing country Parties and 44 summary reports on the technical analysis of BURs published by 31 July 2020. The guiding questions for plenary discussion included:
 - What are other constraints and gaps experienced in your countries? Are there any trends or key changes in terms of priorities, especially in respect of transition to the enhanced transparency framework?
 - How can the CGE and other stakeholders better respond to the evolving needs of developing countries?
- **Closing the loop: Feedback on the CGE workplan:** Mr. Ricardo Fernandez (CGE member from EU) moderated this segment of the discussion on the CGE workplan. The guiding questions included:
 - To country representative, what should be the key areas or topics that the CGE should focus in 2021 and beyond?
 - To those entities who are either supporting or planning to support developing countries, do you foresee any opportunity for us to collaborate and if so how?

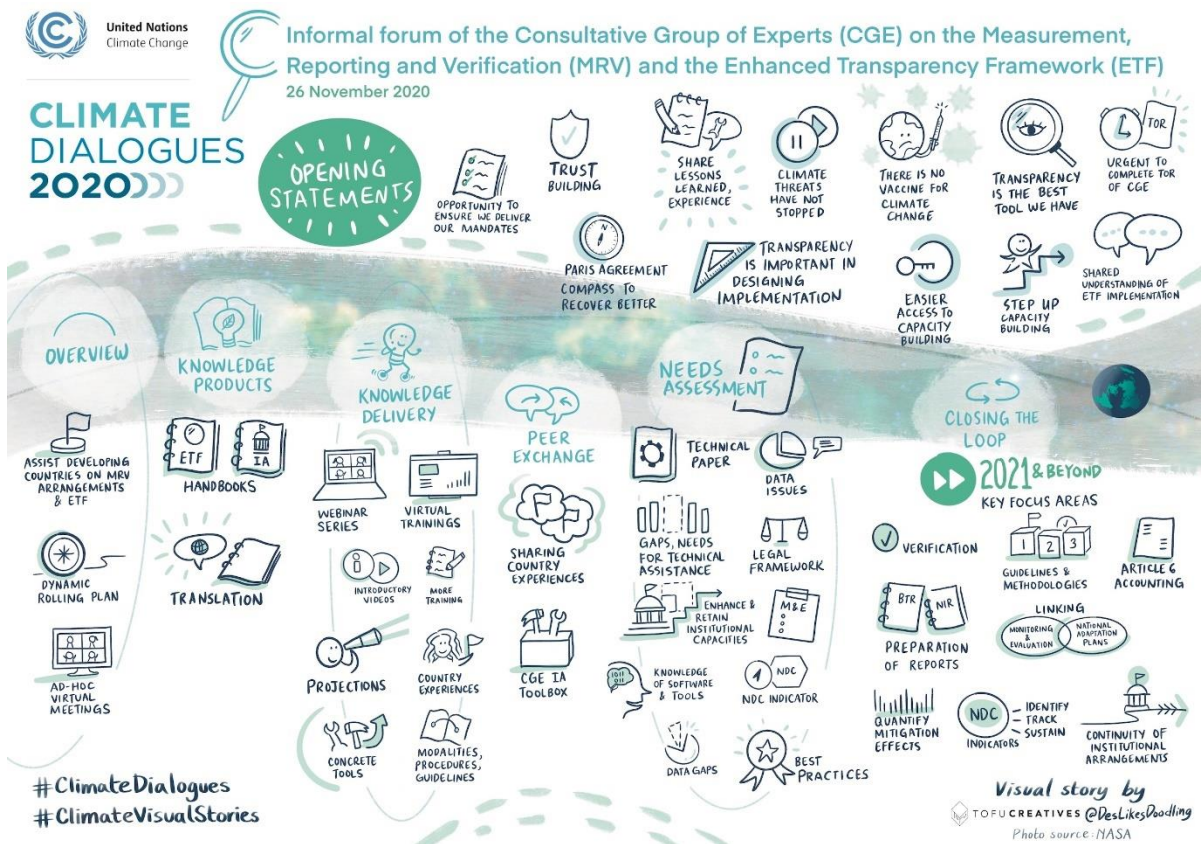
III. KEY TAKEAWAYS

7. The feedback and inputs received throughout the forum highlighted the following key messages:
 - Developing country Parties require continued technical support to enhance their knowledge and technical capacity, in particular, to prepare for the ETF under the Paris Agreement. Specific topics of interest identified for further trainings as well as additional guidelines and methodologies included:
 - Formulation of indicators for tracking progress of implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions (NDCs), quantification of mitigation effects and projections;
 - Transition from revised 1996 IPCC guidelines to 2006 IPCC guidelines for national GHG inventories;
 - Development of monitoring and evaluation system for national adaptation plans (NAPs), adaptation reporting in different channels such as biennial transparency report, adaptation communication, NAPs, etc.; and
 - Reporting on financial, technology development and transfer and capacity-building support needed and received.
 - Establishing and/or improving institutional arrangements and data management systems continues to be a priority area of enhancement for many developing country Parties. Many participants

highlighted the need to formalize, sustain and improve MRV process with proper legal and/or regulative frameworks.

- In terms of how the CGE can better respond to the evolving needs of developing country Parties, suggestions included training of the trainers with a view to sustaining the knowledge and technical capacity built in country and dissemination of best practices and lessons learned (sector-specific practices, institutional arrangements in place, etc.). Further, few participants highlighted the need for the CGE to continue and explore more opportunity to collaborate with other stakeholders that provide support to developing country Parties, especially those entities active at regional and/or sub-regional levels. The usefulness/benefits of discussion forum on a regular basis were also highlighted as a channel to exchange ideas and views and provide feedback to the CGE.

8. Figure below provides a visual summary of discussions at the informal forum.



9. The CGE thanked the participants for their feedback. The CGE indicated that it will take these inputs into consideration when it develops its annual work plan for 2021.

ANNEX. Programme of the third informal forum

Date: Thursday 26 November 2020

Time: 14:00–15:30 CET

Moderator: Mr. Arif Goheer (CGE Chair)

Time	Agenda item	Speaker
14:00–14:25	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening statement by Mr. Arif Goheer, the Chair of the CGE • Introductory remarks by Ms. Marianne Karlsen, the Chair of the SBI • Introductory remarks by Mr. Ovais Sarmad, Deputy Executive Secretary of the secretariat • Introductory remarks by Ms. Jenny Mager, Presidency of COP 25 • Introductory remarks by Ms. Eve Deakin, Incoming Presidency of COP 26 	
14:25–15:25	Showcase of CGE achievements and plenary discussion <i>It consists of six segments dedicated to different elements of the CGE work of 2020. For each segment, a CGE member will introduce the element and moderate the plenary discussion guided by predefined questions, with the aim of seeking feedback on the outputs of the CGE work in 2020 from the end-users' point of view and gathering intelligence on the additional and/or evolving needs of developing countries and their priorities.</i>	
5 min	1. Introduction to cross-cutting element <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vision, mission and strategic priorities • CGE work plan 2020 	Mr. Arif Goheer, CGE Chair
3 min	2.1 Introduction to knowledge products <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ETF handbook • IA handbook 	Ms. Alyssa Ng, CGE member from Singapore
7 min	2.2 Plenary discussion on knowledge products <i>(Guiding questions on knowledge products)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Have you already used the knowledge products? Did you find them useful? How did it help?</i> • <i>Do you foresee additional need for guidance on the topic? If so, what is it?</i> 	
3 min	3.1 Introduction to knowledge delivery <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar series • Virtual trainings and training materials 	Mr. Kadir Aksakal, CGE member from Turkey
4 min	3.2 Showcase of training materials	Virtual training workshop participant: - Ms. María Luz Fernández (Argentina)
5 min	3.3 Reflections by 1–2 virtual training workshop participants	
8 min	3.4 Plenary discussion on knowledge delivery <i>(Guiding questions on knowledge products)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Do you foresee additional area for capacity-building?</i> 	

Time	Agenda item	Speaker
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How can the CGE improve its capacity support? (e.g. in terms of modality, focus of area, etc.)</i> 	
3 min	4. CGE engagement with Parties and peer exchange <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the CGE institutional arrangements toolbox Showcase of an interview Call for inputs 	Mr. Athmane Mehadji, CGE member from Algeria
5 min	5.1 Introduction to needs assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key findings from the latest study on problems, constraints, lessons learned and capacity-building needs will be presented and used as a basis for discussion. 	Ms. Virginia Sena, CGE member from Uruguay
10 min	5.2 Plenary discussion <i>(Guiding questions on needs and gaps)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What are other constraints and gaps experienced in your countries? Are there any trends or key changes in terms of priorities, especially in respect of transition to the enhanced transparency framework?</i> <i>How can the CGE and other stakeholders better respond to the evolving needs of developing countries?</i> 	
7 min	6. Closing the loop: feedback on the CGE work plan <i>(Guiding questions on the CGE work plan)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>To country representative, what should be the key areas or topics that the CGE should focus in 2021 and beyond?</i> <i>To those entities who are either supporting or planning to support developing countries, do you foresee any opportunity for us to collaborate and if so how?</i> 	Mr. Ricardo Fernandez, CGE member from EU
15:25–15:30	Closing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summary of key takeaways Closing remarks by the Chair of the CGE 	Mr. Arif Goheer, CGE Chair
