

**Consultative Group of Experts  
Pilot Informal Forum – Summary**

**Bonn, 22 June 2019**

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## I. BACKGROUND

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), at its 24<sup>th</sup> session, extended the term of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention for eight years, from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2026, and renamed it to the [Consultative Group of Experts](#) (CGE). In addition to assisting developing countries fulfil their reporting requirements under the Convention, the CGE is mandated to support the implementation of the enhanced transparency framework under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement by, inter alia: (a) facilitating the provision of technical advice and support to developing country Parties, as applicable, including for the preparation and submission of their biennial transparency reports and facilitating improved reporting over time; and (b) providing technical advice to the secretariat on the implementation of the training of the technical expert review teams referred to in decision 18/CMA.1, paragraph 12(c).<sup>1</sup>
2. At its first meeting held in Bonn, Germany, from 21–22 February 2019, the CGE developed its [work plan for 2019](#), where it was agreed to organize a pilot informal forum on the support for measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) and transparency on the margins of the sessions of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs). The first pilot CGE informal forum was held in Bonn, Germany, on 22 June 2019, on the margins of the fiftieth session of the SBs.
3. This report contains a summary of the proceedings of and discussions at the first pilot CGE informal forum.<sup>2</sup>

## II. PROCEEDINGS

4. The main objectives of the pilot CGE informal forum were to:
  - a) Provide an informal space for key actors and other stakeholders of MRV/transparency of climate action and support to engage in an implementation-focused exchange;
  - b) Address the technical assistance needs of developing countries to implement the existing MRV arrangements under the Convention and prepare for the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement.
5. The expected outcomes of the pilot CGE informal forum included:
  - a) Improved understanding of the key developments under the Convention and the Paris Agreement in the areas of MRV and enhanced transparency framework, and their implications to developing countries;
  - b) Improved understanding of the existing and emerging constraints, challenges and needs of developing countries in the implementation of the existing MRV arrangements and the transitioning to the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement;
  - c) Promoted understanding of support opportunities available to developing countries for the implementation of the existing MRV arrangements and the transitioning to the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement;

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<sup>1</sup> Decision 11/CP.24 and decision 18/CMA.1, paragraph 15.

<sup>2</sup> All materials presented in the forum are available at: <https://unfccc.int/event/pilot-cge-informal-forum>.

- d) Promoted sharing of lessons learned and experiences of those entities supporting developing countries as well as of developing countries in receiving the support, implementing the existing MRV arrangements, and preparing for the implementation of the enhanced transparency framework;
  - e) Promoted networking amongst developing countries seeking support with those entities that are in a position to provide the support needed.
6. The pilot informal forum, while being an open event, targeted the following groups of audience who can be considered as an “impact” group from the perspective of the implementation of the existing MRV arrangements and the enhanced transparency framework: country experts and policy makers who are key drivers of MRV/transparency efforts nationally; bilateral, multilateral agencies as well as other international organizations providing technical assistance on MRV/transparency.
  7. The pilot informal forum consisted of two technical sessions, following the opening session where the Chair of the CGE (Mr. Gervais Ludovic ITSOUA MADZOUS), the Chair of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) (Mr. Emmanuel DUMISANI DLAMINI) and the Deputy Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC secretariat (Mr. Ovais SARMAD) gave introductory remarks.

#### a. Technical Session I: Emerging needs

8. This session provided a space to discuss the existing and emerging challenges and needs of developing countries in the implementation of the existing MRV arrangements and the transitioning to the enhanced transparency framework. It was moderated by two CGE members, namely, Ms. Mausami Desai (USA) and Mr. Ziaul Haque (Bangladesh). It comprised three sub-sessions:
  - a) **Overview of the emerging needs of developing countries in the transitioning from the existing MRV arrangements to the enhanced transparency framework:** This sub-session outlined key elements of reporting under the enhanced transparency framework, including areas of enhancement vis-à-vis the existing MRV arrangements, and their implications to developing countries. It also provided information on existing and emerging needs of developing countries and their expectations from the CGE, drawing from the preliminary results of the *CGE 2019 stocktake of MRV/transparency gaps and needs to inform CGE technical advice and support to developing countries*.<sup>3</sup>
  - b) **Lessons learned and experiences from the existing MRV arrangements and how countries are preparing for the enhanced transparency framework:** This sub-session focused on the sharing of lessons learned and experiences in the implementation of the existing MRV arrangements, including challenges identified in the MRV process and the approaches undertaken to address those challenges and get ready for the implementation of the enhanced transparency framework. Two developing countries, namely, Indonesia and Ghana, were invited to present their lessons learned and experiences.

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<sup>3</sup> The stocktake survey is on-going since its launch on 24 May 2019. Information presented in the forum contains preliminary survey results only (including inputs from 29 respondents from 26 developing countries). Thus, it should not be considered as final assessment nor an exhaustive list.

- c) **Reflection on structural changes that are needed to the existing institutional arrangements to effectively support the implementation of the enhanced transparency framework:** This sub-session aimed at providing an expert input drawing reflection on the role that robust institutional arrangements can play in facilitating the continuous improvement in the MRV/transparency process over time. The presentation was delivered by an expert with vast years of country-level engagement in the area of environmental data gathering, analysis and reporting. Laying out key elements of a working framework for capacity building on transparency, the presentation provided inputs on how to capitalize the existing systems and processes for data collection and reporting and to strengthen the national capacity on transparency over time.

#### b. Technical session II: Support opportunities and delivery

- 9. This session focused on support opportunities available for assisting countries build capacity for transparency and initiated discussions on how best the international community can respond to the needs of developing countries. It was moderated by two CGE members, namely, Mr. Zammath Khaleel (Maldives) and Mr. Damiano Borgogno (UNDP). It comprised three sub-sessions:
  - a) **An overview of the CGE strategic priorities and technical support avenues available through it:** This sub-session introduced the work plan and strategic priority of the CGE for 2019; and outlined the implementation status of the support initiatives planned for the year. Further, it presented a number of technical resources that are available online, including the CGE training materials, guidelines and manuals, webinar series and e-learning courses; and demonstrated MRV/transparency helpdesk, set up as a one-stop shop for resources on MRV and transparency.
  - b) **An overview of financial resources available to developing countries under the seventh replenishment of the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) and procedures to access them:** This sub-session provided an overview of support opportunities provided by the GEF for MRV and transparency. The presentation outlined the status of financial support provided by the GEF for the preparation of national communications (NCs) and biennial update reports (BURs), and the status of NC/BUR preparation and submissions from the countries receiving support. It also provided an overview of support available through two avenues under the GEF – the Global Support Programme (GSP) and the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT). Further, the presenter shared some lessons and observations that were identified based on the experience of reviewing CBIT project proposals, to inform developing countries in the development of future CBIT project proposals.
  - c) **A success story in accessing funds from the GEF in a timely manner:** This sub-session provided a space for Uruguay to share its experience in accessing funds from the GEF and how the support contributed to establishing institutional arrangements and sustaining the data collection and reporting process for the preparation and submissions of NCs and BURs.
- 10. The presentations were followed by interactive discussion in the plenary setting, addressing the following questions:
  - a) How international community is responding or can respond to the needs of developing countries;

- b) What are the strategic priorities of support providers and key challenges in delivering support on the ground; and
- c) How the effectiveness of the support provided can be improved.

### III. DISCUSSIONS

11. The presentations set the context for the interactive discussions that followed. The discussions mainly focused on the importance of a ***sustained orientation towards enhancing a national MRV/transparency system and continuous capacity-building.***
12. Participants shared the view that a set-up and implementation of an effective national MRV/transparency system takes time and particularly for some developing countries it can be a slow and tough endeavor owing to persistent challenges such as inadequate access to and/or lack of availability of quality data, lack of staff equipped with technical expertise, limited financial resources (i.e. lack of or insufficient national budgetary allocation and/or financial support), lack of awareness or low visibility of MRV results for policy decision-making, to name but a few.
13. However, it was also highlighted that countries can and should leverage the existing workable systems and resources; and foster the sustainability over time. Some elements that can facilitate such efforts were discussed:
  - a) Linking with other data collection and reporting process can be instrumental. Most countries have national statistical systems in the areas of energy, agriculture, transport and forestry; air pollution, waste and other environmental monitoring and reporting activities; or subnational and/or facility-level data compilation and reporting process, which can be leveraged and feed into the MRV/transparency process. Institutional arrangements for coordinating organizations and streamlining data collection process will be needed.
  - b) Building a dedicated team of experts are crucial in sustaining and improving institutional memory, capacity and expertise over time. Leadership, commitments, motivation and stability of technical staff were considered as key components of a dedicated team. In particular, investment in human resources was underscored by means of offering continuous training opportunities, providing technical people the chance to become valued long-term teams of experts, analyst, advisors and negotiators, and securing adequate funding (preferably national budget) to maintain qualified human resources for at least longer than one cycle of preparation and submission of national reports.
  - c) In engaging external organizations or consultancy to fill the technical gap, it is important to develop a continuous cycle that ensures the maintenance of technical capacity in the team. Further, the engagement of external organizations or consultancy should aim at building the capacity of the team (i.e. finding and engaging with stakeholders; training stakeholders; designing, adapting and building templates and tools), not just providing short-term peak capacity (i.e. data gathering, analysis, and producing reports as one-off process).
  - d) Domestic political buy-in is crucial in implementing and enhancing MRV/transparency process. The national benefits of MRV/transparency should be clearly communicated – i.e. MRV/transparency process can inform and inspire decision makers to build effective, integrated, climate sensitive strategies for all sectors and serve as a how-to-guide to building

a low carbon and climate resilient sustainable economy; it also brings opportunities for research in the development of reliable indicators of progress and thereby bringing in confidence for investors.

## ANNEX. Programme of the Pilot CGE Informal Forum

Date: Saturday 22 June 2019

Time: 13:00 – 16:00

Location: AHH Upper Conference room

### *Programme of the Pilot CGE informal forum*

#### **Opening session:**

- Opening statement by the CGE Chair (Mr. Gervais Ludovic ITSOUA MADZOUS)
- Introductory remarks by the SBI Chair (Mr. Emmanuel DUMISANI DLAMINI)
- Introductory remarks by the UNFCCC Deputy Executive Secretariat (Mr. Ovais SARMAD)

<b>Technical session – Part I: Emerging needs</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
Moving from the existing MRV arrangements to the enhanced transparency framework building on the key messages from its survey on gaps and needs	Mr. Gervais Ludovic ITSOUA MADZOUS ( <i>CGE Chair</i> )
Lessons learned and experiences from the existing MRV arrangements and how they are preparing for the enhanced transparency framework	1. Mr. Joko Prihatno ( <i>Indonesia</i> ) 2. Mr. Daniel Benefoh ( <i>Ghana</i> )
Reflection on what structural changes are needed to the existing institutional arrangements to effectively support the implementation of the enhanced transparency framework	Mr. Justin Goodwin ( <i>MRV/transparency consultant, Aether</i> )
<b>Technical session – Part II: Support opportunities and delivery</b>	
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
Overview presentation of CGE's strategic priorities and technical support avenues available through it	Ms. Tian Wang ( <i>CGE member</i> )
Success story in accessing funds from the GEF in a timely manner	Mr. Ignacio Lorenzo ( <i>Uruguay</i> )
Overview of financial resources available to developing countries under GEF-7, and procedures to access them	Ms. Chizuru Aoki ( <i>GEF secretariat</i> )
<b>Interactive Discussion</b>	
Interested entities involved in support developing countries are invited to share their perspectives on: 1. How they are responding or can respond to the needs of developing countries; 2. What are their strategic priorities; 3. What are the key challenges they face in delivering support on the ground; 4. How the effectiveness of the support provided can be improved.	

#### **Concluding session:**

- Closing remarks by the CGE Chair
- Networking - tea/coffee

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