
8th Informal Forum of the Consultative Group of Experts

3 March 2026, 09:30–12:30 CET

Summary Report

I. Background

1. The [Consultative Group of Experts](#) (CGE), at its thirteenth meeting agreed, as a part of its work plan, to organize its eighth annual informal forum in March 2026.
2. The informal forum was convened as a hybrid event on March 3rd, 2026, back-to-back with the [14th meeting of the CGE](#) and broadcasted on [YouTube](#).
3. In implementing the enhanced transparency framework (ETF), an important milestone has been reached. As of March 2026, 130 BTRs were submitted, 50 technical expert reviews (TER) were conducted, and 12 Parties have participated in the facilitative multilateral consideration of progress (FMCP).
4. At its 8th Informal Forum, the CGE aimed to showcase its key activities and seek feedback from the stakeholders on how its work can be further reinforced to address the main challenges, constraints and needs of developing country Parties in implementing the ETF. Further, the event served as a platform to hear directly from the audience on new and emerging areas that require technical assistance and support in implementing the transparency arrangements. The informal forum also aimed to exchange experience and best practices on participation in the TER and FMCP processes under the ETF.
5. The call for registration was sent to national focal points and transparency experts, promoted via the CGE webpage, social media, and other communication channels of the secretariat. A total of 127 (63 male, 64 female) participants joined the event, in-person and online.
6. In addition, the event recording on [YouTube](#) has been viewed 57 times as at 17 March 2026.
7. This report contains a summary of the proceedings and discussions at the eighth informal forum of the CGE.

II. Proceedings and key takeaways

8. The event was moderated by CGE member, Fredrick Ouma from Kenya.
9. The event started with opening and welcoming remarks from Ms. Julia Gardiner, SBI Chair, and Ms. Xuehong Wang, Director of Transparency division at the secretariat. SBI Chair, Ms. Julia Gardiner, reminded Parties that BTRs are an important tool informing the global stocktake, providing the basis for more ambitious climate action and support across the world, and encouraged Parties who have not yet submitted their first BTRs to do so as soon as possible. She thanked donors and partners to the CGE and to the secretariat, for the impactful collaboration on building capacities and providing technical advice and support to the developing country Parties in implementing the ETF. Ms. Wang encouraged Parties to prepare and participate in the TER and FMCP as it helps foster solidarity, mutual understanding and trust in the Paris agreement implementation. She also encouraged participants to make full use of the opportunity to interact with the CGE as it prepares its workplan for 2026.

10. **Scene setting:** CGE member, Ms. Kamil Salazar provided a presentation on the key activities carried out by the CGE In the year 2025 to facilitate the support to developing country Parties through conducting capacity-building activities and capacity-building needs assessments, developing knowledge products, organizing workshops and webinars; as well as collaborating and engaging with stakeholders in MRV and ETF. A key statistic she shared was those 325 national experts (184 women and 141 men), representing 128 countries attended the workshops supported by the CGE and a total of 313 national experts joined the webinars in 2025.
11. **Session I** of the informal forum was a moderated discussion on experience of Parties with preparation for and participation in TER and FMCP processes. The following representatives shared their national experience: Sini Niinistö; Pia Forsell; and Nummelin Marjo of Finland; Gulmira Sergazina of Kazakhstan; Melani Paulette Acosta Chin of Panama; and Thuso Tserane of South Africa. A summary of the reflections is presented in the table below.

Table: Country experience of participation in TER and FMCP

Country	Key Lessons Learned from TER	Challenges Encountered during TER	Effective Practices	FMCP Preparation & Engagement
Finland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased transparency and clarity in reporting - Clear handling of non-mandatory reporting elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical problems with ETF tool (inventory explanations) - Delays in draft report preparation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two-tiered working groups structure - Active early communication - Archiving Q&A from reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strong cooperation between ministries - Early preparation and practice presentations - Online technical support during FMCP
Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-country review format highly effective for capacity building - Importance of clear institutional arrangements for tracking NDC implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial constraints for hosting in-country review - Logistical challenges (internet, equipment, interpreters) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Internal meetings to distribute roles and responsibilities - WhatsApp group for rapid communication - Media engagement to raise visibility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early appointment of experts for presentations - Pre-recorded presentations and coordinated responses
Panama	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In-country review allows deep discussions - Centralized coordination by a single coordinator - Importance of capacity building for new teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ETF reporting tool limitations (tablet formats) - Political transition affecting awareness - Language barriers (English fluency) - Lack of ongoing projects to support reviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Core transparency team with clear roles - Real-time internal communication during FMCP - Use of bilingual coordination for communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-recorded videos - In-person participation of senior negotiators - Virtual technical team support
South Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TER helped identify areas needing improvement, especially consistency with MPGs - Need for better modeling and quantification capacities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical challenges with CRT submission and data accuracy - Varied interpretations of MPG provisions - Coordination across multiple experts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Early and structured preparation - Dedicated project manager with prior review experience - Use of WhatsApp for real-time question management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Coordinated team approach with assigned thematic leads - Internal meetings to align responses - Availability of technical experts during FMCP

12. The common challenges indicated by the speakers included the following points:

- Institutional coordination and governance gaps remain significant hurdles.
- Data availability, quality, and management are persistent issues.
- Capacity constraints, especially for applying complex MPGs and using ETF tools.
- Financial and logistical challenges in hosting and participating in in-country reviews.
- Language barriers and political transitions impact smooth processes.
- Maintaining continuity of expert teams and avoiding capacity gaps is difficult, particularly when projects close before review phases.

13. Participants also **shared good practices, insights and recommendations, as below:**

- Institutional Arrangements: Strong, formalized legal frameworks enhance data flow and stakeholder engagement. Centralized coordination and communication channels (e.g., WhatsApp groups) streamline review preparations and responses. Inclusion of multiple ministries, private sector, and research institutions is crucial;
- Capacity Building: Early and structured preparation with clear roles and responsibilities. Retaining experienced experts and training new ones ensures continuity and quality. Use of peer-to-peer exchanges, mock reviews, and webinars support learning. Encouragement for national experts to register as reviewers to build internal capacity;
- Review Process: Early meetings between parties and reviewers to clarify expectations and national circumstances minimize irrelevant or excessive questions. Acceptance of the review as a facilitative, capacity-building process, not punitive. Use of appendices and additional materials to supplement submissions when technical issues arise. FMCP sessions should focus on policy and progress discussions rather than technical questions, with technical experts available for support;
- Reporting and Flexibility Provisions: Emphasize gradual improvement and use of flexibility provisions in MPGs to accommodate national circumstances. Recommendations should be precise with clear references to MPG provisions, enabling actionable follow-up. Reporting should reflect national mitigation/adaptation progress, not just compliance with reporting formats.

14. Following the discussions, a Mentimeter exercise was conducted. The questions and summary of the feedback were as follows:

- *What specific technical gaps or barriers are limiting your country's ability to effectively implement the ETF?* The top key barriers to implementing the ETF were availability of data for preparing the information needed in the BTR; coordination amongst institutions to collect and analyze data, human resource capacity constraints and financial sustainability of the data collection and reporting process. Other barriers mentioned concerned having an IT system in place to manage data; applying the ETF MPGs when preparing the BTR; securing legal mandates to collect data from key stakeholders in the reporting process; making sense of the collected data for reporting purposes.

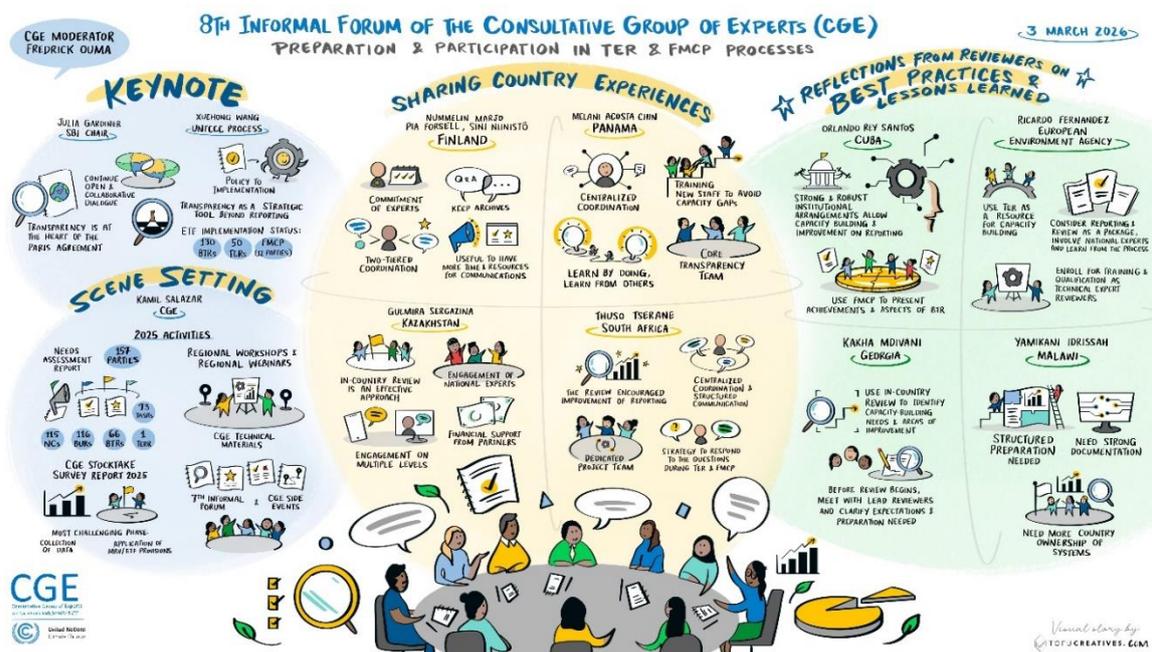
- *In which emerging areas does your country require the most technical advice or support to implement ETF?* The top four emerging areas indicated by the respondent were more support for reporting on the tracking progress and implementation of NDCs; support for improving the GHG inventory preparation and reporting; support for tracking climate finance flows in the country in order to improve reporting in the BTR; and developing indicators for adaptation and reporting on them. Other support areas mentioned were support in applying the ETF MPGs when preparing the BTR; guidance for participating in the TER process; support for developing robust institutional arrangements for climate change reporting.
 - *Are there any other emerging areas that your country requires more technical advice or support in implementing the ETF?* Responses highlighted that countries need comprehensive and practical support to operationalize ETF implementation across multiple interconnected areas. The strongest demand was for developing and implementing robust national MRV systems, alongside improving GHG inventories through better methodologies and emission factors. There was an emphasis on strengthening processes related to NDC tracking and implementation, while also addressing emerging complexities such as the intersection of Article 13 of the Paris Agreement with reporting on Article 6. It is also indicated that support is needed to establish and operationalize institutional arrangements, enhance interagency coordination, develop and use Belem Adaptation Indicators. In parallel, a growing need was highlighted for effective climate finance tracking in order to improve reporting on support needed and received in BTRs, stronger data collection and digital infrastructure to manage the data, and better tools to manage and report information. Challenges were also emphasized in understanding and applying MPGs when preparing the BTRs.
 - *Rank the types of support that would be most valuable from the CGE and other support providers, such as regional hands-on workshops; practical guidance tools; peer-to-peer exchange; e-learning modules; in-country technical advisory missions; South–South cooperation initiatives; desk-based advisory support; and North–South cooperation initiatives.* Responses indicated a clear preference for practical, hands-on and interactive forms of support. Regional workshops ranked highest, followed by practical guidance tools and peer-to-peer exchanges, showing that participants value actionable resources and learning from each other’s experiences. Moderately preferred options included e-learning modules and in-country technical advisory missions.
15. **Session II** of the event focused on reflections from reviewers on the best practices and lessons learned from the TER and FMCP processes. This session included former and current CGE members as speakers, Orlando Ernesto Rey Santos (Cuba), Yamikani Idrissah (Malawi), Kakha Mdivani (Georgia) and Ricardo Fernandez (EC), who were also members of the BTR review teams.
16. Key takeaways from their reflections, included:
- Institutional coordination, data availability and resource sustainability are central challenges;
 - Technical difficulties often arise in projecting GHG emissions and removals, and estimating emission outcomes of policies and measures;

- Reviewers stressed the importance of capacity building through the TER process, which is a valuable learning opportunity;
- Lead reviewers play a critical role in mentoring new reviewers and ensuring consistency;
- Early and open communication between reviewers and Parties improves review outcomes;
- Private sector engagement remains difficult but essential; legal mandates and clear communication of data use could enhance cooperation among stakeholders;
- FMCP is evolving and helpful in highlighting countries' achievements and policy progress.

17. The moderator also provided avenue for support providers to share their reflections. Key reflections from support providers included the following:

- Coordinated multi-stakeholder approaches and capacity building at various stages are important aspects to consider;
- The GEF funds allocated to a developing country Party for preparation of a BTR also covers the technical expert review process.
- Peer-to-peer review exercises and mock TERs help countries prepare and reduce review burdens;
- Support is tailored recognizing countries' diverse stages in ETF implementation;
- Initiatives like centralized regional reviews for LDCs aim to optimize use of resources and peer-to-peer learning amongst participating LDCs in the review.
- Embedding transparency processes within national institutions would enable sustainability of the institutional arrangements for implementing the ETF.

18. A visual summary was prepared by a visual artist and shared at the closing session, as presented below.



19. During the closing session, the moderator highlighted a few important messages from the event.

These included:

- Transparency is a strategic, evolving tool integral to climate governance and implementation of the Paris Agreement;
- Strong, formal institutional arrangements and centralized coordination are foundational to successful ETF implementation;
- Capacity building must be continuous, inclusive, and integrated into national systems, involving diverse stakeholders including private sector and research institutions;
- The TER and FMCP processes are valuable for enhancing transparency, identifying gaps, and fostering cooperation, but require early preparation and clear communication;
- Recommendations from reviews should be precise, actionable, and linked to MPGs, facilitating gradual improvement and national ownership;
- Peer learning, technical support, and engagement of local experts as reviewers strengthen countries' transparency capacity and sustainability;
- Support providers play a critical role in funding, technical assistance, and fostering collaborative networks to aid countries at different implementation stages.

20. The discussions served as an input to CGE in developing its 2026 work plan and will also inform the CGE's progress report to SBI.