

# IAR experience and approach to the BR4 review cycle

7<sup>th</sup> BRs and NCs lead reviewers meeting

9–10 June 2020

Virtual meeting



## Key messages

1. **Visibility of multilateral processes facilitates** national and international transparency systems
2. **Improved reporting** demonstrates advancing of the national transparency arrangements
3. **Improved consistency of assessment** by ERTs and timeliness of TRRs publication shows advancement in maturity of the review system
4. **Remote CRs demonstrated commitment but faced inevitable challenges**
5. Increase in the number of **BR/NC experts** promises to meet ETF demand
6. Still, **more transparency system learning**, such as through BR4 review cycle, is needed to be ready for efficient TER



# LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

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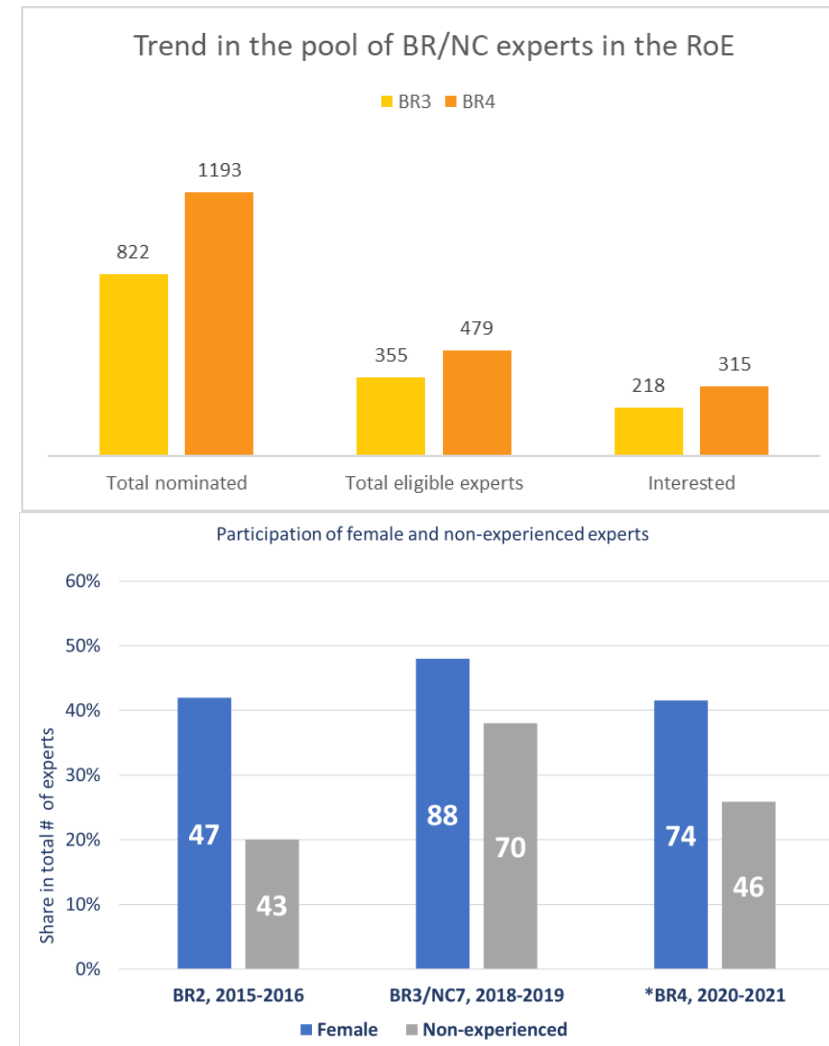


The new IAR cycle builds on the previous review practice and bridges towards ETF



## Building system capacity for transiting to TER under ETF: increasing number of eligible and interested experts

- The number of nominated, eligible, interested experts increased by about 40% in 2 years. **Continuing this trend will ensure that the number of qualified experts will meet the demand for TER in 2024.**
- Encouraging:
  - a) all Parties to nominate experts,
  - b) the experts to participate in training and in the reviews
  - c) Annex I Parties to fund their experts' participation;
  - d) All experts to allocate due time for the review
- Opportunities provided for **involvement of more new experts should be balanced** against the efficiency/quality of reviews.
- Gender balance is still challenging due to the lower number of female experts nominated to the RoE.



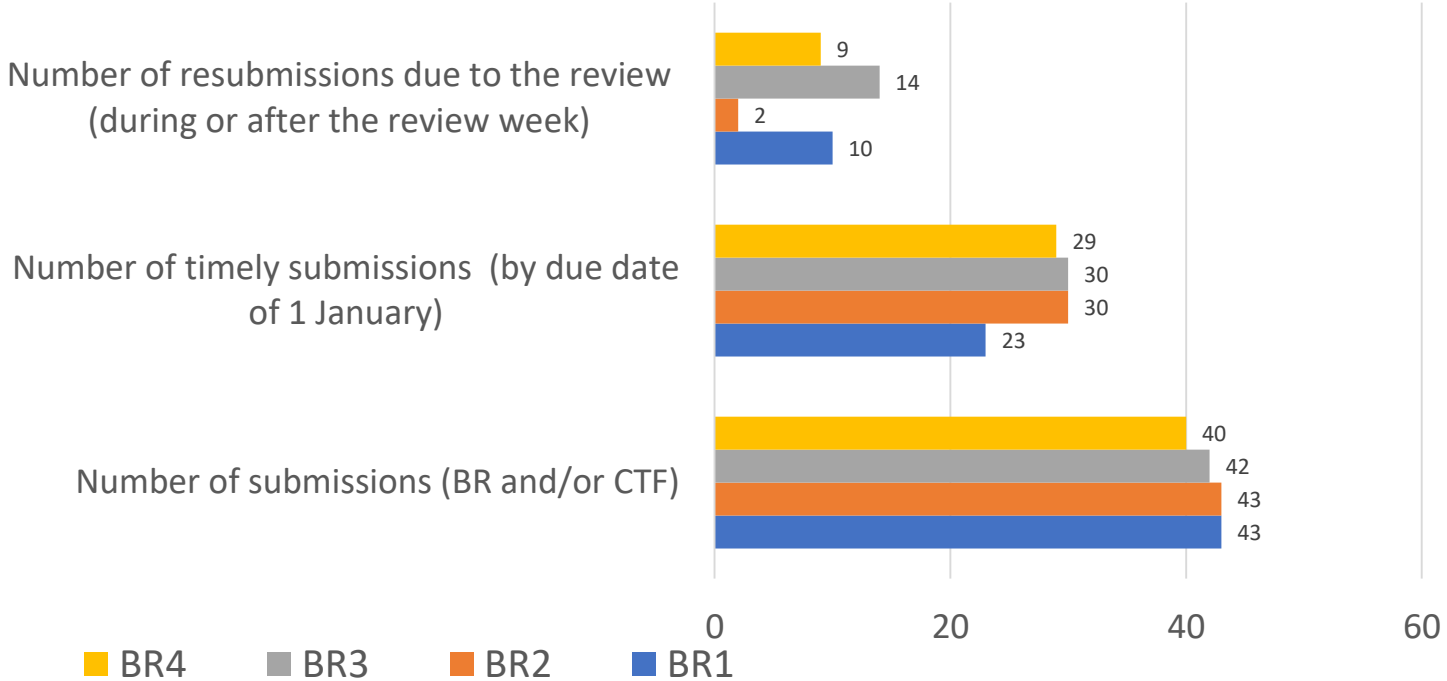
- **Balance of experts:** developed/developing, **geographical and regional representation, gender**
- **Balance of expertise:**
  - **Maintain high ratio of new experts (20% - 60%)**
  - **Demand of 192 experts for BR4 reviews in 2 years from which 118 ( 60%) would be new.**
  - **As the large number of new experts involved would require more guidance from the ROs an LR, ensuring sufficient number of experienced experts across areas was challenging;**
  - **Involve eligible and interested CGE members to provide them with opportunity to gain hands on experience.**
  - **Prioritize eligible and interested experts SIDS and LDC experts.**

Working in sub-teams with focus on 2 Parties led by 2 LRs and each expert focusing on 1 Party

Task	Role	Party
<b>SUB TEAM 1</b>		
Gen, Trends, Edu	Participant	Australia
PaMs	Participant	Australia
<i>PaMs (new)</i>	Participant	Australia
Projections and total effects	Participant	Australia
FTC	<b>Lead reviewer</b>	Australia
Gen, Trends, Edu	Participant	Sweden
PaMs	Participant	Sweden
<i>Projections and total effects (new)</i>	Participant	Sweden
FTC	<b>Lead reviewer</b>	Sweden
<b>SUB TEAM 2</b>		
Gen, Trends, Edu	Participant	Germany
PaMs	<b>Lead reviewer</b>	Germany
Projections and total effects	Participant	Germany
<i>Projections and total effects (new)</i>	Participant	Germany
<i>FTC (new)</i>	Participant	Germany
<i>Gen, Trends, Edu (new)</i>	Participant	Italy
PaMs	<b>Lead reviewer</b>	Italy
<i>Projections and total effects (new)</i>	Participant	Italy
FTC	LR/participant	Italy
<b>SUB-TEAM 3</b>		
<i>PaMs (new)</i>	Participant	Norway
Projections and total effects	<b>Lead reviewer</b>	Norway
<i>FTC (new)</i>	Participant	Norway
<i>Gen, Trends, Edu (new)</i>	Participant	Norway
<i>PaMs (new, but very experienced)</i>	Participant	Switzerland
Projections and total effects	<b>Lead reviewer</b>	Switzerland
FTC	Participant	Switzerland
<i>Gen, Trends, Edu (new)</i>	Participant	Switzerland

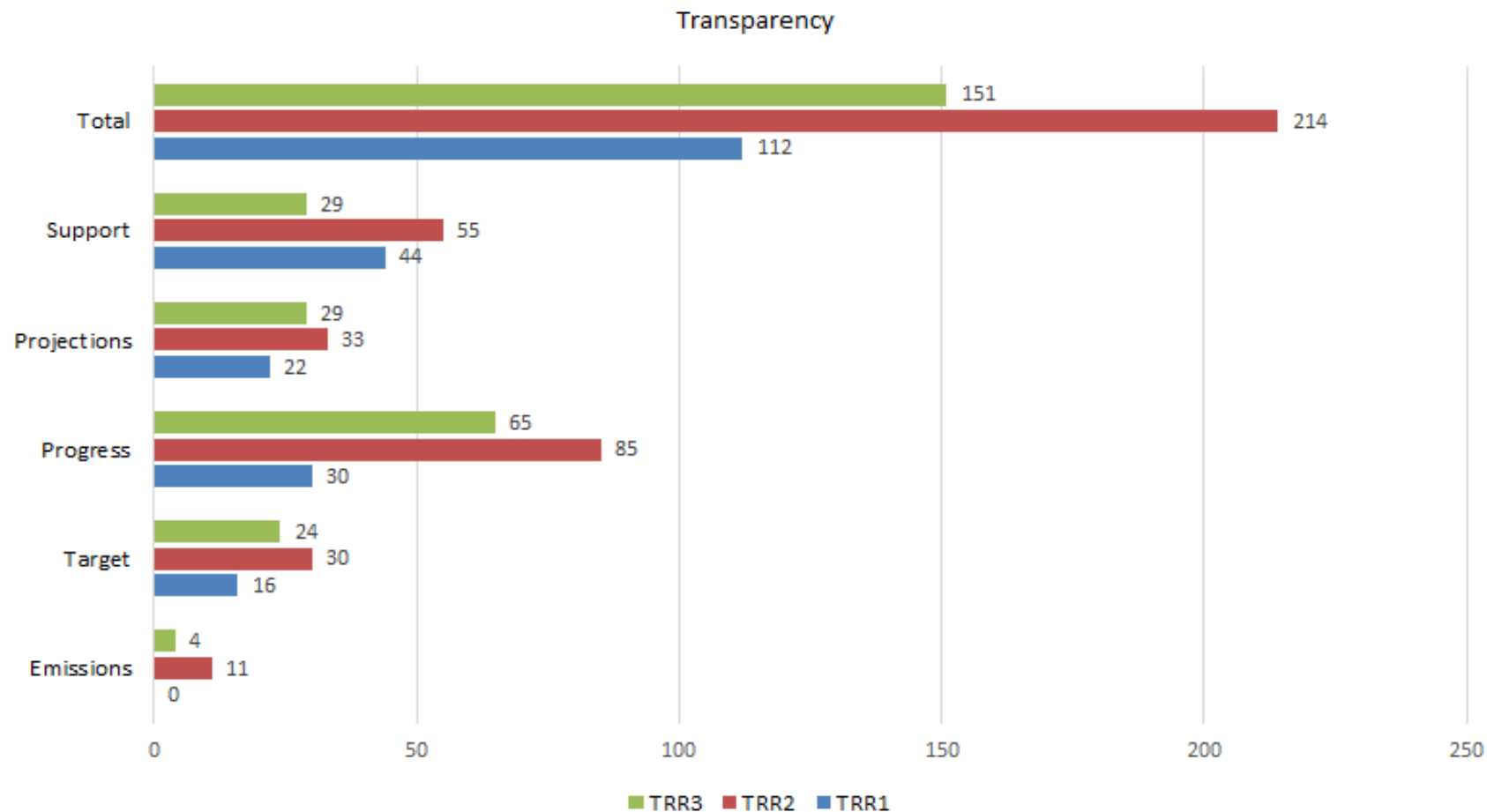
- **Timeliness of Parties submissions has improved** since BR1 submission. Yet I about 1/3 of Parties submitted their BR4s beyond the due date of January 1st 2020. 3 Parties have not submitted BR4 or BR4 CTF as of 26 May 2020.

Trend in Parties' BR reporting 2014-2020



## System learning through BR review cycles: reporting (2)

- The completeness and transparency of reporting, has **improved in the BR3s compared with the BR2s by 25%**.
- Transparency improved from BR2 to BR3 in all sections.



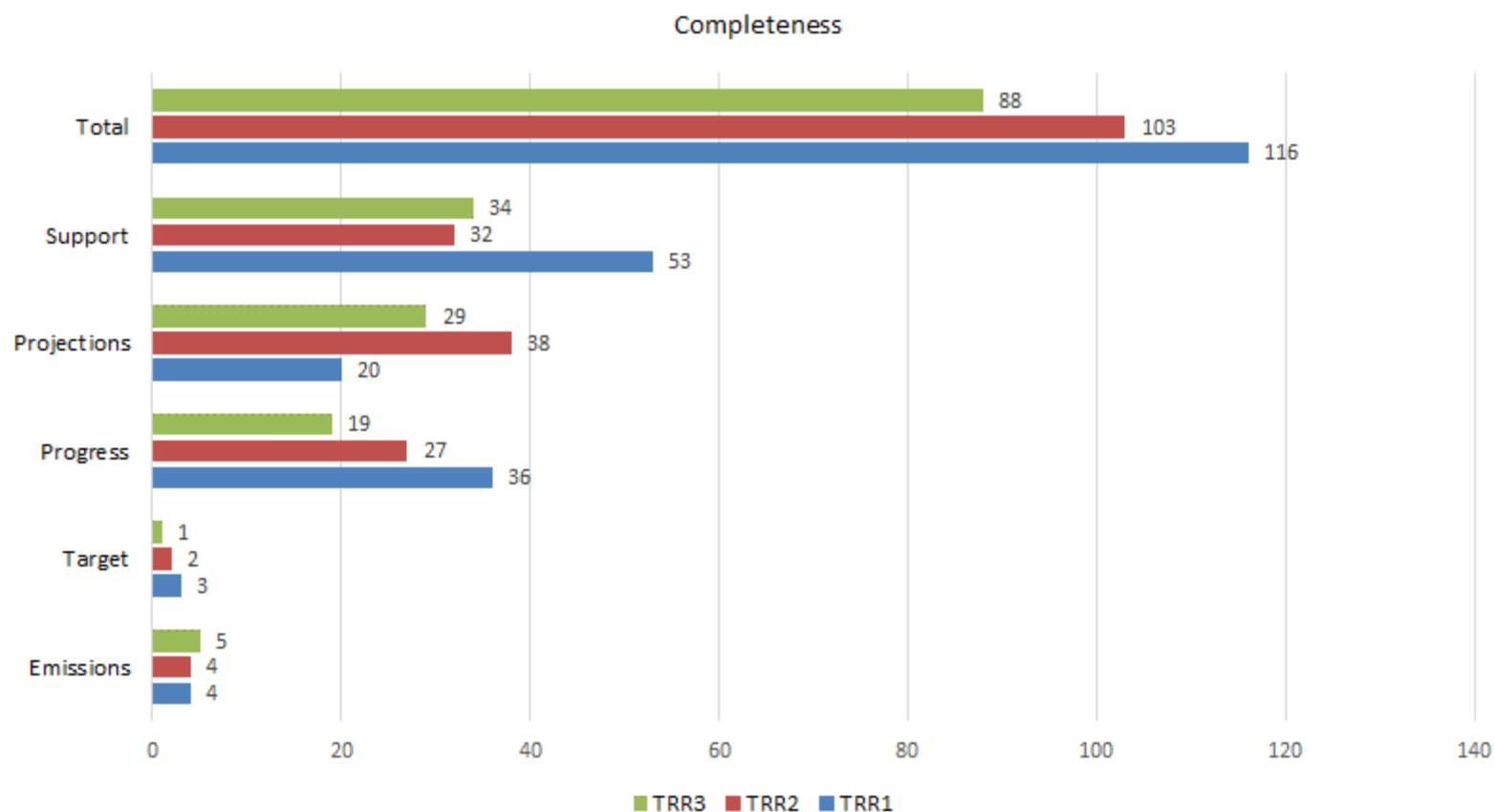
### Improved reporting by Parties demonstrates advancing national transparency capacity

Background paper “Completeness and Transparency Assessment of Information Reported in Technical Review Reports of 3rd Biennial Reports – 2020 Update”, available on UNFCCC LRs meeting website



## System learning through BR review cycles: reporting (3)

- By sector, completeness improved from BR2 to BR3 for progress made towards the achievement of the target, description of the target and projections; slightly decreased for provision of FTC support and GHG emissions and trends.
- The quality of reporting fluctuates across BR cycles, which indicates that Parties still face challenges in maintaining the quality and consistency of reporting as well as evolving RPG.

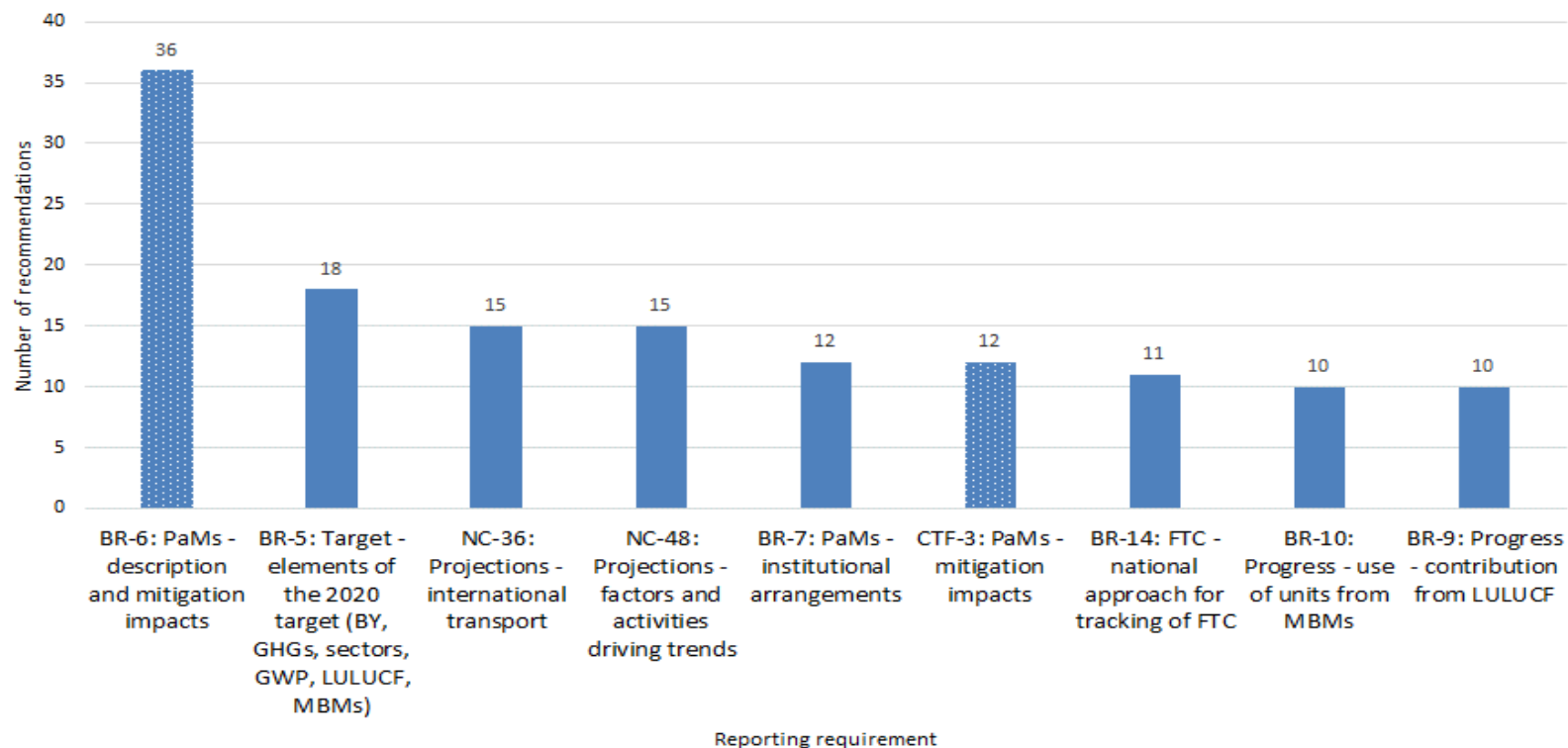


Background paper “Completeness and Transparency Assessment of Information Reported in Technical Review Reports of 3rd Biennial Reports – 2020 Update”, available on UNFCCC LR meeting website



## System learning through BR review cycles: reporting (4) improved, yet challenges remain

The most challenging reporting requirement that was singled out by the TRR3 ERTs in their recommendations was the estimation of impacts for individual PaMs, followed by the description of the quantified emission reduction target, especially as it relates to EU member states and projections.



Background paper “Completeness and Transparency Assessment of Information Reported in Technical Review Reports of 3rd Biennial Reports – 2020 Update”, available on UNFCCC LR meeting website



### Reporting of the impacts of PaMs has improved slightly

between BR3 and BR1 reporting cycles in terms of number of PaMs with estimated impacts.

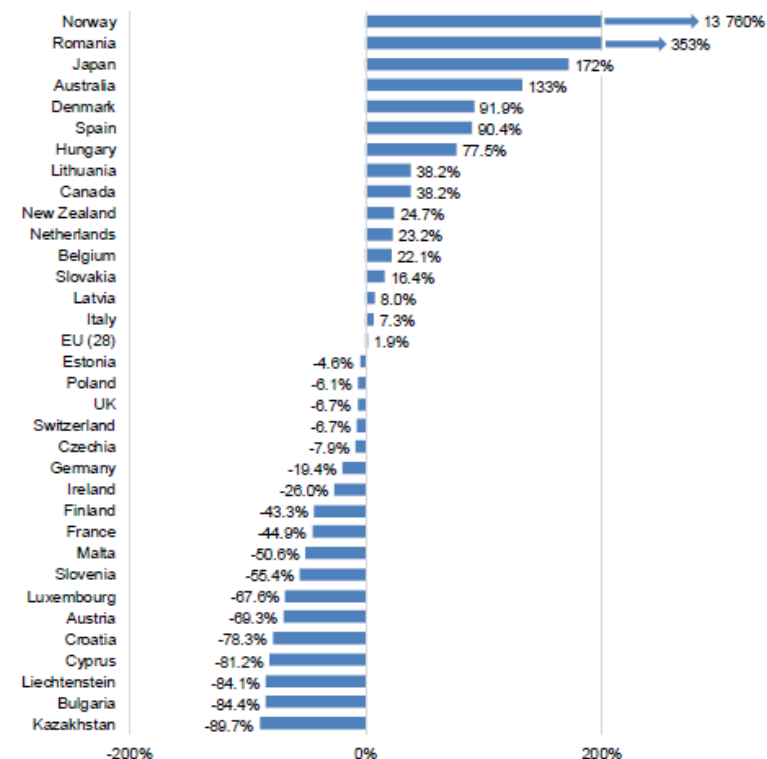
Yet many Parties still face challenges in assessing the impacts of PaMs and identifying and applying sound assessment methodologies.

The difference between impact assessed in BR2s and BR3s illustrates evolving methodologies.

It would be sensible, for the ERTs in TRRs to note:

- improvements in reporting the estimated impacts of PaMs;
- the consistency of the impacts with prior report and explanations for significant differences;
- descriptions of methodologies in BRs;
- when impacts of grouped PaMs are not clearly explained.

Change in total estimated impacts of PaMs reported between BR2 and BR3. Only includes Parties that reported estimated impacts in both reports



Background paper “Assessment of Information Related to Impacts of Policies and Measures Reported in Technical Review Reports of 3rd Biennial Reports” is available on the LRs meeting website



## System learning through BR review cycles: more consistent review practice (1)

- The assessment by ERTs of the completeness and transparency of info provided in the BR3s was **almost fully consistent across TRR3s and in accordance with the RPG**;
- **The consistency has significantly improved** compared to TRR2s. The improvement could be attributed to:
  - a) The ERTs had further accumulated and refined their experience
  - b) The LRs provided guidance to the ERTs consistent with the guiding principles and the assessment scoreboard;
  - c) The ERTs continued to apply the RPG, endorsed by the LRs (9 new issues/solutions for RPG 2020 update).

Frequency distribution of the cases related to the assessment of the completeness of the progress made towards the target

Assessment	NC							
	PC					1	1	
	MC		6	6	4	2		
	FC	20						
Progress made towards the target		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Number of recommendations						

Continuous guidance by the LRs on the application of the guiding principles and the RPG in the future BR reviews would maintain the consistency of the assessment



# REVIEW PRACTICE GUIDANCE 2020



## For Reviews of National Communications and Biennial Reports of Developed Country Parties

### Review Practice Guidance for Review of National Communications and Biennial Reports of Developed Country Parties

- (a) Annex I. Biennial reports and national communications: review challenges and practice, 2016;
- (b) Annex II. (1) Analysis of further options to use the gradations “mostly” or “partially” in the assessment of completeness and transparency in biennial reports. 2016. (2) Update of the analysis of the assessment of completeness and transparency of information reported in biennial reports, 2017;
- (c) Annex III. Implications of changes in the UNFCCC annex I inventory reporting guidelines on the review of second biennial reports, 2016;
- (d) Annex IV. Biennial reports and reporting on domestic arrangements, 2017;
- (e) Annex V. Biennial reports and reporting on the use of the market-based mechanisms by the European Union and its member States, 2017;
- (f) Annex VI. Assessing progress by developed country Parties towards the emission reduction targets, 2017;
- (g) Annex VII. Challenges in reporting and analysing the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties, 2017;
- (h) Annex VIII. Multiple mandatory reporting requirements contained in the same paragraph of the UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties: Analysis of the experience from the technical reviews of the first and second biennial reports.
- (i) Annex IX. Assessment of Information Related to Impacts of Policies and Measures Reported in Technical Review Reports of Third Biennial Reports.

RPG evolved since its launch in 2016, by continuously checking the review approaches, addressing review challenges and adding new guidance after each review cycle.

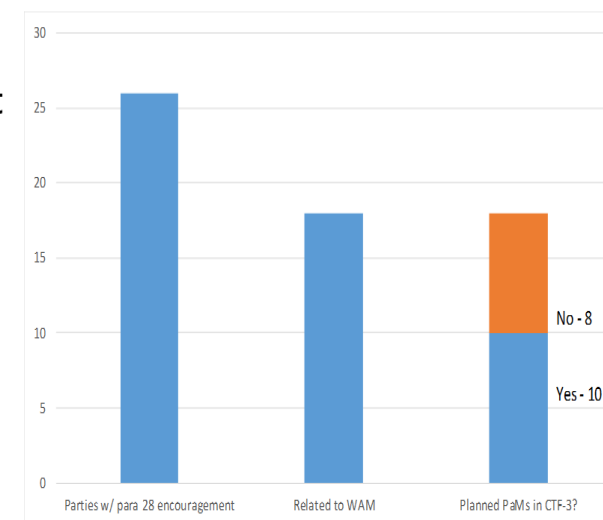
All recommendations/encouragements now tracked in a database and available during reviews, increasing consistency across and within the review cycle

1	Party	Paragraph	Type	RorE	Description1
			Recommendation		In CTF table 6(a), the values reported by Liechtens include emissions for "Transport".
			Encouragement		Liechtenstein reported the WOM and WAM projec but did not provide these projections in CTF table
			Encouragement		The ERT noted that estimates for projected emissi ETS sectors are provided in the BR3 in a figure but In the BR3 the Party did not report information on in the projections even though it presented projec (energy, transport, industrial processes, waste ma

New recommendations database increases consistency

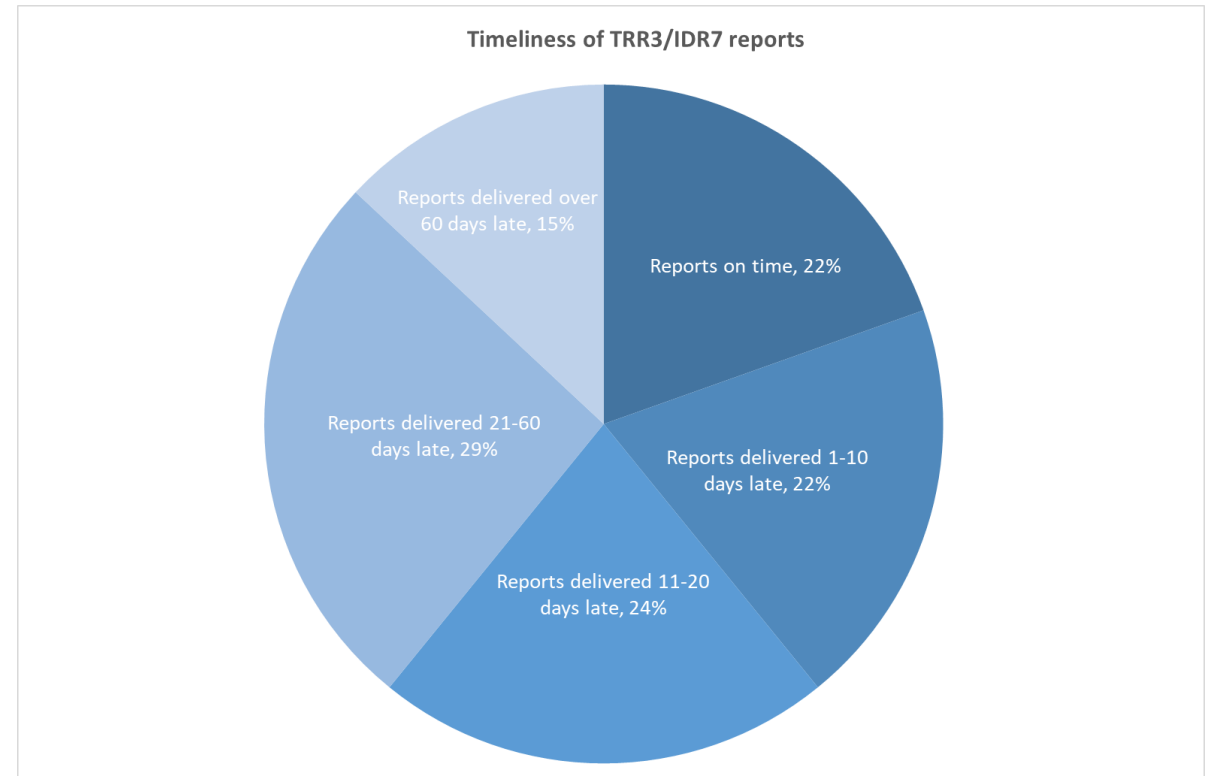
- Allows easy access to other ERT assessments of the same issue during a review
- Increases ability to analyze specific issues for consistent treatment throughout past review cycle:

- 26 Parties received a para 28 encouragement
- 18 were related to WAM
- 10 of those reported planned measures
- 8 did not



## System learning through BR review cycles: improved review timeliness through streamlined practice

- Thanks to process streamlining, timeliness of TRR3 publication improved 2.4 x compared to TRR2. Still only 22% of TRR3 were published within 4 months timeline after the review week.
- Thus efforts put to:
  - a) Prepare before review week;
  - b) Finalize the draft report by end of review week;
  - c) Sent the draft report to the Party within 4 weeks after the review week.



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# QUESTIONS



# ORGANIZATION OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> IAR CYCLE

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The new IAR cycle builds on the previous review practice and bridges towards ETF





## Building system capacity for transiting to TER under ETF: addressing challenges of consistency, timeliness and intensity



1. More **distributed** tasks reduce intensity of the review per expert, LR and RO



2. More **automation** reduces technical effort per expert, LR and RO



3. **More input** and of better quality **before the RW**



4. **More support to RO during RW**



5. Smooth TRR prep. after RW



6. More opportunities provided for **consistency assurance** by ROs and ERTs



7. Systematize channels and space **for feedback** on RPG and the process

## Testing process practices for transiting to TER under ETF: timeliness and consistency during review week



To advance in timeliness and consistency in review, it is critical to complete a draft TRR during the RW. This is facilitated by first completing the assessment tables by Tuesday and completing the story line by Thursday



# Testing process practices for transiting to TER under ETF: addressing consistency and intensity via integrated checklist and advanced template

## New Checklist:

- Integrated with report – no more multiple copies
- New recommendations written in the checklist – automated generation of assessment tables
- Previous recommendations included
- RPG guidance included

CTF-3	<p>Biennial report common tabular format (BR CTF): table 3 (mitigation actions and their effects)</p> <p><i>RPG Guidance:</i> How should the ERT formulate its findings when the quantified estimate of mitigation impact (not cumulative) of individual mitigation actions in 2020 and any other optional years deemed relevant by the Party is not reported in CTF table 3? • The following cases could occur: (a) Relevant cells in CTF table 3 are empty and the Party did not provide an adequate explanation in the custom footnote to CTF table 3 or in the textual part of the BR. This is a completeness issue that leads to a recommendation; (b) Relevant cells in CTF table 3 are empty but the Party provided an adequate explanation in the custom footnote to CTF table 3 and/or in the textual part of the BR as to</p>	<p>Requirements met <input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p>	<p>the ERT <b>encourages</b> <b>TRR3 recommendation</b></p> <p>Party A did not report all the ga The ERT also noted that the st start date and status of implem</p> <p>During the review, Party A ack reporting all the gases affected version of the list of PaMs to re BR.</p> <p>The ERT recommends that Par the related estimates of mitigati reported</p> <p><b>New recommendation for TRR-</b></p> <p>[The Party <b>reported</b>][<b>did no</b> with the UNECCC reporting</p>
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## Updated template:

- More instructions on how;
- More suggestions for standard language

Note: Items listed under reporting requirements refer to the relevant paragraph of the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BRs **CTF table 3** under the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on CTF tables. The reporting on the requirements not included in this is considered to be complete, transparent and free adhering to the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on BRs.

### C. → Progress made towards achievement of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction target<sup>37</sup>

#### 1. → Mitigation actions and their effects **(PaMs expert 3)**

##### (a) → Technical assessment of the reported information<sup>38</sup>

**24.23.** Partyname provided information on its package of PaMs **implemented and adopted** **implemented, adopted and planned**, **by sector** **[and by gas]**, in order to fulfil its commitments under the Convention. Partyname reported on its policy context and legal and institutional arrangements in place for implementing its commitments and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of its PaMs.<sup>39</sup>

**24.24.** Partyname provided information on a set of PaMs similar to those previously reported, **with a few exceptions**. **As an exception as needed, to accurately describe** **changes**. Partyname also **provided information on** **indicated that there have been no** changes since its previous submission to its institutional, legal, administrative and procedural arrangements used for domestic compliance, monitoring, reporting, archiving of information and evaluation of progress towards its target. **Provide a description of changes in its package of PaMs and/or arrangements. Provide a description of changes in its monitoring and evaluation process. Split into two paragraphs if needed.**<sup>40</sup>

**25.** **Reporting on estimated impacts of PaMs.** Modify text as needed to accurately describe the Party's reporting. In its reporting on its PaMs, partyname **provided** **[did not provide]** the estimated emission reduction impacts for **some** **[many]** **[most]** **[all]** of its PaMs. Where estimated impacts were not provided, the Party **did not supply an explanation**. **[supplied an explanation applicable to all PaMs [specific to each PaM]. Partyname estimated the impacts of some of its PaMs as follows]**, and explained why it had done so. **[The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs. The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs. The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs. The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs.]**

**25.25.** **Reporting on estimated impacts of PaMs.** Modify text as needed to accurately describe the Party's reporting. In its reporting on its PaMs, partyname **provided** **[did not provide]** the estimated emission reduction impacts for **some** **[many]** **[most]** **[all]** of its PaMs. Where estimated impacts were not provided, the Party **did not supply an explanation**. **[supplied an explanation applicable to all PaMs [specific to each PaM]. Partyname estimated the impacts of some of its PaMs as follows]**, and explained why it had done so. **[The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs. The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs. The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs. The Party reported on the estimated impacts of its PaMs in its reporting on its PaMs.]**

## Approach for the IAR 4<sup>th</sup> cycle – timeline for reviews and MA ensures the completion of the cycle in 2 years

9 CRs and 1 ICR of BR4 reviews is planned for March 2020 - March 2021 and MA is planned to be conducted in 3 SBI sessions Oct 2020 to Nov 2021. This ensures completing the ICR 4<sup>th</sup> cycle in 2 years.

2020						2021		
March		April	June		Oct	Feb - March		
CR1	CR2	CR3	CR4	CR5	CR6	CR7	CR8	CR9/ICR
NLD	AUS	AUT	MLT	BGR	DNK	ROU	KAZ	ICE
FIN	SWE	IRL	LTU	HUN	NZ	POL	[UKR]	UK
EU	ITA	FRA	CYP	RUS	JPN	HRV	TUR	LUX
PRT	DEU	ESP	EST	SVK	BEL	SLO	LIE	[US]
	NOR	GRE	CZE				MOC	ICR BLR
	CHE	CAN	LVA					
<b>MA4.1, SBI52, 2020 Oct</b>		<b>MA4.2. SBI53, 2021 June</b>				<b>MA 4.3. SBI54, 2021 Nov</b>		
10 Parties		20 Parties				14 Parties		

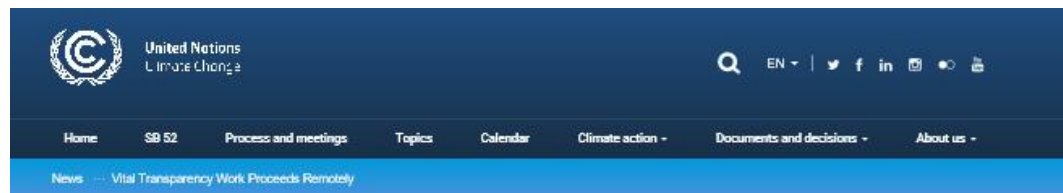


## Approach for the IAR 4<sup>th</sup> cycle – remote CRs demonstrated commitment yet created challenges

As one reviewer put it: “The review provided opportunities to connect with fellow reviewers. I appreciate diverse approaches in reporting among the EU and non-EU countries, and as a report compiler, I will use the experience for the preparation of the next BR.”

<https://unfccc.int/news/vital-transparency-work-proceeds-remotely>

<https://unfccc.int/news/virtual-review-shows-climate-action-in-line-with-2020-emission-reduction-targets>



ARTICLE / 24 APR, 2020

### Vital Transparency Work Proceeds Remotely



UN Climate Change News, 24 April 2020 – Experts coordinated by the UN Climate Change (UNFCCC) secretariat have been conducting important reviews and technical analysis of reports on climate action submitted by governments, working entirely in virtual mode due to the COVID-19 crisis.



ARTICLE / 05 MAY, 2020

### Virtual Review Shows Climate Action in Line With 2020 Emission Reduction Targets



UN Climate Change News, 5 May 2020 – Determined to continue crucial mandated work during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UN Climate Change secretariat has conducted a virtual review of the climate policy and climate action reporting by 16 developed country Parties in March and April.



## Approach for the IAR 4<sup>th</sup> cycle – remote CRs demonstrated commitment yet created challenges

“For me as a new reviewer, on the whole, the review went well through teleconferencing, despite the connection problem my country is currently experiencing.” Another agreed and said: “Thank you for the opportunity to work in this environment. However, face to face is much better.”



# DISCUSSION

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To support continuous improvement of efficiency, effectiveness and consistency of the BR reviews, new measures were introduced in the BR4 cycle, including RPG 2020; integrated checklist and review report template and streamlined schedule for the review week.

Which other measures could be introduced during the BR review cycle to facilitate the business readiness to implement the ETF ?



- The LRs **noted the information presented by the secretariat on the approach** for the review of BR4s. The BR4s of developed country Parties **will be reviewed in nine centralized reviews, from March 2020 to March 2021**. This will allow the TRR4s to be published in time for Parties to undergo the **MA, as feasible, at the working sessions of SBI 52 in 2020 and SBI 53 and SBI 54** in 2021 and complete the 4<sup>th</sup> IAR cycle within 2 years after the submission due date of the BR4 in accordance with the mandate.



- In the light of the recent outbreak of the coronavirus disease, the mode of reviewing **BR4 reviews of 26 Parties scheduled for the first part of 2020 was changed to remote** participation by experts in order to ensure safety for those involved. This unique experience of remote participation has been challenging for Parties, the ERTs and the secretariat. **The challenges include: fewer opportunities to strengthen the capacity of new experts, some limitations in the engagement of reviewers, increased work-load** for reviewers, the review officers, IT support team, difficulties with **internet connectivity** for some experts. Thus, the remote modality of centralized reviews may not be sustainable in the long-run and should be used only as a response to the extraordinary circumstances.



- The LRs **noted that measures proposed by the secretariat in organizing BR4 reviews facilitates** timeliness and consistency and supports business readiness to implement the ETF.

In particular, the LRs acknowledged the following:

- (1) updated draft RPG 2020 to ensure consistency;
- (2) updated and integrated checklist and review report template;
- (3) streamlined schedule for the review week, including sharing and discussing preliminary findings with the Party.

The LRs encourage the ERTs to follow the approach proposed, to finalize the consistent and accurate reports on time, namely **to finalize the draft TRRs the end of the review week.**