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## **Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement**

### **Seventh session**

Belém, 10–21 November 2025

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

**Reporting and review pursuant to Article 13 of the Paris  
Agreement: provision of financial and technical support  
to developing country Parties for reporting and  
capacity-building**

## **Experience of developing country Parties in preparing their first biennial transparency reports**

### **Workshop report by the secretariat**

#### *Summary*

This report provides a summary of the workshop held at the sixty-second session of Subsidiary Body for Implementation to facilitate the sharing of experience of developing country Parties in preparing their first biennial transparency reports, which provided an engaging space for interactive exchange of views and discussion among the Global Environment Facility, its implementing agencies and Parties on the preparation by developing country Parties of their first biennial transparency reports.



## Abbreviations and acronyms

|             |                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| BTR         | biennial transparency report                                                                                                                 |
| CBIT        | Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency                                                                                                |
| CBIT-AFOLU+ | project for global capacity-building towards enhanced transparency of reporting for the agriculture, forestry and other land use sector      |
| CBIT-Forest | project for building global capacity to increase transparency of reporting for the forest sector                                             |
| CBIT-GSP    | joint programme of the Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency and the Global Support Programme                                        |
| CMA         | Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement                                                       |
| ETF         | enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement                                                                                    |
| FAO         | Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations                                                                                      |
| GEF         | Global Environment Facility                                                                                                                  |
| GEF-7       | seventh replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund                                                                          |
| GEF-8       | eighth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund                                                                           |
| GEF-9       | ninth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund                                                                            |
| GHG         | greenhouse gas                                                                                                                               |
| IPCC        | Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change                                                                                                    |
| LDC         | least developed country                                                                                                                      |
| MPGs        | modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support referred to in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement |
| MRV         | measurement, reporting and verification                                                                                                      |
| NC          | national communication                                                                                                                       |
| NDC         | nationally determined contribution                                                                                                           |
| SBI         | Subsidiary Body for Implementation                                                                                                           |
| SIDS        | small island developing State(s)                                                                                                             |
| UNDP        | United Nations Development Programme                                                                                                         |
| UNEP        | United Nations Environment Programme                                                                                                         |
| WWF-US      | World Wildlife Fund, Inc.                                                                                                                    |

## I. Introduction

### A. Background

1. Under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement an enhanced transparency framework for action and support was established, building on and enhancing the existing MRV arrangements under the Convention. The implementation of Article 13 is a cornerstone of global efforts to build mutual trust and confidence among Parties and promote effective implementation of action and provision of support under the Paris Agreement.

2. CMA 1 decided that Parties shall submit their BTR1 and national inventory report, if submitted as a stand-alone report, in accordance with the MPGs,<sup>1</sup> at the latest by 31 December 2024, and that the LDCs and SIDS may submit the information referred to in Article 13, paragraphs 7–10, of the Paris Agreement at their discretion.<sup>2</sup>

### B. Mandate

3. CMA 6 requested the secretariat to organize a workshop in consultation with the GEF and its implementing agencies, as applicable, to be held at SBI 62, to facilitate the sharing of experience of developing country Parties in preparing their BTR1s, including in accessing the funds received from the GEF and their adequacy for the sustainability of the implementation of the ETF.<sup>3</sup>

4. CMA 6 also requested the secretariat to prepare a summary report on the workshop for consideration at CMA 7.<sup>4</sup>

## II. Proceedings of the workshop

5. The workshop referred to in paragraph 3 above was organized by the secretariat and held on 18 June 2025 during SBI 62. Moderated by a representative of the secretariat, the three-hour workshop was convened in person to enable interactive exchange of views and discussion among the GEF, its implementing agencies and Parties through presentations, a question and answer session and breakout group discussions; owing to time constraints, however, breakout group discussions were replaced by a plenary discussion.

6. The workshop agenda, recording and presentation slides are available on the UNFCCC website.<sup>5</sup>

7. The workshop, which was open to all delegates attending SBI 62, attracted 220 participants, including national transparency experts, national focal points involved in transparency-related activities and delegates involved in transparency-related negotiations.

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<sup>1</sup> The MPGs are contained in the annex to decision [18/CMA.1](#). Guidance for operationalizing the MPGs, as well as the corresponding common reporting tables, common tabular format tables and outlines for reporting, can be found in decision [5/CMA.3](#) and its annexes. Guidance pertaining to reviews of the information reported pursuant to chap. IV of the annex to decision [18/CMA.1](#) is available in decision [9/CMA.4](#).

<sup>2</sup> Decision [18/CMA.1](#), paras. 3–4.

<sup>3</sup> Decision [21/CMA.6](#), para. 16.

<sup>4</sup> Decision [21/CMA.6](#), para. 17.

<sup>5</sup> <https://unfccc.int/event/workshop-to-facilitate-sharing-of-experiences-of-developing-country-parties-in-preparing-their-first>.

### III. Summary of the workshop

#### A. Opening remarks

8. The SBI Chair opened the workshop by welcoming the participants and commending the Parties that had submitted their BTR1s, recognizing their efforts as both a technical milestone and a strong signal of commitment to transparency and collective climate ambition. She acknowledged the time, resources and institutional coordination required, especially for developing country Parties with limited capacity, emphasizing that BTR1s are about inclusive participation rather than perfection. Highlighting the crucial support from the GEF and its implementing agencies, she encouraged participants to share experience of accessing funds, assessing the adequacy of those funds and identifying areas for improvement. She underscored the purpose of the workshop as a platform for exchanging knowledge, fostering collaboration, building momentum and driving continuous improvement in implementing the ETF, in a facilitative manner.

9. A representative of the secretariat welcomed participants to the workshop, emphasizing its focus on reflecting on the valuable lessons learned by developing country Parties in preparing BTR1s. He acknowledged the substantial effort required to build national teams, adapt to new reporting formats and coordinate across ministries, often with limited resources, as well as the value of experience in building strong and sustainable national transparency systems. He noted that 103 BTR1s had been submitted as at 18 June 2025, including 67 from developing countries, 15 of which are LDCs or SIDS, with many relying on support from the GEF and its implementing agencies. He highlighted the secretariat's relevant achievements in the first half of 2025, such as conducting 17 country-support events and 11 regional workshops and certifying 1,700 BTR review experts, which were the result of collaborations with 22 partners, including the CBIT-GSP, the Consultative Group of Experts, UNDP and UNEP. He stressed that, as Parties share their experience, it is crucial to understand how financial and technical support were accessed and used, which aspects proved most useful and which best practices and lessons learned can be used to guide future efforts in preparing BTRs. He concluded by encouraging participants to pursue an open and constructive dialogue during the workshop, noting that insights from the workshop will inform negotiations on transparency-related matters at CMA 7.

#### B. Scene-setting presentation

10. The workshop moderator delivered a scene-setting presentation in which he explained that the workshop is part of a broader set of activities supporting the implementation of the ETF, as per decisions [18/CMA.5](#) and [21/CMA.6](#). In 2024, four regional online workshops<sup>6</sup> held before SBI 60 and an in-person workshop<sup>7</sup> held at SBI 60 were organized to discuss support available to developing country Parties for preparing BTR1s and enhancing sustainable institutional capacity and national reporting systems within their Governments for implementing the ETF. A facilitative dialogue was also held at SBI 60 to facilitate the sharing of experience in gathering, analysing and managing data, in particular by developed country Parties, that may be helpful for developing country Parties in enhancing their institutional capacity and national reporting systems for implementing the ETF. Lessons learned and best practices arising from the discussions at the facilitative dialogue were compiled into a summary report.<sup>8</sup> In 2025, Parties submitted information on their experience and challenges in implementing the ETF, and the secretariat synthesized this information,

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<sup>6</sup> See [https://unfccc.int/ETF\\_online\\_workshops\\_2024](https://unfccc.int/ETF_online_workshops_2024).

<sup>7</sup> See <https://unfccc.int/event/in-person-workshop-on-support-available-to-developing-country-parties-for-preparing-their-biennial>.

<sup>8</sup> [FCCC/PA/CMA/2024/4](#).

together with insights from BTR1s, into a synthesis report<sup>9</sup> that was discussed at a facilitative dialogue held on the same day as this workshop.<sup>10</sup>

11. With 103 BTR1s submitted and available on the UNFCCC website as at the date of the workshop, it served as an opportunity to take stock of progress, identify successes and pinpoint areas for improvement to help drive enhancement of BTRs and national transparency systems.

12. The moderator conducted a poll to gather information on participants' backgrounds, and each question received between 104 and 118 responses. Of the respondents who provided information on their region, the largest share were from Western Europe and other States (36 participants), followed by Asia-Pacific States (34), African States (23), Latin American and Caribbean States (12) and Eastern European States (3). Many respondents indicated that they were national transparency experts from developing (44) or developed (30) country Parties, while some indicated that they were representatives of the GEF, its implementing agencies or other support providers (15). A total of 81 out of 109 respondents indicated that they were directly involved in preparing a BTR1, and 69 out of 104 respondents indicated that they were delegates involved in transparency-related negotiations.

## C. Presentations

### 1. Global Environment Facility and its implementing agencies

13. The GEF and its implementing agencies (Conservation International, FAO, UNDP, UNEP and WWF-US) thanked the secretariat for organizing the workshop and delivered a joint presentation on experience and lessons learned in supporting the preparation of BTR1s.

14. The GEF shared an overall picture of its provision of support to developing country Parties for implementing the ETF:

(a) Funding has been provided for the preparation of 163 BTRs across 111 Parties, with some receiving support for BTR2s and BTR3s. The GEF encouraged developing country Parties to request support proactively for future BTRs, in order to secure funding for when needed, using three available modalities: stand-alone projects, combined projects for BTRs and NCs, or top-up funding;

(b) Support is being provided through 100 projects across 96 countries under CBIT. The number of projects continues to grow, and a few proposals are under review;

(c) Global-level support has been provided, including through CBIT-GSP, CBIT-Forest and CBIT-AFOLU+. In June 2025, the GEF Council approved the continuation of the CBIT-GSP, which will be jointly led by UNDP and UNEP with the IPCC to provide complementary support to countries;

(d) The GEF operates in four-year replenishment cycles and is in the final tranche of its eighth cycle, in which USD 53 million of USD 145 million has been committed for preparing transparency reports and USD 45 million of USD 75 million for CBIT projects, leaving substantial funding still available within this cycle. The GEF strongly encouraged developing country Parties that have not yet requested GEF support for implementing transparency arrangements to do so before the current cycle ends.

15. Conservation International emphasized the different modalities and implementing agencies available for requesting GEF support and the importance of aligning project approaches with national needs and priorities. Two CBIT case studies were shared, illustrating approaches to strengthening national and regional technical capacity for implementing transparency arrangements. Approaches include fostering government–academia partnerships through memorandums of understanding to train national experts on implementing transparency arrangements; encouraging the participation of government officials and young professionals in capacity-building activities to facilitate implementation

<sup>9</sup> [FCCC/SBI/2025/10](https://unfccc.int/event/facilitative-dialogue-to-discuss-the-synthesis-report-reflecting-information-on-progress-best-0).

<sup>10</sup> See <https://unfccc.int/event/facilitative-dialogue-to-discuss-the-synthesis-report-reflecting-information-on-progress-best-0>.

of the ETF; and offering incentives to retain and attract experts as government staff, such as applied training, certification, recognition of outstanding trainees as national trainers of trainers and mentorship by former government experts. Conservation International also shared an example of a CBIT project that has already advanced to its second phase, as the closure steps in the first phase, including preparing a project completion report, sharing knowledge and lessons learned through a webinar convened by the CBIT-GSP and responding to recommendations in the terminal evaluation, helped to advance the design of the second phase.

16. FAO outlined its work in implementing eight enabling activities and 28 CBIT projects, and noted that more are in the pipeline. In five countries it is implementing both, which offers strategic advantages through parallel design, streamlined coordination and strengthened institutional frameworks. FAO highlighted that joint implementation of projects enhances synergy and efficiency and enables targeted capacity-building. FAO shared that it faces challenges in identifying appropriate executing agencies for projects with strong managerial capacity, which creates bottlenecks and delays in processing funding requests for both enabling activities and CBIT projects. Close engagement with countries, through FAO country offices, regional teams and headquarters, was emphasized as critical for overcoming the bottlenecks. FAO also shared examples of global CBIT projects relevant to agriculture and land use: (1) CBIT-AFOLU+, the aims of which are to provide technical assistance for improving sectoral reporting, strengthen stakeholder engagement, develop country-driven reporting tools and promote coherence across related processes under the ETF, and (2) CBIT-Forest, which has provided support for over 20 countries directly and more broadly 236 countries and territories through the global network of National Correspondents for the Global Forest Resources Assessment, including training for 2,500 participants from 141 countries to produce robust, transparent forest data for BTRs.

17. UNDP shared information on its work in supporting developing country Parties via enabling activities and CBIT projects. It highlighted that selecting the most appropriate executing agency and implementation modality during the project design phase is essential for mitigating risks and avoiding delays to implementation and preventing major amendments. Executing agencies include government institutions, GEF agencies, donor agencies, civil society organizations and private sector companies. Key steps in selecting the most appropriate executing agency include applying programmatic criteria to identify an agency, thereby ensuring accountability, risk management, sustainability, national ownership, stakeholder engagement, adequate capacities and cost-effectiveness; assessing the capacities of the executing agency identified by the Government; and finalizing governance arrangements, including any need for execution support and capacity development. With regard to the implementation modality, when an implementing agency executes a project as well as supporting preparation of the proposal, this is called dual execution and requires prior GEF approval. UNDP emphasized the value of providing timely technical assistance to Parties for implementing the ETF, sharing cases where rapid support helped in aligning NC and BTR preparation as well as NDC preparation processes, conducting quality control of reports before submission, and strengthening understanding of the MPGs and the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* to enable the LDCs and SIDS to submit BTR1s.

18. UNEP reflected on its work in supporting developing country Parties in preparing BTRs, noting that it assists them in accessing financial and technical support through BTR preparation projects, CBIT projects and the CBIT-GSP. UNEP emphasized the importance of selecting the most appropriate GEF support modality to match countries' project planning and timing. Of the 111 Parties that have accessed funding for preparing BTRs, 66 were supported by UNEP through different modalities – single-country, multi-country or stand-alone BTR1 preparation projects, combined BTR and NC preparation projects, or BTR1 top-up or bundled BTR preparation projects – to promote continuity across consecutive reporting cycles. UNEP explained that expedited single-country or medium-sized project proposals can typically be processed in three to four months, while multi-country project proposals, which require GEF Council approval, may take up to one year. The need for early planning of subsequent proposals was also underscored. UNEP highlighted that the CBIT-GSP has benefited from close collaboration with partners such as the Consultative Group of Experts, UNDP Climate Promise, the Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement and the

Initiative for Climate Action Transparency, which has expanded the reach of transparency support. UNEP recognized the importance of regional networking, noting that the 10 regional networks under the CBIT-GSP have helped to strengthen peer-to-peer learning. The support provided under the CBIT-GSP through tailored training, mock reviews of BTRs, knowledge-sharing and the Climate Transparency Platform complements national ETF processes.

19. WWF-US shared experience from implementing a CBIT project in Nepal aimed at building national capacity to apply the MPGs. The project included components on strengthening national institutions, building capacity to track progress in implementing and achieving the NDC, enhancing technical capacity for preparing the national GHG inventory and establishing systems for monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management for transparency. The project supported the submission of Nepal's BTR1 and its latest NDC, while also advancing work on establishing a national MRV framework and laying the groundwork for the second phase of the CBIT project in the country. WWF-US highlighted that government ownership and strong coordination with other GEF agencies were key factors in making progress in building national capacity and ensuring sustainability of the project. The second phase of Nepal's CBIT project includes a plan for developing a carbon lab for consolidating emission data and creating national emission factors.

20. The GEF shared reflections on its experience in considering and approving project proposals, emphasizing the 33 per cent increase in transparency-related funding under GEF-8 compared with GEF-7, noting that USD 122 million for preparing transparency reports and CBIT projects remains available. Efficiency in processing project proposals has improved, with review times averaging about two months and in some cases taking less than one, through simplified templates and higher funding ceilings for medium-sized projects. The GEF underscored the complementarity between BTR preparation and CBIT support, encouraging Parties to seek funding early and use options such as bundled project proposals. Furthermore, coordination between GEF agencies and other partners such as the UNFCCC secretariat, the Initiative for Climate Action Transparency and the Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement, including through the ETF Group of Friends, has helped to maximize coverage and avoid duplication of support. The GEF reaffirmed its commitment to proactively engaging with developing country Parties by sharing information and responding to their questions.

21. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session that allowed participants to engage with the presenters and clarify aspects such as accessing and using GEF support for BTR preparation and capacity-building for transparency.

22. Participants welcomed the workshop, highlighting it as long anticipated and valuable for enhancing understanding of the transparency process and GEF support. Some participants acknowledged the efforts of the GEF since the adoption of decision [18/CMA.1](#) to streamline processes and provide timely support. They emphasized the importance of new, additional, predictable and adequate financial, technology and capacity-building support being available to developing country Parties. Some participants highlighted that such support should address both the immediate need for tool-specific training to meet the reporting requirements under the ETF and the longer-term need to establish institutional arrangements to sustain national expertise in preparing BTRs.

23. On the sustainability of GEF support for building national capacity for preparing BTRs, some participants stressed that GEF support should facilitate establishing sustainable national institutional capacity rather than increase dependence on external consultants. The GEF shared that CBIT projects are designed to build national capacity and improve national institutional arrangements for transparency, and highlighted that, when the projects reach the second phase, they build on the terminal evaluation of the first phase, allowing challenges and lessons learned to be addressed and support to be channelled on the basis of country-specific needs for implementing the ETF. WWF-US emphasized that the key lesson learned for sustaining national capacity is the importance of focusing on strengthening institutional rather than individual capacity.

24. Some participants raised concerns about gaps between reporting cycles and GEF projects, and the continuity of funding. One participant asked why project approvals take more than a year when the GEF Council meets every six months. Participants also inquired

whether funding requests for projects for preparing subsequent BTRs can be sent before the current BTR is submitted and whether an application for a new CBIT project can be submitted while another project is ongoing. In response, the GEF and UNEP highlighted measures such as bundling projects, for example submitting one project proposal to prepare two BTRs and one NC in the GEF-8 replenishment cycle, and preparing follow-up proposals to avoid gaps. The GEF clarified that a terminal evaluation report is required before applying for a subsequent CBIT project. UNEP explained that countries are assigned to the most appropriate approval track on the basis of their project timing and needs and encouraged Parties to begin preparing subsequent proposals before current projects close. One participant welcomed the increase in the medium-sized project funding ceiling but requested a simplified procedure so that changes in project modalities would not trigger a full review process, which causes delays. The GEF highlighted ongoing efforts to simplify templates, raise the medium-sized project funding ceiling to USD 5 million and promote project bundling to accelerate approvals.

25. On access to funding during project implementation, some participants highlighted difficulties caused by the internal control processes of implementing agencies, sought clarification on the meaning of the term committed resources and expressed concerns about blockages to access and disbursement. The GEF clarified that committed resources refers to funds already approved and allocated to transparency-related projects, noting that USD 92 million for preparing transparency reports and USD 30 million for CBIT projects remain available under GEF-8, and encouraged Parties to request support. UNEP explained that, while enabling activities are treated as simplified projects, disbursements require verification of financial details before transfers can be made, which may cause short delays, and added that financial reporting by executing partners is essential to maintain accountability. UNDP clarified that most projects are carried out through the national implementation modality, with quarterly disbursements linked to government-led workplans, and that direct payments through UNDP country offices may be used when national financial constraints arise.

26. On roles and governance, some participants asked about the distinction between implementing agencies and executing entities, whether implementing agencies can execute projects and how accountability is ensured. The GEF clarified that its implementing agencies carry fiduciary responsibility and support countries in preparing proposals, while executing entities, which are preferably national institutions, are responsible for day-to-day implementation of the project. So-called dual execution of projects by implementing agencies is possible only as an exception. It was emphasized that choosing the right executing partner is critical, as this will determine many aspects of project implementation. FAO explained that it is an implementing agency and also provides technical expertise and collaborates with other agencies to support execution, noting that the distinction between roles depends on GEF guidance and national circumstances. WWF-US, drawing from its experience of the CBIT project in Nepal, stressed the importance of government-led steering committees in approving budgets and workplans, which help to ensure national ownership and accountability.

27. On regional and global projects, some participants asked about who initiates regional CBIT projects, how priorities are determined and the potential for increasing global projects to enable broader sharing of experience, challenges and solutions in preparing BTRs. Conservation International responded that project priorities are country driven. In the regional CBIT project example shared, where common needs were identified, Conservation International co-designed the regional project with a subregional organization, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, with priorities set by member States. The GEF explained that global CBIT projects complement national-level CBIT support, allowing countries without their own projects to still benefit through networks and peer exchanges, noting that many countries are already participating in initiatives such as the CBIT-GSP, CBIT-Forest and CBIT-AFOLU+. FAO underlined that capacity-building must take place at multiple levels, such as strengthening national expertise while also fostering communities of practice and regional and global networks where countries can share solutions to common challenges and learn from each other's experience.

28. On the availability of on-demand technical assistance in preparing BTRs and when it is triggered, UNDP explained that, in addition to the support provided by the GEF, UNDP

has provided assistance that was made possible through financial contributions from the Government of Belgium. The assistance has been directed to francophone and lusophone countries and can be delivered in country or remotely. UNDP noted strong demand for such assistance and expressed interest in expanding it beyond francophone and lusophone countries, noting the need for additional contributions from developed country Parties to enable this.

## 2. Developing country Parties

29. Burkina Faso and China shared their experience in preparing BTR1s, including applying the MPGs and accessing the funds received, and the adequacy of the funds for ensuring the sustainability of the implementation of the ETF.

30. Burkina Faso's preparation of its BTR1, submitted together with its NC4, included securing GEF support, establishing a coordination team and expert groups in 2023, and conducting consultations and data collection with partial use of the MRV system set up under CBIT, supplemented by transparency-related data and information from other sources. The process involved a wide range of stakeholders, including government institutions, academia and civil society. Quality control and quality assurance was conducted by national experts, the secretariat and UNEP, with final validation of the BTR1 occurring in December 2024. When applying the MPGs, some requirements could not be met owing to data gaps, proxies had to be used and overlapping institutional roles led to repetition of information across different reporting elements. Burkina Faso noted that funding was limited to being used to develop the national MRV system and did not extend to sustaining its operation. For example, the MRV system for data collection could only be partially used owing to lack of funding. Burkina Faso mentioned that the national MRV decree adopted in 2024 needs to be implemented for at least two years to ensure sustainability of the MRV system and called for support to make this possible.

31. China noted that, in preparing its BTR1, it strengthened its institutional arrangements through a national workplan and a steering committee involving more than 30 ministries, and made technical progress through greater use of country-specific emission factors, stronger procedures for quality assurance and quality control, and development of a national GHG inventory database. Capacity was built through a CBIT project that expanded the pool of transparency experts, including increased participation of women. Challenges and needs remain across key areas, including preparing national GHG inventories, tracking progress of mitigation efforts and NDC implementation, reporting on adaptation and on support needed and received, and participating in the technical expert review of the BTR and the facilitative, multilateral consideration of progress, such as in relation to clarifying data sources, improving emission and removal factors, assessing overlapping mitigation impacts, strengthening climate scenarios and monitoring systems, standardizing domestic procedures and establishing national databases. On finance, China noted that it estimated preparing a BTR to cost at least USD 2 million, but access to funding is hampered by lengthy and complex procedures, resulting in delayed support. It called on implementing agencies to improve transparency and efficiency in project application processes to avoid stagnation caused by information asymmetry among stakeholders. China stressed that adequate, predictable and sustainable multilateral and bilateral financial, technical and capacity-building support is fundamental for developing country Parties, and suggested enhancing such support, including for establishing national systems and improving institutional arrangements and simplifying project application procedures.

32. The presentations were followed by a question and answer session. China was asked to clarify how it had calculated the estimate of USD 2 million needed for preparing a BTR. China explained that the figure was derived from experience of its projects for preparing its NC4 and third and fourth biennial update reports, and its NC5, BTR2 and BTR3, with each project having a budget of USD 5 million for preparing three reports, which translates into a reasonable estimate of USD 2 million per BTR. Another question was asked to China and Burkina Faso about the priority areas identified for improvement for BTR2s. China indicated the priority areas of improving digital databases and platforms, strengthening technical capacity for inventory compilation and developing country-specific emission factors for applying higher-tier estimation methodologies. Burkina Faso indicated the priority areas of

improving data collection by fully operationalizing its MRV system and allocating the necessary funds to sustain the operation of the system for at least two years, so that data collection becomes a regular activity and information is available in a timely manner.

## **D. Plenary discussion**

33. Participants were invited to share reflections on guiding questions relating to (1) key takeaways from preparing BTRs, (2) effective solutions for addressing challenges and (3) successful approaches that could be replicated or scaled up for future BTR preparation efforts, as well as any other views they wished to share.

34. During the plenary discussion, the challenges in relation to accessing funds and timely disbursement of funds for enabling activities and CBIT projects for preparing BTRs were emphasized. To address these challenges, it was noted that national resources or resources from other GEF-funded projects may be used to facilitate the initiation of the preparatory work until the disbursement is received. While this approach supports timely submission of BTRs, late disbursements hinder full implementation of planned improvements and quality of reporting. Gaps between project cycles were highlighted as another challenge, as they undermine the continuity of technical teams, resulting in the loss of qualified experts to other assignments, the erosion of institutional memory and the slowing or prevention of improvements in subsequent reporting. Participants acknowledged that the available support was helpful for addressing gaps and needs in terms of resources and technical capacity for preparing BTRs.

35. The central role of institutional arrangements and coordination in implementing the ETF was underlined, along with the importance of early and sustained planning, effective inter-agency collaboration and clear division of responsibilities. Regular coordination meetings and formalized data-sharing arrangements were noted as good practices for retaining institutional knowledge, ensuring accountability and strengthening national ownership of the transparency process.

36. On technical aspects, the challenges in applying the MPGs, such as for preparing the national GHG inventory, were highlighted. Limited capacity for developing emission projections and modelling policy scenarios, persistent data gaps in key sectors and technical issues with the ETF reporting tools were noted. Developing improvement plans was shared as a way to prioritize tasks and sequence work within resource and time constraints.

37. A representative of SIDS highlighted particular constraints faced by the group in preparing BTRs, including small expert pools, heavy workloads of national experts and the absence of legislative frameworks for data-sharing. Priorities identified include strengthening the technical capacity of national transparency experts and consultants rather than relying on international experts, enhancing interministerial relationships for data sharing and reinforcing regional collaboration to share solutions and lessons learned.

38. The GEF noted its openness to following up on specific cases raised during the discussion and encouraged early project planning, proactive engagement with implementing agencies and the use of available project modalities to maintain continuity between BTR preparation projects.

## **E. Closing**

39. In closing, the moderator thanked participants and presenters for their engagement and noted the importance of the issues raised in the discussions.

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