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METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

ISSUES RELATING TO ARTICLES 5, 7 AND 8 OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

Experience on pilot training activities for members of expert review teams

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This document reports on the experience gained from a pilot training course on the review of greenhouse gas inventories using traditional and e-learning methods, as requested by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at its seventeenth session. The document includes a proposal for a training programme to ensure the competence of experts participating in review teams under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, including the potential financial implications. At the eighteenth session of the SBSTA, Parties may wish to endorse or modify the proposal for the training programme.

CONTENTS

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Page</u>
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1 – 4	3
A. Mandate.....	1 – 2	3
B. Scope of the note.....	3	3
C. Possible action by the SBSTA.....	4	3
II. REPORT ON THE PILOT TRAINING COURSE ON REVIEW OF GHG INVENTORIES.....	5 – 19	3
A. Background.....	5 – 7	3
B. Pilot course design and implementation.....	8 – 15	4
C. Outcomes of the pilot course.....	16 – 19	5
III. PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR TRAINING REVIEW EXPERTS FOR THE PERIOD 2003–2006.....	20 – 36	6
A. Objectives.....	20	6
B. Approach.....	21 – 30	6
C. Courses of the training programme.....	31	7
D. Specialized training for lead reviewers.....	32	9
E. Preparation and implementation of courses of the training programme.....	33 – 36	9
IV. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED TRAINING PROGRAMME.....	37 – 42	10

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Mandate

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its seventeenth session, requested the secretariat to organize a pilot training course on the review of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, using traditional and e-learning methods. The SBSTA requested the secretariat to prepare a report on the experience gained from the course and, based on this experience, to prepare a proposal, including potential financial implications, for the development of a training programme designed to ensure the competence of experts participating in review teams conducting technical reviews of GHG inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties), under the provisions of the guidelines in the annex to decision 3/CP.5, hereinafter referred to as expert review teams. This proposal should also include options to provide specialized training for lead reviewers. The SBSTA decided to consider the report and the training proposal at its eighteenth session.
2. The SBSTA, at its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions, decided to further consider the training of experts participating in the review of GHG inventories under the Convention in conjunction with the considerations of training of experts under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol.

B. Scope of the note

3. The secretariat held the pilot training course *Greenhouse gas inventories review training course* (hereinafter referred to as the pilot course) in Geneva, Switzerland, from 2 to 6 December 2002. This paper presents the report on the experience from the pilot course and a proposal for a training programme for members of expert review teams for the period 2003–2006.

C. Possible action by the SBSTA

4. The SBSTA may wish to endorse or modify the proposal for the training programme, including the consideration of any action for its implementation, depending on availability of resources.¹ In particular, the SBSTA may wish to give guidance on prioritization of specific courses of the training programme.

II. REPORT ON THE PILOT TRAINING COURSE ON REVIEW OF GHG INVENTORIES

A. Background

5. Experience with technical reviews of GHG inventories from Annex I Parties during the trial period 2000–2003 has demonstrated that the competence of the reviewers and lead reviewers is one of the most important factors in ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of the review process.
6. As annual inventory reviews for all Annex I Parties become mandatory in 2003, a large pool of skilled experts will be needed to ensure an effective and efficient technical review of the GHG inventories under the Convention.
7. Further, the guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol² state that review experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed. They also mention that the training to be

¹ No provision for resources for training members of expert review teams was included in the proposed core budget for the biennium 2004–2005. Resources must therefore be sought from supplementary funds (see document FCCC/SBI/2003/5/Add.1).

² See paragraph 24 of the annex to decision /CMP.1 (*Guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol*) attached to decision 23/CP.8 (FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.3).

provided to experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training and/or of any other steps taken to ensure the necessary competence of experts for participation in expert review teams, shall be designed and operationalized in accordance with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) and the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP).

B. Pilot course design and implementation

8. To promote the participation of skilled experts in expert review teams in 2003 and beyond, and following the request from the SBSTA, the secretariat designed and launched the pilot course mentioned in paragraph 3, with the collaboration of the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the support of the Government of Switzerland.³

9. The pilot course was developed as the first stage of a training programme to provide inventory experts with the basic knowledge they would need to participate in the technical review of GHG inventories under the Convention. After successful completion of the pilot course, trainees will be invited to participate in a real individual centralized or in-country review, where they can work together with more experienced reviewers.

10. The invitation to the pilot course was extended only to experts with experience in preparing GHG inventories (inventory experts), because the course was designed to address mainly the review of GHG inventories. The invitation was extended mainly to national inventory experts from countries that had not participated in reviews during the trial period. Their national focal points were informed in advance of this invitation. Most of the inventory experts were registered in the UNFCCC roster of experts.⁴ Twenty-nine national inventory experts, most of them from non-Annex I Parties, attended the pilot course.⁵ Experts from non-Annex I Parties and countries with economies in transition were funded in accordance with United Nations regulations.

11. The course content was prepared by a group of consultants (instructors)⁶ under the guidance of the secretariat. The instructors had substantial experience in the preparation of national GHG inventories and in inventory review activities under the Convention, or in the elaboration of the *Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* (IPCC good practice guidance). The course comprised six modules: one on general aspects of the UNFCCC inventory review process and cross-cutting IPCC guidance, and five sector-specific modules⁷ (energy, fugitive emissions, industrial processes, agriculture and waste).

³ The Government of Switzerland provided a Sw F 20,000 grant for the organization of the pilot course in Geneva from 2 to 6 December 2002.

⁴ For those who were not registered in the UNFCCC roster of experts, it is expected that national focal points will nominate them for such registration before the individual reviews start so they can participate in expert review teams.

⁵ The participants were from the following countries: Albania, Argentina, Belarus, Bulgaria, Burundi, China, Dominican Republic, Fiji, Finland, France, Greece, India, Japan, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Mauritius, Niger, Norway, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tanzania, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, United Kingdom and United States. Participants from Colombia, Egypt and Ukraine were invited but were not able to attend.

⁶ Mr. Samir Amous (Tunisia); Mr. Eduardo Calvo Buendia (Peru); Mr. Michael Gillenwater (United States); Mr. Sergio Gonzalez Martineaux (Chile); Mr. Tomas Martinsen (Norway); Mr. David Picard (Canada).

⁷ The sector land-use change and forestry was not included at this stage, but will be included in the basic GHG inventories review training course once the IPCC good practice guidance report on land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) has been completed.

12. The general module was converted to electronic learning (e-learning) in collaboration with UNCTAD, using the services of the Learning Center for Sustainable Development of The Earth Council Institute (LearnSD). This module was made available to trainees on-line in November, two weeks before the seminar portion of the course.⁸ Trainees were able to familiarize themselves with the content of the module, as well as the capabilities of e-learning as a training tool, including interaction with the module instructor and other trainees by email or scheduled on-line conversations. The e-learning module was sent on CD-ROM to trainees who did not have easy access to the Internet.

13. After the launch of the on-line course, a five-day course was held in December 2002 in Geneva, where the other modules were presented by the instructors. During this period, additional time was given to trainees to continue working with the general e-learning module, taking advantage of the presence of the module instructor and e-learning course designers.

14. After completion of the course, trainees were requested to complete an examination on the general module and on one sectoral module of their choice; the examination was prepared by the instructors under the guidance of the secretariat. The first part of the examination consisted of multiple-choice and interpretative questions on each module. For the second part, trainees were requested to review specific sectors using actual GHG inventory materials submitted by Parties, and to write a review report. Trainees were given one month to complete their report at home and send it to the secretariat.

15. Trainees who completed the examination will be invited to participate in the second stage of their training by joining expert review teams for individual reviews of GHG inventories (in-country or centralized reviews), starting in 2003.

C. Outcomes of the pilot course

16. The design of the pilot course permitted the comparison of two training methods: traditional on-site seminars and remote e-learning. The experience indicated that the secretariat could use e-learning (on-line or on a CD-ROM) as an effective training method to prepare inventory experts for their participation in expert review teams. E-learning would allow the dissemination of in-depth information to many inventory experts around the world at a lower cost than that of traditional on-site seminars.

17. Trainees commented that the pilot course was well-organized and contained solid technical information needed for the review process. In addition, they indicated that e-learning allowed them to study at their own pace and to learn more information than would be possible through traditional on-site seminars. In relation to the general module, trainees indicated that the meeting in Geneva was useful to consolidate and practice what they had learned from the e-learning course. They also suggested scheduling more time to study e-learning courses and including interactive examples from real GHG inventory reviews.

18. A new group of well-prepared review experts will join the existing pool of inventory review experts. This will facilitate the review activities in 2003 and increase the number of Parties whose experts participate in these activities.

19. A collateral result of this course is that the trained experts will contribute more efficiently to the preparation of their respective national inventories.

⁸ For technical reasons, it was not possible to launch the e-learning module one month before the course in Geneva, as was initially planned.

III. PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR TRAINING REVIEW EXPERTS FOR THE PERIOD 2003–2006

A. Objectives

20. The main objectives of this proposed training programme are:

(a) To provide basic technical knowledge and strengthen other complementary skills to enhance the competence of experts participating in expert review teams;

(b) To improve the effectiveness, efficiency and consistency of review activities under the Convention and Kyoto Protocol;

(c) To contribute to enhanced quality of national GHG inventories and information on GHG emissions and trends from Annex I Parties available to the COP and the subsidiary bodies.

B. Approach

21. This proposed training programme has been developed taking into account the relevant decisions of the COP, the experiences from the trial period of the review process, comments received by Parties on issues relating to training, and experience from the pilot course. It recognizes the need to enhance not only the basic technical competence of the reviewers, but also other complementary skills to carry out review activities. It also aims to ensure the availability of a pool of skilled experts to conduct the review process, and to promote participation of experts from a larger number of countries.

22. This proposal covers the years 2003 to 2006 and addresses the training needs of experts participating in the technical review of GHG inventories under the Convention, as well as of those who will participate in the initial review under the Kyoto Protocol to be conducted prior to the first commitment period, as established in paragraph 12 of the guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol.⁹

23. This proposal does not address any additional training which may be needed for experts who will participate in the annual and periodic reviews of the supplementary information to be submitted under Article 7, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Kyoto Protocol, because those review activities are likely to occur after 2006. The secretariat expects that the experience gained from the implementation of this proposal will guide the development and implementation of future training programmes.

24. The aim of this proposed programme is to train 250 national experts from the UNFCCC roster during this period. The proposal addresses the training for three target audiences among these experts: new reviewers (inventory experts who have not participated in review activities); experienced reviewers (inventory experts who have participated in review activities according to the guidelines under decisions 6/CP.5 and/or 19/CP.8); and lead reviewers (inventory experts with substantial review experience who act as leaders of the expert review teams).¹⁰

25. The basic approach will be through e-learning courses, via the Internet or, for those experts with difficulties in accessing to Internet, by CD-ROM. E-learning courses will be delivered in two different formats – interactive and non-interactive – depending on complexity of the courses, the needs of the

⁹ See annex to decision /CMP.1 (*Guidelines for review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol*) attached to decision 23/CP.8 (FCCC/CP/2001/13/Add.3).

¹⁰ For each review team, one from Annex I Parties and one from non-Annex I Parties.

review activities and financial implications. Interactive courses will be used for those courses of a more technical character or that are more important for the review activities. The content would be the same for both formats.

26. In interactive e-learning courses, trainees will have access to the course materials through either the Internet or CD-ROM, and will be able to consult and get comments from the course instructor through scheduled on-line conversations or emails. In non-interactive e-learning courses, trainees will have access to the course materials but will not interact with an instructor. All the courses of this training programme will be available in non-interactive format all year round for all reviewers who may wish to consult the content of a given course, even though they are not actively studying it.

27. Depending on availability of resources, some courses of a highly technical nature could be completed with a final seminar where trainees are physically present with an instructor.¹¹ This seminar would reinforce the knowledge acquired by trainees from the e-learning courses because it would allow them to work on case studies and to better understand difficult concepts.

28. All courses will have a final examination, either a self-test or an evaluation by instructors under the guidance of the secretariat. Depending on the character of the course, its importance for the review activities and the target audience, successful completion of the examination may be required for further participation of experts in review activities.

29. Lead reviewers will receive specialized training to prepare them in those fields that were not the objects of review during the trial period, and to strengthen their skills to coordinate and overview the work of expert review teams.

30. This training proposal is not comprehensive, and its presentation in this paper does not prejudice the consideration of any other proposals or issues that Parties may wish to consider.

C. Courses of the training programme

31. The secretariat proposes two categories of training course for the period 2003–2006: courses on the review of GHG inventories under the Convention, and courses on the initial review under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol. For the purpose of this training proposal, courses that deliver knowledge on guidelines and procedures to be used in the review activities are considered as technical courses; courses to strengthen skills such as communication and report writing are considered as complementary skills-building courses. Detailed information on these courses is provided in table 1.

¹¹ The section of the proposal on financial implications provides information on two cost options for these courses. Option 1 does not include a final seminar, whereas option 2 does include it.

Table 1. Overview of training courses

Course	Description	Target audience	Format/duration ^a	Pass examination
Review of greenhouse gas inventories under the Convention				
A. Review of Annex I greenhouse gas inventories				
A.1 Basic course (updated version of the pilot course described in paragraph 11)	Covers IPCC and UNFCCC guidelines for preparation and review of GHG inventories. The basic course comprises the general module (<i>UNFCCC review guidelines and procedures and general IPCC inventory guidance</i>) and five sector-specific modules (for energy, fugitive emissions, industrial processes, agriculture and waste)	30 new reviewers per year	Interactive 3 months	Required for new reviewers and other reviewers with experience in fewer than two reviews
A.2 Land use land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) module ^b	The LULUCF module will be based on the IPCC good practice guidance	50 LULUCF experts in 2005	Interactive 2 months	Required for reviewers of LULUCF
B. Complementary skills of reviewers				
B.1 Improving communication and facilitating consensus in expert review teams	Provides tools to improve the work of expert review teams	Experienced and lead reviewers	Non-interactive, except course B.3 which is interactive for lead reviewers	Not required, except course B.3 for lead reviewers or any expert with access to confidential information
B.2 Writing a review report	Guidance on making reports substantive and reader-friendly			
B.3 Handling confidential information	Procedures to ensure protection of any confidential information in the inventory review process (to be developed)			
Initial review under the Kyoto Protocol^c				
C. National systems	Covers guidelines for review of national systems under Article 5.1 and related parts of guidelines under Articles 7 and 8 of the Kyoto Protocol	50 experienced reviewers per year and lead reviewers	Interactive 2 months	Required to review any of these subjects
D. Application of adjustments	Covers COP decisions and technical guidance on methodologies for adjustments under Article 5.2 and related parts of guidelines under Articles 7 and 8 of the Kyoto Protocol		Interactive 2 months	
E. Modalities for the accounting of assigned amounts under Article 7.4	Covers only the review of the information included in paragraph 6 of the annex to decision -/CMP.1 (<i>Modalities for the accounting of assigned amounts under Article 7.4 of the Kyoto Protocol</i>), including registries and related parts of guidelines under Articles 7 and 8 of the Kyoto Protocol		Interactive 2 months	

^a Duration indicates the time that the interactive course will be open to trainees and within which they can interact with the course instructors.

^b This course will allow successful trainees to review the LULUCF sector using the IPCC good practice guidance on LULUCF. It will be implemented as a stand alone course in 2005, but after 2006 it will be integrated in basic course A.1.

^c All the modules relating to the initial review will be offered together to enhance the effectiveness of the review activities.

D. Specialized training for lead reviewers

32. The specialized training planned for lead reviewers includes:

(a) Access to all courses included in this proposal at any moment for consultation (non-interactive format);

(b) Successful completion of courses on handling confidential information¹² and on initial review under the Kyoto Protocol in interactive format. These courses will be consolidated in a final training seminar following an annual lead reviewers meeting that the secretariat intends to organize, starting in 2003, in order to plan a common approach to the review activities. Because this training will be organized immediately after the lead reviewers' meetings, it will not have any major financial implications.¹³ In addition, further specialized training not included in this proposal and identified at a later stage may be provided in these seminars;

(c) Encouragement to complete the other non-interactive courses on strengthening complementary skills;

(d) Completion of the LULUCF module in interactive format (for interested reviewers).

E. Preparation and implementation of courses of the training programme

33. Some preliminary activities of this proposal are already under way following the request of the SBSTA to prepare a pilot course and as a consequence of the need to ensure the competence of the expert review teams that will review GHG inventories in 2003. In addition, the secretariat is developing a complementary-skills-building course to assess the possible scope and content of this type of course.

34. The general module under the title *UNFCCC review guidelines and procedures and general IPCC inventory guidance* has been converted into an e-learning format. It will be available for evaluation by interested Parties¹⁴ as of 1 May 2003 and will be presented in a side event during the eighteenth session of the SBSTA. The Government of Switzerland¹⁵ has provided a generous contribution for the conversion of part of this general module and another sectoral module. This work has been done in collaboration with the UNCTAD secretariat, using the services of LearnSD.¹⁶

35. In order to facilitate the considerations of the SBSTA and to assess the scope and usefulness of complementary-skills-building courses, the secretariat has initiated the preparation of the course *B.1 Improving communication and facilitating consensus in expert review teams* in collaboration with the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES) of Japan. IGES has substantive experience in the preparation of skills-building e-learning courses, examples of which can be found at www.iges.net. The course will be developed and customized from an IGES course on conflict resolution (available on the same Internet page), thus reducing the cost of the course preparation.

¹² This course will also be required for any other expert needing authorization to handle confidential information in the inventory review process.

¹³ No more than two days of subsistence allowance for each lead reviewer trained, and limited fees for potential instructors who might attend the meeting.

¹⁴ Interested Parties may contact the Methods, Inventories and Science Programme of the UNFCCC secretariat to request access to the e-learning course.

¹⁵ The Government of Switzerland has provided US\$ 50,000 to convert two modules from the GHG inventories review training course into e-learning modules at the beginning of 2003.

¹⁶ This work is conducted under the guidance of the UNFCCC secretariat.

36. The planned schedule for developing and implementing the training programme, depending on the endorsement by Parties and on the availability of resources, is shown in table 2.

Table 2. Schedule for the preparation and implementation of courses

Course	Preparation	First implementation	Number of times^a implemented in 2003–2006
Review of greenhouse gas inventories under the Convention			
A. Review of Annex I greenhouse gas inventories			
A.1 Basic course	2003	2004	3
A.2 LULUCF module	2004	2005	1
B. Complementary skills of reviewers			
B.1 Improving communication and facilitating consensus in expert review teams	2003	2004	-
B.2 Writing a review report	2004	2005	-
B.3 Handling confidential information	2004	2005	1
Initial review under the Kyoto Protocol			
C. National systems	2004	2005	2
D. Application of adjustments	2005 ^b	2005	2
E. Modalities for the accounting of assigned amounts under Article 7.4	2004	2005	2

^a Number of times refers only to the interactive courses. All courses will be available all year round in non-interactive format.

^b This course will be prepared during the first part of 2005.

IV. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED TRAINING PROGRAMME

37. A preliminary estimate of costs to train 250 experts in the period 2003–2006 is given in table 3. The information provided in this table identifies the costs of preparing and implementing individual courses, so Parties may consider this proposal as a whole or on a course-by-course basis. Costs for two options are included: option 1 does not include a final seminar component, whereas option 2 does include it.

Table 3. Cost of individual courses

	Preparation cost (US\$)	Implementation cost/year (US\$)	Years implemented	Total implementation cost (US\$)	Total cost (US\$)
Review of greenhouse gas inventories under the Convention					
<i>Cost of e-learning courses</i>					
A. Review of Annex I GHG inventories					
A.1 Basic course	52,000 ^a	28,000 ^b	3	84,000	136,000
A.2 LULUCF	37,000	4,000	1	8,000	45,000
B. Complementary skills of reviewers					
B.1 Improving communication	5,000	2,000	3	6,000	11,000
B.2 Writing a report	8,500	2,000	2	4,000	12,500
B.3 Confidential information	8,500	2,000	2	4,000	12,500
<i>Subtotal 1: Cost of e-learning courses (option 1)</i>					<i>217,000</i>
<i>Cost of seminars (for the period 2003–2006)</i>					
Seminar for course A.1			3		246,000
Seminar for course A.2			1		100,000
Total cost of seminars					346,000
<i>Subtotal 2: Cost of e-learning courses plus final seminars (option 2)</i>					<i>563,000</i>
Initial review under the Kyoto Protocol					
<i>Cost of e-learning courses</i>					
C. National systems	12,500	4,000	2	8,000	20,500
D. Adjustments application	21,500	4,000	2	8,000	29,500
E. Assigned amounts	21,500	4,000	2	8,000	29,500
<i>Subtotal 3: Cost of e-learning (courses without seminar)^c</i>					<i>79,500</i>
Cost of all courses					
For option 1 (subtotal 1 + subtotal 3)					296,500
For option 2 (subtotal 2 + subtotal 3)					642,500

^a The total cost for the preparation of this course is US\$ 157,500. The cost shown here (US\$ 52,000) excludes US\$ 105,500 allocated in 2002 and 2003 for preparation of parts of this course. In 2002, US\$ 33,000 from the UNFCCC secretariat and US\$ 22,500 from the UNCTAD secretariat and the LearnSD were used to launch the pilot course, including the conversion to e-learning of its first module (see paragraphs 11 and 12). In addition, two other modules of the pilot course are being converted to e-learning with US\$ 50,000 provided by the Government of Switzerland in 2003 (see paragraph 34).

^b For technical reasons each module of this course should be implemented independently.

^c The costs for these courses do not include a final seminar, although such a seminar could be beneficial, in particular for the course on adjustments application, depending on the complexity of the technical guidance on methodologies for adjustments under Article 5, to be recommended by the COP at its ninth session for adoption by the COP/MOP at its first session.

38. As indicated in table 3, for the period 2003–2006, the preliminary estimate of costs of the courses for the review of greenhouse gas inventories under the Convention would be US\$ 217,000 for option 1 (subtotal 1) and US\$ 563,000 for option 2 (subtotal 2). The costs of the courses for the initial review under the Kyoto Protocol, without a final seminar as described in table 3, would be US\$ 79,500 (subtotal 3). If Parties decide that these courses should have a final seminar, costs will increase by US\$ 208,000 (for seminars in 2005 and 2006).

39. Preliminary estimates of annual costs of training activities are summarized in table 4.

Table 4. Annual costs of training activities

Year	Option 1 (without final seminar)	Option 2 (with final seminar)
2003	57,000	57,000
2004	118,000	200,000
2005	71,500	253,500
2006	50,000	132,000

40. Financial resources for the preparation and implementation of the courses of this training programme were not included in the proposal for the core budget of 2004–2005. It is intended to seek resources from supplementary funds, as was done for the year 2003. Sums of US\$ 159,000 and US\$ 163,000 are requested from supplementary funds for supporting the training of experts participating in the expert review teams during 2004 and 2005, respectively (see document FCCC/SBI/2003/5/Add.1). These sums were calculated as the average of the less costly option 1 and the most costly option 2 presented in tables 3 and 4. These sums could be modified in accordance with any conclusions the SBSTA may wish to take on this matter.

41. The annual investment for training each of the anticipated 250 experts, who are expected to study at least three courses during the period 2003–2006, would be approximately US\$ 300 for option 1 and US\$ 640 for option 2. The above calculation does not take account of the potential larger pool of experts that would benefit from the fact that the courses will be available on the internet all year round.

42. Other potential indirect economic benefits resulting of this training programme might include:

(a) The potential decrease in costs incurred by Parties under review as a consequence of a more effective review process;

(b) The potential decrease of costs incurred in the preparation of national GHG inventories because better prepared inventory experts would promote a more effective preparation of these inventories.
