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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

**National communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention
Work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications
from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention**

**Progress report on the activities of the Consultative Group of Experts
on National Communications from Parties not included
in Annex I to the Convention**

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

This document contains reports on the seventh meeting of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) relating to the implementation of its work plan for 2006. It also contains reports on two CGE hands-on training workshops: on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region held in Asuncion, Paraguay, from 14 to 18 August 2006, and on national greenhouse gas inventories for the Africa region held in Pretoria, South Africa, from 18 to 22 September 2006.

The Subsidiary Body for Implementation, after having considered the report by the CGE, may wish to provide further guidance in the implementation of the recommendations proposed at the regional workshops.

* This document is submitted after the due date in order to include the report of the seventh meeting of the CGE, held from 25 to 26 September 2006.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by its decision 3/CP.8, mandated the secretariat to facilitate the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) and to compile reports on its meetings and workshops for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI).

B. Scope of the note

2. This note contains reports of the CGE at its seventh meeting, held in Pretoria, South Africa, from 25 to 26 September 2006. It also includes the reports and recommendations of the CGE hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region held in Asuncion, Paraguay, from 14 to 18 August 2006 and on national greenhouse gas inventories for the Africa region held in Pretoria, South Africa, from 18 to 22 September 2006. The other activities of the CGE for 2006 were reported to the SBI at its twenty-fourth session (FCCC/SBI/2006/8).

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

3. The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), after having considered the report by the CGE, may wish to provide further guidance in the implementation of the recommendations proposed at the regional workshops.

II. Report of the seventh meeting of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

4. Ms. Lilian Portillo (Paraguay), the rapporteur of the group, chaired the seventh meeting of the CGE, which was attended by 16 members, including two from international organizations. The objectives of the meeting were to prepare the work plan of the CGE for 2007 and to finalize the technical reports requested by the SBI on matters such as the template on cross-cutting issues and ways to improve access to financial and technical support for the preparation of national communications.

A. Provision of technical recommendations to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

5. At SBI 24, Parties endorsed the work being carried out by the CGE to develop a template on cross-cutting themes (transfer of technologies, research and systematic observation, capacity-building, education, training and public awareness, and information and networking) to assist Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) in providing information under the section on "other information considered relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention" in national communications. The group prepared a draft template, on which the Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT) and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) have provided comments. The template will be reported to the SBI at its twenty-sixth session (May 2007).

6. As requested by Parties at SBI 23, the CGE prepared a report on ways to improve access to financial and technical support to non-Annex I Parties in preparing second and subsequent national communications. The report, which will be considered by the SBI under item 4 (b) of the agenda for its twenty-fifth session, is contained in document FCCC/SBI/2006/24.

7. One of the recommendations of the CGE to the SBI on ways to improve the preparation of second and subsequent national communications is that non-Annex I Parties should be given advice on the information to be included in reporting projects as outlined in Article 12, paragraph 4, of the Convention. In considering the recommendations made by the CGE, Parties, at SBI 23, requested the group to recommend ways to improve the reporting of projects identified in national communications. The group is preparing a technical paper on this issue and will present it to the SBI at its twenty-sixth session.

8. In assessing the status of the implementation of its work programme for 2003 to 2007 and the additional mandates provided by the SBI to the CGE, the group noted its accomplishments and the activities carried out to provide technical recommendations to assist non-Annex I Parties in improving the preparation of their national communications. Table 1 provides a summary of the status of technical recommendations by the CGE.

Table 1. Status of technical recommendations

Mandate	Activity/Output	Status
FCCC/SBI/2005/23, paragraph 26	Integration of information contained in national adaptation programmes of action into second and subsequent national communications	Ongoing collaboration with the LEG
FCCC/SBI/2005/23, paragraph 27	Cost-effective and comprehensive training strategy and other technical support	To be reported at SBI 26 (May 2007)
FCCC/SBI/2005/23, paragraph 29	Ways to improve the reporting of projects identified in national communications from non-Annex I Parties in accordance with Article 12, paragraph 4, of the Convention, and to report to, and advise, the SBI on ways to improve access to financial and technical support for such projects	To be reported at SBI 26
FCCC/SBI/2005/23, paragraph 30	Ways to improve access to financial and technical support to prepare second and subsequent national communications	Report contained in document FCCC/SBI/2006/24
FCCC/SBI/2005/23, paragraph 31	Examination of 41 initial national communications (note: with these additional initial national communications, the CGE has examined a total of 122 initial national communications)	Report contained in document FCCC/SBI/2006/4
FCCC/SBI/2006/11, paragraph 25	Examination of national communications submitted to the secretariat from 2 April 2005	To be reported at SBI 27 (December 2007)
FCCC/SBI/2006/11, paragraph 26	Provision of technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties, upon request, in identifying tools and methods needed, in the context of the preparation of national communications, and which are applicable to their particular circumstances	To be reported at SBI 25
FCCC/SBI/2006/11, paragraph 27	Template on cross-cutting themes (transfer of technologies, research and systematic observation, capacity-building, education, training and public awareness, and information and networking)	Received inputs from the EGTT and LEG. To be reported at SBI 26
FCCC/SBI/2006/11, paragraph 28	Take stock of the implementation of the work programme 2003–2007 and identify possible elements for a future role for the group in facilitating the improvement of national communications of non-Annex I Parties	To be reported at SBI 26

B. Work plan for 2007 of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention

9. The CGE assessed the outcomes of the regional workshops on vulnerability and adaptation (V&A) assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region and on the national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories for the Africa region. To date, the group has conducted a total of six regional workshops on V&A assessments and national GHG inventories and one global workshop on mitigation assessments, involving 325 experts from 125 non-Annex I Parties. The group noted that the training provided to experts forms the foundation for future focused training, including that of trainers at the national and sub-regional level, to further strengthen and broaden the capacity to prepare national communications. Further details of the results of the regional workshops are discussed in sections III and IV below. Table 2 shows the number of experts trained and countries involved in the regional and global workshops conducted by the CGE.

Table 2. Number of experts and countries involved in CGE training workshops

Training workshop	Number of experts	Number of countries
National GHG inventories for the Latin America and the Caribbean region (Panama City, Panama, 25–29 October 2004)	38	21
Vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Africa region (Maputo, Mozambique, 18–22 April 2005)	46	36
National GHG inventories for the Asia region (Shanghai, China, 8–12 February 2005)	26	19
Global workshop on mitigation assessments (Seoul, Republic of Korea, 26–30 September 2005)	57	46
Vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Asia and the Pacific region (Jakarta, Indonesia, 20–24 March 2006)	64	39
Vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region (Asuncion, Paraguay, 14–18 August 2006)	51	27
National GHG inventories for the Africa region (Pretoria, South Africa, 18–22 September, 2006)	43	40

10. The Government of the United States of America has provided financial resources to the UNFCCC secretariat to organize a meeting to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices among non-Annex I Parties in preparing national communications. The secretariat is collaborating with the CGE and the National Communications Support Programme (NCSP) in the organization of this meeting in order to strengthen cooperation among agencies and groups that provide technical support to non-Annex I Parties. The following are possible topics to be covered during the workshop:

- (a) Mainstreaming climate change into development planning;
- (b) Sharing of good practices in the preparation of national communications;
- (c) Making the national communications responsive to national development needs;
- (d) Policy responses to climate change;
- (e) Management systems;

- (f) Sharing experiences in promoting South–South cooperation;
- (g) Building capacity to ensure continuity of the work on national communications.

11. At SBI 24, Parties requested the group to take stock of the implementation of its work programme for 2003–2007 and to identify possible elements for a future role for the group in facilitating the improvement of national communications of non-Annex I Parties and to report to the SBI at its twenty-sixth session. In discussing this mandate from Parties, the group decided to prepare a paper to be presented at SBI 26 that contains the following:

- (a) An assessment of the work of the CGE in responding to its mandate contained in the annex to decision 3/CP.8 and subsequent mandates provided by the SBI. It will also review the implementation of its work programme for 2003–2007 with the aim of identifying its strengths and areas for improvement;
- (b) Stages, trends and timing in the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties. In particular, the group noted that, as more than 100 countries will be working on their national communications in 2006, this will be a good opportunity to define its role vis-à-vis the role of other organizations in providing effective technical support to non-Annex I Parties;
- (c) The role of the CGE in facilitating exchange of good practices and addressing sustainability in preparing national communications, such as institutional strengthening, better management of processes and integration into national development processes.

C. Status of cooperation of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention with other expert groups and the National Communications Support Programme

12. The CGE continues to collaborate with the LEG in preparing its report on how to integrate information contained in national adaptation programmes of action into the national communications. The LEG will discuss a draft concept paper at its next meeting, after which the group will share the paper with the CGE for comments on this issue. The Chairs of the CGE and EGTT will meet informally during COP 12 to discuss areas for collaboration such as adaptation and integration of climate change into national development planning process.

13. The CGE discussed possible areas of cooperation with the EGTT. Depending on the outcome of the review of the mandate of the EGTT at COP 12, the CGE may work closely with the EGTT on issues such as national greenhouse gas inventories, technology needs assessments and adaptation as they relate to the information that Parties may include in their national communications. The group agreed that exchange of information with the EGTT will be strengthened through active participation in the workshops organized by the expert groups. These workshops are useful opportunities to share the views of the group on matters relating to technology transfer in the context of national communications.

14. The CGE appreciated the in-depth report provided by the NCSP of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). The report included an update of the activities of the NCSP such as teleconferences with project coordinators, launching of its knowledge network and organization of technical training workshops as follow-up on tools/methodologies presented at the CGE regional training workshops. The NCSP also informed the group that 87 countries are preparing their second national communications and 12 countries have submitted their proposals for national communications to the implementing agencies of the GEF for approval.

15. The CGE recognized the important role that NCSP plays at the country level in providing technical support to non-Annex I Parties in the preparation of national communications and in facilitating exchange of information among experts through the knowledge network. The activities of the NCSP complement the regional hands-on training workshops and are consistent with the outcomes of the examination of national communications by the CGE. The group, however, sees the need to further define the roles of the CGE and NCSP to ensure consistency and effectiveness in the delivery of technical support to non-Annex I Parties.

III. Report of the hands-on training workshop on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region

16. At SBI 24, Parties noted the remaining two regional hands-on training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region and on national greenhouse gas inventories for the Africa region. The workshops are part of the mandate of the CGE to provide technical advice and support to non-Annex I Parties by organizing and conducting workshops, including hands-on training workshops at the regional or subregional level, on national GHG inventories, V&A and mitigation, as well as training on the use of the guidelines for the preparation of second and subsequent national communications, as referred to in the annex to decision 3/CP.8.

17. The CGE conducted a training workshop on vulnerability and adaptation assessments for the Latin America and the Caribbean region from 14 to 18 August 2006 in Asuncion, Paraguay. Fifty-one experts from 27 non-Annex 1 Parties, six members of the CGE, including a representative from UNDP, and eight trainers attended the workshop. The workshop was made possible through the financial support provided by the Governments of Finland, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States of America.

18. The Government of Cuba provided trainers on climate scenarios and V&A assessment for the health sector while the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies provided trainers for the session on climate change and risk assessments. The Hadley Centre for Climate Prediction and Research of the United Kingdom Meteorology Office provided the trainer on climate change scenarios and a representative of UNDP conducted the session on developing fundable adaptation projects. The Government of Paraguay, through the National Council of Environment, provided financial and logistical support to the workshop, including the translation into Spanish of the training materials on V&A assessments.

19. The objective of the workshop was to familiarize experts from the Latin America and the Caribbean region, who are involved in the preparation of second national communications, with the UNFCCC guidelines for reporting of vulnerability and adaptation assessments, as referred to in the annex to decision 17/CP.8, and with tools for conducting and integrating sectoral assessments.

20. Eight trainers, including CGE members, covered the following topics: overview of various frameworks used in V&A; integration of V&A assessments, climate change and socio-economic scenarios and impacts; and V&A assessments (coastal zones, water resources, agriculture and human health). Tools used by the trainers to elaborate the different topics of the workshop included models such as PRECIS (Providing Regional Climates for Impacts Studies), DIVA (Dynamic Interactive Vulnerability Assessment), WEAP (Water Evaluation and Planning) System and DSSAT (Decision Support System for Agrotechnology Transfer).

21. Participants from the region presented the following country case studies:

- (a) Bottom-up approach in V&A assessments (Peru);
- (b) ETA-Centro de Previsão e Estudos Climáticos (CPTEC) Regional Climate Model (Brazil);

- (c) V&A assessments for coastal zones (Grenada);
- (d) V&A assessments for the water sector (Dominican Republic);
- (e) V&A for the health sector (Paraguay);
- (f) Developing adaptation projects (Ecuador).

22. The workshop benefited from the recommendations from the previous two regional workshops of the CGE. The topics of a bottom-up approach in V&A assessments, climate risk assessments and developing fundable adaptation projects were added in response to needs expressed by countries for in-depth knowledge on these subjects. Downscaling of regional models was also emphasized at this workshop using experiences from the region. A follow-up comprehensive training on PRECIS was scheduled for the Caribbean Island States in September 2006.

23. The workshop was also able to muster the technical and financial resources of international organizations to train experts from the region on various tools in V&A assessments. South-South cooperation was also evident as countries from the region offered to provide trainers, translation of training materials and opportunities for additional focused training.

24. At the request of participants, more time was devoted to exercises using computer models and group dynamics. The exercises were more manageable and focused as participants were grouped according to their areas of interest. Participants also appreciated the active role of the CGE members as trainers and resource persons during the workshop. Some of the recommendations made by the participants to the CGE are listed below:

- (a) Conduct a more focused training workshop for the Caribbean region, particularly on V&A assessments for coastal zones;
- (b) Establish a mechanism to follow-up the progress made by trainees in using the tools/methodologies introduced at the workshop and to determine their additional technical needs;
- (c) Provide more regional examples and actual statistics;
- (d) Develop more tools and training in climate risk assessments.

IV. Report of the hands-on training workshop on national greenhouse gas inventories for the Africa region

25. The CGE conducted a training workshop on national greenhouse gas inventories for the Africa region from 18 to 22 September 2006 in Pretoria, South Africa. Forty-three experts from 40 non-Annex 1 Parties, six members of the CGE, representatives of UNDP, UNEP and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Task Force on national GHG inventories and one from a non-governmental organization attended the workshop. The workshop was made possible through the financial assistance provided by the Governments of Australia, Sweden and the United States of America. The Government of South Africa, as the host of the workshop, provided financial and logistical support through the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

26. The objective of the workshop was to improve the preparation of the national GHG inventories section of national communications by training experts from the Africa region on a wide range of approaches, methodologies and tools in GHG inventories.

27. Trainers covered the following topics: GHG inventories in energy, industrial processes, waste, agriculture and land-use change and forestry; emission factor database; inventory management system. The participants used the UNFCCC GHG inventory software in undertaking exercises for the various sectors (energy, industry, waste, agriculture and land-use change and forestry) and the trainers showed them how to use country data to simulate the results of the GHG inventories.

28. In assessing the outcomes of the workshop, participants appreciated the proficiency and effectiveness of the trainers. They commented that more time should have been allocated to exercises than to lectures. Participants also saw the need for subregional GHG inventory training for specific sectors of the inventory where needs are common across a group of countries, and to find ways to disseminate the GHG inventory training material at a national level with multiple stakeholder involvement, especially with ministries that are providing sectoral data such as agriculture, energy and waste. Additional comments made by the participants at the workshop are listed below:

- (a) There should be a link between the first and the second national communications to ensure continuity of experts and systems for the preparation of GHG inventories;
- (b) Addressing the weaknesses in the GHG inventory of the initial national communications is an important step in preparing the new inventories for the second national communications;
- (c) Support is needed for national experts working on GHG inventories to develop inventory database and cross-sectoral information systems to ensure that data is provided in a timely manner for the national communications, as well as for improving the quality of the inventory;
- (d) The timely preparation and distribution of the inventory software in several languages should be ensured;
- (e) The use of the GHG inventory as a tool goes beyond accounting, being rather a catalyst to inform policy makers on policy direction for clean development mechanism projects, etc.
- (f) It is important for countries to address the quality of their inventories through application of the *Good Practice Guidance and Uncertainty Management in National Greenhouse Gas Inventories*, especially for sectors such as forestry;
- (g) Subregional institutions should be more involved to conduct follow-up technical assistance for GHG inventory preparation and analysis;
- (h) Emission factors for some activities are needed and a regional programme similar to the Eastern Europe programme for the development of emission factors (for the forestry sector) should be given consideration for Africa;
- (i) Countries need to be more informed about the avenues/initiatives that they can use for strengthening their inventory preparation (CGE, government websites, NCSP and universities and research centres working on emission factors, etc.)

V. Conclusions

29. The CGE in implementing its work programme, including the provision of technical support to Parties, has completed the regional training workshops on GHG inventories, V&A assessments, and mitigation assessments through the financial and technical support provided by Parties and international organizations. The workshops were initial but effective steps in building the capacities of national

experts to improve the preparation of second and subsequent national communications by using various tools and methodologies introduced at the workshop. It also provided opportunities for experts to network; this is important as regular technical feedback is necessary when preparing the various sections of national communications.

30. The lessons learned from the implementation of the workshops can serve as useful inputs into the training designs and processes that international organizations and technical support institutions/programmes will implement in the future. In particular, the concept and tools on bottom-up approach and climate risk assessments may be areas that the CGE and international organizations can develop further to provide technical advice to Parties on how they can effectively integrate them into their V&A section of their national communications.
