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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 work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: report on the hands-on training workshop for the Africa region on national greenhouse gas inventories

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE), in collaboration with the Technical Support Unit for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, organized a hands-on training workshop for the Africa region on national greenhouse gas inventories, held in Swakopmund, Namibia, from 23 to 27 April 2012. This report outlines the proceedings of the workshop; it summarizes the feedback and recommendations from the participants of the workshop, the updated CGE training materials, and the financial and technical issues relating to the preparation of national communications.

Contents

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction.....	1–6	3
A. Mandate.....	1–5	3
B. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation.....	6	3
II. Proceedings of the workshop.....	7–15	3
A. Opening of the workshop.....	7–11	3
B. Organization of the work.....	12–14	4
C. Summary of discussions.....	15	5
III. Participants’ feedback and conclusions.....	16–25	6
A. Participants’ feedback.....	16–24	6
B. Conclusions.....	25	8

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 5/CP.15, reconstituted the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) for the period 2010–2012 in order to improve the process of, and preparation of, national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties).

2. The terms of reference of the CGE stipulate that the CGE, in fulfilling its mandate, shall provide technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties for, inter alia, the regular development of national greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories with a view to improving the accuracy, consistency and transparency of the information in their national communications.

3. The terms of reference of the CGE are operationalized through its work programme for 2010–2012, developed at its 1st meeting, held in March 2010. The work programme was welcomed and taken note of by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) at its thirty-second session.¹

4. The CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, and in collaboration with the Technical Support Unit for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Task Force on National Greenhouse Gas Inventories (IPCC TFI-TSU), organized a hands-on training workshop for the Africa region on national GHG inventories, held in Swakopmund, Namibia, from 23 to 27 April 2012 as per its work programme referred to in paragraph 3 above, with a view to enhancing the capacity of national experts from the region involved in the process of, and preparation of, their national communications using updated CGE training materials on national GHG inventories.

5. By decision 5/CP.15, the COP requested the secretariat to facilitate the work of the CGE by organizing meetings and workshops, and by compiling reports of its meetings and workshops for consideration by the SBI.

B. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

6. The SBI, having considered this report, may wish to note the recommendations of the workshop participants and provide further guidance to the CGE on the provision of technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties in order to facilitate the regular development of national GHG inventories.

II. Proceedings of the workshop

A. Opening of the workshop

7. The hands-on training workshop for the Africa region on national GHG inventories was hosted by the Government of Namibia from 23 to 27 April 2012 in Swakopmund. Mr. Petrus Muteyauli, from the Ministry of Environment of Namibia, delivered a speech on behalf of Mr. Teofilus Nghitila, the Environmental Commissioner and national focal point of the Convention. The opening remarks outlined the need to improve the accuracy,

¹ FCCC/SBI/2010/10, paragraph 21.

consistency and transparency of the information reported in national communications, and acknowledged the role played by the CGE, which is mandated to provide technical assistance to non-Annex I Parties for the regular development of national GHG inventories. Ms. Ruleta Camacho (Antigua and Barbuda), Chair of the CGE, thanked the Government of Namibia for hosting the workshop, welcomed the participants and outlined the workshop objectives. The secretariat provided a brief overview of the organization of the workshop.

8. The objectives of the workshop were the following:

(a) To build the capacity of national experts from the Africa region using updated CGE training materials, with a view to improving the preparation of the national GHG inventories by providing the national experts with technical guidance;

(b) To seek and generate feedback on the draft updated CGE training materials on GHG inventories in order to improve them further;

(c) To serve as a platform for the exchange of views among Parties and with the experts.

9. A total of 41 national experts from 37 non-Annex I Parties,² five members of the CGE, one representative of the United Nations Environment Programme and two representatives of the IPCC TFI-TSU attended the workshop.

10. An average of 50 extra participants per day, representing non-Annex I Parties from the Africa region, participated in the workshop through videoconferencing (WebEx), allowing up to 10 GHG experts per country to participate. This remote participation allowed for more than 250 additional experts to be involved in the training. The CGE, with the assistance of the secretariat, will continue to provide this additional opportunity for virtual participation in such workshops to non-Annex I Parties in the future, subject to the availability of resources.

11. The workshop was organized with the financial support of the European Union and the IPCC TFI-TSU.

B. Organization of the work

12. The CGE Chair outlined the organization of the workshop as per the agenda prepared in consultation with the CGE, which comprised 10 sessions, as follows, taking into account the recommendations from the previous regional workshop:³

(a) The first session was in the form of a presentation of background information on the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention” and the IPCC Emission Factor Database;

(b) The second session was on the general aspects and cross-cutting issues regarding national GHG inventories, covering key category analysis (KCA) and uncertainty assessment and quality assurance/quality control (QA/QC) and addressing data gaps;

(c) The third to the eighth sessions, conducted in parallel, were in-depth hands-on training sessions on the IPCC methodologies pertaining to all sectors of a national GHG inventory; the mornings were dedicated to the IPCC methodologies covered by decision

² Algeria, Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Swaziland, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

³ FCCC/SBI/2011/10/Add.2, paragraph 17.

17/CP.8, while the afternoons were dedicated to exercises in which participants addressed activity data, emission factor selection and other methodological issues in order to estimate GHG emissions or sequestration using the UNFCCC GHG inventory software for non-Annex I Parties;

(d) The ninth session was dedicated to presentations from participants providing their national perspectives on institutional arrangements for national GHG inventories, and on challenges and experiences in developing national GHG inventories, as well as a presentation on the technical upgrade of the existing UNFCCC GHG inventory software for non-Annex I Parties, which is expected to be released by June 2013;

(e) The final session was a wrap-up session, in which views were exchanged among participants and with the experts on issues relating to institutional arrangements, financial and technical support, and on how best to address these issues when preparing national communications.

13. The training sessions, including the hands-on training sessions, were facilitated by resource persons as well as CGE members using the updated CGE training materials.⁴

14. In closing, an evaluation of the workshop was conducted. The participants also provided recommendations on possible improvements to the training materials and, in general, to such regional workshops in the future.

C. Summary of discussions

15. The presentations and the hands-on training sessions generated an intensive exchange of views among participants and with the experts in relation to the following:

(a) The challenge of addressing data gaps, as well as the lack of archiving of existing data;

(b) The need for, and challenges regarding, the establishment of suitable institutional arrangements to support the regular development of national GHG inventories;

(c) The choice and application of IPCC methodologies and the year(s) for which emission estimates should be reported;

(d) The application of methods and tools aimed at improving the transparency, accuracy, consistency, completeness and comparability of national GHG inventories;

(e) The development and implementation of QA/QC procedures;

(f) The use of the UNFCCC GHG inventory software for non-Annex I Parties and ways in which to overcome the most commonly faced difficulties;

(g) The financial and technical support needs, and how best to address them to ensure the regular development of national GHG inventories;

(h) The possible assistance of the CGE, at the national level, to non-Annex I Parties, upon request.

⁴ The current CGE training materials, available on the UNFCCC website at http://unfccc.int/national_report/non-annex_i_natcom/training_material/methodological_documents/items/349.php, are being updated.

III. Participants’ feedback and conclusions

A. Participants’ feedback

16. During the workshop, daily feedback was solicited from the workshop participants in order to gather their views on the substantive elements covered each day. In addition, an online survey was conducted after the workshop, which was also open to those who participated remotely. A total of 50 participants responded to the online survey. Their responses are summarized below.

17. The participants welcomed the hands-on training workshop and highlighted the following as key elements for the overall success of the workshop:

(a) The guidance received on the establishment of institutional arrangements to support the regular development of national GHG inventories, and an opportunity to discuss the challenges faced by non-Annex I Parties;

(b) The presentations that clearly outlined the *Revised 1996 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* and the application of IPCC methodologies that lead to a better understanding of various concepts, such as KCA, QA/QC and how to use expert judgement to fill data gaps;

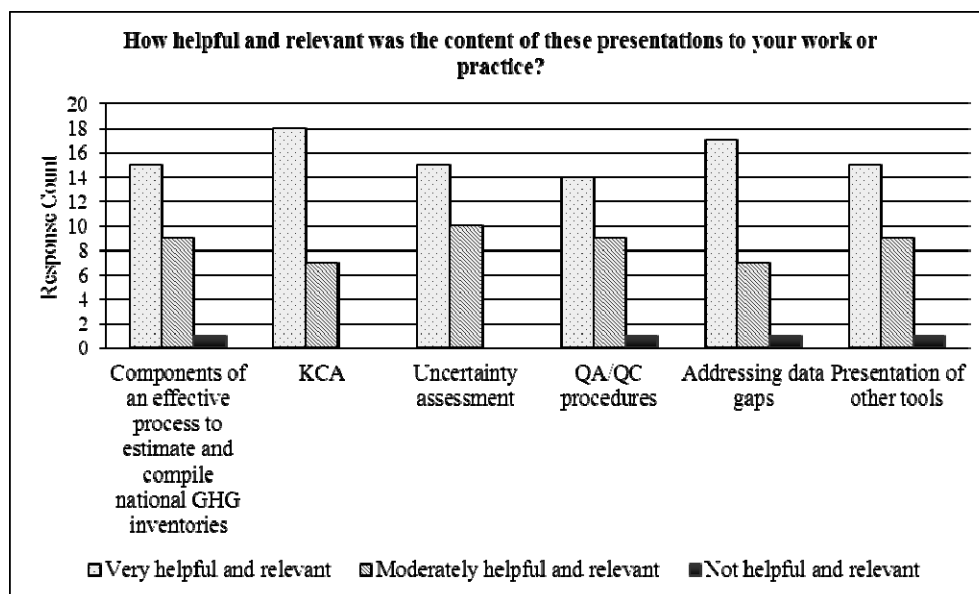
(c) The provision of various reference materials and data sources that can be used for further training at the national level and made available to national experts involved in the preparation of the national communication;

(d) The interaction with trainers and national experts on national GHG inventories;

(e) The application of the software and the provision of practical examples.

18. Most participants also found the training modules clear, helpful and relevant to their work, as illustrated in figure 1.

Figure 1
Evaluation of presentations on cross-cutting issues



Abbreviations: GHG = greenhouse gas, QA/QC = quality assurance/quality control, KCA = key category analysis.

19. The participants highlighted the following as key elements in the success of the sector-specific training sessions:

(a) The stepwise nature of the training process and the use of data for the land use, land-use change and forestry sector to demonstrate the identification of the various subcategories within a sector, the documentation process and the tools available;

(b) The identification of the role of major industrial processes, including the use of relevant examples and the level of detail provided in the presentations;

(c) The introduction of key concepts in the energy sector and the provision of simple tier guidelines, and emission and conversion factors;

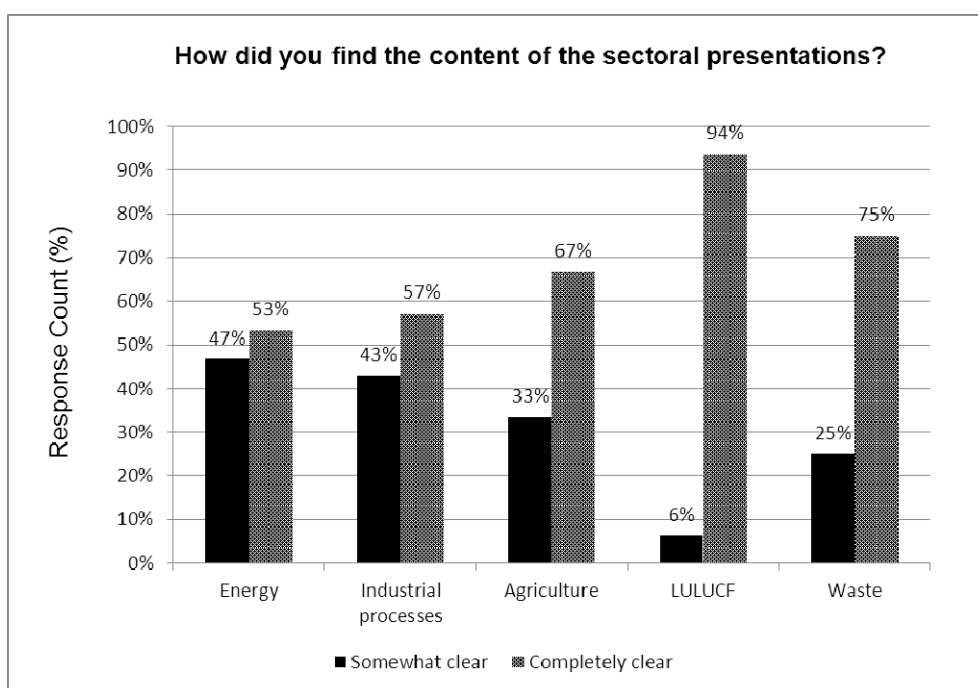
(d) The use of subcategories in the waste sector and in the source of emissions, and the methodological description of estimating methane and carbon dioxide emissions from various sources;

(e) The various decision-making trees in the agriculture sector, which can facilitate the process of data collection and calculation, and the need for KCA and subcategory analysis.

20. Participants found the overall approach and content of the sectoral training sessions clear, as illustrated in figure 2.

Figure 2

Evaluation of presentations on sectors



Abbreviation: LULUCF = land use, land-use change and forestry.

21. The workshop participants made the following comments and recommendations with a view to improving the hands-on training workshops on national GHG inventories to be held in the future:

(a) It is important to provide adequate time for the use of the software application during the hands-on training sessions;

(b) Additional hands-on training sessions on how to access data from the IPCC Emission Factor Database are required, as is more time allocation to KCA.

22. The workshop participants mentioned the following needs concerning the provision of financial and technical support to non-Annex I Parties in the area of national GHG inventories:

(a) An enhancement of regional capacity-building and training programmes;

(b) The promotion of the exchange of regional national experts to share ideas and build capacity of regional experts.

23. During the discussion on issues relating to the financial and technical needs for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties participants welcomed the developments on the technical upgrade of the existing UNFCCC GHG inventory software for non-Annex I Parties. Many participants acknowledged that this software will be a useful tool for the national GHG inventory compilers and urged the secretariat to mobilize resources for its development and to make it available to Parties as soon as possible.

24. The discussions during this session covered the additional reporting requirements envisaged as a result of decision 2/CP.17, adopted in Durban, South Africa, by the COP, at its seventeenth session, on biennial update reports (BURs). During the exchange, clarification was provided on the funds available for the preparation of BURs, the policy guidelines released by the Global Environment Facility and the procedure for accessing the BUR funding, as well as the year(s) for which GHG inventories should be reported. In view of this recent development, most Parties highlighted the importance of continued financial and technical assistance for the development of their GHG inventories.

B. Conclusions

25. Participants were appreciative of the training provided and thanked the CGE and the secretariat for organizing the workshop, the Government of Namibia for hosting it in excellent facilities and the Namibian people for the warm welcome accorded to the workshop participants. They also thanked those Parties and other organizations (see para. 11 above) that made financial contributions towards the organization of the workshop.
