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Methodological issues under the Convention

Work programme on the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties

Report on the workshop on the revision of review guidelines for developed country Parties

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This report provides a summary of the discussions held during the first technical workshop on the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties. The workshop, co-chaired by Ms. Riitta Pipatti (Finland) and Mr. Brian Mantlana (South Africa) and held from 7 to 9 October 2013 in Bonn, Germany, was organized under the work programme of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). The aim of the workshop was to provide participants with an opportunity to discuss the scope, structure, timing, outline and other key elements of the review guidelines and for drafting of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications for developed country Parties. The Parties' views, summarized in the synthesis paper (FCCC/SBSTA/2013/INF.5), and the draft text of the guidelines for the review of greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications under the Convention were the basis of the discussion. This report is expected to serve as input for the further consideration by Parties at SBSTA 39 of the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 46, decided on a work programme, building on existing reporting and review guidelines, processes and experiences, covering the revision of guidelines for the review of national communications (NCs), including biennial reports (BRs), annual greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories and national inventory systems. The COP, by decision 2/CP.17, paragraph 28, decided to establish a work programme under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), with a view to concluding the revision of the guidelines no later than COP 19.

2. SBSTA 36 initiated its consideration of the work programme, including the organization of technical workshops. SBSTA 37 agreed on the elements and timeline for the work programme on the revision of the guidelines for the review of BRs and NCs, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties (hereinafter referred to as the work programme on the revision of the review guidelines), in accordance with decision 2/CP.17, paragraph 28.¹ According to the work programme, the revision of review guidelines for BRs and NCs will be completed by COP 19, while the revision of the review guidelines for GHG inventories will be completed by COP 20.

3. In accordance with the work programme for the revision of the review guidelines, SBSTA 38 continued its consideration of the overall approach to streamlining the review process² and the structure, outline, key elements and content of review guidelines for BRs and NCs.

4. At the same session, the SBSTA also requested the secretariat to organize the first technical workshop on the revision of the guidelines in October 2013, under the work programme agreed upon at SBSTA 37, to address the overall structure and approach to the review guidelines and to discuss the draft of the review guidelines. It further invited Parties, under the work programme, to submit additional views on, inter alia, the scope, structure, timing, outline and publication of review reports, and specific views on key elements and the content and proposed texts, of the review guidelines for BRs and NCs, and requested the secretariat to prepare a synthesis report of Parties' views and a draft of the review guidelines based on the Parties' submissions, as inputs to the discussions at the first technical workshop.³ The synthesis report is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2013/INF.5.

5. The SBSTA concluded that the technical workshop to be held in October 2013 in accordance with the work programme on the revision of the review guidelines should focus first on mapping information requirements contained in the BR and NC reporting guidelines to identify overlapping reporting requirements (e.g. substantively common and duplicated information) and unique information in the BRs and NCs, and on reporting information identified as unique to BRs that could serve as the starting point for a discussion for developing BR review guidelines. Information identified as overlapping in

¹ The work programme with specific timelines and activities for 2013 and 2014 is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2012/5, annex I.

² The consideration of the overall approach to streamlining the review process was based on FCCC/SBSTA/2013/INF.2.

³ The synthesis report contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2013/INF.5 contains text of draft review guidelines that was prepared based on texts submitted by Parties.

the NC and BR reporting guidelines could serve as input to a discussion on streamlining the review process.

6. In addition to the text of the draft review guidelines as contained in the synthesis report, the secretariat prepared an annotated draft of the review guidelines that takes into account all options included in Parties' submissions as reflected in the synthesis report and the secretariat's suggested options based on the existing review procedures and guidelines and the experiences obtained from coordinating reviews. The annotated draft of the review guidelines was used as input to the discussion at the workshop.⁴

B. Scope of the note

7. This report covers the proceedings of, and discussions during, the technical workshop on the revision of guidelines for the review of BRs and NCs, including national inventory reviews for developed country Parties (hereinafter referred as the workshop), held under the work programme as described in paragraph 4 above. The main outcome of the workshop is the revised draft of the guidelines for the review of GHG inventories, BRs and NCs under the Convention (hereinafter referred as the revised draft guidelines), contained in the annex.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

8. SBSTA 39 may wish to take into account this workshop report, together with the views submitted by Parties and the synthesis report of those Parties' submissions, mentioned in paragraph 4 above, and to complete the work on the revision of the guidelines for the review of BRs and NCs.

9. The SBSTA may wish to continue its consideration of the revision of the guidelines for the review of GHG inventories in 2014 to complete the work by COP 20 in accordance with the work programme.

10. The SBSTA may wish to consider further actions required that are identified by the Parties through the work on the revision of the guidelines for the review of GHG inventories, BRs and NCs.

II. Proceedings of the workshop

11. The workshop, organized by the secretariat, was held in Bonn, Germany, from 7 to 9 October 2013. Fifty-seven participants representing 41 Parties, covering 15 Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) and 26 Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, attended the workshop. Mr. Richard Muyungi, the Chair of the SBSTA, opened the workshop, and Mr. Donald Cooper, of the secretariat, welcomed the participants. The workshop was co-facilitated by Ms. Riitta Pipatti (Finland) and Mr. Brian Mantlana (South Africa).

12. The aim of the workshop was to further discuss key issues in order to clarify Parties' views, seek convergence or find a middle ground for agreement, and to advance the drafting of the review guidelines as much as possible before SBSTA 39. That was deemed important in order to enable SBSTA 39 to complete the work on the review guidelines for

⁴ The annotated draft of the review guidelines was made available on the UNFCCC website for the first technical workshop at <http://unfccc.int/methods/other_methodological_issues/items/7732.php>.

the NCs and BRs and to forward the guidelines for adoption at COP 19, in accordance with the work programme adopted at SBSTA 37. Furthermore, the adoption of the review guidelines for the BRs and NCs at COP 19 is critically important in order to enable Parties, review experts and the secretariat to prepare for the reviews of the first BRs and the sixth NCs, which will underpin the newly established international assessment and review (IAR) process, which will be launched in early 2014.

13. Following the opening session, at which the mandate and objectives of the workshop were elaborated, four presentations were made by representatives of the secretariat. The information included in those presentations provided a good basis for the discussions by the participants throughout the workshop. The presentations included the following:

(a) Introduction, overview of the current status of the work programme and organization of the work, which provided a brief background of the development of the work under the programme, and clarified the tasks of the Parties during the workshop;

(b) Synthesis of Parties' submissions on the review guidelines, which summarized Parties' views in their submissions and highlighted issues on which Parties share common views and where Parties' views still diverge;

(c) Identification of overlapping and unique information in the BRs, NCs and GHG inventories, which summarized the result of mapping exercises of different and/or similar information to be reported across the BRs and NCs, respectively;

(d) Planning for the IAR process, which showed feasible time frames for the technical review of BRs and NCs under the IAR process. Those time frames presented by the secretariat were guided by the modalities and procedures of IAR included in annex II to decision 2/CP.17, as well as by the time frames of the existing technical review practices of NCs and GHG inventories.

14. Those presentations set the scene for further discussions on the review guidelines. They provided an overview of the requirements and timeline under the IAR process and the implications for the overall planning of work, as well as possible ways to improve the efficiency of the review process in the light of the increasing amount of work, and also helped participants to consider the various options of formats and timelines for the technical reviews during the workshop.

15. Following the above presentations and brief question and answer sessions, three sessions were held to discuss the following: (a) the objectives, approach and overall structure of the review guidelines; (b) the format, procedures and timing of reviews; and (c) specific issues, including the roles of the lead reviewers and the secretariat, the criteria for identification of issues by the expert review teams (ERTs), training activities, reporting and the outline of review reports.

16. The discussion sessions were followed by the drafting sessions, at which the participants worked on the annotated draft review guidelines. Through those sessions, the participants further clarified their views and the rationale behind them, sought possible directions for a convergence of views, and identified issues that need to be further considered at SBSTA 39. The specific issues discussed are reflected in the revised draft review guidelines. Key issues discussed during the workshop are briefly explained in chapter III below.

17. The background documents, workshop agenda, list of participants, presentations made by representatives of the secretariat and the unedited version of the revised draft review guidelines are available on the UNFCCC website.⁵

⁵ <http://unfccc.int/methods/other_methodological_issues/items/7732.php>.

III. Summary of discussions

A. Overview

18. The draft guidelines comprise two options to present two different views submitted by Parties: option 1, which envisages a single set of guidelines with an overarching chapter followed by chapters on the review of each different type of report, namely GHG inventories, NCs and BRs, to stipulate specific elements of the reviews of those reports; and option 2, which envisages three sets of individual guidelines (i.e. for the technical review of GHG inventories, the technical review of NCs and the IAR of BRs). At the outset, participants agreed to work on option 1 during the workshop, regardless of the different views on the structure of the guidelines among the Parties. The draft also presented options for consideration by the participants, in a way to clearly indicate similar and/or diverging views submitted by Parties on each issue. During the workshop, the participants strived to bridge those divergences to clean the text as much as possible.

19. The participants, guided by the co-facilitators, engaged in a constructive discussion and shared their views and concerns. Noting that the appropriate streamlining of the review process could improve its efficiency and cost-effectiveness, the conclusions of SBSTA 38 include the following two points: (a) the review of NCs should be conducted in conjunction with the review of BRs in the years in which both reports are submitted; and (b) the same information submitted by Parties in NCs, BRs and national GHG inventories would be reviewed only once. During the workshop, those points served as a basis for the discussion on the format and scope, although the participant's views on the format and scope of the reviews diverged.

20. At the wrap-up session of the workshop, the co-facilitators highlighted three major issues that have to be agreed upon by Parties during SBSTA 39: (a) the format of the reviews, namely whether or how in-country and centralized reviews will be conducted and with which timing; (b) the scope of the reviews, which includes the criteria used for reviewing the conformity of the reporting requirements; and (c) the structure of the guidelines (i.e. whether there will be one set of guidelines or three separate guidelines).

21. The co-facilitators noted that the revised draft guidelines could serve as a basis for further discussion at SBSTA 39.

22. The chapters below provide highlights of the discussions around specific issues that led to the development of the draft guidelines.

B. Issues related to scope

1. Scope of the review

23. Parties' views on the scope of technical reviews are generally split into two, reflecting the different interpretations of the relationship between the technical reviews and multilateral assessment. Some Parties consider that the technical reviews by the ERTs and the subsequent multilateral assessment under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) are clearly demarcated, as indicated in annex II to decision 2/CP.17. Other Parties consider that the technical review of BRs is a part of the multilateral assessment process, which should be reflected in the description of the scope of the reviews in the review guidelines.

24. During the workshop, the participants discussed the different interpretations of decision 2/CP.17 and the view that agreement on the guidelines could be achieved by focusing on how to operationalize technical reviews, in accordance with the mandate for

the work on the revision of the review guidelines under the SBSTA. However, if that is not possible, further work on the clarification of the multilateral assessment must be undertaken by the SBI after the adoption of the revised guidelines, during the revision of the modalities and procedures for IAR in accordance with the timelines decided in decision 2/CP.17.

2. Identification of issues

25. Another issue relating to the scope of the review is the criteria used for the identification of issues by the ERT during the technical reviews. The participants generally agreed that the scope of the review is to examine the completeness of the reporting requirements, consistency of the information reported in the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs, and the timeliness of the submission. However, with regard to the criteria to be considered for the identification of issues, the participants' views diverged. Some participants considered that the identification of issues during the technical reviews could be done in relation to all five principles for reporting as described in the reporting guidelines of the BRs and NCs (i.e. transparency, consistency, comparability, completeness and accuracy). Other participants argued that the identification of issues could be done in relation to timeliness, transparency and completeness only, arguing that consistency and accuracy are for the GHG inventory reviews, and cannot be applied to the information in the NCs given the lack of an agreed methodology.

26. How to view comparability also varied among the participants. Some considered that comparability should refer to the information reported in the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs of each Party, while others considered that it should refer to the comparability across Parties relating to information they provided. Those who opposed including comparability argued that it is not applicable, for example, to examine the policies of economies of different sizes and Parties with different national circumstances.

3. Other issues

27. The participants also did not reach agreement on whether the tasks of the review could be listed in the review guidelines for the BRs and NCs. The participants who opposed including a list of tasks considered that the list is outdated and that it is not appropriate to define tasks before knowing what will be reported in the BRs.

28. Regarding how to treat the timeliness of reporting by Parties, some participants considered that a delay of more than a certain period from the submission due date should be brought to the attention of, for example, the COP, and, in that way, a delay in submissions that would affect the timelines of the overall review cycle could be avoided. Other participants considered that such a procedural issue should be included in the reporting guidelines, not in the review guidelines, or that a requirement to inform the secretariat about a delay in advance might be sufficient to minimize the effect on the overall review cycle.

C. Structure of the review guidelines

29. Despite the participants agreeing that the NC and BR reviews would be held in conjunction, the views on the structure of the review guidelines have not narrowed since the previous SBSTA sessions. The divergent views on the structure of the review guidelines are currently captured in two options in the revised review guidelines (see the annex), for further discussion by Parties in Warsaw, Poland.

D. Issues related to the format and timelines

1. Format of reviews

30. The participants agreed that the information that would be reported in the annual submissions of GHG inventories, BRs and NCs, in accordance with the reporting requirements for Annex I Parties,⁶ would significantly overlap. At the time of the workshop, one Party had already submitted its sixth NC and its first BR, and the participants noted that those reports demonstrated that there are major overlaps in the information contained in the reports. Noting that the information in the NCs is to describe the basis for setting targets and the information in the BRs is to describe, in addition, how to meet, and the progress to meeting, the targets, the participants noted that the technical reviews of BRs and NCs could be done in conjunction in a way to satisfy the purpose of the technical reviews of both reports, in an efficient and complete manner.

31. However, when considering the format of the reviews of BRs and NCs, Parties' views diverged between the two extremes, namely centralized reviews for all BRs and NCs and in-country reviews for all BRs and NCs. Noting such divergence, the participants considered that there are broadly three options for the format of reviews of BRs and NCs: option 1, where each BR/NC is subject to a centralized review; option 2, where each BR/NC is subject to an in-country review; and option 3, a combination of centralized and in-country reviews. Option 3 suggests that there is a need for special arrangements for the years when BRs and NCs are submitted together (i.e. Annex I Parties could be divided into two groups, with one group, for example Parties with small economies, undergoing centralized reviews and the other group undergoing in-country reviews), while centralized reviews would be organized for BRs when they are submitted alone.

32. Participants from developed country Parties stressed the need for a realistic approach in formulating the format of the reviews in order to make the reviews practicable in view of the constraints on time and resources. Some participants considered that all reviews of BRs and NCs need to be done through centralized reviews. The reason behind that is the two-year time frame to complete the multilateral assessment process for all reporting Parties, which implies that all the reviews will need to be completed at a maximum of within one and a half years of the submission due date of the BRs and NCs. The availability of a sufficient number of review experts would also be in question given the experience with the current reviews of GHG inventories and NCs. That concern was expressed repeatedly during the discussions.

33. Participants from developing country Parties argued that in-country reviews of all BRs are more appropriate as only those reviews provide for an in-depth examination of the reported information. One participant stressed the need for in-country reviews, in particular for the first BRs, to ensure that all Parties fulfil their reporting requirements in a transparent manner, and streamlining could be discussed after the first review cycle. A positive effect of capacity-building of experts through the in-country review of BRs and NCs was also expressed by participants from developing country Parties.

34. Regarding the reviews for Parties with small-scale economies, some considered that the inventory reviews could be carried out by centralized reviews only, but that the NCs and BRs would need in-country reviews for the first biennial reports of all reporting Parties. Participants also noted the need for conducting in-country reviews for all NCs of Kyoto

⁶ The reporting requirements refer to the guidance given in decisions 2/CP.17, annex I, 19/CP.18, 4/CP.5 and 15/CMP.1, annex.

Protocol Parties, under the current review guidelines for the Kyoto Protocol,⁷ for streamlining and efficiency of the review process.

35. The issues around the format of the reviews of BRs and NCs are intertwined with the issues around the timeline, since the strict time frame for the biennial reporting cycle for the BRs does not allow enough room to organize reviews of BRs and NCs separately in the years in which they are submitted in conjunction unless resources for reviews are increased well beyond the current levels. The compromise therefore suggested by the participants from developed country Parties is to seek a middle ground, a combination of in-country and centralized reviews, such as option 3. A practical solution on the format will have to be sought during SBSTA 39.

2. Timelines

36. In order to complete each review cycle before the next biennial reporting cycle starts, the participants agreed that the NC reviews could be completed within 15 months. However, as for the BRs, Parties kept the specific timeline open in the draft guidelines. Specifically, some Parties suggested that there could be two time frames for the completion of the BR review cycle, following the proposal that the BR reviews could be conducted in two groups for Annex I Parties. That approach is guided by the consideration that the first group of Parties may be subject to multilateral assessment at SBI 41, and the second group at SBI 42. In order to provide feedback of the assessment to the reviewed Party for the Party to incorporate any recommendations in its next BR submission, participants generally considered that an ERT needs to complete each review of BRs well in advance before the due date of their next submissions.

E. Review reports

Outlines and contents of the review report

37. Some participants considered that, even though the reviews would be conducted in conjunction, the results should be presented in two separate review reports for the NCs and the BRs. Other participants advocated a single review report, since it provides for easy referencing between the NCs and the BRs for similar issues reported in both reports. In addition, such an approach could bring efficiency gains. The co-facilitators encouraged the participants to continue discussing the matter in order to find a solution.

38. The participants generally agreed that the inclusion of outlines of review reports as an annex in the review guidelines would be helpful. However, they did not discuss each item during the workshop, partly because there was no agreement on having one report or separate reports for the review of BRs and NCs. The revised draft guidelines include a proposal for separate outlines for BRs and NCs, in an annex, even though some participants questioned the need for having such outlines. Some participants argued that the outlines proposed were just repetitions of the reporting requirements, which would not help to avoid repeating the same information already included in the BRs and NCs. They suggested having a brief summary of the key elements of review reports in the 'reporting and publication' section of the review guidelines instead of the outlines.

39. The participants stressed that the review reports should be concise, transparent and manageable, and should not duplicate the information that is already provided in the BRs

⁷ Provisions for in-country reviews of the NCs under the Kyoto Protocol are contained in decision 22/CMP.1. However, recognizing the need for efficiency and effectiveness of the review process, decision 10/CMP.6 provides for a centralized review for Parties with annual emissions of less than 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent.

and NCs. They generally agreed that there should be a greater use of tables and check lists in order to make the preparation of the reports easier.

F. Distribution of the work between the lead reviewers and the secretariat

40. The participants discussed the distribution of the work between the lead reviewers and the secretariat in accordance with the existing review practices in order to seek further efficiency gains.

41. The participants largely agreed that there is no major change necessary from existing practice for the roles of the lead reviewers. They emphasized that the lead reviewers are responsible for the preparation of, and the whole process of, specific reviews. The role of the secretariat is of a coordination and organizational nature, rather than a substantive nature. Clarity was given, in any case, that the review report is the collective responsibility of the ERT, based on consensus within the team.

42. On the other hand, the participants agreed on the need to formalize the role of the secretariat, in particular for the finalization of the review reports, including the compilation and editing of the review reports, together with the lead reviewers. The participants also considered that the development of a schedule of the reviews and review tools, provision of technical advice to the ERT and coordination with Parties could be added to the role of the secretariat.

G. Arrangements required to operationalize the review of biennial reports and national communications

1. Ensuring the additional expertise needed

43. In association with the discussion on the scope, format and timelines of the review, the participants repeatedly stressed the need to ensure additional expertise in the ERTs for the BR reviews. To that end, the secretariat reiterated the need for cooperation by Parties to update the information in the roster of experts. In response to the question on the selection criteria for the lead reviewers, the secretariat explained that the criteria are based on experience and the capacity to lead the team to ensure that the team will deliver the review reports on time. However, the pool of lead reviewers is not large enough to ensure the availability of such lead reviewers.

2. Training of the reviewers

44. The participants stressed the need for training of review experts. For the reviews starting in 2014, in particular, general guidance for the reviews of BRs and NCs is necessary for both experienced and new experts. Some participants considered that guidance on the review of additional information in the BRs, the objectives of the reviews and the expectation of the ERTs to deliver review reports is essential in the training of experts. Some considered that the training should be considered as an investment, not a cost. Owing to the limited time available before the reviews start in March 2014, a practical approach, including the provision of the training materials to the experts, should be sought, with a view to preparing a more formal training programme in 2014.

45. The secretariat is preparing the training materials as requested by SBSTA 38, which will be presented in a side event during SBSTA 39. The participants expressed their expectations about those materials and looked forward to seeing them in order to consider further arrangements required for the first review cycle of the BR reviews.

46. The participants also stressed the need to seek resources, as well as materials, and to consider systematic arrangements for training in the longer term at SBSTA 39.

3. Lead reviewers meeting and annual report to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

47. The participants discussed the need to expand the lead reviewers' meetings to cover issues relating to the reviews of NCs and BRs. They also agreed to include in the annual report to the SBSTA, which is currently on the GHG inventory only, elements relating to the reviews of NCs and BRs, such as the selection of review experts for NCs and BRs.

IV. Outcome of the workshop

48. The outcome of the workshop is the revised draft guidelines, which is contained in the annex. The revised review guidelines will provide the basis for discussion at SBSTA 39.

Annex

Revised review guidelines

Draft guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

Option 1 for the review guidelines: this option envisages a single set of guidelines with an overarching chapter, followed by chapters on specific guidelines for each of the three types of report.

PART I: GENERAL APPROACH TO THE REVIEW

A. [Applicability]

1. Information provided by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) in their greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs) will be subject to reviews pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines.]

B. Objectives

2. The objectives of the review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP are the following:

(a) To provide, in a facilitative, non-confrontational, open and transparent manner, a thorough, objective and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(b) To promote the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties;

(c) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information contained in GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(d) To ensure that the COP has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.

3. The objectives of the review guidelines are to promote consistency, comparability and transparency in the review of [information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs].

C. General approach

4. The provisions of these guidelines shall apply to the review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP.
5. Specific provisions for the review of GHG inventories, NCs and BRs are included in specific parts of these review guidelines.
6. The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its BR, NC and GHG inventory shall be reviewed only once, by an expert review team (ERT).
7. The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties and shall identify any potential issues [referred to in paragraphs. XX (inventory section), 61, 76 and 77 below]. The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.
8. At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding identified issues. The ERTs should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to resolve such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review. The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.
9. The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant reporting guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information.

Confidentiality

10. In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the GHG inventory, BR and NC reports, an Annex I Party may indicate whether such information or data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the ERT, shall submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information or data for the assessment of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by Annex I Parties and the conformity with the relevant methodological guidance as agreed by the COP. Any confidential information or data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.
11. An ERT member's obligation not to disclose confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with paragraph 10 above shall continue after the termination of his or her service on the ERT.

D. Timing and procedures

I. Placeholder for review of greenhouse gas inventories

12. Each GHG inventory submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to review, in accordance with part I and part II of these guidelines.

II. Review of biennial reports

13. Each BR submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a review by an ERT, in accordance with part I and part III of these guidelines.

14. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

15. A Party's BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

Option 1 (paragraph 16) (NZ, EU)

16. Each BR is subject to a centralized review.

Option 2 (paragraph 16) (CHN)

16. Each BR is subject to an in-country review.

Option 3 (paragraphs 16 and 17) (JPN, AUS)

16. The reviews of BRs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of NCs. In the years in which the BR is submitted alone, the review of BRs should be conducted as a centralized review. In addition, each Annex I Party shall be subject to one in-country review by an ERT, which is to occur in the years in which the BR and NC are submitted in conjunction.

17. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂ eq) (excluding land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF)) in accordance with their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their BRs.

III. Review of national communications

18. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

Option 1 (paragraph 19) (CHN)

19. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled in-country review by an ERT, in accordance with part I and part IV of these guidelines.

Option 2 (paragraph 19) (EU)

19. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a centralized review by an ERT, in accordance with part I and part IV of these guidelines. A Party can request an in-country review for its national communication.

Option 3 (paragraphs 19 and 20) (JPN, LIE)

19. The reviews of NCs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of BRs.

20. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 Mt CO₂ eq (excluding LULUCF) in accordance with their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their NCs.

E. Expert review teams and institutional arrangements

I. Expert review teams

21. Each submission of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP shall be assigned to a single ERT, which shall be responsible for performing the review thereof in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in these guidelines. The submissions of an Annex I Party shall not be reviewed in two successive reviews by an ERT with identical composition.

22. Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party and identifying any potential issues [referred to in paragraphs XX (GHG inventory section), 61, 76 and 77 below]. The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.

23. The ERTs shall be coordinated by the secretariat and shall be composed of experts selected on an ad hoc basis from the UNFCCC roster of experts and shall include lead reviewers. The ERTs formed to carry out the tasks under the provisions of these guidelines may vary in size and composition, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review and the different needs for expertise for each review task. Additional experts may be added to a review team where necessary.

24. Participating experts shall serve in their personal capacity.

25. Experts shall be nominated by Parties to the Convention to the UNFCCC roster of experts and, [as appropriate,] by intergovernmental organizations[, in accordance with relevant guidance provided by the COP].

26. Participating experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines. The training to be provided to the experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training⁸ and/or any other means needed to ensure the necessary competence of the experts for their participation in ERTs, shall be

⁸ The experts that opt not to participate in the training have to undergo a similar assessment successfully to enable them to qualify for participation in ERTs.

designed and operationalized by the secretariat in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP.

27. Experts selected for a specific review activity shall neither be nationals of the Party under review nor be nominated or funded by that Party.

28. Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded [according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities]. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.

29. In conducting reviews, the ERTs shall adhere to these guidelines and work on the basis of established and published procedures agreed upon by the COP and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including quality assurance and control and confidentiality provisions.

II. Competences of the expert review teams

30. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of GHG inventories are in the areas to be covered in part II of these guidelines.

31. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of BRs are in the areas referred to in part III of these guidelines.

32. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of NCs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 74(c) below in part IV of these guidelines.

III. Composition of the expert review teams

33. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs to review the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs submitted under the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP in such a way that the collective skills of the ERTs address the areas mentioned in paragraphs 30, 31 and 32 above, respectively.

34. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs with a view to achieving a balance between experts from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties in the overall composition of the ERTs, without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 33 above. The secretariat shall make every effort to ensure geographical balance among the experts selected from non-Annex I Parties and among those selected from Annex I Parties.

35. The secretariat shall ensure that in any ERT one co-lead reviewer shall be from an Annex I Party and one from a non-Annex I Party.

36. Without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 30, 31 and 32 above, the formation of ERTs should ensure, to the extent possible, that at least one member is fluent in the language of the Party under review.

37. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the composition of ERTs, including the selection of experts for the review teams and the lead reviewers, and on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 33 and 34 above.

IV. Lead reviewers

38. Lead reviewers shall act as co-lead reviewers for the ERTs in accordance with these guidelines.

39. Lead reviewers should ensure that the reviews in which they participate are performed by each ERT according to the relevant review guidelines and consistently across Parties. They should also ensure the quality and objectivity of the thorough and comprehensive technical [examinations] [review] in the reviews and provide for the continuity, comparability and timeliness of the reviews.

40. With the administrative support of the secretariat, lead reviewers shall, for each review:

(a) Ensure that the reviewers have all of the necessary information provided by the secretariat prior to the review;

(b) Monitor the progress of the review;

(c) Coordinate the submission of queries of the ERT to the Party under review and coordinate the inclusion of the answers in the review report;

(d) Provide technical advice to the members of the ERT, if needed;

(e) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with these guidelines;

(f) [Ensure that the ERT gives priority to the areas that had changed since the previous submissions and issues raised in previous review reports.]

41. Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA as part of the annual report referred to in paragraph 37 above, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines.

V. Ad hoc review experts

42. Ad hoc review experts shall be selected by the secretariat from those nominated by Parties or, exceptionally and only when the required expertise for the task is not available among them, from those nominated by relevant intergovernmental organizations belonging to the UNFCCC roster of experts for specific reviews. They shall perform individual review tasks in accordance with the duties set out in their nomination.

43. Review experts shall, as necessary, perform desk review tasks in their home countries and participate in in-country visits and centralized reviews.

VI. Role of the secretariat

44. The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including the preparation of a schedule for the review, the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.

45. The secretariat shall develop review tools and materials and templates for review reports under the guidance of the lead reviewers.

46. The secretariat shall coordinate, together with the lead reviewers, the communication during the review between the ERT concerned and the Party under review and shall maintain a record of communications between ERTs and Parties.

47. The secretariat, together with the lead reviewers, shall compile and edit the final review reports.

48. The secretariat shall facilitate annual meetings of the lead reviewers for GHG inventories, BRs and NCs. It shall summarize information on issues raised in the reviews to

facilitate the work of lead reviewers in fulfilling their task to ensure consistency in the reviews across Parties.

49. The secretariat shall design and implement training activities for review experts, including lead reviewers, and the subsequent assessment of the experts' qualifications, under the guidance of the SBSTA (see paragraph 26 above).

VII. Guidance provided by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

50. The SBSTA shall provide general guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs, and to the ERTs on the expert review process. The reports mentioned in paragraphs 37 and 41 above are intended to provide the SBSTA with inputs for elaborating such guidance.

F. Reporting and publication

51. The ERTs shall, under their collective responsibility, produce review reports. The review of the same information (see paragraph 4 above) [[shall][could] be reflected in one report [only]] [shall be reflected in each individual review report for the GHG inventory, BR, and NC, respectively]. The following review reports should be produced for each Annex I Party:

(a) For the review of GHG inventories, a final report on the review of the GHG inventory, in accordance with part I and part II of these guidelines;

(b) For the review of BRs, a technical report on the review of the BR, in accordance with part I and part III of these guidelines;

(c) For the review of NCs, a report on the review of the NC, in accordance with part I and part IV of these guidelines.

52. The review reports for each Annex I Party shall follow a format and outline comparable to that set out in [paragraph 53 below] [the appendices I–III to these guidelines] and shall include the specific elements described in parts II–IV of these guidelines.

53. All review reports prepared by ERTs shall include the following elements:

(a) An introduction and a summary;

(b) A description of the technical review of each of the elements reviewed according to the relevant sections on the scope of the review detailed in parts II–IV of these guidelines, including:

(i) A description of any potential issues identified [in accordance with paras. XX, 61, 76 and 77 below];

(ii) Any suggestions provided by the ERT to resolve the potential issues;

(iii) An assessment of any efforts made by the Annex I Party under review to address any potential issues identified by the ERT during the current review or during previous reviews that have not been addressed;

(iv) The sources of information used in the formulation of the final report.

54. Following their completion, all review reports shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with a written comment on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.

PART II: REVIEW OF ANNUAL INVENTORIES

Placeholder for guidelines for the review of greenhouse gas inventories

PART III: REVIEW OF BIENNIAL REPORTS

There are two options for part III – option A and option B below

Option A for part III

A. Purpose of the review

55. The technical review of BRs is the first step of the international assessment and review (IAR) process. The overall objectives of the IAR process are to review the progress made by developed country Parties in achieving emission reductions and to assess the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties, as well as to assess emissions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets under the SBI, taking into account national circumstances, in a rigorous, robust and transparent manner, with a view to promoting comparability and building confidence. In addition, the IAR process aims at assessing the implementation of methodological and reporting requirements.

56. The purposes of the technical review of BRs from Annex I Parties are the following:

(a) To provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the parts of BRs that are not otherwise covered in the annual GHG inventory review;

(b) Taking into account paragraph 56(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties” adopted by the COP;⁹

(c) To promote consistency of the information contained in BRs submitted by Annex I Parties;

(d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party.

(f) [To examine the Party’s progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.]

B. General procedures

57. Each Annex I Party’s BR will be reviewed. A Party’s BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

58. Prior to the review, as part of its preparation, the ERT shall conduct a desk review of the BR of the Annex I Party under review. The ERT, through the secretariat, shall notify the Party concerned of any questions the team has regarding the information provided in the BR and of any focal areas for the review.

59. The output of the technical review will be a technical review report, building on existing reporting standards and including an examination of the Party’s progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.

⁹ Decision 2/CP.17, annex I; decision 19/CP.18.

(Placeholder to reflect the composition and competence of the ERT for the BR review to cope with the requirement contained in decision 2/CP.17.) (Brazil)

C. Scope of the review

60. The individual review shall:

(a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the BR, in accordance with the reporting requirements contained in decisions 2/CP.17 and 19/CP.18, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;

(b) Examine the consistency of the BR with the annual GHG inventory and NC but it will not include in-depth examination of the inventory itself;

(c) Undertake a detailed technical examination of only those parts of the BR that are not included in the annual GHG inventory review, [as well as of the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein,] such as the following:

(i) All emissions and removals related to the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;

(ii) Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;

(iii) Progress the Party has made towards the achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;

(iv) The Party's provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties;

(d) In the years in which an NC is submitted at the same time as the BR, serve as part of the review of the NC, where there is an overlap between the content of the BR and that of the NC.

Identification of issues

61. The issues identified during the technical review of individual sections of the BR shall be identified as relating to the following:

(a) Transparency;

(b) Completeness;

(c) Timeliness[.][of implementation;]

(d) [Consistency and accuracy overtime;]

(e) [Comparability.]

[Examination of progress]

62. [The ERTs shall make an examination of the Parties' progress in achieving their economy-wide emission reduction targets.]

D. Timing

63. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the [timeliness of its] BR submission [by the due date], it should inform the secretariat thereof by the due date of the submission[.], in order to facilitate the arrangements of the review process and to make the delay of the submission of the report public.][If the BR is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.]]

64. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

65. If additional information is requested during the review week, the Annex I Party should make every reasonable effort to provide the information within two weeks after the review week.

66. The ERT for the review of the BR of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft technical review report following the format detailed in paragraph 69 below [and in appendix II to these guidelines], to be finalized within eight weeks after the review week.

67. The draft technical review report of each BR shall be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks¹⁰ from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

68. The ERT shall produce the final version of the BR technical review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. [[The Party could provide a written comment on the final technical review report and if provided, the secretariat shall include the comment in a separate section of the final technical review report.] [Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the comments of the Party should be incorporated within a separate section of the technical review report.]]

(Placeholder: Need to revisit the timing in light of time requirement under IAR with two groups of reviews being conducted (NZ))

E. Reporting

69. The following specific elements shall be included in the technical review report referred to in paragraph 51(b) above:

(a) The results of the technical examination of the elements specified in paragraph 60(c) above, including an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target;

(b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 61 above.

Option B for part III – no need for biennial report review guidelines (EU)

¹⁰ Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

PART IV: REVIEW OF NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

A. Purpose

70. The purposes of the review of NCs from Annex I Parties are the following:

(a) To establish a process for a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a group;

(b) Taking into account paragraph 70(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” adopted by the COP;

(c) To promote consistency of the information contained in the NCs of Annex I Parties;

(d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information under Article 12 of the Convention and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party and Annex I Parties as a whole.

B. General procedures

71. Each Annex I Party’s NC will be reviewed[, where relevant] in conjunction with the review of the BR.

Option 1

72. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled centralized review or an in-country review.

Option 2

72. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to an in-country review.

Option 3

72. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to centralized reviews.

Option 4

72. The reviews of NCs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of BRs.

73. Prior to the review, the ERT shall conduct a desk review of the NC of the Annex I Party under review. The ERT, through the secretariat, shall notify the Party concerned of any questions the team has regarding the NC and of any focal areas for the review.

(Placeholder to reflect the composition and competence of the ERT specific for the NC review under the Convention.) (Brazil)

C. Scope of the review

74. The individual review shall:

(a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the NC in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” adopted by the COP, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;

(b) Check the consistency of information contained in the NC with that contained in the BR and GHG inventory. If the same information is reported elsewhere, the information should be reviewed only once;

(c) Undertake a detailed technical examination of the unique information contained in the NC and the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein, noting that the outline of the NC is included in the list below:

- (i) National circumstances relevant to GHG emissions and removals;
- (ii) GHG inventory information;
- (iii) Policies and measures;
- (iv) Projections and the total effect of policies and measures;
- (v) Vulnerability assessment, climate change impacts and adaptation measures;
- (vi) Financial resources;
- (vii) Transfer of technology;
- (viii) Research and systematic observation;¹¹
- (ix) Education, training and public awareness;
- (x) Giving consideration to national circumstances, identify any potential issues referred to in paragraph 76 below.

75. [The review process should undertake the following six major tasks:

(a) Review key qualitative information and quantitative data contained in NCs;

(b) Review policies and measures described in NCs;

(c) Assess the information contained in NCs regarding the Party’s Convention commitments, and assess the extent to which progress towards achieving the objective of the Convention is being made;

(d) Describe expected progress in the limitation of emissions by sources and the enhancement of removals by sinks of GHGs, on the basis of information contained in the NCs;

(e) Describe expected progress in cooperation on the preparations for adaptation;

(f) [Aggregate data across NCs with respect to inventories, projections, effects of measures and financial transfers, but without adding up the individual national totals for projections and the effects of measures.]

¹¹ Information provided under this heading includes a summary of the information provided on global climate observing systems.

Identification of issues

76. The issues identified during the technical review of individual sections of the NC shall be identified as relating to the following:

- (a) Transparency;
- (b) Completeness;
- (c) Timeliness[.][of implementation;]
- (d) [Consistency and accuracy overtime;]
- (e) [Comparability.]

77. [[Only] when [issues of] [the lack of] transparency prevent[s] the ERT from performing the review this should be considered [a problem][an issue]. Failure to submit any section of the NC shall be considered [a problem][an issue].] (Further discussions needed)

D. Timing

78. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the [timeliness of its] NC submission [by the due date], it should inform the secretariat thereof by the due date of the submission[.], in order to facilitate the arrangements of the review process and to make the delay of the submission of the report public.][If the NC is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.]]

79. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

80. If additional information is requested during the review week, the Annex I Party should make every reasonable effort to provide the information within two weeks after the review week.

81. The ERT for the review of the NC of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft of the review report following the format detailed in paragraph 84 below [and appendix III to these guidelines], to be finalized within eight weeks after the review week.

82. The draft of each NC review report shall be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks¹² from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

83. The ERT shall produce the final version of the NC review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. [The Party could provide a written comment on the final review report and if provided, the secretariat shall include the comment in a separate section of the final review report.] [Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the comments of the Party should be incorporated within a separate section of the final review report.]

E. Reporting

84. The following specific elements shall be included in the report referred to in paragraph 51(c) above:

- (a) A technical review of the elements specified in paragraph 74(c) above;

¹² Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

(b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 74(d) above[76 above].

85. The secretariat shall produce a report on the compilation and synthesis of NCs from Annex I Parties, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP.

Appendix I

Outline for reports on the technical reviews of individual greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

(to be discussed in 2014)

Appendix II

Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual biennial reports from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary

- Convention ratification date
- Date of receipt of BR
- Dates of review and dates of comment period
- Members of the expert review team
- Summary and findings
 - Compliance with guidelines
 - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
 - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)

2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends

3. Quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

4. Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target

- Mitigation actions and their effects
- Emission reductions and removals and the use of units from the market-based mechanisms and land use, land-use change and forestry activities

5. Projection

- Implementation of Convention commitments
- Approaches used
- Review of key data points

6. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support

- Review of key data points
- Implementation of Convention commitments

Appendix III

Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary

- Convention ratification date
- Date of receipt of NC
- Dates of review and dates of comment period
- Members of the expert review team
- National circumstances
- Summary and findings
 - Compliance with guidelines
 - Review of key data points
 - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Approach to adaptation
 - Expected progress in adaptation
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
 - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)

2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends

3. Policies and measures

- Implementation of Convention commitments
- Overview of measures by gas, sector and policy instrument
- Effects of individual measures, where possible
- Policies and measures under consideration or requiring international cooperation

4. Projections

- Implementation of Convention commitments
- Approaches used

- Review of key data points
- Projected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation

5. Expected impacts of climate change

6. Adaptation measures

- Implementation of Convention commitments

7. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support

- Review of key data points
- Implementation of Convention commitments

8. Research and systematic observation

- Implementation of Convention commitments

9. Education, training and public awareness

- Implementation of Convention commitments

Draft guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

Option 2 for the review guidelines: this option envisages three sets of guidelines on reviewing GHG inventories, BRs and NCs

Part I: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

Placeholder, to be developed in 2014

Part II: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

A. [Applicability]

1. Information provided by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) in their greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs) will be subject to reviews pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines.]

B. Objectives and purposes

2. The objectives of the review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP are the following:

(a) To provide, in a facilitative, non-confrontational, open and transparent manner, a thorough, objective and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(b) To promote the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties;

(c) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information contained in GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(d) To ensure that the COP has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.

3. The objectives of the review guidelines are to promote consistency, comparability and transparency in the review of [information reported under the Convention related to NCs].

4. The purposes of the review of NCs from Annex I Parties are the following:
- (a) To establish a process for a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a group;
 - (b) Taking into account paragraph 4(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by Annex I Parties in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” adopted by the COP;
 - (c) To promote consistency of the information contained in the NCs of Annex I Parties;
 - (d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information under Article 12 of the Convention and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;
 - (e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party and Annex I Parties as a whole.

C. Scope of the review

5. The individual review shall:
- (a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the NC in accordance with the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” adopted by the COP, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;
 - (b) Check the consistency of information contained in the NC with that contained in the BR and GHG inventory. If the same information is reported elsewhere, the information should be reviewed only once;
 - (c) Undertake a detailed technical examination of the unique information contained in the NC and the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein, noting that the outline of the NC is included in the list below:
 - (i) National circumstances relevant to GHG emissions and removals;
 - (ii) GHG inventory information;
 - (iii) Policies and measures;
 - (iv) Projections and the total effect of policies and measures;
 - (v) Vulnerability assessment, climate change impacts and adaptation measures;
 - (vi) Financial resources;
 - (vii) Transfer of technology;
 - (viii) Research and systematic observation;¹³
 - (ix) Education, training and public awareness.

¹³ Information provided under this heading includes a summary of the information provided on global climate observing systems.

- (x) Giving consideration to national circumstances, identify any potential issues referred to in para. 7 below.
6. [The review process should undertake the following six major tasks:
- (a) Review key qualitative information and quantitative data contained in NCs;
 - (b) Review policies and measures described in NCs;
 - (c) Assess the information contained in NCs regarding the Party's Convention commitments, and assess the extent to which progress towards achieving the objective of the Convention is being made;
 - (d) Describe expected progress in the limitation of emissions by sources and the enhancement of removals by sinks of GHGs, on the basis of information contained in the NCs;
 - (e) Describe expected progress in cooperation on the preparations for adaptation;
 - (f) [Aggregate data across NCs with respect to inventories, projections, effects of measures and financial transfers, but without adding up the individual national totals for projections and the effects of measures.]

Identification of issues

7. The issues identified during the technical review of individual sections of the NC shall be identified as relating to the following:
- (a) Transparency;
 - (b) Completeness;
 - (c) Timeliness[.][of implementation;]
 - (d) [Consistency and accuracy overtime;]
 - (e) [Comparability.]
8. [[Only] when [issues of] [the lack of] transparency prevent[s] the ERT from performing the review this should be considered [a problem][an issue]. Failure to submit any section of the NC shall be considered [a problem][an issue].] (Further discussions needed)

D. General procedures

9. Each Annex I Party's NC will be reviewed[, where relevant] in conjunction with the review of the BR.
10. The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its BR, NC and GHG inventory shall be reviewed only once, by an expert review team (ERT).
11. The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties and shall identify any potential issues [referred to in para. 7 above]. The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.
12. At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding

identified issues. The ERTs should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to resolve such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review. The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.

13. The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant reporting guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information.

Confidentiality

14. In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the GHG inventory, BR and NC reports, an Annex I Party may indicate whether such information or data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the ERT, shall submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information or data for the assessment of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by Annex I Parties and the conformity with the relevant methodological guidance as agreed by the COP. Any confidential information or data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.

15. An ERT member's obligation not to disclose confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with paragraph 14 above shall continue after the termination of his or her service on the ERT.

E. Expert review teams and institutional arrangements

I. Expert review teams

16. Each submission of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP shall be assigned to a single ERT, which shall be responsible for performing the review thereof in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in these guidelines. The submissions of an Annex I Party shall not be reviewed in two successive reviews by an ERT with identical composition.

17. Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party and identifying any potential issues [referred to in paragraph. 7 above]. The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.

18. The ERTs shall be coordinated by the secretariat and shall be composed of experts selected on an ad hoc basis from the UNFCCC roster of experts and shall include lead reviewers. The ERTs formed to carry out the tasks under the provisions of these guidelines

may vary in size and composition, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review and the different needs for expertise for each review task. Additional experts may be added to a review team where necessary.

19. Participating experts shall serve in their personal capacity.

20. Experts shall be nominated by Parties to the Convention to the UNFCCC roster of experts and, [as appropriate,] by intergovernmental organizations[, in accordance with relevant guidance provided by the COP].

21. Participating experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines. The training to be provided to the experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training¹⁴ and/or any other means needed to ensure the necessary competence of the experts for their participation in ERTs, shall be designed and operationalized by the secretariat in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP.

22. Experts selected for a specific review activity shall neither be nationals of the Party under review nor be nominated or funded by that Party.

23. Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded [according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities]. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.

24. In conducting reviews, the ERTs shall adhere to these guidelines and work on the basis of established and published procedures agreed upon by the COP and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including quality assurance and control and confidentiality provisions.

II. Competences of the expert review teams

25. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of NCs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 5(c) above.

III. Composition of the expert review teams

26. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs to review the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs submitted under the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP in such a way that the collective skills of the ERTs address the areas mentioned in paragraphs 25 above, respectively.

27. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs with a view to achieving a balance between experts from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties in the overall composition of the ERTs, without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 26 above. The secretariat shall make every effort to ensure geographical balance among the experts selected from non-Annex I Parties and among those selected from Annex I Parties.

28. The secretariat shall ensure that in any ERT one co-lead reviewer shall be from an Annex I Party and one from a non-Annex I Party.

¹⁴ The experts that opt not to participate in the training have to undergo a similar assessment successfully to enable them to qualify for participation in ERTs.

29. Without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 25 above, the formation of ERTs should ensure, to the extent possible, that at least one member is fluent in the language of the Party under review.

30. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the composition of ERTs, including the selection of experts for the review teams and the lead reviewers, and on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 26 and 27 above.

IV. Lead reviewers

31. Lead reviewers shall act as co-lead reviewers for the ERTs in accordance with these guidelines.

32. Lead reviewers should ensure that the reviews in which they participate are performed by each ERT according to the relevant review guidelines and consistently across Parties. They should also ensure the quality and objectivity of the thorough and comprehensive technical [examinations] [review] in the reviews and provide for the continuity, comparability and timeliness of the reviews.

33. With the administrative support of the secretariat, lead reviewers shall, for each review:

- (a) Ensure that the reviewers have all of the necessary information provided by the secretariat prior to the review;
- (b) Monitor the progress of the review;
- (c) Coordinate the submission of queries of the ERT to the Party under review and coordinate the inclusion of the answers in the review report;
- (d) Provide technical advice to the members of the ERT, if needed;
- (e) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with these guidelines;
- (f) [Ensure that the ERT gives priority to the areas that had changed since the previous submissions and issues raised in previous review reports.]

34. Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA as part of the annual report referred to in paragraph 30 above, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines.

V. Ad hoc review experts

35. Ad hoc review experts shall be selected by the secretariat from those nominated by Parties or, exceptionally and only when the required expertise for the task is not available among them, from those nominated by relevant intergovernmental organizations belonging to the UNFCCC roster of experts for specific reviews. They shall perform individual review tasks in accordance with the duties set out in their nomination.

36. Review experts shall, as necessary, perform desk review tasks in their home countries and participate in in-country visits and centralized reviews.

VI. Role of the secretariat

37. The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including the preparation of a schedule for the review, the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.
38. The secretariat shall develop review tools and materials and templates for review reports under the guidance of the lead reviewers.
39. The secretariat shall coordinate, together with the lead reviewers, the communication during the review between the ERT concerned and the Party under review and shall maintain a record of communications between ERTs and Parties.
40. The secretariat, together with the lead reviewers, shall compile and edit the final review reports.
41. The secretariat shall facilitate annual meetings of the lead reviewers for GHG inventories, BRs and NCs. It shall summarize information on issues raised in the reviews to facilitate the work of lead reviewers in fulfilling their task to ensure consistency in the reviews across Parties.
42. The secretariat shall design and implement training activities for review experts, including lead reviewers, and the subsequent assessment of the experts' qualifications, under the guidance of the SBSTA (see paragraph 21 above).

VII. Guidance provided by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

43. The SBSTA shall provide general guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs, and to the ERTs on the expert review process. The reports mentioned in paragraphs 30 and 34 above are intended to provide the SBSTA with inputs for elaborating such guidance.

F. Timing and procedures

44. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.
- Option 1 (*paragraph 45*)
45. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a scheduled in-country review by an ERT.
- Option 2 (*paragraph 45*)
46. Each NC submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a centralized review by an ERT. A Party can request an in-country review for its national communication.
- Option 3 (*paragraphs 45 and 46*)
47. The reviews of NCs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of BRs.
48. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 Mt CO₂ eq (excluding LULUCF) in accordance with their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their NCs.

49. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the [timeliness of its] NC submission [by the due date], it should inform the secretariat thereof by the due date of the submission[.], in order to facilitate the arrangements of the review process and to make the delay of the submission of the report public.][If the NC is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.]
50. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of NCs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.
51. If additional information is requested during the review week, the Annex I Party should make every reasonable effort to provide the information within two weeks after the review week.
52. The ERT for the review of the NC of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft of the review report following the format detailed in paragraph 57 below [and appendix I to these guidelines], to be finalized within eight weeks after the review week.
53. The draft of each NC review report shall be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks¹⁵ from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.
54. The ERT shall produce the final version of the NC review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. [The Party could provide a written comment on the final review report and if provided, the secretariat shall include the comment in a separate section of the final review report.] [Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the comments of the Party should be incorporated within a separate section of the final review report.]

G. Reporting and publication

55. The ERTs shall, under their collective responsibility, produce review reports. The review of the same information (see paragraph 10 above) [[shall][could] be reflected in one report [only]] [shall be reflected in each individual review report for the GHG inventory, BR, and NC, respectively]. For the review of NCs, a report on the review of the NC should be produced.
56. The review reports for each Annex I Party shall follow a format and outline comparable to that set out in [paragraph 55 below] [the appendix I to these guidelines] and shall include the specific elements described in these guidelines.
57. All review reports prepared by ERTs shall include the following elements:
- (a) An introduction and a summary;
 - (b) A description of the technical review of each of the elements reviewed according to the relevant sections on the scope of the review detailed in parts II–IV of these guidelines, including:
 - (i) A description of any potential issues identified [in accordance with para. 7 above];
 - (ii) Any suggestions provided by the ERT to resolve the potential issues;

¹⁵ Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

(iii) An assessment of any efforts made by the Annex I Party under review to address any potential issues identified by the ERT during the current review or during previous reviews that have not been addressed;

(iv) The sources of information used in the formulation of the final report.

58. Following their completion, all review reports shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with a written comment on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.

59. The following specific elements shall be included in the report referred to in paragraph 53 above:

(a) A technical review of the elements specified in paragraph 5(c) above;

(b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 7 above.

60. The secretariat shall produce a report on the compilation and synthesis of NCs from Annex I Parties, in accordance with the relevant decisions of the COP.

Appendix I

Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual NCs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary
 - Convention ratification date
 - Date of receipt of NC
 - Dates of review and dates of comment period
 - Members of the expert review team
 - National circumstances
 - Summary and findings
 - Compliance with guidelines
 - Review of key data points
 - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Approach to adaptation
 - Expected progress in adaptation
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
 - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)
2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends
3. Policies and measures
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
 - Overview of measures by gas, sector and policy instrument
 - Effects of individual measures, where possible
 - Policies and measures under consideration or requiring international cooperation
4. Projections
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
 - Approaches used
 - Review of key data points
 - Projected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
5. Expected impacts of climate change
6. Adaptation measures
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
7. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support
 - Review of key data points
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
8. Research and systematic observation
 - Implementation of Convention commitments

9. Education, training and public awareness
 - Implementation of Convention commitments

Part III: UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of BRs from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

A. Applicability

1. Information provided by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) in their greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs) will be subject to reviews pursuant to relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties (COP), in accordance with the provisions of these guidelines.]

B. Objectives and purposes

2. The objectives of the review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP are the following:

(a) To provide, in a facilitative, non-confrontational, open and transparent manner, a thorough, objective and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by individual Annex I Parties and Annex I Parties as a whole;

(b) To promote the provision of consistent, transparent, comparable, accurate and complete information by Annex I Parties;

(c) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information contained in GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to other relevant decisions of the COP and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;

(d) To ensure that the COP has accurate, consistent and relevant information in order to review the implementation of the Convention.

3. The objectives of the review guidelines are to promote consistency, comparability and transparency in the review of [information reported under the Convention related to BRs].

4. The technical review of BRs is the first step of the international assessment and review (IAR) process. The overall objectives of the IAR process are to review the progress made by developed country Parties in achieving emission reductions and to assess the provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties, as well as to assess emissions and removals related to quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets under the SBI, taking into account national circumstances, in a rigorous, robust and transparent manner, with a view to promoting comparability and building confidence. In addition, the IAR process aims at assessing the implementation of methodological and reporting requirements.

5. The purposes of the technical review of BRs from Annex I Parties are the following:

(a) To provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the parts of BRs that are not otherwise covered in the annual GHG inventory review;

(b) Taking into account paragraph 5(a) above, to examine in an objective and transparent manner whether quantitative and qualitative information was submitted by

Annex I Parties in accordance with the “UNFCCC biennial reporting guidelines for developed country Parties” adopted by the COP;¹⁶

- (c) To promote consistency of the information contained in BRs submitted by Annex I Parties;
- (d) To assist Annex I Parties in improving their reporting of information and the implementation of their commitments under the Convention;
- (e) To ensure that the COP has reliable information on the implementation of commitments under the Convention by each Annex I Party.
- (f) [To examine the Party’s progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.]

C. Scope of the review

6. The individual review shall:

- (a) Provide an assessment of the completeness of the BR, in accordance with the reporting requirements contained in decisions 2/CP.17 and 19/CP.18, and an indication of whether it was submitted on time;
- (b) Examine the consistency of the BR with the annual GHG inventory and NC but it will not include in-depth examination of the inventory itself;
- (c) Undertake a detailed technical examination of only those parts of the BR that are not included in the annual GHG inventory review, [as well as of the procedures and methodologies used for the preparation of the information therein,] such as the following:
 - (i) All emissions and removals related to the Party’s quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
 - (ii) Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of the Party’s quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
 - (iii) Progress the Party has made towards the achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;
 - (iv) The Party’s provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support to developing country Parties;
- (d) In the years in which an NC is submitted at the same time as the BR, serve as part of the review of the NC, where there is an overlap between the content of the BR and that of the NC.

Identification of issues

7. The issues identified during the technical review of individual sections of the BR shall be identified as relating to the following:

- (a) Transparency;
- (b) Completeness;
- (c) Timeliness[.][of implementation;]

¹⁶ Decision 2/CP.17, Annex I; Decision 19/CP.18.

- (d) [Consistency and accuracy overtime;]
- (e) [Comparability.]

[Examination of progress]

8. [The ERTs shall make an examination of the Parties' progress in achieving their economy-wide emission reduction targets.]

D. General procedures

9. Each Annex I Party's BR will be reviewed. A Party's BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

10. The same information submitted by an Annex I Party in its BR, NC and GHG inventory shall be reviewed only once, by an expert review team (ERT).

11. Prior to the review, as part of its preparation, the ERT shall conduct a desk review of the BR of the Annex I Party under review. The ERT, through the secretariat, shall notify the Party concerned of any questions the team has regarding the information provided in the BR and of any focal areas for the review.

12. The output of the technical review will be a technical review report, building on existing reporting standards and including an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target.

(Placeholder to reflect the composition and competence of the ERT for the BR review to cope with the requirement contained in decision 2/CP.17.) (Brazil)

13. The ERTs shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of all aspects of the implementation of the Convention by Annex I Parties and shall identify any potential issues [referred to in para. 7 above]. The ERTs shall conduct technical reviews to provide information expeditiously to the COP in accordance with the procedures detailed in these guidelines.

14. At any stage in the review process, the ERTs may put questions to, or request additional or clarifying information from, the Annex I Parties under review regarding identified issues. The ERTs should offer suggestions and advice to those Annex I Parties on how to resolve such issues, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review. The ERTs shall also provide technical advice to the COP or the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), upon request.

15. The Annex I Parties under review should provide the ERTs with access to the information necessary to substantiate and clarify the implementation of their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the relevant reporting guidelines adopted by the COP, and, during in-country visits, should also provide appropriate working facilities. The Parties should make every reasonable effort to respond to all questions and requests of the ERTs for additional clarifying information.

Confidentiality

16. In response to a request from the ERT for additional data or information, or access to data used in the preparation of the GHG inventory, BR and NC reports, an Annex I Party

may indicate whether such information or data are confidential. In such a case, the Party should provide the basis for protecting such information, including any domestic law, and, upon receipt of assurance that the data will be maintained as confidential by the ERT, shall submit the confidential data in accordance with domestic law and in a manner that allows the ERT access to sufficient information or data for the assessment of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention by Annex I Parties and the conformity with the relevant methodological guidance as agreed by the COP. Any confidential information or data submitted by a Party in accordance with this paragraph shall be maintained as confidential by the ERT, in accordance with any decisions on this matter adopted by the COP.

17. An ERT member's obligation not to disclose confidential information and data submitted by a Party in accordance with paragraph 16 above shall continue after the termination of his or her service on the ERT.

E. Expert review teams and institutional arrangements

I. Expert review teams

18. Each submission of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP shall be assigned to a single ERT, which shall be responsible for performing the review thereof in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in these guidelines. The submissions of an Annex I Party shall not be reviewed in two successive reviews by an ERT with identical composition.

19. Each ERT shall provide a thorough and comprehensive technical review of the information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, BRs and NCs and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP and shall, under its collective responsibility, prepare a review report, assessing the implementation of the commitments of the Annex I Party and identifying any potential issues [referred to in paragraph 7 above]. The ERTs shall refrain from making any political judgement.

20. The ERTs shall be coordinated by the secretariat and shall be composed of experts selected on an ad hoc basis from the UNFCCC roster of experts and shall include lead reviewers. The ERTs formed to carry out the tasks under the provisions of these guidelines may vary in size and composition, taking into account the national circumstances of the Party under review and the different needs for expertise for each review task. Additional experts may be added to a review team where necessary.

21. Participating experts shall serve in their personal capacity.

22. Experts shall be nominated by Parties to the Convention to the UNFCCC roster of experts and, [as appropriate,] by intergovernmental organizations[, in accordance with relevant guidance provided by the COP].

23. Participating experts shall have recognized competence in the areas to be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines. The training to be provided to the experts, and the subsequent assessment after the completion of the training¹⁷ and/or any other means needed to ensure the necessary competence of the experts for their participation in ERTs, shall be designed and operationalized by the secretariat in accordance with relevant decisions of the COP.

¹⁷ The experts that opt not to participate in the training have to undergo a similar assessment successfully to enable them to qualify for participation in ERTs.

24. Experts selected for a specific review activity shall neither be nationals of the Party under review nor be nominated or funded by that Party.

25. Participating experts from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and Annex I Parties with economies in transition shall be funded [according to the existing procedures for participation in UNFCCC activities]. Experts from other Annex I Parties shall be funded by their governments.

26. In conducting reviews, the ERTs shall adhere to these guidelines and work on the basis of established and published procedures agreed upon by the COP and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), including quality assurance and control and confidentiality provisions.

II. Competences of the expert review teams

27. The competences required to be a member of an ERT for the technical review of BRs are in the areas referred to in paragraph 6(c) above of these guidelines.

III. Composition of the expert review teams

28. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs to review the GHG inventories, BRs and NCs submitted under the Convention and pursuant to relevant decisions of the COP in such a way that the collective skills of the ERTs address the areas mentioned in paragraph 27 above.

29. The secretariat shall select the members of the ERTs with a view to achieving a balance between experts from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties in the overall composition of the ERTs, without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 28 above. The secretariat shall make every effort to ensure geographical balance among the experts selected from non-Annex I Parties and among those selected from Annex I Parties.

30. The secretariat shall ensure that in any ERT one co-lead reviewer shall be from an Annex I Party and one from a non-Annex I Party.

31. Without compromising the selection criteria referred to in paragraph 27 above, the formation of ERTs should ensure, to the extent possible, that at least one member is fluent in the language of the Party under review.

32. The secretariat shall prepare an annual report to the SBSTA on the composition of ERTs, including the selection of experts for the review teams and the lead reviewers, and on the actions taken to ensure the application of the selection criteria referred to in paragraphs 28 and 29 above.

IV. Lead reviewers

33. Lead reviewers shall act as co-lead reviewers for the ERTs in accordance with these guidelines.

34. Lead reviewers should ensure that the reviews in which they participate are performed by each ERT according to the relevant review guidelines and consistently across Parties. They should also ensure the quality and objectivity of the thorough and comprehensive technical [examinations] [review] in the reviews and provide for the continuity, comparability and timeliness of the reviews.

35. With the administrative support of the secretariat, lead reviewers shall, for each review:

- (a) Ensure that the reviewers have all of the necessary information provided by the secretariat prior to the review;
- (b) Monitor the progress of the review;
- (c) Coordinate the submission of queries of the ERT to the Party under review and coordinate the inclusion of the answers in the review report;
- (d) Provide technical advice to the members of the ERT, if needed;
- (e) Ensure that the review is performed and the review report is prepared in accordance with these guidelines;
- (f) [Ensure that the ERT gives priority to the areas that had changed since the previous submissions and issues raised in previous review reports.]

36. Lead reviewers shall also collectively prepare an annual report to the SBSTA as part of the annual report referred to in paragraph 32 above, containing suggestions on how to improve the quality, efficiency and consistency of the reviews in the light of paragraph 2 above of these guidelines.

V. Ad hoc review experts

37. Ad hoc review experts shall be selected by the secretariat from those nominated by Parties or, exceptionally and only when the required expertise for the task is not available among them, from those nominated by relevant intergovernmental organizations belonging to the UNFCCC roster of experts for specific reviews. They shall perform individual review tasks in accordance with the duties set out in their nomination.

38. Review experts shall, as necessary, perform desk review tasks in their home countries and participate in in-country visits and centralized reviews.

VI. Role of the secretariat

39. The secretariat shall organize the reviews, including the preparation of a schedule for the review, the coordination of the practical arrangements concerning the review and the provision of all relevant reported information to the ERT concerned.

40. The secretariat shall develop review tools and materials and templates for review reports under the guidance of the lead reviewers.

41. The secretariat shall coordinate, together with the lead reviewers, the communication during the review between the ERT concerned and the Party under review and shall maintain a record of communications between ERTs and Parties.

42. The secretariat, together with the lead reviewers, shall compile and edit the final review reports.

43. The secretariat shall facilitate annual meetings of the lead reviewers for GHG inventories, BRs and NCs. It shall summarize information on issues raised in the reviews to facilitate the work of lead reviewers in fulfilling their task to ensure consistency in the reviews across Parties.

44. The secretariat shall design and implement training activities for review experts, including lead reviewers, and the subsequent assessment of the experts' qualifications, under the guidance of the SBSTA (see paragraph 23 above).

VII. Guidance provided by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

45. The SBSTA shall provide general guidance to the secretariat on the selection of experts and the coordination of the ERTs, and to the ERTs on the expert review process. The reports mentioned in paragraphs 32 and 36 above are intended to provide the SBSTA with inputs for elaborating such guidance.

F. Timing and procedures

46. Each BR submitted under the Convention by an Annex I Party shall be subject to a review by an ERT, in accordance with these guidelines.

47. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs within 15 months of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

48. A Party's BR shall be reviewed in conjunction with its NC in the years in which both the BR and the NC are submitted.

Option 1 (paragraph 49)

49. Each BR is subject to a centralized review.

Option 2 (paragraph 49)

49. Each BR is subject to an in-country review.

Option 3 (paragraphs 49 and 50)

50. The reviews of BRs shall be split into two groups. In the years when the NCs are submitted in conjunction with the BRs, one group will undergo centralized reviews and the other group will undergo in-country reviews in conjunction with the review of NCs. In the years in which the BR is submitted alone, the review of BRs should be conducted as a centralized review. In addition, each Annex I Party shall be subject to one in-country review by an ERT, which is to occur in the years in which the BR and NC are submitted in conjunction.

51. Annex I Parties with total GHG emissions of less than 50 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂ eq) (excluding land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF)) according to their most recent GHG inventory submission, with the exception of Parties included in Annex II to the Convention, may choose to undergo a centralized review for their BRs.

52. [If an Annex I Party expects difficulties with the [timeliness of its] BR submission [by the due date], it should inform the secretariat thereof by the due date of the submission[.], in order to facilitate the arrangements of the review process and to make the delay of the submission of the report public.][If the BR is not submitted within six weeks after the due date, the delay shall be brought to the attention of the COP and made public.]]

53. The ERTs shall make every effort to complete the individual review of BRs within [15 months] of the due date of their submission for each Annex I Party.

54. If additional information is requested during the review week, the Annex I Party should make every reasonable effort to provide the information within two weeks after the review week.

55. The ERT for the review of the BR of each Annex I Party shall, under its collective responsibility, produce a draft technical review report following the format detailed in paragraph 59 below [and in appendix II to these guidelines], to be finalized within eight weeks after the review week.

56. The draft technical review report of each BR shall be sent to the Annex I Party subject to the review for comment. The Party concerned shall be given four weeks¹⁸ from its receipt of the draft report to provide comments thereon.

57. The ERT shall produce the final version of the BR technical review report, taking into account the comments of the Annex I Party within four weeks of receipt of the comments. [[The Party could provide a written comment on the final technical review report and if provided, the secretariat shall include the comment in a separate section of the final technical review report.] [Should the Party and the ERT be unable to agree on the treatment of a comment, the comments of the Party should be incorporated within a separate section of the technical review report.]]

(Placeholder: Need to revisit the timing in light of time requirement under IAR with two groups of reviews being conducted (NZ))

G. Reporting and publication

58. The ERTs shall, under their collective responsibility, produce review reports. The review of the same information (see paragraph 4 above) [[shall][could] be reflected in one report [only]] [shall be reflected in each individual review report for the GHG inventory, BR, and NC, respectively]. For the review of BRs, a technical report on the review of the BR should be produced.

59. The review reports for each Annex I Party shall follow a format and outline comparable to that set out in [paragraph 59 below] [appendix II to these guidelines] and shall include the specific elements described in these guidelines.

60. All review reports prepared by ERTs shall include the following elements:

- (a) An introduction and a summary;
- (b) A description of the technical review of each of the elements reviewed according to the relevant sections on the scope of the review detailed in parts II–IV of these guidelines, including:
 - (c) A description of any potential issues identified [in accordance with para. 7 above];
 - (d) Any suggestions provided by the ERT to resolve the potential issues;
 - (e) An assessment of any efforts made by the Annex I Party under review to address any potential issues identified by the ERT during the current review or during previous reviews that have not been addressed;
 - (f) The sources of information used in the formulation of the final report.

61. Following their completion, all review reports shall be published and forwarded by the secretariat, together with a written comment on the final review report made by the Party under review, to the Party concerned, the COP and the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate, following these guidelines.

62. The following specific elements shall be included in the technical review report referred to in paragraph 57 above:

¹⁸ Four weeks, or 20 working days if the Party has a public holiday occurring within the four-week time frame.

- (a) The results of the technical examination of the elements specified in paragraph 6(c) above, including an examination of the Party's progress in achieving its economy-wide emission reduction target;
- (b) An identification of issues in accordance with paragraph 7 above.

Appendix II

Outline for reports on technical reviews of individual biennial reports from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (JPN)

1. Introduction and summary
 - Convention ratification date
 - Date of receipt of BR
 - Dates of review and dates of comment period
 - Members of the expert review team
 - Summary and findings
 - Compliance with guidelines
 - Approach to greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
 - Expected progress in greenhouse gas mitigation
 - Summary of comments offered by the Party (when not reflected in the text)
 2. Information on greenhouse gas emissions and trends
 3. Quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
 4. Progress in achievement of quantified economy-wide emission reduction target
 - Mitigation actions and their effects
 - Emission reductions and removals and the use of units from the market-based mechanisms and land use, land-use change and forestry activities
 5. Projection
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
 - Approaches used
 - Review of key data points
 6. Provision of financial, technological and capacity-building support
 - Review of key data points
 - Implementation of Convention commitments
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