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## Subsidiary Body for Implementation

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**Reporting from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention**

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

### **Progress report on the work of the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention: report on the regional training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment**

**Note by the secretariat**

#### *Summary*

The Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, with the assistance of the secretariat, conducted in 2015 three regional training workshops on vulnerability and adaptation assessment for Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties): for the Asia-Pacific and the Eastern European States the workshop was held in Vientiane, Lao People's Democratic Republic, from 29 June to 3 July; for the Latin American and Caribbean States in Asunción, Paraguay, from 27 to 31 July; and for the African States in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 28 September to 2 October. The aim of the workshops was to enhance the capacity of national experts from non-Annex I Parties to prepare their vulnerability and adaptation assessments. This report outlines the proceedings of the workshops and includes a summary of the discussions.

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## I. Introduction

### A. Mandate

1. The Conference of the Parties (COP), by decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 1, decided to continue the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (CGE) for a period of five years, from 2014 to 2018, with the objective of improving the process of, and preparation of, national communications and biennial update reports from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties). The COP also decided that the CGE, in fulfilling its mandate, shall function in accordance with the revised terms of reference contained in the annex to the same decision.

2. As per the terms of reference referred to in paragraph 1 above, the CGE at its first meeting in 2014 developed a work programme for 2014–2018.<sup>1</sup> The CGE, under its workplan for 2014, agreed to revise the training materials for preparing a vulnerability and adaptation assessment, which are to be included in national communications from non-Annex I Parties. The training materials were updated with a view to taking into account the contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability*,<sup>2</sup> including its summary for policymakers, and to include new and additional information.

3. The CGE, among other activities, agreed to conduct three regional training workshops for non-Annex I Parties on the preparation of a vulnerability and adaptation assessment: for the Asia-Pacific States and the Eastern European States; for the Latin American and Caribbean States; and for the African States. The aim of these workshops was to enhance the capacity of national experts from non-Annex I Parties to prepare a vulnerability and adaptation assessment.

4. The COP requested the CGE to submit a progress report annually on its work to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) for consideration at the sessions of the SBI held in conjunction with the sessions of the COP.<sup>3</sup>

### B. Scope of the note

5. This document, prepared as a part of the progress report on the work of the CGE, is a report on the regional training workshops for non-Annex I Parties on the preparation of a vulnerability and adaptation assessment.

6. A summary of the proceedings can be found in chapter III below. A summary of the discussions that took place at the different sessions of the workshops is provided in chapter IV below.

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<sup>1</sup> FCCC/SBI/2014/17, annex I.

<sup>2</sup> Available at <<http://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/>>.

<sup>3</sup> Decision 19/CP.19, paragraph 7.

### **C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation**

7. The SBI, having considered this report, may wish to provide further guidance to the CGE, as appropriate, on the technical assistance provided to non-Annex I Parties with the goal of enabling them to fulfil their reporting obligations under the Convention.

## **II. Objectives of the workshops**

8. The main objectives of the regional training workshops were, inter alia, to enhance the capacity of national experts in using the “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention” (hereinafter referred to as the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties to facilitate the preparation of their country’s vulnerability and adaptation assessment; and to serve as a platform for the exchange of views, lessons learned and experiences relating to the preparation of vulnerability and adaptation assessments.

## **III. Summary of the proceedings**

9. The three regional training workshops, following similar agendas,<sup>4</sup> were designed to cover all of the core elements of preparing vulnerability and adaptation assessments, using an interactive training approach, including presentations and mock exercises, which were further supplemented by interactive question and answer sessions.

10. The regional training workshop for the Asia-Pacific States and the Eastern European States was hosted by the Government of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, in Vientiane, from 29 June to 3 July 2015. The workshop was attended by 31 national experts representing 21 non-Annex I Parties. Mr. Phouvong Luangxaysana, Director General, Department of Disaster Management and Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, delivered the opening remarks.

11. The regional training workshop for the Latin American and Caribbean States was hosted by the Government of Paraguay, in Asunción, from 27 to 31 July 2015. The workshop was attended by 45 national experts representing 23 non-Annex I Parties. Mr. Carlos Pierre Vacca, Director of Climate Change, Secretariat of the Environment, Paraguay, delivered the keynote statement and Ms. Cecilia Ugaz, Resident Coordinator of the United Nations in Paraguay, delivered the opening remarks.

12. The regional training workshop for the African States was hosted by the Government of Morocco, in Marrakesh, from 28 September to 2 October 2015. The workshop was attended by 38 national experts representing 35 non-Annex I Parties. Mr. Abdelfetah Sahibi, National Coordinator for the National Communications, delivered the keynote address.

## **IV. Summary of the discussions**

13. The regional training workshops included eight packages of training materials covering:

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<sup>4</sup> The final agendas and lists of participants for the three training workshops are available at [http://unfccc.int/national\\_reports/non-annex\\_i\\_natcom/cge/items/7371.php](http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/cge/items/7371.php).

- (a) Vulnerability and adaptation frameworks;
- (b) Baseline socioeconomic and climate change scenarios;
- (c) The agriculture sector;
- (d) Coastal resources;
- (e) Human health;
- (f) Water resources;
- (g) Integration;
- (h) Communication.

14. Each of the sessions was followed by a question and answer session, as well as breakout group sessions during which exercises were conducted to familiarize participants with the nature of the information to be reported in their national communications and approaches to reporting, consistent with the UNFCCC guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties.

15. The training materials included regional examples.

16. The key elements of the discussions under each of these sessions are summarized below.

## A. Country presentations

17. Representatives of Parties listed in the table below presented brief overviews of information on the vulnerability and adaptation assessment within their countries. The participants also outlined lessons learned, best practices and recommendations for future action. Each country presentation was followed by a question and answer session in which other participants also shared their national experiences.

### List of country presentations

<i>Party</i>	<i>Topic</i>
Brazil	Water resources and national adaptation plan
Cambodia	Climate change scenarios
Costa Rica	Agriculture sector
Liberia	Agriculture sector
Oman	Water resources
Peru	Water resources
Republic of Moldova	Integration and communication
Serbia	Agriculture sector
South Africa	Climate change scenarios
Sri Lanka	Vulnerability and adaptation frameworks
Thailand	Water resources

## **B. Vulnerability and adaptation framework**

18. The participants were introduced to the various terms, definitions and concepts used when conducting a vulnerability and adaptation assessment, as some of the terminology is used differently by different stakeholders. In addition, the participants were informed about the updates included in the training materials since 2012. The participants were also informed about how to identify the various options that can be taken into consideration when undertaking a vulnerability and adaptation assessment.

19. The training emphasized the importance of developing country Parties thinking carefully about what kind of assessment would be most useful to them. This was highlighted as an important aspect when considering top-down versus bottom-up assessment, but also for considerations such as whether low-probability/high-consequence events or more likely outcomes would be emphasized.

## **C. Vulnerability and adaptation scenarios**

### **1. Climate change scenarios**

20. Participants were informed about the updated IPCC AR5 projections, which emphasize the use of a risk-management approach, include more observed and projection data sets, and more fully discuss the trade-offs and options among different methods for developing climate change scenarios.

21. The training addressed observed data sets, what is known about climate change, why scenarios are created, and options for developing scenarios (e.g. the use of general circulation models, regional circulation models, statistical downscaling, bias correction techniques, and tools such as MAGICC/SCENGEN and SimCLIM).

22. The participants were made aware of the various choices available on how to create scenarios, which are now far more numerous than the choices that were available a decade ago, as well as of the subtle but important differences between these choices.

### **2. Baseline socioeconomic scenarios**

23. The training provided a general overview of the baseline socioeconomic scenarios, focusing on the updates from the IPCC AR5, which include these aspects, comparing the new representative concentration pathways and shared socioeconomic pathways with the previous scenario of the IPCC *Special Report on Emissions Scenarios*. The participants were introduced to the economic perspective when selecting a target socioeconomic scenario based on the concepts of cost of action and cost of inaction.

## **D. Sectoral training sessions**

### **1. Agriculture**

24. The training on the agriculture sector focused on impacts and vulnerability. Specific training was provided on process-based models such as the Decision Support System for Agrotechnology Transfer and general equilibrium models such as the Global Trade Analysis Project Model. Hands-on training was given on the selection of tools according to the analysis. It was highlighted that the models for this sector have the advantage of having fewer data requirements than other methods used, which made the use of such models very suitable in many cases. Participants were provided with a simple model for analysing the barriers and opportunities of starting a simulation in the agriculture sector.

## 2. Coastal resources

25. The goal of this training session was to develop a knowledge base on coastal a vulnerability and adaptation assessment. The participants were trained on how to identify the drivers and potential impacts of climate change on coastal zones; to identify the methodological approaches, tools and data available to assess the impact of climate change on coastal zones; and to identify appropriate adaptation measures.

26. The participants were provided with an overview of the impacts of Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO), El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD). They were informed that the variations in PDO, ENSO and IOD can greatly impact countries'/islands' sea level patterns, seasonal rainfall distribution and tropical cyclone activities. The participants were trained on how to conduct sea level forecasting exercises based on local climate data. This will help them to prepare their own real-time response plan for coastal hazard management.

## 3. Water resources

27. The participants were informed about the vulnerability and adaptation concepts for the water resources sector and the hydrologic implications of climate change on water resources. The training materials covered methods, tools and data requirements to assess vulnerability in water resources, which included physically based hydrological modelling for impact assessment (supply side) and demand analysis modelling (demand side optimization) for resource management. In this context, the Soil and Water Assessment Tool and Water Evaluation and Planning (WEAP) models were introduced. Details of what WEAP can do, when and where it is useful, and its advantages were discussed.

28. Participants carried out a hands-on exercise with WEAP for supply–demand optimization using an example data set on digitizing a river and adding other model components, and ran two scenarios to compare ways of managing the demand. This helped participants to understand how adaptation in the water sector can be tackled with stakeholder participation in the decision-making.

## 4. Human health

29. The segment on training materials on the human health sector covered a number of topics, including: human health impacts from environmental changes; predictive tools for the future for assessing human health vulnerability to climate change, such as the health impact assessment process; methods to determine the current burden of climate-sensitive diseases; adaptation options for malaria; and global projections of health impacts and mapping of climate change and human health.

30. The training materials were updated using *Climate Change, Vulnerability and Health: A Guide to Assessing and Addressing the Health Impacts*<sup>5</sup> by the World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Environmental Health Impact Assessment at Curtin University, which provides a step-by-step process for undertaking a vulnerability and adaptation assessment for health.

## E. Integration and communication

31. The last session of the training workshops focused on reporting requirements under the Convention for national communications from non-Annex I Parties and the ways in which information related to a vulnerability and adaptation assessment could be effectively

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<sup>5</sup> Available at <<http://ehia.curtin.edu.au/local/docs/cc-guideline-10615.pdf>>.

communicated in national communications. The participants were informed about various ways in which information can be sourced from various sectors and integrated in a vulnerability and adaptation assessment. After the presentations by the resource persons, an interactive discussion facilitated the exchange of views among the participants and the sharing of experiences with the resource persons.

### **1. Integration**

32. The training materials on the integration of information highlighted the importance of integration both across and within the sectors in the framework of vulnerability and adaptation assessment. Impacts in one sector can adversely or positively affect another sector. Cross-sectoral and multisectoral integration is important in linking related sectors. The presentation also focused on recognizing the relevance of options for integration both across and within the sectors in the framework of vulnerability and adaptation assessment. It included methods and examples of ranking vulnerabilities and adaptation options across the sectors, which is an essential element in prioritizing adaptation options.

33. Participants discussed the importance of national communications and the need for establishing sustainable institutional arrangements, which they saw as a necessary element in integrating climate change to facilitate sustainable development.

### **2. Communication**

34. The training materials on communication provided an overview of relevant provisions under the Convention on reporting information on vulnerability and adaptation from non-Annex I Parties as a part of their national communications. The segment also addressed general guidance, with some examples, on how to effectively present the results of the vulnerability and adaptation assessment, taking into account the target audience of the report.

## **V. Feedback and recommendations**

35. Participants acknowledged the usefulness of the training, especially with regard to the updated materials. The linkages between the integrated resource management and the potential impact of climate change were underscored by participants. They requested further training on sector-specific areas and in particular on the use of impact assessment models and planning tools, which could greatly assist them in the formulation of policies and other adaptation strategies in their countries.

36. Requests were also made for the translation of the training materials, including the modelling exercises, from English into other official languages of the United Nations. A number of the participants acknowledged that the availability of data is still an issue. Suggestions were also made for further in-depth materials on other sectors currently not covered, such as forestry, biodiversity, tourism, transport and infrastructure.

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