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Reference: MTP/TRANSP./
Submissions/forest
reference levels

Page 1 of: 4

MESSAGE TO PARTIES

Information on the submission of proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels by developing country Parties, on a voluntary basis, when implementing the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, and on the technical assessments of these submitted reference levels in 2023 and 2024

Parties will recall that the COP, in its decision 12/CP.17,¹ paragraph 13, invited developing country Parties, on a voluntary basis and when deemed appropriate, to submit proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, in accordance with decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71(b), when undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of that same decision. Parties will also recall that the COP, in its decision 13/CP.19, adopted the guidelines and procedures for the technical assessment of submissions from Parties on proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels. In accordance with decision 13/CP.19, paragraphs 1–2, each submission shall be subject to a technical assessment and such proposed reference levels may be technically assessed in the context of results-based payments.

The secretariat, in response to the mandate set out in decision 13/CP.19, is pleased to inform Parties of the proposed **time frames for the technical assessments** to be conducted in **2023** and **2024**.² This information is being provided to facilitate the planning for submission of reference levels by developing country Parties and to ensure the efficient and effective organization of the technical assessment sessions by the secretariat in accordance with the procedures and time frames established in the annex of that decision.

Distribution: To Parties and observer States through their national focal points for climate change and diplomatic missions accredited to the Federal Republic of Germany.

¹ All decisions mentioned in this message are available at <https://unfccc.int/topics/land-use/resources/redd-documents>.

² Dates for 2023 and 2024 are indicative and are subject to change.



To that end, and particularly to ensure the successful organization of the technical assessment sessions, the secretariat will be taking several actions, including the following:

1. Organize assessment sessions once a year in Bonn, as mandated by paragraph 10 of the annex to decision 13/CP.19. In accordance with the same paragraph, submissions received no later than 10 weeks before a session will be assessed at that session. Submissions received less than 10 weeks ahead of a session will be scheduled for assessment the following year.
2. Coordinate the technical assessment process.
3. Ensure a balanced representation of LULUCF experts from developing countries and developed countries, whereby each submission shall be assessed by two LULUCF experts selected from the UNFCCC roster of experts, one from a developed country and one from a developing country.

In line with point 1 above, the secretariat would appreciate an early notification from developing country Parties intending to submit their proposed reference levels for a technical assessment. As noted, the secretariat will need to receive submissions **at least 10 weeks** before the start of the assessment session to ensure adequate and effective logistical preparation and organization of the technical assessment (e.g. identifying, inviting and confirming relevant experts). Parties should also note that all relevant information pertaining to the submission needs to be forwarded to the assessment team of LULUCF experts **at least eight weeks** before the start of the assessment session, to allow the participating LULUCF experts sufficient time to prepare for the one-week centralized assessment session in Bonn. The technical assessment process spans approximately **43 weeks**, including interaction time between the assessment team and Party concerned, response time by the Party and time for preparing draft and final reports.

After careful consideration of several factors that have implications for the timing of the technical assessment, such as the timing of all technical review processes being organized under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol in any given year, the timing of UNFCCC negotiation sessions, the availability of LULUCF experts during the year and the need for ongoing fundraising to support the organization of the technical assessment, the secretariat has identified the most feasible dates for the assessment sessions in 2023 and 2024 and the corresponding submission deadlines for these sessions. The detailed steps and time frames of the technical assessment sessions in 2023 and 2024 are presented in the annex to this notification. Submissions of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels should be sent by the UNFCCC national focal point to the secretariat at secretariat@unfccc.int, with a copy to TARL@unfccc.int.

In addition to the guidance contained in decision 13/CP.19 on the technical assessment process, the COP invited Parties to nominate technical experts with the relevant qualifications to the UNFCCC roster of experts. Each Party should also confirm to the secretariat the names of their active LULUCF experts on the roster and which experts will be able to participate in the technical assessment of the submitted reference levels. Parties are invited to refer to the roster at <http://www4.unfccc.int/sites/roe/Pages/Home.aspx> to nominate new experts and/or update the information on those already nominated. The secretariat would also like to recall paragraphs 7–8 of decision 13/CP.19, in which the COP noted the budgetary implications related to the activities undertaken by the secretariat in paragraphs 1–3 and the annex of the same decision. The secretariat is



Page 3

only able to undertake these activities subject to the availability of supplementary funding and would like to take this opportunity to request Parties in a position to do so to support the technical assessment process, which is a critical step in developing country Parties' implementation of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ that is also fully embodied in Article 5 of the Paris Agreement.

The secretariat requests the kind cooperation of Parties in meeting the time frames of the planned technical assessment sessions for 2023 and 2024 with a view to facilitating the organization and coordination of the technical assessments of submitted forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels and ensuring successful outcomes. In addition, the secretariat would like to take this opportunity to express its gratitude to Parties for their continuing support for this important process.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed by)

Simon Stiell



Annex
Indicative time frame of the technical assessment of reference levels in 2023 and 2024

	2023 technical assessment	2024 technical assessment
Early notice to the secretariat	31 October 2022	30 October 2023
Reference level submission (no later than 10 weeks before the assessment session)	9 January 2023	8 January 2024
Information forwarded to assessment team (8 weeks before the assessment session)	23 January 2023	22 January 2024
Assessment session in Bonn (1 week)	20–24 March 2023	18–22 March 2024
Additional clarifications sought from the Party (up to 1 week)	27–31 March 2023	25–29 March 2024
Party to provide clarifications (8 weeks), including submission of a modified submission, if appropriate.	29 May 2023	27 May 2024
Assessment team to consider modified reference level (4 weeks) (applicable when a Party modifies its submitted reference level)	29 May to 26 June 2023	27 May to 24 June 2024
Assessment team to prepare draft report	24 July 2023	22 July 2024
Party to respond to draft report (12 weeks)	20 October 2023	18 October 2024
Assessment team to prepare final report within 4 weeks following Party's response	20 November 2023	18 November 2024
Final report published and technical assessment completed	11 December 2023	9 December 2024

For planning purposes, dates indicate the maximum time frames required as per decision 13/CP.19 and its annex. Dates relating to the preparation of the draft report are based on the assumption that a modified submission will be made.