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Page: 1 of 6

MESSAGE TO PARTIES

Multilateral assessment at SBI 49 in Katowice, Poland

I wish to draw the attention of all Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to the next working group session (WGS) of multilateral assessment (MA), which will be convened during the forty-ninth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018. The WGS of MA, which initiates the third round of the international assessment and review (IAR) process, will be conducted for 14 developed country Parties (see the annex to this notification for the complete listing).¹

The MA process is a part of the IAR process for developed country Parties that was established through decisions 1/CP.16 and 2/CP.17. The IAR process comprises two steps:

- 1) A technical review of the national reports of each developed country Party;
- 2) MA of the progress towards achieving the economy-wide emission reduction targets by developed country Parties in a working group session under the SBI.

During the SBI MA WGS, Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Parties) will be multilaterally assessed, with the participation of all Parties to the Convention. This process is key for shaping the future transparency framework under the Paris Agreement. As the MA process involves an important preparatory stage, including a question and answer period between Parties being multilaterally assessed and all other participating Parties, actions and inputs from all Parties are needed in the next few months in the lead up to the MA session at SBI 49. For this purpose, the annex to this message contains a list of activities and inputs called for in accordance with decision 2/CP.17 in order to prepare for the MA session in Katowice.

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 Further information on the organization and the exact dates of this session will be posted on the MA web page at <https://unfccc.int/node/15807>.



The annex also contains details of the MA WGS under the SBI 49 in Katowice, including information on the format and duration of the session, as well as other organizational issues. This follows the established practice and procedures from the previous WGS of MA, which were endorsed by Parties and the Chair of the SBI.

It is hoped that this information will assist Parties in their preparation for, and participation in, the MA process at SBI 49 in Katowice. Questions or requests for clarification can be addressed to the secretariat MA-portal@unfccc.int.

The MA process constitutes an important step in the evolution of the UNFCCC process. The secretariat is committed to supporting Parties as they implement their decisions to strengthen transparency under the Convention.

Yours faithfully,

(signed by)

Ovais Sarmad
Deputy Executive Secretary



Annex

Overview of the issues related to the preparation and conduct of multilateral assessment in Katowice

I. Background for the multilateral assessment under the international assessment and review

1. The International assessment and review (IAR) process is a process under the Subsidiary Body of Implementation (SBI) that aims to promote the comparability of efforts among all developed countries with regard to their quantified economy-wide emission limitation and reduction targets. Modalities and procedures of IAR are elaborated in annex II to decision 2/CP.17, document FCCC/CP/2011/9/Add.1, pages 36–38.
2. The third round of the IAR process (2018–2019) comprises:
 - a. A **technical review** of the third biennial reports;
 - b. A **multilateral assessment** (MA) of the progress made by developed country Parties in implementation towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to their quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets.
3. The MA entails:
 - a. A **question and answer** (Q&A) period before the MA working group session (WGS) under the SBI – any Party may submit written questions to the Parties being assessed in advance of the MA, and the Parties being assessed endeavour to respond to those questions within two months;
 - b. An **assessment** of the Parties concerned with the participation of all Parties during the MA WGS under the SBI.
4. The **outputs** of the MA process for each Party included in Annex I to the Convention (Annex I Party) form the basis of a Party record prepared by the secretariat including:
 - a. Technical review reports;
 - b. The summary report of the SBI;
 - c. The compilation of Q&As;
 - d. Any observations by the Party under review that are submitted within 2 months of the MA WGS.
5. Based on the Party record, the SBI will forward **conclusions** to relevant bodies under the Convention as appropriate.

II. Parties under multilateral assessment in Katowice

6. Following the technical reviews of the third biennial reports of Annex I Parties, the secretariat will publish the respective review reports of the 14 Annex I Parties listed in the table below by latest 1 September 2018. The MA WGS for these Parties is tentatively scheduled to be conducted at SBI 49 in Katowice. The exact dates of this WGS will be posted on the MA web page as the planning for the Conference develops.



Table 1
List of Parties under multilateral assessment

Name of Party	Name of Party
1. European Union	8. Latvia
2. Canada	9. Liechtenstein
3. Czech Republic	10. Lithuania
4. Estonia	11. Monaco
5. France	12. Netherlands
6. Germany	13. Norway
7. Hungary	14. Slovakia

III. The question and answer period before multilateral assessment session in Katowice

7. The MA will be conducted on the basis of the biennial report, the national greenhouse gas inventory (including the national inventory report), and their respective review reports, as well as supplementary information on the achievement of the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target provided by the Annex I Party.

8. Prior to the WGS of the SBI in Katowice, in accordance with decision 2/CP.17, there will be a question and answer period during which any Party can submit questions to the Parties being multilaterally assessed during the WGS. The question and answer period is approximately **three months** prior to the WGS, during which the first month is allocated for questions, and the last two months are allocated for the Parties undergoing multilateral assessment to answer questions. To facilitate the question and answer period, the secretariat developed a web portal, the MA Portal, which can be accessed by nominated users.

9. To enable Parties to access the MA Portal, log-in credentials provided by the secretariat are required. Since the launch of the web portal in 2014, the secretariat has been in contact with all Parties (via National Focal Points) requesting that they nominate relevant persons to access the portal on their behalf.

10. For the WGS of MA at SBI 49 in Katowice, the timeline for the question and answer period is outlined in table 2 below. The working language for the question and answer period is English. Questions or requests for clarification and nominations can be addressed to the secretariat using the email address: MA-portal@unfccc.int.



Table 2
Timeline of the question and answer period

Timeline	Action	Note
1 to 30 Sept. 2018	<p>Any Party can submit questions to the Parties being assessed</p> <p>Questions should fall into the following categories (annex II to decision 2/CP.17):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• All emissions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;• Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to the attainment of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;• Progress towards the achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target	<p>Questions can be submitted by nominated users via the MA Portal https://process.unfccc.int/sites/ma, and can be raised on the basis of the background documents (see para. 8 above) accessible through the individual Party pages at https://unfccc.int/node/15807</p>
1 Oct. to 30 Nov. 2018	<p>The Parties being assessed will endeavor to answer the questions from all Parties that were submitted by 30 Sept. 2018. Parties are not obligated, but may wish to answer questions submitted after this date</p>	<p>Answers can be provided via the MA Portal https://process.unfccc.int/sites/ma</p>
by 4 Dec. 2018	<p>The secretariat will compile these questions and answers by Party and upload them to the individual Party page</p>	<p>The compiled questions and answers will be made available on the individual Party at https://unfccc.int/node/15807</p>

IV. Format, duration and other organizational issues of the multilateral assessment working group session

11. **Format and duration:** The WGS of MA will be conducted for each of the 14 Parties¹. Following the practice and procedures of the previous WGS of the MA, flexibility is envisaged in terms of the time allocated to each Party. In this regard, questions submitted in advance of the MA WGS could be used as an indication for planning purposes. Table 3 below shows three scenarios for the format and duration of the MA WGS for each Party being multilaterally assessed.

12. For the **oral presentation** by Parties during the WGS, Parties can focus on the highlights of their climate change policy development and implementation, share success practices and innovative approaches and the experience and lessons learned while participating in the IAR process.

13. **Representation of Parties:** Based on the anticipated nature of the audience and potential questions, it is expected that a representative with competences in policy issues will speak on behalf of the Party being assessed during WGS with support provided by representatives with competencies in technical issues, as needed.

¹ Due to possible time constraints during the session, some Parties may need to be rescheduled to participate in the WGS of MA during SBI 50 in Bonn.



Table 3
Format and duration of the working group session

Scenario	Duration	Format
Average	One hour for each Party	10 minutes of oral presentation by the Party, followed by 50 minutes in-session questions and answers
Minimum	15 minutes for a single Party if it receives few questions or no questions in advance of the working group session	5 minutes of oral presentation by the Party, followed by 10 minutes in-session questions and answers
Maximum	Two hours for a single Party if it receives a large number of questions in advance of the working group session	20 minutes of oral presentation by the Party, followed by 100 minutes in-session questions and answers

14. **Seating arrangements:** It is planned that the representative of the Party being assessed will speak from his or her seat on the floor, to ensure proximity to the technical experts that might be needed for advice and to facilitate a swift transition to the next Party.

15. **Other organizational issues:** The WGS of MA will be conducted during SBI 49. In order to give Parties a chance to summarize their main conclusions and positions from the MA process, a brief statement by Parties who wish to do so is allowed at the end of the WGS.

16. The WGS will be chaired by the Chair of the SBI, or his designate from the Bureau of the SBI. The **WGS, conducted in English, will be broadcasted and open to observers and the media.**
