

CGE TRAINING MATERIALS - MITIGATION ASSESSMENT

MODULE B

Mitigation in the Context of Reporting



Module Objectives and Expectations

- 1. Objective:** Provide participants with an introduction to climate change mitigation in the context of reporting, including:
 - National communications (NC), BURs and mitigation
 - Experiences and lessons learned with mitigation
 - Recent developments related to mitigation
- 2. Expectations:** Participants will have a broad but sound understanding of key issues related to climate change mitigation, in particular, on reporting requirements for non-Annex I Parties and recent developments in the area of mitigation.



Module Outline

1. National communications, BURs and the mitigation components
2. Experiences and lessons learned with mitigation components
3. Recent developments related to mitigation



MODULE B1

National Communications and the Mitigation Components



The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)

- Overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle climate change
- Recognizes that climate is affected by anthropogenic emissions of Greenhouse Gas Inventories (GHGs)
- Seeks “stabilization of GHG concentrations...at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system” (Article 2)
- Parties to the Convention:
 - Are expected to “take precautionary measures to anticipate, prevent or minimize the causes of climate change and mitigate its adverse effects” (Article 3)
 - Have “common but differentiated responsibilities” based on their national circumstances
 - Gather and share information on GHG emissions, national policies and best practices
 - Launch national strategies for addressing GHG emissions and adapting to expected impacts, including the provision of financial and technological support to developing countries
 - Cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change.



UNFCCC Parties

- **Annex I:** members of OECD in 1992 + economies in transition (EIT).
- **Annex II:** OECD members of Annex I. Required to provide financial resources to enable developing countries to undertake emissions reduction activities and to help them adapt to adverse effects of climate change. Must also "take all practicable steps" to promote development and transfer of environmentally friendly technologies to EITs and developing countries.
- **Non-Annex I (NAI):** mostly developing countries:
 - Certain countries recognized as being especially vulnerable to climate change, including countries with low-lying coastal areas and those prone to desertification and drought. Others are more vulnerable to the potential economic impacts of climate change responses (e.g. fossil fuel exporting nations)
 - The 48 least developed countries (LDCs) are given special consideration under the Convention on account of their limited capacity to respond to climate change and adapt to its adverse effects.



National Communications under the UNFCCC

Article 4

Para.1 All Parties, taking into account their common but differentiated responsibilities and their specific national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, shall:

- (a) Develop, periodically update, publish and make available ... national inventories of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, using comparable methodologies to be agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties

Article 12

Para 1. ...” each Party shall communicate ...”

- (a) A national inventory of anthropogenic emissions ...
- (b) (b) A general description of steps taken or envisaged by the Party to implement the Convention; and
- (c) (c) Any other information that the Party considers relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention...

Para.4 Developing country Parties may, on a voluntary basis, propose projects for financing...along with, if possible, an estimate of all incremental costs, of the reductions of emissions and increments of removals of greenhouse gases, as well as an estimate of the consequent benefits.

Para. 5 Each [NAI] Party... shall make its initial communication within three years of the entry into force of the Convention for that Party, or of the availability of financial resources.... Parties that are least developed countries may make their initial communication at their discretion..

Para. 7..... ...the Conference of the Parties shall arrange for the provision to developing country Parties of technical and financial support, on request, in compiling and communicating information under this Article....



National Communications: Structure and Timetable

- Core elements for both Annex I and Non-Annex I:
 - Information on emissions and removals of GHGs (reporting requirements differ)
 - Details of activities a Party has undertaken to implement the Convention
- Usually contain information on:
 - National circumstances
 - Vulnerability assessment
 - Financial resources and transfer of technology
 - Education, training, and public awareness
- Timetable for submission:
 - Annex I: Required to submit information on national inventories annually, and to submit national communications periodically (according to dates set by COP)
 - Non-Annex I: Should be submitted every four years (no fixed dates), dependent on resources for assistance; LDCs optional.



National Circumstances for NAI Parties

- NAI Parties should provide a description of national and regional development priorities, objectives and circumstances, on the basis of which they will address climate change and its adverse impacts.
 - This may include information on geography, climate and economy which may affect their ability to deal with mitigating and adapting to climate change, as well as information regarding specific needs and concerns arising from the adverse effects of climate change and/or the impact of the implementation of response measures.
- NAI Parties are encouraged to provide a summary of relevant information regarding their national circumstances, as appropriate, in tabular form.
- NAI Parties may provide a description of existing institutional arrangements relevant to the preparation of their national communications on a continuous basis.



Guidelines for Preparation of National Communications

- The guidelines for the preparation of NCs from NAI Parties contained in annex to decision 17/CP.8 were adopted in 2002. The objectives of the guidelines are:
 - To assist NAI Parties in meeting their reporting requirements;
 - To encourage the presentation of information in a consistent, transparent, comparable and flexible manner;
 - To facilitate the presentation of information on support required for the preparation of national communications;
 - To serve as policy guidance to the operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention, for the timely provision of financial support needed by NAI Parties in order to fulfill their reporting requirement;
 - To ensure that the COP has sufficient information to carry out its responsibility for assessing the implementation of the Convention by Parties.



Benefits of the National Communications Process

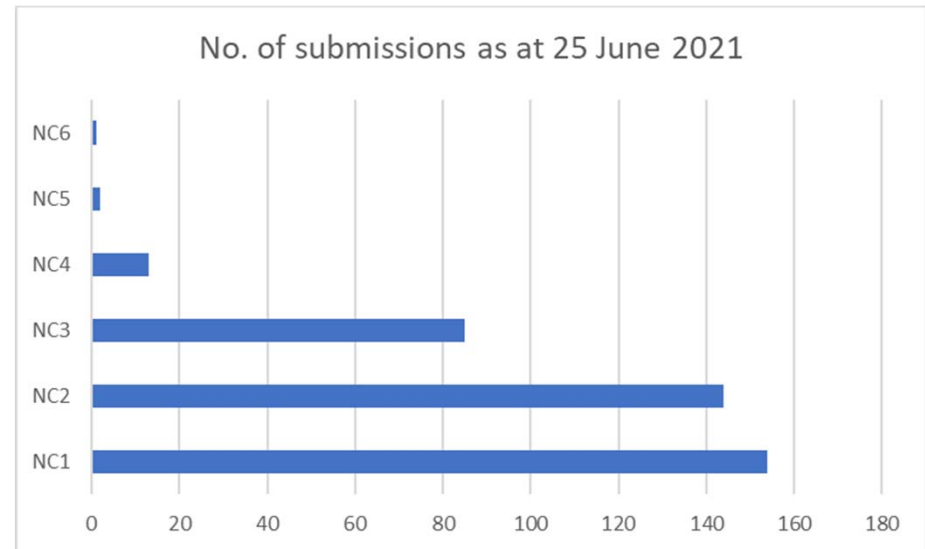
- Provides information to the COP
- Serves as a tool for planning/ decision-making at national level
- Provides an opportunity to address climate change in a systematic manner by providing opportunities to explore possibilities for taking climate change considerations into account, to the extent feasible, in relevant social, economic and environmental policies and actions
- Provides information to donors about potential adaptation and mitigation projects
- Provides information (e.g. best practices, technology needs, etc.) to other stakeholders (possibilities to explore different networks and forms of cooperation)
- Builds capacity of national experts.



Status of National Communications

- National communications have become an important tool for bringing climate change concerns to the attention of policy makers at the national level.
- In the next phase of the Convention in which the focus is increasingly on implementation, national communications will become an important strategic tool to help countries align their interests and priorities to the overall goals of the Convention.

Number of NCs submitted by NAI Parties as at 25 June 2021



Mitigation in National Communications

- National Communications provide the opportunity to examine and present mitigation actions and scenarios to varying levels of depth, depending on national circumstances and interests.
- *We will explore examples of mitigation assessments, methods and reporting in subsequent modules.*



MODULE B2

Experience and Lessons Learned with Mitigation Components



Designing the Mitigation Assessment

- It is crucial to have a broad understanding of the context for the assessment: economic, social and political circumstances. This provides a basis for scoping the work and establishing appropriate detail required for assessment.
- Parties should consider how mitigation assessments can provide practical inputs to other national, regional and sectoral planning processes to enhance ownership of mitigation actions.
- Analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of past mitigation work helps ensure that future national communications (NCs) are more relevant.
- Having focused discussions with key stakeholders beforehand can focus assessment and help in identifying most relevant potential mitigation options.

Note: This section is based in part on slides provided by UNDP National Communications Support Programme (NCSP)



Implementing Mitigation Assessments (1)

- Inconsistent methods, definitions, assumptions and data make comparison of results across parties difficult.
- Inconsistent definitions of baselines adds to difficulties in comparing NCs (e.g. whether imminently planned efforts should be considered in the baseline) .
- Most countries are forced to put in significant effort to develop or update baseline analyses, even though the desired focus of their efforts is to assess mitigation options.
- Team continuity is a significant challenge for many Parties, often with new analytical teams being set up and then disbanded from one NC to the next. Reliance on outside contractors to meet NC obligations and poor documentation of data, methods, assumptions and results exacerbates this.



Implementing Mitigation Assessments (2)

- Use of inappropriately complex methods was a major hurdle for many Parties in initial NCs. In later NCs more appropriate methods have generally been adopted, but models remain relatively complex, making it hard for Parties to find suitable experts in country to conduct these assessments.
- NCs require a wide breadth of skills (engineers, economists, modellers, agriculture and forestry experts, inventory experts, etc.) making it challenging to assemble a team with sufficient expertise under limited budgets.
- NCs in most NAI countries are conducted as one-off projects: making it hard for countries to maintain and develop in-country expertise.
- Mitigation teams need to be closely connected to inventory teams. *Baseline* scenarios constructed for mitigation assessments should be built upon *base year* inventories of GHGs.



Implementing Mitigation Assessments (3)

- Data availability can severely hamper the depth and accuracy of assessments in many countries.
- Even relatively simple methods still require large amounts of data, much of which is hard to access or even proprietary.
- Not all data will be available, but gaps can be filled using international sources of data, expert judgment, or comparisons among countries with similar conditions.
- Data generally more readily available for assessing energy sector (vs. forestry, agriculture and land-use sectors). Key source analysis can help Parties decide how to allocate effort among sectors.



Implementing Mitigation Assessments (4)

- Development of baseline and mitigation scenarios do not need to be based on complex modelling, especially in countries with very low emissions and/or few relevant emission sources. Simple analyses have been able to produce credible and useful assessments, so long as the approach, assumptions and data used are appropriate and clearly explained.
- A random “shopping list” of mitigation options does not provide credible results and is not well suited for informing policy making. Options need to be coherently prioritized to make the NC more relevant for decision making.
- Social and economic consideration in mitigation analysis remain as one of the weak areas of NCs.



Communicating Results

- Failure to involve stakeholders during the NC process can lead to negative responses and a failure to take ownership of recommendations.
- Mitigation results are often communicated using very technical language, which prevents them reaching key stakeholders and policy makers. Greater efforts are needed, for instance through targeted communication and public awareness strategies, to influence decision-making processes more effectively.
- Presentation of mitigation measures purely from a GHG emission reduction perspective is often counter-productive. Parties need to demonstrate the benefits of mitigation action in the context of wider development priorities so they can assist government and other institutions in prioritizing development planning.
- Assessments that provide a clear understanding of the technologies needed and potential costs of mitigation measures are more useful for subsequent project proposal development.



MODULE B3

Recent Developments Related to Nationally Appropriate Mitigation
Actions by Developing Countries



NAMAs

- NAMAs refer to any action that reduces emissions in developing countries and is prepared under the umbrella of a national governmental initiative. They can be policies directed at transformational change within an economic sector, or actions across sectors for a broader national focus. NAMAs are supported and enabled by technology, financing, and capacity-building and are aimed at achieving a reduction in emissions relative to 'business as usual' emissions in 2020.



Key decisions

- 2010: COP 16 (Cancún):
 - Developing countries agreed to undertake nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs)
 - Registry to record NAMAs, support available and to facilitate matching of support to NAMAs was set up
 - Established international consultation and analysis for NAI Parties.
 - 2011: COP 17 (Durban):
 - Operationalized registry
 - Adopted the guidelines established, for the preparation of biennial update reports (BURs) and elements of NAMAs to be entered into registry
 - Adopted modalities and procedures established for international consultation and analysis
 - 2012: Negotiations pursuant to the Bali Action Plan concluded at COP 18 in Doha. As a part of the agreed outcome, developing country Parties will take NAMAs in the context of sustainable development.
-



Biennial Update Reports (1)

- Guidelines for preparation of biennial update reports (BURs) from NAI Parties:
 - Adopted guidelines for the preparation of biennial update reports (contained in Annex III of 2/CP.17)
 - COP recognized the important role of the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) in facilitating technical advice and support for the preparation and submission of the first BUR
 - Submission of first BURs by December 2014 (flexibility for least developed countries (LDCs) and small Island developing states (SIDS))
 - Frequency of submission of BURs: every two years (either as a summary of parts of their national communication in the year when national communication is submitted or as a stand-alone update report; flexibility for LDCs and SIDS)
 - Urged NAI Parties to submit their request to the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) for support.
 - Urged and requested the GEF to make support available to NAI Parties for preparation of BURs, as early as possible in 2012 and on the basis of agreed full cost.



Biennial Update Reports (2)

- The guidelines contain seven chapters covering:
 - Objectives
 - Scope
 - National GHG inventory
 - Mitigation actions
 - Finance, technology and capacity-building needs and support received
 - Submission
 - Updating the guidelines.



International Consultation and Analysis (1)

- The ICA will:
 - Be conducted in a manner that is non-intrusive, non-punitive and respectful of national sovereignty;
 - Aim to increase transparency of mitigation actions and their effects.
- Two steps:
 - Technical analysis by a team of technical experts in consultation with the Party, resulting in a summary report
 - Facilitative sharing of views, which will have as input the BURs report and summary report.



International Consultation and Analysis (2)

- Modalities and guidelines for international consultation and analysis (paragraphs 56-62 of 2/CP.17)
- Adopted modalities and guidelines for international consultation and analysis (ICA) (contained in Annex IV of 2/CP.17)
- Decided on the timeframe for initiation of the first rounds of ICA (within six months of submission of first round of BURs by developing country Parties) and the frequency of participation in subsequent rounds of ICA (depending on the submission of subsequent BURs)



Diversity of NAMAs

1. NAMAs at the National Level:

- At the National Level as a formal submission by Parties declaring intent to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions in a manner commensurate with their capacity and in line with their national development goals.
- An open invitation for countries to communicate NAMAs aimed at achieving deviation from business as usual emissions is included in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 50.

2. Individual NAMAs that contribute towards meeting the objectives of NAMAs at the National Level:

At the Individual Action Level, as detailed actions or groups of actions designed to help a country meet their mitigation objectives within the context of national development goals.

These NAMAs are diverse, ranging from project based mitigation actions to sectoral programmes or policies, and exist in either a preparation or implementation stage.



Registry (1)

NAMAs that have been submitted to the NAMA Registry are publicly available in this platform.

<https://unfccc.int/topics/mitigation/workstreams/nationally-appropriate-mitigation-actions#eq-3>

- Invitation to developing countries to submit information on individual NAMAs seeking international support and also information on other individual NAMAs for their recognition
- Invitation to Parties and entities to submit, subsequent to matching of action with support, information on both internationally supported mitigation actions and associated support.



Registry (2)

- Developing countries to submit the following information on NAMAs seeking support:
 - A description of the mitigation action and national implementing entity, including contact information;
 - The expected time frame for the implementation of the mitigation action
 - The estimated full cost of the preparation, estimated full cost and/or incremental cost of implementation of the mitigation action;
 - The amount and type of support (finance, technology and capacity-building) required to prepare and/or implement the mitigation action;
 - The estimated emission reductions;
 - Other indicators of implementation;
 - Other relevant information, including the co-benefits for local sustainable development, if information thereon exists.



Registry (3)

- Matching of actions with support:
 - Registry will facilitate the matching of actions seeking international support with support available by providing and directing information to Parties
 - COP requested the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources:
 - To provide assistance to developing country Parties requesting information on available sources of support in the registry;
 - To provide information on the operation of the registry to the COP annually, in order to inform the discussions on the financial mechanism.



Possible Topics for Discussion

- With multiple contexts for examining and presenting mitigation actions and opportunities: National Communications, Biennial Update Reports, NAMA communication, NAMA registry, low-emission development strategies, and so on,
 - Where are the synergies and overlaps?
 - How best to manage and coordinate these activities within and among national institutions?
 - How do these mitigation assessment venues overlap or relate to CDM and bilateral activities?

