



Date: 5 March 2021
Reference: MA/FSV/KO/VC
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NOTIFICATION

Multilateral assessment and facilitative sharing of views in 2021

I wish to draw the attention of Parties and Observer States to the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement to the arrangements for the next multilateral assessment (MA) working group session and workshop for facilitative sharing of views (FSV), both of which are mandated events organized under the SBI.

At its meeting on 22 June 2020, the COP Bureau decided to postpone SB 52 until 2021 owing to the COVID-19 pandemic. Following that decision and consultations between the SBI Chair and groups of Parties, an MA working group session and FSV workshop were held virtually for 10 and 17 Parties, respectively, during the UNFCCC Climate Dialogues 2020 in accordance with the modalities set out in decision 2/CP.17 and established practice.

In view of the uncertainty as to how the global situation will evolve in the light of COVID-19, at its meeting on 25 February 2021 the COP Bureau requested that the Presiding Officers, with the support of the secretariat, make available a calendar for their upcoming activities, including informal consultations, technical expert meetings and other activities planned in preparation for a successful COP 26 in November 2021. In the light of this decision, the SBI Chair is now developing a plan for relevant events, including possibly holding an MA working group session and FSV workshop virtually in June 2021, in accordance with the modalities established and applied at the Climate Dialogues 2020.

MA and FSV are integral parts of the international assessment and review (IAR) and international consultation and analysis (ICA) processes established by decisions 1/CP.16 and 2/CP.17, respectively. These processes are key to laying a solid foundation for operationalization of the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement, and important for building trust and confidence that countries are progressing towards implementing more ambitious climate action.

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



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The next MA working group session continues the fourth cycle of IAR and will cover 20 Annex I Parties. The FSV workshop will cover 15 non-Annex I Parties.¹

The MA and FSV processes start with a period of written question and answers between the Parties subject to MA and FSV and all other Parties.

Please note that the upcoming question and answer period will run from March to June 2021 in accordance with the modalities set out in decision 2/CP.17 and established practice.

Please see annexes I–II for information on the preparations for the upcoming MA working group session and FSV workshop. The secretariat hopes that this information will assist Parties in preparing for and participating in the processes. Questions and requests for clarification on MA and FSV may be addressed to ma-portal@unfccc.int and ica@unfccc.int, respectively.

The secretariat is aware that the uncertainty surrounding the organization of the sessions has had an impact on the planning arrangements of Parties and their delegations, and is committed to supporting Parties as they implement the decisions to strengthen transparency under the Convention. We trust that we can count on your patience, understanding and support in these challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed by)

Donald Cooper
Director of the Transparency Division

¹ Further information on the next MA working group session and FSV workshop will be made available at <https://unfccc.int/ma> and <https://unfccc.int/fsv>, respectively.



Annex I

Overview of the preparation and conduct of multilateral assessment under international assessment and review

I. Background

1. The aim of the IAR process under the SBI is to promote comparability of Annex I Parties' efforts with regard to their quantified economy-wide emission limitation and reduction targets for 2020. The modalities and procedures for IAR are contained in annex II to decision 2/CP.17.
2. The fourth cycle of IAR (2020–2021) comprises:
 - (a) Submission of fourth biennial reports (BRs) by Annex I Parties;
 - (b) Technical review of the BR4s;
 - (c) MA of Annex I Parties' progress towards their 2020 targets.
3. MA takes into account the Party's BR and the respective technical review report, the national GHG inventory and any supplementary information on the Party's achievement of its 2020 target. There are three stages in the MA process:
 - (a) A three-month written question and answer period before the working group session;
 - (b) An oral presentation followed by oral question and answers at the working group session;
 - (c) Completion of the Party record through preparation of the MA summary report for the Party after the working group session.
4. The outputs of the MA process for each Annex I Party form the basis of the Party record prepared by the secretariat and are available on the Party's MA web page,² including:
 - (a) Technical review report;
 - (b) Compilation of questions and answers;
 - (c) Summary report for the Party on the MA working group session;
 - (d) Any observations by the Party submitted within two months of the MA working group session.
5. On the basis of the Party record, the SBI forwards the conclusions of the MA to relevant bodies under the Convention, as appropriate.

II. Parties being multilaterally assessed as at 8 March 2021

6. The 20 Annex I Parties for which technical review reports on their BR4s have been completed and that will be multilaterally assessed at the upcoming session are Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, New Zealand, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Spain.

III. Question and answer period

7. To prepare for the upcoming MA working group session, background documents for the Parties are available on their individual MA web pages, including:
 - (a) The technical review report on the Party's BR4 and any other relevant review reports on the Party's annual GHG inventory;
 - (b) The Party's BR4 and national GHG inventory, including national inventory report;

² <https://unfccc.int/ma>.



- (c) Supplementary information on the Party's achievement of its 2020 target, including on the role of land use, land-use change and forestry, and use of units from market-based mechanisms.
8. In accordance with the IAR modalities and procedures, there will be a three-month written question and answer period prior to the MA working group session: in the first month any Party may submit questions to the Parties being multilaterally assessed at the upcoming session; and those Parties should provide their answers in the following two months.
9. To facilitate the exchange of questions and answers, Parties are invited to use the MA portal,³ which can be accessed by nominated users using log-in credentials. The secretariat can provide log-in credentials to representatives nominated by the Parties' national focal points.
10. The timeline for the question and answer period for the next MA working group session is outlined in the table below. The working language for the questions and answers is English.

Timeline for the multilateral assessment question and answer period in March–June 2021

Dates	Action	Note
8 March to 5 April 2021	Any Party may submit written questions to the Parties being multilaterally assessed Questions should address one of the following, as per the IAR modalities and procedures: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emissions and removals related to the Party's quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;• Assumptions, conditions and methodologies related to attainment of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target;• Progress towards achievement of its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target	Questions may be submitted by nominated users via the MA portal, and can be raised on the basis of the background documents on the individual Party MA web pages
6 April to 1 June 2021	Parties being assessed should answer all questions that were submitted by 5 April 2021. Parties may wish to answer questions submitted after that date but are not obligated to do so	Parties may provide their responses via the MA portal
By 3 June 2021	The secretariat will compile the questions and answers for each Party	The compiled questions and answers will be made available on the individual Party web pages

IV. Format, duration and related organizational issues

11. Further information on format, duration and related organizational matters will be shared once the dates of the MA working group session have been confirmed by the COP Bureau.
12. Questions, requests for clarification and nominations of representatives to use the MA portal may be addressed to ma-portal@unfccc.int.

³ <https://process.unfccc.int/sites/ma>.



Annex II

Overview of the preparation and conduct of facilitative sharing of views under international consultation and analysis

I. Background

1. The aim of the ICA process under the SBI is to increase the transparency of mitigation actions and their effects through technical analysis of non-Annex I Parties' biennial update reports (BURs) by teams of technical experts in consultation with the Parties concerned followed by FSV. The modalities and guidelines for ICA are contained in paragraphs 56–62 of and annex IV to decision 2/CP.17.
2. The main outcome of the technical analysis of BURs is the summary reports thereon.
3. The FSV workshop, to which the BURs and summary reports serve as input, consists of a one- to three-hour session for each Party or group of Parties. The session consists of a brief presentation by the Party or Parties concerned on their BUR(s), followed by oral questions and answers. Other interested Parties may submit written questions in advance.
4. The outputs of the ICA process for each Party include:
 - (a) A final summary report on the technical analysis of its BUR;
 - (b) An FSV record, summarizing the proceedings of the FSV session for the Party.

II. Parties subject to facilitative sharing of views as at 28 February 2021

5. The 15 non-Annex I Parties that have submitted a BUR for which a final technical analysis summary report has been prepared and will be subject to FSV at the next workshop are Afghanistan, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Benin, Botswana, Costa Rica, Kuwait, Lebanon, Maldives, Oman, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Tajikistan and Uganda.

III. Written questions submitted in advance

6. In accordance with decision 2/CP.17, annex IV, paragraph 6, Parties may submit written questions in advance of the FSV workshop via the FSV Portal.⁴ The secretariat will be in contact with all Parties (via nominated users of the FSV portal) to inform them of the steps in this process. The working language for the questions and answers is English and the questions raised should be within the scope of the ICA process.
7. The timeline for the next FSV workshop is outlined in the table below.

⁴ <https://process.unfccc.int/sites/fsv/Pages/Home.aspx>.



Timeline for the next workshop for facilitative sharing of views

Dates	Action	Note
April 2021	Interested Parties have one month to submit written questions in advance to the Parties subject to FSV at the workshop	Questions may be submitted by nominated users via the dedicated FSV portal
One day prior to the FSV workshop	The secretariat will publish the written questions and answers in the UNFCCC webpage	
Dates of the workshop to be confirmed	Each Party will make a presentation on its BUR, followed by question and answers	

IV. Format, duration and related organizational matters

8. Further information on format, duration and related organizational matters will be shared once the dates of the FSV workshop have been confirmed by the COP Bureau.

9. Questions and requests for clarification may be addressed to ica@unfccc.int. Questions about the FSV portal may be addressed to fsvportal@unfccc.int.
