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Report of the Consultative Group of Experts

Report of the Consultative Group of Experts*

Summary

This report summarizes the progress of the Consultative Group of Experts in implementing its workplan for 2022, including major achievements and lessons learned. It covers the proceedings and outcomes of its two regular meetings in 2022, at which the Group discussed its key areas of work and implementing its workplan for 2022 and work programme for 2022–2026.

* This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



Abbreviations and acronyms

AR	Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
BUR	biennial update report
CBIT	Capacity-building Initiative for Transparency
CGE	Consultative Group of Experts
COP	Conference of the Parties
ETF	enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement
GHG	greenhouse gas
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MRV	measurement, reporting and verification
NC	national communication
NDC	nationally determined contribution
SB	session of the subsidiary bodies
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. COP 24 decided to extend the term of the CGE for eight years, from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2026.¹ COP 26 adopted the revised terms of reference of the CGE.²
2. Furthermore, the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement decided that the CGE shall serve the Paris Agreement, starting from 1 January 2019, to support implementation of the ETF by, inter alia:
 - (a) Facilitating provision of technical advice and support to developing country Parties, as applicable, including for preparing and submitting their biennial transparency reports, and facilitating improved reporting over time;
 - (b) Providing technical advice to the secretariat on the training of technical expert review teams referred to in paragraph 12(c) of decision 18/CMA.1.³

B. Scope

3. This report provides an overview of the implementation by the CGE of its workplan for 2022.⁴ It covers the proceedings and outcomes of the 7th and 8th meetings of the CGE, including key achievements, lessons learned and challenges.
4. In addition, a technical paper on problems, constraints, lessons learned and capacity-building needs in relation to preparing NCs and BURs (see paras. 30–38 below),⁵ has been prepared for consideration by the SBI.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

5. The SBI will be invited to consider this report and to provide guidance, as appropriate, to the CGE.

II. Proceedings of the meetings of the Consultative Group of Experts

A. Seventh meeting

6. The 7th meeting of the CGE was held virtually on 28 February and 1 March 2022. A total of 24 members participated.⁶
7. Alpha Kaloga (Guinea) was elected as Chair of the CGE and Tian Wang (China) as Rapporteur, both for a term of one year.
8. At the meeting, following the adoption of the revised terms of reference, the CGE revised its vision, mission and strategic priorities for 2020–2026⁷ and developed its work

¹ Decision 11/CP.24, para. 1.

² Decision 14/CP.26, annex.

³ Decision 18/CMA.1, para. 15.

⁴ Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/461128>.

⁵ FCCC/SBI/2022/INF.12.

⁶ From Armenia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Cameroon, Chile, China, Cuba, the European Union, Guinea, Haiti, Japan, Maldives, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Türkiye, the United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, the IPCC, UNDP and UNEP.

⁷ Available at https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/CGE%20Vision%20Mission%20Metrics%20Strategic%20priorities_2020-2026.pdf.

programme for 2022–2026⁸ and its workplan for 2022, taking into account existing and emerging needs and gaps of developing countries and feedback received from national experts and practitioners through engagement of the CGE in various forums and events.

B. Eighth meeting

9. The 8th meeting of the CGE was held on 1 and 2 September 2022. A total of 22 members participated.⁹

10. At the meeting, the CGE reviewed the implementation of its workplan for 2022, identified lessons learned and challenges, and considered its 2022 progress report to the SBI, including the technical paper referred to in paragraph 4 above. In the light of decision 14/CP.26, the CGE discussed its rules of procedure with a view to updating them but was unable to conclude its deliberations. It will continue discussion of this matter at its 9th meeting.

III. Progress of the Consultative Group of Experts in implementing its workplan for 2022

A. Regional hands-on training workshops

11. The CGE decided to organize regional hands-on training workshops on tracking progress of NDCs under the ETF. They would cover mitigation assessment, tracking progress of implementation and achievement of NDCs through use of indicators, and support needed and received in relation to tracking progress of NDCs.

12. The main objective of the regional hands-on training workshops is to enhance the technical capacity of experts from developing country Parties in relation to reporting provisions. Specifically, after completing the hands-on training workshop, participants are expected to:

- (a) Better understand existing MRV arrangements and the ETF;
- (b) Have knowledge of the key components of tracking progress in achieving NDCs;
- (c) Better understand the main types of support needed and received in relation to implementing NDCs, the main stakeholders in terms of data ownership and how to compile relevant information;
- (d) Understand the key components of establishing sustainable institutional arrangements for tracking progress in achieving NDCs;
- (e) Have examples of tools and practical experience that can be applied and/or built upon in developing relevant indicators for demonstrating progress in achieving NDCs;
- (f) Be able to discuss gaps and capacity-building needs in relation to establishing and reporting on tracking progress in achieving NDCs.

13. These regional workshops will be organized as follows:

- (a) The Asia-Pacific workshop will be held from 19 to 21 October 2022 in Yerevan, Armenia;
- (b) The Africa workshop will be held from 6 to 8 December 2022 in Bonn;
- (c) The Latin America and the Caribbean workshop will be held from 6 to 8 December 2022 in Bonn.

⁸ See <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/CGE%20work%20programme%202022-2026.pdf>.

⁹ From Algeria, Armenia, Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, China, Cuba, the European Union, Guinea, Japan, Maldives, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovakia, Togo, Türkiye, the United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe, the IPCC and UNDP.

14. A report on these regional workshops will be made available in 2023.

B. Regional webinar series

15. At its 7th meeting, the CGE agreed to organize three regional webinars on the topic “How climate transparency arrangements matter at the national level?”:¹⁰ one in English for the Africa and Asia-Pacific regions each, and one in Spanish for the Latin America and the Caribbean region. They were attended in total by 197 experts. They aimed to:

- (a) Showcase the possible benefits of climate transparency at the national level;
- (b) Discuss useful processes for and approaches to achieving the national benefits of climate transparency;
- (c) Discuss frequent challenges to benefitting on the national level from climate transparency and possible ways of addressing them;
- (d) Provide an interactive platform to showcase and share relevant experience, lessons learned and best practices;

16. Country presentations were made by the Dominican Republic, Malawi and UNDP on behalf of Armenia, with additional presentations made by the International Institute for Environment and Development and the Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement.

17. The target audience was experts and practitioners actively involved in preparing NCs, BURs and national GHG inventories, those involved in planning for the implementation of the ETF, and climate actors not directly involved in MRV/transparency systems who could potentially benefit from climate transparency arrangements at the national level.

18. Following each webinar, participants were invited to share their feedback in an online survey. The CGE received 38 survey responses in total. The webinar content met all of the respondents’ expectations, and 87 per cent of respondents were of the view that the level of interaction between the speakers and the participants was sufficient. Overall, the respondents were satisfied with and appreciated the quality of the webinars, appreciated the content and found the presentations to be clear, precise and very useful. The respondents were also satisfied with the information provided by the CGE on transparency arrangements, the country-specific experience and insights shared by the presenters, relevant links shared via the webinar chat function, and the simple and clear structure of the webinar topics. Suggestions for improving future webinars include sharing presentation slides in advance, including more lessons learned, increasing the duration of the webinars, providing simultaneous interpretation, and making the webinars more interactive.

C. E-learning courses

19. The CGE e-learning courses¹¹ are hosted on the secretariat’s Learning Management System and cover vulnerability and adaptation assessment, mitigation assessment and national GHG inventories. As at 4 August 2022, 133 participants had registered for the courses.

D. Informal forum

20. The CGE agreed to organize its fifth annual informal forum on MRV arrangements and the ETF virtually in December 2022.

21. The CGE uses its informal forum to engage with key stakeholders on its current and future work and brainstorm with participants on key factors in the successful implementation

¹⁰ See <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/consultative-group-of-experts-cge/cge-webinar-series>.

¹¹ Available at <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/transparency-and-reporting/support-for-developing-countries/training#eq-1>.

of the existing MRV arrangements under the Convention and transition to the ETF under the Paris Agreement.

22. The objective of the fifth informal forum of the CGE is to showcase its work and seek feedback from stakeholders on reinforcing this work in a manner that addresses the main challenges, constraints and needs of developing country Parties in relation to transitioning to the ETF. It will also be an opportunity to informally reflect and exchange views on country cases and lessons learned in the areas of capacity-building, collaboration and access to finance.

E. Support for the technical analysis of biennial update reports

1. Composition of teams of technical experts

23. The secretariat reports to the CGE on the composition of the teams of technical experts for the technical analysis of BURs on a semi-annual basis.¹² At its 7th and 8th meetings, the CGE considered the reports prepared by the secretariat.

24. As at June 2022, 22 rounds of technical analysis of BURs under international consultation and analysis had been conducted by 54 teams of technical experts,¹³ taking into consideration advice from the CGE.

2. Training programme for teams of technical experts

25. As requested at COP 19, the CGE training programme for experts conducting technical analysis of BURs was rolled out in April 2015 and converted to an online course¹⁴ in June 2015.¹⁵ Since then, the programme has been offered to experts nominated to the UNFCCC roster of experts by Parties included and not included in Annex I to the Convention alike. The fifteenth round of the training programme started in September 2022, with an assessment period in October 2022.

F. Participation in the technical assessment of submissions on proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels

26. In 2022, a CGE member participated as an observer in the technical assessment of submissions from Parties on their proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels,¹⁶ conducted from 21 to 25 March 2022.

27. At its 8th meeting, the CGE considered this matter, including the report on the technical assessment, and thanked the CGE member for participating in the technical assessment and preparing the report.

G. Stocktake of training materials on mitigation assessment and vulnerability and adaptation assessment

28. At its 5th meeting, the CGE agreed to conduct a light update of its two training materials for reporting on mitigation and adaptation. References to and information on tools, which have undergone some changes since 2015, were updated and references to obsolete models were deleted. The revised materials are available on the UNFCCC website.¹⁷

¹² As per decision 20/CP.19, annex, para. 2.

¹³ Composed in accordance with decision 20/CP.19, annex.

¹⁴ See <https://unfccc.int/process/transparency-and-reporting/reporting-and-review-under-convention/training-review-experts>.

¹⁵ In accordance with decision 20/CP.19, paras. 1 and 4.

¹⁶ As per decision 13/CP.19, annex, para. 9.

¹⁷ <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/consultative-group-of-experts/cge-training-materials/cge-training-materials-for-the-preparation-of-national-communications>.

29. The CGE began updating its training materials in 2022. The updated training materials include relevant parts of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report and will be made available by the end of 2022.

H. Assessment of gaps and needs

30. At its 7th meeting, the CGE agreed to continue assessing existing and emerging constraints and challenges, lessons learned and capacity-building needs of developing country Parties in implementing the existing MRV arrangements and preparing for ETF implementation, and to update the 2021 technical paper on problems, constraints, lessons learned and capacity-building needs in relation to preparing NCs and BURs.¹⁸

31. The updated technical paper¹⁹ took into account information from the 12 NCs and 30 BURs submitted and the 11 summary reports on the technical analysis of BURs published between 1 July 2021 and 30 June 2022. In total, the most recent 151 NCs and 79 BURs from 152 developing country Parties and 38 summary reports on the technical analysis of BURs published by 30 June 2022 were drawn upon.

32. The results of the assessment by the CGE show that developing country Parties continue to face challenges and constraints and have needs in relation to preparing NCs and BURs, with similarities observed across regions. These challenges, needs and constraints predominantly relate to preparing national GHG inventories, reporting on climate change impacts and adaptation, cross-cutting issues, reporting on mitigation actions, and reporting on support needed and received. The presence of different themes among the reported challenges, needs and constraints varies across the regions.

33. With regard to preparing national GHG inventories, the main challenges and needs relate to a lack of quality data, setting up and improving databases for standardizing the data collection process, and a lack of technical capacity and technical backstopping for applying methodologies and tools.

34. The main challenges and needs regarding reporting on climate change impacts and adaptation are related to promoting research to better understand climate change impacts in various sectors (e.g. biodiversity, health, water resources and agriculture); establishing, improving or maintaining technological infrastructure with a view to collecting climate data and monitoring meteorological, atmospheric, oceanographic and terrestrial variables related to climate change; and developing or improving methodologies for ensuring the consistent monitoring of adaptation measures or assessing aspects of vulnerability and adaptation applicable to some or all sectors.

35. As for reporting on mitigation actions, the main challenges and needs concern the lack of access to practical guidance, tools and methods for conducting mitigation assessments and tracking progress in achieving NDCs; lack of technical capacity or skills in relation to using available tools and methods; and lack of a standardized and effective data collection and compilation process.

36. The main challenges and needs with respect to reporting on support needed and received relate to the lack of a coherent or common definition of climate finance or approach to classifying and monitoring, and reporting on, climate finance; strengthening institutional capacity for the continuous provision of high-quality data on support needed and received; and lack of a standardized and effective data collection and compilation process among data provider agencies.

37. With regard to cross-cutting issues relating to transparency at the national level, the key challenges concern enhancing institutional capacity to sustain and improve the MRV and transparency process over time; and enhancement of the data collection process and coordination across sectors and institutions in terms of collecting and sharing data.

38. Parties acknowledged that participating in the international consultation and analysis process has led to improvements in their report preparation process over time, while

¹⁸ FCCC/TP/2021/2.

¹⁹ FCCC/TP/2022/2.

recognizing the need for challenges and needs to be addressed more swiftly in preparation for the transition to the ETF.

I. Other elements of the workplan

1. Communications and outreach

39. At its 7th meeting, the CGE reviewed and noted the communication and outreach plan for 2022.²⁰ The objective of outreach by the CGE is to increase awareness of its role and activities in supporting developing country Parties so that it is able to engage effectively with its target audience.

40. The CGE web pages,²¹ one of the main channels of communication of the CGE, continued to be updated to ensure that the latest information and technical resources are easily accessible. In addition, the CGE continued to utilize other social media platforms such as Facebook and LinkedIn to share information and reach out to its stakeholders.

41. As part of its outreach activities, the CGE organized and will organize the following events:

(a) A side event on the margins of SB 56 entitled “Applying IPCC AR6 in climate change reporting” and one on the margins of COP 27 entitled “Transitioning from MRV to the ETF, support from the CGE and experience from the developing countries”;

(b) An event at the Latin America and Caribbean Climate Week on 20 July 2022 entitled “Meet your CGE members”, which aimed to raise awareness of CGE activities pertaining to the ETF and the related technical materials for developing country Parties.

2. Online platform

42. The CGE continued to enhance its MRV/Transparency helpdesk²² for sharing technical materials, news and announcements.

43. The CGE encourages national experts and other stakeholders involved in implementing MRV arrangements, including preparing NCs and BURs and preparing for ETF implementation, to make use of the MRV/Transparency helpdesk.

J. Collaboration and cooperation

1. Constituted bodies and expert groups

(a) Adaptation Committee

44. The CGE participated in the Adaptation Committee annual dialogue with UNFCCC constituted bodies that focus on adaptation to discuss ways of further strengthening coherence and collaboration in addressing adaptation.

(b) Paris Committee on Capacity-building

45. A CGE member participated in the 3rd meeting of the informal coordination group for capacity-building under the Convention and the Paris Agreement on 7 June 2022, where several avenues for coordination and collaboration among constituted bodies and expert groups were identified, including knowledge-sharing and joint events.

46. The CGE noted that other constituted bodies sharing CGE technical materials would facilitate access to the information and knowledge needed to enhance climate action in developing countries.

²⁰ See <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/bodies/constituted-bodies/consultative-group-of-experts-cge/cge-news-and-announcements>.

²¹ <https://unfccc.int/CGE>.

²² See <https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/transparency/Pages/Home.aspx>.

(c) Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

47. As part of its communication and outreach activities, the CGE continued to provide input to the Nairobi Work Programme eUpdate newsletter in 2022.

(d) Facilitative Working Group of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform

48. A CGE member participated in the 7th meeting of the Facilitative Working Group, held from 1 to 3 June 2022. The CGE noted that it would be willing to engage with the Facilitative Working Group on matters related to indigenous peoples and local communities in national reporting frameworks and the ETF.

(e) Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage

49. The Chair of the CGE was invited to participate in the 15th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts.²³ During the meeting, the Chair presented the work of the CGE on the ETF as it relates to loss and damage with a view to exploring potential collaboration between the two bodies in this regard and agreeing on follow-up steps, as appropriate.

50. The Chair of the CGE presented the CGE work programme for 2022–2026 and workplan for 2022.

51. The CGE agreed to identify areas for collaboration and initiate information-sharing with the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, including in relation to CGE technical products.

2. Intergovernmental organizations and related arrangements**(a) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**

52. At the 7th and 8th meetings of the CGE, the member representing the IPCC provided an update on its work.

53. The CGE noted with appreciation the contribution of the IPCC at its side event held on the margins of SB 56 (see para. 41(a) above). IPCC experts and country representatives discussed the key findings of the contributions of the working groups of the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report to be taken into account in preparing NCs, BURs and biennial transparency reports; countries' experience in translating climate science into action; and how the findings can help in developing climate policies or raising ambition for climate action.

(b) United Nations Development Programme

54. At the 8th meeting, a representative of UNDP provided an update on the progress of the preparation of NCs and BURs by non-Annex I Parties.

(c) United Nations Environment Programme

55. At the 7th and 8th meetings of the CGE, a representative of UNEP provided an update on the CBIT Global Coordination Platform, which builds on current delivery models and leverages long-standing South–South networks and relationships with developing countries.

IV. Conclusions

56. Guided by its vision, mission and strategic objectives, the CGE continued providing technical support and advice to developing country Parties. Its 2022 workplan builds on a number of successful activities implemented in 2021 and has the aim of comprehensively fulfilling the CGE mandate of assisting developing country Parties in improving their

²³ In response to decision 18/CMA.1, para. 15.

capacity to implement existing MRV arrangements as well as to start preparing for the transition to the ETF in a smooth, timely and sustainable manner.

57. The CGE was able to successfully implement the activities outlined in its workplan for 2022, which resulted in the following outputs:

(a) Organizing a series of regional webinars on the topic “How climate transparency arrangements matter at the national level?”, which reached 197 experts;

(b) Continuing to offer the training programme on the technical analysis of BURs to experts on the UNFCCC roster;

(c) Providing six new case stories and videos on sustainable institutional arrangements;

(d) Increasing awareness of CGE activities among stakeholders actively engaged in providing support to developing country Parties in the area of MRV and transparency, including bilateral and multilateral entities, through side events on the margins of SB 56 and COP 27, as well as through its website and interactive online platform;

(e) Undertaking targeted analytical work, such as compiling and summarizing problems, constraints, lessons learned and capacity-building needs related to preparing NCs and BURs.

58. Demand continues to exist to build the technical capacity of developing country Parties to enhance their preparedness to implement the ETF while continuing to implement existing MRV arrangements.

59. The CGE, recognizing the cross-cutting nature of its technical support in the transition to ETF implementation, noted the need to collaborate with other constituted bodies and expert groups under the Convention and the Paris Agreement. The CGE will develop a strategy plan for such collaboration.

60. The CGE noted the need to continuously enhance its outreach efforts and ensure that the technical materials are available and events organized in multiple official United Nations languages.

61. The CGE acknowledged the Parties that showed interest in hosting regional CGE workshops.

62. The CGE extended its appreciation to developing country Parties for actively engaging in its activities in 2022 and providing feedback that will greatly help to align its workplan with the needs and priorities of developing country Parties.

63. The CGE also extended its appreciation to Parties that provided financial support to the CGE for the timely and effective implementation of its workplan.
