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Methodological issues
Reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework

Inputs from Parties on the test version of the enhanced transparency framework reporting tools

Report by the secretariat

Summary

In August 2023, the secretariat made a test version of the enhanced transparency framework reporting tools available to Parties, with updates to the test version released in November 2023 and April 2024. Parties provided inputs on their experience of using the test version, including on integrating the reporting tools into their national inventory systems, along with suggestions for improving the tools. This report presents information on how those inputs have been considered in the final version of the reporting tools.

Abbreviations and acronyms

CMA	Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement
CRT	common reporting table
CTF	common tabular format
ETF	enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement
GHG	greenhouse gas
JSON	JavaScript Object Notation
MPGs	modalities, procedures and guidelines for the transparency framework for action and support referred to in Article 13 of the Paris Agreement

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. CMA 3 requested the secretariat to develop tools for the electronic reporting of the CRTs and CTFs under the ETF, taking into account the operationalization of the flexibility provisions referred to in paragraph 5 of decision 5/CMA.3, and to make available a test version of those ETF reporting tools by June 2023 with a view to the final version being completed by June 2024, subject to the timely availability of sufficient financial resources.[1]

2. CMA 3 invited Parties to submit information on their experience with the test version of the reporting tools, including with integrating the tools into their national inventory arrangements, and inputs on improving the tools by December 2023.[2]

3. CMA 3 requested the secretariat to prepare a report on how the inputs of Parties on the test version of the reporting tools have been considered in the final version of the tools and to present this to the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at the next session following finalization of the reporting tools.[3]

B. Background

4. In response to the mandate referred to in paragraph 1 above, the secretariat made a test version of the ETF reporting tools available to Parties in August 2023, with updates to the test version released in November 2023 and April 2024. These updates included an expanded scope of functionality for the reporting tools.

5. The secretariat released the final version of the reporting tools on 28 June 2024. The release comprised three distinct electronic reporting tools: the ETF GHG inventory reporting tool, for reporting information on anthropogenic emissions and removals of GHGs; the ETF progress reporting tool, for reporting information necessary for tracking progress in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions; and the ETF support reporting tool, for reporting information on support provided, mobilized, needed and received related to finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building. In their inputs, Parties expressed appreciation for the secretariat's efforts in developing the final version of the ETF reporting tools and for releasing the test version in August 2023 and the updates to the test version in November 2023 and April 2024.

C. Scope

6. This report summarizes the inputs received from Parties on the test version of the ETF reporting tools as at May 2024 and how those inputs have been considered in the development of the final version of the tools. The inputs were provided through submissions[4] and emails from Parties, as well as through feedback received during the training workshops on the use of the reporting tools, held between September 2023 and May 2024.

II. Summary of inputs received from Parties

7. A total of 306 inputs were received from 20 Parties and three groups of Parties. Most of the inputs were related to the ETF GHG inventory reporting tool. Figure 1 shows the distribution of inputs across the ETF reporting tools, with the greatest number of inputs received in relation to the ETF GHG inventory reporting tool. Figure 2 presents the number of inputs received by category of issue, where the majority of inputs related to functionality.

[1] Decision 5/CMA.3, para. 8.
[2] Decision 5/CMA.3, para. 10.
[3] Decision 5/CMA.3, para. 13.
[4] Available at https://www4.unfccc.int/sites/submissionsstaging/Pages/Home.aspx (in the search field, type "test version").

Figure 1
Number of inputs received from Parties in relation to the test version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework, by reporting tool

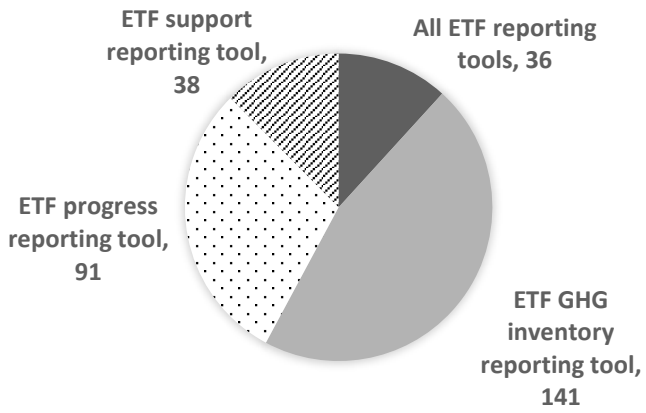
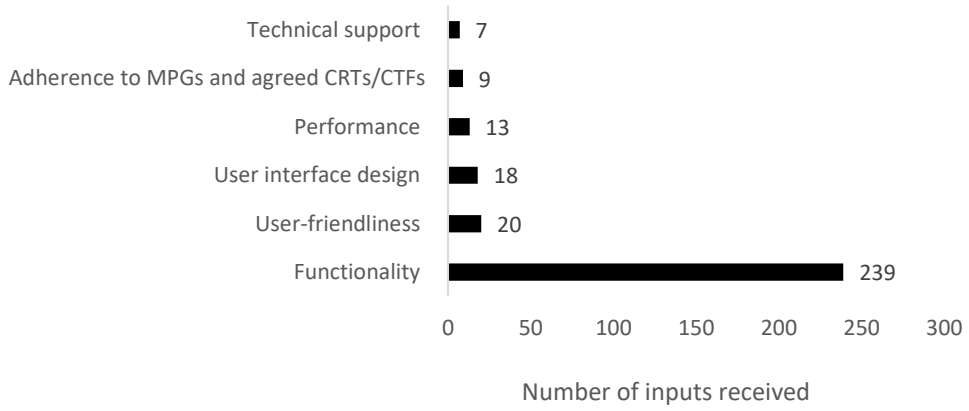
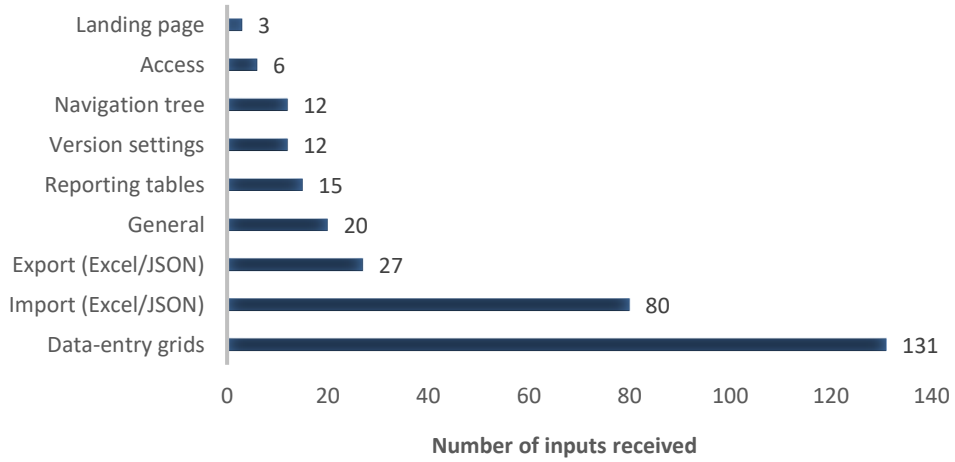


Figure 2
Number of inputs received from Parties in relation to the test version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework, by category of issue



8. Figure 3 presents the number of inputs received across the aspects of the ETF reporting tools.

Figure 3
Number of inputs received from Parties across aspects of the test version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework



Note: "General" refers to technical documentation and support, the user manual and other issues not covered by the other aspects of the reporting tools.

9. The inputs received were categorized according to the action necessary to address the issues and areas of improvement identified in the inputs (figure 4), as follows:

(a) "Implementable", which can be further subcategorized as:

(i) Requiring clarification within the reporting tools and/or user manual;

(ii) Requiring a technical fix for a known or new technical bug;[5]

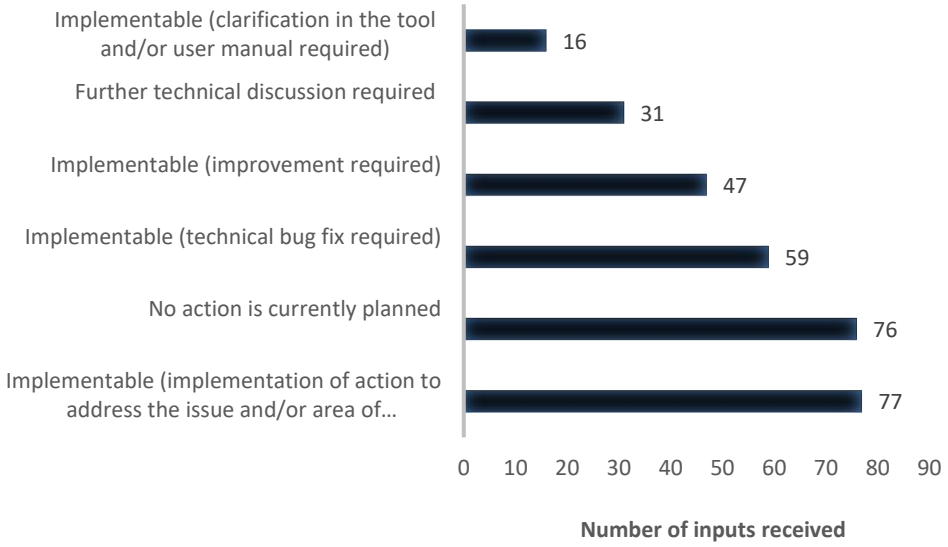
(iii) Requiring improvement[6] of the reporting tools;

(iv) Requiring action that has already been included within the scope of the planned development of the final version of the reporting tools;

(b) "Further technical discussion required": expert consultation is required to assess the technical feasibility of implementing the action;

(c) "No action is currently planned": the issue identified is not within the framework of the development of the reporting tools (such as changes in the navigation tree and data-entry grids that are not consistent with the agreed CRTs and CTFs, or the availability of dropdown options in the exported Excel file) and/or is not reproducible.

Figure 4
Number of inputs received from Parties in relation to the test version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework, by action required to address issues and areas of improvement identified



10. Figure 5 presents the implementation status of the actions required to address the issues and areas of improvement identified in the inputs received. The inputs were categorized according to the implementation status of those actions, as follows:

(a) "Implementation completed": the action required has already been implemented in the final version of the reporting tools;

(b) "No action is currently planned": no action is currently planned as the issue identified was not within the framework of the development of the reporting tools and/or is not reproducible;

(c) "Prospective implementation": the issue identified was related to a known or new technical bug and/or required improvement to the tool and/or expert assessment of the

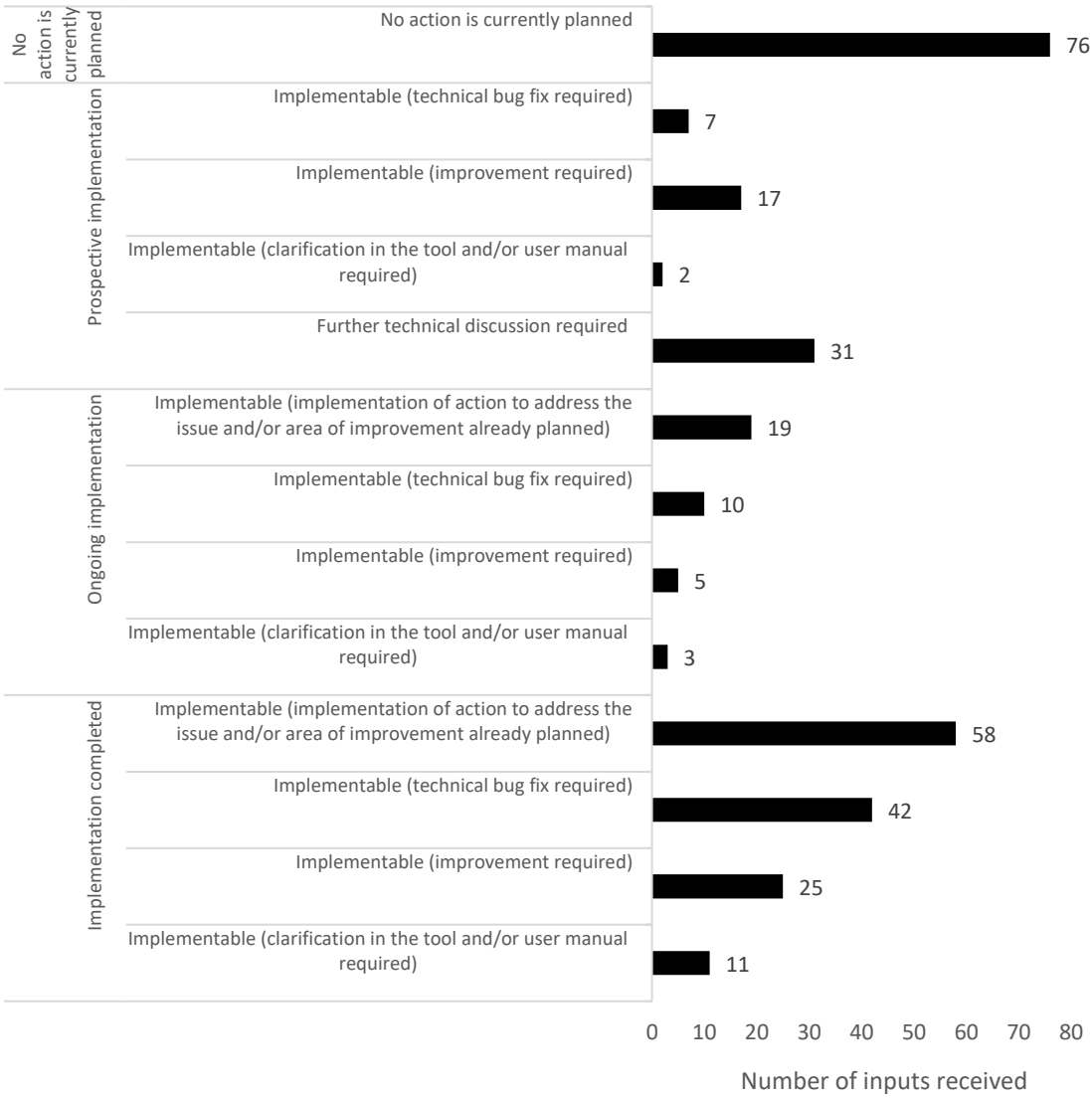
[5] In the context of the ETF reporting tools, a "bug" refers to a flaw or error in the code that causes the tools to behave unexpectedly or incorrectly.

[6] In the context of the ETF reporting tools, an improvement refers to changes or enhancements to be made to the tools to increase their performance, usability, functionality or reliability.

technical feasibility of the required action. Implementation of the action required is subject to the availability of financial resources and technical solutions;

(d) "Ongoing implementation": the action required has already been incorporated into the planned updates for the final version of the reporting tools.

Figure 5
Number of inputs received from Parties in relation to the test version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework, by status of the action required to address the issues and areas of improvement identified



III. Consideration of the inputs in the final version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework

11. The inputs received from Parties focused mainly on their experience of using the test version of the ETF reporting tools released in August 2023 and updated in November 2023 and April 2024, identifying issues and recommending improvements. Their inputs are applicable either to all three ETF reporting tools collectively or to one specific tool. Some Parties also submitted inputs on challenges that developing country Parties may face in integrating the tools into their national inventory arrangements.

12. Taking into consideration resource constraints (relating to time, funding and personnel) and technology solutions required, the secretariat prioritized the actions required

to address the issues and areas of improvement identified in the inputs received. The table below outlines the actions taken to incorporate the key issues and areas for improvement identified in the inputs received into the final version of the ETF reporting tools.

Summary of the main actions taken to incorporate the key issues and areas of improvement identified in the inputs received from Parties into the final version of the reporting tools under the enhanced transparency framework

Key issues and areas of improvement identified	*Actions taken*
Ensure adherence to the MPGs and to the agreed CRTs and CTFs	The version settings, data-entry grids and reporting tables were implemented in line with the reporting guidelines and flexibility provisions set out in the MPGs and the format and structure of the agreed CRTs and CTFs
Ensure consistent performance of the reporting tools	Specific load testing at various levels of efficiency and intensity was conducted to ensure that the tools will perform reliably, especially at peak times, such as when reporting deadlines are approaching
	The reporting tools were optimized to efficiently handle large data exports and imports using Excel and JSON files and to generate reporting tables
	The data synchronization process, including manual saving of imported data, was enhanced to ensure data integrity, prevent data loss and avoid abrupt freezing of the reporting tools during data entry and when exporting and importing data using Excel and JSON files
Improve user interface designs and user-friendliness in the reporting tools to enhance user experience	The user interface designs for version settings, the navigation tree, and the data-entry grids were enhanced to ensure efficient and user-friendly navigation across all components of the reporting tools and facilitate seamless data entry and generation of reporting tables
	Additional explanations and tips were integrated into the user interface designs and user manuals to explain various components and functionalities of the reporting tools and clarify the consequences and effects of selecting various options in the version settings, navigation tree and data-entry grids
	The user interface designs were enhanced to ensure the full visibility of text in the version settings, dropdown menus and custom items in the data-entry grids, incorporate colour codes and graphics for improved visibility of important functions and information, and support keyboard navigation during data entry
	The error messages in data-entry grids and log files for importing and exporting Excel and JSON files were also enhanced to identify and communicate the root causes of errors, providing more effective troubleshooting and more accurate solutions
	The footnotes to the agreed CRTs and CTFs were incorporated into the user interface design of the data-entry grids to enhance understanding of the reporting provisions and facilitate the data-entry process
Enhance and finalize the functionalities of the reporting tools to streamline data entry and the generation of reporting tables	The version settings functionality was fully developed for all agreed CRTs and CTFs, including editing and saving of any selected version at any time
	The functionality to create a copy of the existing version for a given submission year was introduced
	The data-entry grids were improved to ensure a more efficient and user-friendly data-entry process, including features such as automatic population of notation keys, the ability to copy and paste information, simplify data-entry cells and enable the use of negative values and notation keys, as needed
	The functionality for automatic calculation of values was fully developed and implemented to reflect real-time calculations and aggregation of values in the relevant data-entry grids on the basis of the version settings and embedded mathematical formulas
	Data-entry grids were improved to maintain confidentiality within the reporting tools by allowing the use of appropriate notation keys and the overwriting of calculated cells to safeguard data and information related to national security and confidential business activities

Key issues and areas of improvement identified	*Actions taken*
	An alternative solution is being developed to facilitate the creation of data-entry grids and update data efficiently for multiple entries related to policies, measures and actions, and support programmes, projects or activities
	The comment functionality was fully developed, allowing users to add additional information in the form of official comments, user comments, Party comments and documentation boxes within the generated reporting tables. This feature also enables users of the reporting tools to leave comments for all users within the team of national experts involved in reporting under the ETF and make personal notes visible only to individual users
	The export and import functionality was fully developed and introduced to enable the exporting and importing of Excel or JSON files for either selected or all data-entry grids; ensure the accurate display of data entered into the data-entry grids within the exported Excel and JSON files; enable the updating of the data-entry grids on the basis of changes made in the imported Excel and JSON files; and provide clear information on the status of processes related to exporting and importing Excel and JSON files, including any errors that may occur
	The reporting tables functionality was fully developed and introduced to display all data and information, on the basis of the version settings and inputs in the data-entry grids, following the format and structure of the agreed CRTs and CTFs
	The final version of the reporting tools was developed to incorporate a user-management feature that enables timely allocation of the required number of user roles and user access, within the team of national experts involved in reporting under the ETF, to the reporting tools
Ensure the availability of technical support for users	Comprehensive technical documentation was published on the reporting tools, covering the metadata structure and JSON data-exchange standards and providing detailed documents with tables of unique identifiers for the respective inventory sectors. This documentation was updated following the release of the test version of the reporting tools
	A series of question and answer sessions was organized to provide updates on the scope and functionality of the tools and offer a forum for discussing specific technical issues
	A comprehensive user manual was produced to help users understand and efficiently navigate the reporting tools, ensuring broad accessibility and support