Guidelines for the preparation of TEC Briefs

I. General information on briefs

1.   A brief is a short document presenting information in a concise, easy-to-understand and visually attractive manner regarding a specific topic. The objective is usually to attract the attention of a targeted audience and convey information, key messages and/or recommendations in an effective manner.

2.   In the context of the climate change, technology briefs usually address specific technologies or particular areas of technologies, and are used to inform decision makers about existing technologies, their benefits for the climate, barriers, costs and environmental and social benefits to support them in their decisions to consider certain technologies for mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

3.   Policy briefs rather focus on policy guidance for decision/policy-makers as they usually provide information and/or recommendations on measures or actions to be taken to tackle climate change.

4.   The style of delivery of a technology/policy brief is to present technical or policy information as an overview so that the targeted audience learns about the most important aspects of the topic being addressed. Unlike elaborate studies or papers that go in-depth into the subject, technology/policy briefs are designed to present the topic in a light and clear way.

5.   As technology/policy briefs are generally short concise documents, they often provide links or references to more detailed descriptions of aspects contained in the brief.

II. Guidelines for TEC Briefs

A. Scope of TEC Briefs

6.   While the TEC may produce briefs on specific technologies or areas of technologies (technology briefs), it is more likely that the TEC will produce briefs of policy nature (policy briefs), given its mandate and functions in the Technology Mechanism.

7.   Any brief produced by the TEC will be called a "TEC Brief".

8.   TEC Briefs may address technologies for mitigation or adaptation, any aspect of the technology cycle (research and development, demonstration, deployment, diffusion and transfer), and any related tool, approach or process, bearing in mind the wide scope of "technology", i.e. hardware (installations, equipment), software (knowledge and capabilities) and orgware (institutions).

B. Objective and targeted audience

9.   The objective and targeted audience of a TEC Brief should be clearly defined before beginning the drafting of the brief, and drafters should always keep these elements in mind when drafting it. The brief has to be drafted in a way to be easily understood by the audience.

10.   The general audience of TEC Briefs may be very diverse. It can include Parties in general, policy makers in developing and developed countries involved in technology development and transfer and broader climate change policies, intergovernmental

organizations, non-governmental organizations, research and academic institutes, business and industry, civil society, etc.

11.   The objective of a TEC Brief should be stated at the beginning of the brief, in the introduction section. The targeted audience could also be included along the objective.

C.   General features

12.   TEC Briefs should be preferably between two and six pages long.

13.   TEC Briefs may contain a mixture of texts, diagrams, graphs, images, tables, boxes and dot points. It may also contain other elements such as: quotes, references and contact details.

14.   For all TEC Briefs, a short summary should be presented at the beginning of the brief, giving the main points that the TEC wants to convey to the targeted audience. The summary should be presented in a clear manner, for example in a box, and should not take more than one third of a page.

15.   TEC Briefs will be drafted in English, the working language of the TEC, and will be proof-read by an English native speaker before final issuance.

D.   Structure

16.   While keeping some flexibility, the structure of TEC Briefs should be standardized in order to maintain consistency across all TEC Briefs.

17.   The standard structure should be:

  (a)   Title, and optionally, a sub-title;

  (b)   Summary;

  (c)   Introduction / Objective / Why this TEC Brief?;

  (d)   Main text;

  (e)   Concluding section;

  (f)   References;

  (g)   Contact;

  (h)   About the Technology Executive Committee.

18.   While headers in the main text will be specific to the TEC Brief, similar headers should be used across all TEC Briefs for generic sections, as the introduction, concluding section, references, contact and the very last section about the TEC.

19.   Numbering of headers or paragraphs, and footnotes should be avoided.

E.   General drafting principles

1.   Introduction

20.   This is the first part of TEC Briefs, hence it is of great importance to attract the interest of the audience to read the brief.

21.   While the subject will be specific to the TEC Brief, the style and tone of the introduction should be similar and consistent across all TEC briefs in order to establish a "TEC image".

22.   The introduction may be seen as a statement of the context and the issue. The introduction does three things:

        (a)   It grabs the reader's attention (catchy context to bring up the topic);

        (b)   It introduces the topic (what the topic is, and for whom);

        (c)   It says why it is important (why, the rationale).

2.   Main text

23.   There are various ways to structure the body of TEC Briefs. However, a few elements are key:

        (a)   Make sure that the text is structured in a logical manner;

        (b)   Keep the paragraphs short and restricted to a single idea.

24.   The following are drafting tips:

        (a)   More (sub)headings should be used than in technical papers;

        (b)   Drafters should re-read each paragraph and ask themselves: "so what?" If it is not obvious what the paragraph is trying to say, it should be rewritten or deleted;

        (c)   It is important to remember that the audience might not be specialists in the field. The text should be kept simple;

        (d)   Sentences should be direct, simple and short, and active voice should be used rather than passive voice;

        (e)   It is often very good to use a picture or graph to show how it looks like or how it is used.

25.   If applicable, TEC Briefs may provide information on how to use the information globally or in a regional or national context.

3.   Concluding section

26.   This is the last part of TEC Briefs, and it is often the most important one as some readers may only read that part, especially if the brief is long.

27.   Various options are possible for the TEC regarding the type and content of this section, depending on the strength of messages the TEC wants to convey. It could be one of the following or a combination of:

        (a)   Conclusions;

        (b)   Highlights;

        (c)   Lessons learnt;

        (d)   Key messages;

        (e)   Recommendations.

28.   Regardless of the option taken, there should at least one, in order to conclude the TEC Brief and make a final pitch.

29.   The text of this section should be very concise and made of short statements, and should be presented in a clear fashion, e.g. with bullet points, in a box, etc.

4.   References

30.   All TEC Briefs will contain a very short section to list any relevant documents that provide more information on the topic addressed by the briefs.

5.   Contact

31.   All TEC Briefs will contain a very short section giving contact information for the readers to have more information. The following is proposed:

> The Technology Executive Committee may be contacted through the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat (UNFCCC):
> Martin-Luther-King-Straße 8
> 53175 Bonn, Germany
> Telephone +49. 228. 815 10 00
> Telefax +49. 228. 815 19 99
> secretariat@unfccc.int
> ttclear.unfccc.int

6.   About the Technology Executive Committee

32.   All TEC Briefs will contain a very short section consisting of a paragraph describing what the TEC is and its role in the Technology Mechanism. The following is proposed:

> The Technology Executive Committee (TEC) is the policy and guidance component of the Technology Mechanism established by the Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2010 by decision 1/CP.16 to facilitate the implementation of enhanced action on technology development and transfer to support action on mitigation and adaptation. Along with the other component of the Technology Mechanism, the Climate Technology Centre and Network, the TEC is mandated to facilitate the effective implementation of the Technology Mechanism.

F.   Design aspects

33.   In addition to ensuring consistency in the structure and drafting of TEC Briefs, the design and visual aspects are very important to attract potential readers of the briefs. The design may include a TEC logo (or special typography) and a distinctive colour to identify the TEC briefs.

34.   Once the final content of a TEC Brief is agreed upon by the TEC, the brief will be formatted by a graphical designer to ensure an attractive and homogeneous presentation.

G.   Database of briefs produced by other organizations

35.   The technology/policy briefs reviewed in the preparation of these Guidelines will be made available on TT:CLEAR.

36.   Any drafter of TEC Briefs is encouraged to consult several briefs before initiating the preparation of TEC Briefs.

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