

CDM-EB94-AA-A06

Information note

Status of the work on digitization of methodology-specific design document forms

Version 01.0



United Nations
Framework Convention on
Climate Change

1. Procedural background

1. The Executive Board of the clean development mechanism (CDM) (hereinafter referred to as the Board), at its ninety-third meeting, requested the secretariat to provide, for the Board's consideration at its next meeting, an information note on the status of the work related to the development and digitization of methodology-specific design document forms for project activities and programmes of activities, including information on the resources already utilized and further resources required to complete the work.¹
2. The present information note reports on the progress made in the work related to the development and digitization of methodology-specific design document forms for project activities and programmes of activities (PoAs).

2. Purpose

3. This information note aims to apprise the Board of:
 - (a) The progress made in the work related to the development and digitization of methodology-specific design document forms for project activities and PoAs; and
 - (b) Resources already utilized and further resources required to complete the work.

3. Progress of work

3.1. Background of mandates issued by the CMP and the Board and work undertaken by the secretariat

4. In response to the request from the Conference of Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) through decision 3/CMP.9, paragraph 18, the Board, at its seventy-ninth meeting, considered a concept note on simplifying the validation process for project activities and PoAs that are deemed to be automatically additional,² and agreed to initiate the work on methodology-specific project design document (PDD) forms.
5. The Board, at its eighty-first meeting, considered the information note on methodology-specific PDD forms and the possible way forward for their digitization.³ The Board requested the secretariat to work further on three specific methodologies as per option 1 in the note and road-test the concept in consultation with the Methodologies Panel (MP), the Small-Scale Working Group (SSC WG) and practitioners/stakeholders. The Board agreed that, once the compliance of the digitized forms with the requirements of the regulatory documents and respective methodologies was established, the secretariat would make a recommendation to the Board at a future meeting on the approval of the forms.

¹ EB 93 report, paragraph 18(b).

² EB 79 annotated agenda, annex 16.

³ EB 81 annotated agenda, annex 7.

6. The CMP, through decision 4/CMP.10, paragraph 15, further requested the Board to develop and digitize methodology-specific design document forms for project activities and PoAs.
7. As per the work plan approved by the Board at its eighty-second meeting, contained in the “Simplification of methodologies including digitization to reduce transaction costs”,⁴ a digitized methodology-specific tool to generate a PDD or a programme design document (PoA-DD) for one specific methodology was to be presented at the eighty-fifth meeting and another two were to be presented at the eighty-seventh meetings of the Board.
8. As per the request from the Board referred to in paragraph 7 above, the secretariat consulted with the MP at its 66th meeting and SSC WG at its 47th meeting, and addressed the comments received.
9. The Board, at its eighty-fifth meeting, took note of the current status of the work on digitizing methodologies,⁵ and provided the following guidance to the secretariat: (a) ensure that the digitized methodologies comply with all the relevant methodological and regulatory requirements of the CDM; (b) road-test the digitized methodologies as Excel spreadsheets with practitioners and stakeholders and improve their user-friendliness; (c) be mindful of the technical and administrative challenges in maintaining multiple versions of the tool; (d) pursue the process of development of a web-based system; and (e) consider developing modular approaches that could accommodate multiple methodological standards and tools for the broad application of the digitized system.
10. As per the guidance provided at the eighty-fifth meeting of the Board, the secretariat consulted with the SSC WG at its 49th meeting. The SSC WG endorsed the approach and work undertaken by the secretariat in mapping and integrating the methodology requirements into the Word-based templates and the Excel-based digitization tools for the three methodologies (i.e. AMS-II.J., AMS-III.AR. and AMS-I.L.).
11. At its eighty-seventh meeting, the Board considered the concept note⁶ prepared by the secretariat on the methodological digitization tool for automatic generation of PDDs and PoA-DDs and requested the secretariat to continue improving the tool to make it more user-friendly by including self-explanatory guidance and continue road-testing with external stakeholders. The Board further reiterated its request to implement the mandates it provided to the secretariat at its eighty-fifth meeting, including:
 - (a) Use a modular approach so that the methodological digitization tool can accommodate multiple methodological standards and tools for its broad application;
 - (b) Develop the final version of the methodological digitization tool using a web-based system;
 - (c) Road-test the web-based methodological digitization tool.

⁴ EB 82 meeting report, annex 8.

⁵ EB 85 annotated agenda, annex 10.

⁶ EB 87 annotated agenda, annex 9.

12. The CMP, through decision 6/CMP.11, paragraph 14, encouraged the Board to continue the development of digitized project and programme design document forms for clean development mechanism project activities and programmes of activities.
13. At its ninety-second meeting, the Board did not include any product from the digitization in its CDM management plan 2017.
14. The CMP, through decision 3/CMP.12, paragraph 9, encouraged the Board to continue its activities in response to decision 6/CMP.11, paragraph 14.

3.2. Work undertaken by the secretariat since EB 87

15. In respect to the above mandates, the secretariat contracted an external vendor, which is developing two web-based products:
 - (a) Administration interface for developing questionnaires to generate PDD, PoA-DD, CPA-DD and monitoring report forms;
 - (b) External-user interface to generate PDD, PoA-DD, CPA-DD and monitoring report forms from the specific answers/data provided by the user in responding to the questionnaires.

3.2.1. Administration interface for developing questionnaires to generate PDD, PoA-DD, CPA-DD and monitoring report forms

16. This interface, accessible only to secretariat staff members, will allow:
 - (a) Existing CDM methodologies to be translated into a series of online questionnaires, including mathematical formulas to implement methodology equations. It will also allow them to define the logic to navigate questions, as well as apply default values and rules reflecting CDM requirements. These dynamic questionnaires will be editable by the secretariat without recourse to Information and communication team (ICT) experts, allowing the secretariat to reflect in a timely manner any changes to CDM regulations approved by the Board;
 - (b) Validation of data and calculations to be built into the dynamic questionnaires, which will improve the quality of the resulting PDD, PoA-DD or CPA-DD;
 - (c) CDM templates to be set up, which will be automatically populated from user inputs (i.e. responses to the questionnaires). For standardized baselines, the product also includes a work flow containing the templates of email communications to be sent to the stakeholders during administration of the work flow.
17. The system being developed will ensure that all the relevant methodological and regulatory requirements of the CDM are met. It therefore acts as a quality gate at the initial stage of the project cycle (at the step of development of the PDD, PoA-DD or CPA-DD) to ensure compliance with the CDM rules and enhance predictability.

3.2.2. External user interface to generate PDD, PoA-DD, CPA-DD and monitoring report forms

18. This external interface, accessible to CDM stakeholders (e.g. project participants, Designated National Authorities), will allow:
- (a) Data entered in response to the web-based questionnaires prepared by secretariat staff to be captured;
 - (b) Other information to be captured, including through uploading of required or supporting documents (e.g. annexes, figures, location maps);
 - (c) Design documents (i.e. PDD, PoA-DD, CPA-DD, proposed standardized baseline, monitoring plan form) to be created, and, for standardized baselines, the work flow to interact with the DNAs and other stakeholders.

4. Status of systems development and incurred costs

19. The above two products have been developed with a completion rate of about 75 per cent. The system, once completely developed, will be subjected to a series of user tests, first by internal stakeholders (secretariat) and later by selected (volunteering) external stakeholders. It is expected that the internal testing will be completed by the end of August 2017.

5. Resources utilized and required

20. USD 320,000 have been committed to cover the entire programming of the systems by an external vendor selected through a competitive process, and payment for the information technology development was completed in October 2016 for its delivery by August 2017. Once the system becomes operational, an initial maintenance period of two years with the vendor would incur a cost of USD 70,000 annum, which would decline afterwards. In addition to the above USD 140,000 have been committed to Information and communication technology programme of the UNFCCC secretariat for the completion of the project.
21. It is expected that once the system of tools for developing the web-based generation of methodology-specific PDD, PoA-DD, CPA-DD, PSB and monitoring forms is ready to use, if the Board agrees, the secretariat will start using this tool to develop three methodology-specific questionnaires (Q4/2017 onwards) based on a prioritized list of methodologies/sectors. The expected resources to be spent is eight person-months for the digitalization of three methodologies.

6. Subsequent work and timelines

22. If the Board agrees to further work and resources identified in this information note, three methodology-specific questionnaires will be developed and road-tested for their use.

7. Recommendations to the Board

23. The secretariat invites the Board to take note of the information contained the present document and provide guidance.

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Document information

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