

UNFCCC EXPERT MEETING TO ASSESS EXPERIENCES IN THE USE OF THE REPORTING AND REVIEW GUIDELINES

Bonn, Germany, 4 – 6 December 2001

Working paper No. 5 (2001): Key issues to be addressed at the expert meeting

I. MANDATE

1. The SBSTA at its fifteenth session welcomed the organization of an expert meeting by the secretariat, to be held from 4 to 6 December 2001 in Bonn, on methodological and operational issues relating to the use of:

(a) The guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part I: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories (reporting guidelines); and

(b) The UNFCCC guidelines for the technical review of greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (review guidelines).

2. The SBSTA requested the secretariat to prepare a report of the expert meeting for consideration at its sixteenth session.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE EXPERT MEETING

3. The purpose of the expert meeting is to advance the methodological work to revise the reporting and review guidelines mandated by decisions 3/CP.5 and 6/CP.5 and the decision on these matters adopted at COP 7 (FCCC/SBSTA/2001/L.9/Add.1). The participants at the expert meeting will assess the experience gained during the trial period by Parties, review experts and the secretariat in the use of the reporting and review guidelines. It is anticipated that this expert meeting will contribute to ensuring that the revisions of the reporting and review guidelines take this experience into account.

III. SCOPE OF THE PAPER

4. The purpose of this paper is to summarize issues relating to the UNFCCC reporting and review guidelines which could be considered during the expert meeting. These issues were identified by the secretariat, under the guidance of the Chairman of the SBSTA, with the aims of facilitating discussions on methodological and technical aspects and of contributing to consideration of the possible revision of the reporting and review guidelines, as mandated by decisions 3/CP.5 and 6/CP.5, respectively.

5. The issues included in this paper are based on information included in documents FCCC/SBSTA/2001/5 and Add.1 and FCCC/SBI/2001/12, which were prepared for the

fifteenth sessions of the subsidiary bodies¹ and which describe the experience of Parties, the secretariat and experts in the use of the reporting and the review guidelines during the trial period.

6. The issues, proposals and options presented below are not comprehensive. Other issues, proposals and options may exist and could be identified by experts at the expert meeting or by Parties during the sixteenth session of the subsidiary bodies.

IV. EXPECTED RESULTS

7. It would be convenient to complete any revision of the existing reporting guidelines by SBSTA 16. This would allow enough time for Annex I Parties' inventory experts to include any revised reporting requirement in the GHG inventory submissions due by 15 April 2003. Technical fixes could also be incorporated into the current Common Reporting Format (CRF) for the 2002 inventory submissions. In addition, it would enable any recommendations to be tested during the review activities carried out during the year 2002.

V. REPORTING GUIDELINES

(The numbers in the left column refer to the paragraph numbers in document FCCC/SBSTA/2001/5/Add.1)

1) Cross-cutting issues		
Paragraph numbers	Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
10	Amount of information to be reported annually	Action should be taken to avoid repetitive information within the CRF and from one submission to the next, while ensuring transparency.
14	Recalculations	The reporting requirements should be expanded to distinguish between recalculations due to changes in methods, AD and EF gathering and minor revisions/corrections to the data. In addition, major impacts of the recalculations on the national totals should be reflected (taking into account the good practice guidance).
18	Precursor gases	The current reporting requirements do not need to change significantly, but should be described more clearly in the guidelines.

¹ Agenda item 4 (a): Ongoing activities on reporting and review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention (implementing decisions 3/CP.5 and 6/CP.5).

2) Issues relating to the national inventory report (NIR)		
Paragraph numbers	Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
19	NIR and its linkages with the CRF and independent methodologies.	<p>1) The guidance for the preparation of the NIR should be improved, including, for example, a common structure of the report (similar, for example, to the guidelines for national communications). This guidance should be consistent with the guidance for preparing the CRF.</p> <p>2) Independent documents with descriptions of used methodologies provided by Parties at earlier stages may be considered as part of the NIR if they are clearly referenced in the NIR. They should be provided and updated electronically for the use of expert review teams (take into account the good practice guidance).</p>

3) General issues relating to the common reporting format		
Paragraph numbers	Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
28 and 36	Additional information and documentation boxes currently requested in the CRF.	<p>1) Their use should be rationalized.</p> <p>2) Information should be moved from the CRF to the NIR when appropriate (case by case) depending on possible changes to the structure of the NIR relating to question 2 above.</p> <p>3) The guidance for completing the boxes should be improved.</p>
32	Notation keys (standard indicators)	The use of indicator “0” should be eliminated and the reporting of actual values should be required.
40	Shaded cells	Shading of particular source/sink categories should be re-examined and applied consistently throughout the CRF (jointly with the table by table analysis).
44	Reporting on methods and emission factors	Reporting should be disaggregated and transparent to follow good practice guidance, taking into account the level of disaggregation used for key source determination. (Consider jointly with the analysis of the good practice guidance.)

4) General issues relating to good practice guidance		
Paragraph numbers	Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
71 + working paper	How to include good practice in the guidelines?	The working paper on this matter should be used as the basis for analysis. This working paper includes proposals by the secretariat on how to include good practice guidance in the current guidelines, including “draft guidelines text”. Considerations should be focused on main decisions to be taken, but not on the text that could be finalized at a later stage. Specific sectoral elements of good practice guidance should be addressed in the table-by-table consideration.
	How to address key source determination?	Each Party should determine its key sources using methods of the good practice guidance as part of the application of such a guidance. The secretariat should continue to determine key sources for all Parties for purposes of standard comparisons and consistency in the reviews of inventories.

5) Issues relating to land-use change and forestry		
Paragraph numbers	Issue to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
65 + working paper	Should modifications in the guidelines be deferred until the IPCC good practice guidance on LULUCF is completed and adopted by the COP?	LULUCF tables should be modified by COP 8 to improve the current reporting on this sector on the basis of suggestions by Parties and taking into consideration experience gained so far.

6) Analysis of possible changes of the sectoral tables of the CRF.		
Paragraph numbers	Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
50/57 + working papers	Issues relating to the Energy sector	Tables should be modified, as appropriate, taking into account good practice guidance.
	Issues relating to Industrial Processes and Solvent Use	Tables should be modified, as appropriate, taking into account good practice guidance.
	Issues relating to Agriculture	Tables should be modified, as appropriate, taking into account good practice guidance.
	Issues relating to Waste	Tables should be modified, as appropriate, taking into account good practice guidance.

7) Changes to the CRF resulting from related software modifications		
Paragraph numbers	Issue to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
79 (first bullet)	Redundant reporting elements, such as Summary 1.B of the CRF	Redundant elements should be eliminated.

8) Other possible issues to be addressed

VI. REVIEW GUIDELINES

1) Initial check and status report	
Issue to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
Should the current approach be changed?	The current approach should be maintained. The secretariat should ensure timely preparation and Parties should make every effort to comment on the status report within two weeks (see Table 1). Such a procedure requires submission of revisions after initial submission to be kept at a minimum.

2) Synthesis and assessment review and report	
Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
Should the current approach (phase I and II) be changed?	Yes. The involvement of experts during the second phase of the S&A should be modified to a limited general check of the work done by the secretariat . This could be done by three experts (lead reviewers), with the initial phase of this general check being conducted using a desk approach, completing this work with a 2-3-day visit to the secretariat.
When should the different stages of the S&A take place?	A deadline for the different stages of the S&A should be fixed in order to enable the completion of the S&A report by 30 July or an earlier date (see Table 1 for more details). This may require the establishment of a cut-off date (for example 6 weeks after 15 April) for the submission of the CRF or the submission of revised GHG inventory data. This implies that submissions received after the cut-off date would not be considered for the preparation of the S&A report, but these submissions will be reviewed during the third stage of the review process. The secretariat could complete an assessment of these delayed submissions and could publish these assessments as separate documents provided that this does not affect the review schedule for other Parties.

Should the current structure and content of the S&A report be changed?	<p>1) The current structure of the S&A report should be maintained: Section I containing a standardized set of data comparisons and Section II with identification of potential issues to be clarified by the expert review teams during the individual reviews.</p> <p>2) The standardized set of data comparisons should be expanded with statistical determination of outliers and graphical representations.</p> <p>3) The tables of the S&A should be expanded to include any source that could be considered key in Annex I Parties using the determination approach used by the secretariat.</p> <p>4) The S&A report should only be published electronically on the web site of the secretariat.</p>
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Table 1. Proposed time line for the initial check and the synthesis and assessment stages of the review

Activity	Duration	Indicative date
Submission due date		15 April
Initial check – status report	6 weeks (from actual submission date)	by end of May*
Secretariat to prepare draft status reports	3 weeks	
Parties to comment	2 weeks	
Preparation of final reports	1 week	
Synthesis and assessment	15 weeks (from 15 April)***	by end of July**
Secretariat to prepare 0 order S&A report	8 weeks	
Experts to comment on secretariat's draft report	1 week	
Secretariat to prepare 1st order S&A report	2 weeks	
Parties to comment	2 weeks	
Preparation of final report	2 weeks	

* The status reports should be finalized prior to the first sessional period of the subsidiary bodies in the year of submission (assuming that the first sessional period would be scheduled for end of May or beginning of June).

** The synthesis and assessment report should be finalized prior to the second sessional period of the subsidiary bodies in the year of submission (assuming that the second sessional period would be scheduled during mid to late autumn).

*** Only for Parties that submit their inventories prior to a cut-off date (see issue 2 above).

3) Individual reviews	
Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
Should the current overall approach be changed?	No, but priority should be given to desk and in-country review, keeping at least one centralized review. The centralized review would assist experts who have not yet participated in the review process.
Number of inventories to be reviewed.	The number of inventories should be limited to five to be reviewed by an expert review team (ERT) in desk and centralized reviews.
Composition of expert review teams.	<p>1) Two lead reviewers in each expert review team should be appointed, selected from more experienced experts.</p> <p>2) At least one expert should be appointed as generalist in each expert review team.</p> <p>3) The normal size of the ERT for individual reviews should be established as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 6 for in-country visits; and b) 11-12 for desk and centralized reviews. <p>4) The size of the ERT should be expanded if the complexity of the inventory so requires.</p> <p>5) Experts from relevant international organizations should be involved when appropriate.</p> <p>6) It should be ensured that the review teams include experts with experience in the review process.</p>
When should the different stages of the individual reviews take place?	<p>A proposal by the secretariat can be found in Table 2.</p> <p>The indicative dates in Table 2 are based on the assumption that the review activities will begin at the beginning of September and that it may not be possible to schedule all review activities simultaneously. In addition, official UN holidays and holidays during the end of the calendar year have been taken into account.</p> <p>The time needed for the preparation the review reports will depend on the structure of these reports (see issue number 7 below). For example, if the review reports include only identified problems and an overall appraisal of the GHG inventory data then such reports could possibly require less time to complete compared to full review reports (as per current practice), which would include a more detailed description of the GHG inventory data and other relevant issues. The time allocated in Table 2 is based on the preparation of full reports from all review approaches.</p>

Table 2. Proposed time line for the individual reviews

Approach	Duration	Indicative date
In-country review	14 weeks	from middle of December to end of January
Preparation of ERT	1 week	
In-country review	1 week	
Preparation of 1 st order review report	3 weeks	
Editing of report	1 week	
Party to comment	4 weeks	
Preparation of final report	3 weeks	
Final editing and publication of report*	1 week	
Desk review (4-5 Parties)	20 weeks	from middle of February to middle of March
Preparation of ERT	1 week	
Desk review	3 weeks	
Preparation of 1 st order review reports	4 weeks	
Editing of reports	2 weeks	
Parties to comment	4 weeks	
Preparation of final reports	4 weeks	
Final editing and publication of reports*	2 weeks	
Centralized review (4-5 Parties)	20 weeks	from middle of February to middle of March
Preparation of ERT	1 week	
Centralized review	1 week	
Preparation of 1 st order review reports	6 weeks	
Editing of reports	2 weeks	
Parties to comment	4 weeks	
Preparation of final reports	4 weeks	
Final editing and publication of reports*	2 weeks	

* All review reports should be finalized prior to the first sessional period of the subsidiary bodies in the year following the year of submission (assuming that the first sessional period would be scheduled for end of May or beginning of June).

Other important issues to be addressed relating to individual reviews not covered in the current review guidelines.

Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
5) Additional guidance for review experts	1) The current updated guidance for review experts should be expanded and specific review guidance should be developed for each IPCC sector and for cross-cutting issues of the inventory. This guidance should be based on the reporting guidelines, the IPCC good practice guidance and on the experience gained during the trial period of the review guidelines.

	<p>2) This guidance should be developed as an established and published procedure which may be agreed upon by SBSTA 17.</p> <p>3) Standard procedures/documentation should be developed for the orientation and preparation of ERT.</p> <p>4) Each sectoral expert should be prepared to “chair” sessions during the visit.</p>
6) Key source determination (see also	<p>1) Parties are to be requested to report the key source determination used by them as part of their application of the IPCC good practice guidance.</p> <p>2) The secretariat should continue to determine key sources for all Parties using a common level of category disaggregation.</p> <p>3) The comparison of both key source determinations might be used as a tool for the review process.</p>
7) Should the current structure and content of the individual review reports be changed?	<p><i>Option 1:</i> No. Reports of 25-30 pages following the outline of the updated guidance for review experts. If so,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is a 2-3 pages summary needed in the review reports? 2) Does the whole report need to be published in hard copy or only electronically on the secretariat web site? <p><i>Option 2:</i> Yes. Short reports only, focused on identified problems and on an overall appraisal of the quality/reliability of the inventory and emission trends and the degree of adherence to the reporting guidelines and IPCC good practice guidance. If this option were chosen, a new structure for the review reports would have to be developed.</p> <p>A combination of the options mentioned above, as well as other possible options, might be considered.</p>
8) Should a data search facility (including the full GHG inventory data base which supports its use) be provided to the review experts on CDs or through special on-line access on the web site of the secretariat? (It is planned to convert this search facility into a more comprehensive special review software.)	<p><i>Option 1:</i> No. The distribution of a CD with different and non-updated or incomplete versions of GHG datasets might introduce confusion among users.</p> <p><i>Option 2:</i> Yes. A stand alone software with a local database (only with the necessary data for a specific review) distributed on CDs for experts before a review. The program could also be downloaded from a web site.</p> <p><i>Option 3:</i> Yes, as an online application on the secretariat's web site.</p> <p>A combination of the options mentioned above, as well as other possible options, might be considered.</p>

<p>9) Should ERTs performing a desk review (or centralized review) communicate directly with the national experts from the Party under review regarding queries relating to the review of GHG inventories?</p>	<p><i>Option 1:</i> Yes. The direct communication among experts might be beneficial for the technical review, but might cause an uncontrolled and decentralized flow of questions and answers between the expert review team and the Party under review.</p> <p><i>Option 2:</i> Yes, but through the lead reviewers and a special channel in the Party under review. This might decrease the problems mentioned above, but the workload of the lead reviewers might be increased.</p> <p><i>Option 3:</i> No. The queries should be made through the secretariat in order to have a controlled flow of information in all reviews. This might decrease the problems mentioned in options 1 and 2, but the ease of communication between experts and the Party under review might be affected. If so, special arrangements for improving this communication should be created.</p> <p>A combination of the options mentioned above, as well as other possible options, might be considered.</p>
<p>10) How can an active participation of review experts in the review process be ensured?</p>	<p><i>Background:</i> For the year 2003 at least 6 in-country review teams (36 participants), 4-5 desk reviews (48-60 participants) and 1-2 centralized reviews (12-24 participants) would be needed. This means that about 110 experts participants would be needed in one year. For budgetary reasons it would be convenient if no more than 50% of the experts were funded.</p>
<p>a) How should experts with appropriate qualifications to participate in the individual reviews be identified?</p>	<p><i>Option 1:</i> Ask for specific recommendations (also for inclusion in the UNFCCC roster of experts) from national focal points, including a description of the practical experience of the candidate.</p> <p><i>Option 2:</i> Select new experts from the roster and include one or two of the “new” experts in each in-country review and five in each centralized review.</p> <p><i>Option 3:</i> Create a specialized section on the web site of the secretariat with relevant materials and preliminary tests to be performed by candidates.</p> <p>A combination of the options mentioned above, as well as other possible options, might be considered.</p>

b) How can an adequate participation of experts from Annex II Parties be ensured?	<p><i>Option 1:</i> Pre-establish voluntary quotas for participation of review experts at the beginning of a review year, for example during the COP.</p> <p><i>Option 2:</i> Send official letters to the national focal points asking for specific planned needs.</p> <p>A combination of the options mentioned above, as well as, other possible options, might be considered.</p>
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11. Other possible issues to be addressed

VII. TECHNICAL AND SOFTWARE ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE REPORTING AND REVIEW OF GHG INVENTORIES

(The number in the left column refers to the paragraph number in document FCCC/SBSTA/2001/5/Add.1.)

1) CRF reporting software		
Paragraph numbers	Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
79	Should the existing Excel CRF software be further used or should a new software be developed as the main way of overcoming the identified difficulties in filling and processing the CRF?	<p>1) The secretariat has already made some minor improvements to the existing CRF software.</p> <p>2) The secretariat suggests to develop a new software on the basis of a database platform which would ease both reporting and analysis tasks.</p>
79	What additional facilities should be developed to assist users in entering and verifying inventory data?	The software should encompass different facilities for data entry (input) and CRF table production (output), as well as a checking facility to assist users in verifying the correctness/completeness of data entered before submission.

2) Software for the technical review of GHG inventories	
Issues to be addressed	Proposal by the secretariat
What additional facilities should be developed to assist inventory reviewers?	<p>1) Data search and analysis facilities should be further developed.</p> <p>2) Facilities for graphical presentations and for statistical analysis, when appropriate, should be developed.</p>

Should these facilities be accessible only to reviewers or also to Parties and the general public?	These facilities should be, at least at the initial stages, limited to reviewers and Parties.
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VIII. HOW TO PROCEED AFTER THE EXPERT MEETING

Issue to be addressed	Proposal by the Chairman of the SBSTA
What preparatory work should be done to facilitate consideration of the possible revision of guidelines by the SBSTA ?	<p>1) The secretariat, under the guidance of the Chairman of the SBSTA, should prepare a draft revised version of the reporting and review guidelines based on the conclusions of the expert meeting, in order to begin considerations at SBSTA 16.</p> <p>2) In preparing the draft text of the review guidelines, relevant technical and methodological aspects relating to the review of GHG inventories in the review guidelines under Article 8 of the Kyoto Protocol might be used under the premise that these aspects are in line with the conclusions of the expert meeting.</p> <p>3) The resulting draft texts might be considered in a meeting with a limited number of lead reviewers and co-chair persons of the working groups at the expert meeting before its final preparation as an official document for the SBSTA.</p>

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