

REVIEW PRACTICE GUIDANCE



An evaluation of remotely conducted reviews of BR4s and its implications for future NC/BR reviews

Background paper for the 9th lead reviewers meeting

March 2022

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Abbreviations and acronyms

BR	biennial report
BTR	biennial transparency report
ERT	expert review team
GHG	greenhouse gas
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
IT	information technology
LRs	lead reviewers
MCDA	Multi-Criteria Decision Analysis
NC	national communication
NIS	negative ideal solution
PIS	positive ideal solution
TOPSIS	Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change”

I. Background

1. The COVID 19 pandemic has forced organizations all across the world to adopt work-from-home arrangements. Lockdowns and restrictions on the physical presence of employees have made remote working the new normal. In addition, international travel restrictions have also made it nearly impossible for organizations to organize in-person international conferences, meetings or workshops. This has caused a fundamental shift in the way organizations, especially international organizations like the United Nations, conduct their work. Following the pandemic, the UNFCCC secretariat put in place restrictions on the physical presence of staff members in the office as well as on organizing in-person international meetings. As a result, like most international UNFCCC meetings organized over the past two years, the centralized reviews of fourth biennial reports of developed country Parties were conducted remotely between March 2020 and March 2021.

2. The remote conduct of BR4 reviews was a unique experience for both the secretariat and review experts. As noted in the conclusions of the 8th LRs meeting¹, it posed a number of challenges including *fewer opportunities to train new experts, increased limitations in the engagement of reviewers, increased workloads for reviewers and the need to accommodate meetings across different time zones*. At the same time, remote reviews offered some benefits such as cost savings for the secretariat and a reduction in GHG emissions. Most importantly, the remotely conducted BR4 reviews provided the secretariat an opportunity to test an alternative approach to conducting reviews, which could generate useful lessons to inform the review modalities going forward.

3. Reporting of BRs and biennial update reports under the Convention will be superseded by reporting of BTRs for Parties to the Paris Agreement. Review of BRs and technical analysis of biennial update reports under the Convention will be superseded by technical expert review of BTRs for Parties to the Paris Agreement. Multilateral assessment and facilitative sharing of views under the Convention will be superseded by facilitative multilateral consideration of progress for Parties to the Paris Agreement.

II. Purpose and scope

4. This paper aims to quantitatively evaluate the remotely conducted BR4 reviews in terms of their impacts on the different actors involved in review process (experts, Parties and the UNFCCC secretariat) based on a few key criteria including GHG emissions, costs, quality, efficiency and timeliness of reviews as well as on the quality of interaction and work-life balance of the reviewer community using a MCDA. Additionally, this paper offers a qualitative analysis of other possible approaches for conducting reviews such as hybrid reviews. The conclusions of the analysis provide evidence for decision making on the review modalities in the future.

5. The sources of information for this study comprised results of questionnaire surveys of experts conducted by the secretariat after each centralized review and after the BR4 review cycle and data on experts' travel and allowances obtained from the secretariat travel unit.

6. This paper serves primarily as an analytical input to the 9th meeting of LRs for the review of BRs and NCs, to be held virtually on 7–9 March 2022 to inform their consideration of the review approaches to be followed for the NC8/BR5 review cycle.

III. An overview of remotely conducted BR4 reviews and their impact on the review process

7. The centralized reviews of BR4 submissions of Annex I Parties were organized remotely over nine rounds between March 2020–March 2021. A total of 160 experts from all around the

¹ Available at: <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/8LR-Conclusions_FinalForPublication.pdf>.

globe (70 and 90 from Annex I and non-Annex I Parties respectively) performed the reviews of the BR4 submissions of 41 Annex I Parties.²

8. Remotely conducted BR4 reviews had a wide-ranging impact on the entire review process encompassing both benefits and costs for review experts, Parties and the secretariat.

A. Impacts on the review experts

9. The impacts of remotely conducted BR4 reviews on the reviewer community include (see fig. 1 below):

- (a) **Collaboration.** Issues in interaction within the ERTs and with the secretariat (e.g. issues stemming from different time zones and virtual participation);
- (b) **Connectivity.** Connectivity issues in remote participation (e.g. poor or expensive internet);
- (c) **Quality of output and efficiency of process.** Potential impacts on the efficiency of review work and quality of review reports;
- (d) **Travel.** Potential benefits in terms of avoiding disruption caused by long periods away from home and work; no opportunities to travel and to meet other experts;
- (e) **Working arrangements.** Issues with managing regular official work and maintaining work-life balance while participating virtually.

B. Impacts on the secretariat

10. From the standpoint of the UNFCCC secretariat the impacts include:

- (a) **Collaboration.** Challenges in coordinating ERTs and mentoring new experts;
- (b) **Costs.** Cost savings from remote participation of experts (travel and subsistence-related costs of experts from developing countries);
- (c) **GHG emissions.** Reduction in GHG emissions (e.g. travel-related GHG emissions);
- (d) **Quality of output and efficiency of process.** Potentially adverse impacts on the efficiency of review work and quality of review reports;
- (e) **Working arrangements.** Challenges in operating from the home-office owing to uncertainties of family arrangements.

C. Impacts on Parties

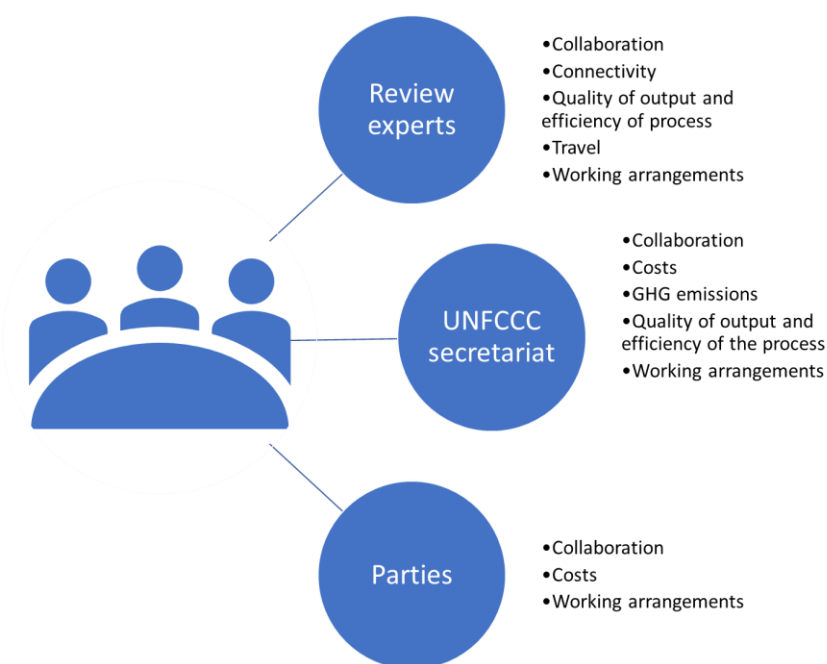
11. In addition, the remotely conducted reviews had the following potential impacts on Parties:

- (a) **Collaboration.** Challenges in interacting with the ERTs and secretariat during the reviews (e.g. time zone issues);
- (b) **Costs.** Cost savings for developed country Parties (e.g. costs of supporting the participation of national experts in the review process);
- (c) **Working arrangements.** Challenges in supporting national experts to participate virtually in reviews (e.g. ensuring balance with regular official work).

² Ukraine did not submit its BR4. In addition, the BR4 submissions of Belarus and the United States of America have not yet been reviewed because the BR4 of Belarus was submitted in conjunction with its NC and owing to the COVID 19 pandemic, an in-country review of Belarus could not be possible in 2020–2021, while the BR4 of the US was submitted in October 2021.

Figure 1

Potential impacts of remotely conducted BR4 reviews



IV. Methodology

12. This paper attempts to evaluate the remotely conducted BR4 centralized reviews and compare them with the in-person reviews applying a MCDA method.

A. Boundaries of the study

13. As noted above, the remotely conducted BR4 reviews had advantages and disadvantages for review experts, the secretariat, and Parties. However, given the fact that review procedures for Parties were not significantly altered because of remote reviews, it can be assumed that the preponderant impacts are on the review experts and the UNFCCC secretariat. As such, this analysis primarily focuses on the impacts of the BR4 reviews on the review experts and the UNFCCC secretariat.

B. Criteria considered

14. The criteria considered for the analysis related to impacts on review experts and secretariat. These criteria were identified based on the surveys conducted after the BR4 reviews, the conclusions of the 8th LR meeting and internal discussions within the UNFCCC secretariat. These include the following.

1. Costs of organizing reviews for the secretariat

15. One of the main benefits for the secretariat from organizing the BR4 reviews virtually was the reduction in the participation costs of experts. In addition to the costs related to organization, logistics and coordination, which largely remain the same for the two review formats, the costs for the secretariat involved in organizing in-person centralized reviews comprise the financial support for the participation of experts from non-Annex I and some Annex I Parties, namely, travel costs (economy-class return flight ticket and terminal costs) and DSA applicable for Bonn (241 Euros) for 6 days in addition to the terminal costs (160 Euros) (see table 1 below).

16. On the other hand, the additional costs involved in remotely conducting centralized reviews relate to the additional IT support provided for organizing virtual meetings (75 Euros/hour). It was

assumed that conducting the BR4 centralized reviews remotely entailed no additional workload for the review officers or administrative/logistical support as compared to an in-person centralized review.

17. The additional costs of organizing BR4 centralized reviews in an in-person format were derived by calculating the participation costs of 118 experts that required support in the BR4 reviews. The additional costs of remotely conducting BR4 reviews were derived by calculating the cost of additional IT support for a total of 360 hours (=9*5*8) for the 9 review weeks assuming an average working day of 8 hours.

Table 1

Costs related to an expert’s participation in an in-person centralized review

<i>Travel costs</i>	<i>Terminal costs (Euros)</i>	<i>DSA for 6 days (Euros)</i>
Economy-class return flight ticket between place of residence and Bonn for one expert	160	1 441

2. GHG emissions

18. In-person centralized reviews entail a significant amount of travel-related GHG emissions. These GHG emissions stem primarily from international flights and, to a much lesser extent, from the use of other modes of transport. Remotely conducted reviews have the obvious advantage of avoiding these travel-related GHG emissions, although there are some, albeit much less significant, emissions associated with holding virtual meetings (e.g. GHG emissions from an increased use of IT equipment) during reviews, which have not been considered for this analysis. The GHG emissions in the counterfactual scenario of an in-person conduct of BR4 reviews were calculated by summing the emissions from round-trip economy-class flights the 160 experts would have been taken to travel to Bonn to participate in the centralized reviews. GHG emissions from an economy-class round-trip flight between the place of residence of an expert and Frankfurt were calculated using the ICAO Carbon Emissions Calculator (ICAO, 2021). It was assumed that experts either took a direct flight to Frankfurt or, if that was not possible, flew via the shortest route. The emissions from using other modes of transport (e.g. travel by rail or car between airport and the final destination) are relatively much lower than the flight-related emissions and as such, were considered insignificant for the purpose of this analysis.

3. Other qualitative criteria

19. As noted above, the most significant impacts of remotely conducted BR4 reviews were on review experts. In addition to the challenges of working in a new review environment, review experts faced, in some cases, issues such as poor internet connectivity and challenges in managing routine personal and professional work alongside the review work and in working across different time zones. These qualitative criteria were identified based on the issues highlighted by the experts in the post-review week surveys conducted by the secretariat using an online tool (SurveyMonkey)³, particularly by analyzing the issues highlighted in the experts’ responses to the question: *Participating in a remote centralized review, could you please explain what worked well and what could be further improved?* The following qualitative criteria were identified and used for the MCDA:

- (a) Quality of your internet connectivity and ease of access to the online platform;
- (b) Quality and ease of interaction amongst the ERT;
- (c) Quality of mentoring of new experts;
- (d) Efficiency of review work;
- (e) Quality (consistency and accuracy) of the technical review reports;
- (f) Ease of managing regular official work and maintaining work-life balance alongside the review work.

³ 56 per cent (90 out of 160) of experts that participated in the BR4 remotely conducted centralized reviews responded to the post-review week surveys conducted in March 2020–March 2021.

20. Further, a quantitative comparison of in-person and remotely conducted reviews was obtained through a separate questionnaire survey conducted using an online tool (SurveyMonkey)⁴. The survey questionnaire comprised questions asking the experts to compare remote reviews and centralized reviews on the above-mentioned criteria. The experts' responses were scaled using the following Likert scale (5 = much better; 4 = better; 3 = same; 2 = worse; 1 = much worse). Table 2 below shows an example of a survey question. Averages of ranking scores given by survey respondents to various criteria for remote reviews were calculated. The ranking scores for all the criteria for in-person reviews were taken as 3.

Table 2

Extract from survey questionnaire using Likert scale

As compared to in-person reviews, how would you rate the remotely conducted reviews in the BR4 review cycle with respect to the following?(5 = much better; 4 = better; 3 = same; 2 = worse; 1 = much worse)

Criteria	Ranking score
a. Quality of your internet connectivity and ease of access to the online platform	
b. Quality and ease of interaction amongst the ERT	
c. Quality of mentoring of new experts	
d. Efficiency of review work	
e. Quality (consistency and accuracy) of the technical review reports	
f. Ease of managing routine official work and maintaining work-life balance alongside the review work	

4. Multi-criteria decision analysis

21. The TOPSIS method was used for multi-criteria decision analysis for this study (Hwang and Yoon, 1981). TOPSIS is a distance-based MCDA method, which is based on the concept that the chosen option should have the shortest geometric distance from the PIS and the longest geometric distance from the NIS (Assari, Mahesh, and Assari, 2012). This method compares a set of alternatives or options by determining weights and normalizing the scores for each criterion and then calculating the geometric distance between each alternative and the ideal alternatives to calculate a performance score for each alternative and to rank them according to the performance scores. The weights of all the criteria were considered equal for the purpose of this analysis. The following steps were taken to perform the MCDA:

(a) A Weighted Normalized Decision Matrix was constructed using the weighted normalized scores of the in-person and remote reviews on various criteria.

(b) Based on the type of criteria, *Ideal Best* and *Ideal Worst* solutions were identified for each criterion. For example, for non-beneficial criteria like costs or emissions, the ideal best and ideal worst solutions corresponds to the lowest and highest values of weighted normalized scores respectively. On the other hand, for beneficial criteria like quality of internet connectivity and ease of access to the online platform, the ideal best and ideal worst solutions corresponds to the highest and lowest values respectively.

(c) For each option (in-person and remote reviews), the Euclidean distance or separation from the ideal best and worse solutions was calculated.

(d) A performance score was calculated for each option based on its Euclidean distances from the ideal best and worst options. This was used to determine the rank of each option based on its relative closeness to 1.

⁴ The survey was sent in July 2021 to the 160 experts who participated in the BR4 reviews, out of which 91 (57 per cent) responded.

V. Results and analysis

A. Benefits and costs for the UNFCCC secretariat

22. 118 experts from Parties requiring support participated in the BR4 review cycle. The total costs of organizing the reviews in the two formats with the same number of Parties and experts are given in table 3.

Table 3

Costs of organizing reviews for the UNFCCC secretariat

<i>Review format</i>	<i>Travel costs + DSA (Euros)</i>	<i>Additional IT-related support costs for remote reviews (Euros)</i>
In-person centralized reviews	299 818.00	–
Remotely conducted reviews	–	27 000
Total	299 818.00	27 000
Total cost saved for remotely conducted reviews	272 818.00	

23. The additional cost of organizing the BR4 reviews in-person is 272,818.00 EUR, which translates to an average additional cost of 1705.11 EUR per expert.

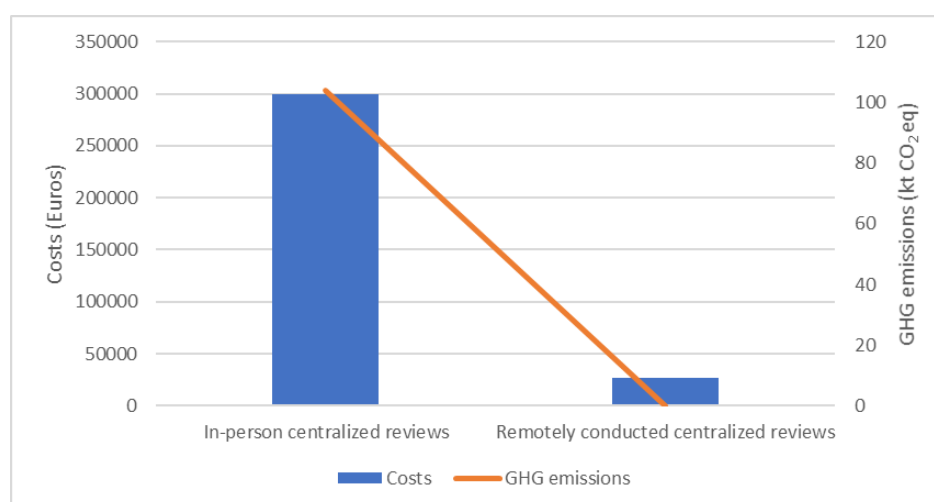
24. The total travel-related GHG emissions from in-person participation of 160 reviewers in BR4 reviews were calculated as 104.04 kt CO₂ eq, while the GHG emissions from remotely conducted reviews can be considered insignificant in comparison. Thus, the total GHG emissions saved by remotely organizing the BR4 reviews are 104.04 kt CO₂, which correspond to average travel related GHG emissions per expert saved of 0.65 kt CO₂ eq.

25. As expected, both the costs involved in as well as GHG emissions from remotely conducting centralized reviews are quite insignificant in comparison with organizing them in-person (see fig. 2 below).

26. However, it is important to note here that this analysis does not include the substantive and technical challenges faced by the secretariat in coordinating the ERT remotely, particularly related to communicating with the ERT.

Figure 2

Costs and GHG emissions involved in in-person and remotely conducted centralized reviews

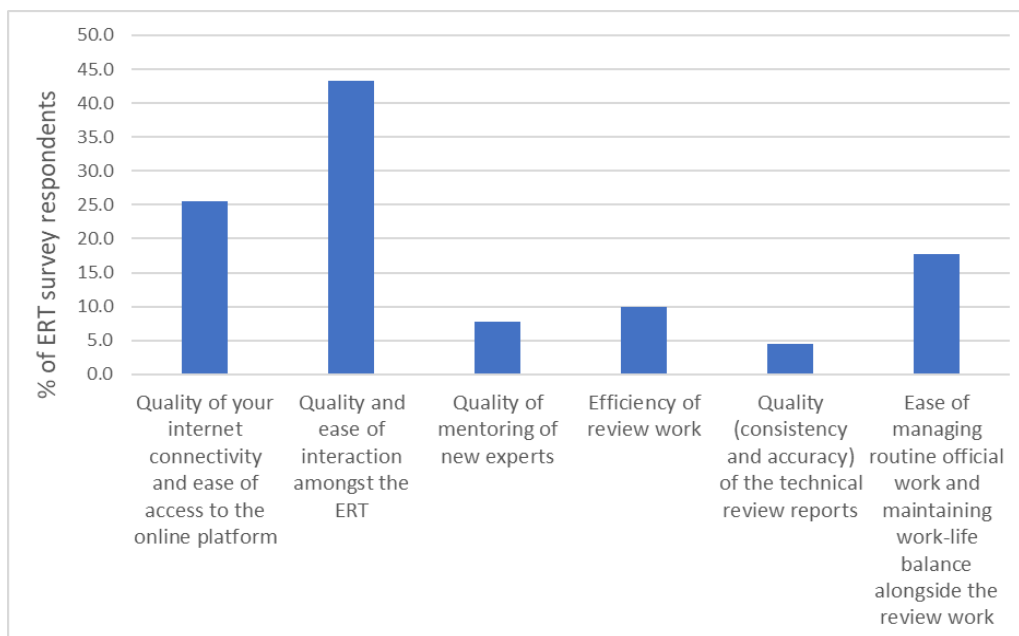


B. Benefits and challenges for reviewers

27. The qualitative criteria used for the analysis were identified based on issues identified by experts in post-review surveys. Figure 3 below shows the issues identified with remotely conducted reviews against the percentage of ERT survey respondents.

Figure 3

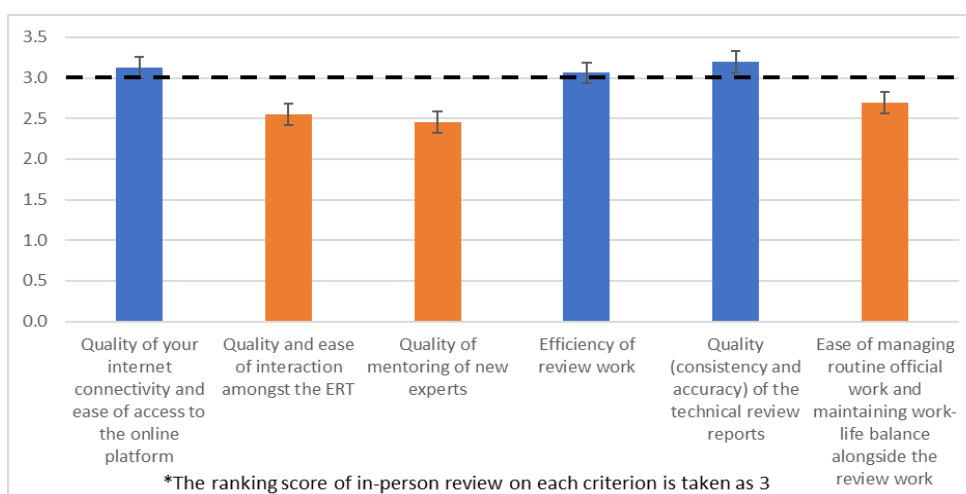
Issues identified with remotely conducted BR4 reviews



28. As mentioned above, remotely organized BR4 centralized reviews were compared with centralized reviews on the above criteria based on responses obtained through a separate questionnaire survey of review experts conducted by the secretariat. The ranking scores for the remotely conducted reviews on these criteria were averaged over all the survey respondents. The ranking score of in-person reviews on each criterion was taken as 3, which corresponds to the ranking scores for remotely conducted centralized reviews, when they are considered equal to in-person centralized reviews with respect to a given criterion. Figure 4 below shows the average ranking scores of remote reviews on qualitative criteria.

Figure 4

Average ranking scores of remote reviews on qualitative criteria compared to in-person reviews*



29. It is clear from the above that experts rate remotely conducted centralized reviews significantly lower than in-person centralized reviews on 3 key qualitative criteria such as quality and ease of interaction amongst the ERT, quality of mentoring of new experts and ease of managing routine official work and maintaining work-life balance alongside the review work. However, they rate remotely conducted centralized reviews slightly higher than or nearly the same as (within the limits of standard error) in-person centralized reviews on remaining 3 criteria: quality of your internet connectivity and ease of access to the online platform, efficiency of review work and quality of the review reports.

30. This indicates that the challenges experts consider the most difficult to deal with relate to interaction within the ERT and managing other work and personal life alongside review work. Experts do not perceive internet connectivity and impacts on quality and efficiency of reviews as major issues in conducting reviews remotely. Table 4 below shows the results of the MCDA of the two review modalities considering all the criteria discussed above, including the impacts on both the secretariat and experts.

An evaluation of remotely conducted reviews of BR4s and its implications for future NC/BR reviews

Table 4
Normalized Decision Matrix used in MCDA

<i>Normalized scores on various criteria</i>												
	Additional costs (Euros)	GHG emissions (tCO ² eq)	Quality of your internet connectivity and ease of access to the online platform	Quality and ease of interaction amongst the ERT	Quality of mentoring of new experts	Efficiency of review work	Quality (consistency and accuracy) of the technical review reports	Ease of managing routine official work and maintaining work-life balance alongside the review work	Euclidean distance from ideal best (Si+)	Euclidean distance from ideal worst (Si-)	Performance score (Pi)	Rank
In-person reviews	1.00	1.00	0.69	0.76	0.77	0.70	0.68	0.74	1.42	0.20	0.12	2
Remote reviews	0.00	0.00	0.72	0.65	0.63	0.71	0.73	0.67	0.20	1.42	0.88	1
Ideal best	0.00	0.00	0.72	0.76	0.77	0.71	0.73	0.74				
Ideal worst	1.00	1.00	0.69	0.65	0.63	0.70	0.68	0.67				

31. The results of the MCDA in table 4 show the performance scores and ranks of the two options based on their closeness to the ideal best solution (which corresponds to lowest GHG emissions and costs and highest ranking scores on other qualitative criteria assessed through survey questionnaire). When all the criteria are considered, the remotely conducted reviews have a higher performance index and thus a higher rank than in-person reviews. This stems largely from the significantly less costs and GHG emissions involved in remotely conducting centralized reviews despite its lower ranking scores on some key criteria such as interaction within the ERT and ease of managing routine official work and maintaining work-life balance alongside the review work.

32. It is important to note that the ranking in the MCDA analysis depends on the weightage attached to a given criterion. In this analysis the weights of different criteria have been assumed to be the same. But the performance score of the two options may well be different if more weightage is attached to criteria such as the quality of interaction within the ERT. In addition, average ranking scores across all review experts do not fully reflect the fact that experts from many developing countries are disproportionately impacted by the challenges highlighted above including:

- (a) Internet connectivity issues;
- (b) Challenges in mentoring new experts;
- (c) Challenges in managing routine official work alongside the review, particularly because the developing country experts typically perform reviews on their own time.

C. Hybrid review modality

33. Hybrid reviews that allow experts to participate in reviews both in-person and virtually depending on their specific needs, encompass many benefits of remotely conducted reviews (e.g. reduction in costs and GHG emissions) while also addressing some of the challenges faced by experts. Experts can opt to participate in hybrid reviews either remotely or in-person by informing the secretariat in advance. The secretariat will make all arrangements to ensure that the review can be conducted both in-person and virtually including setting up the necessary tools for virtual participation.

1. Organizing in-country reviews in a hybrid format

34. In-country reviews typically involve an in-country visit by the ERT to review NC and BR in the years when they are reviewed together. They entail some key differences in review modalities and in roles and responsibilities of review experts, Parties and the secretariat as compared to centralized reviews. Organizing in-country reviews in a hybrid format thus encompasses a unique set of opportunities and challenges for all the actors involved in the review process.

35. Given the continued uncertainty regarding in-person participation of experts in the upcoming NC8/BR5 review cycle, which are typically organized in an in-country format, it is relevant to examine the pros and cons of organizing the NC8/BR5 reviews in a hybrid format as discussed below (see table 5 below). The criteria for assessment were the same as mentioned above (see para. 18 above).

2. Benefits

36. Experts

(a) Collaboration

- (i) Potentially better interaction within the ERT and mentoring of new experts as compared to remotely conducted reviews, especially if the new experts and some experienced experts participate in person;
- (ii) Better interaction with the country experts, given that some experts will interact in-person with the country experts.

(b) **Working arrangements.** Greater flexibility to work according to personal preferences (e.g. inability to travel because of family or work situation).

37. Secretariat

(a) **Collaboration.** Better interaction with the ERT (e.g. better time-zone management) as compared to remotely conducted reviews;

(b) **GHG emissions and costs.** Reduction in GHG emissions and secretariat costs as compared to in-person in-country reviews;

(c) **Participation.** Greater flexibility to form ERTs by accommodating reviewers' personal preferences (e.g. inability to travel because of family or work situation) leading to fewer experts dropping out.

38. Parties

(a) **Collaboration.** Opportunity to interact in-person with some ERT members as opposed to fully virtual interaction in a remotely conducted review;

(b) **Costs.** Potential saving of costs involved in supporting national experts' participation in-country reviews in the case of developed country Parties;

(c) **Participation.** Opportunities to involve more national experts in the review process, especially if it is not possible to support their in-person participation.

3. Challenges

39. Experts

(a) **Collaboration.** Potentially less effective team interaction and mentoring of new experts as compared to in-person reviews, especially if the new experts and LRs/experienced expert participate virtually;

(b) **Connectivity.** Connectivity issues for some experts (e.g. poor and/or expensive internet).

40. Secretariat

(a) **Connectivity.** Technical challenges in managing both in-person and remote participation;

(b) **Working arrangements.** Increased workload for the secretariat owing to challenges in managing both in-person and remote participation of experts.

41. Parties

(a) **Collaboration.** Challenges in interacting with experts both in-person and virtually at the same time;

(b) **Connectivity.** Technical challenges related to enabling virtual participation.

Table 5
Benefits of and challenges in conducting hybrid in-country reviews

Actor	Connectivity	Collaboration	GHG emission/costs	Participation	Quality / efficiency	Working arrangements
Experts	X Connectivity issues in remote participation (e.g. poor and/or expensive internet)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Potentially better interaction within the ERT and mentoring of new experts and with country experts (relative to remotely conducted reviews) X Potentially less effective team interaction and mentoring of new experts (relative to in-person reviews) 			No impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Greater flexibility to work according to personal preferences
UNFCCC Secretariat	X Technical challenges in managing both in-person and remote participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Better interaction with the ERT (e.g. time-zone management) (relative to remotely conducted reviews) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Reduced GHG emissions/costs (relative to in-person reviews) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Greater flexibility to form ERTs by accommodating experts' personal preferences 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Increased workload for the secretariat
Parties	X Technical challenges in enabling virtual participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Opportunity to interact in-person with some ERT members X Challenges in interacting with experts both in-person and virtually at the same time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Potential saving of costs in national experts' participation in reviews (developed country Parties) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Opportunities to involve more national experts in the review process 		

42. It is clear from the above that the hybrid format for in-country reviews has advantages like greater flexibility for experts, reduction in costs and GHG emissions (as compared to in-person reviews) and better interaction within the ERT and with the Party (as compared to virtual reviews). Although hybrid review format does present a few logistical and technical challenges for the secretariat and Party, including difficulties in managing both virtual and in-person interaction with experts simultaneously, those could potentially be overcome through careful planning (e.g. ERT composition) and deploying appropriate technological solutions.

VI. Conclusions

43. As discussed above, conducting BR4 centralized reviews remotely had a range of impacts on all the actors involved including the secretariat, review experts and Parties. It impacted review experts differently depending on their specific circumstances. The MCDA-based analysis presented considered a range of impacts on experts and secretariat including the costs and GHG emission saved, quality of interaction within ERT and mentoring of new experts, quality of internet connectivity and ease of access to online platforms, quality of review report and efficiency of work, and ease of managing other work/personal life alongside review work. The analysis reveals that when all the criteria are given equal weightage, remotely conducted reviews are better than in-person reviews. However, this issue needs a more nuanced consideration because some of the qualitative criteria cannot be captured adequately in average ranking scores obtained through questionnaire surveys. While all the factors discussed above affect experts to varying extents, the challenges faced by even a small number of experts in remotely participating in reviews cannot be ignored in planning the review modalities going forward.

44. As such, it is pertinent to conclude that there is no 'one-size-fits-all' solution and a rational approach to planning future reviews should encompass a variety of options tailored to the specific needs and circumstances of the experts. Hybrid reviews, that allow experts to participate in reviews both in-person and virtually depending on their specific needs, encompass many benefits of remotely conducted reviews (e.g. costs and GHG emissions reductions) while also addressing some of the challenges faced by experts in remotely conducted reviews (e.g. those related to quality of interaction with ERT and mentoring of new experts). Given the continued uncertainty around the in-person participation of review experts stemming from the COVID 19 pandemic, hybrid reviews could be implemented in the upcoming NC8/BR5 review cycle with the concurrence of Parties.

Annex

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