

Conclusions and recommendations from the 9th meeting of lead reviewers for the review of biennial reports and national communications of developed country Parties

2 and 7–9 March 2022

Second draft, 8 March 2022

1. The 9th meeting of lead reviewers (LRs) for the review of biennial reports (BRs) and national communications (NCs) of developed country Parties was held remotely on 2 March and from 7 to 9 March 2022. A total of xxx experts were invited to the meeting. Of the xxx experts who attended the meeting, xx were from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention and xx from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention. A total of xx co-leads of biennial update reports of developing country Parties participated in the meeting as observers.
2. In accordance with the “Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to greenhouse gas inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention”,¹ both procedural and technical issues relating to the review of BRs and NCs of developed country Parties were addressed at the meeting with a view to facilitating the work of the LRs to ensure consistency of review across Parties.
3. The LRs note the decisions on the enhanced transparency framework under the Paris Agreement (ETF) adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement and the secretariat’s update on and plans for transition from the measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) arrangements under the Convention to the ETF.²
4. The LRs take note of the information provided by the secretariat³ on progress in implementing the international consultation and analysis process, which helps developing country Parties gain experience as they move towards implementing the ETF.

Experience from the fourth round of international assessment and review

5. The LRs acknowledge that the review of BRs and the multilateral assessment process provide opportunities for testing approaches and tools, such as BR virtual team room, MA portal, review report template and checklist, Review Practice Guidance, planning for reviews, that will facilitate the technical expert review under the ETF.
6. The LRs also acknowledge the experience gained in remotely conducting the review of BR4s in 2020–2021 and the extra efforts made by the reviewers. The contribution of all experts who participated in the review of BR4s has been acknowledged on the UNFCCC website.⁴ The LRs note that conducting reviews remotely presents both advantages and disadvantages for the participating experts, depending on their personal circumstances (e.g. managing routine official work and maintaining work life balance alongside the review work), among other issues. Challenges faced by some experts in remotely participating in reviews should be considered in planning the review modalities in the future.
7. The LRs further acknowledge the background paper providing an update on the assessment of completeness and transparency of information in BRs⁵ and request the secretariat to continue to evaluate the consistency of assessment across the review of BR5s and improvements in reporting in the BR5s, as well as to assess how reporting and review practices under the existing MRV arrangements have evolved and how they can inform the reporting and technical expert review processes under the ETF.
8. The LRs note that completeness of the information reported in the BR4s has improved while transparency remained at the same level compared with the previous review of BR3s, and that high level of consistency of the reviews is maintained. The LRs also note that more than half of Parties further improved

¹ Decision 13/CP.20, annex.

² Available at <http://unfccc.int/documents/461023>.

³ Available at https://unfccc.int/event/9th_BRNC_LRMeeting2022.

⁴ See <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/transparency-and-reporting/training-programmes-for-experts/celebrating-technical-experts#eq-19>.

⁵ Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/460812>.

their reporting owing to resubmissions of BR4s during the review process,⁶ although expert review teams (ERTs) faced challenges in responding to the resubmissions within the mandated timeline for review report preparation.

Preparations for the review of fifth biennial reports and eighth national communications

9. The LRs note that the BR5s and NC8s are planned to be reviewed in 2023–2024, followed by multilateral assessment during the sessions of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation in the second half of 2023, in 2024 and possibly in the first half of 2025.

10. The LRs also note that two thirds of the experts nominated for the review of BRs and NCs on the UNFCCC roster of experts have not yet undertaken the training and certification to become a reviewer.⁷ The LRs encourage those experts to enrol in the training programme at their earliest opportunity.⁸ The LRs note that new experts should be included in the ERTs for the review of BR5s and NC8s, carefully allocating tasks among the experienced and new experts so that LRs are empowered to support new experts. The LRs encourage all eligible experts to prepare for and participate in the upcoming review of BR5s and NC8s.

11. The LRs acknowledge the background paper on the remotely conducted review of BR4s and implications for future BR and NC reviews⁹ prepared by the secretariat, and that, given the continued uncertainty around the in-person participation of review experts stemming from the pandemic, in-person in-country reviews with a virtual component may be implemented in the upcoming BR5 and NC8 review cycle with the agreement of Parties and ERTs.

12. The LRs also acknowledge the two background papers prepared by the secretariat as inputs to the discussion on the Review Practice Guidance (RPG), on approaches to the technical assessment of the achievement of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets in 2020¹⁰ and reporting requirements for developed country Parties: comparison of BR, NC and biennial transparency report.¹¹

13. The LRs request the secretariat to prepare the RPG for 2022,¹² including incorporating the approaches discussed and agreed at the meeting. The LRs agree that the review approaches presented in the RPG 2022 should be applied by the ERTs in the review of BR5s and NC8s. The agreed approaches relate to:

- a. Noting of recurring reporting issues;
- b. Technical assessment of the achievement of the quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets in 2020;
- c. Treatment of recommendations and encouragements in the final TRR of BRs;
- d. The updated scoreboard for the assessment of the completeness and transparency of the information reported in NCs in line with the revised “Guidelines for the preparation of national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention, Part II: UNFCCC reporting guidelines on national communications” (UNFCCC reporting guidelines on NCs).¹³ The LRs noted that the ERT should continue to apply a qualitative assessment in its expert judgement in order to make a final determination on the level of completeness and transparency in reporting.

⁶ In total, 22 of the 40 reviewed Parties resubmitted their BR4 as a result of preliminary findings by the ERT communicated during the review.

⁷ As at 20 October 2021, 514 experts had successfully completed the BR and NC reviewer training programme of the 1,534 experts nominated on the UNFCCC roster of experts for the review of BRs and NCs.

⁸ The next online training for BR and NC review experts will be launched on 29 August 2022, with examinations to take place in the week of 10 October 2022; see <https://unfccc.int/process/transparency-and-reporting/reporting-and-review-under-the-convention/training-of-review-experts/training-programmes-for-the-review-of-information-submitted-by-annex-i-parties>.

⁹ Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/460813>.

¹⁰ Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/461000>.

¹¹ Available at <https://unfccc.int/documents/460811>.

¹² The RPG 2022 will be available at <https://unfccc.int/RPG>.

¹³ Decision 6/CP.25, annex.

14. The LRs request the secretariat to explore ways how to inform Parties under the review on the differences in reporting requirements of BR and BTR.

15. The LRs also request the secretariat to continue collecting information on and analysing the review-related issues raised by the ERTs during BR5/NC8 reviews under the Convention with a view to presenting them for discussion at future meetings of LRs, as needed.

[paragraphs 16–17 below will be discussed during day 3]

16. The LRs further request the secretariat to update the tools to be used for the review of NC8s (e.g. review report template, checklist and RPG) in line with the revised UNFCCC reporting guidelines on NCs.

17. The LRs acknowledge the concept for the development of the IDR8/TRR5 review report template and checklist and request the secretariat to present the review report template, the checklist and other review tools at the next meeting of LRs and to organize activities to facilitate practical use of these tools and approaches to address review challenges such as estimation of mitigation impacts of policies and measures and the assessment of the achievement of 2020 targets.]
