

Mainstreaming Scientific Knowledge into the Process for Nationally-determining Contributions

Kentaro Tamura, PhD

Area Leader/Principal Policy Researcher
Climate and Energy Area, IGES



Background

- Growing attention on nationally determined mitigation commitments with some form of international process to enable *ex-ante* clarity of such commitments and to ensure that Parties' commitments are ambitious as well as equitable

However,

- Finding a way to increase the level of mitigation commitments in an equitable manner is very challenging.

Optimistic stance

- *"Countries will be more ambitious if they have confidence that their peers are also genuinely acting."* Todd Stern, U.S. special envoy
 - How can such confidence be built? How can peer pressure be generated?
 - ✓ Information on Parties' relative contributions to the 2° C target
 - ✓ Such information should be scientifically well-founded and politically non-biased, be comparative and/or infused with prescriptive guidance

Limitation of the Current Institutional Arrangements

- None of the current institutional arrangements for providing information on mitigation commitments and actions under the UNFCCC generate such information.
 - The “clarification and understanding” processes of the Copenhagen mitigation pledges
 - On developed countries’ pledges: less comparative due to weak adherence
 - On developing countries’ pledges: not comparative by design
 - Biennial report (BR)/international assessment and review (IAR) and biennial update report (BUR)/international consultation and analysis (ICA)
 - Snapshot of the progress made, rather than new submissions of new commitments
 - 2013-2015 Review
 - Overall progress towards achieving the long-term global goal, rather than Parties’ individual commitments to climate change mitigation

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Proposal

1. A consortium of respected research institutes should be established with a view to providing benchmarks to which Parties can refer when proposing their initial commitments and against which each Party’s relative contribution to the 2°C target will be assessed.
2. To enhance *ex-ante* clarity and comparability of Parties’ commitments, the Consortium will also provide a common and clear template for information on mitigation commitments that Parties will complete *ex-ante*.
3. A limited number of Parties—for example the G20 member countries—will be requested to complete the common template and go through an international consultation process with a view to amending commitments to meet the required aggregate contribution for the 2°C target.

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Timelines for the international consultation process proposed

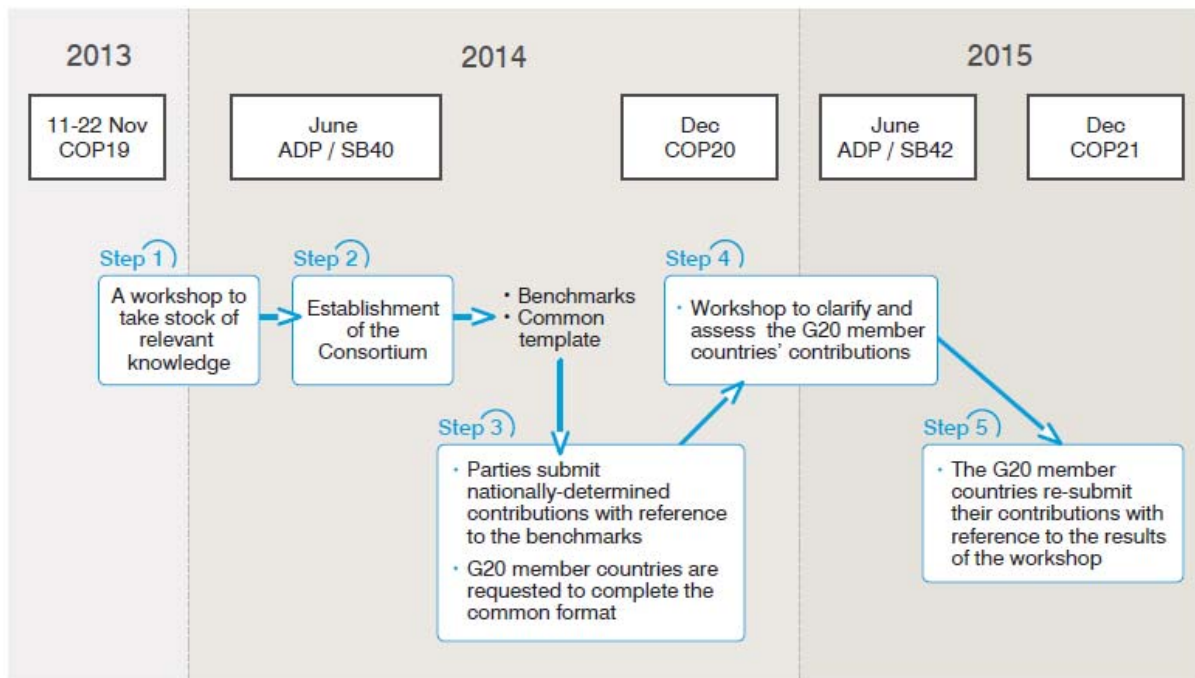


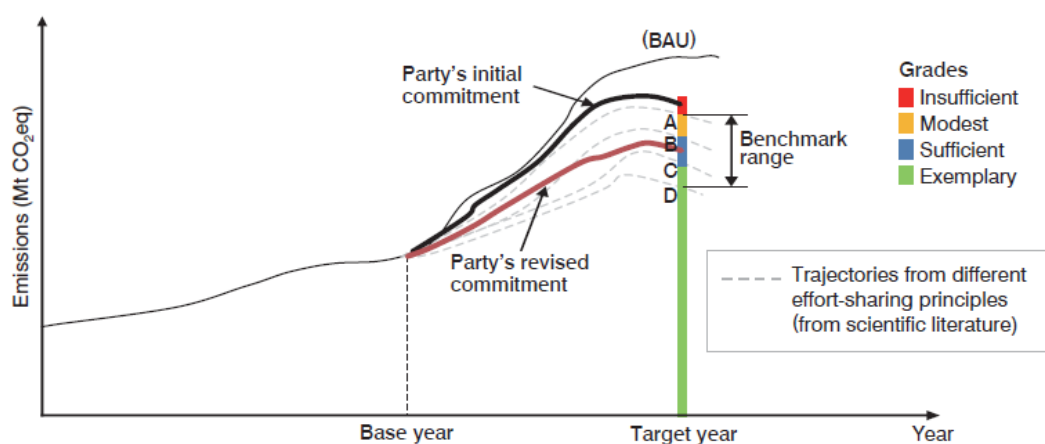
Figure 3. Timeline for the international consultation process

Clarification

- Why is a consortium necessary?
 - A consultation process can give rise to peer pressure through comparisons between countries.
 - There needs to be development and sharing of benchmarks or indicators to compare Parties' commitments.
 - However, comparisons may produce positive results only when the indicators and methods of comparison are clear and widely accepted.
 - This is why a consortium consisting of a wide range of respected research institutes is necessary.

Clarification

- What would the benchmarks look like?
 - Difficulty in agreeing upon a single effort-sharing approach
 - “Benchmark range” to incorporate a wide range of approaches to sharing mitigation efforts among countries in consistent with the 2° C target
 - This concept is similar to the approach taken by Climate Action Tracker, but different in terms of diversity of researchers and approaches involved.



Clarification

- Why are only limited number of countries requested to go through a consultation process?
 - The current institutional “congestion” regarding review/consultation
 - BR/IAR, BUR/ICA, the 2013-2015 Review, Review of Annex I Parties’ 6th National Communications and the inventory review of the first Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol
 - A limited number of countries, say G20 member countries, in order to be efficient and complete its work in time (by 2015).
 - Note: the BUR/ICA for developing countries can contribute to the improvement in their measurement and reporting capacity. These arrangements should continue.
- What is the rationale for targeting G20 member countries?
 - Developing countries of G20 show their interest and capacity to supply and manage “global public goods.”

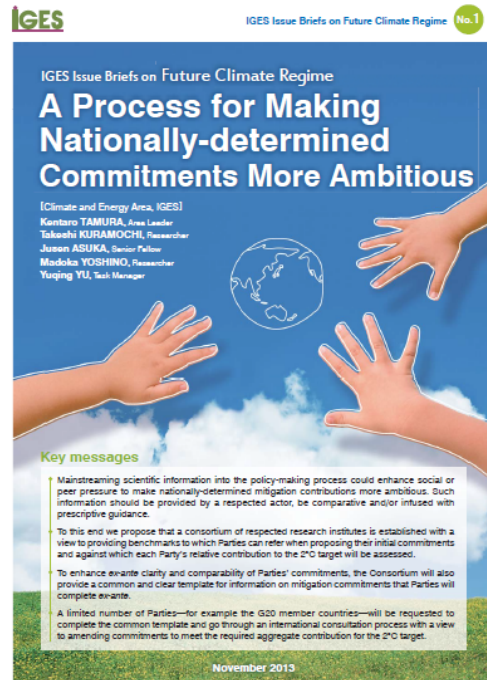
Clarification

- How does the *ex-ante* clarification process move forward?
 - Option 1: Limited function
 - A venue for basic information change on the benchmark range the Parties' proposed commitments and the global emission gap
 - Pros: Limited resources and time required; Parties' more willingness to take part in
 - Cons: Limited level of transparency and clarity
 - Option 2: Moderate function
 - To grade each Party's proposed commitments against the benchmark range
 - Pros: Further transparency and clarity; grading enhances peer pressure.
 - Cons: More resources required; Parties' reluctance to be officially graded
 - Option 3: Active function
 - To review the proposed commitment at the sectoral level and examine whether the mitigation potential of each Party is fully addressed
 - Pros: In-depth clarity, comparative and prescriptive information further enhance peer pressure.
 - Cons: More resources and technical knowledge; Could be seen too intrusive.

Concluding Remarks

- Three advantages
 - Build upon the existing initiatives of research institutions
 - A concerted action in the research community, further policy impacts
 - Be integrated into the current institutional arrangement for generating, exchanging and reviewing information, though additional COP decisions will be required
 - Contribute to the mainstreaming of existing mitigation science into the target setting process.
- Caveats
 - While the proposed process is up to 2015. How can the proposed approach be dynamically applied beyond this period?
 - Information is important but not everything. For example, incentive mechanisms to provide Parties with material interests, as well as a compliance and enforcement system, can also play a part. These components should be considered in an overall picture of a post-2020 framework

Thank you very much



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