

The Building Blocks for MRV and Transparency: National Communications and GHG Inventories

Kate M. Larsen
U.S. Department of State
19th Asia-Pacific Seminar on Climate Change
July 20, 2010

Overview

1. Purpose of a UNFCCC framework for MRV and transparency
2. *Annex I* - the current system for reporting and review
 - Inventories
 - National Communications
3. *Non-Annex I* -the current system for reporting and review
4. Looking forward – building on experience
5. Elaborating Copenhagen Accord provisions for MRV and ICA
 - Inventories
 - National Communications
 - International Consultation and Analysis

Purpose of a UNFCCC MRV & Transparency Framework

1. Build and sustain domestic capacity

- Regular reporting and expert analysis promotes learning by doing, builds and sustains domestic capacity to measure and manage emissions

2. Transparent information sharing

- Measure global progress toward achieving ultimate objective
- Understand extent to which Party implements pledged targets/ actions
- Understand sources and effectiveness of support

3. Facilitative and confidence-building

- Improve reporting quality and scope over time through expert analysis and recommendations
- Not compliance or political judgments about adequacy of commitments

4. International support to overcome constraints

- Full agreed costs (Article 4.3) provided to non-Annex I Parties for compiling and communicating information under Article 12.1
- Flexibility according to capabilities – LDCs only at their discretion

Annex I - the current system for reporting and review Inventories

Measurement

- Annual accounting of anthropogenic emissions and sequestration
- Using IPCC methodologies
 - Different rigor provided for countries with different capabilities
 - System for identifying the “key sources” within each country

Reporting

- Annual electronic report of emissions and supporting data in common reporting tables, time series from 1990 to present year, National Inventory Report with narrative explanation, detailed uncertainty estimates

Review and Verification

- Reviewed annually by accredited international experts
- Purpose is facilitative - ensure no bias in estimates, reduce uncertainties as far as practicable, consistency with external datasets, and to identify sources of uncertainty to guide improvements over time
- Transparency: submissions and review reports posted on UNFCCC website

Annex I – the current system for reporting and review National Communications

Measurement and Reporting

- Inventory of annual emissions from 1990 to the year prior to submission;
- Description of policies and measures (planned, adopted, implemented) by sector, as well as estimates of their individual and aggregate GHG effects;
- Projections to 2020 of business as usual, “with measures” and “with additional measures” by sector and gas;
- Information on financial resources provided through bilateral, regional and other multilateral channels, broken down by country recipient.

Review and Verification

- International team of experts conduct in-depth review;
- Desk-based study and in-country visit where Party is able to provide further information and answer any questions, product is summary report;
- Aims to provide a comprehensive, technical assessment of information provided by the Party and recommendations for future improvements.

Non-Annex I – the current system for reporting and review

Inventories

- No requirement for annual submission of inventories
- Inventories submitted as part of national communications, no time series, data for single year (1994 for 1st, 2000 for 2nd, no date for subsequent inventories)

National Communications

- National inventory
- Descriptions of steps taken or envisaged to implement the Convention
- Any other information that the non-Annex I Party considers relevant

Review

- There is currently no formal process for review

Looking Forward – Building on Experience

- *Guidance*: Bali Action Plan and Copenhagen Accord, enhanced implementation of the Convention
- *Building blocks*: GHG Inventories and National Communications
- *Experience*: the UNFCCC developed an effective system and helped build Annex I Parties' capacity

Elaborating Copenhagen Accord provisions for MRV and ICA Inventories

National GHG Inventories

- Biennial reporting (every 2 years)
- Using 2006 IPCC Guidelines, tiers based on capacity
- Common reporting formats
- Recognizing need for flexibility and transition over time based on capacity

Goal: More regular reporting builds and sustains domestic capacity, learning from expert technical advice, improvements in inventory scope and quality over time

Elaborating Copenhagen Accord provisions for MRV and ICA National Communications

Streamlined biennial communications (every 2 years), including:

- Status of implementation of actions (both supported and unsupported)
- Estimated emissions impacts and methodologies and assumptions used
- Description of domestic MRV system and its results
- Finance, technology and capacity building support receipt/use, relation to needs identified in LEDS, international offsets used/generated

Full national communications periodically (every 4-6 years), including same content as biennial communications, in addition to:

- National circumstances
- National vulnerability assessment/impacts, adaptation actions
- Emission projections with and without actions
- Any updates to low-emission development strategies (LEDS)

Goal: International understanding of range of actions in context of national sustainable development and any support needs/receipt

Elaborating Copenhagen Accord provisions for MRV and ICA

International Consultation and Analysis

International consultation and analysis:

- Inventories and domestic MRV of mitigation actions reported through biennial communications
- Technical analysis of communications by an independent expert panel that produces a technical report
- Consultations under the SBI – interactive dialogue among Parties, based on technical report
- A summary report of technical analysis and consultations

Goal: Party-driven process that respects national sovereignty and promotes transparency and better understanding of Parties' actions, determines extent to which implementing actions and facilitates dialogue any constraints or needs

Conclusions

An international system for MRV and transparency should:

1. Build and sustain domestic capacity
2. Encourage transparent information sharing
3. Be facilitative and confidence-building
4. Provide international support to overcome constraints

The Convention gave us the building blocks - national GHG inventories and national communications

We can use experience with the extensive Annex I system for reporting and review to build a system for non-Annex I Parties that is flexible and takes into account different capacities