Operational Criteria for enabling Activities: Climate Change

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BACKGROUND

1. The following relevant provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) are recalled:

Article. 12.1:

'In accordance with Article 4, paragraph 1, each Party shall communicate to the Conference of the Parties, through the secretariat, the following elements of information:

- (a) A national inventory of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, to the extent its capacities permit, using comparable methodologies to be promoted and agreed upon by the Conference of the Parties
- (b) A general description of steps taken or envisaged by the Party to implement the Convention; and
- (c) Any other information that the Party considers relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention and suitable for inclusion in its communication, including, if feasible, material relevant for calculations of global emission trends'.

Article 12.5:

Each developed country Party and each other Party included in Annex 1 shall make its initial communication within six months of the entry into force of the Convention for that Party. Each Party not so listed shall make its initial communication within three years of the entry into force of the Convention for that Party, or of the availability of financial resources in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 3. Parties that are least developed countries may make their initial communication at their discretion. The frequency of subsequent communications by all Parties shall be determined by the Conference of the Parties, taking into account the differentiated timetable set by this paragraph'.

- 2. At its first meeting, the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the FCCC identified the funding of enabling activities as a program priority in its guidance to the GEF, as the operating entity of the financial mechanism of the FCCC, on an interim basis. (see endnote 1)
- 3. Enabling activities were defined by the COP as (see endnote 2)

'[measures] such as planning and endogenous capacity building, including institutional strengthening, training, research and education, that will facilitate implementation, in accordance with the Convention, of effective response measures'.

4. Enabling activities thus concern the implementation of the measures envisaged in Article 4.1 of the FCCC (see glossary in Annex F). They include measures related to the communication obligations of countries under Article 12.1, as well as activities that relate more generally to the

commitments under Article 4.1. In conformity with the Convention, the 'agreed full costs' are financed for enabling activities related to national communications, while 'agreed full incremental cost' funding may be available for other enabling activities.

- 5. For enabling activities related to communication obligations, the draft GEF Operational Strategy calls for the development of operational criteria to (see endnote 3)
- (a) clarify the basis of possible GEF support in the country, its complementarity to past and ongoing support, and its focus on the task of preparing a particular strategy, plan, program or communications; and
- (b) to set out the scope, sequence, depth, frequency, and cost norms of the envisaged components of such support.
- 6. The present document sets out these criteria for enabling activities related to national communications in the climate change area. (see endnote 4) Because the guidelines for national communications by non-Annex 1 Parties are still under consideration by the COP, the criteria will, for the interim, be based broadly on the requirements of Article 12.1, taking into account the common, but differentiated responsibilities of countries. The criteria will be revised as necessary once the guidelines for non-Annex 1 Parties have been developed by the COP. Other decisions by the COP, including guidance on enabling activities related to subsequent communications, will similarly be incorporated as necessary.
- 7. Enabling activities not related to national communications are not covered by the operational criteria. These other enabling activities are prepared and assessed in the context of an operational program, since their aim is to facilitate the implementation of GEF operational programs. They include measures like planning and capacity building, including institutional strengthening, training, public participation and targeted research, that complement other activities of the relevant operational program and are necessary for its success.

OPERATIONAL CRITERIA

- 8. There are four operational criteria:
- (a) Coverage without duplication;
- (b) Appropriate overall sequencing of activities;
- (c) Good practice; and
- (d) Cost-effectiveness.
- 9. These criteria apply to all enabling activities, whether free-standing or regional umbrella projects. In the case of umbrella projects, the operational criteria apply to each country subcomponent of the project. Thus, both types of projects provide the same service, and

countries should in principle be indifferent between joining an umbrella project and receiving enabling activities through a one-country project. The choice depends on the comparative advantage of each approach for particular tasks.

Criterion 1: Coverage without duplication

- 10. The aim of enabling activities is to provide sufficient capabilities for recipient countries to fulfill their current commitments under Article 12.1 of the FCCC, without duplication of efforts or funding. That is, in assessing a country's needs, past, ongoing, planned and committed activities are fully taken into account: e.g., bilateral activities, multilateral programs, as well as activities undertaken by other agencies. GEF projects concentrate on filling remaining gaps.
- 11. To assure that there will be coverage without duplication, an activity matrix is compiled for all countries requesting assistance. The activity matrix summarizes:
- (a) the existing capabilities in a country,
- (b) the improvement expected from ongoing, planned, and committed enabling activities,
- (c) the improvement envisaged through the proposed enabling activity, and
- (d) the remaining assistance needed to provide sufficient capabilities.

Details on the activity matrix, and how it is constructed are provided in Annex A.

Criterion 2: Appropriate overall sequencing of activities

- 12. While it is not expected that the goal of sufficient capabilities is necessarily achieved within one project, projects should be embedded in an overall strategy that leads towards sufficient capability. To this end project documents contain a plan for enablement, indicating the timetable for producing the national communication and how remaining gaps could be filled.
- 13. Activities are carried out in sequence. The process of preparing a national communication normally comprises the following four elements, which are carried out in turn
- (a) Stocktaking and inventories (collection of background information)
- (b) Identification of options to meet the objectives of the Convention
- (c) Preparation of a national plan (national implementation strategy)
- (d) Preparation of the national communication
- 14. To enhance the action-oriented character of enabling activities, individual activities often serve a double purpose. In addition to forming the basis of the national communication, enabling activities initiate a planning process and prepare the ground for project development and the implementation of the national plan. Actual project development goes beyond (communication-related) enabling activities, however. Countries may request PDF funds for proposals that are in line with GEF operational policy and programs. (see endnote 5)
- 15. Annex B contains guidelines on the appropriate sequencing of activities.

Criterion 3: Good practice

16. Enabling activities are provided at an acceptable level of detail that takes into account the needs of the country, but does not normally entail original research. Enabling activity projects follow good practice and observe established guidelines, using existing tools whenever available. Whenever possible, technical assistance is provided through regional experts. Annex C contains an indicative list of relevant guidelines.

Criterion 4: Cost-effectiveness

- 17. Projects adopt the least-cost means of providing assistance to countries. Projects follow general GEF policy and are subject to the same operational guidelines on eligible expenditures and administrative costs that apply in the case of project development and preparation. (see endnote 6) In accordance with these rules, funds are primarily used to meet the in-country costs associated with an enabling activity.
- 18. To ensure their cost-effectiveness, projects follow two types of norms

- (a) Activity norms that describe the list of the activities which typically form part of an enablement plan (e.g., compilation of an emission inventory);
- (b) Cost norms that describe the typical cost associated with each of these activities (e.g., costs of producing an emission inventory).
- 19. The cost and activity norms used for communication-related enabling activities are outlined in Annex D.

PREPARATION OF PROPOSALS

- 20. Project proposals submitted to the GEF Operations Committee (GEFOP) contain, for each country participating in the project, an activity matrix and an enablement plan. Deviations from cost and activity norms are clearly explained in the project document. The standard format for proposals is shown in Annex E.
- 21. Proposals are endorsed by the GEF operational focal points of each country participating in the project. In this endorsement, countries explicitly acknowledge the project goal, which is providing sufficient capabilities in those cells of the activity matrix covered by the project. That is, no further enabling activities are expected to be necessary with respect to those areas covered in the project. (see endnote 7)
- 22. The Climate Change Task Force reviews proposals for their conformity with the operational criteria. Proposals that are in line with the criteria are submitted to GEFOP as a package, with the recommendation of the Task Force. Proposals that do not conform to the criteria, or which are not recommended by the Task Force for other reasons, are discussed individually in GEFOP.

ANNEX A

THE ACTIVITY MATRIX

1. PURPOSE OF AN ACTIVITY MATRIX

The purpose of an activity matrix is to summarize, in a concise way, the already existing capabilities in a country, the improvement envisaged through the proposed project, and the gaps remaining after project completion.

2. DIMENSIONS OF CAPABILITIES

Two main dimensions of capabilities can be distinguished. First, there are the different types of commitments, for which assistance may have to be provided (e.g., the provision of an emissions inventory). Second, different capabilities may be required to meet a certain commitment (e.g., know-how needed to produce an emission inventory).

3. TYPES OF COMMITMENTS

Article 12.1 of the FCCC calls for countries to prepare a national communication containing information relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention. It is anticipated that the format of national communications of non-Annex I countries will take into account that for Annex-I parties, and may include the following elements: (see endnote 8)

- (a) an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions and sinks;
- (b) options for climate change mitigation;
- (c) vulnerability assessment and adaptation options;
- (d) findings from research projects and the systematic observation of climate variables;
- (e) information on education, training, and public awareness; and
- (f) any other relevant information.

The types of activities included in communication-related enabling activities are determined by the requirement to provide this information. The activities typically needed to produce a national communication are outlined in the activity norms (see Annex D).

Once the format for non-Annex 1 communications has been developed by the COP, the operational criteria will be adjusted as necessary.

4. TYPES OF CAPABILITIES

In addition to the planning and actual execution of a task, enabling activities include measures to build the capacity necessary for a country to perform these tasks. Such capacity building measures include the strengthening of relevant institutions and adequate training.

5. THE BASIC ENABLING ACTIVITY BUILDING BLOCKS

The dimensions of enabling activities span a matrix of two principal classes of capability (output and capacity) and four principal types of activities. Table A1 shows the standard activity matrix. Each cell in the matrix refers to a specific activity. For example, the entry for "training" and "emission inventory" could refer to instruction courses in the OECD/IPCC inventory software. The cells of the activity matrix constitute the basic building blocks of enabling activities.

6. COMPILING THE MATRIX

Most of the information on previous and ongoing (including planned and committed) projects needed to construct the activity matrix is available from the CC:INFO database maintained by the FCCC Secretariat. Implementing agencies check the information from the database as necessary to assure an accurate representation of existing capabilities in the matrix.

In assessing existing capabilities, the presumption is that previous and ongoing enabling activities have succeeded or will succeed in providing sufficient capabilities in the categories they deal with. That is, if an activity is already covered by other enabling activities, the corresponding cell in the activity matrix is ticked and no further activities are undertaken in this area. Deviations from this rule are justified in the project document, where it is explained why initial activities are not considered sufficient (usually because of inadequacies identified in an independent evaluation of these activities).

7. EXAMPLE

Table A2 gives an example of a (shortened) activity matrix. Entries to the matrix are binary. A positive entry indicates sufficient capabilities, while a negative entry denotes insufficient capabilities. In the example, bold entries 'x' show the areas to be covered by the proposed enabling activity. Acronyms standing for other projects or programs (e.g. 'CCT' for CC:TRAIN, 'US' for the US Country Studies Program. 'GTZ' for the German program) indicate areas already covered by these projects. Remaining gaps are represented by a '0', while 'NA' indicates a non-applicable or nonsensical entry (e.g., coastal vulnerability assessment for a land-locked country). Bracketed items indicate projects in progress.

ANNEX B

ENABLEMENT PLAN AND APPROPRIATE SEQUENCING

1. SEQUENCING

The individual tasks of an enabling activity are performed in sequence. Tasks building on the results of prior activities are only undertaken if these prior steps have been taken. For example, an analysis of available mitigation options is a prerequisite for the formulation of a national mitigation plan. Similarly, if a satisfactory and detailed national plan already exists, further mitigation analysis are not usually considered a necessary part of enabling activities.

In particular, the following sequencing of activities is observed:

- (a) for mitigation analysis: inventory mitigation options national plan National Communication
- (b) for adaptation analysis: vulnerability assessment (stage I) adaptation options (stage I) national plan (stage I) national communication

2. COORDINATION OF MITIGATION AND ADAPTATION

With respect to the coordination between mitigation and adaptation analysis, countries are free to set their own priorities and perform these tasks in the order that best suits their needs.

3. ENABLEMENT PLAN

Appropriate sequencing also applies for projects building on the work of other agencies and organizations.

For projects that do not fill all remaining gaps, an enablement plan is established that shows how the proposed project is integrated and coordinated with complementary activities, and how remaining gaps are expected to be filled.

ANNEX C

INDICATIVE LIST OF ENABLING ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

1. GOOD PRACTICE

For each required activity, assistance may be provided for recipient countries to fulfill their communication commitments. A country has sufficient capabilities to perform a task

- (a) if the country is able to carry out a required activity in accordance with established practice, following accepted guidelines;
- (b) if subsequent tasks that build on it can likewise be completed at the required level; and
- (c) if required tasks can be carried out in a way that conforms to the usual practice in the country and in a way that is in line with existing capacities on which the enabling activity builds, but which it does not aim to improve (e.g. general development planning).

Furthermore, enabling activity projects follow good practice when these:

- (a) observe general GEF operational principles as outlined in the GEF Operational Strategy (e.g. country-drivenness, compliance with FCCC guidance);
- (b) involve key government agencies in a leading role, such that they take ownership of the recommendations, and integrate climate change issues into their own mission, functions and budget.
- (c) are conducted in a participatory manner, involving a broad range of stakeholders such as firms in key sectors, industry associations, NGOs, affected communities and financial institutions;
- (d) help to integrate climate change issues into other development plans and larger sustainable development initiatives;
- (e) make use of regional and local expertise whenever available; and
- (f) share experiences and information with other country teams.

2. GUIDELINES FOR ENABLING ACTIVITIES

Enabling activity projects follow established guidelines. Whenever available, established tools and methodologies should be used, instead of developing new ones. Possible guidelines to be utilized include

ANNEX C

3. UPDATING

The indicative list of available tools and guidelines will be periodically updated, as learning takes place and new tools and information become available.

ANNEX D

COST AND ACTIVITY NORMS

To assure the cost effectiveness of enabling activities, projects are expected to be consistent with the following activity and cost norms.

1. ACTIVITY NORMS

Activity norms describe the activities required to meet the commitments under Article 12.1 of the FCCC. The list of activities has to strike a balance between specificity on the one hand and flexibility and administrative simplicity on the other. Basic building blocks have to be narrowly defined, to ensure that projects can be accurately described by a list of included activities. At the same time, activity norms have to be simple and flexible enough to keep the task of compiling the activity matrix simple. Table D1 provides the standard set of activity norms that are typically used (the level of detail may sometimes vary depending on the project).

2. COST NORMS

Indicators of reasonable cost ranges for individual activities ensure cost-effectiveness in each activity, including administrative needs. Each cost range describes the approximate expenditure needed to perform a particular activity. Projects that do not cover the full range of activities are expected to incur lower costs, in accordance with the cost norms (e.g. projects that only concern training for, but not the actual execution, of a task). Table D2 provides the initial list of cost norms to be used.

3. DEVIATIONS FROM COST NORMS

In exceptional cases, proposals may deviate from the cost norms. The adequacy and costeffectiveness of such proposals is judged on a case-by-case basis. Deviations can occur either

(a) because a proposal envisages coverage that goes beyond activity norms and good practice; or

(b) because of special circumstances that lead to higher costs for the provision of the usual coverage.

To the extent that proposals go beyond activity norms and good practice (case a), they are considered an enabling activity that goes beyond the preparation of a national communication. They are therefore evaluated according to the criteria relevant for such activities (compatibility with operational programs, incremental cost analysis, see paragraph 7). For example, a particular enabling activity may be carried out in more detail than strictly necessary, because the additional insights are of general value and could assist other countries in a similar situation. The additional analysis that goes beyond the requirements of the communication is then judged in the context of a relevant operational program.

ANNEX D

Special circumstances that may justify above average costs for activities related to national communications (case b) include

- (i) the complexity of the response options that need to be analyzed;
- (ii) the diversity of emission sources and sinks, or of available response options.

4. ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

The following expenditures are normally excluded from GEF funding: (see endnote 9)

- (a) costs associated with the work of specialized Implementing Agency staff or consultants retained by an Implementing Agency needed for a particular task (including those that are over and above those covered by the administrative budget);
- (b) capital goods other than those directly required for activities specified in the activity norms; and
- (c) goods and services that can be produced through funding channels other than GEF.

TABLE D1: ACTIVITY NORMS

- 1. Inventories and Stocktaking
- (a) emission inventory:
- (i) CO2 from energy sources;
- (ii) CO2 from land use change;
- (iii) CH4 from energy sources;

(iv) CH4 from other sources;
(v) N2O; and
(vi) other sources and gases.
(b) vulnerability assessment:
(i) agriculture;
(ii) forestry;
(iii) coastal zone;
(iv) water resources;
(v) health impacts
(vi) natural ecosystems; and
(vii) other impacts.
2. Identification of Options to Meet the Objectives of the Convention
(a) mitigation options
(i) energy related
a. industry
b. transport
c. energy supply
d. residential
(ii) non-energy sources
a. agriculture
b. forestry
c. waste management
d. other

(iii) sink enhancement
(b) adaptation options (stage I adaptation)
3. Preparation of a Plan to Fulfill Commitments
(a) national plan for mitigation
(b) national plan for adaptation
(c) limited public awareness building
4. Preparation of a national communication
(a) inventory
(b) mitigation options
(c) vulnerability and adaptation
(d) other relevant information
TABLE D2: COST NORMS FOR COMMUNICATION-RELATED ENABLING ACTIVITIES
(Available from the GEF Secretariat)
ANNEX E
STANDARD FORMAT FOR PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNICATION-RELATED ENABLING ACTIVITIES
Cover Page
Country
Project Title
GEF Focal Area
Country Eligibility
GEF Financing
Government Counterpart Financing
GEF Implementing Agency

Executing Agency

Local Counterpart Agency

Estimated Starting Date

Project Duration

Body of Proposal

Background/Context

Project Objectives and Description

Information related to Criterion 1 (Coverage without duplication)

- Activity Matrix (for each participating country)

Information related to Criterion 2 (appropriate sequencing)

- Enablement Plan (remaining steps to achieve sufficient capability)
- National Level Support

Information related to Criterion 3 (best practice)

- Lessons Learned and Technical Review

Information related to Criterion 4 (cost-effectiveness)

- Project Financing and Budget
- Explanation for deviations from cost norms (where applicable)

Institutional Framework and Project Implementation

Annexes

- Project endorsement by GEF operational focal points of each participating country, acknowledging project goal of sufficient capability in areas covered by the project.
- Technical Opinion

ANNEX F

ENABLING ACTIVITIES AND RELATED MEASURES -- A GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABATEMENT

The term abatement refers to activities undertaken to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Abatement measures are a subset of mitigation activities, the other main mitigation measure being sink enhancement.

ADAPTATION

Adaptation activities are measures undertaken to reduce vulnerability and to moderate the adverse effects of environmental impacts, for example climate change. In the context of climate change, decision 11/CP.1 of the COP identifies three stages in the adaptation process:

Stage I is predominantly concerned with vulnerability studies and the assessment of available adaptation options. It also envisages initial measures to build adaptive capacity. Stage I adaptation may be incorporated into, and become part of a country's national communication. Where this is the case, Stage I measures are eligible for GEF funding.

Stages II and III include the medium and long term adaptation measures envisaged in Articles 4.1(b) and 4.1(e) of the FCCC. Stage II and III activities are not yet eligible for funding under the Convention.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The term capacity building refers to a wide range of measures relevant not only to global environment issues but to development activities in general. Capacity building may be defined as the process of creating or enhancing indigenous capabilities to perform specific tasks on an ongoing basis in order to attain a given development objective. Among others, the following three aspects are often stressed:

- (a) human resource development (training, education);
- (b) institutional strengthening (improve organizational methods, administrative procedures); and
- (c) creation of a receptive environment (increase public awareness; create regulations and socio-interactive processes conducive to development).

COUNTRY STUDIES

The development of country studies is one example of an enabling activity. Country studies have been sponsored by several bodies, including GEF and bilateral agencies. Studies usually aim at enhancing the capability of a country to formulate its national communication and/or to develop a national strategy to deal with climate change in the longer term, e.g. by assisting in the development of an emission inventory or the assessment of mitigation options.

EMISSION INVENTORIES

A national emission inventory is one of the key elements of a national communication. An inventory is expected to cover all anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, listed by sources and sinks. The IPCC and the OECD have established a standard format and procedure to perform this task.

ENABLING ACTIVITIES

In the context of climate change, enabling activities were defined by the COP as those measures that facilitate the implementation of response measures in accordance with the FCCC (decision 11/CP.1). Enabling activities in developing country parties are a program priority and eligible for funding under the Convention. Measures include:

- (a) planning; and
- (b) capacity building measures such as
- (i) institutional strengthening,
- (ii) training,
- (iii) research,
- (iv) education,

which help countries to implement the Convention.

MITIGATION

Activities which aim at a reduction of the net amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere, and thus help slowing down the process of anthropogenic climate change, are called mitigation measures. They include both emission abatement and sink enhancement, and cover all greenhouse gases, as well as all economic sectors and activities where emissions occur. Mitigation measures undertaken in developing countries are eligible for incremental cost funding under the FCCC.

NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

The FCCC requires each Party to communicate to the COP information relevant to the achievement of the objective of the FCCC (Art. 4.1(j) and Art. 12). While recognizing the differentiated responsibilities of different countries, communications are expected to contain the following elements (A/AC.237/55, annex I):

- (a) a national inventory of emissions and sinks;
- (b) if feasible, material relevant for the calculation of emission trends;
- (c) a general description of available or envisaged mitigation options;
- (d) a general description of available or envisaged adaptation options;
- (e) an assessment of the country's vulnerability to climate change;
- (f) a description and assessment of measures adopted to implement the FCCC (Annex I countries only); and
- (g) any other relevant information.

Communications of Annex I countries are due within 6 months of the entry into force of the FCCC (countries with economies in transition are granted 'a certain degree of flexibility'). Least developed countries may make their initial communication at their discretion. The communications of all other countries are due within 3 years of the entry into force of the Convention for the country, or within 3 years of the availability of financial resources in accordance with Article 4.3. Non-Annex I countries are eligible for full-cost funding under the Convention.

NATIONAL PLAN

Prior, or parallel to the formulation of the national communication, a national strategy may be developed which sets out in detail how a country intends to achieve the objective of the FCCC, which mitigation and adaptation options it has available, how and when they are best implemented, and so on. Ideally, the development of a national strategy will result in a program of climate change projects, to be subsequently implemented, with appropriate support through the Convention as and when applicable.

SINK ENHANCEMENT

Sink enhancement measures aim at the protection or expansion of forests and other natural systems that are capable of storing carbon and thus reduce the net emission rate of CO2 into the atmosphere.

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Part of stage-I adaptation, a vulnerability assessment analyzes the potential impacts of climate change on a country or region in one or several sectors (e.g., impact on agriculture, on coastal zones, etc.).

ENDNOTES

- 1. FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1, decision 11/CP.1.
- 2. FCCC/CP/1995/7/Add.1, decision 11/CP.1.
- 3. GEF/C.6/3.
- 4. The criteria were developed by the GEF Task Force on Climate Change, in consultation with the FCCC Secretariat.
- 5. See document GEF/C.3/6.
- 6. See GEF/C.3/6.
- 7. Further planning and capacity building activities will often be required for the implementation of identified policies. Projects providing such capacity would form part of a GEF operational program and would be submitted as a general enabling activity project (see paragraph 4 and 7).
- 8. See format for communications from Annex I countries, described in document A/AC.237/55 annex I.
- 9. See the guidelines on eligible expenditures for PDF, document GEF/C.3/6.