

ANNEX 3- STAP ROSTER TECHNICAL REVIEW NATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS SUPPORT PROGRAMME

1. RELEVANCE TO GEF

The project is clearly relevant to the climate change area of GEF. As noted in Article 12 of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the 127 non-Annex 1 parties should submit their first communication to the Convention Secretariat within three years of the entry into force of the Convention for that Party, or following the availability of financial resources in accordance with Article 4. The lack of financial resources may cause non-Annex 1 parties to delay their communications beyond the 3-year period. As of 30 August 1997, only Jordan and Argentina had submitted their initial national communications. This proposal thus is an important step towards ensuring that adequate resources are available to non-Annex 1 parties to complete their communications.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

The project objectives are to improve the quality, comprehensiveness and timeliness of the initial national communications of non-Annex 1 parties. I think the project needs to have as its core goal one or more outlines of what constitutes a national communication. There need not be a single model for this. Indeed, it is desirable to have multiple outlines, one of which would be appropriate for a country to follow.

3. APPROPRIATENESS OF THE PROJECT APPROACH

I think prior to designing the approach for this project, it is important to understand the reasons that prevent 125 of the 127 countries from submitting their national communications. I can imagine that the countries lack data and scientific information to complete their greenhouse gas inventories, conduct analysis of abatement and adaptation options, and assess their vulnerability to climate change. Tables 2 and 3 hint at this. But, I believe that the national communications ought not to be held hostage to this barrier, since there will never be enough data and information to provide a fully-satisfactory national communication. So, the question worth asking is what constitutes an "acceptable" standard for a national communication from a non-Annex 1 country. The Convention text provides only a short and vague description of what a country should submit as a national communication. One way that this project could facilitate towards setting such a standard, would be to provide alternative models for what constitutes a national communication for countries of different economic and population size, GHG emissions, vulnerability to climate change, etc. A handful of such models could be developed in consultation with selected non-Annex 1 countries and then provided as a guide for other countries to follow. The technical support and workshops, which this project would organize, would be geared towards helping countries to adopt, or adapt to, one of the models for their national communication.

4. ACTIVITIES

I would suggest adding a core activity to the project. This core activity would be the creation of model communications that other countries could emulate. The other activities, such as the help desk, technical support and workshops, would assist countries in adopting, or adapting to, one of the models designed by the project team in consultation with selected country(ies).

I note that the proposal cites that the Africa workshop participants wanted more thematic workshops. But if the main goal of the national-communications activity is to integrate the available data and scientific information for the country, then the scope of the thematic and training workshop activity could be reduced. Thematic workshops and training are less useful for writing national communications, since they tend to focus on providing or sharing in-depth knowledge and understanding of specific technical areas.

5. COUNTRIES

It would be desirable to group countries by the typical models that they wish to follow, in order to speed assistance and design workshops that are appropriate for them to attend. Also, it would be useful to provide some sense for the number of countries that might seek assistance from this project. There are several countries that are already being given such assistance through bilateral programs, through UNEP and other international agencies. A tentative list of such countries would help to narrow the types of countries that might seek assistance.

6. OMISSIONS IN BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

The background discussion needs to provide information on countries that are receiving assistance for the preparation of national communications already.

7. FUNDING AND INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The level of funding sought for the project is small compared to the potential support that countries are likely to seek. With national communications from 125 countries still outstanding, the roughly \$2.7 million requested for this project reduces to about \$22,000 per country. Granted that not all countries will seek such assistance or they may have other sources of support. But if even half the countries seek assistance, the funding level per country is still modest. More importantly, the model communications created under this project could be used by the countries that have received funding already for preparing their communications.

The budget allocated for the thematic workshops and training activity could be reduced and, in part, used to support the activity to create the model communications. The creation of the model communications ought to be the core activity with a budget line of around \$300K.

The proposal makes note of bilateral support for the project, but does not delineate the level of funding which might be expected from such sources. This aspect will need to be clarified prior to the funding of the proposal.