

## **Third voluntary meeting on the coordination of support for the implementation of REDD-plus activities in developing countries**

**23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016, 15:00-18:00,**

*Agenda item: Update of the UNFCCC secretariat on the Technical Assessment Process for proposed FREL*

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, colleagues,

Thank you Mr Co-facilitators for giving the secretariat the floor and the opportunity for us to briefly update participants at this meeting about the technical assessment process for proposed forest reference emission levels/ forest reference levels.

I am pleased to provide you a brief overview of the technical assessment sessions that have been organized by the secretariat in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

Following the adoption of the Warsaw Framework for REDD-plus at COP 19 in 2013, the secretariat launched the technical assessment process in 2014. The objective of the technical assessment is to assess the degree to which the information provided by Parties is in accordance with the guidelines contained in decision 12/CP.17. The assessment process also offers a facilitative, non-intrusive, technical exchange on the construction of reference levels with the aim to support the capacities of submitting Parties and to improve their future submissions.

The technical assessment session is organized by the secretariat once a year in Bonn. The entire annual technical assessment process spans 43 weeks, including a one-week centralized assessment session in Bonn.

At the first technical assessment session in 2014, only one submission of a proposed reference level was received from Brazil. In 2015, 5 countries submitted their proposed reference levels: Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Malaysia and Mexico. All these countries successfully completed the technical assessment process. The corresponding technical assessment reports have been published on the UNFCCC website.

This year, 2016, 9 developing countries have proposed their reference levels for the technical assessment. They are: Chile, Congo, Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Indonesia, Paraguay, Peru, Viet Nam and Zambia. The process is ongoing and is expected to complete by the end of November.

The submitting Parties and the technical assessment teams that participated in the technical assessment sessions thus far have acknowledged that the process provided a valuable opportunity for a rich, open, facilitative and constructive technical exchange of information between them. In all cases, Parties provided transparent and complete information and data, continuing to improve them during the assessment session as a result of the technical exchanges had with the assessment teams. On the basis of the technical inputs and suggestions provided by the assessment teams during the technical exchanges, Parties provided modified submissions that significantly

improved the transparency, completeness, consistency and accuracy of the methodological information, data, approaches, methods and models used in constructing their reference levels. Furthermore, the technical assessment reports identified potential areas for future technical improvements.

The secretariat encountered several key challenges in the organization of the technical assessment process, including challenges relating to the availability of well-prepared LULUCF experts and other process-related challenges.

It is critical for the continued efficiency and efficacy of the technical assessment process to have available a sufficient number of LULUCF experts nominated by Parties. However, quite a number of LULUCF experts invited for the assessment sessions could not accept the invitation due to other competing priorities, notably, their participation in several other parallel mandated review and analysis processes under the Convention. The secretariat would like to recall the invitation by the COP to Parties as well as the secretariat's communication with national focal points to nominate new LULUCF experts who can actively participate in any of the review and analysis processes and to regularly check and update the information on experts nominated to the UNFCCC roster of experts. In addition, the secretariat strongly encourages all LULUCF experts nominated to the UNFCCC roster of experts to take the relevant Convention and Kyoto Protocol training course and examinations.

In order to overcome the challenge on planning for the technical assessment session that is in accordance with the guidance and timelines given in decision 13/CP.19, the secretariat has provided early notification to Parties on the planned dates for the technical assessment sessions. For the 2017 technical assessment session, Parties are requested to provide an early notice to the secretariat by 31 October 2016, at the latest. They are requested to submit their proposed reference levels to the secretariat by 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2017. The centralized technical assessment session in Bonn will take place in mid-March 2017.

Participants may wish to read more on the technical assessment process. Further information on the process has been provided in a synthesis report prepared by the secretariat, FCCC/SBSTA/2016/INF.2. The SBSTA, at its opening plenary last Monday, took note of this synthesis report and the recommendations contained therein.

In addition, the links to the submissions of proposed reference levels by Parties and the corresponding technical assessment reports can be found on the REDD+ web platform.

In conclusion, the secretariat continues to build and improve the technical assessment process by gathering experience with the organization of each session.

Thank you.