

Webinar: Reporting adaptation through the BTR

Questions and Answers

7th October, 2020

Question	Answer
<p>1 Will MRV be replaced by ETF and if so, to what extent?</p>	<p>The MRV will be replaced by the ETF for countries that are Party to the Paris Agreement. If we consider the MRV system as the transparency arrangements established at COP17 (i.e. the BR and BUR and their associated review mechanisms), the ETF will actually replace the MRV in its entirety. However, this allows for the continuation of the national communication instrument and its associated review mechanisms (established before COP17), which will continue to be used by/applied to countries that are Party to the Paris Agreement, alongside the instruments (i.e. the BTR and National Inventories Report) and review mechanism (i.e. the Technical Expert Review) under the ETF.</p> <p><i>More information about what the instruments are applicable to communicating and reporting on adaptation plans and actions can be found in section one of the ICAT guidance document "Reporting on adaptation through the biennial transparency report".</i></p>

<p>2</p>	<p>Is it correct that implementation of planned policies and measures in NDCs are then reported through NCs and BTRs (and adaptation communications)? Which reporting instrument would reflect the most of the NDC implementation progress: NC or BTR?</p>	<p>NCs, BTRs, and adaptation communications can all include information about the implementation of planned policies and measures included in countries' NDCs, as well as in their NAPs, other national adaptation plans/strategies (or in fact any adaptation regardless of whether it is included in a plan at all).</p> <p>With regards to which instrument better reflects the NDC implementation process, the answer is not so straight forward. The guidelines for national communications and BTRs do not obligate countries to report adaptation in a certain way (i.e. via a specific structure) or limit what countries include in the document (all information requested by the guidelines is preceded by the prefix "Parties should"). This means that countries can essentially create national communications or BTRs with any structure and include any range of information that they deem fit and as such, countries can structure both these documents in a way that reflects the NDC implementation process.</p> <p>While this is the case however, as the guidelines provided for the BTR are so much more detailed than those for the national communications, countries would likely find that following the guidelines for the BTR would provide them with much greater direction as to how they can report in a manner that reflects the NDC implementation process.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>Why is it so formal classifying the Adaptation Communications as reporting-oriented instruments whose primary function is to provide backward looking information? Some Parties are choosing to use it to communicate forward-looking information on adaptation needs and priorities, as a component of their NDCs.</p>	<p>These are excellent points. In the section one of the ICAT guidance document "Reporting on adaptation through the biennial transparency report", we acknowledge that the adaptation communication is country-driven (as are all adaptation instruments/adaptation aspects of more general instruments) that countries can use in any way they deem fit (i.e. can focus on forward-looking aspects of a national adaptation process, backward-looking aspects of a national adaptation process, or both).</p> <p>However, in order to provide an [simplified] overview of what the UNFCCC's instrument landscape looks like</p>

		and how it works. We found the need to give the adaptation communication a forward- or backwards-facing role in order to provide an example scenario. Again however, this is done with the caveat that the function of the adaptation is a country-driven decision.
4	What will be the key differences between BURs and BTRs?	In the context of reporting on adaptation, the main difference between the two instruments is that countries can use the BTR to report on adaptation (this is not possible in the BUR). The wider context relating to mitigation action, GHG emissions and support provided was beyond the scope of this webinar, however more information that applies to the broader context can be found in the document "Unfolding the reporting requirements for Developing Countries under the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework" published under the ICAT and CBIT projects.
5	Are there any guidelines on good practices and lessons learned related to reporting on adaptation to the ETF?	<p>Guidance for establishing M&E systems and good practices in doing this can be found in the guidance by Price-Kelly et al. (2015) and Hammill et al. (2014). Meanwhile, the Least Developed Country Expert Group's (2012) guidance for formulating and implementing National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) should include some guidance towards reporting of adaptation (part four of a suggested NAP-process is monitoring and evaluation which should include reporting).</p> <p>From experience however, documents that provide examples of good practice in national adaptation reporting are limited. In particular, we have not come across any examples that focus on good practices in national-level reporting of adaptation to the UNFCCC.</p>
6	Article 7.10 of the Paris Agreement indicates that the Parties may include in their communication on adaptation their priorities and needs for adaptation. In other words, a forward-looking vision. Why is the AC not considered as an instrument	<i>See answer to question 3.</i>

	for future planning and only as a reporting mechanism?	
7	Are any financial aspects included in the A-BTR? For example, assessments of how much funds are needed to achieve the adaptation targets, whether these needs can be met internally by a country, or whether a country requires external support.	<p>Information concerning adaptation support needs (financial or otherwise) is not explicitly requested by the guidelines for the A-BTR, however section I of the guidelines – titled "Any other information related to climate change impacts and adaptation under Article 7 of the Paris Agreement" – means that there is nothing that stops countries from including this information in the document if they so wish to.</p> <p>More obviously however, information about adaptation support needs and gaps is requested by the guidelines for the adaptation communication. As such, one would anticipate that this information would be found in a country's adaptation communication instead (bearing in mind that countries can submit A-BTRs and adaptation communications together or as a single report when their submission deadlines overlap).</p>
8	How will BTRs be reviewed or assessed? Same as BURs by ICAs?	<p>BTRs will be reviewed by the Technical Expert Review also established by the Enhanced Transparency Framework. This review process however, will not be applied to adaptation sections of country's BTRs.</p> <p>Furthermore, information in BTRs (including information relating to adaptation) will be considered to the global stocktake, which will synthesize the information included in these reports and use it in the stocktaking process.</p>

<p>9</p>	<p>NDCs are the most important (in terms of commitment and visibility) documents produced by countries towards the UNFCCC. Yet it is committed only to the measurement of mitigation effort (CO2 equivalents). Adaptation efforts are presented in various documents, with different purposes, but these are often not even harmonized within the same country.</p> <p>Could BTRs aim at bringing in, once and for all, a single frame with common guidelines as to how to monitor adaptation measures ? If yes, can we find transversal metrics?</p>	<p>We do not entirely agree with this presentation of the landscape for communicating adaptation plans and ambitions. NDCs can, and commonly do, include an adaptation component in which a country would include its top-level adaptation goals and ambitions, as well as its flagship plans/strategies/programmes. As NDCs are typically short documents however, how countries actually plan to achieve their goals and ambitions (i.e. actual planned actions) are included in supplementary documents such as NAPs, national adaptation plans/strategies, and sector-specific adaptation plans.</p> <p>This situation generally reflects the situation for mitigation, in which goals, commitments, and flagship plans/strategies/programmes are presented in a country's NDC, while more detailed accounts of how countries will achieve these goals and commitments are found in more detailed planning documents (e.g. NAMAs and low carbon development strategies).</p> <p>With regards to the idea that BTRs could bring in a uniform method for monitoring adaptation measures, this looks unlikely. While being more detailed with regards to what information countries should include regarding monitoring and evaluation of adaptation (e.g. how concepts such as resilience, adaptive capacity, and vulnerability have changed as a result of an action/plan), the guidelines as they are now do not attempt to tell countries how they should reach this information (i.e. what methodologies they should apply to determine changes in (for example) resilience, adaptive capacity, and vulnerability).</p> <p>Furthermore, it is unclear that attempting to align methodologies in this manner would be beneficial. As while it would enable easier comparison and aggregation on paper, the highly context specific nature of adaptation means that the application of top-down evaluation methodologies would risk the evaluations missing out on important nuances that could inform future decision-making.</p>
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<p>10</p>	<p>Considering that Section IV of the ETF about adaptation is not subject to the technical expert review (TER), what will the role be of the TER in the adaptation processes?</p>	<p>In short, the TER will not have an active role in the process of reporting on adaptation to the UNFCCC.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Considering the number of documents, is there a risk of redundancy or overburdening the reporting process on adaptation?</p>	<p>Yes, the risk of overburdening in the process of reporting on adaptation to the UNFCCC is a real one for many countries due to capacity and resource constraints. There are two key ways countries can reduce this risk:</p> <p>The first is to ensure that their reporting systems are sustainable, in so much as the country reports as much as it can while ensuring that the process of collecting data/information (i.e. M&E of adaptation) and compiling the reports is sustainable given the capacity a country has to execute the task and the resources it has available operate any M&E systems it has in play. Countries are not expected to overexert themselves in order to meet all adaptation reporting requirements outlined in the BTR's guidelines, however it is generally expected that countries will make efforts to improve the quality and comprehensiveness of reporting overtime. For developing countries, it is acknowledged that improvements in reporting will be facilitated through the provision of capacity building support.</p> <p>The second is to streamline their reporting commitments. Countries are able to merge national communications, BTRs and adaptation communications when their submission deadlines overlap – something that would happen every four years if all instruments are submitted on time and countries elect to submit adaptation communications with their national communications. The guidance document recently released by the ICAT project "Reporting on adaptation through the biennial transparency report" covers this situation on page 17, section one.</p>

<p>12</p>	<p>Are there any best practices on how to develop an Information and/or M&E system which will provide reliable data on time?</p>	<p>There is a general dearth of information about how to develop national M&E systems for adaptation / good practices in developing national M&E systems for adaptation. I would recommend people to look at:</p> <p>'Monitoring and Evaluation Adaptation at Aggregated Levels: A Comparative Analysis of Ten Systems' by Hammill et al. (2014) for an overview/assessment of what M&E systems are presently doing;</p> <p>"Developing national adaptation monitoring and evaluation systems: A guidebook" by Price-Kelly et al.(2015) for guidance on how to develop a M&E system for adaptation, and;</p> <p>"Setting up a national monitoring system for climate change impacts and adaptation" by van R�uth and Sch�onthaler (2016 p.97) and "Development of national and sub-national adaptation metrics: lessons from Kenya" by Karani (2016 p.113) for interesting first-hand accounts of how their countries (Germany and Kenya) have approached the task of developing and national system for monitoring and evaluating adaptation.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>Many countries are assessing a lot of adaptation parameters needed under the BTR for their climate funds reporting (e.g. PPCR, GCF, GEF). Why is there limited information on how domestic systems of M&E and reporting can be aligned with different results framework of climate funds for BTR reporting at the country level (in order to harness what is already being done)?</p>	<p>There is a general dearth of information about how to develop national M&E systems for adaptation / good practices in developing national M&E systems for adaptation. To find information about national reporting can be aligned with donor reporting (e.g. to the PPCR, GCF, or GED), one could look at the below documents (although I am not 100% sure they address this issue directly or at length):</p> <p>'Monitoring and Evaluation Adaptation at Aggregated Levels: A Comparative Analysis of Ten Systems' by Hammill et al. (2014) for an overview/assessment of what M&E systems are presently doing;</p> <p>Developing national adaptation monitoring and evaluation systems: A guidebook" by Price-Kelly et al.(2015) for guidance on how to develop a M&E system for adaptation, and;</p>

		<p>"Setting up a national monitoring system for climate change impacts and adaptation" by van R�uth and Sch�onthaler (2016 p.97) and "Development of national and sub-national adaptation metrics: lessons from Kenya" by Karani (2016 p.113) for interesting first-hand accounts of how their countries (Germany and Kenya) have approached the task of developing and national system for monitoring and evaluating adaptation.</p>
14	<p>Are there any synergies between reporting on SDGs and voluntary national reviews? And could those be harnessed in BTRs? For example: There are many indicators related to improved resilience in donor reporting</p>	<p>Yes, there are likely to be significant synergies between the context and processes being monitored and evaluated for the purposes of conducting a voluntary national review and the context and processes that countries will want to monitor and evaluate to inform their A-BTRs.</p> <p>In this vein, one good practice for monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on adaptation that is commonly highlighted by reports, guidance documents, and articles is that systems for M&E adaptation should, where possible, utilize synergies with pre-existing M&E systems (e.g. selecting indicators that are already collected for monitoring a different but related purpose). M&E systems informing voluntary national reviews would be a good example of such a system that could present synergies.</p>
15	<p>Considering different national circumstances and reporting levels, how will it be possible to know if the world is advancing on the adaptation goals set under the Paris Agreement?</p>	<p>This is largely beyond the scope of the webinar however, a better idea of how and to what extent this will be possible will be provided by the upcoming Adaptation GAP Report 2020, which is aiming to provide an assessment of how adaptation is progressing across the areas of planning, finance, and implementation. The report is scheduled to be released by UNEP in mid-January 2021.</p>

16	<p>Are there other suggestions or recommendations for fitting all the pieces together in regards to adaptation communications?</p>	<p>Not 100% sure what this question is getting at. However, if they are referring to how countries can effectively merge their adaptation communications with the adaptation chapters of national communications and BTRs, the guidance document does not provide any further guidance other than to say that it is possible.</p> <p>Before the end of the year, it is expected that ISPRR will release a paper that better describes how countries could merge these three documents based on their respective guidance. The tentative title for this paper is "Streamlining adaptation-reporting of developed countries under the Paris Regime" by Brocchieri et al.</p>
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