

7 January 2021

Call for Expressions of Interest

[The Initiative for Climate Action Transparency \(ICAT\)](#) is seeking Expressions of Interest from new partner countries to join the Initiative and receive support from ICAT to enhance domestic capacity for mitigation and adaptation action transparency, guided by the Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement. Support will be provided in the form of resources for work by national experts, training activities and international expert advice.

Background

ICAT has built over its first five years a strong foundation for its activities in terms of tools, methodologies, knowledge, experience and active networks in some 40 developing countries. The ICAT infrastructure is tailored to support countries in developing their capacity to build and manage a strong transparency framework that can enable them to effectively implement the Paris Agreement.

In order for developing countries to develop and implement ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), the actions they commit to need to be anchored in sound data and information to underpin national policies that back up the actions required. Strong transparency frameworks enable national ownership, the integration of relevant stakeholders in policy processes, and they ensure accountability, at the national and international level, and in terms of policy and finance.

ICAT's work has the following core features:

- Policy focus, aimed at enabling transformational change;
- Agility in responding to country needs, anchored in sustainable development assessments;
- Flexibility to innovate and create replicable approaches;
- Sound methodologies and tools; and
- Peer-to-peer collaboration and knowledge sharing.

ICAT is a multi-stakeholder partnership steered and funded by the Donor Steering Committee (DSC), conformed by its donors, namely: the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF); ClimateWorks Foundation (CWF); the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, and Nuclear Safety (BMU); and the Italian Ministry for the Environment, Land and Sea (IMELS). It is also supported by the UNFCCC and managed by UNOPS, with the ICAT

Secretariat coordinating day-to-day activities and guiding the work of ICAT's implementing partners.

ICAT's support offer to countries

ICAT offers partner countries a menu of support options based on which they can tailor the project details that best suit their context. Activities are country-driven, based on the needs and priorities defined by the partner country and may include support to:

1. Build or enhance the transparency systems for mitigation actions in one or several sectors, including: institutional capacity; greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories; reporting protocols and processes; data systems; and drafting of legal and regulatory documents;
2. Build a monitoring approach for adaptation actions in one or several sectors, including: stakeholder consultations; institutional capacity; reporting schemes and processes; and data systems and tools;
3. Implement and further developing NDCs, including: baseline; qualitative or quantitative indicators; tracking framework; and sustainable development impacts and transformational change potentials;
4. Assess the impacts of policies (ex-ante or ex-post, in one or several sectors), using ICAT methodologies for: GHGs; sustainable development impacts; and transformational change potential;
5. Integrate and/or aggregate transparency at the subnational level and for non-state actors;
6. Identify and further domestic benefits and synergies from enhanced climate action transparency, including using data and information to mobilize finance and to stimulate economic recovery during exceptional crises.

Country support will be delivered through focused and time-bound (12 to 18 months) projects with resources provided for work by national experts or expert institutions, training activities, stakeholder workshops and international expert advice. Partner countries are encouraged to utilize some of the methodologies and tools in the ICAT toolbox (see annex below).

Submission process

Interested countries are invited to submit a formal Expression of Interest issued by an official entity (ministry or agency) with competency in the matter, by email to icat@unops.org within the deadline below. The following information could be included:

- Status of reporting under UNFCCC and status of submission of NDC;
- Potential areas of interest and priorities for transparency support;
- Activities that ICAT can support (based on areas listed above or others);

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- Other ongoing initiatives in the country related to climate action transparency and other support expected;
 - Contact information of focal point.

In order to tailor ICAT support to your country's needs and context, please fill out this questionnaire: <https://forms.gle/hwzqTSX2brJ5xGZF7>.

Countries which intend to submit an Expression of Interest should be informed that joining the Initiative will imply commitment from a designated focal point to coordinate the work at the national level, in order to ensure success of the project.

Submission deadline

28 February 2021

Next steps after submission

The submitted Expressions of Interest will be reviewed based on approved selection criteria:

- Diversity of ICAT countries (e.g. geography, size, economic development, significance of GHG emissions and main GHG emitting sectors);
- Ongoing efforts on MRV/transparency;
- Support needs;
- Maximum ICAT impact (countries where ICAT can best apply its tools and methodologies);
- Workability (e.g. political stability, existing in-country partnerships and connections with the implementing entities, existence of functioning institutions/procedures).

A list of selected countries will be finalized within six weeks after the submission deadline. The ICAT Secretariat will then send out the invitations to the selected countries and will lead the initial discussions with country focal points on country priorities, gaps in capacity and the interest in ICAT methodologies and tools. A period of five weeks will be given to countries to formally confirm the invitation to join ICAT. A country scoping phase and an inception mission will then follow (to be determined based on travel restrictions). Based on this, the engagement will be formalized by completing a work plan and budget as well as signing a Project Cooperation Agreement (PCA) with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS). Implementation of the work plan for the first set of countries is envisaged to start in mid-2021.

Note

ICAT will be available to hold virtual discussions with interested countries before the deadline for submission. Country focal points can contact Ms. Randa Ahmed (randaa@unops.org) to

arrange for a meeting with ICAT's Director, Mr. Henning Wuester, to discuss potential ICAT support and country needs.

Annex: ICAT background information

I. ICAT's mission

The Initiative for Climate Action Transparency aims to help countries better assess the impacts of their climate policies and actions, and fulfil their transparency commitments. It does this by increasing the overall transparency capacities of countries, including the capacity to assess the contribution of climate policies and actions on countries' development objectives, and providing appropriate methodological information and tools to support evidence-based policy-making. ICAT's innovative approach is to integrate these two aspects.

ICAT focuses on countries that can highlight the benefits of increased transparency to demonstrate policy impact and evidence-based action. ICAT will generate evolving methodological guidance and extract best practices, to be publicly available to all actors, increasing the global knowledge base. ICAT's work is country-driven, efforts build on existing MRV systems and knowledge in countries and complement previous or on-going activities by other initiatives, where applicable. Support provided is tailored to the country context and priorities. ICAT's work is aimed at engaging national expertise as much as possible, while encouraging peer-to-peer learning.

II. The ICAT Toolbox

In order to provide effective support to countries, ICAT has developed a set of methodologies and tools, and collaborates with its partners on other tools. ICAT prioritizes countries that need support which can be addressed using ICAT's tools and methodologies.

a. ICAT Assessment Guides

The ICAT assessment guides help policymakers and other users assess the impacts of countries' climate policies and actions. They can play a critical role in providing the information needed for effective policymaking, for implementing the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and for preparing reports under the Enhanced Transparency Framework of the Paris Agreement and on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The guides can be found [here](#).

- **Renewable Energy:**

The Renewable Energy Methodology helps policymakers assess and communicate the impacts of renewable energy policies to ensure that they are effective in mitigating GHG emissions, advancing development objectives, and helping countries meet their sectoral targets and national commitments. The document provides methodological guidance on how to estimate emissions pathways and reductions resulting from the implementation of policies in the energy sector. The methodology focuses on three policy interventions: Feed-in tariff policies, auctions policies and tax incentive policies.

- **Buildings Efficiency:**

The Buildings Efficiency Guide provides guidance for assessing the greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts of buildings sector energy efficiency policies. The guidance provides a stepwise approach for estimating the effects of policy design characteristics and barriers associated with regulatory and financial support policies on GHG impacts.

- **Agriculture Sector:**

The Agriculture Guide supports the assessment of the GHG impacts of agricultural policies and actions. This guide fills a gap in currently available guidance, which includes project-level agricultural GHG accounting, but does not include GHG accounting at the agricultural policy level.

- **Forest Sector:**

The Forest Methodology helps policymakers assess the impacts of forest policies to ensure that they are effective in mitigating GHG emissions, and helping countries meet their sectoral targets and national commitments. The document provides methodological guidance for assessing the GHG impacts of forest policies that increase carbon sequestration and/or reduce GHG emissions from afforestation and/or reforestation, sustainable forest management and avoided deforestation and/or degradation.

- **Transport Pricing:**

The Transport Pricing Methodology helps policymakers assess the impacts of pricing policies in the transport sector and improve their effectiveness. The document provides methodological guidance for assessing the GHG impacts of specific mitigation measures in the transport sector. The methods provided focus on the GHG impacts of fuel subsidy removals, increased fuel taxes or levies, road pricing and vehicle purchase incentives for efficient vehicles.

- **Sustainable Development:**

The Sustainable Development Methodology helps policymakers and other users assess multiple development and climate impacts across the environmental, social and economic dimensions. These may include air pollution reduction, job creation, improved health, access to energy, poverty reduction, protection of ecosystems, and more.

- **Transformational Change:**

The Transformational Change Methodology defines transformational change for GHG mitigation and unpacks this definition to provide a stepwise approach to determining the extent to which a policy is truly transformational. The methodology has been met with interest by governments, financial institutions and programmes as a basis for assessing the expected or achieved transformational impact of policies and investments towards alignment with the global goals.

- **Non-State and Subnational Action:**

The Non-State and Subnational Action Guide facilitates the integration of the impacts of actions by entities such as states, regions, cities, and businesses into national GHG projections and mitigation assessments. While monitoring historic emission developments automatically reflects all emission reductions efforts undertaken within nation-states, including those driven by non-state actors, developing accurate projections requires that non-state actions be explicitly taken into account.

- **Stakeholder Participation:**

The Stakeholder Participation Guide can help countries enhance stakeholder participation in the design, implementation and assessment of climate policies and actions. Enhancing stakeholder participation has been shown to build understanding and support among diverse groups, which can improve policy and action design and strengthen GHG, sustainable development, and transformational change impacts.

- **Technical Review:**

The Technical Review Guide provides guidance for planning and conducting technical reviews. The guide outlines three different approaches for review and provides guidance on selecting the most appropriate type of review. The elements that define a credible review and the steps to follow when pursuing or conducting a review are discussed.

b. Modelling and data tools

ICAT also supports the tailoring and application at national level of modelling tools to model the impacts of a portfolio of policies, for instance as part of assessing a country's NDCs, and data management tools. These tools are:

- The [GHG Abatement Cost MOdel \(GACMO\)](#), developed by the UNEP-DTU Partnership can be used to support countries or regions in analysing their GHG mitigation options to prepare information for their NDCs, National Communications, or Low-Carbon Development Plans. GACMO can be used by countries to calculate and visualise their business-as-usual scenario and selected mitigation scenarios. It provides calculations for all the desired mitigation options selected and allows to conduct an assessment of techno-economic performance of individual technical mitigation options.
- The [PROSPECTS+](#) tool, prepared by the New Climate Institute, is a sector-level, bottom-up Excel tool which uses decarbonisation-relevant activity and intensity indicators to track and project sectoral and national total GHG emission trends. Countries can use it to develop their own emission scenarios by adjusting policy-relevant indicators. Add-ons have been prepared to assess the impact of policy packages on sustainable development parameters such as investments, jobs, air pollution and health.
- The [SINAMECC](#) data system, which is Costa Rica's National Climate Change Metrics System (Sistema Nacional de Métrica de Cambio Climático, SINAMECC) specifically designed to improve data-based decision making on climate action and policy. The

system was designed as open-source software with the explicit goal of sharing it with other countries and building an international community of practice. This “SINAMECC community” can then work together to maintain and improve the system, saving resources and improving South-South collaboration. SINAMECC currently incorporates a variety of functionalities including:

- Data collection and management features which can be used to automate or semiautomate data gathering and pre-processing for GHG inventory/BUR/NC/BTR development and NDC and policy MRV;
 - A calculation engine to estimate the GHG inventory, based on the IPCC guidelines and gathered data;
 - A mitigation action registry to keep track of and follow up on specific targets, policies and projects and their emissions;
 - Data visualizations and open data portal to facilitate transparency and data sharing, simplifying the reporting process;
 - Systems management functionalities including user access and automatic notification administration.
- The **Non-State and Subnational Action tool**, prepared by the World Resources Institute, supports the utilization of the Non-State and Subnational Action Guide (see above) by providing a user-friendly tool to aggregate and integrate the impact of non-state and subnational mitigation actions into national greenhouse gas projections, targets and planning. The excel-based tool distills the step by step process explained in the Guide into an easily accessible and guided template that national stakeholders can use to gather data, conduct an aggregation analysis of non-state and subnational emission reduction commitments, conduct a scenario analysis to quantify emission reductions from non-state and subnational actors additional to projected national emission pathways, and generate elements for reports.

ICAT supports countries in tailoring these tools to the specific country context and provides training to national stakeholders to utilize them on an ongoing basis subsequently.

c. Capacity building modules

Since capacity building lies at the heart of ICAT’s approach, training material and software, including e-learning modules and other material for transparency capacity building have been developed. The following guides are currently available:

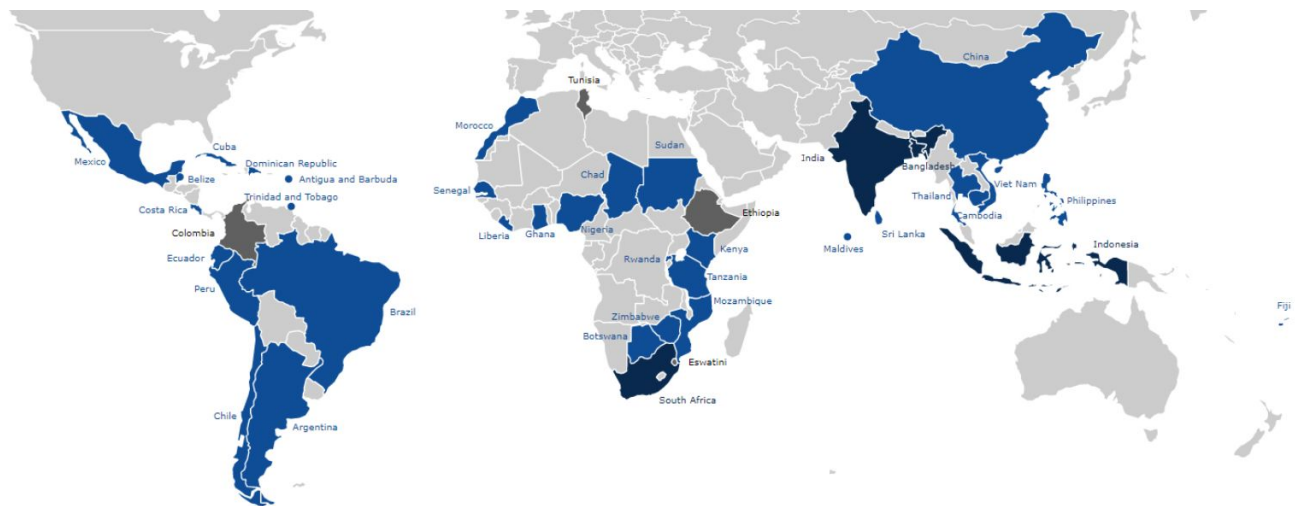
- A publication analysing the Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines (MPGs) adopted in 2018 by the UNFCCC COP highlighting their implication for countries, [“Unfolding the reporting requirements for Developing Countries under the Paris Agreement’s Enhanced Transparency Framework”](#);
- A guide focused on the methodological approaches to establish data management platforms and the relevance of these platforms in the context of national MRV systems

and processes, [“A road map for establishing information systems for climate action and support”](#).




- A guide to provide technical experts responsible for producing the adaptation section of their country’s Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) with a practical and easy-to-follow interpretation, [“Reporting adaptation through the biennial transparency report: A practical explanation of the guidance”](#).

III. ICAT countries

ICAT is currently (as of 7 January 2021) working with 40 countries worldwide.



Status of country engagement:

-  Agreement to collaborate by a government entity signed
-  Agreement to collaborate by a non-governmental entity signed
-  Formal letter to collaborate by a government entity issued, work plan under development