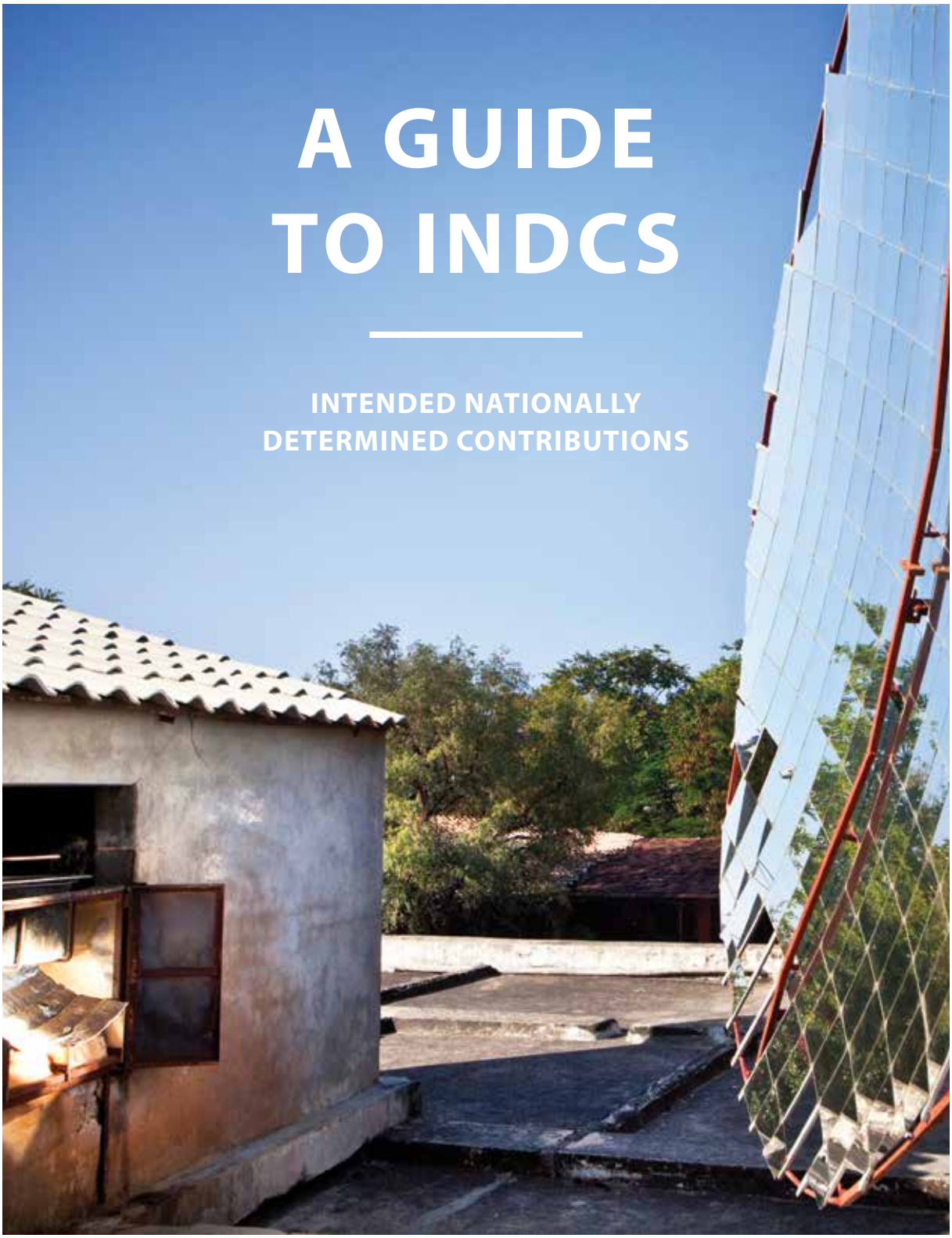
A GUIDE TO INDCS

INTENDED NATIONALLY DETERMINED CONTRIBUTIONS



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INTRODUCTION

This guide is intended to support the preparation of Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) by Least Developed Countries (LDCs) for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). It was initiated at the request of several LDCs, who asked for practical guidance, tailored to their needs. This guide was developed in consultation with a range of stakeholders, including authors of existing INDC guidance, LDC representatives and organisations working with CDKN to support INDC preparations. It seeks to address the broad spectrum of approaches being considered by LDCs in preparing their INDCs, reflecting their different national circumstances and levels of capacity, preparedness and ambition.

This guide is not an official UNFCCC publication nor is it endorsed by the UNFCCC. The views within are those of CDKN and Ricardo-AEA, based on their experience of supporting the development of INDCs in a number of countries, and not of any Party or Government. This template is not mandatory and Parties should adapt this information as needed in light of their national circumstances.

The Lima Call for Climate Action agreed at the 20th Conference of the Parties (COP20)[1] reiterated the invitation to all Parties to develop and communicate INDCs as their 'contributions' towards achieving the ultimate objective of Article 2 of the UNFCCC: *"to achieve … stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system".*

Recognising concerns about the legal nature of INDCs, the decision also noted that arrangements for INDC preparation and submission were *"without prejudice to the legal nature and content of the intended nationally determined contributions of Parties or to the content of the protocol, another legal instrument or agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties".*[2]

Further, the Lima COP agreed that special provisions would apply to LDCs i.e. that their INDCs *"may communicate information on strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emission development reflecting their special circumstances"* (although the precise implications of this wording are unclear). This means that while the INDCs of developed countries are expected to include absolute or economy-wide emission reduction commitments, LDCs can draw on specific strategies, plans or projects to formulate their contributions, and specify the component of the contribution that would be conditional upon receiving international finance or other support.

This guide serves as a practical tool for LDCs to support their INDC preparations. In doing so, it addresses a number of common challenges that LDCs face:

- their emissions are low in the global context, but they may wish to take actions to embrace low-carbon development and future-proof their investments;

- they have a prevailing need for economic development and poverty reduction, including improving energy access;
- they have limited capacity to undertake the analysis needed to develop their INDC;
- they are likely to face constraints in implementing the actions envisaged in their INDCs and certain actions/levels of ambition are likely to be dependent or conditional on the provision of funding from developed countries;
- they are among some of the most climate-vulnerable countries and therefore adaptation is likely to be a major focus of their national climate change plans.

Why would an LDC adopt an ambitious approach to towards its INDC? While it is true that future global emissions of greenhouse gases will largely be determined by the actions of major economies, the approach taken by progressive LDCs will be key to building political momentum in the run up to the Paris COP in December 2015, and to putting pressure on these economies to take ambitious action. Adopting a proactive position on INDC development could bring a range of benefits to LDCs, including:

- demonstrating that plans for economic growth are compatible with low-carbon and climate-resilient pathways and avoiding lock-in to high carbon-intensive infrastructure;
- highlighting the adaptation-related co-benefits of mitigation actions, and other co-benefits such as poverty alleviation, health, energy access and security;
- capturing the potential for mitigation within planned and potential adaptation activities;
- encouraging other countries to take equivalent action, thereby increasing global ambition and reducing climate impacts;
- attracting financial, capacity-building, technology transfer and other types of international support.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

In the absence of an official INDC template from the UNFCCC, the following guide offers a practical example of how an LDC INDC could be structured and its key elements. Each section cross-references the relevant text from the UNFCCC Call to Climate Action (Decision -/CP.20),[3] outlines the aims of the section and suggested data sources for completing the template.

Examples illustrate the type of content and narrative that LDCs may wish to include in their INDCs – note that these are only examples and INDCs should be tailored to reflect the country's national circumstances. Much of the information needed for completing the template may already be available in existing documents (e.g. National Communications, national and subnational climate change strategies and plans, sectoral strategies, etc). As such, INDCs can be relatively succinct and refer to other publically-available sources for detailed data and analysis as needed.

At the time of going to print, several major economies and a number of developing countries have submitted their INDCs to the UNFCCC. While none of the INDCs are identical, they do have common elements and formats. If desired, instead of creating an INDC anew using this template, LDCs can adopt any of the formats that have already been used and tailor them with information provided here.

This guide does not give information on how and when to engage stakeholders in the development of an INDC or in other national processes, which is critical for securing political buy-in and approval. These aspects are addressed in detail in other guidance documents, and in a forthcoming CDKN publication on the lessons learned from supporting INDC preparation in developing countries.

Further guidance which may provide assistance in the preparation of INDCs includes:

- International Partnership on Mitigation and Monitoring Reporting and Verification
    - Process guidance for INDCs (2014), commissioned by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH: www.mitigationpartnership.net/international-partnership-mitigation-and-mrv-2014-process-guidance-intended-nationally-determined--0
    - INDCs (2014), commissioned by Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH: www.mitigationpartnership.net/international-partnership-mitigation-and-mrv-2014-intended-nationally-determined-contributions
- World Resources Institute
    - Ex-Ante Clarification, Transparency, and Understanding of Intended Nationally Determined Mitigation Contributions (2014), commissioned by World Resources Institute: www.wri.org/publication/ex-ante-clarification-transparency-and-understanding-intended-nationally-determined
    - Designing and Preparing Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) (draft). commissioned by World Resources Institute: http://unfccc.int/files/focus/mitigation/application/pdf/indc_designing_and_preparing_indcs.pdf
    - Elements to Consider in the Adaptation Component of Intended Nationally-Determined Contributions (draft)
- UNFCCC
    - INDCs submitted to UNFCCC to date (2015, continuously updated): http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php
    - Lima Call for Climate Action (2014): http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/lima_dec_2014/application/pdf/auv_cop20_lima_call_for_climate_action.pdf

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Glossary

BAU	Business-As-Usual
BUR	Biennial Update Report
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
INDC	Intended Nationally Determined Contribution
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
JCM	Joint Crediting Mechanism
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LEDS	Low Emission Development Strategies
MRV	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

1. National context

Aim: This section provides the overall national context for the INDC, including how the actions set out in the INDC fit with national sustainable development priorities and existing plans and strategies.

Key data sources: National climate change strategies and/or action plans; national development plans; national adaptation plans; national vulnerability assessments; National Communications to the UNFCCC;[4] Biennial Update Reports; greenhouse gas inventory, new analysis undertaken for INDC preparation.

Relevant UNFCCC reference: N/A

This section may include information on any or all of the following:

- national development objectives, including how climate change and related concepts (green growth, increased access to sustainable energy, etc.) have been reflected in development plans and other relevant documents;
- national, subnational and sectoral climate change priorities on both mitigation and adaptation, national and subnational strategies/plans, national legislation;
- climate variability, which includes trends in averages and extremes of precipitation and temperature;
- climate impacts, such as sea level rise, drought, flooding, and subsequent social, economic and environmental impacts;
- budgetary allocations towards climate change activities;
- previous or existing climate change pledges or commitments (voluntary or legislated) or actions to date.

Existing documents (such as those listed above) are likely to already outline national circumstances. Hence, it would be preferable to include only a summary of key points here and then refer to existing documents for further detail.

An illustrative example of a completed section 1 of the template is provided below.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

1. National context

Without ambitious action to limit greenhouse gases internationally, the future costs of adapting to climate change will be much higher than they are today. Country X therefore intends to undertake measures across a number of sectors of its economy to reduce its emissions. These mitigation actions are guided by the long term development aspiration that [insert appropriate principle/goal/aspiration].

As a climate-vulnerable country whose emissions are less than XX% of global emissions, the principal focus of these activities will be on

increasing our resilience to the impacts of climate change. Climate change is are already affecting the livelihoods of much of our population. If Country X fails to take action, the costs of climate change could amount to XX% of GDP.

Thus, Country X's INDC is guided by its commitment to follow a low-carbon, climate-resilient development pathway to achieving middle income status. This INDC is based on Country X's existing strategies and plans, in particular the [insert reference to national climate change/ green growth plan/strategy]. In addition, it incorporates the outcome of further analysis and consultation to enhance Country X's existing plans, in particular [insert focus of INDC preparatory work].

The INDC of Country X consists of the following elements:

- *Mitigation contribution: [bullet point summary of long-term goal, headline contributions, sectoral focus etc.];*
- *Adaptation component: [bullet point summary];*
- *Planning process: [bullet point summary];*
- *Means of implementation: [bullet point summary on planning process (e.g. implementation of national plans, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification [MRV][5] system) and international support needed to implement the INDC (e.g. finance, technology transfer, capacity building)].*

2. Mitigation

2.1 CONTRIBUTION

Aim: This section contains a summary of the country's mitigation contribution, including: type of contribution, level of ambition and any conditionality that may be relevant for meeting the contribution. It should be noted that countries may wish to specify a long-term outcome as well as short-term mitigation contribution for the period to 2025 or 2030.

Key data sources: National climate change strategies, policies and action plans; previous submissions to the UNFCCC; statements at the UN Climate Summit; NAMAs, National Communications.

Relevant UNFCCC reference: *"…each Party's intended nationally determined contribution towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2 will represent a progression beyond the current undertaking of that Party…"* (Lima Call for Climate Action Decision -/CP.20, Paragraph 10).

"…the least developed countries and small island developing States may communicate information on strategies, plans and actions for low greenhouse gas emission development reflecting their special circumstances in the context of intended nationally determined contributions…" (Lima Call for Climate Action Decision -/CP.20, Paragraph 11).

A key decision in the formulation of an INDC is the form and geographical coverage of the final contribution. For example a contribution could:

- refer to either greenhouse gas mitigation **actions** (e.g. NAMAs, sectoral strategies, policies and projects) or greenhouse gas mitigation **outcomes** (e.g. emission reductions relative to a historical base year or projected future emissions) – or a **combination of both**;
- cover the **entire economy or specific sector(s)**.

Section 2.1 provides a suggested template for presenting an action-based contribution; Section 2.2 provides a suggested template for an outcome-based contribution. Illustrative examples are provided for both. Note that it is also possible for the contribution to be a combination of both an action-based and an outcome-based contribution, i.e. providing both sectoral or economy-wide emission reductions, as well as the actions that will be implemented to achieve these reductions.

Factors that will influence the form of the contribution will include:

- any existing (national or subnational) greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments, goals or activities – ensuring that the form of the INDC contribution is consistent with existing types of greenhouse gas emission reduction commitments/goals/activities could help streamline national MRV processes, as well as reduce the time needed to obtain country-level sign-off for the INDC;

- the country's vision and aspirations for addressing climate change – the country may decide to define an INDC contribution which is more ambitious than previous commitments/goal/activities and hence a new form is required for the INDC;
- existing climate change mitigation information that is available (e.g. historical, current and projected future emissions, mitigation potential of existing policies or projects). The form of data on mitigation potential that is available may shape the form selected for the INDC contribution, (e.g. if quantitative data is limited, the country may prefer an activity-based contribution over a goal-based contribution);
- levels of stakeholder support and engagement, especially in key sectors relevant to the INDC (e.g. with the greatest emissions reduction potential).

It may be that countries wish to include the mitigation co-benefits of their climate change adaptation programmes as part of their mitigation contribution. Where a country wishes to include mitigation co-benefits for its adaptation activities within its goal-based contribution, important steps in this process may include screening adaptation actions to identify those with mitigation co-benefits (e.g. afforestation, reforestation, agroforestry, off-grid renewables, climate smart agriculture) and defining an emission accounting methodology that avoids double-counting of emissions from mitigation activities.

Template for action-based contribution

Action-based contribution

Name of activity	Description	Objectives of the activity
Brief title for the activity	Summary description of the action (s), including: • the type of activity (e.g. laws, economic instruments or financing mechanisms, regulations/ standards, other policy instruments, projects, NAMAs, etc); • an overview of the specific actions the activity will involve; suggest referring to other documents for details; • whether the activity is being or will be implemented unilaterally, or will be conditional on international support.	Objectives can be quantitative (e.g. Mt CO_2eq reductions, MW of a renewable technology installed, etc) and/or qualitative (e.g. removal of financial barriers, increase renewable energy, etc). Whether qualitative or quantitative, objectives should be formulated to be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-based).

Countries may wish to explain how the above activities have been selected. For example, countries may have prioritised:

- actions which best align with national development priorities; and
- synergies between adaptation and mitigation, in particular by including adaptation activities with significant mitigation co-benefits.

Countries may also wish to state the estimated aggregate avoided emissions or emissions reductions that will result from the above activities in a given year (e.g. 2025).

Two illustrative examples of action-based contributions are provided here for one or multiple sectors. A number of sectors could be considered relevant for LDCs to highlight in their INDCs (e.g. energy, forestry, agriculture). Key factors in identifying the sector(s) for the INDC could include:

- share of national greenhouse gas emissions;
- ease of implementing greenhouse gas reduction measures;
- cost-effectiveness of the abatement opportunities;
- identification of 'quick wins';
- current mitigation activity.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

2.1.1 Action-based contribution

Country X intends to reduce its CO_2eq emissions by implementing the following activities:

Name of activity	*Description*	*Objectives of the activity*
National REDD+ Strategy	*Reduction in forest cover clearance for commercial purposes and increased community based forest management and enhancement of non-carbon forest benefits such as forest based livelihoods.*	*Reduced forest cover clearance, increased local resilience, incentives for forest conservation through enhanced local livelihoods and alternative economic activities.*
Renewable Energy Master Plan	*80% of existing power generation through coal and diesel to be replaced by hydropower, biogas and wind-power-facilities.*	*80% renewable energy by 2025.*
Waste management strategy	*Reductions in methane emissions due to improvement of waste management at landfill sites.*	*Waste management strategy to be formulated by 2015.* *Training of staff for all landfill sites on waste management strategy by 2016.* *Improved waste management processes in line with waste management strategy implemented at all landfill sites by 2017.* *Regular bi-annual audits and reporting on waste management processes from 2017 onwards.*

Geothermal NAMA	*Feasibility study for geothermal site ABC; finance has been identified and agreements with donors are in place. Further detail: (link to online information).*	*100MW geothermal project to be operational by 2020.*
Improving Rural Livelihoods Program (IRLP)	*This climate resilience program includes increasing small hydropower plants to provide electricity to rural communities and businesses, replacing diesel-fuelled off-grid generation. 20% of financing for this programme will come from domestic resources. Further detail: (link to online information).*	*Key objectives relate to improving rural livelihoods, however, there will be mitigation co-benefits of around XX Mt CO_2eq by 2030 due to the implementation of around 5MW of hydropower plants.*
Green economy strategy	*Actions in the green economy strategy including renewables, restoration of forest on degraded lands and low carbon fuel standards. International support will be needed to further develop and implement these actions. Further detail: (link to online information).*	*Delivery of the green economy strategy putting Country X on a climate compatible development pathway to middle income status by 2030.*
Renewable Energy Master Plan	*80% of existing power generation through coal and diesel to be replaced by hydropower, biogas and wind-power-facilities.*	*80% renewable energy by 2025.*

Template for outcome-based contribution

Several forms of outcome-based contributions can be considered, including:

- base year emissions outcome – a reduction in emissions relative to a historical base year (e.g. EU: 40%+ greenhouse gas reduction by 2030 compared to 1990 levels);
- fixed level outcome – a reduction in emissions to a fixed, absolute level (e.g. Costa Rica: carbon neutrality by 2021);
- base year intensity outcome – a reduction in emissions relative to a historical base year (e.g. China: 40–45% greenhouse gas reduction in carbon intensity per unit of Gross Domestic Product by 2020 compared to 2005 levels);
- baseline scenario outcome – a reduction in emissions relative to projected future emissions (e.g. South Africa: 34% greenhouse gas reduction below business-as-usual (BAU) by 2020).

Outcome-based contribution		
Unconditional contribution	Contribution assuming unilateral action only (no additional international support)	Briefly summarise your greenhouse gas emission reduction outcome and the year in which it is intended to be achieved (select between a base year emissions, fixed level, base year intensity or baseline scenario outcome). The outcome can apply across the whole of the economy or only apply to specific sectors. In addition, the goal can be presented in ranges to take into account uncertainty in calculations.
Conditional contribution	Contribution assuming both unilateral action and international support	Briefly summarise your greenhouse gas emission reduction outcome and the year in which it is intended to be achieved (select between a base year emissions, fixed level, base year intensity or baseline scenario outcome). The outcome can apply across the whole of the economy or only apply to specific sectors. In addition, the goal can be presented in ranges to take into account uncertainty in calculations.

Note that options can be reduced or added as required.

An illustrative example of an outcome-based contribution is provided below. This is an example only; different forms of outcome-based contributions or different number of options can be included.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

2.1.2. Outcome-based contribution

Country X intends to reduce its CO_2eq emissions as per the below:

Name of activity	*Description*	*Objectives of the activity*
Unconditional contribution	*Contribution assuming unilateral action only (no additional international support).*	*10% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below business-as-usual by 2030.*
Conditional contribution	*Contribution assuming both unilateral action and international support.*	*80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions below business-as-usual by 2030.*

2.2 INFORMATION TO FACILITATE CLARITY, TRANSPARENCY AND UNDERSTANDING

Aim: This section includes detailed information required to allow full understanding of the contribution at the international level and comparability with other contributions.

Key data sources could include: Biennial Reports or Biennial Update Reports;[6] National Communications;[7] national greenhouse gas inventory; national mitigation assessment studies; Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project documents; NAMAs; national or sectoral climate change strategies or action plans assessments undertaken for the drafting of the INDC.

Relevant UNFCCC reference: *"…the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions, in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, may include,*

as appropriate, inter alia, quantifiable information on the reference point (including, as appropriate, a base year), time frames and/or periods for implementation, scope and coverage … assumptions and methodological approaches including those for estimating and accounting for anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions and, as appropriate, removals" (Lima Call for Climate Action Decision -/CP.20, Paragraph 14).

Templates for information

Information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding (applicable to all forms of contribution)

Time frames and/or periods for implementation	
Timeframe for implementation	Specify the year that the contribution will start and when it will end.
Scope and coverage	
Scope of gases included in the contribution	Carbon dioxide (CO_2), methane (CH_4), nitrous oxide (N_2O), HFCs, PFCs, SF_6, NF_3 [delete any that do not apply].
Sectors/sources covered by the contribution	List the sector/sources from the IPCC Guidelines for greenhouse gas inventories[8] that apply; and any sectors/sources that have been excluded from the contribution.
Geographies covered by the contribution	If all national territories are included, this be stated; otherwise the geographies that have been excluded should be stated.
Assumptions and methodological approaches	
Methodology for emissions accounting	Refer to methodologies which are used for emissions accounting, e.g. 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories.[9]
Global warming potentials	Refer to the document which specifies the global warming potentials, or else refer directly to the global warming potential which has been used, e.g. 100 year timescale in accordance with IPCC's 4th Assessment Report.
Approach for land use, land use change and forestry emissions	Approach for land use, land use change and forestry emissions State whether emissions (or net emissions[10]) associated with land use, land use change and forestry are included in the contribution. If so, information regarding the points below should be stated, where available: • the separation of the net emissions into emissions of CO_2 and other GHGs, and removals of CO_2; • which categories are included (i.e. forest land, cropland, grassland, wetland, settlements, other land); • which activities are included (i.e. afforestation, deforestation, reforestation; forest management, re-vegetation, cropland management, grazing land management; soil carbon management, agroforestry, other relevant activities); • which methodological approach (or approaches) for GHG estimation and reporting has or have been used (e.g. IPCC 2006 Guidelines, 2003 IPCC Good Practice Guidance). In case the approach for including land use, land use change and forestry has yet to be determined, this should be clearly stated, ideally with a timeframe for when this will be addressed.
Net contribution of International Market Based Mechanism	State whether international market-based mechanisms will be used to fulfil the contribution. If they will be used, the information below should be stated, if known: • what proportion of the emission reductions to be achieved by the contribution will be fulfilled by market-based mechanisms (e.g. % or Mt CO_2eq contribution); • what type of mechanisms are anticipated to be used (e.g. CDM units, JCM units, compliance units from emissions trading schemes, REDD+ etc); • what vintages of units will be used (e.g. only those relating the timeframe for implementation of the contribution); • how double-counting of those mechanisms will be avoided (e.g. being used by two countries or two institutions).

Information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding (applicable to action-based contributions)

Name of action	Base year	Methodology for assessing base year and anticipated future emissions	Anticipated emission reductions
Brief title for the activity	State the base year for the activity.	Refer to documents which provide the methodology for calculating base year emissions, and projecting or evaluating future emissions.	State the anticipated impact that the activity will have on emissions reductions over the time period for implementation of the INDC (e.g. XX Mt CO_2eq).

Quantifiable information on the reference point (applicable to outcome-based contributions)

Outcome-based contribution : base year emissions outcome	
Base year	State the base year for the contribution (whether goal-based or activity-based).
Base year emissions	State base year emissions (e.g. XX Mt CO_2eq).
Methodology for assessing base year emissions	Refer to documents which provide the methodology for calculating base year emissions.
Outcome-based contribution : fixed level outcome	
Base year	State that, by definition, a fixed level goal does not have a base year, but consider providing further detail regarding the definition of the fixed level goal.
Outcome-based contribution : base year intensity outcome	
Base year	State the base year for the contribution.
Base year emissions intensity	State base year emissions (e.g. XX Mt CO_2eq/GDP, XX Mt CO_2eq/capita).
Methodology for assessing base year emissions intensity	Refer to documents which provide the methodology for base year emissions.
Baseline and projection methodology for emission intensity factors	Refer to documents which provide the methodology for both the base year for the emission intensity factors (e.g. GDP, population) and as well as how these factors are expected to grow over time, including historical trends. Note that explanation only needs to be provided for the emission intensity factors that are explicitly included in the contribution.
Outcome-based contribution : baseline scenario outcome	
BAU emissions in the target year	State the BAU target year emissions (i.e. XX Mt CO_2eq).
Baseline projection methodology	State whether the baseline scenario is fixed or dynamic, and refer to documents which provide further details regarding the baseline projection methodology.
Projection methodology for low carbon scenarios	Refer to documents which provide the methodology for the low carbon scenarios.

If known, additional information that may be relevant to include is:

- scope and coverage: % national emissions covered by the contribution;
- in addition to providing a short-term contribution (e.g. to 2030), also providing a long term contribution (e.g. to 2050);
- expected total emissions in the target year;
- expected year for and level at which emissions are anticipated to peak;

- historical trends for greenhouse gas emissions and removals;
- uncertainty or sensitivity analyses in relation to the contribution.

Please refer to INDCs submitted to UNFCCC to date for examples of how this section of the template could be completed: http://unfccc.int/focus/indc_portal/items/8766.php.

2.3 FAIR AND AMBITIOUS

Aim: This section sets out how the contribution is considered to be fair and ambitious in light of the country's national circumstances and the Convention's objective as set out in its Article 2: "*to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system*."

Key data sources could include: Information related to national circumstances (as presented in section 1 from national communications, Biennial Update Reports, projections of national greenhouse gas emissions, national statistics), metrics related to fairness and effort sharing (these will vary depending on the metric selected, but could include data and assumptions related to population growth, emission scenarios, production in various sectors, GDP growth, global emission pathways etc.) , any studies undertaken on fairness and related metrics.

Relevant UNFCCC reference: *"…the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions, in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, may include, as appropriate, inter alia … how the Party considers that its intended nationally determined contribution is fair and ambitious, in light of its national circumstances, and how it contributes towards achieving the objective of the Convention as set out in its Article 2"* (Lima Call for Climate Action Decision -/CP.20, paragraph 14).

Please note that official definitions and metrics for fairness and ambition have yet to be agreed. In general, fairness requires a comparison of the emissions and contributions with other countries; ambition refers to the relationship between what a country could do and what it proposes to do.

Template for fairness and ambition

Fairness and ambition

Fairness	Ambition
The following metrics can be considered to explain "fairness" in sharing the effort of combating climate change: • historical responsibility; • mitigation potential; • per capita emissions; • capability (e.g. GDP/capita), etc.	The following considerations may be useful when discussing the level of ambition of a contribution: • relevant national circumstances – emission trends, economic trends (e.g. GDP), population trends, existing mitigation policies and climate related support etc.; • mitigation potential[11] and its related costs at the national level and the extent to which this potential is exploited by the contribution[12] as well as mitigation activities already implemented/planned; • capability – can include both constraints and opportunities in relation to development, economic, social and environmental capabilities.

Existing documents are likely to provide the data and assumptions for the metrics above, including data sources stated in the description of national context. Hence, it would be preferable to include only a summary of key points here and then refer to existing documents for further detail.

An example of a completed section 2.3 is provided below.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

2.3 Fair and ambitious

Country X is a Least Developed Country whose emissions are less than XX% of global emissions and net per capital emissions are XX t CO_2eq (compared to the global average of XX t CO_2eq). However, Country X recognises that in order to meet the 2 degree objective all countries will need to undertake mitigation. Country X's approach is driven by the long-term emissions convergence goal, whereby all countries' emission should converge to 2tCOeq/capita by 2050. Subsequently, Country X's approach focuses on avoiding an increase of emissions per capita beyond this level, while pursuing our development goals.

As an LDC and given we account for a small share of past and current global greenhouse gases, Country X is therefore putting forward actions that align with a low carbon development pathway, which to be fully implemented would require additional international support in the form of finance, technology transfer and capacity building. Country X will also provide a relevant contribution with regards to national financial resources, staff time and strong integration of development and mitigation activities.

In selecting the actions outlined above, Country X has prioritised those which fit with the growth priorities set out in our national development plans. In addition, Country X has captured the synergies between mitigation and adaptation, not only by prioritising those adaptation activities with significant mitigation co-benefits but also by seeking to minimise the carbon footprint of its adaptation portfolio as a whole.

3. Adaptation

Aim: This section provides an opportunity for countries to outline current and future adaptation action. For many countries, climate change adaptation, incorporated as climate resilient development, is intrinsic to their overall economic development. The INDC provides an opportunity for countries to highlight current adaptation activity including potentially transferable tools and practices, and the support that may be required for implementation of adaptation plans, developing capacity or scaling up interventions. It also provides a way for countries to demonstrate progress in these plans through monitoring activities in future.

Key data sources could include: National Adaptation Plan (NAP), National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), National Communications, National Planning documents, disaster risk reduction plans, National Communications.

Relevant UNFCCC reference: *"Invites all Parties to consider communicating their undertakings in adaptation planning or consider including an adaptation component in their intended nationally determined contributions"* (Lima Call for Climate Action Decision -/CP.20, paragraph 12).

Given the wide-ranging and often cross-cutting nature of adaptation plans and activities, countries may well choose to base the content of the adaptation section of their INDCs on existing assessments, mechanisms and processes. This would ensure that the adaptation efforts included have been fully considered in the context of country-driven assessments of needs, priorities, capabilities and benefits. However, INDCs may also usefully highlight greater ambition for the future, especially in respect of capacity development, finance and technology support needed to scale up current plans to underpin wider climate-resilient development.

There are a number of ways in which adaptation activities could be incorporated into INDCs:

- Some adaptation activities will provide mitigation co-benefits, i.e. lead to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions or increase greenhouse gas sinks. Where this is the case, the mitigation benefits from these activities should be included within the mitigation section of the INDC (and not here), alongside other greenhouse gas impacts, to avoid any potential for double-counting.
- Some activities undertaken primarily for mitigation purposes may also offer adaptation co-benefits. For example, forestry activities undertaken to deliver greenhouse gas impacts, may also provide a range of ecosystem-based adaptation benefits and services, depending on their location. In this case, it will be helpful to indicate these adaptation co-benefits within this adaptation section of the INDC.
- More broadly, this section of the INDC could capture nationally-determined priorities and plans for adaptation, ideally in a concise,

coherent and coordinated form, such that future tracking of progress is supported.

- The national or international technology, finance and capacity support needed to deliver the adaptation activities outlined here could be highlighted within the INDC implementation plan, alongside the similar needs in relation to mitigation. There are likely to be benefits in terms of efficiency and effectiveness in having one integrated implementation plan.

Template for adaptation

Adaptation

This section may include an overview of any or all of the below, where relevant and where country-level information is available.

- The role of adaptation in national sustainable development planning including statement of the long-term goals and vision. This may include a justification for national adaptation ambition in relation to needs and benefits, and should cross-refer to the description of climate impacts, risks and vulnerabilities included in the National Circumstances section. Goals may be expressed in relation to key sectors or cross-cutting themes, and in terms of quantitative output targets or process-oriented goals, as appropriate to the country and their existing plans.
- Existing national adaptation plans and strategies, such as National Adaptation Plans (NAPs) and National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs), including any respective implementation plans and progress made. As highlighted in draft WRI guidance, the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) has provided both an overview and guidance to the preparation of NAPs, showing a strong overlap between the processes of preparing a NAP and the elements needed for the adaptation component of an INDC. There are a number of other national level documents which may provide an appropriate starting point, or countries may have summaries within their National Communications to the UNFCCC. The INDC provides an opportunity to bring several key national climate change strategies and processes together to present a coordinated and coherent outline of the country's nationally-determined adaptation plans. Countries may choose to present plans according to sectors or themes or lead ministries, according to their contexts and priorities.
- Qualitative assessment of adaptation co-benefits from mitigation activities. Many climate action projects can deliver co-benefits or side-benefits in addition to the primary objective of the project. For example reforestation programmes do not only increase the sink of greenhouse gases and therefore help mitigation again climate change but can also protect water resources and therefore contribute to adaptation to climate change.
- Current financial support for adaptation and future requirements.
- Identifying key gaps, barriers and needs for support (including technical, financial capacity building) needed to deliver national adaptation actions as outlined in the national strategies. This can be differentiated between long-term and short-term needs.
- Plans for monitoring and reporting on adaptation activities, ideally including metrics that can be used to track progress in both the implementation and effectiveness of adaptation activities. There is currently quite a wide range of approaches to monitor adaptation, and the INDC provides an opportunity for countries to move towards a more rigorous and robust system of monitoring and review, based on the framework of activities included in this section. This may include any existing measures to capture the impacts of adaptation projects and activities or plans to integrate adaptation into wider national planning and measurement systems.

For some countries it will be appropriate to include an overview of relevant subnational or sector adaptation plans in the INDC, either in addition to the national level information or in its place if there is no established national adaptation plan or programme of activities.

Existing documents (such as the data sources listed above) can be referred to for further detail.

An illustrative example of a completed section 3 for an LDC with ongoing national level adaptation activities and plans is provided below.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

3. Adaptation

Climate change adaptation is a key priority for Country X and we have already undertaken initiatives to mainstream adaptation into national development such as in the water, health, forestry and agriculture sectors. This is because Country X is particularly vulnerable to weather extremes like cyclones and heatwaves and science predicts that these and other climate change impacts will become more severe and frequent in the future. Some specific regions (e.g. Y and J) are already experiencing a regular worsening of droughts, and regional-level adaptation action plans are in place to address those sectors which have been particularly affected. Other regions (e.g. M and P) have suffered in the past 5 years for the worst floods of the last 50 years. It was also estimated that a global warming of 2°C would imply severe economic losses for Xs coffee sector, a sector that contributes to over 40% of Country X's exports.

Country X's long-term vision is to ensure that the livelihoods of our population will thrive in spite of the expected changes in climatic conditions, such as droughts and heatwaves, to achieve a middle-income status by 20yy. To ensure that climate change adaptation is mainstreamed across all key policies and sectors in Country X a National Climate Change Committee have been established to coordinate effort. In addition Country X is committed to protecting the most vulnerable groups and will ensure that all policies and actions are guided by equity and equal rights and opportunities for women and men. Further information regarding the key vulnerabilities of Country X including the regional variation and country's long term vision are presented in the [National Development Plan y] and the key [adaptation strategy z].

The adaptation priorities and plans are presented in the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) completed in 2010. In addition Country X has already started the process to develop the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) expected to be completed in 2016. Along with the NAP many municipalities have started to develop their adaptation strategies that will draw from the national strategy. Many key programmes identified in the NAPA are either completed or under implementation such as the national early warning system for natural disasters and climate change vulnerability assessment of key sectors. For a more complete list of current and planned projects and initiatives please the NAPA of Country X.

Country X acknowledges that climate change action requires a holistic approach and further acknowledges that many activities will deliver both adaptation and mitigation benefits. For example, Country X's national afforestation programme (see strategy f for details) aims at increasing the national forest cover by 2% a year for the next 15 years; in doing so Country X will both protect the livelihoods and water resources of our population and increase the national sinks of greenhouse gases.

Although Country X has already implemented several key adaptation initiatives; it still remains vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. In order to increase the resilience to climate change in Country X, it is estimated that the near-term financial needs are $ x until 2020 and $ y by 2030 (source). However, these estimates are based on the assumption that global warming will be limited to 2 degrees Celsius and therefore the expected costs will be higher if collective action fails to keep the warming under that threshold. Some of the key programmes that have been highlighted as national adaptation priorities include 'Mainstreaming climate change in Agriculture', 'Climate Smart Water Use and Planning, 'National Reforestation Programme' and 'Sustainable Livelihoods' that are long-term programmes building the capacity of local communities to adapt to climate change. For further information about the details of these programmes, including expected impacts and costs, and of other programmes please see y. In addition, further resources are needed to increase the understanding of long-term impacts of climate change (such as on precipitation and temperature) and the respective socio-economic implication across different sectors in Country X. Country X has also identified institutional capacity building at the national and local level, around adaptation planning and coordination, as a priority.

Finally, Country X acknowledges that monitoring and evaluation of adaptation policies and programmes is crucial to ensure that resources are targeted to actions that provide the best opportunities to increase the resilience of our people. Development of key adaptation indicators is already explored in the Programme 'Climate Smart Water Use and Planning' and the main lessons learned will be shared across programmes. The objective is to mainstream adaptation and vulnerability indicators in the National Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) system currently under development.

4. Planning process

Aim: This section provides an overview of existing or planned domestic processes for monitoring and supporting the implementation of the INDC.

Key data sources could include: National and subnational formal and informal development planning processes, climate change legislation, policies or action plans, green growth strategies, information on institutional structures and processes related to climate change policy planning and MRV from Biennial Update Reports or National Communications.

Relevant UNFCCC reference: "…the information to be provided by Parties communicating their intended nationally determined contributions, in order to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding, may include, as appropriate, inter alia, … planning processes…"(Lima Call for Climate Action Decision -/CP.20, paragraph 14).

Template for planning process

Planning process

This section may include overview information on any (or all) of the below, where relevant:

- existing or proposed national and subnational planning or other processes for implementing and tracking climate change activities and finance;
- national climate policy monitoring and evaluation processes;
- national MRV processes for greenhouse gas emissions;
- existing national climate change legislation, policies or actions plans, on which the contribution will build;
- key sectoral plans e.g. energy, water, agriculture;
- awareness raising and capacity building.

Existing documents may already outline planning processes relevant for implementing and tracking the implementation of the contribution. Hence, it may be possible to summarise key points from these existing documents and then refer to the documents for further detail.

An example of a completed section 4 is provided below.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

4. Planning process

Country X intends to support the delivery of its INDC through the implementation of the comprehensive climate change policy set out in its National Climate Change Action Plan. The plan incorporates the following elements:

- *sectoral action plans covering all of the activities summarised above, led by the respective line ministries;*
- *synergies with the National Development Plan;*
- *a National Climate Change Committee, led by the Deputy Prime Minister, supported by a Climate Change Secretariat within the Ministry of Environment & Forests;*
- *a proposed National Climate MRV System (to be developed and implemented), encompassing greenhouse gas inventory, NAMA MRV framework, adaptation monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework and climate finance tracking system;*
- *supporting initiatives on stakeholder engagement and capacity building;*
- *climate change legislation to be tabled in draft in 2015.*

5. Means of implementation

Aim: This section provides the financial, capacity-building, technology transfer or other types of international support related to the INDC. The information provided may help international partners to better understand and target their support. This section can cover both mitigation and adaptation.

Key data sources could include: Technology needs assessments; national and subnational climate change strategies or action plans; green growth strategies; capacity needs assessments; bilateral and multilateral support to the country to date; investment needs assessments; NAMAs, NAPAs, CPEIR (Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review).

Relevant UNFCCC reference: N/A

Template for means of implementation

Means of implementation

This section can include overview information on any or all of the below:

- financial support – the anticipated domestic financial contribution, as well as current domestic spending on climate change action; and the scale and type of international finance needs related to the INDC;
- capacity-building support – this can include any support required to monitor and implement the INDC's contribution, including the underlying policies, sector strategies and projects that will help;
- technology transfer – the scale and types of environmentally sustainable technologies related to the INDC contribution.

An overview of the country's requirements can be provided, or a more detailed break-down provided by action/sector. Where possible, further details should be included, such as when the support is needed, how much international finance may be needed; separately specifying any domestic financial contribution that may be relevant.

Existing documents (such as the data sources listed above) can be referred to for further detail.

An example completed section 5 is provided below.

ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLE

5. Means of implementation

Country X's INDC includes both an unconditional and conditional contribution; the unconditional contribution assumes unilateral action only (no additional international support), while the conditional contribution assumes that international support will be needed.

The table further below summarises the international support that would be required to implement the conditional contribution, with specific support required across three areas: finance, technology transfer and capacity-building.

Furthermore, international support is needed to support the implementation of Country X's National Adaptation Plan. Country X estimates that the cost of adapting to climate change has cost approximately US$ XX million over 2004–2014, with the majority funded from international sources. Initial estimates indicate that at least this level of finance will be needed again over the coming decade and thereafter, due to the increasing impacts of climate change.

Name of activity	*Description*	*Support required*	*Type of support needed (financial, technology transfer, capacity building)*	*When is support required?*
Renewable Energy Master Plan	*80% of existing power generation through coal and diesel to be replaced by hydropower, biogas and wind-power-facilities.*	*To achieve this ambitious program, renewable technologies will be needed, as well as financial support to undertake feasibility studies and obtain attractive finance.*	*Financial support, technology transfer.*	*2015–2030.*
Update of greenhouse gas inventory needed	*Limited understanding of 2006 IPCC Guidelines and lack of resources for data collection means that the greenhouse gas inventory has not been updated since 1996.*	*Capacity-building, financial support for technical assistance to update the greenhouse gas Inventory.*	*Capacity-building, financial support.*	*As soon as possible.*
Improving Rural Livelihoods Program (IRLP)	*This climate resilience program includes increasing small hydropower plants to provide electricity to rural communities and businesses, replacing diesel-fuelled off-grid generation. 20% of financing for this programme will come from domestic resources.*	*Grants are needed to improve the affordability of the hydropower technology.*	*Financial.*	*2015–2020.*
National Adaptation Plan	*The NAP details an action plan for improving Country X's climate resilience. For details see: (insert link to online information).*	*See Annex 1 of the NAP, (link to online information).*	*Financial, capacity-building, technology-transfer.*	*2015–2030.*

INDC TEMPLATE AT A GLANCE

National Context

This section provides the overall national context for the INDC, including how the actions set out in the INDC fit with national sustainable development priorities and existing plans and strategies.

Mitigation

Action-based contribution / Outcome-based contribution
This section contains a summary of the country's mitigation contribution, including: type of contribution, level of ambition and any conditionality that may be relevant for the contribution. It should be noted that countries may wish to specify a long-term outcome as well as short-term mitigation contribution for the period to 2025 or 2030.

Fair and Ambitious

This section sets out how the contribution is considered to be fair and ambitious in light of the country's national circumstances and the Convention's objective as set out in its Article 2: *to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system*.

Information

This section includes detailed information required to allow full understanding of the contribution at the international level and comparability with other contributions

Adaptation

This section provides an opportunity for countries to outline current and future adaptation action. The INDC could highlight current adaptation activity including potentially transferable tools and practices, and the support that may be required for implementation of adaptation plans, developing capacity or scaling up interventions. It also provides a way for countries to demonstrate progress in these plans through monitoring activities in future.

Planning Process

This section provides an overview of existing or planned domestic processes for monitoring and supporting the implementation of the INDC.

Means of Implementation

This section provides the financial, capacity-building, technology transfer or other types of international support related to the INDC . The information provided may help international partners to better understand and target their support. This section can cover both mitigation and adaptation.

ENDNOTES

1 http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/lima_dec_2014/application/pdf/auv_cop20_lima_call_for_climate_action.pdf

2 Ibid.

3 http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/lima_dec_2014/application/pdf/auv_cop20_lima_call_for_climate_action.pdf

4 http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2979.php

5 Monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) refers to a process/concept that potentially supports greater transparency in the climate change regime. The following example is given in the context of climate change mitigation but the concept of MRV can be extended to cover other policies as well, such as international support and adaptation. Monitoring refers to monitoring of emissions including collation of data against agreed indicators. Reporting refers to presentation and communication of data and findings to relevant stakeholders (such as through national communications) whereas verification refer to external qualify check of the findings for example via International Consultation and Analysis (ICA). For further information see http://unfccc.int/focus/mitigation/items/7173.php

6 http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/guidelines_and_user_manual/items/2607.php

7 http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2979.php

8 www.ipcc-nggip.iges.or.jp/public/2006gl/index.html

9 Ibid.

10 Land use can act as a sink of CO_2 or a source of GHGs. Unlike other sectors in a GHG inventory, land use includes both emissions of GHGs, including CO_2, and removals of CO_2. The sum of these emissions and removals is called a net emission. The sector can be a net sink of CO_2 emissions (e.g. more CO_2 is sequestered than emitted from land use activities), so CO_2 emissions can be negative. For many developed countries forest land is a net sink, although for a few it constitutes a net source. For more information about the processes of GHG emissions and removals in the sector, see Section 1.2 of Volume 4 of the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories: http://www.ipcc-nggip.iges.or.jp/public/2006gl/vol4.html

11 Both mitigation potential and costs always need to be related to a point in time, e.g. 2030, since both will vary over time as the mitigation potential is progressively implemented and costs change.

12 Depending on the form of the contribution, further considerations include a comparison to the Business As Usual (BAU) scenario or decarbonisation indicators, like the carbon intensity of power generation (t CO_2eq / MWh generated), of transport (t CO_2eq/km travelled or tkm) or of production (t CO_2eq / t steel produced or t cement produced).

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