



MRV and the International Climate Change Negotiations: Coming to Terms with MRV

Information is the driving force behind effective policies and action. That's why the centerpiece of the international climate change negotiations is to agree on which and how information should be provided to create transparency of what countries need to do collectively and what individual countries are actually doing.

What do the M, R, and V stand for?

M stands for Measurable: The bottom line is that the "M" should collect information about whether the world is on track to stay below the 2°C objective and that adequate support is being provided.

The intent of the "M" is to keep track of three things: 1) greenhouse gases (GHG) emitted 2) mitigation actions to avoid or reduce those emissions, and 3) the support provided in the form of financing, capacity building and technologies for carrying out the mitigation actions. Furthermore, it comprises the tracking of incremental costs and co-benefits for sustainable development. Either way, the intent of the "M" is to keep track of two things: 1) greenhouse gases – both those emitted and those reduced or avoided through mitigation actions, and 2) the support provided in the form of financing, capacity building and technologies for carrying out the mitigation actions. Furthermore, it comprises the tracking of incremental costs and co-benefits for sustainable development.

R stands for Reportable: The R is meant to make Parties report progress on climate-related activities. Reporting under the convention happens via national communications and biennial update reports. However, there are no common agreed upon formats or tables for *all* countries to uniformly capture information about such things as mitigation actions, emissions projections and GHG inventories.

Given the growing share of GHG emissions from developing countries, more frequent and more robust reporting is necessary to create greater transparency in order to be able to understand and track GHG emissions in the light of the below 2°C objective. The Cancun Agreements state that developing country parties should submit national communications every four years, as well as biennial update reports (BURs) containing key mitigation information every two years, assuming that adequate support for reporting is provided.

At COP 17 in Durban UNFCCC biennial update reporting guidelines were defined in order to assist countries in compiling and presenting information in a consistent, transparent, accurate, complete and timely manner, considering national circumstances. The first BURs shall be submitted to the UNFCCC by December 2014.

V stands for Verifiable: The purpose of verification is to advise on how to improve reports and to ensure that confirmed methodologies for measuring mitigation progress have been applied.

The "verification process" might entail independent experts analysing biennial update reports or sectoral specialists verifying the results of mitigation actions through the process of ICA. Verification could also result in improvements in the quality of reported information by generating recommendations through a facilitative sharing of views. The scope and purpose of ICA, such as the composition of technical expert teams, are still under negotiation.

Why MRV?

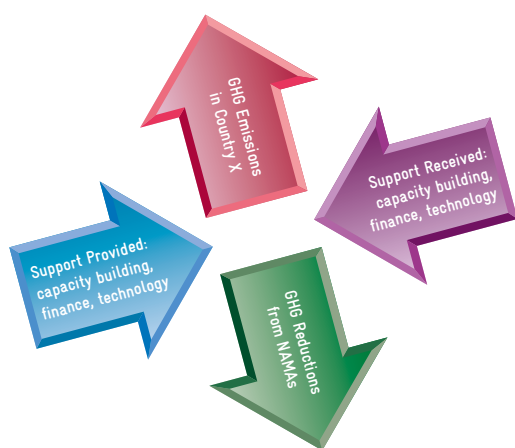
Currently there are gaps with regard to gathering and sharing information about GHG emissions, mitigation objectives and support. The purpose of MRV is to:

- » facilitate decision-making by serving as a tool for national planning,
- » help to identify priority sectors and provide an information basis for planning and implementing mitigation action,
- » promote coordination and communication between emitting sectors,
- » build trust and enhance transparency,
- » generate feedback for policymakers on the effectiveness of adopted policies and measures,
- » increase ambition at national and international level,
- » generate comparable information across countries,
- » track whether collective action is sufficient to meet the global 2°C objective and whether a country is on track to meeting its own domestic climate change-related objectives,
- » highlight lessons learned and good practices,
- » increase the likelihood of gaining international support for mitigation actions.

What are current gaps?

The gaps can be attributed to a variety of institutional, technical, political, financial, information and capacity barriers, which are frequently cited by parties as hindering the production of high quality reports. Availability and access to emission data, expertise in preparing national GHG inventories, and / or lack of experts or high turnover of experts are just some of the problems.

What needs to be MRV'd?



MRV applies to GHG emissions, GHG reductions and support for GHG reductions

MRV is needed in three key areas to generate a complete picture of global progress towards halting global warming:

1. **National GHG Emissions:** the sources of GHGs, as well as the methodologies used to monitor emissions.
2. **Mitigation Actions or NAMAs** (Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions): information about GHG emissions reductions that are taking place within a country.
3. **Support** information about the provision and receipt of finance, technology and capacity building for effective climate policies and action.

What are some challenges to developing an internationally agreed upon MRV framework?

Mitigation pathways are country-specific and vary widely, which means that any internationally agreed upon MRV system must be rigorous and transparent to make information accurate and comparable, as well as flexible to capture a range of mitigation actions. A robust domestic MRV system will enhance capabilities of a country to plan and implement effective policies and actions. Thus, a robust domestic MRV system is in the best own interest of every country and will most likely meet all international requirements at once.

Admittedly, this can be a challenge related to the current capacities of many countries (see examples related to gaps above). The existing IPCC Guidelines for measuring GHG emissions and the guidelines for the reporting and verification of biennial update reports which were adopted in Durban with details finalized in Warsaw, compose an international MRV framework. However, the 2015 Agreement applicable to all will require additionally MRV and accounting rules for tracking progress toward mitigation objectives as well as methodologies to quantify impacts of individual mitigation actions and the disaggregation of investment information from the private sector for climate-related purposes.

How can German International Cooperation contribute to enhancing MRV?

Progress on MRV is expected and happening outside the climate negotiations, as lessons learned and best practice emerge from individual countries, whose MRV systems are taking shape.

German International Cooperation is already playing an important role in supporting its partners with regard to:

- » improving data collection and reporting systems,
- » designing and implementing national and sectoral MRV systems,
- » developing mitigation actions (NAMAs) with MRV requirements,
- » providing support to institutions involved in reporting,
- » building capacity within reporting institutions, e.g. through technical workshops and trainings
- » strengthening cooperation between relevant sectors and governmental entities,
- » facilitating the sharing of experiences between countries,
- » helping partners gain MRV experience.

GIZ, on behalf of the federal ministries BMZ and BMUB, is actively involved in supporting partners in Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ghana, Indonesia, Mexico, the Philippines, South Africa, Tunisia, Vietnam and India in the establishment of national MRV systems, with the expectation that these and other practical applications of MRV can inform the climate negotiations, thereby contributing to transparency and effective climate change policies and actions.

See more information, projects and documents on MRV on the website of the International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV under "Topics / Measuring, Reporting and Verification (MRV)": www.mitigationpartnership.net

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