



Partnership on Transparency
in the Paris Agreement

Annual Partnership Retreat (APR) 2019

“Enhanced Transparency Framework: Getting ready for the transition.”

Broumana, Lebanon, 18 to 23 October 2019



The Government of
the Republic of Korea



Federal Ministry
for the Environment, Nature Conservation
and Nuclear Safety



environmental affairs

Department:
Environmental Affairs
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



REPUBLIC OF LEBANON
MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT



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Authors of the report:

Gonçalo Cavalheiro (CAOS)

Dona Geagea

Hussien Muhsen (GIZ)

Mijako Nierenköther (GIZ)

Catarina Tarpo (GIZ)

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<https://www.transparency-partnership.net/>

info@transparency-partnership.net

<https://twitter.com/TrackingClimate>

Introduction

8th Annual Partnership Retreat (APR)

The Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement (PATPA) conducted the Annual Partnership Retreat (APR) in Broumana, Lebanon from 18 to 23 of October 2019. The focus of the retreat was on the Enhanced Transparency Framework (ETF), in particular the transition from the current framework to the ETF, and the Common Tabular Formats (CTF) under negotiation at the Conference of the Parties (COP) 25. The objective of the retreat was to facilitate an exchange of relevant transparency experiences and perspectives that stimulate both the negotiators in COP 25 as well as domestic implementation of the ETF, with the overall aim to meet the goals of the Paris Agreement.

The program followed the typical structure of the APR, focusing on the interrelation between negotiations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and national implementation. A good mix of negotiators, implementers, domestic policy-makers and experts attended the retreat, allowing for a dynamic and fruitful exchange of experiences.

The topics of capacity for transparency, transitioning from the current reporting framework to the ETF, tracking progress towards achieving National Determined Contributions (NDCs), reporting on adaptation, reporting on support, international expert reviews and flexibility, were discussed in the retreat. Building on last year's discussions on the ETF, the 2019 APR focused on understanding the new requirements under the ETF and the preparation required for the transition from the current framework adopted in Cancun. The participants shared their specific experiences of national implementation, which helped negotiators understand how national implementers perceive the barriers, challenges and opportunities in providing information using the Common Tabular Formats, which is expected to be finally adopted at COP26 (2020). This exchange clearly helped attendees understand each other's negotiation positions and points of view in order to facilitate a smoother negotiation regarding transparency at COP 25 in Santiago, Chile, later this year¹.



¹ After the APR, the government of Chile decided not to host the COP due to internal reasons. The COP will be held in Madrid, but the Presidency of the COP will remain Chilean. Given that at the time of the APR, the COP was still to be held in Santiago, any references to it will remain unchanged.



The founding members of the Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement (PATPA) are South Africa, South Korea and Germany. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH organized the retreat on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). The Lebanese Ministry of Environment (MoE) hosted this year's retreat. Specific funding has been provided by Belgium's Ministry of Public Health and Environment, Norway's Ministry of Climate and Environment and Great Britain's Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.



Agenda

Day 1 Friday, 18/10	Day 2 Saturday, 19/10	Day 3 Sunday, 20/10	Day 4 Monday, 21/10	Day 5 Tuesday, 22/10	Day 6 Wednesday, 23/10
Welcome	State of play of negotiations	Free day	Transition to the ETF: concrete steps and continuous improvement	Technical Expert Review	Flexibility
Exchange of experiences and perspectives	Building capacity: - institutional arrangements, - ownership, - data management focusing on GHG inventories and mitigation action			Reporting on support	Key Messages
				Reporting on adaptation	Closure
					Departure

Participants

The APR 2019 welcomed 54 participants from 24 developing and industrialized countries: Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Egypt, Germany, Ghana, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Mexico, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Turkey, and United Kingdom, as well as international organizations: the International Institute for Environment and Development (IIED), the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the UNFCCC Secretariat, UNEP DTU, and the World Resources Institute (WRI).





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Topics, schedule and methods

Topics addressed included: Negotiations, focusing on the Common Tabular Formats, capacity building, transition to the ETF, reporting of adaptation, reporting of support, technical expert review, and flexibility. The Retreat featured a combination of expert inputs, presentations of individual country experiences, group work, and facilitated discussions. The speaker presentations that provided insight into the negotiations and implementation served as inputs for the subsequent group activities and facilitated discussions. The group activities, in particular, provided an important opportunity for in-depth discussion among negotiators and practitioners.

In addition to the content-related discussions, the APR provided a number of opportunities for participants to spend time together in a more informal setting, creating trust and friendship and promoting continued exchange during the free time and even beyond the retreat.

“The APR creates camaraderie. It opens the door for honest and candid discussions on issues that cannot be opened and discussed during negotiations. It opens the door for understanding the rationale behind certain positions of countries. This helps bridge understanding others’ positions from a technical point of view, which makes it clearer to achieve the type of support that is needed by the countries. This space allows the ease to open up and move things forward as grounds for negotiations.” - APR Participant, 2019

Key messages

The following key messages were compiled jointly by all participants during the “write shop” session on the last day of the APR.

Status of international negotiations: the ETF in the Katowice Climate Package and work ahead towards COP 25

- COP25 to focus on ambition to meet the temperature goals of the Paris Agreement.
- Discussions on Common Tabular Formats can be of a purely technical nature.
- Agreeing on Article 6 is of utmost importance to complete the rules for implementation of the Paris Agreement and to allow for the adoption of the Common Tabular Formats at COP26 (2020).



With the rules for the implementation of the Paris Agreement adopted at COP 24 (with exception of Article 6 and of the Common Tabular Formats under the Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines (MPGs) for the ETF), participants noted that COP25 would be focused on increasing ambition, following up on the appeal from the UN Secretary General. Participants stressed uncertainty on how COP 25 would translate this “ambition momentum” into new and updated NDCs and low emission long-term strategies leading to zero net emissions by 2050. Participants emphasized that the science is clear and that it is time for decisions to be fully aligned with science, in particular with the IPCC reports.

Participants noted that what seems to be a much less crowded agenda than in previous years, might create a false feeling of relaxation: there is plenty of hard and complex work ahead.

The discussions on the upcoming COP 25 started with stressing the importance of producing a clear road map for countries and the importance of achieving significant progress at COP 25, and that there is no room for slow progress since this will impact the entire transition process toward the ETF. Participants stressed the need to raise the importance on delivery on transparency to the COP presidency. Specifically with regards to the ETF and ETF related topics (such as the terms of reference of the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE), the training program for review experts and the outline for the reports), participants noted that it would be important to advance as much as possible at COP 25, including agreeing on draft-decisions, even if only to be adopted at COP 26.

Article 6 remains perhaps the most complex topic at COP 25. A successful outcome at COP 25 is key for finalizing the Common Tabular Formats at COP26.

“I can highlight 3 key aspects to the APR: first, the synthesis of negotiators and practitioners is really unusual and there aren’t a lot of opportunities for that within the UNFCCC process. Second, it makes a big difference to extract oneself from the flow of daily work and be able to concentrate fully on these issues. Third, it allows conversation on a more personal level with people you only otherwise encounter in a more formal and potentially adversary role – and it’s also fun!” - APR Participant, 2019



Capacity for Transparency

- Capacity building and capacity building support are no magic wishes that can make meaningful and sustainable changes overnight.
- Countries' capacities vary considerably among them and capacity is not uniform across different subjects and stakeholders within each country.
- Review should be considered as part of the CB process and not interpreted as a punishment.



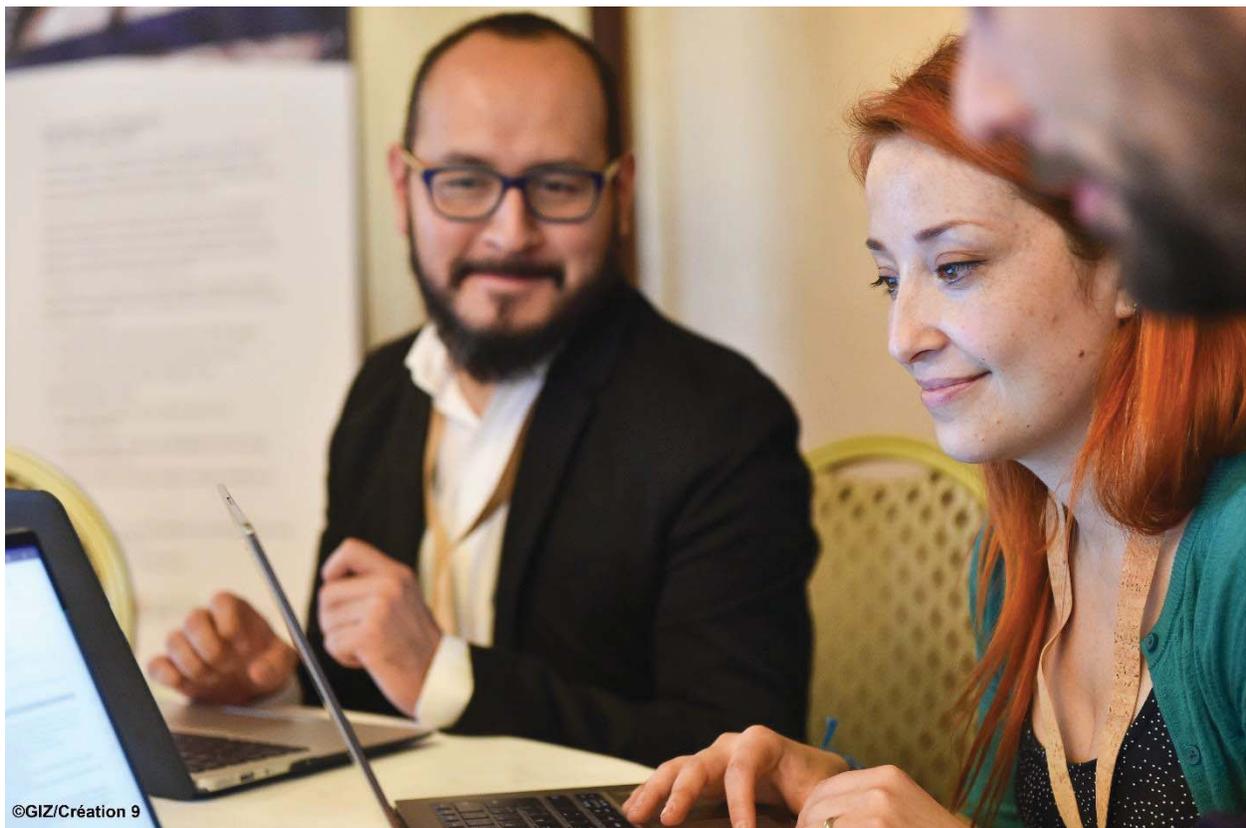
Capacity building is crucial to drive climate transparency. The 2015 Paris Agreement outlines an “Enhanced Transparency Framework” that includes increased requirements from developing countries. The discussion focused on the importance of technical capacity and having more technical experts trained for the reporting requirements under the ETF. It also focused on the institutional arrangement required and the need for institutional capacity building, integrating relevant stakeholders including but not limited to academia, sub-national, and local stakeholders.

The results of the application of the Capacity Building Initiative for Transparency (CBIT) capacity assessment tool show that countries have very different starting points for different reporting subjects. For example, a country may have capacity to report on emissions, but not as much on mitigation action and much less on adaptation and support.

The discussion highlighted that capacity building should be tailored to each country's reality and needs, where there are different levels of capacity within developing countries, and stressed it is a process and not a one-time step that countries go through. Participants underlined that developing countries need capacity and assistance with the assessment of needs because they do not always know how to assess their needs to attract the appropriate support. Additionally, the Common Tabular Formats can prove to be a very important tool in highlighting capacity building needs.

The participants stressed that the international review process should be part of the transparency capacity building process that countries could benefit from to define priorities and areas of improvements needed, and that the review should not be seen as burden. A general observation was that there has been improvement in capacity in some developing countries over the past years, which is a good prognosis on the way to implementing the ETF.

"This retreat has been really useful because it is helping us to prepare ourselves for the next COP by giving us more information regarding the Paris Agreement and Transparency. Capacity is really helpful for us to share experiences on NDC's, transparency, institutional and legal arrangements. We will write a report and translate it in my own language and share it with our colleagues. We have a website and an internal mailing list as well as internal coordination meetings –we will share the learning from this retreat and the outcomes through these channels." – APR Participant, 2019



Transitioning from the current reporting framework to the ETF

- The Katowice Decisions provide all that is needed for the transition.
- The transition to the ETF has already started in many countries and many others are starting preparations.
- The timeline for the ETF is clear: the transition should be part of a continuum, rather than a “stop and go”.



Discussions stressed that the timeline for the transition to the ETF is clear and countries need to plan and have a road map for delivery on the ETF by 2024 at the latest. This may include submission of a Biennial Update Report (BUR) and Biennial Transparency Report (BTR) at the same time. The submitted BUR and the technical analysis will serve as a basis for improvements and preparing for the transition. The participants agreed that the first step of the transition is to create an ETF roadmap, define data gaps, capacities required as well as defining flexibility requirements by countries.

There is a foundation for the transition to the ETF, which is the Katowice Climate Package. Even countries that are at early stages under the current reporting framework, have the potential to start working according to new MPGs. Some countries are transitioning (or planning to do so), by preparing the next report as a hybrid between a BUR and a BTR. Countries noted that this might be a very effective approach to identifying capacity gaps and needs.



Identifying challenges and gaps is instrumental in the transition process toward the ETF. Planning countries' resources and being aware of the needed financial support between now and 2024 are two major steps towards transitioning to the ETF. Countries discussed the timeframe required for a transition to be effective and highlighted that the years 2021 and 2022 are crucial for developing countries to make the transition from the current reporting framework toward the ETF.

“The whole APR experience is an eye-opener and offers the opportunity to understand most of the issues that were difficult to comprehend. It offers the opportunity to get to learn about the experiences of others who are more advanced than you. Experience gathered here will be shared with my colleagues back home to improve the reports that will be submitted subsequently and also at stakeholder and office meetings.” – APR Participant, 2019



Tracking progress

- Tracking progress towards achieving NDCs is a requirement for which developing countries have little or no experience, thus may be particularly challenging.
- Synergies between different types of policies, including different international frameworks (such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)), may promote and facilitate tracking and reporting on action and on progress.
- Common Tabular Formats are essential for the collection of comparable data for the Global Stocktake.



Participants noted that, since NDCs are nationally determined, the MPGs do not foresee flexibility in the application of the guidelines to track progress. While many agree that countries should be in a position to track the NDC they have determined, many also note that this is not necessarily always true, in particular because capacity is dynamic.

Participants noted that tracking progress is a data intensive process for which developing countries have little or no experience (developed countries have experience under the Kyoto Protocol and/or the pre-2020 pledges).

The discussion highlighted the best practice of integrating data collection with that of other policies and international frameworks and that the use of online systems is efficient and contributes to building capacity.

Concerning reporting on progress using Common Tabular Formats, participants noted that the tables are essential for the collection of comparable data to be used in the Global Stocktake. Participants also noted that the use of tables makes the requirement in the guidelines more easily understandable to data compilers. Finally, the participants held the opinion that tables need to be accompanied by text, to provide a narrative that explains the figures in the tables.

“Most important at the APR is hearing quiet voices that don’t usually speak, allowing them to give background on their experiences and to ask clarifying questions – because it’s a safe space. In this retreat you are actually building your capacities. In terms of sharing the benefits, and because a lot of what is discussed at the APR is about next steps, it offers a great planning tool to share with and guide my team.”– APR Participant, 2019



Reporting on adaptation

- Among the adaptation-specific or adaptation-compatible “vehicles” as foreseen by the Paris Agreement and the Katowice Package, e.g. National Communications (NCs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are recognized both as an opportunity (as countries can choose what suits their circumstances best) and as a challenge as the different vehicles are confusing
- Experience and capacity with regard to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and reporting on adaptation is the lowest across most developing countries, in particular Least Developed Countries (LDCs). But even these countries can report about their vulnerabilities and policies, e.g. via its NAP
- Indicators are the backbone of a Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E) system; they need to be customised to the domestic context. Moreover, if the M&E system is designed usefully it provides domestic benefits



On the reporting on adaptation, the APR covered the reporting processes under the UNFCCC, the current work on the development of guidelines for the adaptation communication, and M&E of adaptation. The speakers stated the importance of reviewing the context at domestic level and identifying what the adaptation needs are. The discussion highlighted the context specific nature of adaptation. Speakers advised to seek synergies between information in NAP, NDC, NCs, and domestic reports; and identify synergies with sectoral policies and other international frameworks (SDGs, etc.) in order to avoid the reporting burden. They also pointed out that if a country has adaptation targets & goals in place, you need to report in order for a country’s efforts to be recognised. Once reported, it primarily serves domestic purposes and informs political decision for Adaptation at domestic level. LDCs might make a deliberate choice to communicate on adaptation as a stand-alone document to emphasize the importance of

adaptation. This is in line with the “voluntary” nature of adaptation reporting. Reporting on adaptation actions is also a prerequisite to increase funding for adaptation. Finally, adaptation reporting informs the global climate change community, however, there is no single global universal metric to measure adaptation progress.

The work of the Adaptation Committee (AC) has been recognized by participants as effective and efficient. However, too many bodies (Consultative Group of Experts (CGE), Paris Committee on Capacity-building (PCCB), task forces, etc.) treat adaptation within the UNFCCC process. Participants suggested bundling these groups as working groups of the AC.

“It’s a great opportunity to be at the APR. It is a policy dialogue, between developed, developing and least developed countries – just like in negotiations – but it offers an informal and comfortable setting. As representatives of our countries, we are here to present our experience but also to clarify many technical issues. It has been good to be updated about the latest procedures and processes that have been happening in negotiations because as a negotiator, I don’t have as much info on actions of all other developing countries – this is the kind of input I can share with my colleagues. For sharing the benefits of this APR with colleagues, I will provide a report to my team in my country’s language and share it in several national committees that I am a member of, beyond my department.” – APR Participant, 2019

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Reporting on support

- Developing countries have little experience is transparent reporting on support received and were never required to use Common Tabular Formats.
- There are several complex methodological issues related to tracking and reporting support mobilized, provided and received. Nonetheless, there is no official agenda item to improve a shared understanding of such methodological issues.
- International organizations such as the multilateral development banks or the OECD have produced extensive methodological guidance that countries may refer to in preparing their reports on support.



The MPGs include guidelines on reporting on support. Currently, only Annex II countries are obliged to report on support and use Common Tabular Formats. The participants highlighted the fact that there is no agenda item under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) to tackle the technical issues on reporting on support and considering how the SBSTA can serve the technical issues like: overlaps, tabular formats, etc.

Technical guidance from institutions like OECD or WRI could provide inspiration for the SBSTA discussions. OECD developed a system to record multilateral climate finance (Development Assistance Committee (DAC) – CRS database; using the Rio Markers, two markers: one on mitigation and adaptation), but the system is limited to countries that are members of the OECD, so the information is not comprehensive.

In a simplified approach, the participants suggested to compile a list of all support needed, the source of support and the status, including the classification (mitigation, adaptation, reporting). This will allow to systematically update the database from one reporting cycle to another. Participants stressed that support received by non-governmental organizations (including the private sector) is difficult to track and capture and there needs to be national arrangements to track and capture and report this support.

Participants indicated the need to track beyond financial support, capturing the actual impact of the support using indicators.

“I loved the presentations from those who were from institutions like the OECD and WRI that could share how the process is thought out.” - APR Participant, 2019



Flexibility

- The flexibility in the implementation of the MPGs is well defined in the MPGs themselves.
- Several options are still open concerning how flexibility can be applied in the use of Common Tabular Formats: deleting columns/rows for which the country does not have information (the tables would not be “common” anymore) or using notation keys (preserving the integrity and comparability of the tables).



Participants argued that flexibility is a tool for improvement and building capacity and that it should not be seen as permanent: countries should provide self-determined estimated time frames for improvements. Participants stressed that flexibility enables participation of all countries in the context of continuous improvement.

Participants noted that a common understanding on how to operationalize flexibility in the use of the Common Tabular Formats could be reached at COP 25 and that there are several tools that can be jointly used to explain the use of the flexibility provisions: summary tables, footnotes, documentation boxes, notation keys.

“The APR retreat is a unique space to meet both negotiators and implementers, and opinion leaders at the negotiation table from key countries, all at the same time. This is the place we can ask people who have not attended the negotiations how they feel when they read the statements. This space is really important and should be carried on, with more implementers if possible! Negotiators learn from implementers how provisions are understood and used by them.” – APR Participant, 2019

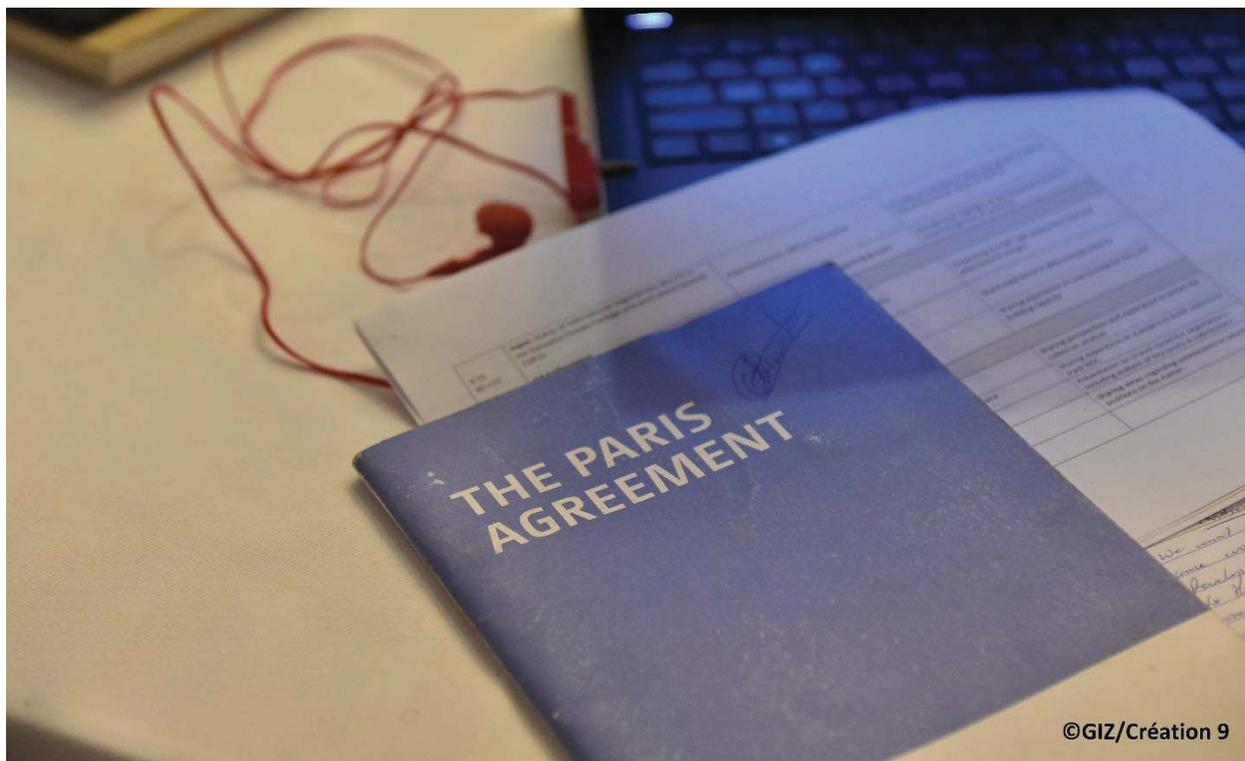
Background

The Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement

During the Petersburg Climate Dialogue held in Berlin in May 2010, three countries – Germany, the Republic of Korea and South Africa – launched the *International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV* with the aim of promoting ambitious climate action through policy dialogue and practitioner-based exchanges. This alliance has since been renamed *the Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement*, reflecting the 2015 launch of the Paris Agreement’s transparency mechanism, which is tasked with facilitating and catalyzing the implementation of the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). The overarching goal of the Agreement is to keep the increase in average global temperature well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, possibly limiting it to 1.5°C. Effective implementation of the NDCs is essential to achieve this goal. The new enhanced transparency system is of particular importance in this context, as it helps build mutual trust, encourages partner countries to grow their ambitions and, in so doing, helps to limit global temperature rise to well below 2°C and ideally to 1.5°C.

Today, the *Partnership on Transparency in the Paris Agreement* is addressing the new challenges posed by the transparency rules, while continuing to provide support for practical exchanges between developing and industrialized countries and to serve as a discussion forum for climate negotiation topics.

More than 120 countries have already participated in the Partnership’s various activities, the *Annual Partnership Retreat* being one of its key forums for exchange, peer learning and policy dialogue on transparency issues.



Annex: List of participants APR 2019

#	Sex	Surname	Given name	Country/ Organisation	Institution
1	Mr	Almang	Hugo Matías	Argentina	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Worship
2	Mr	Aminou	Raphiou Adissa	Benin	Ministère du Cadre de Vie et du Développement Durable
3	Ms	Elegbede	Ilako Adjoke Maurille Tchele	Benin	Ministry of Living Environment and Climate Change
4	Ms	Rocha de Oliveira Melo	Lidiane	Brazil	Ministry of Science, Technology, innovations and Communications
5	Mr	Rotella Braga	Paulo Cezar	Brazil	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
6	Mr	Brouwer	Geoffrey	Canada	Environment & Climate Change
7	Mr	Díaz Bórquez	Felipe Andrés	Chile	Ministry of Environment
8	Ms	Mager Santos	Jenny Liesbeth María	Chile	Ministry of Environment
9	Ms	Geagea	Dona Habib	Co-Facilitator	
10	Mr	Leiter	Timo	Consultant	
11	Ms	Moya Mora	Ana Lucía	Costa Rica	Ministry of Energy and Environment of Costa Rica-Climate Change Directorate
12	Mr	Abdel-Aziz	Amr	Egypt	Integral Consult
13	Ms	Badr	Rania Bassiouny Shehata	Egypt	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
14	Mr	Pera Cavalheiro	Gonçalo Nuno	Facilitator	
15	Ms	Lichte	Rocío	Germany	Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
16	Mr	Zarzo Fuertes	Oscar	Germany	German Environment Agency
17	Mr	Abbas	Dawood	Ghana	Environmental Protection Agency
18	Mr	Onwona-Kwakye	Michael	Ghana	Environmental Protection Agency, Ghana
19	Ms	Nierenköther	Mijako	GIZ	PATPA



#	Sex	Surname	Given name	Country/ Organisation	Institution
20	Ms	Tarpo	Catarina	GIZ	PATPA
21	Mr	Wenzel	Klaus	GIZ	PATPA
22	Mr	Muhsen	Hussien	GIZ Jordan	GIZ
23	Ms	Sanchez Ibrahim	Navina	GIZ Jordan	GIZ
24	Ms	Aragon Noriega	Illari Zulema	IIED	International Institute for the Environment and Development (IIED)
25	Mr	Prihatno	Joko	Indonesia	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
26	Ms	Wargahadibrata	Ratnasari	Indonesia	Ministry of Environment and Forestry
27	Ms	Asgharzadeh Ghahroudi	Sheida	Iran	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
28	Mr	Khajeh Pour	Hossein	Iran	Iranian Department of the Environment
29	Mr	Morimoto	Takashi	Japan	Mitsubishi UFJ Research & Consulting Co., Ltd.
30	Ms	Ajjour	Ruba	Jordan	Royal Scientific Society
31	Mr	Ouma	Fredrick	Kenya	Transparency International Kenya
32	Ms	Awad Menassa	Mary	Lebanon	Ministry of Environment
33	Ms	Daou Chalfoun	Yara	Lebanon	Ministry of Environment
34	Ms	El Chemaly	Danielle	Lebanon	Ministry of Environment
35	Mr	Kabakian	Vahakn	Lebanon	Ministry of Environment
36	Ms	Kai Aboujaoudé	Lea	Lebanon	Ministry of Environment
37	Mr	Pereyra	Saul	Mexico	Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources
38	Ms	Falduto	Chiara	OECD	OECD
39	Ms	Al-Hinai	Bushra	Saudi Arabia	Ministry of Energy
40	Mr	Barry	Ahmadou Tidiane	Senegal	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development



#	Sex	Surname	Given name	Country/ Organisation	Institution
41	Mr	Diop	Assane	Senegal	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development
42	Ms	Ng	Shu Hui	Singapore	National Climate Change Secretariat, Prime Minister's Office
43	Mr	Marquard	Andrew Keith	South Africa	Energy Research Centre, University of Cape Town
44	Ms	Motshwanedi	Sandra Boitumelo	South Africa	Department of Environmental Affairs
45	Mr	Jung	Jae Hyuk	South Korea	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
46	Ms	Kim	Minyoung	South Korea	Greenhouse Gas Inventory and Research Center of Korea (GIR)
47	Mr	Allerup	Jonas	Sweden	Environmental Protection Agency
48	Ms	Berggren	Sara	Sweden	Environmental Protection Agency
49	Mr	Aksakal	Kadir	Turkey	Turkish Statistical Institute
50	Mr	Aydogan	Hakan	Turkey	Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation
51	Ms	Cardoso	Ana	UNEP DTU	UNEP DTU
52	Ms	Simeonova	Katia	UNFCCC	UNFCCC Secretariat
53	Ms	Robinson	Emma	United Kingdom	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
54	Ms	Elliott	Cynthia	WRI	World Resources Institute

Main organizers



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