



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/AC.237/90/Add.1
13 January 1995

Original: ENGLISH

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE
FOR A FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE
Eleventh session
New York, 6-17 February 1995
Item 9 of the provisional agenda

PROVISION TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY PARTIES OF TECHNICAL
AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Addendum

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE CLIMATE CONVENTION INFORMATION
EXCHANGE PROGRAMME

Note by the interim secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme

I. Committee mandate

1. At its ninth and tenth sessions, the Committee was informed about the Climate Convention information exchange programme (CC:INFO), formerly known as Climex (see A/AC.237/51 and A/AC.237/75). The Committee noted with satisfaction the progress achieved on CC:INFO and requested the interim secretariat and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to continue their efforts to update the database on a regular basis, to improve modes of dissemination (for example, electronic means, Internet), to increase the variety of information contained within CC:INFO, and to report on further progress to its eleventh session (A/AC.237/76, para. 98).

II. Programme activities to date

2. The database is being updated through regular and frequent communication with key people and organizations that supply, or are potentially able to supply, resources for enabling activities. These contacts, in some cases reinforced by visits from CC:INFO staff, were sent

a copy of the CC:INFO report, and were requested to keep CC:INFO staff informed of new enabling activities of their organizations and new developments in existing enabling activities. Such contacts have served to expand and update the CC:INFO information base. Moreover, these contacts were requested to send to the secretariat project documents and other relevant material for archiving in the newly-established secretariat library. These documents can be re-distributed on request.

3. In addition to its distribution to delegates during the tenth session of the Committee, the CC:INFO report (August 1994) was mailed to 550 persons and organizations worldwide. Only those replying to the accompanying letters will be kept on the distribution list for future updates.

4. The March 1995 edition of the CC:INFO report is currently being prepared and will be available for consultation by delegates during the eleventh session of the Committee. Copies of this report, in its final version, will be distributed to all delegates at the first Conference of the Parties (COP 1) and to the climate change community worldwide during the second quarter of 1995. It is planned to produce the report in two versions, one complete and one abridged.

5. Efforts to make the CC:INFO information base accessible from electronic networks and bulletin boards are also under way. A preliminary version of the CC:INFO on-line report, containing part of the CC:INFO information base, should be available for demonstration, as well as for external access on the Internet, using the World Wide Web server 1/ of the UNEP/World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Information Unit on Climate Change (IUCC). Information from CC:INFO is also distributed on diskette. The first user of this service was the World Bank.

6. Further to comments and suggestions received regarding the first CC:INFO report (August 1994), the "activity matrix" will be incorporated into a set of "country profiles" in the CC:INFO report (March 1995). These profiles, organized in alphabetical order by country name, will provide a concise source of information on the process of implementation of the Convention. Each country profile consists of two sections. The first contains general information about a country, including the dates of signature and ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, the dates of when the national communication is due, when it was received, and who the contact is for the national communication, as well as the name and contact person of a national committee on climate change (where this exists), and other relevant information. The second section includes the updated country information prepared for the activity matrix in the previous CC:INFO report. In the future, other relevant information could be added.

1/ The World Wide Web is a network of computers that use a proprietary system for linking documents across the Internet. Mosaic, the leading WWW front-end software used at the secretariat, is able to access all these computers and the documents.

7. A list of seminars, workshops and other events on issues relating to the implementation of the provisions of the Convention could also be included in the next CC:INFO report. It is also planned to disseminate this list on-line, and to update it on a regular basis. Other improvements in the report include the addition of tables at the beginning of each section to help readers access the information.

8. During the course of the third and fourth quarters of 1994, CC:INFO staff members received and processed approximately 60 requests for assistance to implement enabling activities in developing countries. Information on these funding opportunities have been circulated to a number of organizations (approximately 60) listed in the CC:INFO database as potential suppliers of resources. While it is generally not possible to track each request for assistance, anecdotal evidence is available to demonstrate that these are being used, and funding is being made available for them.

9. CC:INFO staff are planning to develop an information management tool for use by national teams established by the Climate Convention training programme (CC:TRAIN), which is carried out jointly by the interim secretariat and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). This tool, which will consist of a database and a training programme on how to manage information related to the Convention, should enhance the capacity of the country teams to prepare and follow up on national strategies for the implementation of the Convention. In addition, it is expected that this will:

(a) Contribute to the founding of nationwide Climate Convention information management systems;

(b) Foster the integration of national implementation strategies into wider national environmental strategies and plans;

(c) Increase the capacity of CC:INFO to access country-level information; and

(d) Enable countries to tap the global resource base more efficiently.

10. Further to meetings with staff at the Sittard-based (Netherlands) Greenhouse Gas Technology Information Exchange (GREENTIE), it was also decided that an electronic gateway to GREENTIE's on-line dissemination system would be provided in mid-1995 through the IUCC World Wide Web server.

III. Preliminary appraisal of Phase One

11. An internal evaluation of Phase One activities of in 1994 was undertaken by the secretariat using CC:INFO internal files and through informal discussions with users of the CC:INFO report and information base. The original objectives of the programme were "to facilitate and coordinate external support, on request, for activities related to the Convention in developing and other countries" (A/AC.237/38, para. 1). In the same document, it was

mentioned that "focus will be on exchanging information relating to country activities at the national level" and "sources of technical expertise and financial resources" (A/AC.237/38, para. 5).

12. During Phase One, approximately 60 organization profiles were prepared and distributed in print and electronically. The internal evaluation shows that these profiles together provide an accurate map of the world resource base available to support enabling activities in developing and other countries. These organizations supply resources to more than 190 enabling activities at various stages of development worldwide. About 100 general enquiries were also processed during Phase One. These included general requests for information on the CC:INFO programme, requests for information on specific activities and organizations, requests to receive copies of the CC:INFO report and requests to be part of the CC:TRAIN programme.

13. To date, CC:INFO staff have received, processed and circulated to the resource-supply community about 60 requests for assistance. The internal evaluation shows that these funding opportunities are viewed as an effective tool to help supply-side organizations initiate and focus support where this is most needed. Feedback from countries requesting assistance has also been positive, as these requests are viewed as an instrument to effectively access the international resource base. While CC:INFO is not yet extensively used to facilitate channelling assistance to countries, these first 60 requests reinforce the original indication that it could become an effective tool in matching supply with demand.

14. Reactions to the CC:INFO programme were also gathered at various international seminars and meetings, as well as at ad hoc workshops at the ninth and tenth sessions of the Committee. This feedback was very positive; during these events, more than 150 persons asked to be included in the CC:INFO mailing list. In several cases, it was clear that the CC:INFO report was the first opportunity that interested government officials had had of seeing all the climate change related activities presented in one matrix.

15. On these and other occasions, the need was also stated for more substantive information concerning the process of implementation of the commitments under the Convention, such as copies of project documents, and other related information. Since these documents are also used as models for project proposals on similar activities in different countries, their distribution helps to promote and diffuse good practice and processes in implementing the provisions of the Convention.

16. Regular users of CC:INFO information include the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its Implementing Agencies, bilateral programmes, and government agencies and non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries. These users have requested, *inter alia*, information on activities and organizations, copies of the latest requests for assistance and copies of project documents.

17. Several users have also made suggestions on how to improve the quantity and quality of the CC:INFO information. In addition to the preparation of country profiles mentioned above, other suggestions included preparing and distributing a regularly updated list of meetings, seminars and other events, disseminating the CC:INFO information on-line using electronic networks and bulletin boards (for example, Internet and the World Wide Web server) and off-line through diskettes.

18. While it is too early to evaluate the CC:INFO programme, this preliminary appraisal indicates that the programme has become an established and up-to-date source of information. Findings suggest that CC:INFO is meeting the needs of supply-side organizations for information on which enabling activities are being undertaken, where and by whom. The programme is also beginning to respond to the needs of countries for information on available international assistance. Finally, CC:INFO is increasingly being used for both proposals and requests for assistance. Anecdotal evidence suggests that requests proposed through CC:INFO have received funding.

19. These findings indicate that the CC:INFO programme should be continued beyond Phase One. Its activities should be intensified in order to respond to the numerous suggestions made and to improve the timeliness, quantity and quality of the information, as well as its collection and dissemination.

IV. Future developments

20. Based on this evaluation, the goal of the interim secretariat is to strengthen the CC:INFO programme as a service both to Parties and to multilateral and bilateral organizations, including the GEF. UNEP will also continue its substantive support to the programme, and will endeavour to extend financial support. The immediate aim is to improve the information provided through CC:INFO, in accordance with the findings mentioned in paragraph 19 above. CC:INFO staff aim to achieve this goal through strengthening two main areas of the programme: the collection and updating of information and its subsequent processing and distribution; and synergy with other programmes and organizations.

21. In the future, CC:INFO will disseminate information not only on enabling activities, but also on activities carried out by countries after they have fulfilled their first communication requirements, and on organizations focusing their assistance on such activities.

22. Efforts to disseminate information more effectively will centre upon two main areas, printed information and electronic information. As far as the former is concerned, the CC:INFO report (see paragraphs 7-8) above, will be sent to interested people and organizations on the mailing list. Copies of the report will be kept up to date through the periodical mailing of replacement sheets in the form of organization profiles and country profiles.

23. In order to keep printing and postage costs to a minimum, information will continue to be disseminated electronically. CC:INFO information is expected to reach substantially more users as the base of global networks and bulletin boards (such as the Internet) expands. The distribution of information on diskette (as experimented with in the case of the World Bank), will also be continued in order to satisfy those users who do not have access to on-line communication.

24. In addition to providing information to countries and to the broad community of users working in activities related to the Convention, CC:INFO will also respond to needs for an exchange of technical information and experiences of the secretariat technical cooperation programme (CC:COPE) and its informal consultative group (see A/AC.237/90/Add.3).

V. Staff and budget

25. At present, the CC:INFO staff consists of a part-time programme manager, a full-time programme officer, and one database assistant. Technical support for the development of databases, as well as computers and other related services, was provided by the interim secretariat information system. Technical support and facilities have also been provided by IUCC.

26. In the future, the programme manager will increasingly focus on coordinating the efforts of the interim secretariat on technical cooperation. In order to be able to respond to the increasing demands for information, a second programme officer will need to be added to the team in 1995. Moreover, some additional computer hardware needs to be purchased, such as a high-speed, multi-tray printer and a photocopier.

27. In 1994, the cost of CC:INFO was estimated at US\$416,000. The Government of Denmark contributed US\$200,000 to the programme and UNEP provided US\$191,500. The remaining expenses were covered from other extra-budgetary contributions to the trust fund for the negotiating process.
