

Name of Project: Enabling China to Prepare Its Third National Communication to the UNFCCC Project (TNC)

Terms of Reference for the Terminal Evaluation

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Background

Climate is an important component of the natural environment that sustains human beings. A moderate and stable climate system is essential for the survival and evolution of all living creatures, and necessary for the sustainable development of human society. Scientific research concludes that the global climate is undergoing a significant change – climate system is warming and extreme climate events have become more frequent. Global climate change will affect human society in all aspects. It will not only affect the stability of ecosystem, but also the development of human society.

Undoubtedly, climate change attaches great concern of the global community. The Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) states that “*most of the observed increase in global average temperatures since the mid-20th century is very likely due to the observed increase in anthropogenic GHG concentrations*”. In addition, the Fifth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has further strengthened the scientific conclusion that human activity accounts for climate change. As international consensus on addressing climate change continues to deepen and China’s strength increases, China is faced with a new situation regarding the climate change issue.

There are many measures have been taken so as to address climate change effectively and efficiently, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was adopted by the international community in June 1992 and came into force in March 1994, thanks to the joint efforts of all related parties. The UNFCCC stipulates clearly that the Parties to the Convention shall protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Additionally, the UNFCCC also requires all Parties to submit national inventories, which include anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases (GHGs). It further provides that all Parties shall formulate, implement, publish and regularly update national programmes to address climate change, promote the development and application of technologies that reduce or prevent anthropogenic emissions of GHGs. Moreover, it is urgent to improve the sinks of GHGs, develop adaptation plan and promote the exchange of information about climate change and response measures; promote education, training and public awareness related to climate change. According to the UNFCCC, each Party has the responsibility to exchange communication, including a national inventory of emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all GHGs, a general description of steps taken and envisaged to implement the UNFCCC as well as other information that the Party considers appropriate.

The Chinese government attaches great significance to its international obligations, and engaged officials and experts of relevant government departments, social groups, research institutes, universities and

enterprises to develop China's Initial National Communication (hereinafter referred to as INC) in accordance with the UNFCCC *Guidelines for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties*. The INC was completed after 3-year concerted efforts of more than 400 experts from about 100 organizations and submitted to the Secretariat of the UNFCCC in October 2004. In 2008, China launched the preparation of its Second National Communication (hereinafter referred to as 2NC). After four-year coordinated efforts of relevant government departments, scientific research institutions, universities, state-owned enterprises and civil societies, with further elaboration by the National Leading Group on Climate Change (NLGCC), the 2NC was completed and approved by the State Council in 2012 and submitted to the UNFCCC on 8 November 2012. The compilation of 2NC was based on *the guidelines for the preparation of the second national communications from non-Annex I Parties*, which were adopted by the Conference of the Parties (COP) at its eighth session.

The 2NC is composed of 8 parts providing information on national circumstances, national GHG inventory, climate change impacts and adaptation, policies and actions for climate change mitigation, other relevant information on achieving the objective of the Convention, needs for financial support, technologies and capacity building, basic situation of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) and Macao SAR on addressing climate change. The 2NC has fully reflected China's national circumstances related to climate change. On the whole, China will sincerely carry out all the tasks in the China's National Climate Change Programme, strive to build a resource conservative and environmentally friendly society, enhance national capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and make further contribution to the protection of the global.

In this context, the Third National Communication of the People's Republic of China on Climate Change (hereinafter referred to as 3NC) project will be conducive for China to establish national systems, methodologies and further strengthen coordination and institutional arrangements for the preparation of national communications. It will further strengthen China's capacity to develop national GHG inventory, including the capacity to determine activity data, appropriate emission factors, collecting field measurement data and controlling inventory quality. The 3NC will enhance China's ability to project future GHG emissions, develop and maintain national GHG emission database. The 3NC will comprise 2012 national GHG inventory and emission projections, policies and measures for climate change mitigation, analysis on mitigation actions, and institutional structure of Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV), promotions for public awareness related to climate change, GHG inventory and basic information of the Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR on addressing climate change. It will also assess the impacts of and vulnerability to climate change so as to identify adaptation options in the short and long terms.

Decision 2/CP.17 adopted by the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UNFCCC stipulates that "*non-Annex I Parties, consistent with their capabilities and the level of support provided for reporting, should submit their first biennial update report by December 2014. In using the Guidelines, non-Annex I Parties should take into account their development priorities, objectives, capacities and national circumstances. Non-Annex I Parties shall submit a biennial update report every two years, either as a summary of parts of their national communication in the year in which the national communication is submitted or as a stand-alone update report. The first biennial update report submitted by non-Annex I Parties shall cover, at a minimum, the inventory for the calendar year no more than four years prior to the date of the submission, or more recent years if information is available, and that subsequent biennial update reports shall cover a calendar year that does not precede the submission date*

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by more than four years". Therefore, the preparation and submission of China's Initial Biennial Update Report (hereinafter referred to as BUR) will be important demonstration and guarantee to improve the consistency, transparency, integrity, accuracy and timeliness of data contained in its national communications.



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The 3NC and the BUR will enable China to better assess domestic climate change impacts, vulnerability and adaptation measures, enhance China's capacity in measurement, statistics and monitoring, and promote public awareness related to climate change. On the other hand, the preparation of the 3NC and the BUR will also demonstrate and strengthen China's efforts to address climate change. It will assist the international community to better comprehend China's climate change actions and enhance international cooperation and exchanges.

1.2 Project Summary

This project is to enable China to fulfill its commitments under the UNFCCC to prepare its Third National Communication (3NC) and Initial Biennial Update Report (BUR) and to gradually establish a supporting system of developing NCs and BUR in accordance with the *Guidelines for the Preparation of National Communications from Non-Annex I Parties (17/CP.8)* and *Biennial Update Reporting Guidelines for Non-Annex I Parties (2/CP.17)* adopted by the Conference of Parties (COP). Based on the experience and lessons learned from the previous two NCs, the project will broaden and consolidate the network of stakeholders, including those in the government, research and education institutions, associations, social groups, enterprises, individuals and NGOs, enhance technical capacity of national experts, and strengthen the institutional framework for the preparation of NCs and BURs. Furthermore, the project will place greater emphasis on relevant policies on mitigation of and adaptation to climate change and the results of their implementation, promote the establishment and improvement of the domestic systems for measurement, report and verification, so as to enable China to effectively address climate change in the process of pursuing national sustainable development.

The project will develop comprehensive national Greenhouse Gas (GHG) inventory of 2010 and 2012, with extended categories and sources of GHG emissions and reduced uncertainties of the inventory. It will further improve the national GHG inventory database management system, with a view to administering inventory data in a more scientific way and making the preparation of GHG inventories a continuing process. The project will further improve the approach for projecting GHG emissions in China, and estimate China's CO₂ emission from energy activities in 2025. It will also identify key impacts of climate change and corresponding adaptation measures, describe relevant policies and measures which China adopts to address climate change, and introduce the activities of enhancing public awareness on climate change. It will provide relevant information on addressing climate change by Hong Kong and Macao. The project will lead to the submission of the 3NC and BUR to the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the UNFCCC.

Expected outcomes:

1. Updating of National GHG Emission Inventory and GHG Inventory Database, and Enhancement of GHG Emission Forecasting and Modeling Systems.
2. Assessment on Impacts of, Vulnerability and Adaptation to Climate Change.
3. Updating of Climate Change Mitigation, Measures, Options and Actions for 3NC.

4. Improving Public Awareness and Informing Policy Decision Making on Climate Change.
5. Inventory of GHG Emissions and Other Relevant Information on Climate Change in Hong Kong and Macau SARs.
6. Supplementary Support for Achieving Convention Objectives and Publication and Dissemination of the 3NC Report.
7. Supporting China Biennial Update Report completed and Submitting to the UNFCCC.

Funding:

Total Budget (USD): 8,180,000, including 7,280,000 from GEF

Implementation Period: 2015-2020

2. Objectives of the Terminal Evaluation

The objectives of this Terminal Evaluation (TE) seek to fulfill the following overarching objectives of the monitoring and evaluation of GEF projects:

The objective of the TE is to gain an independent analysis of the progress of the project. The Terminal Evaluation will identify potential project design problems, assess progress towards the achievement of the project objective, identify and document lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation of other UNDP-GEF projects), and make recommendations regarding specific actions that should be taken to improve the project in future. The TE will assess early signs of project success or failure and identify the necessary changes to be made. The project performance will be measured based on the indicators of the project's logical framework (see Annex 1) and various Tracking Tools.

The TE must provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The review team is expected to follow a participatory and consultative approach ensuring close engagement with government counterparts, in particular the GEF operational focal point, UNDP Country Office, project team, UNDP GEF Technical Adviser based in the region and key stakeholders. Interviews will be held with the following organizations and individuals at a minimum:

1. UNDP staff who have project responsibilities;
2. Executing agencies (including but not limited to senior officials and task team/ component leaders: MEE, key experts and consultants in the demonstration areas, PSC members;
3. The Chair of Project Steering Committee
4. Project stakeholders, including academia, local government and CBOs

The team will review all relevant sources of information, such as the project document, project reports – including Annual APR/PIR, project budget revisions, progress reports, GEF focal area tracking tools, project files, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review.

3. Scope of the Evaluation

2 Liangmahe Nanlu, Beijing, China, 100600, Tel: 86-10-85320800 Fax: 86-10-85320900 www.undp.org.cn
中国北京亮马河南路二号 邮编: 100600

The scope of the TE covers the entire UNDP/GEF-funded project and its components as well as the co-financed components of the project.

The TE will assess the Project implementation taking into account the status of the project activities and outputs and the resource disbursements made up to the point of the start of the review

The evaluation will involve analysis at two levels: component level and project level. On the component level, the following shall be assessed:

- Whether there is effective relationship and communication between/among components so that data, information, lessons learned, best practices and outputs are shared efficiently, including cross-cutting issues.
- Whether the performance measurement indicators and targets used in the project monitoring system are specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable and time-bounded to achieve desired project outcomes.
- Whether the use of consultants has been successful in achieving component outputs.

The evaluation will include such aspects as appropriateness and relevance of work plan, compliance with the work and financial plan with budget allocation, timeliness of disbursements, procurement, coordination among project team members and committees. Any issue or factor that has impeded or accelerated the implementation of the project or any of its components, including actions taken and resolutions made should be highlighted.

On the project level, it will assess the project performance in terms of: (a.) Progress towards achievement of results, (b.) Factors affecting successful implementation and achievement of results, (c.) Project Management framework, and (d.) Strategic partnerships.

3.1 Progress towards achievement of results (internal and within project's control)

- Is the Project making satisfactory progress in achieving project outputs vis-à-vis the targets and related delivery of inputs and activities?
- Are the direct partners and project consultants able to provide necessary inputs or achieve results?
- Given the level of achievement of outputs and related inputs and activities to date, is the Project likely to achieve its Immediate Purpose and Development Objectives?
- Are there critical issues relating to achievement of project results that have been pending and need immediate attention in the next period of implementation?

3.2 Factors affecting successful implementation and achievement of results (beyond the Project's immediate control or project-design factors that influence outcomes and results)

- Is the project implementation and achievement of results proceeding well and according to plan, or are there any outstanding issues, obstacles, bottlenecks, etc. on the consumer,

government or private sector or other organizations that are affecting the successful implementation and achievement of project results?

- To what extent does the broader policy environment remain conducive to achieving expected project results, including existing and planned legislations, rules, regulations, policy guidelines and government priorities?
- Is the project logical framework and design still relevant in the light of the project experience to date?
- To what extent do critical assumptions/risks in project design make true under present circumstances and on which the project success still hold? Validate these assumptions as presently viewed by the project management and determine whether there are new assumptions/risks that should be raised?
- Is the project well-placed and integrated within the national government development strategies, such as community development, poverty reduction, etc., and related global development programs to which the project implementation should align?
- Do the Project's purpose and objectives remain valid and relevant, or are there items or components in the project design that need to be reviewed and updated?
- Are the Project's institutional and implementation arrangements still relevant and helpful in the achievement of the Project's objectives, or are there any institutional concerns that hinder the Project's implementation and progress.

3.3 Project management (adaptive management framework)

- Are the project management arrangements adequate and appropriate?
- How effectively is the project managed at all levels? Is it results-based and innovative?
- Do the project management systems, including progress reporting, administrative and financial systems and monitoring and evaluation system, operate as effective management tools, aid in effective implementation and provide sufficient basis for evaluating performance and decision making?
- Is technical assistance and support from project partners and stakeholders appropriate, adequate and timely?
- Validate whether the risks originally identified in the project document and, currently in the APR/PIRs, are the most critical and the assessments and risk ratings placed are reasonable.
- Describe additional risks identified during the evaluation, if any, and suggest risk ratings and possible risk management strategies to be adopted.
- Assess the use of the project logical framework and work plans as management tools and in meeting with UNDP-GEF requirements in planning and reporting.
- Assess the use of electronic information and communication technologies in the implementation and management of the project.
- On the financial management side, assess the cost effectiveness of the interventions and note any irregularities.
- How have the APR/PIR process helped in monitoring and evaluating the project implementation and achievement of results?

3.4 Strategic partnerships (project positioning and leveraging)

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- Asses how project partners, stakeholders and co-financing institutions are involved in the Project's adaptive management framework.
- Identify opportunities for stronger collaboration and substantive partnerships to enhance the project's achievement of results and outcomes.
- Are the project information and progress of activities disseminated to project partners and stakeholders? Are there areas to improve in the collaboration and partnership mechanisms?



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4. Evaluation Methodology

The TE Team is expected to become well versed as to the project objectives, historical developments, institutional and management mechanisms, activities and status of accomplishments. Information will be gathered through document review, group and individual interviews and site visits. Review relevant project documents and reports will be based on the following sources of information: review of documents related to the project and structured interviews with knowledgeable parties

The TE Team will conduct an opening meeting with the National Project Director (NPD), Project Management Office (PMO), the Ministry of Finance, and the China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges. An “exit” interview will also be held to discuss the findings of the assessment prior to the submission of the draft Final Report.

Prior to engagement with PMO, the TE Team shall receive all the relevant documents including at least:

- The Project Document and Project Brief
- Inception Report
- Annual Work and Financial Plans
- Annual Project Report/Project Implementation Review (APR/PIR) for 2015 and 2016

To provide more details, as may be needed, the following will be made available for access by the TE Team:

- Executive summary of all quarterly reports
- Internal monitoring results
- Terms of Reference for past consultants' assignments and summary of the results
- Past audit reports

All additional material related to the project management and implementation and held by the PMO and their subcontracts will be available for review at the discretion of the Evaluation Team.

The TE Evaluation Team should at least interview (online) the following people:

- National Project Director
- National Project Coordinator
- PMO Director
- International Chief Technical Advisor

- Project Financial Officer
- A representative of the Project Steering Committee
- UNDP Country Office in China in-charge of the Project

It is also anticipated that the TE will interview a number of sub-contractors and recipients of services, and make site visits to implementation areas. However, the degree to which such interactions are required will be at the discretion of the Evaluation Team.

With the aim of having an objective and independent evaluation, the TE Team is expected to conduct the project review according to international criteria and professional norms and standards as adopted by the UN Evaluation Group.

5. TE Team

The TE Team will be composed of one International Lead Consultant and one National Consultants. The Team is expected to combine international standards of evaluation expertise, excellent knowledge of Energy Efficiency and Climate Change projects and the national context of in which the project is being implemented.

At the minimum, the members of the TE Team shall have the following professional background and responsibilities:

A. International Lead Consultant (one person)

Budget: Consultant fee

Numbers of working days: 15 days

Location: Beijing

Profile

- Minimum of ten years accumulated and recognized experience in the Energy Efficiency and climate change area
- Minimum of five years experience of project evaluation and/or implementation experience in the result-based management framework
- Familiarity with China
- Experience with multilateral and bilateral supported project environments
- Comprehensive knowledge of international project best practices
- Very good report writing skills in English

Responsibilities

- Define the evaluation methodology and schedule, and report to the PMO
- Documentation of the review
- Leading the TE Team in planning, conducting and reporting on the evaluation

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- Deciding on division of labor within the team and ensuring timeliness of reports
- Use of best practice evaluation methodologies in conducting the evaluation
- Leading presentation of the draft evaluation findings and recommendations in-country
- Conducting the debriefing for the UNDP China Office and the TNC PMO
- Leading the drafting and finalization of the MTR report



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B. All TE Team Members

The members of the team must be independent from both the policy-making process and the delivery and management of the UNDP/GEF assistance to the project. Therefore, candidates who had any direct involvement with the design and implementation of the project will not be considered.

6. Evaluation Schedule and Deliverables

The TE is provisionally scheduled to commence in November 2020. The draft evaluation report should be produced with 2 weeks, highlighting important observations, analysis of information and key conclusions including its recommendations. Based on the scope of the TE described above, the Evaluation Report will include, among others:

- Findings on the project implementation achievements, challenges, and difficulties to date;
- Assessments of the progress made towards the attainment of outcomes;
- Recommendations for modifications and the future course of action;
- Lessons learned from the project structure, coordination between different agencies, experience of the implementation, and output/outcome.

The report will be initially shared with UNDP China Office and PMO to solicit comments or clarifications. Consequently, a presentation of the report will be made to an open meeting of all project stakeholders for comment. The final TE report will then be submitted within 1 month of the initiation of the evaluation. Three copies of the report will be submitted to the UNDP China Office and a copy to PMO.

There will be two main deliverables:

- TE report, including an executive summary, fulfilling the evaluation requirements set out in this Terms of Reference (TOR). The final report (including executive summary, but excluding annexes) should not exceed 50 pages.
- A power-point presentation of the findings of the evaluation

7. Budget

All the costs incurred for the conduct of the TE for the Project shall be charged against project funds allocated for the conduct of such activity. Payment of the TE Evaluation Team's professional fees shall be made in accordance with the Special Service Agreement to be issued in this regard.

