

Network membership criteria and expiry – Experience and lessons learnt

1 Introduction

The Advisory Board of the Climate Technology Centre and Network, at its 5th meeting, requested the CTCN to prepare a revised document on how the membership criteria are applied and the experience and lessons learnt in applying the criteria, in particular focusing on the revised procedure for Network member application and the membership validity period.

The document lays out the interpretation and application of the Network membership criteria (see Annex 1) and how the fulfilment of the criteria by applicant organizations is assessed. The document further elaborates on the information obtained through applications based on which the fulfilment of each criterion is verified. Finally, the document will report on observations made in relation to the criteria since the previous Advisory Board meeting. A flowchart of the membership application assessment process including anticipated timing is presented in Annex 2 of this document.

2 Background

The advisory board at its 2nd meeting mandated the CTCN to “*develop the CTN gradually over time to allow a diversity of organizations, initiatives and networks to become the CTN members*”. It further agreed that the development will be done with “*flexibility to evolve over time by learning, adapting and adjusting to the needs of developing countries*”. With the intention to revisit the criteria as necessary and appropriate, the initial set of criteria was defined with the guidance of the relevant COP decisions and adopted at its 2nd meeting. At its 3rd meeting, the criterion requiring the applicant not have “*any pending juridical process or past conviction for mal practice or fraud*” was removed in response to concerns raised by stakeholders. To capture the intent of this criterion while addressing the concerns of potential applicants, the declaration text in the application form was revised to include a statement to “*respect local laws and will not engage in any form of corrupt practices*” and to adhere to “*the highest standard of moral and ethical conduct*”.

The initial Network application and assessment procedures and related documents were established in line with the guiding principles and the criteria defined by the Advisory board (*Guiding Principles and Criteria for Establishment of the Climate Technology Network, AB02*), taking the utmost care to ensure the members’ ability in providing technical services, including aspects concerning its operational stability. In addition, to maintain an active and effective Network, as per Guiding Principle 2, the membership validity was initially defined in CTCN Network information material as 2 years after which members would be required to apply for renewal of membership.

Concerns were raised by some of the Advisory Board members at its 4th meeting that to fulfil the mission of the CTCN to serve the needs of developing countries upon request in a timely manner, the Network should possess a diverse set of technical and regional expertise through a large number of members. In addition, the role of the Network is not limited to the provision of technical services, but includes fostering networking and enriching the knowledge base of the CTCN. Thus, the membership application process needed to be adjusted to accommodate a swift development of a larger Network. To accelerate Network development while ensuring adhesion to the UN standards and regulations of procurement, clear division was made between the Network registration and procurement processes and necessary adjustments were made to the application form and guiding documents. The procurement procedures comply with fiduciary and ethical standards of the United Nations, as required by the Terms of Reference of the CTCN (Annex VII to Decision 2/CP.17).

At its 5th meeting, the Advisory Board took note of a proposed revision to the Network membership application process whereby the application form would be further simplified by removing extraneous information to promote Network applications and thus Network expansion. Concerns were also expressed regarding the membership validity period of 2 years. Although it was decided that no Network memberships would expire prior to December 2017 to account for the delayed involvement of Network members in CTCN services, a longer term solution to the membership expiry dilemma was sought.

3 Interpretation and application of the criteria

Network criteria as defined by the Advisory Board were interpreted and applied to assessing their fulfilment as described below:

1. **Institutional setup:** members are required to be legally established institutions as opposed to individuals; a wide variety of institutional setups, including but not limited to those listed in the criteria, are accepted. An applicant is considered to have fulfilled this criterion when it has been demonstrated that the applicant is:
 - A registered institution whose establishment and existence can be verified against an official registration document or equivalent; OR
 - A recognized partnership, initiative, network, association or like entity with an official mission or equivalent, which can be verified against official mandate, mission statement, memorandum of understanding, among others.
2. **Capacity:** for the CTC to effectively engage the Network in serving the three functions of the CTCN, members are required to contribute to at least one of these three core CTCN areas:
 - 1) Providing technical assistance at the request of developing countries to accelerate the transfer of climate technologies;
 - 2) Creating access to information and knowledge on climate technologies;
 - 3) Fostering collaboration among climate technology stakeholders via the Centre's Network of regional and sectoral experts.

Therefore, an applicant is considered to have fulfilled this criterion when it demonstrates having:

- a. Experiences and capacity related to implementation of environmentally sound technologies, practices and processes, including but not limited to:
 - i. Advice and support related to environmentally sound technologies, practices and processes;
 - ii. Provision of information and capacity building services;
 - iii. Deployment of technologies;
- b. Its mission and objectives related to stimulating and encouraging the development and transfer of existing and emerging environmentally sound technologies
- c. Potential to enhance and stimulate cooperation.

The expertise of the Network will be analyzed periodically to ensure sufficient participation of relevant institutions capable of responding to requests from developing countries related to technology development and transfer.

3. **Operational and organizational stability:** to ensure active and continuing engagement of each member, applicant organizations are required to demonstrate having sufficient means to participate in the activities of the CTCN, particularly in terms of human resources and to remain in existence in the mid-term (e.g. the duration of the membership). By financial stability, each member, as an institution, regardless of its size, is expected to have a minimally sound and lawful accounting practice in place, i.e. have proper book keeping. Exceptions exist depending on the nature of the mission and activities of the organization. It is not the intention of this criterion to assess the financial performance of the applicant organization.
4. **Ethical conduct:** to ensure ethical conduct of the members, thus protecting the reputation of the CTCN, the highest authority of the applicant organization is required to commit to comply with the Code of Conduct of the CTCN.

4 Information requested at application

In verifying the fulfillment of each criterion, information and supporting documents that have been requested and reviewed have been summarized in Table 1 below. Additional information such as contact information and country of registration have been requested for post-registration communication and engagement, as well as to monitor the regional and technical coverage of the Network.

Version 4.0 of the application form (available at www.ctc-n.org) was developed in the second quarter of 2015 to simplify the application process by limiting the requested information to the minimum requirements. As a result, the application process was streamlined while the application assessment process was unchanged.

Table 1. Application of membership criteria

Criteria	Fulfillment of criteria	Document for verification
<p>1. Have one of the following institutional structures:</p> <p>NDEs are de facto members of the CTN.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A legally registered organization; OR • A recognized partnership, initiative, network, association or like. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration document • Certificate of incorporation • Official mandate, e.g. convention • Code of conduct • Memorandum of understanding, mission statement, etc. • Annual report of activities <p>OR equivalent of any of the above</p>
<p>2. Have a demonstrated capability in initiatives aimed at development, transfer and deployment of climate technologies applicable for developing countries</p>	<p>(a) have experience in supporting implementation of environmentally sound technologies, practices and processes:</p> <p>(b) have mission and objectives related to stimulating and encouraging the development and transfer of environmentally sound technologies</p> <p>(c) have potential to enhance cooperation</p>	<p>Examples of projects, describing briefly the project objective, activities, mitigation/ adaptation impact aimed/ achieved and role played.</p> <p>Supplemented by organization's annual report, brochure, workshop report, project report, where available and appropriate.</p>
<p>3. Have demonstrated operational and organizational stability, as evidenced by financial, human and other resources relative to their mandate and size ...</p>	<p>Have sound accounting practices, where applicable, and experts in climate technology or related field and services demonstrated for criterion 2 above. Exempted for partnerships or initiatives with no common accounting or associations with no formal employment of staff.</p>	<p>Financial statement where available. Not requested for partnerships, initiatives, associations or equivalent where no common/joint accounting system exists.</p>
<p>4. Pledge and comply with the CTCN Code of Conduct.</p>	<p>Application form is signed</p>	<p>Declaration validated by the highest authority of the organization or personnel with delegated authority.</p>

5 Experience and Lessons Learnt

Through reviewing the applications and assessing the applications against the Network criteria, the following observations were made on each criterion. A proposal for Network membership validity is also presented.

Criterion 1 (*Institutional set up*) continues to serve its purpose to encourage applications from established institutions rather than from individuals. Organizational information such as organogrammes and information on parent organizations, while useful to better understand the structure of an organization, did not add to the ability to assess an organization against this criterion and thus were removed from the application form. A new section that requests a description of the main activities of the organization was included in the new application form to facilitate promotion of Network members on the CTCN website.

Criterion 2 (*Capacity*) enabled the CTCN to obtain meaningful information on the expertise of the applicant organizations and helped to understand the activities of the applicant organizations while serving the purpose to ensure the ability of each applicant to contribute to the mission of the CTCN. However, it was perceived to emphasize the ability of the applicant to contribute to technical assistance request services and potential contribution to stimulating collaboration was not sufficiently recognized. The application form was revised to explicitly request areas of potential collaboration with the CTCN along its three main services of technical assistance requests, information and knowledge sharing, and networking and collaboration. Furthermore, the format of this section of the application was revised to capture the relevance of a broader set of expertise which could be assessed using tools developed by the CTCN Knowledge Management System.

Criterion 3 (*Operational and organizational stability*) was intended to ensure that the applicant organization has sound operation in terms of its accounting and has technical experts to deliver its services. To address concerns that the criterion may be limiting the participation of smaller or newer institutions, associations or initiatives that could play important roles in achieving the mission of the CTCN, it is considered to be sufficient to ensure that the organization has a minimally sound accounting practice at membership registration stage and thus greater flexibility was built into the assessment process. This flexibility was also reflected in additional guidance regarding evidence of financial stability within the revised application form. The application form was further streamlined by removing a repetitive request for information on key experts.

Criterion 4 (*Ethical conduct*) ensures member's awareness of the Code of Conduct. By committing to comply with it, members commit to other relevant UN rules and regulations. No concern has been raised regarding this criterion.

Membership expiry: At its 5th Advisory Board meeting, the initial duration of Network membership validity was extended beyond 2 years, as initially noted in CTCN guidance documents, such that any member who joins the network before 31 December 2015 will not have their membership expire before 31 December 2017.

Considering that the CTCN only recently became fully operating with technical assistance requests progressing to the implementation stage where Network members could be involved, it was conceivable that the membership validity of some members could expire before any opportunities for CTCN engagement arose. Furthermore, the other routes of Network member engagement such as information and knowledge sharing and networking and collaboration have only begun to take place in 2015.

Taking the above into consideration, the CTCN proposes to **extend the 2 year membership validity period until further notice**. This approach will allow the CTCN to concentrate on building a critical mass of Network members that will be able to support the functions of the CTCN and for the number of technical assistance requests to increase, thereby increasing opportunities for Network involvement.

Cessation of this extension to membership validity will involve direct notification to all Network members. Furthermore, membership validity will be a minimum of 2 years from the date of such notification. The CTCN will continue to monitor the duration of membership validity issue and propose new approaches as needed, not excluding a new duration of validity or seeking an alternative arrangement to the time-bound criteria.

Annex 1: Climate Technology Network Membership Criteria and Guiding Principles

Network membership criteria (last revised at AB03)

1. Have one of the following institutional structures: national technology centre or institution; regional climate technology centre or Network; intergovernmental, international, regional or sector organization, partnership or initiative that contributes to technology deployment and transfer; or research, academic, financial, non- governmental, private sector or public sector organization, partnership or initiative. NDEs are de facto members of the CTN.
2. Have a demonstrated capability in initiatives aimed at development, transfer and deployment of climate technologies applicable for developing countries including expertise in policy, capacity building and/or investment.
3. Have demonstrated operational and organizational stability, as evidenced by financial, human and other resources relative to their mandate and size that could reasonably be deemed sufficient to deliver the organization's mandate
4. Pledge and comply with the CTCN Code of Conduct.

Guiding Principles (set at AB02)

1. The CTC is required to develop and operate the CTN, in particular the involvement of CTN Members in responding to requests of developing country Party NDEs in a way that ensures, from the perspective of the requesting NDE(s):
 - a. use of appropriate technical capacity and competence;
 - b. accessibility of and proximity to the CTN Members;
 - c. CTN Members provide value for money, where applicable; and
 - d. relevance of the experience of CTN Member to the request.
2. Membership in the CTN is merit based and time-bound. Prospective Members will need to demonstrate their expertise and commit to the CTN Code of Conduct in their application for CTN membership.
3. CTN Members are expected to be active in the CTN, both in activities initiated by the CTC as well as through other forms of collaboration, in particular in support of the developing country Party NDEs. The CTC will monitor all activities of CTN Members that have been undertaken on behalf of the CTC, including communicating with NDEs on their interactions with all CTN Members.
4. The CTC is mandated to develop the CTN gradually over time to allow a diversity of organizations, initiatives and networks to become CTN Members., and further develop the CTN taking into consideration inter alia the requests posed by developing country party NDEs and the experience accumulated in developed country NDEs.

Annex 2: Membership Application Assessment Process

