



A look back to take the next steps forward

Five years of International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV (IPMM)

1. Background information on this paper

This paper summarises the results of a study conducted by adelphi in 2015 and commissioned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. The aim was to analyse the role of the Partnership in international climate policy, assess its previous performance as well as prepare recommendations for the possible contribution of the Partnership following the adoption of the Paris Agreement. For the purposes of the study, a desk review of the Partnership’s activities since its establishment as well as the presentation

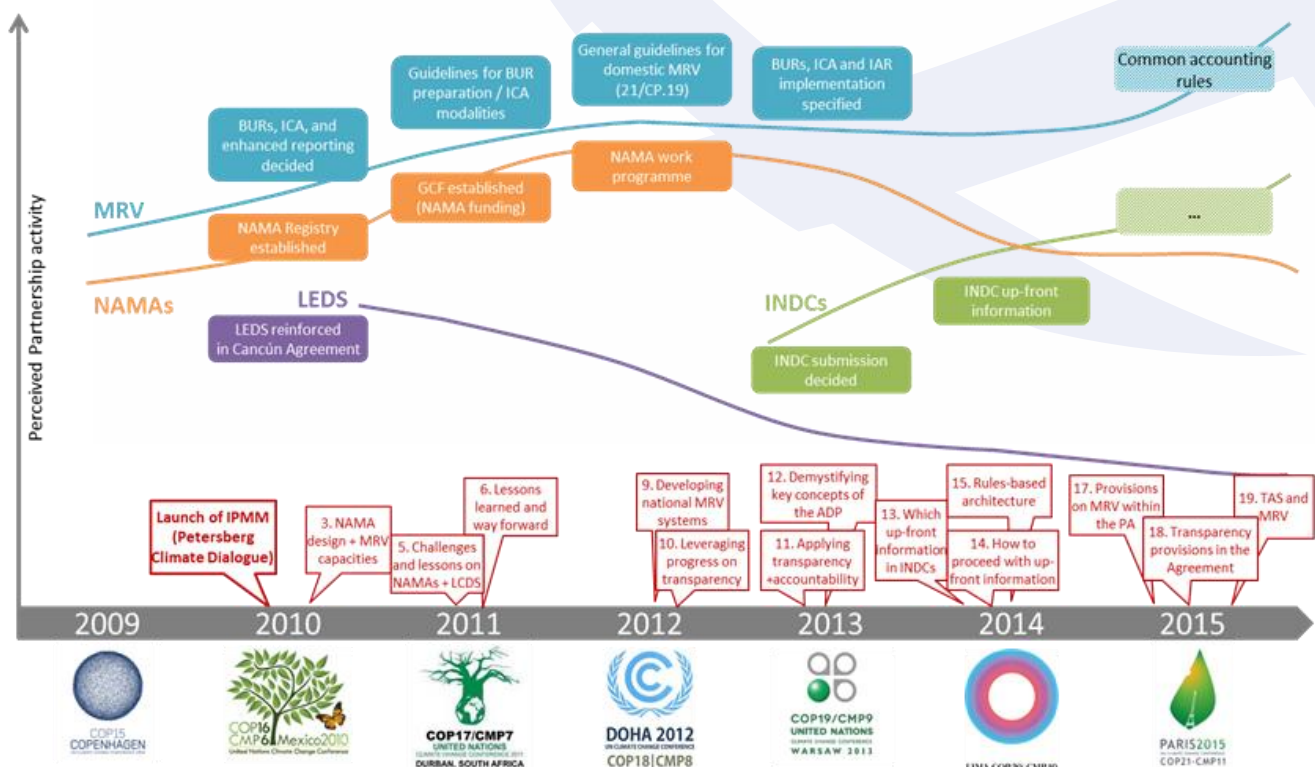
of these activities on the Partnership’s website was conducted. In addition to that, selected Partnership members were interviewed.

In the following we present a summary of the main findings of this study.

2. The IPMM as part of the international climate governance architecture

The Partnership was established in 2010 to offer several unique features, in comparison with other initiatives in the field of climate governance:

Highlights from thematic areas:



Source: adelphi

- Informal discussions
- A flexible, demand-driven agenda to complement the negotiations
- Technical cooperation to support political solutions
- Ongoing exchange outside heavy institutional structures
- Possibility of selective participation in specific areas
- Support for regional approaches
- Function as a knowledge hub for other initiatives (as a meta platform)

As a result, developed and developing countries have been able to establish a mutual learning community within the Partnership.

MRV is at the “heart” of the Partnership. The informal discussions during the Partnership’s meetings and key capacity-building initiatives such as regular Annual Partnership Retreats and the regional workshops have enabled the Partnership to de-politicise the issue, making this a key area of success. Additionally, the Partnership published several knowledge products on MRV related issues in order to promote discussions and learning in this field.

LEDS have decreased in importance for the Partnership. This may be due to the increasing relevance of INDCs or the role played by other initiatives with a focus on this topic. In addition, LEDS are associated with a lengthy, complex and coordination-intensive process, and are accordingly not a priority for the Partnership.

NAMAs: Thanks to the strong implementation focus of NAMAs in many countries, the Partnership has been able to engage dynamically in this area. The Partnership was part of a joint research project “Indicators of transformational change for MRV of NAMAs”, undertaken together with the NAMA Partnership in collaboration with the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (UNFCCC) and UNEP DTU Partnership. In this framework three papers on this topic have been published. Also, the Partnership offers an e-learning course, which provides significant support to countries preparing for NAMA implementation. Considering the increasing number of NAMAs and strong references to this approach in a number of INDCs it is likely to remain a major topic in the near term.

INDCs: By adding INDCs to its agenda, the Partnership has proven its flexibility. Case studies, web tools, regional workshops and Annual Partnership Retreats have provided immediate guidance as needed. In addition, partners stressed the joint learning curve: the focus of many INDCs is broader than mitigation and needs to include adaptation aspects from the perspective of developing countries as well.

Overall

As illustrated by the trend curve (see graph above), MRV has been a stable element in the Partnership. Comparatively, LEDS and NAMAs have lost prominence since 2013 as the INDCs have risen up to the top of the agenda. There are several other international initiatives focusing on LEDS and NAMAs (e.g. LEDS Global Partnership; NAMA Partnership) that also provide important supportive resources; the contribution of the IPMM in this area is therefore not unique. However, as the focus of the Partnership on Good Practice shows, the three initial areas and the INDCs are all interrelated in various ways, for example when it comes to the question of transparency.

3. Main capacity building deliverables

The Mitigation Partnership offers various forms of capacity-building activities in different constellations and for different

target groups. The Partnership's annual one-week Summer Schools, now 'Annual Partnership Retreats', are open to negotiators and implementers from any Partnership country and bring together experts for in-depth discussions on one topic. The Partnership also maintains four regional groups to facilitate peer-to-peer exchange between experts from countries in a specific region or a language group. Within these regional groups additional workshops and technical training courses take place that are tailored to the needs of the participating countries. These workshops concentrate on domestic capacity building and sharing of experiences by stakeholders from partner countries involved in the development and implementation of mitigation actions and MRV systems. Among the guidance materials supported by the Partnership, the "Global Good Practice Analysis (GPA) on INDCs, LEDS, NAMAs and MRV" is a resource that is widely considered to be useful.

According to participants, the **Annual Partnership Retreats** were among the Partnership's most successful formats. Participants were highly motivated and eager to learn from one another, in particular to hear about the real-world experiences of different countries on mechanisms and policies already implemented and lessons learned at various stages of implementation of MRV, NAMA or INDC. The Retreat format encourages participants to be open and open-minded, allowing them to listen and constructively exchange on an equal basis and without judgement.

"One of the Partnership's biggest successes was to get people engaged and to make MRV and mitigation topics domestic issues that national experts discuss."

(Interview with a member of the Partnership)

Moreover, the Annual Partnership Retreats act as an interface between the worlds of negotiators and practitioners. In some instances, content discussed at the Retreats fed back into the negotiations, showing the IPMM's impact on participants' positions. The Partnership therefore offers a unique opportunity to **nurture participants' understanding of key negotiation issues** and strengthens decision-making by setting realistic assumptions of domestic priorities and capacities.

Participants' feedback on the peer-to-peer exchange has also been very positive. The peer-to-peer activities aim to "enhance networking, develop relationships built on trust and support capacity building within the member community".¹ The two to three-day workshops of the regional groups bring together policymakers and practitioners from a range of countries to share experiences and good practices on the development and implementation of mitigation policies and MRV systems to foster mutual learning and build a community of peers. The dialogue can be enriched with input from experts and specialists from the think-tank community. Namibia even referred to the insights it gained from the African regional workshop on Biennial Update Reports (BURs) in 2014 in its BUR.

4. The emergence of an epistemic community

Since the Partnership was established, its work has been supported by numerous partner institutions with significant expertise in the field of climate policy. National and transnational environmental think tanks and consultancies are actively engaged in a number of the Partnership's working areas. Among the many expert partners, several institutions provide

¹ <https://mitigationpartnership.net/capacity-building>

support on a large scale and therefore play an especially important role. These key partners include the UNFCCC Secretariat, UNDP, the Partnership for Market Readiness, the World Resources Institute, as well as supporting think tanks like Ecofys, Öko-Institute or Ricardo-AEA”.

The role of this “epistemic community” is multifaceted. According to the type of support provided, think tanks participate in the preparation of

- knowledge products including guidebooks,
- training materials or
- background papers

that are disseminated by the Partnership and constitute a solid knowledge base for its work.

Further, during capacity building activities and the Partnership’s meetings, representatives from the think tanks act as international experts who share the latest research and knowledge on MRV, NAMAs, LEDS and INDCs with the participants. There are several think tanks that both actively participate in capacity-building activities and provide expert contributions in the form of knowledge products.

“The partnership is an essential component of international work on climate change and plays an important role in helping developing countries develop their institutions.”

(Interview with a member of the Partnership)

5. Lessons to be learned

a. Initial lessons

A number of lessons can be drawn from the Partnership’s first five years:

- a. An equitable dialogue:** Partners from developing countries noted that this was not a top-down communication of experiences but an honest exchange addressing the challenges of climate change.
- b. Be political by going technical:** By providing a “safe space” for questions on key aspects of the negotiations, the Partnership was able to reveal the technical nature of many political or politicised debates throughout the negotiations.
- c. Ensuring high-level engagement:** The high-level engagement of key players (with relevance to the negotiations) was mentioned as a key factor encouraging participation. To this end, the increasing participation of non-governmental representatives was mentioned as a potential future barrier to participation since this development is perceived as a potential challenge to the genuine character of partnership meetings.
- d. Occupy the MRV niche:** MRV has been considered a blind spot in the world of climate governance when it comes to technical discussions and capacity-building. By outlining first experiences as well as the problems industrialised countries have faced in the past, it was possible to initiate a forward-looking discussion that has helped to start de-politicising this issue.
- e. Enable broad but specific participation:** By involving a large number of partner countries it was possible to engage a number of different levels of climate

policy development. Since this may actually present a challenge to a useful debate for some partners, it was important to offer additional capacity-building activities recognising partners' varying capacities.

- f.** Provide a flexible but stable institutional structure: A number of countries are reluctant to embrace new

and additional institutional structures for climate governance. The current format of the Partnership, especially after an initial learning phase and the involvement of GIZ as a partner to address some of the unavoidable administrative burden, is widely considered a positive feature of the partnership.

b. The lessons in the context of the Paris Agreement: next steps?

The initial lessons show that the overall performance of the Partnership has been widely welcomed by its members. However, with the Paris Agreement, new expectations and concerns among partner countries are likely to emerge. Some pertinent questions in the near future include:

- a.** How to stay relevant?
- b.** How to ensure high-level engagement after Paris?
- c.** What will be the relevance of new (sub) topics such as MRV of support, transparency, stocktaking and climate finance?
- d.** How to strengthen the engagement from regions?
- e.** What are appropriate means of public outreach to provide deliverables that are considered meaningful? What role should social media and other instruments play?
- f.** How to foster more cross learning between hubs (Francophone, Anglophone, Latin American)?

Further reading:

<http://mitigationpartnership.net>

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Suggested Citation: Dennis Tänzler, Katharina Nett, Aki Kachi and Julia Melnikova 2016: A look back to take the next steps forward. Five years of International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV (IPMM). Eschborn/Berlin: International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV/adelphi. Paper commissioned by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety.

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