

MRV Systems and Database Webinar Q&A Responses

Can the MRV System be expanded to include both mitigation and adaptation?

Yes, absolutely. The MRV System works as an integrated system for collecting data and reporting on both mitigation and adaptation actions. Understanding national climate change vulnerabilities, risks and adaptation is crucial for informed decision making and developing impactful policies. Action is often sectoral and therefore also needs to consider adaptation and mitigation together. Historically, international reporting has been focussed on climate change mitigation, however with the changes brought about by the Paris Agreement, reporting of climate change adaptation is increasingly important. Data gathering and engagement of stakeholders on adaptation is also extremely important for national decision making. Aether's MRV (Transparency) System is designed to allow data collection and reporting on both mitigation and adaptation actions, including information on action indicators and investment (known as climate finance and support). Both adaptation and mitigation actions can be directly linked to national environmental challenges and wider co-benefits for national strategies and sustainable development goals.

Does the MRV System accommodate comprehensive reporting of climate finance?

Climate change finance is a vital pillar of Aether's MRV System. The system is designed to enable collecting, tracking and updating information on investors actively funding climate change actions. This information can be linked to specific beneficiaries and outcomes. Increasingly, climate finance providers require examples of existing initiatives and their outcomes. Tracking and managing this information in the MRV System can support the bidding process and help to secure additional investment for climate change action. As long as the data can be collected it can be exported and used for reporting.

How long does it take to implement a similar MRV system, how much does it cost and how is sustainability ensured?

Building a conceptual MRV System can take 4-6 months, this includes time for scoping out the institutional arrangements with key stakeholders, assessing the country's specifications and needs for the MRV system and building a prototype online management platform. However, for the MRV System to be successful and sustainable, the institutional and legal frameworks must be in place to enable data collection and reporting. The development of these frameworks can take varying amounts of time depending on the national circumstances and complexities required in data structuring and reporting. Assuming these frameworks are already in place, the development of an online platform can cost anywhere between € 50,000 and € 100,000 but the exact value is variable and depends on time needed for engagement and customisation of the system. The specific cost of the system varies depending on national specifications and the time spent training experts and collecting and preparing data. Usually, the development of this platform is one part of a broader programme to develop a country's national MRV system that Aether offer. This is often on a flexible framework service basis which includes a range of support and mentoring services on MRV/Transparency provided by a pool of experienced experts to support appropriate data collection and system customisation.

Sustainability is a key requirement for developing Aether's MRV systems. The answer is to ensure that the system is supported by well-defined institutional arrangements, which includes establishing the relevant legal framework and building capacity. Aether are well placed to provide this advice and to make sure the system is fit for purpose. For the system to be sustainable, a national team is needed to manage and maintain the data in the system, to coordinate sectoral experts and data providers and to act as the national MRV focal point. The system is adaptable and can be customised quickly to adapt to new data collection and reporting needs.

How many people are required to maintain such a system?

Maintenance of the system itself does not require specific resources. The contents of the MRV System can be managed by one-two trained team members (one for adaptation and one for Mitigation) coordinating and checking contributions/input from other specialists. This in itself is not a full-time activity but it can be combined with work on gathering and improving contents and reporting which will require the same level of resources that would be assigned to this task without the system in place.

Should national circumstances and institutional arrangements be given priority over technical capabilities?

The MRV System can only be successful when supported by the necessary institutional arrangements and the provision of resources to collect, quality assure and archive the data. Our experience has shown that without the legal frameworks and institutional capacity to enable transparent data gathering, quality assurance, archiving and reporting, online data management platforms can be left stranded and unused. So, any technological developments involving the MRV System must be carried out alongside a programme of understanding the national circumstances, developing capacity and establishing the underlying legal framework and teams of people empowered to use and maintain them.

How do you address data ownership and concerns over data integrity and data security? Is this issue raised by country representatives when attempting to gather data?

Data ownership and security are often cited as key barriers to the implementation of Aether's MRV System, in particular to the development of the online data management platform. This problem exists with or without a centralised data archive and MRV system. Existing data supply arrangements can vary between government departments and statistical offices and voluntary data reporting is frequently viewed as a challenge. The solution lies in the process of building trust between stakeholders and developing the legal frameworks to support the system. These frameworks can operate on a sliding scale of formality, from Memorandum of Understandings (MoUs) to data supply agreements to legislative acts. The online platform itself offers a fully customisable 2 factor authentication system of permissions that allows administrators to grant access to specific sections of the site to specific individuals or groups. Alternatively, the system can be built on or transferred to a country's own dedicated servers. Whilst this is a more expensive and less flexible alternative, it can address certain barriers raised by national data laws.

What are the enabling factors that facilitated the institutional arrangements based on your country experiences?

Enabling factors include the establishment of clear buy-in from ministries and decision-making authorities in a country. While the MRV system offers a clear and customisable structure for collecting data that improves transparency and efficiency of data use and re-use, it relies on experts having the time and mandate to contribute to it and use it. This requires the establishment of institutional arrangements and roles and responsibilities to collect data and use the system. During the development of Aether's MRV systems we establish an enabling environment with the following activities:

- Clear templates and structuring of institutional arrangements
- Clear and simple description of each role and its responsibilities and recommendations for the allocation of roles to individuals and organisations.
- Clear discussions with potential stakeholders to understand the barriers to meeting responsibilities so there are no surprises. Development of recommendations to make sure enabling environments are created (e.g. additional team members, mentoring and training).
- Establishment of buy-in at the top so that heads of departments understand the needs and value of the data and push for the arrangements to be in place. Experts are valued and enabled to do



the work they feel is important. We make it easy for senior managers to stand up and say ‘this must be done and is important’.

- We identify experts and coordinators and managers fit for the job from staff within existing organisations. We support and equip them with the skills and credibility to do the new job and ‘champion’ the process.
- Shape the national legal frameworks between departments/ministries to build on already established legal obligations and institutional cooperation.

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