

Parties in the AWG-LCA insist on meeting in the fall

Bonn, 16 June (Hilary Chiew and Meena Raman)– Many Parties reiterated their call for a further session in the autumn to advance work carried out in informal groups of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) prior to the final session to be held in Durban at the end of the year.

Several Parties, both from developed and developing countries made this call at the fourth “touch-base” session of the AWG-LCA held on 15 June in Bonn following progress made in the discussions under the informal groups.

AWG-LCA Chair Daniel Reifsnyder (the United States) asked facilitators of the informal groups to report to Parties on progress in their respective groups.

On the issue of ‘review’ to further define its scope and develop its modalities, the informal group facilitator Margaret Mukahanana-Sangarwe (Zimbabwe) said she introduced a summary paper and explained that it was just a summary and reflection of Parties’ views. However, she said the Group of 77 and China had expressed concern that the summary should not prejudice the outcome. Sangarwe, who is also the Vice-chair of the AWG-LCA said she would revise the summary in time for the next informal meeting on 16 June.

(According to the Cancun decision 1/CP.16, Parties agreed to periodically review the adequacy of the long-term goal to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2 degrees C above pre-industrial levels in the light of the ultimate objective of the Convention, and overall progress towards achieving it in accordance with relevant principles and provisions of the Convention.

(It is learnt that while the Alliance of Small Island States wants the scope of the review to be limited

to the long-term global goal, the United States wants the review to include not only the adequacy of the goal and the efforts made but also the adequacy of the Convention itself. The US stance has raised concerns among many developing countries who perceive this as an attempt to renegotiate the Convention which they feel is unacceptable. Some developing countries want the review to include the efforts of developed country Parties in implementing their obligations under the Convention.)

Sangarwe also reported on behalf of Antonio Gabriel La Vina (Philippines), the facilitator of the informal group on ‘policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries’ (REDD-plus). She said Parties exchanged views on financing options. They said the options should come from various sources and some suggested flexible approaches to allow countries to choose what is appropriate according to their national circumstances. More discussions were needed to make further progress. There was also suggestion to continue to open up the meeting to observer organisations as these were just brainstorming sessions and their participations can be reviewed accordingly.

Jose Alberto Garibaldi (Peru), the co-facilitator of the groups on the mitigation commitments of developed countries and national appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) by developing countries reported that on the discussion of mitigation by developed countries, there was an exchange of views and addressed technical aspects of guidelines for national communications and biennial reports, including scope, flexibility and

timing. There were also proposals for workshops to be organized in this regard.

On the mitigation actions of developing countries, on the biennial reports, developing countries emphasized the need for clarity on key aspects especially as regards the financing of the reports. On the issue of the registry for NAMAs, many countries stressed the voluntary nature of the registry and discussed its functions and the modalities to facilitate support. Garibaldi noted common understanding on the need to separate in the registry, NAMAs requiring international support and those that were already being supported. There was also discussion on the prototype of the registry with the possibility of having a technical meeting in this regard. They need to measure, report and verify (MRV) the support was also stressed.

(In Cancun, Parties had agreed to set up a registry to record NAMAs seeking international support and to facilitate matching of finance, technology and capacity-building support to these actions. They also agreed to develop modalities for the facilitation of support through the registry.)

George Wamukoya (Kenya), the facilitator of the informal group on 'cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions, said that in order to enhance the implementation of Article 4, paragraph 1 (c) of the Convention', two informal meetings were conducted since 13 June (Monday) and Parties discussed ways to move forward and outlined three items as the focus: general framework for cooperative sectoral approaches; agriculture; and bunker fuels. He said it was agreed that there would be more informal meetings on each from 15-16 June.

The informal session on general framework for cooperative sectoral approaches will be facilitated by Singapore. On agriculture, he said views were exchanged on how to progress and it was decided that the text from Copenhagen (15th meeting of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties in 2009) will be used as the basis for negotiations and Brazil wanted to provide more inputs by today (16 June).

The informal group on market and non-market approaches was facilitated by Gasper Martins (Angola) who reported that there was common ground that could provide the basis for a decision on these approaches but the need for further discussions on this was stressed.

Jukka Uosukainen (Finland), facilitator of the informal group on 'technology development and transfer and capacity-building', said Parties had good discussions on institutional arrangements for capacity building. Some Parties saw the benefit of having a technical paper by the secretariat in this regard and also asked for an in-session workshop on how capacity building.

Reporting on technology development and transfer, Uosukainen said there were some crunch issues such as operationalising the Climate Technology Centre and Network and its accountability to the COP. Parties also raised governance issues such as what is the most fruitful role of the Technology Executive Committee in steering the process. Parties will continue to discuss broader issues in terms of finance and the link to other bodies.

George Borsting (Norway) who facilitated the finance informal group said Parties continued to make progress on the Standing Committee with clarification sought on specific elements to operationalise the committee. Some Parties had developed views on the functions of the committee while others were working on submissions. On long-term finance, Parties reflected a variety of views and there is a need for further discussions.

(The Cancun COP meeting decided to establish a Standing Committee under the COP to among other things, improve coherence and coordination in the delivery of climate change financing.)

Maria del Socorro Flores (Mexico) who facilitated the informal group on 'legal options' said there were rich discussions in the legal options informal group and Parties needed to narrow down differences in the hope of identifying common elements later this year in Durban.

Chair of the AWG-LCA Dan Reifsnnyder said it was important to carry forward the work achieved thus far to the next session but said that facilitators' notes have no legal status. (Some facilitators had prepared notes to reflect discussions in the informal groups).

He proposed three options to deal with the notes viz. (i) to post them on the UNFCCC website; (ii) to include them in an 'information document' where all the notes from various groups will be pulled together in the original language; (iii) to attach them as an annex to the meeting's report, (which will have no status) but would be available

in the different UN languages. He said he wanted to inform Parties early to avoid surprises on these options but the matter will be decided on Friday, 17 June at the closing plenary of the AWG-LCA.

He noted that from the facilitators reports, there will be further submissions from Parties and there were requests for technical papers from the secretariat, adding that it was important to capture progress of all groups and to summarise those views by Friday. He urged the informal groups to come forward with advice on how to move the work forward.

On a possible fall session, Reifsnyder said the incoming presidency, South Africa, is still consulting informally with Parties and ideas are already emerging for possible intersessional workshops in the area of 'registry' and on 'biennial reports' (in relation to mitigation) to be conducted back-to-back.

India said good work been done in the last few days and a fall meeting is therefore vital for further progress. It said a lot of work is sequential in nature and there is need to tie up loose ends in order to achieve something in Durban. It also said workshops are not the end in themselves as they must be linked to negotiations and also wanted Parties' submissions to be put together with the facilitators' notes.

Brazil also echoed the importance of a fall meeting and noted that Parties had begun to engage in the substance of the issues. It said back-to-back workshops will help to reduce costs and discussions of workshops will flow into negotiations and that will make them much more positive towards a Durban outcome.

Tuvalu said the workshops on registry and biennial reports should link to ICA (International Consultation and Analysis) and IAR (International Assessment and Review) as Parties needed further elaboration on IAR and suggested a workshop on IAR as well.

Singapore agreed with the assessment of good progress in spin-off groups and would like to see summaries of different requests so Parties are clear on follow-ups in different groups.

Pakistan said it is not opposing the idea of workshops but the purpose of the activities must be clarified. It also supported views that Parties' submissions must be treated in the same way as facilitators' notes.

In supporting a fall meeting, **Indonesia** said it should be used to discuss substantive matters and furthering of texts. It can also go along with the idea of workshops and agreed that holding them back-to-back saves time and money.

Colombia said it was cautiously optimistic of progress and requested that the fall session dispense with opening and closing plenaries. It said some issues are very polarized and political in nature making them difficult to move forward much. It suggested workshops to be held with the fall meeting.

Australia echoed similar cautious optimism and supported not having plenaries at the fall session and agreed that facilitators' notes are important to move forward.

Mexico supported a fall meeting and that the workshops should include market-based approaches.