

Subsidiary body for implementation adopts conclusions

Geneva, 22 June (Meena Raman) – The 34th session Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) adopted several conclusions at its closing session held on 16 and 17 June in Bonn.

Among the highlights are the work of the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) on national communications from developing countries, national adaptation plans, approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts, and ways of enhancing the participation of observers in the intergovernmental process.

On the work of the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) on national communications from Parties not included in Annex 1 to the Convention, the SBI recognized the important role played by the CGE in improving the process and preparation of national communications from non-Annex 1 Parties, by providing technical advice and support to non-Annex 1 Parties. It highlighted the importance of the training activities to be organized by the CGE, which remain underfunded and reiterated its request to the CGE to organize to the extent possible, at least two training activities per region in the period 2011 to 2012, subject to the availability of resources. The SBI will also review the need for the continuation of the CGE at the 17th meeting of the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP 17) in Durban, South Africa in November this year.

(Annex 1 comprises developed countries and countries with economies in transition.)

As regards the issue of national adaptation plans (NAPs), the SBI requested the secretariat to explore the possibility of convening an expert meeting to identify and discuss elements and deliverables of the process to enable least

developed countries (LDCs) to formulate and implement NAPs, building upon their experience in preparing and implementing national programmes of action on adaptation (NAPAs) and elaborate draft modalities and guidelines for LDCs and other developing countries to employ modalities formulated to support NAPs.

It also invited Parties and relevant organizations to submit their views to the UNFCCC Secretariat by 15 August 2011 for compilation on the above and for a synthesis report to be prepared on these submissions. The submissions will be considered together with the outcomes of the expert meeting at its 35th session with a view to making recommendations to COP 17.

On the issue of approaches to address loss and damage associated with climate change impacts in developing countries, the SBI noted the importance of addressing the following thematic areas in the implementation of the work programme: (a) Assessing the risk of loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change and the current knowledge on the same; (b) A range of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including impacts related to extreme weather events and slow onset events, taking into consideration experience at all levels; (c) The role of the Convention in enhancing the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

The SBI invited Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 15 August 2011, further views and information on the themes to be addressed above and requested the secretariat to compile these submissions into a miscellaneous document for consideration at its thirty-fifth

session and to prepare a synthesis report based on the submissions and other relevant information before its 35th session. In this regard, the SBI requested the Secretariat to explore the possibility of convening an expert meeting.

On the issue of enhancing the participation of observer organizations in the intergovernmental process, the SBI encouraged the chairs of workshops and expert meetings to invite, time permitting, observer organizations to make presentations, while maintaining the balance of participation between Parties and observer organizations. In this context, the SBI welcomed the practices of the recent mitigation workshops, at which observers could make presentations when time allowed.

The SBI took note of the report of the in-session workshop (in the recently ended June Bonn talks) to further develop ways to enhance the engagement of observer organizations in the UNFCCC process. The SBI considered the range of proposals contained in the report and examined their implementation. The SBI welcomed the initiatives by the Secretariat to improve the participation of observer organizations and requested the Secretariat to continue its efforts in this regard.

The SBI agreed that the existing means of engagement of observer organizations could be further enhanced, in the spirit of fostering openness, transparency and inclusiveness through:

- (a) Inviting the presiding officers of various bodies, as relevant, subject to the availability of funding, time and space, to: (i) Seek opportunities for observer organizations to make interventions; (ii) Make greater use of observer inputs in workshops and technical meetings in accordance with the conclusions of the SBI at its seventeenth session in 2002; (iii) Increase opportunities for regular briefings and debriefings as a means for dialogue for observer organizations with presiding officers and Parties;
- (b) Encouraging the hosts of future sessions of the COP and the CMP to: (i) Consider, in their planning, and organization, the size of the venue, the distance between buildings and the need to facilitate the participation of all Parties and admitted observer organizations, recalling the conclusions of the SBI at its thirty-second session; (ii) Engage stakeholders in the lead up to and during the COP and the CMP;

(c) Encouraging all Parties to further engage stakeholders at the national level, including information dissemination and consultation;

(d) Requesting the secretariat, where feasible and appropriate, to: (i) Post submissions from observer organizations on the UNFCCC website in a way that makes them accessible to Parties; (ii) Make use of observer inputs, including scientific and technical, for the preparation of background documentation;

(e) Requesting the secretariat, subject to the availability of resources and where appropriate, to: (i) Enable the replacement of names of nominated representatives of admitted observer organizations in the online registration system before and during sessions in exceptional circumstances; (ii) Increase the number of meetings that are webcast.

The SBI requested the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies, workshop chairs and the secretariat to make additional efforts to promote transparency and observer participation, while safeguarding the effectiveness of workshops.

The SBI also adopted several other conclusions on various items on the agenda.

At the closing plenary of the Bonn session, **Ambassador Silvia Meregá of Argentina**, the **Chair of G77 and China** said that according to the 'Compilation and Synthesis of fifth national communications from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention', over the period 1990- 2008, the total aggregate of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from Annex I Parties that are not economies in transition, excluding LULUCF (land use, land use change and forestry), increased by 8%. Moreover, according to projected data, the GHG emissions of Annex I Parties, excluding emissions and removals from the LULUCF sector are expected to increase by 7.8 %, between 2010-2020. The Group expressed concerns about the facts and the trend contained in the reports and strongly urged Annex I Parties to intensify their efforts aimed at reducing their GHG emissions.

With reference to the same document on the "Compilation and Synthesis of Fifth National Communications of Annex I Parties", on financing, Meregá said the report states, in Section III covering the implementation of commitments for financial resources, transfer of technologies and capacity-building, that "many data gaps and inconsistencies in reporting approaches among Annex II countries and across periods still persist,

which was also noted in the previous synthesis report..." She urged Annex I Parties first, to provide detailed information or make available in their national communications the level of improvement in emissions reductions, or lack thereof.

In this sense, she said it is important to maintain and strengthen annual reports on the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention as well as the monitor, report and evaluation of their domestic mitigation action. Secondly, as repeatedly stated in the synthesis of Annex I communications, standard formats of reporting on the provision of financial resources, including for transfer of technology and adaptation should be utilized in fulfillment of obligations under Article 12.3 of the Convention, she added.

She also underlined the Group's call on developed country Parties to intensify their efforts aimed at fulfilling their commitments on the provision of financial resources, enhancing technology development and transfer, meeting costs of adaptation, and strengthening capacity building in developing country Parties. To this end, the accuracy, comparability and level of detail of information regarding the provision of support of financial resources, technology development and transfer and capacity building reported in National Communications of developed country Parties must be further defined and enhanced.

Merega also reiterated the shared difficulties faced by developing country Parties in terms of lack of technical and financial support to enable them to prepare their national communications. Recalling the 2010 Cancun decisions which contain additional reporting obligations for developing countries, as well as provisions on more frequent timelines for the submission of reports, she said that the submission of biennial reports are

contingent on support, and would therefore require specific technical and technological inputs, as well as increased human and institutional capacities.

Predictability of funding and the provision of the agreed full costs for the preparation of national communications from non-Annex I Parties are crucial, she added. Financing of non-Annex I national communications is currently subject to limited allocations and other conditions. She also reiterated the call for more contributions to the funds devoted to adaptation under the Convention, in particular the Special Climate Change Fund, the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Adaptation Fund under the Kyoto Protocol. Not only are they hugely underfunded, and most of them dependent on voluntary funding, they are also the only main sources of financing adaptation under the Convention, said Merega.

In addition, Merega urged that conditions attached to the allocation and use of the funds that are managed through the Global Environment Facility as an operating entity of the financial mechanism of the Convention should not be applied to these funds, in particular the requirement of co-financing prior to accessing funding. The historical imbalance in financing to the detriment of adaptation must be redressed, and adaptation financing be treated in an equal manner as for mitigation. Balanced allocation of resources for adaptation, including for the design of the Green Climate Fund, as well as direct access as operationalized in the Adaptation Fund, are basic principles and are strong positions of the Group of 77 and China. The Group expects that the process for the formulation and implementation of National Adaptation Plans modalities and guidelines will truly enable developing countries to address adaptation needs.