

Equity will not deliver emission cuts – say AOSIS

Bonn, 24 May (Hilary Chiew) – At the meeting of the informal group on shared vision under the Ad-Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) on 23 May, the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) said the context for actions against climate change lies with the science, and that the equity principle will not deliver the number (on the long global goal for emissions reductions) that science required to stabilise greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Speaking for AOSIS, Trinidad and Tobago said while all Parties acknowledge the importance of numbers (for greenhouse gases emissions reduction targets) and it heard about the importance of equity, but equity cannot supply it with the numbers that are needed in this particular instant, as there is no agreement on the definition of equity.

It's not that AOSIS has problem with equity. We emphasised that equity cannot be achieved if some of us ceased to exist, it added. Similarly, while burden-sharing is useful, it cannot help Parties to move forward as Parties have yet to decide what the burden will be.

Quoting Article 2 of the UNFCCC, it said the ultimate objective is to achieve the stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.

It further said that it understood that means of implementation include adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building but these are not to be the focus of shared vision. Parties need to speak about long-term global goal and peaking year.

In order to move along speedily, it said, Parties need to start from where they left off in Durban and progress from there.

It was supported by **Singapore** and **the United States**.

Facilitator of the informal group, Zou Ji from China urged Parties to focus on identifying converging elements to make progress in the negotiation on shared vision.

In response to the AOSIS position, **Brazil** said the group seemed to consider only part of the objective and neglect the other part which provided the context for action, referring to the second sentence in the two-sentence Article 2 which reads 'Such a level should be achieved within a time-frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.'

So the context is already provided in the Convention, it added.

South Africa said it is important that Parties look at the Convention in totality so we can adequately address the problem.

While it agreed with AOSIS that Article 2 is an area of convergence but the Convention must be read in totality. It said Article 3 shows that the contextual elements such as equity are part of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) and respective capabilities.

Pointing to Article 4.1 and 4.5, it said there are specific commitments that Parties have to undertake that are relevant to how we actually achieve the objective of convergence.

Speaking for the Africa Group, Botswana said it is the Group's vision that it gets decisions out of Doha (the venue of COP18 end of the year) and it understands that numbers are important for some Parties especially for the Group. Elements that are of importance to it are finance, technology transfer, capacity-building etc.

Representing the LDCs, Uganda and associating with Botswana, said LDCs are the most vulnerable

with tens of thousands dying from impacts of climate change and thousands affected by adverse effects of climate change. It strongly believed that all elements of shared vision must be addressed so as to provide the guiding principle on how to address the most vulnerable communities.

It said any outcome must embrace all essential elements and means of implementation especially on finance, technology transfer, capacity-building and bear in mind the mandate from 1/CP.13 (2007 Bali Action Plan) and the views contained in CRP39 (the unresolved issues from the Durban COP including on shared vision).

Several developing countries shared the views that there must be convergence in numbers, the importance of the means of implementation and the principle of CBDR.

China agreed with the convergence approach and that CRP39 provided a good basis for the negotiation as it contains critical elements, the equity principle, historical responsibilities and the establishment of global goal for finance, technology transfer, adaptation and capacity-building.

It also noted other elements like trade, impacts from implementation of response measures and intellectual property rights related to technology.

It also pointed to the presentations at the 'Equitable Access to Sustainable Development' workshop where out of 16 presentations, 12 mentioned the importance of the means of implementation and the importance of CBDR and the equity principle; 10 highlighted the importance of historical responsibilities.

These, it added, are the convergence for Parties when discussing shared vision.

Among others, **India** said the outcomes in Doha should provide solution to the long-standing intellectual property issue in the area of technology development and transfer.

Others who shared this view include **Philippines, Bolivia, Indonesia, Argentina, Bangladesh, South Africa and Saudi Arabia.**

Mexico said global goal and peaking year had been identified as the final end of Parties' work and along the way could take contextual elements as they provide relevance to providing the numbers and figures.

It's important that Parties do not do work until they have full understanding of the context and how to update those elements.

It urged Parties to be flexible as the numbers are not fixed but need to be updated as we find new elements.

Norway said there is clear mandate in decision 2/CP.17 to continue to identify the global goal and to decide on the timeframe for peaking of GHG and Parties should find convergence. The main purpose is to bring clarity and facilitate discussion to define global goal and peaking year.

Singapore said it also supports Mexico and Norway. It could appreciate the context framing the numbers but there has to be parameters and clear link to global goal and peaking as well as issues on trade and IPR so it hopes to move along on those lines.

Zou said he will report this discussion to the Chair of the AWG-LCA and encouraged Parties to continue thinking about areas where we might reach convergence in Doha.