

ADP: Disagreement over need for capacity building mechanism

Geneva, 20 June (Indrajit Bose) – The contact group of the UNFCCC's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) met on 10 June at the Bonn climate talks to elaborate on the elements for the 2015 agreement with a focus on 'capacity building'. The Bonn talks concluded on 15 June.

Discussions on capacity building were brief, but they highlighted the key differences among developed and developing countries on how they see capacity building being represented in the agreement to be drawn up in Paris in 2015. Central to the disagreement was how capacity building should be addressed and issues related to institutional arrangements on capacity building.

While developing countries such as the Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC), the Africa Group, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Arab Group were in favour of a separate institutional mechanism for capacity building, developed countries said there is no need for such a mechanism dedicated to capacity building because it is already being addressed under the existing institutions such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Technology Mechanism and the Durban Forum on Capacity Building. (The Durban Forum, agreed to in 2011, was designed for Parties and various organizations to share ideas, experiences, lessons learnt and good practices on implementing capacity-building activities in developing countries.)

Developing countries however countered that the Durban Forum is not an institution, but a platform to exchange experiences of countries. China, speaking for the LMDC

also called for a separate chapter in the 2015 agreement on capacity building, but the United States said that doing so would mean not recognizing the cross cutting nature of capacity building and doing "injustice to the issue". Tuvalu, representing the LDCs remarked that because it is cross cutting in nature that a coherent approach is needed. "There are institutions doing their own thing and one does not know if adequate financing is being provided," it said.

Speaking for **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)**, **China** said that enhanced capacity building actions must be demand driven by developing countries and supported by developed countries through specific and quantified finance and technology being provided, with financing channeled through the GCF. It called for the establishment of an international mechanism for capacity building funded by GCF and linked to the work of the Technology Executive Committee and adaptation institutions, with an evaluation mechanism to assess the effectiveness of the delivery of capacity building to developing countries. It emphasized that capacity building should focus on enhancing capacity of developing countries to implement mitigation and adaptation actions under the Convention, including human skills training for planning, implementation, and domestic institution building, and technology innovation and development of endogenous technology.

It stressed that enhancing capacity building is an urgent long-term task globally, especially for the most vulnerable countries with less responsibility for global warming. It reminded Parties that developing countries

are tied down by economic constraints. It said that even though differences existed in the past, Parties made progress and capacity building was put as a separate issue under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action at COP 15 in Copenhagen. China also reminded Parties that even as negotiations continue, the requirements of developing countries are growing manifold.

China said that capacity building in the 2015 agreement should respond to national needs and foster country ownership. It added that there is no established institutional arrangement to coordinate capacity building arrangements across all sectors. Recognizing the cross cutting nature of capacity building, it called for the establishment of effective institutional arrangements for capacity building. It should figure prominently as a separate chapter and mainstreamed in the agreement. With an institutional arrangement, information provided by the Durban Forum and national communication reports could be analysed systematically and nationally appropriate actions could be recommended in line with capacity building needs. Capacity building actions across national and international spectrum can be coordinated. MRV (measurement, reporting and verification) of capacity building support must also be done, said China.

Speaking for the **Africa Group, Sudan** explained the rationale for why capacity building should be a separate chapter in the new agreement. It said that capacity building is a cross cutting issue and that there needs to be a more coordinated approach. It called for capacity building on finance and technology to be clearly defined in the agreement. It proposed a capacity building committee, which would monitor, review and verify the support against the needs of the Parties and ensure capacity building needs do not become a barrier to implementation. It called for institutional arrangements to be set up at the earliest so that capacity gaps do not become deterrent for action.

Speaking for the **Arab Group, Algeria** said it is urgent to clarify and articulate clear outcomes and actions on capacity building for developing countries to implement mitigation and adaptation actions with

human skills and technology innovation. It said that the concrete relationship between capacity building and other mechanisms on mitigation and adaptation have to be clearly defined and stressed the need to establish a clear mechanism on capacity building. It said enhancing capacity building means it must be effectively sustained over a long period of time to let developing countries implement climate change activities. It should be demand driven.

Speaking for the **Least Developed Countries, Tuvalu** said that enhancing and intensifying work of the Durban Forum is crucial. Referring to capacity building as an important aspect, it envisaged a capacity building committee in the agreement and its role would be to monitor all processes on capacity building, including mitigation, adaptation and finance. The reason to establish such a committee is to give coherence to the subject. There are institutions doing their own thing and one does not know if adequate financing is provided. It is therefore important for a specific institution to assess whether capacity building is being done. It also said that while the Durban Forum is good to exchange ideas, it was not good enough to build capacity. Countries should be able to decide their capacity building needs. Tuvalu also said that there should be a review mechanism to ensure capacity building is carried out effectively, particularly for the LDCs. **Zambia** supported Tuvalu.

Speaking for the **Alliance of Small Island States, Jamaica** said Parties agreed that addressing capacity building in developing countries is important to respond to climate change and reiterated that what had not gained consensus is the need for a formal and structured approach to plan and implement measures on capacity building, as well as adapt to climate change. Obligations to assist Parties are already enshrined in the Convention. These must be enhanced to assist those countries that do not have the capacity. It must be done so that their economies and livelihoods are not adversely affected. Referring to the needs of developing countries, their development agenda and requirements for national communication, Jamaica said these call for

support of the international community. It highlighted that the Durban Forum could be instrumental to capacity building and it must be complemented with an “action oriented process”. It also called the lack of mention of capacity building for loss and damage as an oversight. It said that capacity building could do with some more elaboration.

Supporting China, **Iran** said that it is a commitment for developed countries to provide finance and technology support to developing countries and it called for the establishment of an international capacity building mechanism to be funded by the GCF and linked to the TEC.

Lending support to the African Group, **Burundi** added that capacity building is one of the key elements of the new agreement and there should be MRV of technology support. It called for a capacity building committee to work at the regional and national levels to assess the gaps between needs and support provided.

The **European Union** said capacity building is cross cutting and the fundamental response of all UNFCCC support mechanisms and it expected the 2015 agreement to reflect that. It was against the idea of establishing a new institution on capacity building and said the Durban Forum could enhance its work and be more focused and thematic.

The **United States** said capacity building is essential to the core objective of the Convention. Referring to China’s call for

capacity building to feature separately in the new agreement, the US said such kind of approach did not take into consideration the cross cutting nature of capacity building and the fact that it is inherently country driven. It said the function of capacity building is being achieved through existing mechanisms and bodies under the Convention. It gave the example of the operating entities of the financial mechanism and Technology Mechanism, and said these help develop capacity in very specific areas. The US was also opposed to having a capacity building window in the GCF. It said the GCF’s Governing Instrument affirmed the need for adequate resources for capacity building and that having it in a separate window ran the risk of doing injustice to the issue. It said that the Durban Forum would be helpful to understand the anticipated capacity building needs.

Japan said existing institutional arrangements such as Durban Forum, the Adaptation Committee, the Climate Technology Centre and Network and the Technology Executive Committee are functioning well and these should be further strengthened.

Canada said provision of capacity building, technology and climate finance need to be considered holistically. It claimed that capacity building would continue to play a crucial role in the national context of Parties and added that existing institutions such as the GCF and the Technology Mechanism all reflect their role to build capacities.