

Subsidiary Bodies begin work on key issues

Bonn, 2 June (Hilary Chiew) – The 42nd session of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA42) launched its work in contact groups and informal consultations upon opening on 1 June.

The groups are to conclude their respective work and submit draft decisions and draft conclusions for adoption at the closing plenary scheduled for the morning of 11 June.

The new chair Lidia Wojtal (Poland) said 2015 will be another challenging year for the whole UNFCCC process given the scarcity of time and workload that needs to be carefully managed towards concluding the Paris agreement. She said SBSTA42 would need to complete as much work as possible and every effort should be made to find and build consensus to achieve that.

She assured Parties that she considered all agenda items as equally important and as such will give equal attention to all items. "All item will receive balanced treatment and I will instruct co-facilitators along the same line" she stressed. (Lidia Wojtal replaced Tomasz Chruszczow [also of Poland]).

Wojtal had issued an information note on 8 May outlining her 'approach and vision for the forthcoming two SBSTA sessions in the run-up to the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) in Paris, France, and to highlight a few issues of particular interest to the SBSTA'.

She also said as time in Paris will be very short and space must be made for governments to complete their negotiations on the Paris agreement, an intense effort will be required at SBSTA42 so that work on as many items as possible can be completed. She further noted that she intended for SBSTA43 (to be held alongside the Paris COP) to exclusively focus on key issues that are directly related to the Paris outcome, and for any other unresolved issues to be addressed at SBSTA44. Her particular focus for SBSTA42 will

include key issues on which SBSTA41 was not able to conclude work last December.

Referring to the SBSTA Chair's approach, **South Africa for the G77 and China** said that "it regards all issues on the SBSTA agenda with the same priority and not only those items that have been prioritised in your information note. All these issues need to be concluded as soon as possible."

Meanwhile, the 42nd Session of the Subsidiary Body on Implementation (SBI42) also launched its work in contact groups and informal consultations. A major agenda of the SBI42 is the second multilateral assessment (MA) working group session under the international assessment and review process on 4 and 5 June. A total of 24 developed countries will be assessed on their progress towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to their quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets. Countries to be assessed include Canada, Japan, Russian Federation, Australia and Germany.

Besides the MA and agenda items, several workshops and events will take place during this session of SBI: a joint-technical workshop with SBSTA and the Standing Committee on Finance (SCF) on methodologies for the reporting of financial information by developed country Parties will also be held on 6 June; the 4th meeting of the Durban Forum on Capacity building (3 and 8 June); and, the 3rd Dialogue on Article 6 of the Convention (2 and 3 June).

The SBI is presided over by Amena Yauvoli (Fiji) and is expected to conclude its work before the closing plenary in the afternoon of 11 June.

Following are the interventions of groups of Parties at the SBSTA opening.

South Africa speaking for the G77 and China said the work of SBSTA plays an important role in our understanding of the science of climate change, is aimed at strengthening the implementation of the Convention and therefore has a direct bearing on the

negotiations under the Adhoc Working Group on Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP).

The G77 reiterated the importance of the achievement reached at COP19 with the Warsaw Framework for REDD-plus, which has concluded most of the negotiations under this agenda item. It looked forward to concluding the consideration of pending matters in this session and is ready and willing to move REDD-plus further into implementation, provided that adequate and predictable support is made available from developed countries.

It also called for the recognition that alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches, need differentiated methodological guidance, in accordance to national circumstances and national policies, in the context of sustainable development supported by financial, technical and capacity building within the context of the Convention.

In relation to agriculture, the G77 and China said it attaches great importance to the SBSTA discussions. It engage actively in the two in-session workshops on early warning systems, risks assessments and vulnerability of agricultural systems affected by climate change. Agriculture is considered to be the backbone of developing countries, economic systems and has a special role for the livelihood of millions, food security and poverty eradication.

The Group also appreciated the work of the Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) under the 2013-2015 Review of the adequacy of the long term global goal and the overall progress towards achieving it and welcomed the SED final report. It expected that a thorough consideration will be made of the report in order for COP21 to take forward the work of the SED, as well as on linkages with work under the ADP.

The G77-China said that research dialogue is a fundamental part of our common efforts to communicate emerging scientific findings; research planning activities; research priorities and gaps; research capacity building activities particularly in developing countries, as well as regional climate change research networks. It therefore sees the seventh research dialogue taking place on Thursday (4 June) as an important forum to facilitate discussions with the scientific community on scientific issues related to meeting the needs of the Convention. The Group seeks to help address the data and information gaps, including from the Inter-Governmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCCC) Fifth Assessment Report, and to advancing the discussions on lessons learned.

On Response Measures, the G77-China reaffirmed the importance of giving full consideration to what actions

are necessary to meet the specific needs and concerns of developing country Parties arising from the impact of the implementation of response measures, in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

In this regard, we look forward to engage constructively on the text of the draft decision forwarded from Lima in order to adopt a decision in COP21 for the establishment of a mechanism on enhanced action on the impact of the implementation of response measures. The G77-China position remains firm that the negative economic and social consequences of response measures taken by developed country Parties on developing country Parties must be avoided and minimised. Policy issues, such as unilateral measures, must be addressed.

As for agenda item 8(a) on methodologies for reporting of financial information by Parties included in Annex 1 to the Convention. The actions taken to comply with obligations on the provision of financial resources, access and transfer of technology - and more especially on meeting costs of adaptation - have to be reported by developed country Parties in a manner that is comparable and verifiable. This has not been the case in the 20 years since the entry into force of the Convention. Such lack of reporting is one of the most serious gaps in our implementation of the Convention. It is of utmost importance that progress be made on this item to ensure that the SBSTA fulfils its mandate set out in decision 2/CP.17 and that COP21 takes a decision in this regard, it said further.

In Lima, it said the Group worked very hard to bring the item on methodological issues under the Kyoto Protocol to a conclusion. Any further obstacles to finalising the Kyoto Protocol's second commitment period must be dealt with during this session. If progress is not made on this agenda item, it would not bode well for the 2015 agreement in Paris.

It also looked forward to continuing to engage constructively at this session in the discussions related to the framework for various approaches, new market mechanism and non-market-based approaches in a balanced manner thereafter, noting the importance of this discussion for the 2015 agreement. Also, the Group recognizes that non-market-based approaches are important to ensure the implementation of the objective of the Convention, according to its principles and provisions.

Representing the African Group, Sudan drew attention to key elements and area of work that require considerable advancement in this session. On REDD-plus, the Group intends to continue to positively engage on the issues of non-market based approaches

and additional guidance for safeguards. It believed that more time should be devoted to the yet-to-be-discussed issue of non-carbon benefits, which has interesting and complimentary overlaps between itself, the issue of safeguards and nonmarket based approaches (NCB). NCBs within the African context are essential for the long-term viability and success of REDD-plus implementation. In the particular case of African countries whose interest is in the “plus” part of REDD, success in generating and maintaining the NCBs is the main bulwark against emissions from deforestation and degradation. The Group intends to table a proposal on the consideration of NCBs that would direct sufficient support towards their implementation in REDD-plus countries for whom the implementation of NCBs is critical. Progress on this issue here in Bonn, we believe, would bode well for a positive outcome in Paris.

The African Group appreciated the work of the SED and its final report. It was concerned about the mandate of special event of 2013-2015 Review and how to take forward the work of SED.

On the impacts of implementation of Response Measures, the African Group would like to highlight the crucial need to strengthen and enhance areas of cooperation and collaboration among Parties. It would also like to highlight the urgency to give full consideration to the necessary action required to meet the needs arising from the impacts of the implementation of response measures, particularly the specific needs and concerns of developing country Parties.

“We were disappointed when the negotiations on the impacts of the implementation of response measures could not reach a successful conclusion in Lima, after a lot of work and cooperation from our Group. We see this as an important issue for sustainable development for Africa and look forward to constructive discussions and successful conclusions at this session,” it lamented.

On methodological issues under the Kyoto Protocol, the Group said it did its utmost to bring this item to a conclusion in Lima, and hoped that any further obstacles to finalising the Kyoto Protocol’s second commitment period can be overcome during this session for a decision to be reached in Paris and called for the rapid ratification of the Doha Amendment by all.

It said the Framework for Various Approaches, New Market Mechanisms and Non-market Approaches are very important issues for the African Group. However, the Group believes that it is important to consider the relationship with the 2015 agreement and

previous decisions prior to taking decisions on these matters, including the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol. The Group reiterates its position that market discussion should take into account issues of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Maldives representing the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) warned that the guardrail of up to 2C of warming is considered safe is inadequate. It said Parties should aim to push the defence line as low as possible. It said limiting temperature rise to 1.5C is still feasible and bring many benefits but the window is closing rapidly. It called upon the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) to explore climate technologies to address the ambition gap as the IPCC has confirmed that sea level rise will worsen and this would threaten infrastructure and settlements that support livelihood of island communities.

It said it is essential that actions are informed by latest science findings particularly the conclusion of the 2013-2015 Review and therefore the joint contact group of SBSTA and the SBI to deliberate on the SED final report must lead to immediate implementation of climate actions.

Representing the Least Developed Countries (LDC), Angola expressed solidarity with Bangladesh, Nepal and Vanuatu that were hit by deadly earthquake and cyclones recently.

It too found that keeping temperature rise below 2 degree C cannot be considered safe as climate change impacts are already costing lives and warned that increased warming will cause irreversible damage. It said the SED final report directly lent support to the Group’s position of 1.5C as defensible global goal. Towards this end, it said the agenda item on research dialogue is of vital importance to the LDCs.

It also said it is of critical importance that SBSTA develops a methodology for reporting on finance especially with experience gained by Annex 1 Parties from their first Biennial Report, adding that it is crucial for methodologies on reporting to be enhanced to gain more clarity and transparency of finance available for the needs of developing countries.

On agriculture, it said the assessment of risks and vulnerabilities of agriculture system to different warming scenario revealed a knowledge gap that needs to be addressed. It is critical to support the most vulnerable countries with contingency plans that hold great potential of reducing the impacts. On loss and damage, it said the composition of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage needs to be completed as soon as possible so that the ExCom can get into full operationalisation of its two year workplan.

Guatemala representing the Independent Alliance of Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC) announced its new member the Republic of Paraguay. It reckoned that the contribution of REDD-plus to the global effort of mitigating climate change is of substantial importance and therefore it is important to conclude outstanding issue and focus on the implementation.

It looked forward to a constructive and productive workshop on methodologies to provide financial information by Annex 1 countries to developing countries. It was alarmed by the final report of the SED which tells us to avoid a 2degree C temperature rise and that governments should work to limit the rise to 1.5C. It also underscored the importance of resolving all the methodological issues related to the KP and the urgent need for developed country Parties to ratify the second commitment period of the KP.

The European Union welcomed the final SED factual technical report and looked forward to discuss scientific findings related to the adequacy of the long term goal and its further operationalization. It was keen on finalizing meaningful conclusions, with a view to informing the ADP process in due time.

Highlighting the issues that the EU considered as central for this SBSTA session, it said the first and the utmost important item is the methodological issues relating to Article 5, 7 and 8 of the KP. It urged Parties to work towards a constructive outcome and resolve outstanding issues during the June session so that the CP2 can become effective with legal certainty.

It highlighted the importance of finalization of the Methodological issues under the KP on determining the “average annual emissions for the first three years of the preceding commitment period”. It suggested keeping this item separate from SBSTA items 9a and 9b.

It reiterated the importance of the methodologies for reporting of financial information by Annex I Parties since it has linkages to the discussions on transparency of support under ADP. On market mechanisms and non-market approaches under the Convention, the EU is awaiting the technical exchange of views and a close cooperation of SBSTA chair and ADP co-chairs on these mechanisms.

It also welcomed efforts made by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in addressing international transport greenhouse gas emissions and encouraged them to step up their related work and activities, including an agreement on a global market-based mechanism for aviation in 2016.

Mexico speaking for the Environmental Integrity Group (EIG) said the Nairobi Work Programme which has been established as the technical and knowledge platform under the Cancun Adaptation Framework has enormous potential to liaise with other organisations doing valuable work in adaptation. On REDD-plus, it said following the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, it is now crucial to advance its implementation. It looked forward to the two in-session workshop related to agriculture and considered the work as fundamental in the field of adaptation. It welcomed the joint workshop on reporting methodologies of financial information which would add to understanding of different financing approaches. It looked forward to the completion of the 2013-2015 Review at this session in Bonn.

Representing the Umbrella Group, Australia said as Parties work to conclude the Paris agreement, the 2013-2015 Review and the SED final report would help Parties to better understand the adequacy of the long term global goal. It welcomed the continued efforts by forest countries and donors to implement the Warsaw Framework for REDD-plus and hoped to conclude all outstanding issues including safeguards under the REDD+ agenda item. While it welcomed the two in-session workshops of early warning system and risk and vulnerability assessments of the agriculture agenda item, it is disappointed that there was no agreement on the item related to market mechanism (at SBSTA41).

The meeting was reconvened after lunch as several Parties had indicated their intention to address the agenda item 8(c) on emissions from fuel used for international aviation and maritime transport. This agenda item will not be deliberated at this session.

Argentina speaking for the African Group, the League of Arab States, Bolivia, Brazil, China, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, India, Iran, Malaysia, Nicaragua, Uruguay, Venezuela, and Vietnam welcomed the reports presented by ICAO and IMO on their work.

As expressed previously, they reaffirmed that the following elements should be duly considered by the ICAO and IMO when addressing climate change:

- Article 2.2 of the KP, by which Annex I Parties shall pursue limitation or reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases of international maritime and aviation working through the ICAO and IMO, and by which both organizations are mandated by the UNFCCC - as primary fora on climate change- to address the issue;
- Full respect for the principles and provisions of the Convention and of its Kyoto Protocol, in particular

the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR), as well as that measures should not constitute disguised restrictions on international trade;

- Comprehensive assessment of the possible social, economic, technical and environmental implications of the measures under discussion for developing countries, taking into account that international aviation and maritime transport play a vital role in the facilitation of world trade, and therefore on the socio and economic development in developing countries;
- Respect to the consensus rule, and to the promotion of an inclusive and transparent process and a multilateral approach consistent with the principles and provisions of the UNFCCC, in opposition to unilateral measures;
- Promotion of transfer of financial resources and technologies from developed countries to developing countries, in accordance with the developed countries obligations under the Convention.

Argentina said in relation to the IMO work, the group of countries reaffirmed the importance of the progress made in the IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee with the recognition its Resolution on Promotion of Technical Co-operation and Transfer of Technology relating to the Improvement of Energy Efficiency of Ships to the UNFCCC principles, in particular the principle of CBDR and equity. In particular, they acknowledged the work of the Ad Hoc Expert Working Group on Facilitation of Transfer of Technology for Ships (AHEWG-TT). With respect to the proposals for additional IMO measures, this should be consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention and expressed support for multilateral discussions, in opposition to unilateral measures. In this sense, they are deeply concerned about the recent approval by the EU of a unilateral measure on measuring, reporting and verification of shipping emissions that undermines the spirit of multilateral cooperation and that is inconsistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention.

It also reiterated its acknowledgement of the approval of the Third IMO GHG Study 2014, which highlights, in reference to the average of the period from 2007 to 2012, that "international shipping accounts for approximately 2.6% and 2.4% of CO₂ and GHGs on a CO₂e basis, respectively.", while in 2012 it only accounted for 2.2 % of global emissions. This shows that international maritime transport is only a modest contributor to climate change, while it is fundamental for trade and economic and social development, as recognised in the IMO communication.

With respect to the ICAO report and communication, and in relation to the work of the Environmental Advisory Group (EAG), the group would like to recall the mandate coming from Resolution A38-18, in the sense that ICAO State Members should work on the technical aspects, environmental and economic impacts and modalities of the different possible options for a global market based measure for international aviation, including its feasibility and practicability. In this respect, it is worth to note the recent presentation in the EAG of some alternative proposals to the Strawman document by different ICAO Members, proposals that should be further analyzed, studied and elaborated by the ICAO, in particular in terms on how they take into account the special circumstances of developing States and address all of the concerns presented by parties before taking further steps forward, following Resolution A38-18. In this sense, the work in the ICAO should remain Party-driven, transparent and inclusive.

[The strawman document is the report of the Meteorological Aeronautical Requirements and Information Exchange Project Team (MARIE-PT-Action Report No. 2A dated 20 March 2012). This paper presents a "strawman", in other words a proposal, outline or framework, for functional requirements for meteorological information to support ICAO's global concept of air traffic management and performance-based navigation.]

The group of countries also wish to reaffirm the importance of the recognition in the Resolution A38-18 that market-based measures (MBM) should be implemented only after bilateral and/or multilateral agreement and on the basis of mutual consent. Therefore, they call on countries to respect ICAO decisions and not resort to unilateral action. In addition, it is worth to note the acknowledgement in the ICAO resolution of the principle of CBDR in any possible design of market based measures. The ICAO discussions should not prejudice or duplicate neither possible results of the UNFCCC work or its principles and provisions.

With regards to ICAO's work referred to States' action plans, in the case of developing countries, these plans must be understood as voluntary actions that take into account the specific national contexts, and not as part of a global goal in the international aviation transport. In this context, there is a need to ensure the transfer of financial resources, technology transfer and capacity building support to developing countries for them to be able to voluntarily undertake specific action plans.

The group also wanted to reiterate their deep concern at the proposals for the use of international aviation

and maritime transport as a potential source for the mobilization of revenue for climate finance, echoing the views included in the Resolution A38-18 and in the submissions made by ICAO that international aviation should not be disproportionately targeted as a source of revenue.

Argentina requested for the statement to be included in the records of the session and trusts that the ICAO and IMO will take these matters under consideration in their work and in their reports and communications in future SBSTA sessions.

China emphasized that MBM should accommodate the principle of CBDR and that economic impact analysis of different options of MBM should be carried out especially on developing countries. On IMO's plan, it concurred with the warning by the IMO general-secretary who had cautioned that such regulation could undermine international shipping.

Singapore commended the progress made by ICAO and IMO and believed that with their expertise, measures such as the global MBM should continue to be developed.

Japan welcomed the significant progress made by the ICAO in terms of the global MBM and by the IMO in terms of discussion of data collection system for fuel consumption. It noted that the mention of CBDR in the IMO preamble is not an acknowledgment of the principle but merely cognizant (of its presence). It further said the principle of non-discrimination should be the basis for international cooperation but CBDR is not consistent with this principle. Therefore, differentiation of developed and developing countries is not compatible.

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