

SBI/SBSTA: Scope of next periodic review on global goal to be considered in May 2017

Kuala Lumpur, 6 June (Hilary Chiew) – Parties to the UNFCCC at the recently concluded climate talks in Bonn agreed to further consider the scope of the next periodic review of the long-term global goal under the Convention, and of overall progress towards achieving it, in May 2017 at the 46th sessions of the subsidiary bodies.

This decision was taken at the 44th session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) on 26 May, the final day of the Bonn talks. The scope of the next periodic review is a joint SBI/SBSTA agenda item.

[Parties in Cancun in 2010 agreed on a long-term global goal (LTGG) to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions so as to hold the increase in global average temperature below 2°C above pre-industrial levels. In 2012 in Doha, they also decided to periodically review: (1) the adequacy of this LTGG in the light of the ultimate objective of the Convention, and (2) overall progress toward achieving the global goal, including a consideration of the implementation of the commitments under the Convention.

[In Paris, at the 21st meeting of the Conference of Parties (COP 21), through decision 10/CP.21, Parties agreed that “*in relation to the adequacy of the LTGG, and in the light of the ultimate objective of the Convention, that the goal is to hold the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels, recognizing that this would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change*”. They also noted that “*although some progress has already been made by UNFCCC bodies in scaling up financial, technological and capacity-building support, significant gaps still exist in terms of both the scale and the speed of such progress*”. Parties also requested the SBSTA and the

SBI “*to consider the scope of the next periodic review, referred to in paragraph 9 above, with a view to forwarding a recommendation for consideration by the COP by no later than 2018, as appropriate.*”]

At the recent Bonn session, Parties agreed “that the next periodic review should be conducted in an effective and efficient manner, avoid duplication of work and take into account the results of relevant work conducted under the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol and the subsidiary bodies. In that regard, the SBSTA and the SBI noted the relevant work on the global stocktake under the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement, the facilitative dialogue, which will take place in 2018, and the technical examination processes.”

They also agreed that the SBSTA and the SBI will “further consider the scope of the next periodic review at their 46th sessions (May 2017) and refine it, taking into account relevant experiences with the 2013–2015 review.”

They also “noted that an in-session workshop on the scope of the next periodic review could be useful and that they may consider the matter further at their 46th sessions.”

At the first contact group meeting on 17 May, co-facilitator **Gertraude Wollansky (Austria)** posed the question on when would be the right time to begin discussions on the scope of the review.

Brazil said it was not ready to begin discussions on the scope as it was difficult to determine duplication pending the facilitative dialogue in 2018 (to take stock of the collective efforts of Parties in relation to progress towards the LTGG of limiting temperature rise.)

The **United States** was in favour of starting discussions at the 48th session of the subsidiary bodies (May/June 2018) referring to the Paris decision which recommends to the COP to consider the scope of the review no later than 2018. It also agreed with Brazil to allow for the total modalities of the global stocktake (GST) (to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Paris Agreement to be held in 2023) “to be teased out first”.

Japan noted that there is duplication with the GST and the periodic review. Hence, the scope of the periodic review should be narrowed down. It saw the point of postponing discussions to a later stage but was mindful that the discussion needs to send a message to the scientific community.

The **European Union** was fine with visiting the issue at a later stage until at least in mid- 2017. A year from now should be the minimum, it added.

Australia said it was important that work be organised efficiently so as to avoid duplication, noting that the GST is also dealing with the temperature goal. It agreed that it would make sense to have a bit more clarity from the GST. On the engagement of the scientific community, it reckoned that the opportunities are provided by the GST where the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) can inform the GST.

Palau speaking for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** thought it was appropriate to consider the periodic review at the 46th sessions of the subsidiary bodies (SB 46).

Botswana representing the **African Group** said deferring until SB 48 did not go down well and it saw the periodic review as important work and preferred SB 46.

Norway agreed that postponing to 2018 might send the wrong signal, preferring to start next year, in 2017.

Reacting to the United States, **Brazil** cautioned that visiting the issue at SB 48 will be too late for Parties to make recommendations to the COP in 2018.

Switzerland noted that 2018 is a good time with the facilitative dialogue and the IPCC Special Report. However, it aligned with others that preferred SB 46.

(At Paris, Parties agreed to invite the IPCC to provide a special report in 2018 on the impacts of global warming of 1.5 degree C above pre-industrial levels and related global greenhouse gas emission pathways.)

Solomon Islands and **Peru** thought that delaying to 2018 would be too late, with the latter noting that it would like to have the technical and political space to enable continuation of work.

Saudi Arabia said it had an open mind but stressed that the scope will determine the timing. Recalling that the previous review did not do much work on how to close the gaps to achieve the 1.5 degree C target, it said Parties need to decide on the elements of the review, and be faithful to the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs) submitted by many Parties detailing the support that they need to achieve those targets.

“So, in short, determining when to look into it (the scope) is subject to what we want to look into. If it is comprehensive then we should do it now. If we think only of the mitigation target, then it is a redundancy as IPCC is already commissioned to do the report,” it stressed.

Edited by Meena Raman