



## Differences of views on continuation of mitigation work programme

Bonn, June 12, (Radhika Chatterjee) - Differences of views emerged over the continuation of the 'Sharm-el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme [referred to as the 'Mitigation Work Programme' (MWP)] at the on-going UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies sessions [SB64] in Bonn, Germany. While giving their views on the assessment of the MWP, they also addressed the question of how it should be continued, at informal consultations presided over by co-facilitators **Ursula Fuentes (Germany)** and **Maesela John Kekana (South Africa)**.

The key areas of divergence that have surfaced are: the manner in which the MWP's continuation takes place, whether the enhancement of the work programme should lead to a translation of outputs of the MWP into policy guidance; whether there should be any linkage between the MWP and the first global stocktake [GST1] decision adopted in Dubai at COP 28 in 2023; whether the MWP should be a vehicle for implementation of the mitigation section of the GST outcome; the relationship of the MWP and the Nationally Determined Contributions [NDCs]; and the need for enhancing Investment Focused Events (IFEs) to ensure that mitigation projects of developing countries are able to secure funding and translated into reality on the ground. The importance of means of implementation [MOI] as a crucial element of

raising mitigation ambition and implementation was also highlighted.

Many developing countries like the **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC), Arab Group, Africa Group, China, South Africa** and **India** said that an essential starting point for any kind of discussions on the continuation of the MWP should be that the "safeguards" under the programme's mandate on respecting national sovereignty and national circumstances are retained in its new form. They also said the continued MWP should remain within that mandate and should not be used to impose national mitigation targets and that it should not undermine the nationally determined nature of NDCs, highlighting also the importance of MOI in raising their ambition.

Developed countries like the **European Union (EU), Environmental Integrity Group (EIG), United Kingdom [UK], Canada, New Zealand, Japan** and some developing countries like the **Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS)** and the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Nations (AILAC)** and **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** on the other hand, expressed a strong desire for making the MWP's outputs "more consequential", by translating them into policy guidelines for decision makers and for Parties

national plans like their NDCs and long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies (LT-LEDS). They also stressed the need for using the MWP as a vehicle for implementing the outcomes of GST1, particularly the mitigation efforts related to the energy transition, including tripling of renewable energy and doubling energy efficiency, and halting deforestation. Some also suggested the need for setting up a “technical expert committee” that could help translate outputs of the dialogues held under MWP into policy guidance.

**China** for the **LMDC** said Parties had submitted views related to the continuation of MWP in response to para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 and that discussions at SB64 should not be confined only to the continuation issue but also focus on the global dialogues held under the MWP. It pointed out that the top guiding principles of the MWP are about it being non-prescriptive, non-punitive, facilitative and respectful of national sovereignty, which were also contained in para 16 of the Belem decision, and must be kept in mind in current discussions. It pointed out that it should not be assumed that Parties have already agreed to continuing the work programme, just because they have made submissions on the matter, adding that Parties should not rush to draft text in this regard, but focus first on understanding the submissions made on this issue.

It said the Belem decision on the MWP reflects the LMDC’s “maximum compromise” and said paragraph 16 of the decision should be understood in a comprehensive manner. It said the safeguards related to the principles of the MWP are the “starting point for our conversation on the continuation of the work programme.” Sharing its suggestion for the continuation of the MWP, the LMDC insisted on the strict mandate that Parties regards as the principles of the MWP. It added that the MWP should not be used to prescribe climate targets upon Parties.

On what modalities the continued MWP could look like, it said it could take the form of dialogues or roundtables, and workshops, indicating flexibility on the format, to build on the positive experiences gained and emphasised that it should remain party-driven in nature. It said regional formats should be avoided as they can be exclusive in

nature. It pointed out that many Parties have limited willingness and ability to participate in “climate weeks” in person, something that was seen at the seventh global dialogue when many could not participate in light of the existing geopolitical circumstances. It said dialogues can be held during COPs/CMAAs to ensure more participation and accessibility. It said the outcome of the MWP may be presented in the form of summary reports. It stressed that these reports cannot become policy guidance without any negotiated outcome and wanted to see more progress in IFEs so that Parties could share more on their needs in relation to projects and hear from donors and multilateral development banks [MDBs]. It stressed that the future rounds of MWP should have “pitch-hub events” and that the IFEs can be improved in a manner so that pragmatic funds can go to support projects of developing countries.

It also pointed to the need for focusing on tools like the “Non-Market Approaches platform” [under Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement] to facilitate financing, adding that developing countries should receive help in preparing their project concept notes to increase their ability to get funding. Responding to the calls of setting up “expert groups”, it pointed to budgetary constraints that the UNFCCC is facing.

It said messages of the MWP’s dialogues are well captured in annual reports and there is no need for further messages to be identified for policymakers in the decision. It said the continuation of the MWP does not mean its redesigning and made clear that there is no mandate for including the MWP as a permanent agenda item.

It said further that the mandate of the MWP does not provide links to GST1 and found the calls by others of producing concrete outcomes of the GST to fit national planning prescriptive and intrusive to national policy spaces. It said proposals for having a technical committee for the MWP challenges the current mandate. Further, responding to calls for focusing future global dialogues on specific topics relating to the energy transition, it said the selection of topics cannot be prejudged now. Adding further, it said the MWP is not designed for guiding NDCs, and information to facilitate clarity, transparency, and understanding

[ICTU] already exists to facilitate Parties to deliver clear messages in NDCs. The LMDC stressed the importance of ensuring the global nature of the MWP's dialogues and agreed to the idea of enhancing expert participation, but without any outcome. It also added that engagement with the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [PCC] in the MWP was out of its mandate and could be discussed in other agenda items.

**Saudi Arabia for the Arab Group** said discussions should be an exchange of views and that it was not in a position to support views on a draft decision text as it wanted the text to be informed by a complete record of interventions. It called for two rounds of exchange where Parties can share their views on the functioning of the MWP. It pointed out that Parties made submissions on the continuation of the work programme in response to para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7, but not to predetermine any outcome on the question of continuation of the programme. It stressed that its submission did not provide unconditional support for the continuation of the MWP, but rather it outlined the principles for continuation. It said there is a need to recognize the substantial progress that has been achieved so far in MWP and pointed out that the global dialogues held under the programme provided a valuable space for learning and helping to strengthen solutions across the board, and to help in understanding opportunities and barriers in national contexts. It expressed appreciation of knowledge sharing without imposing prescriptive approaches. It stressed these achievements did not occur by accident but through the carefully crafted principles and parameters established in decision 4/CMA.4, especially its para 2.

It expressed concerns to the calls for links to the GST and said that "para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 does not establish a mandate to strengthen such linkages but rather it has dropped that linkage all together." Adding further, it said, "while paragraph 186 of the GST outcome refers to relevant work programmes integrating GST outcomes, it does so only "in line with their mandates." This qualification is essential and that it cannot be used to expand the MWP, create new functions, or transform it into a GST implementation mechanism."

On proposals to extend MWP's tenure to beyond

2030, it said it did not support that and pointed out that the work programme's objective, mandate, and timeline are intrinsically linked to the period up to 2030. It said it cannot support the idea of establishing a technical expert committee "as it would fundamentally change the nature of the MWP from a Party-driven exchange into a process that could develop top-down recommendations, identify priorities, or shape policy direction. This would go beyond the principles of this work programme." It cautioned against "proposals to produce "strengthened usable outputs for policymakers" if this means developing recommendations, toolkits, policy menus or guidance for national planning. The MWP is not a policy advisory body. It is not mandated to tell policymakers what they should do. It can summarize what was shared in the global dialogues. It can identify practical barriers and support needs. It can highlight examples on a non-prescriptive basis. But it cannot become an indirect mechanism for shaping domestic mitigation policies."

**Zimbabwe for the African Group** said it still needs to be convinced about the need for continuation of the work programme. It said the support provided in the IFEs has largely remained technical, while no funds have actually flowed to projects under the MWP. It highlighted that Parties had till COP31 to demonstrate if the MWP is working, adding that the global dialogues were an educative space for exchanging views. It said these may justify the continuation of the MWP but there was a need for enhancements to ensure the work programme is relevant. It said MWP should continue under the agreed principles and safeguards of: common but differentiated responsibilities [CBDR], equity, respect the nationally determined nature of NDCs, remain non prescriptive, non-punitive, facilitative, respectful of national sovereignty and national circumstances.

It also stressed that MWP should support more implementation, as ambition was already there. It said there is a need to support countries to develop mitigation proposals into fundable proposals that can support developing countries in accessing financing. It said the need is to ensure that mitigation actions don't remain on paper, but also become a reality on the ground.

**Sierra Leone** for **LDCs** expressed strong support for the continuation of the MWP. Stressing the urgency of keeping the 1.5 °C goal alive, it said the MWP must evolve beyond being a dialogue platform and should enhance mitigation ambition and implementation. It said the MWP should become a permanent agenda item under UNFCCC while maintaining its current mandate. It proposed the formation of a technical mechanism or committee to ensure the programme's mandate is translated into concrete action, adding that the MWP should be assessed not only by the quantity or quality of discussions, but also by the number of projects it translated into reality on ground.

**Cook Islands** for **AOSIS** said the collective efforts need to be focused on scaling up mitigation ambition in a manner that complements the GST. It said the mitigation agenda should be aimed at limiting global warming to 1.5 °C, which it called the North Star. It said the MWP has not delivered on its mandate and that any future MWP should contribute to GST outcomes and that the MWP should accelerate the GST1 outcomes including tripling renewable energy and doubling energy efficiency. It added that the MWP should operate in a facilitative manner and that there is a need for more substantial outputs like technical reports from the programme that can be translated into guidance for implementation.

Expressing support for a strong mitigation space, it said the future MWP should become more "implementation oriented that moves beyond dialogues" so that mitigation ambition and implementation can be raised. In terms of strengthening MWP's modalities, it said IFEs would have to respond better to the needs of SIDS and deliver tangible value. It asked for a work plan for the global dialogues and IFEs and suggested that IFEs could be held where there is a greater involvement of financial institutions. It expressed a preference for having a multi-year thematic programme for the MWP and said criteria proposed by the IPCC to achieve 1.5 °C pathways should be kept in mind in its work. It said lessons learned could be documented in a report containing available policy options.

**Colombia** for **AILAC** said it wants a solution to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade, adding that

the MWP is not meeting its objectives. It said Parties need guidance from the CMA to remove barriers to delivering the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement. It said a great enabler of mitigation action is international cooperation, multilateralism and solidarity. It said there is a need for results that are oriented towards action and that the proliferation of workstreams was making the CMA "work heavy" and called for the MWP to draw on the outcomes of GST1 and serve as an input to subsequent GSTs. It referred to the mitigation goals [in the GST1 outcomes] related to transitioning away from fossil fuels and halting and reversing deforestation. It said transitioning away from fossil fuels implies a phase-in of renewables and pointed out both are integral parts of para 28 of the GST decision. It said there are barriers to the massive deployment and global scaling up of renewable energy and stressed the need for talking about international cooperation to discuss how Parties can transform their national pathways.

It said it is important how Parties ensure that the MWP actually results in the provision and mobilisation of support for implementation to keep global warming below the 1.5 °C limit. It said the IFEs have had no consequence and are nowhere close to mobilising finances at the scale at which they were needed. It pointed to the need for a programme that is capable of identifying barriers to taking action. It said MWP should not only include calls to action but also commitments on MOI and international cooperation. It said paragraph 186 of GST1 must be the basis of these conversations and the focus should not be only on the mitigation section of GST, but also the MOI elements. It considers this as the operationalisation of CBDR and equity.

**India** said it heard some say that the MWP has not delivered its objective on enhancing mitigation ambition and acceleration and is unable to see how this will be addressed by the setting up of another committee. It said further that "in the case of Parties that have high historical responsibility and also high capacities, the lack of ambition requires deeper introspection that cannot simply be addressed by setting up another committee," adding that "in the case of developing countries, even where higher ambition than countries can manage actually exists, implementation is often impeded by the lack of support and backtracking

on obligations on providing the MOI". Said India further that "these issues must be discussed and multiple platforms within the process already exist to do so. The financial and technology mechanisms already exist and stronger linkages with these mechanisms can in fact begin to bridge the gaps that many have identified."

**South Africa** said it views the NDCs as the main mechanism for ambition in mitigation in a nationally determined manner and that this is clearly articulated in various provisions of the Paris Agreement. The MWP is therefore additional to this and should not replace, displace or duplicate the key mechanisms under the agreement, including the GST and the NDCs. Calling the current phase of MWP useful, it proposed "that rather than looking at reforms of the mandate and principles that are foundational to the MWP, we should consider improvements and enhancements to the MWP that will assist in the provision of support for mitigation projects, especially in developing countries." Adding further, it said the MWP is "more than just a match-making platform" and rather it is "a mechanism that can bring the role-players that lead on mitigation ambition, provision of finance/support/investment and mitigation project implementers into the same space. We understand that the MWP cannot provide direct financing for mitigation projects/programmes but can be that bridge builder between mitigation ambition, provision of finance and implementation on the ground."

The **EU** said there is a need to ensure adequate space for mitigation ambition and strengthen alignment of NDCs with the 1.5 °C goal, and that MWP was the only space for this. Pointing out that MWP has fallen short on delivering its mandate after four years of work, it supported continuation of the work programme "if we can make it fit for purpose", as is being done for Global Goal on Adaptation, Just Transition Work Programme , "with the establishment of a mechanism". It said the MWP should be extended till 2030, followed by a review of functioning effectiveness. It said the objective is to scale up mitigation ambition and implementation covering the current round of NDCs. Adding further, it said the Global Climate Action Agenda, the Biennial Transparency Reports, synthesis reports of NDCs, the UN Environment Programme's Emissions Gap Report, and the IPCC's

7th Assessment Reports could be inputs to the MWP.

It said MWP should be complementary to GST, integrate outcomes of GST1 and MWP outcomes should inform the GST2. In terms of modalities, it said, the programme should have a multi-year thematic work with a more regional focus. It said MWP should provide inputs to the CMA to provide political signals to close the ambition and implementation gaps to enhance mitigation in this critical decade.

**Switzerland** for **EIG** said the Paris Agreement has delivered real progress but the window for limiting warming to 1.5 °Cs is closing. It said MWP is one of the places where Parties can reflect on how they can accelerate mitigation ambition. It stressed the need to do more on emission reductions. In terms of improvements to the work programme, it said there is a need to strengthen exchange with experts who could meet practitioners around the year virtually and suggested the idea of maintaining a roster of technical experts. It said the continued MWP should have a thematic structure with multi-year thematic tracks with a work plan.

It said MWP should respond to GST and support countries in their energy transition efforts and in the fight against deforestation. It said outputs of the MWP should be a text that informs policy making documents. It added there is a need to ensure functioning of IFEs is improved. Suggesting the formation of a technical expert group, it said this group could work in a non-prescriptive manner alongside other bodies like the Standing Committee on Finance, the Technology Executive Committee and provide the analytical backbone that is lacking in the current MWP. It affirmed MWP's role in maintaining 1.5 °C goal, reports of MWP should be recognized as inputs to the GST, and that para 186 of GST1 should be operationalised, and that a space should be created in the MWP to facilitate implementation and that discussions must remain facilitative and avoid finger pointing.

The **UK** said the future MWP should be action oriented so that the 1.5 °C goal is kept within reach. It wanted more substantive and useful outcomes that would be of value to policy makers. It supported improvements to IFEs and greater

coherence and complementarity with GST and the Action Agenda. It said there is a need to deepen and broaden the sectoral focus and supported the EU and EIG's proposal on having longer term track considerations. It said ambition and implementation are what drives real world outcomes and helps close ambition gaps. It said there is a need to make MWP more effective for practical support for learning.

**Canada** said that the MWP has been a useful space for sharing knowledge but that Parties are not making full use of the global dialogues in informing climate action plans like NDCs and LT-LEDs. It said there is a need to think how MWP can better inform these objectives and become more relevant to policymakers and produce actionable outcomes for decision makers. Supporting the idea of voluntary technical expert groups proposed by Switzerland, it said more exchanges amongst experts would foster more candid and technically rich conversation. It stressed the need for more sharing and coordination of technical work, of not just governments but also of non-state actors including experts and Indigenous Peoples.

**New Zealand** said that the MWP can and must facilitate action in a way that can help us go further and faster and that a continued MWP is needed and that "it must be more effective and facilitative" than

what it is today. It highlighted the importance of MWP as a space up to 2030 and beyond and called it an important accelerator for action. It said there is a need to ensure its working complements outcomes of GSTs.

**The Republic of Korea** said that the MWP has not lived up to its founding objective. It called the MWP a unique important space where barriers, challenges, solutions and opportunities to scale up mitigation implementation can be discussed. Citing paragraph 186 of GST1 decision, it said the focus should be on making the MWP more effective "in supporting nationally" actions. It said that the MWP should facilitate implementation of mitigation outcomes of GST1, which should inform the global dialogues of MWP, and that the MWP should provide useful inputs to GST, thus creating a reinforcing ambition cycle. It also said that the outputs of the continued MWP should be in the form of annual summary reports that make the learnings from the dialogues more useful for domestic mitigation planning. It said there is a need for having a greater link between mitigation actions and market realities.

The next informal consultation of MWP is scheduled for June 12. To assist Parties in their discussions, co-facilitators of MWP have shared a [list of three guiding questions](#).