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ANTALYA CLIMATE NEWS UPDATE

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Failure to agree on continuation of Mitigation Work Programme

Antalya, 25 Nov, (Radhika Chatterjee): Parties failed to agree on the continuation of the 'Sharm-el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme' (MWP) at the climate talks in Antalya, which ended on Sunday, 22nd Nov. The main point of contention was over efforts to link the MWP to the outcomes of the global stocktake (GST).

(Under Article 14 of the Paris Agreement [PA], the GST is held every 5 years, with the first held in Dubai in 2023, "to assess the collective progress towards achieving the purpose of the Agreement and its long-term goals.")

Negotiations in Antalya on the MWP were to focus on its review and continuation. From the start of the talks, discussions were wrought by persistent faultlines. This became even more evident at the closing of 65th session of the Subsidiary Bodies (SB65) at the first week of talks in Antalya, when Parties adopted a procedural conclusion for further work in the final week. Matters came to a head on the closing plenary when COP 31 President **Murat Kurum, Turkiye** invited Parties to adopt the MWP's draft decision text.

The **Russian Federation** and the **Arab Group** said they could not accept the text tabled by the Presidency. They said the text provided for a linkage of the MWP with the GST in a manner that went beyond its mandate. Their concerns stemmed from para 32 of the final iteration of the text, which they said went against the facilitative, non-prescriptive, and non-punitive nature of the MWP's mandate and transformed it into a mechanism for reaching outcomes in the GST. The **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** too expressed concerns about para 32 of the text. (See details below).

(Para 32 of the decision text read as follows: "*Recognizes* that the work programme should provide for Parties to exchange views and experiences with mitigation ambition and implementation, including opportunities, challenges, barriers and actionable solutions, taking into account, as appropriate, the outcome of the global stocktake, which informs nationally determined contributions [NDCs] as per decision 19/CMA.1, while respecting their nationally determined nature, in the context of diverse national pathways and

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development priorities, as relevant to the mandate of the work programme.")

On the other hand, developed countries and some developing countries wanted to retain the emphasis on having a stronger linkage of the MWP with the GST. The **Umbrella Group (UG)** said complementarity with the GST has been a part of MWP's mandate from the beginning, and that it looked for stronger implementation of its findings. The **European Union (EU)** and **Switzerland** said that the MWP was important for strengthening implementation of mitigation ambition, while the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** and the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean States (AILAC)** also wanted to see a strong linkage between the MWP with GST.

The **LMDC** proposed the deletion of para 32 from the decision, which was contentious for achieving consensus. This approach was not acceptable to the **Russian Federation**, and consequently, the MWP matter was subjected to Rule 16 of the draft Rules of Procedure, (where the matter will be considered at the next session of the CMA [Conference of Parties to the PA]).

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE INTERVENTIONS DURING PLENARY

When the MWP decision text was put forward for adoption, the **Russian Federation** objected and said that it regretted that Parties could not achieve agreement "despite all the collective efforts". It objected against the principle embedded in para 32 of the final text that "provides links between areas which goes beyond the programme's mandate." It stressed that the MWP should not be prescriptive and "must not be an additional mechanism to reach an outcome on GST."

Saudi Arabia for the **Arab Group** said it is "deeply disappointed by the continued attempts throughout the negotiations to fundamentally alter the facilitative, non-prescriptive and bottom-up nature of the MWP, and to move it away from its agreed mandate. It said the Arab Group came ready to agree on the continuation of the programme, but it continued to see attempts to shift the MWP away from an exchange of nationally determined experiences towards a process that would prescribe priorities, direct national mitigation efforts and cherry pick outcomes negotiated under other processes (in an apparent reference to the GST). "Doing so would blur the distinction between two separate mandates and undermine the carefully negotiated balance on which this programme was established. We continue to support a facilitative exchange on mitigation ambition and implementation, grounded in Parties' own experiences, the barriers they face and the support they need to act."

The **EU** expressed regret about being unable to find consensus on the MWP decision, and said "this is an important programme to strengthen acceleration and implementation of mitigation," emphasising the need for the programme to deliver "concrete progress". It also stressed the need to include links to the GST.

The **United Kingdom (UK)** for the **UG** said it "sought a balanced outcome" and emphasized that the MWP was "crucial" for "dealing with overshoot" [of 1.5°C]. It said "complementarity with GST has been part of MWP's mandate from the beginning" and stressed the need for translating GST findings into stronger implementation. Adding further it said, "the work does not stop here" but that there is a need for "accelerating mitigation action across key sectors."

Switzerland said the MWP is the "only space for discussing mitigation issues" and emphasized its linkage with the GST.

Palau for **AOSIS** said 1.5°C is not just a temperature target, but a "survival threshold" for it. It said lowering of ambition was further narrowing the space for solutions and asserted that "political will is missing" for the "speed and scale" that is required in delivering mitigation ambition. "For island States, 1.5°C must remain our objective" and mitigation implementation "is our immediate priority." It emphasized the

need for a "clear linkage of the MWP with the GST." **Fiji** also aligned with the AOSIS sentiments.

Peru for **AILAC** said the MWP's purpose is to scale up mitigation ambition and implementation "in a manner that is complementary to GST." It said the "programme has not met the mandate" and that its dialogues did not succeed in fueling ambition. It said that scaling up mitigation ambition involves addressing structural barriers which can be overcome through cooperation. It said it would work tirelessly to meet the objectives of the Convention and minimizing the scale and magnitude of overshoot beyond 1.5°C.

China for the **LMDC** said that para 32 went beyond the mandate of the MWP and called for deletion of the para as the best way for finding consensus.

In response, the COP President asked Parties at the plenary to react to the LMDC proposal.

The **Russian Federation** said its objection was not only in relation to one para and clarified that it was objecting to the adoption of the decision.

Following this, the COP President said that Rule 16 would be applied to the matter.

OVERVIEW OF THE KEY DIVERGENCES IN MWP

On the concluding day of SB65, Parties agreed to adopt a procedural conclusion that noted the work that had been done during the SBs and referenced the informal note capturing the views shared by Parties for further work in the final week. This note became controversial because it contained an annex which had a set of key messages from the annual report that is produced on the basis of the global dialogues that are held under the MWP and Parties had not had any discussion on the messages throughout the whole first week.

During the first week, Parties had shared their views on the continuation of the MWP. While all Parties had expressed an interest in continuing the work programme, the key point of divergence hinged on the issue of whether or not the MWP should become a vehicle for implementation of outcomes of the GST, especially its mitigation section. Another major point of contention was the proposal of establishing a mitigation advisory committee and having a permanent agenda item on mitigation [For more details regarding views expressed on continuation of the MWP, see TWN update.]

During the final week of the Antalya talks, informal consultations over three days on the MWP were presided over by Co-facilitators **Ursula Fuentes (Germany)** and **Maesela John Kekana (South Africa)**. Parties were informed by the Co-facilitators that three aspects related to the future of MWP were being discussed at the political level by the ministerial pair (**Carsten Schneider** [**Germany]** and **Bhupender Yadav [India]**): the MWP's duration, relationship with the GST, and governance arrangements. The Co-facilitators also said that the discussions of the ministerial pair on mitigation were not limited to the MWP but also included elements related to the "presidency-initiated party decision" (referring to the cover decision, which Parties failed to adopt on the final day of COP31).

Parties were asked to consider technical aspects related to the workplan of the MWP like sequence of activities, topic selection, what other activities could be undertaken by MWP, output, and key messages from 2026 that could be incorporated in the decision. Part of these discussions were held in 'informal-informal' mode (closed to observers), following which draft texts were produced by the Co-facilitators for further consideration by Parties.

The main points of divergence amongst Parties were questions related to MWP's linkage with GST, its scope and outcome, and finally, what kind of key messages should be reflected in the MWP decision to be adopted.

Several developing countries like the **LMDC, African Group, Arab Group, India, Egypt,** and **South Africa** emphasized that there was no linkage of MWP with GST and they did not want to see that in the continued form of MWP. They

also expressed a preference for maintaining the existing scope and outcome of the MWP, in that they wanted its annual report to reflect a factual summary of key findings instead of providing a synthesis of findings. **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** too wanted to maintain the existing scope, objective and output of MWP in its continued form.

On the other hand, developed countries like the **EU, UK, Switzerland, Canada, Norway, New Zealand** and **Japan** emphasized the need for having a stronger linkage of the MWP with GST, and in expanding its scope to include the thematic sectors from the 3rd Working Group Report (on mitigation) of the 7th Assessment Report (AR7) of Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the NDC synthesis report. Some developing country groups like the **AOSIS** and **AILAC** had positions similar to those of developed countries.

HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERVENTIONS DURING FINAL WEEK OF CONSULTATIONS

China for the **LMDC** expressed reluctance to have any kind of synthesis report and said the reports produced over the last four years were clear and balanced and the same approach should be followed. It said a synthesis report would possibly be used to "tell Parties what they should do and recommend to them on their policies and measures" in a prescriptive manner, which it did not want. On the issue of discussing key messages, it pointed out there was not enough time to discuss them was not in favour of capturing messages that were prescriptive and top down in nature. It also did not want the scope of the MWP to be enlarged, nor for linking its mandate to the GST, as the MWP should not be used as a vehicle for the implementation of GST outcomes.

Zimbabwe for the **African Group** said it wanted to make investment focused events (IFEs) more meaningful so that they can play a stronger role in matchmaking projects with investments. It wanted the annual report to be a summary of key findings instead of providing a synthesis. It wanted the scope of MWP to remain as it has been in the past. It suggested the inclusion of a message related to the need for having an open and non-discriminatory international trade environment. Referring to MWP's 2026 annual report, it pointed out that the report's findings acknowledged the impact of unilateral climate related trade measures and stressed such policies reduce market access and hinder progress, constraining developing countries' ability to undertake mitigation action. It proposed having a strengthened element around international cooperation to implement mitigation solutions in a manner that is aligned with mitigation ambition and implementation. Finally, it wanted the decision to reflect an element on strengthening the NMA (Non-markets Approach) platform (under Article 6.8 of the PA) so that it is used not just to store projects "but also to support and enhance matchmaking."

Saudi Arabia for the **Arab Group** said it was not supportive of the idea of a mitigation committee and having additional institutional arrangements. It did not support the linkage of MWP with GST. It emphasized the need for the MWP's mandate to be guided by its safeguards that are captured in para 2 of decision 4/CMA.4, and in para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7. It said that Parties have not had any discussion on key messages. Highlighting the need for balance and Party ownership of the text, it said it too had some messages concerning socio-economic aspects, particularly those related to impacts of unilateral trade measures. It pointed out that these were all included in MWP's 2026 annual report and yet did not find any mention in the list of key messages that had been incorporated in the draft text. It said expanding the scope of MWP was a "non-starter" for the group because "it would change fundamentally the mandate of MWP." It did not support the linkage of the MWP with GST.

Bangladesh for **LDCs** said there is a need for maintaining consistency with existing mandates regarding objectives, principles and scope of the MWP. In terms of output, it wanted to maintain

the current practice of having an annual report that presented a summary of key findings.

Cook Islands for **AOSIS** expressed support for having additional activities like regional dialogues. It supported having a synthesis report as output and wanted to expand the scope of MWP to include the NDC synthesis report, among other things.

AILAC said there was a need for "granular and actionable outputs". It said it wanted to see guidance added to the safeguard principles that define MWP's mandate. This along with regional dialogues were the minimum conditions it wanted to be met for accepting having only one global dialogue. It wanted to have a strong linkage between MWP and GST.

Egypt opposed the idea of having any synthesis report "or any output that would open the door for prescriptiveness" as that "would not be in line with the non-prescriptive safeguards" of the MWP. It felt development of key messages for MWP's decision was a big task which needed time. Responding to the UK's rejection of messages proposed by the African Group, it said, "when messages come from our side, they are prescriptive, but when they come from the other side, they are not prescriptive. We need to be fair and balanced." It was not in favour of linking MWP to GST and of setting up any kind of mitigation committee.

The **UK** said it preferred a non-prescriptive synthesis report over factual summaries as outputs of a continued MWP because that would be a more useful thing for stakeholders. It wanted this report to be taken into account for the annual decision that would be adopted by Parties under MWP. It said the continued MWP should have additional activities that could consider crosscutting elements and recognized the need for considering roadmaps [for transitioning away from fossil fuels]. It wanted the 2026 MWP decision to contain detailed key messages, including goals related to decarbonizing industries and mentioned the importance of supporting decarbonization powered through renewable energy in this context. However, it rejected African Group's proposal to include a message on impact of unilateral trade measures because it felt that would be "prescriptive." It wanted to expand the scope of MWP to the thematic areas of the 3rd Working Group of the IPCC's AR7. Regarding the mandate of MWP, it wanted the programme to complement the GST.

The **EU** preferred to have a synthesis report as the output of MWP which would be considered for its decision. This it said "could be useful for a broad audience" and for the high-level ministerial round table as well. It said the framing of key messages in MWP's decision should be "positive" and "not prescriptive," and wanted to incorporate messages related to carbon pricing, grids, green procurement and standards. It also supported the idea of having additional activities. It wanted to expand the scope of MWP to include the state of global mitigation ambition and implementation and wanted to include the NDC synthesis report in MWP's scope, alongside the IPCC's AR7. It said a mitigation committee could help address the need expressed by some countries for help in project development. It did not want to include any reference to the NMA platform because it was being discussed in Article 6.8 negotiations.

Switzerland said it liked the idea of having a report that "lays out actions" that speak to "specific stakeholders." It said the annual report of MWP should be an input to the second GST. It said there is a need "for more than incremental change in MWP in delivering emission reductions." It wanted the scope of MWP to have a reflection of areas that have a high mitigation potential. It wanted to include extensive key messages to the MWP decision. **Canada, New Zealand, Norway** and **Japan** shared positions similar to that of EU and UK.