

SBSTA: Differences over agriculture, aviation and maritime transport emissions

Doha, 29 November (Hilary Chiew) – The opening plenary of the 37th Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) on 26 November saw significant differences among Parties on two agenda items – issues relating to agriculture, and emissions from fuel used for international aviation and maritime transport.

While many developing countries argued that the foremost concern of agriculture is adaptation as it is linked to food security, developed and some developing countries called for emission from the agriculture sector to be addressed as a mitigation issue.

Parties continue to have differences over work at the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) in addressing emissions from these transport sectors.

Speaking for the Least Developed Countries, Gambia said agriculture should be treated as a matter of survival with a comprehensive work programme to support agriculture development for LDCs. It said emission from the agriculture sector is low in LDCs and the over-riding priority for LDCs in agriculture is food production and development. It urged developed countries to support and expedite work on loss and damage, including the impact on agriculture.

Argentina said the issue of agriculture is related to adaptation given its vulnerability (to the effects of climate change) and to food security. It encouraged the Food and Agriculture Organisation to submit its report from the Committee on World Food Security which acknowledged that climate change can pose serious threats to food security especially to small scale food producers, to the UNFCCC.

Egypt said the impacts of climate change on agriculture will leave it in no position for

mitigation in agriculture as the latter would be a luxury that it won't be able to afford. It said any mid-term work plan for developing countries in agriculture should focus on adaptation.

Uganda said for agriculture, adaptation is of particular relevance and the sector may not be able to reduce its emissions.

India said Parties must remain mindful of the fact that the agriculture sector in developing countries is an extremely sensitive and critical sector as it supports livelihoods of millions of small and marginal farmers. Our agriculture is subsistence and we will not accept anything that impacts adversely on their livelihoods, particularly under the guise of mitigation.

Costa Rica said one of its major concerns is the negotiation to be undertaken between the forestry and agriculture sectors concerning implementation of REDD-plus. It believed that the subject of agriculture and climate change should not be seen as adaptation but also mitigation efforts. It recognised that priorities should be given to adaptation and vulnerability but disagreed with the position that they should be restricted to adaptation only.

[Decision 2/CP.17 from the Durban conference requested the SBSTA to consider issues related to agriculture at its 36th session (in May in Bonn this year), with the aim of exchanging views and the COP considering and adopting a decision on this matter at its 18th session in Doha.]

Cuba speaking for Argentina, Brazil, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Algeria, Venezuela, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia reiterated the importance the group of countries attached to multilateralism in addressing climate change in accordance with the principles and provisions of the Convention, in opposition to unilateral

measures in the international maritime and aviation transport.

It said in the context of multilateral discussions, the following elements should guide the ICAO and IMO when addressing climate change:

- Article 2.2 of the Kyoto Protocol, 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;
- Full respect to the principles and provisions of the Convention and of its Kyoto Protocol, in particular the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities, as well as that measures should not constitute disguised restrictions on international trade;
- Explicit recognition of the legal distinction of obligations between developed and developing countries while addressing climate change;
- Comprehensive assessment of the possible (direct and indirect) social, economic 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 social and economic development in developing countries;
- Respect to the consensus rule, and to the promotion of an inclusive and transparent process;
- Promotion of transfer of financial, technological and capacity-building support from developed countries to developing countries, in accordance with the developed countries' obligations under the Convention.

In relation to the specific work of IMO it noted the progress made in the last IMO Sessions of October 2012, in the sense that it was clear that the consideration of other issues related to the reduction of GHG emissions from ships, in particular all further discussions on market-based mechanisms, must await the adoption of a

resolution on financial, technological and capacity-building support from developed countries to developing countries.

In addition, in relation to references in the IMO communication to the UN process of sustainable development goals and the current development by IMO of those goals for shipping, the group of countries believe that this would need a careful consideration by IMO Members. At the same time, there is a need not to prejudge nor duplicate the sustainable development goals process that is currently taking place in its competent fora, that is, the UN General Assembly.

In relation to the ICAO report and communication, it welcomed multilateral discussions on how to address climate change in aviation. However, it recalled that several ICAO Members, both from developed and developing countries, presented reservations to some paragraphs of Resolution A37-19, and they trust that this will be taken into account in ICAO's work and in its future presentations in SBSTA.

Cuba further said, with regard to the work of the ICAO that referred to the States action plans, for 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 transport.

It also expressed the group's concern at the proposals to include, among the alternative sources of finance for climate change, possible revenues from market-based measures applied to international maritime and aviation transport, due to their negative potential implications in terms of imposing an additional cost to air and maritime freights, and therefore on international trade.

The statement of this group of developing countries was also endorsed by **India** from the floor. It said it took note of the European Union's announcement to stop the clock as far as the application of its Emission Trading Scheme to non-EU airline carriers is concerned.

However, India reiterated its continued opposition to unilateral measures to address the issue related to emissions from aviation and maritime sector. It believed that these issues should be addressed through a multilateral response based on Convention principles and not on the basis of unilateral measures.

Japan reiterated that issues related to maritime and aviation should be considered continuously by ICAO and IMO and noted that there have been

significant progress and assist in implementation of global cooperation to combat climate change. It said in the field of international aviation and maritime transport, global regulation applies to all aircraft and ships irrespective of the country and it is improper to apply the common but differentiated principles.

Singapore believed that IMO and ICAO continue to make good progress and are the most competent entities in developing measures to develop measures that can effectively limit emissions while allowing for sustainable growth of their respective sectors and taking into account the diverse needs of their member States. It fully supports the IMO's implementation of mandatory measures to enhance ship energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping, which will enter into force on 1 January 2013.

It stressed that it is also important that any measures to address emissions from international maritime and aviation transport be developed through the multilateral frameworks under the IMO and ICAO.

Group and individual Party statements also covered a range of other issues.

Speaking for the Group of 77 and China, Algeria reiterated that mitigation and adaptation should be addressed in a balanced manner and it looked forward to conclusion of future work of the Nairobi Work Programme in enhancing the capacity of developing countries in the adaptation efforts to the adverse effects of climate change.

It said the Group attached great importance on economic and social consequences of response measures taken by developed countries and the need to minimise the negative impacts.

While welcoming the TEC report, it said progress was made but Parties still need to make further progress. On REDD-plus, it called for a balanced discussion and outcome.

Nauru representing the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) said the methodological issues under the Kyoto Protocol raised very important issues related to environmental integrity and urged Parties to keep considerations of environmental integrity at the forefront.

On the consideration of transboundary carbon capture and storage (CCS) projects as CDM projects, environmental integrity, liability, eligibility and the need for transparent and robust

accounting warrant detailed discussion prior to any decision, it said, adding that it supports a global reserve for CCS project activities.

It also said consideration should be given to whether environmental integrity could be ensured in a context of a comprehensive land-based accounting under the Kyoto Protocol. It does not support additional LULUCF activities under the CDM during the 2CP, or the development of alternative approaches to the issue of the risk of non-permanence which put the onus on host countries to address this risk. Further, it is of the view that the current rules for accounting for Afforestation/Reforestation projects under the CDM remain valid and should not be amended.

It said discussions on matters related to the implications of decisions 2/CMP.7 to 5/CMP.7, Parties should limit discussions to technical issues and leave any related political issues arising from those earlier decisions to the AWG-KP.

On HFC (hydrofluorocarbon) destruction projects, AOSIS is of the view that HFC reduction projects should no longer be addressed through market-based approaches under the CDM, and this agenda item should be concluded appropriately.

It also said the SBSTA should receive the reports of the Adaptation Committee and the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and provide these bodies with the technical guidance for them to continue their work. The SBSTA should prepare a draft decision on methodological guidance relating to modalities for a NFMS, for a MRV system for REDD-plus. The SBSTA should also conclude its consideration of the agenda item under Research and Systematic observation which it began at its last session. While the other items on the agenda, such as the Nairobi Work Programme on Adaptation, are important to AOSIS, they are not critical at this session, it added.

Swaziland speaking for the African Group said despite substantive decision were taken in Durban (end of 2011) regarding safeguard information system and modalities for forest reference emission levels/forest reference levels (FRELs/FRLs) more time is needed for deliberation on modalities for National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS), measuring, reporting and verifying (MRV) and how to address the drivers of deforestation before developing countries can confidently develop robust system for REDD-plus (Reducing Emissions from

Deforestation and Forest Degradation; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries).

It looked forward to the TEC's work plan and its aim in supporting technology transfer and requested that funding be made available by the Global Environmental Facility to those African countries that have not updated their national action plan.

On agriculture, it said it should focus on enhancing resilient and food security and looked forward to substantial discussion on this agenda item.

Australia speaking for the Umbrella Group (Canada, Japan, Kazakhstan, New Zealand, Norway, Russia Federation and United States) said Parties should think about how to organise, coordinate and conclude the tasks.

It stressed that outcome in Doha must include the methodological issues of REDD-plus such as the NFMS and modalities for MRV and modalities for FRELs/FRLs.

It welcome continued discussion on landuse, landuse change and forestry as the current process represent an excellent opportunity to examine a range of technical matters particularly on accounting issues.

It said it is encouraged by the discussion on agriculture in Bonn (May 2012) and looked forward to translating the progress into a concrete outcome in Doha. It also said SBSTA has an important role to play in the transition period of the KP. It welcomed the technical report on carbon capture and storage that allow for projects that cross national boundaries as Clean Development Mechanism

The European Union representing its 27 members and **Croatia** said the foremost task for this session of SBSTA is to implement the second commitment period under the KP with immediate implementation on January 1, 2013. It said Parties must focus on the technical issues that need to be resolved and called for allocation of sufficient time, both formally and informally to finalise this work.

It also looked forward to finalising the work of the TEC mechanisms, the modalities for REDD-plus, and Parties agreeing to launching work plan on

agriculture addressing both adaptation and mitigation.

The Republic of Korea representing the Environmental Integrity Group (including Liechtenstein, Mexico, Monaco and Switzerland) said SBSTA is a well-suited body to undertake the tasks (of all the agenda items) and it is necessary to make substantial progress in all of them.

On MRV (of nationally appropriate mitigation actions or NAMAs), it said progress were made in various aspects but transparency is a major aspect as it builds mutual confidence in setting solid basis for a future regime.

On REDD-plus, it believed Parties are making progress on addressing drivers of deforestation, on the timing and frequency on how the safeguard information system is respected and guidelines for technical assessment of FRELs/FRLs.

It supported the establishment of a work programme to address both mitigation and adaptation in agriculture, and also looked forward to the reports from the ICAO and the IMO for addressing greenhouse gases emission for these two dynamic sections.

Papua New Guinea speaking for a number of members of the Coalition of Rainforest Nations said it is committed to maintaining momentum by finalising the modalities for NFMS, MRV, FREL and FRL for REDD-plus.

It said although progress was limited in Bonn, it believed agreement is within reach in Doha. It said in Cancun, Parties already agreed that MRV for REDD-plus is similar to MRV for NAMAs and it hoped to finalise the text in the next few days.

It said Parties have completed discussing the necessary building blocks for REDD-plus and warned that the more Parties revisit the issues, the more emissions (from forests) are being released and warned against perfection being the enemy of the good.

It called upon Parties to finish the basic foundation for REDD and that anything less is being irresponsible.

It also expressed regret at the delay in addressing emission from the marine ecosystem and renewed its call for the secretariat to organise such a meeting in 2013.