

Divisions on safeguards remain on REDD-plus; no outcome in Lima

Kuala Lumpur, 5 Jan (Kate Dooley) – After a week of negotiations on further guidance for safeguard information systems (SIS), and methodological approaches for non-market-based approaches to REDD-plus (Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries-plus) at the meeting of the UNFCCC's Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in Lima, Parties were unable to reach consensus on either issue.

This means that discussions will continue at the next meeting of SBSTA in June 2015, with no outcomes recorded from this session.

Parties were unable to agree on the need for further guidance on transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness when informing on how all the safeguards in Decision 1/CP.16 Appendix 1 (from Cancun) are being addressed and respected, or to agree to consider the development of methodological guidance on non-market-based approaches.

The **G77 and China** presented a united front that they considered the discussion on the need for further guidance should be concluded at the Lima session, with learning and information exchange to continue between countries informally. Several countries, including the **United States** and **Norway**, wanted discussions under the SBSTA to continue at some point in the future.

Developing countries, including **Brazil**, showed support to discuss **Bolivia's** proposal on methodological guidance for non-market-based approaches, but there was no overall consensus on how to move forward on this.

Under the guidance of co-chairs **Robert Bamfo (Ghana)**, and **Stephen Cornelius (United Kingdom)**, Parties continued discussions on agenda item 6 under the SBSTA in an informal session on Thursday December 4th, and then in a closed informal on Friday December 5th, which was opened to observers for the last 15 minutes. There were also several closed drafting sessions.

In the informal consultations on Thursday, December 4, Parties continued discussing a draft conclusion text, which had been presented by the co-chairs in the previous session (See TWN Lima Update 9). The co-chairs stressed that this session would focus only on considering the need for further guidance, with more focused discussion on the text in a closed drafting group to take place that afternoon.

Panama, speaking on behalf of the **G77 and China** made a key intervention that the Group was not willing to agree to continue considering the need for further guidance under the SBSTA. It suggested the deletion of paragraph 8 of the draft conclusions (which committed Parties to consider the need for further guidance at a future session after developing country Parties have gained adequate experience in developing their safeguards information systems and their summaries of information), and the last 3 words of paragraph 7 (which read *"It agreed that no further guidance is needed on the matter at this time"*), so that this paragraph would refer to the SBSTA having completed its consideration of this issue.

Switzerland on behalf of the **Environmental Integrity Group (EIG)**, supported by the **European Union (EU)** said there is a need for further guidance, but recognised that there is a divergence of opinions in the room on when further guidance would be most useful. Switzerland said it would agree to amend the paragraph on guidance

needed at a future point to be more specific on when this future point is, and suggested a Technical Expert Meeting (TEM) in 2016 followed by future work in SBSTA in Bonn 2017, to take the work forward. **Japan** supported this proposal, and also said it saw a clear need for further guidance.

Panama then said it would be happy to go forward with text including its suggested amendments, but that it could not agree to the proposal from EIG. It suggested instead a meeting of national focal points in January 2015.

The **Philippines** agreed that further information on the type of information regarding safeguards would be useful for both developed and developing countries. However, in order to make progress, the Philippines said it would agree to go forward with this text, which leaves unspecified when further guidance would be developed.

Following the proposal from the EIG, **Panama** called for a short break for the G77 and China to convene. After this break, Panama announced that the Group's position remained unchanged, and it would agree to go forward with the text if paragraph 8 and the last three words of paragraph 7 were deleted.

Ecuador, Ghana, Colombia, Tanzania, Guyana, Brazil and others spoke up to support this position. **Thailand** also supported the G77 position and responded to the proposal from EIG, saying that rather than spend money and time in a TEM on this matter, it would rather see an exchange of information on a web platform such as the REDD-plus platform already established. Thailand said transparency would be achieved through information provided in national communications, and that learning by implementation and consulting each other would be the way forward.

Mexico also supported the G77 position, and said it could share information on safeguards as suggested by Thailand.

New Zealand (NZ) supported Japan and the EIG, saying that it would prefer to be working on a decision on guidance; however, given the views of the G77, it would be willing to support a process as suggested by Switzerland on behalf of the EIG. **NZ** added that to mobilise resources, we need to build

confidence that REDD-plus is transparent and activities are working.

Norway recognised that there were different views in the room around when this guidance should take place. It said that although it was Norway's objective to arrive at guidance in Lima, it could see there was no movement to agree this in a decision text. Hence, Norway said it also supported the EIG proposal for an expert meeting in 2016 to consider the need for further guidance, suggesting that this may be the outcome that best reflects the views in this room.

Co-chair Bamfo reminded Parties that they were almost out of time. He asked Parties to save their interventions for the drafting session taking place that afternoon.

The **US** appreciated Panama's suggestion for a national focal points meeting, but as the voluntary meeting is not linked to the UNFCCC, the US suggested SBSTA is the correct place for this discussion. The US said it would like to put a timeframe on reports so they can inform further discussions in REDD-plus

Co-chair Cornelius intervened to say it was necessary to leave some time to discuss the other part of the agenda item, on methodological guidance on non-market-based approaches.

Bolivia said that after additional discussions with Parties, it felt there is support from developing countries for additional discussions on this issue. It requested space and room for Parties to reflect on the conference room paper (CRP) Bolivia had submitted, in order to try and have an agreement in Lima.

Brazil supported Bolivia's proposal, reminding Parties that there are two issues under this agenda item to be discussed during this session, and it was important to allow time for a discussion of the Bolivian proposal. **Ecuador** agreed with Brazil and said it could consider Bolivia's document as the basis for discussion.

The **US** supported by **Norway**, said it was happy to discuss the agenda items as per the mandate, but as it had stated earlier, it did not see the CRP as a basis for discussions.

Co-chair Cornelius suggested that a small group of Parties with the most divergent views on this issue

get together to work towards an outcome for this session. He reminded Parties that the default option to not reaching a conclusion would be for the agenda item to continue to the next SBSTA. Cornelius announced the provision of a room for one hour to discuss Bolivia's proposal, followed by closed drafting groups in the afternoon for both agenda items, and closed the meeting.

Parties continued discussions in closed sessions, including an informal consultation on Friday December 5th. This meeting was opened to observers for the last 15 minutes, at which point Parties had still not found consensus on several issues. The meeting was closed without agreement being reached, and with no conclusions to forward to the Chair, the agenda item will continue at SBSTA 42 in June 2015.