

SBSTA: REDD+ safeguards standoff; support for alternative non-market-based approaches

Lima, 4 December (Kate Dooley) – There was much disagreement among Parties on the need for negotiations to continue on safeguards, while some Parties expressed support to consider alternative policy approaches to REDD+.

Under the guidance of co-chairs Stephen Cornelius (United Kingdom) and Robert Bamfo (Ghana), Parties met on 2 and 3 December to discuss 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 are being addressed and respected, as well as to continue consideration of the development of methodological guidance on non-market-based approaches.

Some Parties saw the need to develop further guidance on summaries of Safeguards Information Systems (SIS), while other Parties were concerned that additional guidance at the multilateral level represents increased burden and costs for REDD+ countries, with no guarantee of results based finance. The European Union (EU), and others stressed that information increased confidence and credibility of financial payments for REDD+.

Bolivia also presented a conference room paper (crp.1) on the joint mitigation and adaptation approach for the integral and sustainable management of forests. While Norway, the EU, Australia and the US said they did not see this text as a basis for negotiations, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Switzerland, India and Indonesia said that they could see potential to move forward with this work, possibly in a new agenda item or somewhere else not related to REDD+, as Bolivia's proposal was much broader than REDD+ and encompassed adaptation.

In the opening contact group on Tuesday, 2 December, **Co-chair Bamfo** opened the floor to Parties asking them to express their views on safeguards, particularly encouraging Parties who had not made submissions.

The **Philippines** kicked off discussions by saying that further guidance is needed to ensure transparency and consistency, and to provide guidance on the minimum information requirements and what types of information would be required. The Philippines said that harmonising reporting requirements would lower the reporting burden for countries. It also raised the issue of participation, saying that the current guidance does not talk about participation in SIS, and there is a need for explicit guidance on the inclusion of stakeholders, especially indigenous peoples, both in designing the system and in providing information. Clarification is also needed on how SIS links to measuring, reporting and verification (MRV), and the provision of results based finance.

Ghana on behalf of the **African Group** said that safeguards are important to prevent negative environmental and social impacts, and noted that the Cancun safeguards are simple, easy to understand and country driven. It said that the African Group is not of the view that additional guidance is needed, saying that what is most important now is to implement safeguards, and conduct a review in the next few years to determine if additional guidance is required.

The **European Union (EU)** said that the mandate related to safeguards is twofold – looking both at the types of information required, and consideration of the need for further and additional guidance to ensure transparency. The EU noted the importance of these aspects, as

information on countries' SIS gives assurance to institutions that are financing REDD+ activities.

Bolivia said that it did not endorse the Cancun agreement where safeguards were included, but since COP 19 (in Warsaw in 2013) opened the likelihood for appropriate market approaches that could be developed by the COP, Bolivia considers that a stronger safeguards framework is needed for countries that are willing to utilise market-based approaches.

The **United States (US)** said additional guidance on SIS would be most useful now when Parties are in the early stages of developing these systems. It said that Parties have never developed clear guidance on the types of information to be provided, and submissions provide a lot of good information to draw on. The **US** and **Norway** supported the EU proposal to give the co-chairs a mandate to start working on text. **Japan** said further guidance would promote better commitment to the safeguards, and a template form could be developed for REDD+ countries to provide information, and could be continually improved.

Guyana said that the safeguards decision in the REDD+ package has never been implemented, yet even before implementation we are considering revising. Guyana said it did not believe further guidance was needed at this point in time, and supported the African Group view that the priority now is to direct efforts to implementing all elements of the REDD+ framework and then review what works and what improvements are needed. Guyana also referred to the need for linkages between the REDD+ package and the Results Management Framework (RMF) in the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Panama on behalf of the **Coalition for Rainforest Nations (CfRN)**, as well as **Tanzania, Fiji, Colombia, China, Thailand, Mozambique** and **Indonesia** supported the African Group and Guyana, saying that now is the time for implementation of REDD+, rather than to develop further guidance. **India** said it has regard for safeguards, but there is no need for additional guidance because Cancun and Durban gave enough guidance to countries to develop their own SIS systems, in accordance with their national circumstances.

Cameroon, speaking on behalf of the **Commission des Forêts d'Afrique Centrale (COMIFAC)**, also aligned itself with the African

Group and other Parties, and suggested that harmonisation could best be made at the national level through Strategic Social and Environmental Assessments.

Brazil said that the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ has concluded the negotiations phase of REDD+ and now countries have moved to implementation phase. It said that, like other countries, it is moving forward to full implementation of REDD+, and its SIS is currently under public consultation, recognising the importance of safeguards for the implementation of REDD+. Brazil said the issue for this SBSTA is whether further guidance is needed at the multilateral level to ensure comprehensiveness, consistency and effectiveness, posing the question that such a requirement was to assume developing countries are not being transparent. As there was no reason to believe developing countries are not being transparent and effective, Brazil suggested there is no need for further guidance, and that the issue of further guidance could be seen as a barrier to obtaining results based payments for REDD+.

Peru encouraged Parties to find common ground, and **Sudan** said additional guidance is very important to help provide an in-depth analysis of social and environmental issues which can help in reducing risk in the implementation of REDD+.

Costa Rica observed that this continues to be a very theoretical discussion, as REDD+ is in very early stages, and so this issue should be discussed after REDD+ countries have gained more experience in the field. Costa Rica said it is fully aligned with the need for transparency and consistency on the need for reporting on safeguards from REDD+, and **Guyana** conceded that it was feasible to conclude work at this session on what type of information could or should be provided, and hence it was willing to support the EU for a Co-chair mandate to prepare draft text.

With 7 minutes to go until the end of the session, the Co-chairs introduced the second part of the agenda item, to continue its **consideration of the development of methodological guidance on non-market-based approaches**. As Bolivia had submitted a conference room paper on this (FCCC/SBSTA/2014/crp.1), the Co-chairs invited Bolivia to present their proposal.

Bolivia explained its proposal is trying to move the debate forward regarding methodological

guidance for non-market-based approaches such as the Joint Mitigation and Adaptation mechanism (JMA). Bolivia said it has taken into consideration different proposals from Parties in order to enable a meaningful outcome on this issue in Lima. It reminded Parties that since Cancun, it has requested an alternative approach to REDD+. In Warsaw, Parties reached an important decision to reflect balance in the process in paragraph 8 of Decision 9/CP.19, on supporting alternative policy approaches, such as joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests.

Bolivia reminded Parties that they have requested SBSTA to analyse guidelines on non-market-based approaches. It noted that, for some, additional guidance on non-market-based approaches is not needed because REDD+ is also considered a non-market approach, and the Warsaw framework on REDD+ is considered enough guidance for implementation of market and non-market based approaches. Other Parties felt this should be a new agenda item. In this new proposal, Bolivia suggested to move forward in this debate and paragraph 7 of document (FCCC/SBSTA/2014/crp.1), provides a simple framework for the methodological guidance needed for JMA, in the form of three key guidelines:

- The promotion and support to the integral and sustainable managements of forests, ecosystems and environmental functions taking into account the holistic views of indigenous peoples, local communities and local resource users about environment and Mother Earth, and the achievement of gender equality;
- Identification of financial needs for joint mitigation and adaptation actions, as a non-market-based approach, including ex-ante financing, technological support and capacity building;
- Monitoring and evaluation carried out through the use of quantitative and qualitative information, as appropriate.

Bolivia said it thinks the simplicity of this guidance can help unblock the discussion on additional guidance for non-market-based approaches and it looks forward to a constructive discussion for a meaningful outcome in Lima.

The **US** responded that it would not be able to accept the crp.1 paper as a basis for negotiation.

The **Co-chairs** then closed the session which had run overtime, encouraging Parties to get together to discuss Bolivia's proposal. The Co-chairs said they would provide a draft text on additional guidance of the summary of SIS, which would be on the UNFCCC website by 11am on Wednesday (@unfccc.int/8696).

Wednesday 3 December

The Informal Consultation on agenda item 6 under the SBSTA on Wednesday December 3 started with countries providing their views on the proposal presented by Bolivia the day before on developing guidance for non-market-alternatives to REDD+.

Bolivia opened the discussions by saying that they had heard some reservation about their proposal, but were looking forward to a constructive discussion.

The **US** said that all REDD+ countries can develop an approach that is best for them, and there are many different strategies emerging. The US said it is happy to see different types of finance going to different approaches, including linkages to adaptation funding, and noted that most forest finance currently is non-market. Hence the US said it did not see the need to develop new approaches, as flexible approaches are already available.

Brazil again stated that the REDD+ mandate has been fulfilled in Warsaw, which includes non-market-based approaches, hence it is not the issue of non-markets, but the issue of alternative policy approaches is important. It said that Bolivia's proposal establishes the difference between REDD+ and further policy approaches and between market and non-market-based REDD+. Brazil said that while it agrees that the Warsaw Framework is broad and flexible enough to apply to all Parties, it does not see this as the only way to finance forests, and said that Bolivia's proposal was a good starting point to understand the difference between alternative policy approaches and REDD+.

Norway thanked Bolivia for a proposal that is said has developed further since the last negotiation session in June. Regarding non-market-based approaches, Norway said it thinks the current guidance on REDD+ already encompasses non-market-based approaches, and that there is funding available under the GCF and Global Environment Fund (which refers to JMA approaches to the land sector). Norway said it

does not see any need to agree on further guidance on alternative policy processes, and does not see the crp.1 paper as a basis for further discussion. The **EU** and **Australia** aligned themselves with the position of the US and Norway.

Colombia and **Ecuador** thanked Bolivia for the effort and flexibility demonstrated with the new paper, noting that different national policies may lead to alternative approaches, and as recognising those differences is important, both countries invited Parties to further discuss this issue on the basis of Bolivia's proposal.

Switzerland on behalf of **EIG** said that it could see this new proposal from Bolivia was broader than REDD+, and that it belonged outside of the SBSTA discussions to consider adaptation as well. Switzerland suggested that a new agenda item that is broader than REDD+ could discuss this as well as non-carbon benefits.

India, supported by **Indonesia**, said it supported Bolivia's concept that all ecosystem services that are supported by forests are important, but it was concerned about linking REDD+ with other ecosystem services. India supported Switzerland in discussing these issues, but separate from the subject of REDD+.

Co-chair Cornelius wrapped up the discussion by saying that they hear some Parties saying Bolivia's proposal is not perfect but they can work with it, and other Parties saying they cannot accept the crp.1 paper as the basis for further negotiations. Cornelius suggested that more work needs to happen behind the scenes and Parties can see if further advances are possible tomorrow.

Co-chair Bamfo then opened the floor for comments on the draft conclusion text on further guidance for the summary of information on SIS. He clarified that the Co-chairs were seeking general comments, and after a request from Colombia spent a few minutes summarising the

draft text, which included an agreement that no further guidance is needed on the matter (of SIS) at this time, and that the need for further guidance would be considered after Parties had gained experience.

Norway said it was disappointed by the text as it did not see the views provided by Parties reflected. Norway said it was willing to work with other Parties to strengthen this text, but would prefer to see that happen in a decision text and not a draft conclusion text. It reminded the Co-chairs that a number of Parties had raised views on the need for further guidance and this is not reflected in the draft conclusions.

India considered the draft conclusions presented to be in line with views expressed, and said that it would like this whole process to come to an end, so the finality of what Parties agreed to in the Warsaw Framework comes to an end.

Co-chair Cornelius noted that the group was out of time, but said there was some appetite for working on the text, either as SBSTA conclusions or a draft decision text. Cornelius suggested that, in line with procedures for COP 20, Parties could come together in an un-facilitated discussion during the evening, for which a room had been reserved. He emphasised that the Secretariat and Co-chairs could not be present or facilitate the discussions after 6 pm.

Brazil suggested that if Bolivia had been advised to talk to other Parties on their proposal, that this could also happen during the un-facilitated evening discussions. **Co-chair Cornelius** responded that it was up to Parties what they discussed, but he recommended prioritising issues on which the most progress could be made.

The Co-chairs then closed the session, announcing that the next informal consultation would be held on Thursday 4 December at 11 am in room C6 – Huarez.