

SBSTA 45 begins work, developing countries call for balanced progress in all issues

Marrakech, 9 Nov (Hilary Chiew) – The 45th session of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA 45) opened on 7 November after the official opening ceremony of the 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP22) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Developing country Parties reiterated that the work of the SBSTA must proceed in a comprehensive, coherent, balanced and Party-driven manner. They emphasised the need to ensure comprehensive and balanced progress in all issues, with respect to the mandates given under the Paris Agreement.

In addition, in welcoming and looking forward to constructive engagement in the Facilitative Dialogue on enhancing ambition and support, they urged for the enhancing of pre-2020 action and support and a focus on delivering major tasks on pre-2020 implementation.

Developed country Parties welcomed the entry into force of the Paris Agreement with some saying that it is an incentive to resume the SBSTA activities with more enthusiasm to fulfil the tasks mandated by the COP. They also urged for balanced progress regarding the implementation of existing and new mandates.

SBSTA Chair **Carlos Fuller (Belize)**, presiding over the session, launched the work of the various agenda items and sent delegates to work in either contact groups or informal consultations with some of the meetings kicked off later in the afternoon.

Fuller closed the first plenary meeting slightly after 1 pm after five groupings of Parties delivered their respective statements and urged others to post their statements on the website. He also informed Parties that the next plenary session would be on 14 November where Parties are expected to adopt

draft conclusions and draft decisions in the closing plenary.

However, a second plenary session was convened later at 6pm to take more groupings' statement as well as statements related to the agenda item on emissions from fuel used for international aviation and maritime transport. (See separate article on this agenda item.)

Following are the highlights of groupings' statements.

Thailand representing the Group of 77 and China (G77-China) emphasised that the pre-2020 work must lead to enabling concrete actions on the ground, as well as making the most progress on all issues that Parties have agreed in the decisions of the COP.

The Group recognised the progress made under the Nairobi Work Programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change (NWP) and expects concrete implementation of activities and undertakings by the Adaptation Committee (AC), the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) and NWP which leads to implementation on the ground.

The Group welcomed the report of the AC and took note of the progress made by the Committee in all areas of its work. "We reiterate that developing countries require enhanced support as they advance in the process to formulate and implement National Adaptation Plans (NAPs). The Group notes with concern, however, that the current financial availability for the AC is inadequate for supporting the implementation of NAPs relating activities."

Regarding the work of the Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (WIM), the Group took note of

its key achievements in the implementation of the initial two-year workplan and looks forward to a constructive discussion on the draft five-year rolling work plan and its adoption at COP 22.

On technology, the Group believed that the Technology Framework can provide the much needed guidance to the work of the Technology Mechanism in promoting and facilitating actions on technology development and transfer in order to support the implementation of the Convention and the Paris Agreement, in particular its Article 10. The Group expects the Technology Framework to facilitate the four working areas identified in decision 1/CP.21, paragraph 67, as well as other areas beyond them, including establishing linkage with financial mechanism and supporting the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), among others.

The Group considered that adaptation, including co-benefits, of agriculture to the adverse effects of climate change continues to be the key priority for developing countries for SBSTA work, in light of the particular vulnerabilities of the agricultural sector and its relationship with the livelihood of millions, food security and poverty eradication. This is in line with the Paris Agreement, which recognises the fundamental priority of safeguarding food security and ending hunger, and the particular vulnerabilities of food production systems to the adverse effects of climate change and that food production is not to be threatened. The Group looked forward to engaging in the constructive discussion in this session based on the outcome from previous workshops and submissions.

Regarding matters related to science and review, the Group welcomed the report on the status of the observing system for climate prepared by Global Climate Observing System and looked forward to considering the information contained in this report.

On “advice of how the assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) can inform the global stocktake”, the Group looked forward to continued discussion at this session, recognizing that the IPCC can play an important role in providing scientific inputs in a comprehensive manner for the Global Stocktake.

On response measures, the Group reaffirmed the importance of giving full consideration to identify necessary actions to meet the specific needs and concerns of developing country Parties arising

from the impact of the implementation of response measures and avoid the negative economic and social consequences of response measures on developing countries. The Group took note of the report from the workshop, welcomed the technical paper on a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality job and looked forward to engage in the in-forum discussion on priority area, including constituting an ad hoc technical expert group and to advance work on developing the modalities, work program and function of the forum. It looked forward to a meaningful outcome of the High-level event on sustainable economic transition and economic diversification.

The Group reiterated the importance of supporting multilateral solutions when addressing emissions from fuel used for international aviation and maritime transport, while taking into account the principles and provisions of the Convention and not on the basis of unilateral measures, taking note of the developments made under the International Civil Aviation Organisation and International Maritime Organisation in addressing these matters.

On matters relating to Article 6 of Paris Agreement, the Group reiterated the need to ensure a party-driven process as well as the balance of all three sub-items, namely the guidance on cooperative approaches; the rules, modalities and procedures for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4 of the Paris Agreement; and the work programme under the framework for non-market approaches.

On accounting of financial resources, the Group reaffirmed that the modalities for accounting of financial resources by developed country Parties to developing country Parties, mobilized through public interventions, in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 7, of the Paris Agreement, must aim to provide transparency and consistency. The reported information must also be comparable and verifiable. No developing countries are to be excluded from receiving financial support for their enhanced climate change actions whether they have or have not ratified the Paris Agreement.

The **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** statement made available to Third World Network stressed that balance in terms of progress with other mandated work of other COP subsidiary bodies under decision 1/CP21 is essential.

“The work in relation to adaptation, loss and damage, response measures, and on science and review (including IPCC advice in relation to the global stocktake) must be based on the principles and provisions of the Convention as the context for the implementation of the Paris Agreement applicable only to the Parties that have ratified it.

“The SBSTA’s work should be focused on ensuring that any modalities developed with respect to these issues help enable developing countries to be better equipped to undertake their climate change actions in light of their national circumstances and in the context of their national sustainable development objectives,” the statement read.

In the discussion on modalities for accounting of public climate finance from developed countries, LMDC said there should be a clear roadmap on the quantity of public finance provided by developed countries under their Convention obligations, and such modalities should require developed countries to provide greater transparency and clarity, as well as measurement, reporting and verification (MRV), on the definition, amounts, conditions, charges, and, flows of the public climate finance that they are to provide. No developing country shall be excluded or blocked from receiving financial support for their mitigation or adaptation actions.

The Group said work on the Technology Framework must result in an outcome that takes an integrated approach between technology transfer and the provision of climate finance by developed countries. The focus of the outcome here on the Technology Framework should be on having a practical and results-oriented framework to help developing countries, through technology transfer and associate climate finance, be able to develop their own climate technologies as part of the implementation of mitigation and adaptation actions by developing countries.

It also said the work on Article 6.8 is of fundamental importance in order to strengthen non-market approaches under the Paris Agreement, in the understanding that the Convention is non-market based, and therefore to assist Parties in the implementation of their nationally determined contributions, in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication, including through, inter alia, mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building, as appropriate.

Speaking for the African Group, Mali noted that the mandate to review the effectiveness and performance of the AC is scheduled for this session and it believed that this review should be guided by the Parties, based on specific terms of references that include scope, modalities, and procedures of the review which Parties aim to develop here. Further, the Group noted with great concern the estimated budgetary implications of the activities to be undertaken by the secretariat. The AC was mandated by the Parties to undertake work on the implementation of the adaptation provisions of the Paris Agreement, stressed Mali.

“As such, we urge Parties, as a matter of urgency, to increase their financial contributions to ensure that the adaptation work under the Convention and its Paris Agreement advances in a balanced manner with the mitigation-related provisions,” it added.

On the report of the ExCom of the WIM, the Group looked forward to fruitful deliberations on the report. It considered the initiation of the review process to be important for this COP and in that respect it saw the opportunity to develop the terms of reference to guide the review process in Marrakech and to initiate other relevant processes that will ensure a thorough and in-depth review is done.

The African Group welcomed the joint report of the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). It stressed the need and call for additional support to these bodies to enable them to undertake their mandated activities. It is ready to engage with Parties on the elaboration of the framework under the Paris Agreement, including updating the technology needs assessments (TNAs), enhancing implementation of their results, assessing available technologies, and enhancing financial and technical support for the implementation of the TNAs and believed the elaboration of the technology framework will not only be limited to initial activities, and Parties will be forwarding key elements to the upcoming SBSTA session.

It also said Parties have engaged fruitfully on issues relating to agriculture for the past two years and believed Parties should now work with Parties on how to take the work forward and reach a decision to advance our work and address the impacts of climate change on agriculture. It stressed the importance of this agenda to guide Parties’ action and consider, in a balanced manner, opportunities

adaptation and mitigation research topics for addressing current and future challenges particularly in developing countries.

The African Group welcomed the agenda on the assessment of the IPCC to inform the global stocktake and called for the best available science to inform Parties' action. It hoped that future IPCC work will address the Paris Agreement concerns and provide region-specific reports and looked towards the possible establishment of a joint process between the UNFCCC and the IPCC to discuss, among others, the alignment of IPCC and the global stocktake cycles.

On the improved forum and work programme on response measures, the African Group welcomed progress made under the improved forum to address issues of economic diversification and just transition but would like to see more substantive technical work in this regard. With respect to the modalities, work program and functions under the Paris Agreement of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures, the African Group would like to see the forum progress beyond the sharing of information and the themes of economic diversification and just transition, to focus on the actual and potential impacts of the implementation of response measures on sustainable development. It viewed the implementation of response measures with some concern, especially their implications for sustainable development in Africa and looked forward to constructive discussions and conclusions at this session that address the specific needs and concerns of developing country Parties.

The Group is of the view that the issue of modalities for the accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized through public interventions, is of crucial importance to ensure the implementation of the Paris Agreement. In this regard, the Group called for a focused discussion based on the recommendations made by the Standing Committee on Finance, aiming at reaching an agreement on the modalities to ensure the transparency of support and avoid the discrepancies between the current reporting channels in a way to build confidence and ensure effective participation of developing countries as part of the collective action to address climate change.

"The African Group believes the outcome of COP 22 will help clarify the modalities for the accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized through public intervention. Marrakech

should first clarify the fundamental parameters that are required to form the basis of an accounting system as well as set principles that should guide the set-up of the new accounting frame-work. In addition, we expects that COP 22 lays out the process of development of those modalities, including the expected deliverables and decisions for each session, with the view of adopting those modalities for the accounting by COP 24," said Mali.

Maldives speaking for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) said in the past year alone, "we have seen that the impacts from less than one degree of warming are far worse than we anticipated. Limiting warming to the 1.5 degree goal agreed in Paris is absolutely critical, and we hope to see the Special Report on 1.5 degrees as early in 2018 as possible so that it can be properly considered in time for the Facilitative Dialogue later that year."

"It is also extremely important that that our work continues to be informed by the best available science, and therefore AOSIS supports aligning IPCC reporting cycles with the timing of the global stocktake," it added.

In terms of climate finance, AOSIS is looking forward to the in-session workshop on accounting modalities and expect to be able to identify parameters for the accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized to developing country parties that can then form the basis of a technical paper to be considered in SBSTA 46. The timeline for completion of these modalities must be accelerated in order that they can feed into the discussion on transparency of support.

"It is also extremely important that our work continues to be informed by the best available science, and in this regard we take note of the proposed implementation plan of the GCOS Committee to address the data and research gaps critical for climate observing systems and networks in SIDS," it further added.

Maldives said the guidance Parties provide on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement will have to ensure environmental integrity, sustainable development and the avoidance of double counting. This will require, among other things, a common international accounting framework, applicable to all Parties and centralized institutions to facilitate tracking and transparency, including an international transactions log and registries.

In the new context of the Paris Agreement, the Group said Article 6 should accomplish three key goals:

- it should be operationalized to contribute to overall mitigation in global emissions – by which we mean that transfers that go beyond offsetting to deliver global emission reductions that the atmosphere sees;
- it should create incentives for all Parties to move towards quantified economy-wide emission reduction and limitation targets;
- it should generate a share of proceeds for adaptation that is substantial, moving to a 5% share, from the 2% now in place under the Kyoto Protocol.

Maldives said work on Article 6 should be time-bound, to provide certainty to Parties and to the private sector. Intersessional work will be needed, given the complexity of the issues involved. This technical work could address:

- environmental integrity, transparency, governance and incentives in the context of generation, acquisition and transfers;
- lessons learned from Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) and Joint Implementation (JI) on environmental integrity and governance, recognizing the progress and discussions in recent years on the reform of the rules and guidelines for these mechanisms;
- options for approaches to deliver new elements (e.g., overall mitigation in global emissions), drawing out these options to enable a technical discussion;
- options for transition.

On the work programme on non-market approaches, it believed this work programme could begin with consideration of the following three issues:

- Fossil fuel subsidy reform;
- The phase out of inefficient and polluting technology;
- Policy reform to create the enabling environment for increased deployment of renewable energy

Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) representing the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) informed that as matters related to agriculture is an important agenda item for the Group, it has taken a proactive approach by preparing a draft decision together with the African Group on this matter.

“We are also in consultation with other groups and hope that the draft decision text will help to ease the decision making process here at this COP.”

The Group looked forward to the in-session workshop on the modalities for the accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized through public interventions in accordance with Article 9, paragraph 7, of the Paris Agreement. “In this workshop, we expect to gain a common understanding on the different Parties’ views and start developing the modalities for the accounting of financial resources.”

Recognising the progress made under the NWP in strengthening engagement with partner organizations and developing new partnerships under specific thematic areas, the Group looked forward to contributions of the NWP in assisting the implementation of adaptation activities in the LDCs.

On matters related to the global stocktake and the IPCC assessment report, the Group is of the view that the IPCC should align its work following the timing of the global stocktake by adopting a five-year assessment cycles from 2023 onwards and ensure that all products of an assessment cycle are in time to be considered for the global stocktake process.

“At this meeting here in Marrakech, a call to the IPCC to provide the best available science on all elements of the mandate of the global stocktake would certainly help. The IPCC should aim to provide information on mitigation, adaptation and the means of implementation, as well as on the impacts implied by current NDC pathways and the avoided impacts by limiting warming to below 1.5°C,” it urged.

On matters related to the Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, it stressed that Parties shall meet their mitigation contributions domestically and the use of international transfer of mitigation outcomes must lead to a higher ambition and promote sustainable development while ensuring environmental integrity. Non market mechanisms can help developing countries to implement their adaptation and mitigation NDCs.

It noted the concern highlighted in the report of the AC regarding the serious shortfall in resources available to the AC, and the need for supplementary financial resources.

“This will certainly have implications on the activities to be undertaken by the secretariat,

including those additional activities pursuant to decision 1/CP.21. We urge the Chairs of SBI and SBSTA to take this concern forward,” it added.

It welcomed the progress made by the ExCom of the WIM in implementing the two-year work programme and delivering to the mandates from 1/CP.21 which is a high-priority agenda item for the group and it looked forward for constructive engagement from all partners to have decision here at COP 22 with regards to five-year rolling work plan and review of the WIM.

It further welcomed the joint annual report of the TEC and CTCN and looked forward to engage in a discussion, particularly the recommendation related to exploring potential opportunities offered by South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation to help countries implement their NAPs and NDCs.

On the linkage between the technology mechanism and the financial mechanism, it looked forward for concrete outcome of this discussion to adequately support the technology needs of developing countries.

It would like to see an appropriate decision on the elaboration of the technology framework, noting that the LDC Group has made a submission in this regard, highlighting the purpose, content, features and characteristics of the framework. It believed that the framework will play a strategic role in improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the work of the Technology Mechanism by ensuring that climate technology needs of developing countries are met, taking into account the specific situation of LDCs.

Nicaragua speaking on behalf of the Central American Integration System (SICA) said under the NWP, access to information and scientific and technical knowledge is a priority for the region, including the traditional and ancestral knowledge of its populations.

It said it is important for this program to undertake studies on the losses and damages associated with the adverse effects of climate change, with a focus on particularly vulnerable countries such as those in SICA, together with the WIM.

SICA believed that the synergy between adaptation, mitigation, and co-benefits must be considered from a methodological standpoint, with an integral approach to programs of action in sectors such as human health, water, agriculture,

food security, landscape management, and recovery of land and marine ecosystems, among others.

With regard to agriculture, the SICA countries believed that it is vitally important to work under an ecosystem-based approach for adaptation and productive landscape management, including the co-benefits of mitigation to ensure that food security and sovereignty of its peoples through sustainable food production and the promotion of knowledge in appropriate technologies for resilience.

Nicaragua said SICA countries have already been affected by the impacts of agriculture and silviculture pests and diseases across millions of hectares as a result of climate change, with negative effects for their agricultural production, food security, and mitigation efforts. Additionally, the incidence of human illnesses attributable to climate change, such as Zika, Chikungunya, dengue, and malaria, has been exacerbated due to vector proliferation.

“We need REDD+plus programs to include an approach to recognize non-carbon co-benefits, and the multiple functions and services of forest ecosystems around the world, to develop programs adapted to national circumstances, priorities, and capacities, with full respect for national sovereignty, plans, and programs,” it concluded.

Costa Rica speaking for the Independent Association of Latin American and Caribbean (AILAC) said Parties must send a clear message for all non-governmental organisations and private sectors to follow UNFCCC and IPCC good practice guidance as only by remaining consistent with the UN climate change regime can Parties ensure the required pace and scale for emission reductions. It also regular IPCC special report to inform the global stocktake.

The European Union noting that the SBSTA will handle a number of issues arising from the Paris Agreement and the Paris decision, said balanced progress is necessary regarding the implementation of existing and new mandates.

“In this session we will continue to discuss the details of the scientific aspects of the Global Stocktake. Based on an exchange of the views of Parties on how current and future IPCC assessments can support the Global Stocktake, we are looking forward to work with other Parties to come to substantive conclusions. These conclusions can be taken up by the IPCC to

inform the scoping of the Sixth Assessment Report in 2017,” it said.

The EU welcomed the Joint Report of the TEC and the CTCN and looked forward to continue the elaboration of the new Technology Framework. It expects to get a clearer understanding about the structure and the main themes of the Framework and on how it can help Parties address fragmentation around the existing processes aimed at facilitating technology transfer.

“Now that we have clear decisions on cooperative approaches and market mechanism under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, we note that this will replace the KP mechanisms post 2020,” it opined.

It further said that progress on the development of modalities for accounting of financial resources provided and mobilized through public interventions is important to further improve transparency of climate finance and to ensure that these modalities are integrated in the transparency framework.

“The Paris Agreement has also confirmed what we have been discussing for a long time: adaptation and mitigation stand on an equal footing. We are eager to continue discussion with our partners on how to further progress with adaptation action, including through the NWP. The Adaptation Committee has proven its added value as an overall advisory body on adaptation to Parties. This is in our view performing effectively and we are looking forward to the continued work of the AC,” it said.

On the WIM, it would encourage the ExCom to agree on deliverables for the 5 year rolling work plan as soon as possible to ensure a continuous implementation of the work of the WIM including the efforts of the mandates given by Paris Agreement to establish a clearing house for risk transfer and a task force on displacement.

For the EU, it is key to recognize climate related processes outside the UNFCCC, and to build on this to avoid duplication of work and make use of all valuable information at hand, it concluded.

Australia speaking for the Umbrella Group in welcoming the entry into force of the Paris Agreement said the SBSTA has an important role

to play in the implementation of the Agreement and ensuring the effective operation of all its components, and alongside the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement and the SBI “has a lot to achieve this week.”

It also said Parties must not lose sight of the important SBSTA work related to the pre-2020 period.

“While the world keeps one eye focused on the future, the other must have focus on the here and now,” it added.

On agriculture, it said the Group recognises the fundamental importance of agriculture for food production and livelihoods for all countries. Many countries, it said, have indicated the importance of agriculture in their NDCs and the need to improve agriculture productivity, resilience and sustainability. It looked forward to working with Parties to develop a technical work programme that support countries in the effective implementation of their NDCs.

On international cooperative approaches, Umbrella Group said both market and non-market can facilitate greater ambition. It said SBSTA needs to deliver arrangements than enable Parties to enhance ambition while they ensure environmental integrity and sustainable development. It looked forward to develop a programme of work that will ensure arrangements are ready well in advance of 2020 and would like sufficient time allocated for these technical discussions.

Switzerland speaking for the Environmental Integrity Group (EIG) welcomed the entry into force of the Paris Agreement noting that it represents an incentive to resume SBSTA activities with more enthusiasm.

It believed that science-based approached are crucial for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and Parties need to share their experience and knowledge on issues such as climate observations, early warning system, ecosystem-based adaptation and MRV methodologies.