

ADP: Discussion on 'adaptation' in the new agreement

Warsaw, Nov.18 (Graham Reeder) – The UNFCCC's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) held a second session on 'Adaptation' in the 'open-ended consultations on the content and elements of the 2015 agreement' which took place on Friday, 15 Nov in Warsaw.

The adaptation issue in the ADP was first taken up in Warsaw on the 13th of November, but was closed to observers; this second session was a continuation of the first one.

The ADP Co-chair, Kishan Kumarsingh, began discussions with two questions: 1. What does strengthening of existing adaptation proposals mean, taking existing proposals a step further: what would need to be reflected in the new agreement to incentivise the enhanced implementation of, and adequate support for, adaptation; and 2. What would constitute a proposed global adaptation goal in practical terms? How could it fit into the new agreements?

In summarising, the Co-chair noted that many Parties stressed close relationship between mitigation and adaptation; all countries need National Adaptation Plans (NAPs); the sustainable development agenda is to be closely linked to the 2015 agreement; existing arrangements should be enhanced; NAPs are the main vehicle through which adaptation will be planned and implemented; developing countries need sufficient means of implementation; the new agreement could add value to existing work, that needs at the national level contribute to monitoring and evaluation. He also noted proposals on linking global and national efforts through a facilitative framework, and that further clarification is required on the concept of a global adaptation goal. He urged all Parties to convene informally to get closer on this concept, and noted

that the Co-chairs are willing to convene that meeting.

Malaysia, speaking for the **G77/China** welcomed the growing prioritisation of adaptation under the Convention, noting how critical it is given that climate change undermines development gains. Even if impacts are local and response happens at local level, there is a global responsibility to enhance adaptation. Adaptation is an iterative process, and NAPs are key to doing adaptation at a national level in an ongoing manner. Under the new agreement NAPs should be a cornerstone; all countries should be encouraged to share experiences with NAPs, and support will be needed for development, formulation and implementation.

It noted that a project by project approach to adaptation will not allow countries to reduce vulnerabilities and adapt to climate change. Reduction of vulnerabilities will depend on access to technologies. Existing structures must be strengthened in order to be operationalized, and the lack of finance undermines the basis for future of this work.

Nauru, speaking for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**, said that the adverse impacts of climate change pose significant risk, and that those risks extend to efforts on sustainable development. It said it was already experiencing impacts, and that as climate change increases, so will vulnerability among Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The Adaptation Committee has been operational for just over a year, and guidelines for Least Developed Country NAPs have only just been published and non-LDC guidelines are still on the way. Finance and technical support must be provided in order for AOSIS countries to adapt, in their absence, many SIDS are forced to use existing national budgets

to do so. New and additional resources are to be committed under the Convention and in the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF), provision of long-term, scaled up, predictable, additional, and adequate finance is crucial to the success of adaptation.

On the new agreement for 2015, it said this was an opportunity for Parties to shed light on vague terms in the Convention, the relationship between adaptation and mitigation as well as the space between mitigation actions and avoidable loss and damage. Adverse effects in SIDS are a key tool to assess sufficiency of mitigation actions, adaptation actions, and the extent of loss and damage. The agreement must factor reality that average temperature will be 2 degrees C warmer by 2050; countries will not be able to adapt to all of those impacts, and the 2015 agreement must be robust. Parties must understand limits to adaptation for SIDS. Enhanced adaptation must address needs of SIDS, in particular vulnerable developing countries.

Nepal for the LDCs said that recent studies show that the adaptation challenge is huge, especially for vulnerable countries. Strengthening adaptation implies streamlining the system to ensure effectiveness. The 2015 agreement should enhance action by strengthening existing institutions. More finance is needed, securing long-term finance is necessary. The new agreement should ensure coherence between adaptation structures and the financial mechanism of the Convention. Only the highest level of mitigation will reduce adaptation costs.

Egypt said that when talking about a new agreement, adaptation is a top priority for both developed and developing countries. It stressed the importance of developing a list of countries most affected by climate change, in light of the standard set by the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change and impacts on food security and stability must be considered. The agreement must have meaningful effort to combat impacts—such as anti-desertification and reforestation—in order to deal with impacts. Parties must provide finance, technology transfer, and capacity building to kick-start adaptation. It said that countries should have plans to respond to disasters, early warning systems, and insurance coverage. Climate change means increased cost and risk for populations in developing countries. Existing resources are not enough to address this. Common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) must be

part of the agreement, as well as more cooperation and coordination to minimise Loss and Damage.

China said that the starting point on adaptation is the relevant provisions in convention, namely articles 4.1, 4.4, 4.8, and 4.10. As well as various decisions in the past 18 COPs and institutional arrangements such as the Adaptation Fund (AF), Adaptation Committee (AC), the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP), and the Work Programme on Loss and Damage. Parties cannot simply continue what is done now, the AF is almost empty, and the AC should be further strengthened in a post-2020 agreement. Activities need to be coordinated and considered in the design of strengthening the AC. The AF is under Kyoto Protocol, while the 2015 agreement includes all Parties under the Convention, it suggested that we need a fund for adaptation that is under the convention. It suggested the need to open up institutional arrangements for support of adaptation activities.

On the questions, it said that it needed to better understand what the second part of first question means: what would need to be reflected in new agreement to incentivise the enhanced implementation? How will we incentivise adequate support for adaptation? It noted that support for adaptation from developed countries is their commitment and asked how to put in place incentives for developed countries to honour their commitments. It pointed out that the question seems misleading. Adaptation is linked to means of implementation: finance, technology transfer, and capacity building. In terms of adaptation itself, it called for specific activities in terms of NAPS or National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs); key sectors should be addressed (agriculture, forests, water, coastal areas); it should be more specific in terms of urgent immediate adaptation needs in those sectors. If Parties have a better idea of needs, they can assess needed support for the activities.

It said that an objective global goal for adaptation would be needed, guided by Article 2 of the Convention. The ultimate goal of convention includes mitigation, adaptation, and means of implementation. This would be achieved in a way that would allow systems to adapt naturally, without preventing food production and sustainable development—this squarely talks about the need for support for means of implementation. The goal will be considered in terms of needs for sustainable development. Linkages between adaptation and means of implementation, also between mitigation and

adaptation should be considered. Countries cannot adapt to any presumed impacts, which does not mean they shouldn't be prepared for any predicted scenarios; they must be ready to make plans for any possible scenario. It said that a priority should be to avoid maladaptation and called for specificity on elements.

India noted that adaptation must be integral to a 2015 agreement. Article 4.4 gives a basis for action, in which the cost of adaptation will be met by developed countries. Not only in respect to adequacy, but also predictability. The 2% levy on Clean Development Mechanism has suffered from a lack of ambition. It noted the need to consider how the IPCC will inform the work; global costing for adaptation will help that and must be taken as a basic reference. NAPs should be supported by finance and technology transfer because adaptation technology is crucial for success, so is finance for Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) to make progress on the current lock jam. Funding IPRs will not stifle innovation; it is crucial for adaptation.

Kenya noted that adaptation is an integral part of the 2015 agreement, particularly as economic, social, and non-economic losses continue to occur, and many countries are struggling to adapt. The CAF provides significant steps towards implementation of adaptation, these steps should be enhanced and strengthened and should not lose focus on adequacy, sustainability, predictability of means of implementation. It noted that the AF is empty, and that finance is an important way to strengthen the adaptation system. There is a need to incentivise adaptation actions; this requires a process for establishing NAPs in developing countries and supporting them. There is also a need for mainstreaming adaptation and resilience into sustainable development processes.

With respect to global adaptation goals, it noted the need to provide clear links between adaptation and mitigation opportunities should be based on science and should differentiate costs for different temperature scenarios. It should also be clear about operational mechanisms, institutions, and structures for adaptation. Adaptation efforts are part of global efforts on climate change, and should therefore be linked to mitigation efforts.

The **Philippines** said a practical problem arises that if you don't do mitigation, then the cost of adaptation will rise. It said that it worries that by the time the UNFCCC really addresses mitigation, vulnerable countries may not be around to see it.

It highlighted the current situation in the Philippines. Calibrated support must be sufficient, so that if there is a failure to mitigate, the adaptation support will not be useless. It stressed the need to break down solutions into many parts, and to address vulnerabilities on the ground. There is very little time and much work to be done on this forum.

Mali noted that there are good institutional arrangements already. A fundamental challenge is that this is learning by doing process. The 2015 agreement must ensure that countries do and that that they do more. Not only must Parties present contributions, but developing countries must avail themselves through appropriate programmes, the NAP process is that venue, financial support of all NAPs will be necessary. Countries will need a robust *ex ante* assessment process so that they can continually raise the level of support. It cannot be done in a vacuum; it must be done in the context of an agreed temperature goal; a review of adequacy is very much linked to this.

Bangladesh said adaptation must remain a continuing process and is a very long one. The adaptation agreement must be dynamic and long-term, build in flexibility, extend to new types of vulnerabilities that we do not know about, and must accommodate the demand for new types of technology. Some critical types of adaptation are a priority, such as those slated to share existing resources. The long-term, dynamic nature of adaptation must be based on real life observation, monitoring, review, and verification of financial support and technology transfer as well as technology development are needed. Provisions for periodic reviews and updating information are also necessary. Adaptation is inherently local and is more engaged in certain sectors than others. No single country can manage the adverse effects of ocean acidification on its own, some issues are global here. Global adaptation goals must be based on generic issues as well as those issues that can only be solved on global levels but with local impacts and actions.

On the adaptation goal, mobilising resources for needs is crucial. Needs assessment is essential for determining adequacy, and must be based on principle of 'do no harm', and adaptation must not negatively impact other countries.

Peru stressed the need to better enforce communication of NAPs, to reinforce support of NAPs and adaptation financially. It said there were two issues: reinforcement in NAP guidelines of information as guiding NAP activities, in

particular to local and regional information and mobilising financial resources for support of adaptation processes.

Indonesia agreed with the G77/China. It said that in addressing adaptation we must clearly understand adaptation has international perspectives, though planning is national and local, but the issue is international in perspective. The international community, through the 2015 agreement, must support full implementation of NAPs in developing countries, strengthen regional centres, and fully implement a loss and damage mechanism and related arrangements.

Saudi Arabia noted that the last session missed the issue of transparency in adaptation, it is important to have a platform for all countries to provide adaptation plans and projects in a way that recognises the work they do and will help countries to make sure efforts are supported and monitored at the international level.

On the global goal, the importance of a goal goes back to NAPs. All countries need a NAP, and this is a requirement for the 2015 agreement. When Parties go back home they must make sure that they engage the future, they must fully address the risks of a 2 degrees C plus world, these NAPs should have an aim to them that considers future impacts and what can be done to address them. Parties must have the opportunity to work to see what support they need to hedge their future, because impacts will come now and in the future, early planning is important.

Australia said that it had heard a lot of ideas and need to work out what is needed. For it the guiding questions are: "What additional value can the new agreement have on adaptation? How can we empower bodies within the existing process? And how can we empower countries to develop a NAP process?" It also asked for more information from Singapore about their proposal for a system of recognition and review, as well as frameworks proposed by South Africa and Colombia. It wanted to know how those systems would add to the adaptation framework and if they can be done within existing structures. It noted that the adaptation committee is the primary body on adaptation, and should strengthen adaptation structures and NAPs through that. It called for focus on enhancing the existing adaptation regime.

In response to the second question, Australia inquired as to whether a goal could be quantified as a global goal. It noted that much adaptation

data is very local, and was concerned that if there was a global goal it would end up in a conversation about finance. It stressed that they would like to see work done within existing elements of the CAF.

The **United States** said that they firmly believe adaptation is important in the 2015 outcome; all countries will need to prepare for post-2020 climate impacts. The 2015 agreement must reflect that all Parties must enhance adaptation planning efforts. It said that the NAP process is critical to address risks, and to mainstream climate change concerns into policy. Support will come as technical assistance from existing bodies in the form of financial assistance; it noted that the US second largest donor to Least Developed Countries Fund and third largest donor to the Special Climate Change Fund and reiterated its commitment to provide support. It also noted that it had exceeded its fast start finance pledge and increased adaptation finance nine fold since Copenhagen. Public finance will continue to be important for adaptation efforts.

It raised concerns about a global adaptation finance goal that is linked to a mitigation goal as it thought that might incentivise lower ambition. It is impossible to add up costs of adaptation, given that it would require globally adding up costs which are location and sector specific and do not lend themselves to adding up. It noted that this addition would require specificity in variable climate systems which is not scientifically viable and would require disaggregating development from adaptation efforts which is also not possible. Instead of spending time and focus on this, it suggested looking at how the 2015 outcome can strengthen the ability of all Parties to make adaptation decisions effectively.

Norway drew attention to its submission on how to frame adaptation in a new agreement. It pointed to the CAF as a solid framework for seeing how we can bring clarity to adaptation, and noted that it is flexible enough to accommodate enhanced action in a new agreement. The NAP process is a key tool, elements of it should be taken as a point of departure. Priorities are the poorest and most vulnerable people. It also called for more reporting based on existing reporting procedures. It noted that there is a responsibility for all countries to adapt, and that support for adaptation in developing countries is important to achieve that.

It called for a structured discussion focused on NAPs and their elements as well as framing and

commitment to prioritise poorest and most vulnerable people. It recalled the objective of the convention, which is to create climate resilient societies that prosper in a changing climate. It also noted that the call for a numeric goal would not bring us closer to adaptation goals, stating that financing is a means to an end and not an end in its self.

The Republic of Korea said that Parties should make use of existing mechanisms like the AC, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), which is intended to

play a bigger role in support of adaptation for developing countries. They noted that countries have been supporting the operationalization of the GCF, which is vital for effective mobilisation of GCF finances in 2015 agreement. The global adaptation goal would be hard and take time given the localised and specific approach typically taken to adaptation research. One solution might be to interlink the issue on global efforts for sustainable development goals for 2015.