

BONN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE: TUESDAY, 11 JUNE 2013

On Tuesday, the SBI plenary convened. The first SBI in-session dialogue to advance implementation of the Doha work programme on Convention Article 6 (education, training and public awareness) continued in the afternoon. During the day, informal consultations took place under the SBSTA and ADP.

SBI

SBI Chair Chruszczow lamented that the SBI has lost eight days of working time and provided an overview of efforts to reach agreement on the SBI agenda. He proposed a “solution box,” including: a statement by the SBI Chair to provide assurance that issues related to decision-making would be addressed; inclusion of the Chair’s statement in the meeting’s report; and adoption of the SBI’s supplementary provisional agenda (FCCC/SBI/2013/1/Add.1) while deleting the proposed new item on procedural and legal issues related to decision-making by the COP and CMP. He stressed that after adoption of the agenda, a contact group, co-chaired by the SBI Chair and Vice-Chair, would be established on Tuesday afternoon to consider legal and procedural issues related to decision-making by the COP and CMP under the agenda item on arrangements for intergovernmental meetings. SBI Chair Chruszczow invited parties to adopt the provisional agenda in accordance with the solution proposed.

The RUSSIAN FEDERATION, supported by UKRAINE and BELARUS, objected and stressed the need for an agenda that takes into account the interests of all parties. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION underlined that working based on a provisional agenda in 2013 involves the risk that in 2015 there will be a “provisional agreement with provisional commitments.” UKRAINE highlighted the “paradox” that while all parties recognized that the issue underlying their proposed agenda item was important, there is no agreement to include it on the agenda.

Fiji, for the G-77/CHINA, emphasized the Group’s support for the SBI Chair’s efforts and for his proposal. Swaziland, for the AFRICAN GROUP, and Nepal, for the LDCs, also supported the Chair’s proposal. Switzerland, for the ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY GROUP, said it is difficult to understand why the Chair’s proposal is unacceptable to some parties, stressing it would: clearly place the issue on the agenda; be accompanied by a Chair’s statement reflecting agreement on parties’ desire to discuss the issue; and establish a contact group for such discussion. The EU supported the Chair’s proposal and, acknowledging the importance of the issue, stressed willingness to discuss the matter in a contact group.

JAPAN regretted the loss of working time under the SBI and supported the Chair’s proposal. Noting “unusually broad” agreement on the importance of the matter, the US supported the Chair’s proposal and stressed that lack of agreement would

hold up SBI discussions on this and other important issues. AUSTRALIA called for the SBI’s work “to get on its way.” Identifying the Chair’s proposal as “a good way forward,” NEW ZEALAND expressed willingness to discuss matters raised by the Russian Federation, Ukraine and Belarus. Supporting the SBI’s Chair’s approach, CANADA agreed that the issues raised were important and needed to be discussed.

Highlighting the rules of procedure, SINGAPORE noted that any party has the right to propose new agenda items but consensus is required for their inclusion on the agenda. He emphasized that otherwise there would be an incentive to add new agenda items “at every meeting of the UNFCCC.” He expressed regret that the three proponents of the new item have not accepted “the normal courses of action” in such a situation either to reject the proposal or hold the proposed item in abeyance, while continuing consultations. SINGAPORE cautioned that the resolution of “this impasse” will set a precedent for the future.

SBI Chair Chruszczow recalled that in Durban, parties decided to launch the work of the COP and CMP without adopting their agendas and worked hard to find a solution allowing for the agendas to be adopted at a later stage. He reiterated his proposal, but the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, BELARUS and UKRAINE continued to oppose it.

TUVALU requested that the SBI Chair rule on how to address the matter. Chair Chruszczow observed that the rules of procedure did not allow for voting and that decisions under the SBI must be taken by consensus. Noting that the “procedure had exhausted itself,” the G-77/CHINA requested that the Chair apply the principle of “necessity” and “gavel the way forward,” saying this would be viewed as “a personal attempt by the Chair to save the countries of the world.” Chair Chruszczow announced that he would suspend the meeting for fifteen minutes.

As the meeting resumed, the RUSSIAN FEDERATION stressed the importance of transparency, state sovereignty and political will, noting that “constant procedural problems” under the UNFCCC illustrate the rationale behind the proposed new agenda item. He stressed the need to examine decision-making procedures and prepare a COP decision on the rules of procedure. He underscored that the SBI Chair taking a decision on the agenda based on the principle of necessity would “fall outside any legal context” and that adopting the agenda without a consensus would be a “blatant breach” of the rules of procedure.

SBI Chair Chruszczow acknowledged the lack of consensus to adopt his proposal, saying “there is no way to start the SBI’s work.” Highlighting the need for transparency and inclusiveness, as well as confidence in the process and parties’ ownership of it, he noted that the Chair is in the service of the parties and that “it is up to the parties to save the world.”

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres acknowledged that the last hours of COP 18 were held in a context that “everyone would have preferred to have avoided.” She noted that such a context does not support the right of parties to be heard to the fullest. Figueres indicated that while all parties have expressed commitment to engage in discussions on decision-making, including in an informal setting, these discussions could neither continue without adopting the agenda, nor could the SBI’s work begin. She expressed hope that the next time parties come together to consider the SBI’s work, deliberations could begin in a different spirit, with parties guided by the timely pursuit of the Convention’s ultimate objective.

SBI Chair Chruszczow informed parties that the SBI plenary would resume on Friday to close the session.

DIALOGUE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DOHA WORK PROGRAMME ON CONVENTION ARTICLE 6: The SBI in-session dialogue continued on Tuesday afternoon.

On lessons learned from planning, implementation and evaluation of climate change training, Mariia Khovanskaia, Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe, outlined several opportunities at the “supra-regional” level, including training for negotiations and adaptation decision-making.

Zinaida Fadeeva, United Nations University, identified several competencies required to address climate change and said education should be transformative and not simply technical, practice-centered, reflexive and open-ended.

Stelios Pesmajoglou, Greenhouse Gas Management Institute, overviewed their: online training on MRV principles and programme design; professional certification of GHG quantification and verification; and new courses in development based on the IPCC guidelines.

Marek Harsdorff, International Labour Organization, underlined the need to address the human resources gap that is constraining transition to a green economy and noted that there is a range of trainings required, from on-the-job training to retraining.

Participants discussed: the sustainability of efforts; assessing success; training as an ongoing process; and incorporating sector-specific needs in national curricula.

On opportunities for strengthening the implementation of climate change education and training through international cooperation, Yucheng Zhang, China, presented on initiatives his country is undertaking to enhance capacity building on climate change through South-South cooperation, including training programmes. Highlighting that the EU is the leading provider of ODA and climate finance, Tony Carritt, EU, presented on the EU’s initiatives to support capacity building in developing countries, including the Global Climate Change Alliance to strengthen dialogue on, *inter alia*, integration of climate change into poverty reduction strategies, adaptation and REDD+.

Moritz Weigel, UNFCCC, presented on the United Nations Alliance on Climate Change Education, Training and Public Awareness, which was launched in December 2012 to maximize synergies and coherence among UN agencies’ activities. Representatives from the UN participating entities presented on concrete projects and activities undertaken to implement Convention Article 6. Highlighting recent projects that promoted education and training, Rawleston Moore, GEF, explained that: the GEF Trust Fund provides financial resources to meet the incremental cost of activities that generate global environmental benefits; and the LDCF and SCCF provide resources to meet additional costs of adaptation aimed at generating adaptation benefits.

During discussions, participants addressed, *inter alia*, ways to communicate between national focal points and interactive learning processes.

SBSTA

REDD+: In the morning informal consultations on REDD+, delegates considered draft text on, *inter alia*: national forest monitoring systems and MRV; forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels; safeguards; drivers of deforestation; and non-carbon benefits. They discussed encouraging developing countries to take into consideration relevant guidance under the Convention and other international processes concerning the provision of information on safeguards. A number of developing countries opposed language on “international processes,” expressing preference for “national processes.” Some suggested referring to “intergovernmental processes,” with one party highlighting that this reference would facilitate the consideration of guidance by bodies, such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, but would exclude guidance from other types of institutions. Delegates eventually agreed to delete the paragraph. Negotiations continued throughout the day.

TECHNOLOGY: During the afternoon contact group, parties considered the progress report on modalities and procedures of the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) and its Advisory Board (FCCC/SB/2013/INF.5). Parties generally welcomed the report acknowledging the work of the CTCN Advisory Board.

On National Designated Entities (NDEs), the Philippines, for the G-77/CHINA, and the EU called for ensuring engagement of NDEs in the work of the CTCN. The US observed that only a small number of parties had responded to the call for nominations and encouraged non-Annex I parties in particular to identify and nominate NDEs. CHINA proposed considering how to encourage parties to put forward nominations and how to engage NDEs in the future. JAPAN highlighted confusion over whether developed countries were supposed to submit nominations and, with UGANDA, called for clarity on criteria for becoming a NDE. AUSTRALIA cautioned against being overly prescriptive and said the CTCN should be given time to decide how it is going to organize its work. CTCN Advisory Board Chair indicated that guidance on what constitutes an NDE was being drafted and would be released soon and that countries would be allowed flexibility in identifying NDEs.

The Co-Chairs will prepare draft conclusions.

IN THE CORRIDORS

On Tuesday morning, even the most jaded of delegates found it hard not to be infected by the enthusiasm of YOUNGOs as they launched their “Youth in Action” report celebrating their campaigns and achievements. However, soon the mood changed notably when it was confirmed that the SBI plenary was finally set to convene at lunchtime. An SBI plenary session characterized by emotional exchanges left many reeling and contemplating the implications of the fact that the SBI will not be able to launch substantive work in Bonn and the inevitable repercussions of this down the line. One negotiator reflected on the irony of imploring the SBI Chair to “gavel us out of here without a consensus, when it was hasty gaveling in Doha that created this mess in the first place.” Managing to muster some optimism, he added that delegates would inevitably “have to pick up the pieces in Warsaw.”

For several delegates, the implications of “Terrible Tuesday” were more immediate, with one delegate ruefully declaring “this is a sad day for the process; the world is watching us and will think the worst.” Another delegate added that the SBI standoff could “overshadow the good work and constructive discussions occurring in SBSTA and ADP.” Recalling UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres’s plea for “better spirits,” another hoped that somehow her message would be taken on board, so as to avoid paralyzing the UNFCCC process entirely.