Bonn Climate Change Conference: 19-23 October 2015

Negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) open today in Bonn, Germany, and will continue until 23 October 2015. This meeting, the 11th part of the second session of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP 2-11), is the fourth meeting of the ADP this year. ADP 2-11 will proceed on the basis of the agenda (ADP/2013/AGENDA) adopted at ADP 2-1, structured around workstream 1 (2015 agreement) and workstream 2 (pre-2020 ambition). Its task of developing the 2015 agreement will be based on the negotiating text as compiled at the Geneva Climate Change Conference in February 2015.

In their scenario note (ADP.2015.7.InformalNote), ADP Co-Chairs Ahmed Djoghlaf (Algeria) and Daniel Reifsnyder (US) proposed to intensify the pace of text-based negotiations to deliver a draft agreement and accompanying decisions for finalization at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 21) taking place in December 2015, in Paris, France. In advance of ADP 2-11, the Co-Chairs produced a non-paper containing the basis for negotiation of the draft Paris climate package and a draft decision on workstream 2.

A Brief History of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol

The international political response to climate change began with the 1992 adoption of the UNFCCC, which sets out a legal framework for stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases (GHGs) to avoid “dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.” The Convention, which entered into force on 21 March 1994, now has 196 parties. In December 1997, delegates to COP 3 in Kyoto, Japan, agreed to a protocol to the UNFCCC that committed industrialized countries and countries in transition to a market economy to achieve emission reduction targets. These countries, known as Annex I parties under the UNFCCC, agreed to reduce their overall emissions of six GHGs by an average of 5% below 1990 levels in 2008-2012 (first commitment period), with specific targets varying from country to country. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 16 February 2005, and now has 192 parties.

Long-Term Negotiations, 2005-2009: Convening in Montreal, Canada, in 2005, the first session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 1) decided to establish the Ad Hoc Working Group on Annex I Parties’ Further Commitments under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) in accordance with Protocol Article 3.9, which mandated consideration of Annex I parties’ further commitments at least seven years before the end of the first commitment period.

In December 2007, COP 13 and CMP 3 in Bali, Indonesia, resulted in agreement on the Bali Roadmap on long-term issues. COP 13 adopted the Bali Action Plan (BAP) and established the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) with a mandate to focus on mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, capacity building and a shared vision for long-term cooperative action. Negotiations on Annex I parties’ further commitments continued under the AWG-KP. The deadline for concluding the two-track negotiations was in 2009 in Copenhagen.

Copenhagen: The UN Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, took place in December 2009. The high-profile event was marked by disputes over transparency and process. Late in the evening of 18 December, these talks resulted in a political agreement, the “Copenhagen Accord,” which was then presented to the COP plenary for adoption. After 13 hours of debate, delegates ultimately agreed to “take note” of the Copenhagen Accord and to extend the mandates of the negotiating groups until COP 16 and CMP 6 in 2010. In 2010, over 140 countries indicated support for the Accord. More than 80 countries also provided information on their national mitigation targets or actions.

Cancun: The UN Climate Change Conference in Cancun, Mexico, took place in December 2010, where parties finalized the Cancun Agreements and extended the mandates of the two AWGs for another year. Under the Convention track, Decision 1/CP.16 recognized the need for deep cuts in global emissions in order to limit the global average temperature rise to 2°C above pre-industrial levels. Parties agreed to consider strengthening the global long-term goal during a review by 2015, including in relation to a proposed 1.5°C target. Decision 1/CP.16 also addressed other aspects of mitigation, such as: measuring, reporting and verification (MRV); and reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (REDD+).

The Cancun Agreements also established several new institutions and processes, including the Cancun Adaptation Framework, the Adaptation Committee and the Technology Mechanism, which includes the Technology Executive Committee.
Committee (TEC) and the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). The Green Climate Fund (GCF) was created and designated as an operating entity of the Convention’s financial mechanism. Under the Protocol track, the CMP urged Annex I parties to raise the level of ambition of their emission reductions, and adopted Decision 2/CMP.6 on land use, land-use change and forestry.

DURBAN: The UN Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa, took place in November and December 2011. The Durban outcomes covered a wide range of topics, notably the agreement to establish a second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol from 2013 to 2020, a decision on long-term cooperative action under the Convention and agreement on the operationalization of the GCF. Parties also agreed to launch the ADP with a mandate “to develop a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention applicable to all Parties.” The ADP is scheduled to complete these negotiations by 2015, with the new instrument entering into force in 2020. In addition, the ADP was mandated to explore actions to close the pre-2020 ambition gap in relation to the 2°C target.

DOHA: The UN Climate Change Conference in Doha, Qatar, took place in November and December 2012. The conference resulted in a package of decisions, referred to as the “Doha Climate Gateway.” These include amendments to the Kyoto Protocol to establish its second commitment period and agreement to terminate the AWG-KP’s work. The parties also agreed to terminate the AWG-LCA and negotiations under the BAP. A number of issues requiring further consideration were transferred to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), such as: the 2013-2015 Review of the global goal; developed and developing country mitigation; the Kyoto Protocol’s flexibility mechanisms; national adaptation plans; MRV; market and non-market mechanisms; and REDD+.

WARSAW: The UN Climate Change Conference in Warsaw took place in November 2013, in Warsaw, Poland. Negotiations focused on the implementation of agreements reached at previous meetings, including pursuing the work of the ADP. The meeting adopted an ADP decision that, inter alia, invites parties to initiate or intensify domestic preparations for their intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs). Parties also adopted a decision establishing the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts, and the Warsaw REDD+ Framework—a series of seven decisions on REDD+ finance, institutional arrangements and methodological issues.

LIMA: The UN Climate Change Conference took place in December 2014, in Lima, Peru. Negotiations focused on outcomes under the ADP necessary to advance towards an agreement in Paris at COP 21 in 2015. Following lengthy negotiations, the meeting adopted the “Lima Call for Climate Action,” which sets in motion the negotiations towards a 2015 agreement, including the process for submitting and reviewing INDCs. The decision also addresses enhancing pre-2020 ambition.

Parties also adopted 19 decisions, 17 under COP 20 and two under CMP 10 that, inter alia: help operationalize the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage; establish the Lima work programme on gender; and adopt the Lima Declaration on Education and Awareness Raising. The Conference laid the groundwork for Paris, by capturing progress made in elaborating the elements of a draft negotiating text for the 2015 agreement and adopting a decision on INDCs, including their scope, upfront information, and steps to be taken by the Secretariat after their submission.

ADP 2-8: The Geneva Climate Change Conference took place in February 2015, in Geneva, Switzerland. The objective of the session, as mandated by COP 20, was to develop the negotiating text based on the elements for a draft negotiating text annexed to Decision 1/CP.20 (Lima Call for Climate Action). The text (FCCC/ADP/2015/1) developed at ADP 2-8 has served as the basis for the negotiations of the Paris agreement.

ADP 2-9: ADP 2-9 convened in June 2015 in Bonn, Germany, and began discussing the Geneva Negotiating Text and addressed workstream 2. Facilitated groups streamlined and/or consolidated options and paragraphs within the text, began the process of clustering options and undertook conceptual discussions. Under workstream 2, Technical Expert Meetings convened on energy efficiency in urban environments and renewable energy supply.

ADP 2-10: ADP 2-10 convened in August-September 2015 in Bonn, Germany. To guide the work, the ADP Co-Chairs produced, at the request of parties, a “Tool” based on the streamlined and consolidated text resulting from ADP 2-9. Delegates engaged on various parts of the Tool in facilitated groups and “spin-offs,” or informal meetings of the facilitated groups, addressing sections of the text. The groups considered placement of paragraphs in the Tool, engaged in conceptual discussions on key issues, and, in some cases, started developing textual proposals.

**INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS**

**SECOND SESSION OF THE INFORMAL MINISTERIAL CONSULTATIONS:** Informal consultations took place from 6-7 September 2015, in Paris, France, bringing together ministers from 57 countries to address the themes of means of implementation (MOI), including finance, technology and capacity building, and adaptation and loss and damage. There was broad agreement on the central place of MOI in the Paris agreement, with finance highlighted as particularly crucial, and the need to ensure political parity between adaptation and mitigation.

**HIGH-LEVEL WORKING LUNCH ON CLIMATE CHANGE:** The working lunch, which took place on 27 September 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York, brought together Heads of State to inject energy into negotiations towards a legally-binding agreement to be adopted at COP 21 in Paris.

**ICCA2015:** The International Conference on Climate Action (ICCA2015) convened from 1-2 October 2015, in Hanover, Germany. ICCA2015 focused on bridging the divide between subnational governments and decision making at the intergovernmental level. Discussions resulted in the “Hanover Declaration: Local Action Driving Transformation.”

**IPCC-42:** The 42nd session of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC-42) took place from 5-8 October 2015, in Dubrovnik, Croatia. The Panel elected a new Bureau for the sixth assessment cycle. Hoesung Lee, Republic of Korea, was elected as IPCC Chair.

**FINANCE MINISTERS MEETING:** A meeting on 9 October 2015, in Lima, Peru, on the sidelines of the 2015 Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund and World Bank brought together finance ministers to discuss financial aspects of the Paris agreement. The meeting included the launch of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Climate Policy Initiative report “Climate Finance in 2013-2014 and the USD 100 Billion Goal,” which was commissioned by France and Peru.