

Bonn Highlights: Thursday, 20 June 2019

The Bonn Climate Change Conference continued on Thursday. Delegates discussed transparency reporting formats and Article 6 (market and non-market approaches), among other issues. The 11th Research Dialogue, Durban Forum for Capacity Building, and Technical Expert Meeting on Mitigation convened.

SBI

Matters Relating to the Adaptation Fund: Membership of the Adaptation Fund Board: Informal consultations were co-facilitated by Amjad Abdulla (Maldives). Views diverged on the need for SBI 50 to address the issue of eligibility, which some stressed was the mandate from the CMP and CMA. One group said the current status of representation from only Kyoto Protocol parties was a problem because Paris Agreement parties should also be able to serve the Board. Several opposed, saying that the decision that the Adaptation Fund will serve the Paris Agreement substantiates the eligibility of Agreement parties to serve the Board. Some suggested the issue could be addressed after hearing input from the Adaptation Board Task force, and after the outcome of negotiations under Article 6. Consultations will continue.

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the 2019 Review of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts: Marianne Karlsson (Norway) and Pepetua Latasi (Tuvalu) co-facilitated. Parties reiterated views on their priorities for a review of the WIM, including, among others, effectiveness and efficiency; a backwards- and forwards-looking scope for the review; and the importance of a long-term vision. Some parties urged the elaboration of adequate benchmarks to assess the progress.

One party requested a draft ToR from the Co-Facilitators, who proposed submitting a non-paper for consideration by parties.

Some requested more time to discuss. The Co-Facilitators agreed to set up additional informal consultations to allow participants to discuss a long-term vision for the review. Some parties continued in informal informals.

Arrangements for Intergovernmental Meetings: In informal consultations, observers critiqued the UNFCCC's "limited capacity" for civil society participation, and most called for a conflict of interest policy to limit polluting private interests' participation.

On COP 25, countries raised concerns about visas. Chile said that a dedicated online visa portal was being designed for COP attendees, and suggested inviting heads of state and government for a high-level segment on 2 December 2019.

SBSTA

Methodological Issues under the Convention: Common metrics: In informal consultations, co-facilitated by Clifford Mahlun (Jamaica), parties commented on draft conclusions.

Some stressed that common metrics are a scientific issue more than a transparency issue. Many advocated reflecting previous decisions and activities, including workshops and special events. One party opposed recalling decisions, and cautioned against the SBSTA making recommendations.

Several suggested postponing further considerations of common metrics until the IPCC's sixth assessment report. One party suggested concluding the agenda item until then. Others opposed, calling for technical discussions, stressing the relevance of common metrics to policies aimed at achieving the long-term global temperature goals. Co-Facilitators will revise the text.

Methodological Issues Under the Paris Agreement: Xian Gao (China) co-chaired the contact group. Parties heard reports from the Co-Facilitators on all sub-items, then took stock of progress.

On common reporting tables (CRTs) for national inventory reports, AILAC called for options in informal notes as well as workshops during SBSTA 51 on experiences using the current software.

On training programme for technical experts participating in the technical expert review, BRAZIL distinguished between developing a training programme and training materials. AOSIS noted training modules will evolve over time. AUSTRALIA said the training programme could be completed before 2021. AILAC proposed a technical paper.

On flexibility, the EU, with SWITZERLAND, proposed addressing the content of all tables and then addressing flexibility in each. Many developing countries underscored the need to discuss flexibility generally and in the context of specific tables.

AOSIS, with the LDCs, and others flagged adaptation reporting as a high priority. The AFRICAN GROUP cautioned against burdening the Adaptation Committee with this issue.

On way forward, many hesitated to consider intersessional work. The AFRICAN GROUP, with INDIA, proposed targeted submissions before COP 25.

The Co-Chairs will draft conclusions and ask Co-Facilitators to draft informal notes.

CRTs for national inventory reports: The Secretariat presented the Common Reporting Framework (CRF) tables used by Annex I parties, which developed countries prefer to use as a starting point for a table common to all, and the tables for national communications used by non-Annex I parties, which several developing countries preferred to use as a starting point for tables that will be used by developing countries.

Common tabular formats (CTF) for reporting information necessary to track progress made in implementing and achieving nationally determined contributions: In informal consultations, co-facilitated by Helen Plume (New Zealand), parties reviewed the existing CTF in biennial reports on progress in achievement of the quantified economy-wide emissions reduction target as a starting point for reporting mitigation policies

and measures, actions and plans. Several developed countries said only minor changes would align this table with the modalities, procedures and guidelines (MPGs) of the transparency framework. Developing countries pointed to the flexibilities in this section of the MPGs (Chapter 3d), including that some information is not strictly required, and that information on estimates of expected and achieved GHG emissions reductions shall be provided “to the extent possible.” One suggested that parties should be able to delete columns, and others called for a consistent way to indicate when flexibility is applied. A group called for including mitigation co-benefits resulting from adaptation actions and economic diversification plans. Discussions will continue.

CTF for financial, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building support: During informal consultations co-facilitated by Delphine Eyraud (France), parties commented on how the MPGs need to be reflected in a table on the provision of public financial support: contributions through bilateral, regional, and other channels. Suggestions included: disaggregating information on support for adaptation and mitigation; using sector-specific codes for reporting; and reporting multilateral support. Developing countries suggested adding columns for information on grant equivalency and face value, providing space for project information, and capturing links to capacity building or technology transfer. Parties highlighted the risk of double counting and called for safeguards, including providing information on how specific methodologies were applied. The Co-Facilitators will update the table to include MPGs that are “straightforward” and parties’ comments. The next discussion will focus on financial support needed and received.

Training programme for technical experts participating in the technical expert review: In informal consultations, co-facilitated by Jae Hyuk Jung (Republic of Korea) and Harry Vreuls (the Netherlands), delegates discussed ways to make the programme and certification process more accessible. Some developing countries preferred that the Consultative Group of Experts develop the training programme and materials, while developed countries, and one developing country group, favored tasking the Secretariat with support from lead reviewers. Views diverged on whether the programme should be completed by COP 26.

Nairobi Work Programme: Informal consultations were co-facilitated by Monika Antosik (Poland) and Majid Shafipour (Iran). On thematic areas, groups supported those agreed by SBSTA 48. As additional areas, several groups suggested human displacement, regional migration, and national security. Some suggested consideration of potential synergies with work on fishing, gender, and agriculture. Some parties noted assessments of countries’ adaptation needs should inform the global stocktake. The Co-Facilitators will draft conclusions.

Article 6: Co-Facilitator Peer Stiansen (Norway) said the purpose of the exchange of views was to come up with a better basis for the text.

On governance of the Article 6.8 framework, parties expressed diverging views on the need for a permanent body. Noting the integral nature of Article 6.8 within Article 6, a group of parties opposed further deferring the matter for consideration. Others tried to find a bridging ground between the options, noting that a work program could be mandated to discuss both the functions as well as the nature of the governance arrangements.

On the governance of the Article 6.4 mechanism, parties expressed varying views on the balance of responsibilities between the supervisory body and member states, with a group of parties suggesting that host parties should be enabled to get more involved. Parties diverged on the need for term limits for members of the board.

In the afternoon, parties resumed their discussion on the governance of the Article 6.4 mechanism before discussing activity design and the definition of internationally transferred mitigation outcomes (ITMOs). On Article 6.4 mechanism, parties exchanged views on membership of the supervisory board, with many supporting a gender-balanced board.

On activity design, some parties suggested that all sectors and gases should be eligible. Many parties opposed excluding activities related to Article 5 (forests). In regard to human rights, parties’ views diverged, with those opposed to its inclusion suggesting that activities would conform with prevailing national laws. As a bridging proposal, a group suggested referring to the Paris Agreement preamble. On activity design and NDC scope, two groups of parties explicitly focusing on supporting parties to expand the scope of their NDCs. Others supported activities outside NDC scope as long as robust accounting was possible.

On defining ITMOs, parties identified various features, including quantifiability; expression into CO₂ equivalents; eligibility of emission avoidance; and national determination. A group identified the distinction between ITMOs and mitigation outcomes that are used for purposes other than NDC fulfillment or international transfers. Some highlighted the ability of a buffer registry to enable exchanging parties with different units to transfer ITMOs. Discussions on the list of unresolved issues will continue.

SBSTA/SBI

Scope of the Next Periodic Review of the Long-term Global Goal (LTGG) under the Convention and of Overall Progress towards Achieving it: Exchanging views on the scope of the next periodic review, some parties rejected the possibility of redefining the LTGG, with some open to the review using best scientific information to deepen its understanding of the goal.

On mechanisms to assess progress, parties asserted that the periodic review and the global stocktake are complementary and synergetic, while others pressed the presence of overlaps, including with other processes within the Convention. One party suggested maintaining the option of closing the periodic review. Co-Facilitators Leon Charles (Grenada) and Makoda Yoshino (Japan) will prepare draft conclusions with options for discussion.

Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture: Co-Facilitators Milagros Sandoval (Peru) and Heikki Gransolm (Finland) opened informal consultations by soliciting views from parties on conclusions from previous workshops. Participants welcomed the report from the first workshop in Katowice. Many parties welcomed New Zealand’s proposal to host a workshop in March 2020, with some suggesting the formation of a team to support it to determine the scope of the workshop.

Some developing country parties stressed the need to create a permanent mechanism to continue the work of the Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture.

In the Corridors

“The house is on fire,” said UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa this morning in a meeting with observers, echoing t-shirts advertising the upcoming UN Secretary-General summit. On World Refugee Day, the theme of climate impacts reverberated throughout discussions: various interventions sparked mentions of the national security, displacement, and migration issues inextricably linked to the impacts of the climate emergency. One observer lamented that loss and damage discussions resurfaced only today, after a three-hour informal meeting yesterday: “it’s only a terms of reference of a review,” she reminded.