



THE TENTH SESSIONS OF THE FCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES 31 MAY – 11 JUNE 1999

The tenth sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) will meet from 31 May – 11 June 1999 in Bonn, Germany. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) will consider, *inter alia*, technology transfer, land use change and forestry and FCCC Article 6 (education, training and public awareness). SBI will discuss, *inter alia*, national communications and FCCC Articles 4.8 and 4.9 (adverse effects). SBSTA and SBI will jointly consider the mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol and activities implemented jointly under the pilot phase. A joint working group is expected to consider procedures and mechanisms relating to compliance under the Protocol.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE FCCC AND THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

The FCCC was adopted on 9 May 1992, and was opened for signature at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in June 1992. The Convention entered into force on 21 March 1994, 90 days after receipt of the 50th ratification. It has been ratified by 176 countries.

COP-1: The first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the FCCC (COP-1) took place in Berlin from 28 March - 7 April 1995. In addition to addressing a number of important issues related to the future of the Convention, delegates reached agreement on what many believed to be the central issue before COP-1 — adequacy of commitments, the "Berlin Mandate." The result was to establish an open-ended *Ad Hoc* Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGBM) to begin a process toward appropriate action for the period beyond 2000, including the strengthening of the commitments of Annex I Parties through the adoption of a protocol or another legal instrument.

COP-1 also requested the Secretariat to make arrangements for sessions of SBSTA and SBI. SBSTA would serve as the link between the information provided by competent international bodies, and the policy-oriented needs of the COP. During the AGBM process, SBSTA addressed several issues, including the treatment of the IPCC's Second Assessment Report (SAR). SBI was created to develop recommendations to assist the COP in the review and assessment of the implementation of the Convention and in the preparation and implementation of its decisions. SBI also addressed several key issues during the AGBM process, such as the national communications and activities implemented jointly (AIJ).

The *Ad Hoc* Group on Article 13 (AG13) was set up to consider the establishment of a multilateral consultative process (MCP) available to Parties to resolve questions on implementation. AG13-1, held from 30-31 October 1995 in Geneva, decided to request Parties, non-Parties, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to make written submissions in response to a questionnaire on an MCP. Delegates continued their discussion over the course of the next three meetings. At their fifth session, they agreed that the MCP should be advisory rather than supervisory in nature and AG13 should complete its work by COP-4.

AD HOC GROUP ON THE BERLIN MANDATE: The AGBM met eight times between August 1995 and COP-3 in December 1997. During the first three sessions, delegates focused on analyzing and assessing possible policies and measures to strengthen the commitments of Annex I Parties, how Annex I countries might distribute or share new commitments and whether commitments should take the form of an amendment or protocol. AGBM-4, which coincided with COP-2 in Geneva in July 1996, completed its in-depth analysis of the likely elements of a protocol and States appeared ready to prepare a negotiating text. At AGBM-5, which met in December 1996, delegates recognized the need to decide whether or not to allow mechanisms that would provide Annex I Parties with flexibility in meeting quantified emissions limitation and reduction objectives (QELROs).

As the protocol was drafted during the sixth and seventh sessions of the AGBM, in March and August 1997, respectively, delegates "streamlined" a framework compilation text by merging or eliminating some overlapping provisions within the myriad of proposals. Much of the discussion centered on a proposal from the EU for a 15% cut in a "basket" of three greenhouse gases (GHGs) by the year 2010 compared to 1990 levels. In October 1997, as AGBM-8 began, US President Bill Clinton included a call for "meaningful participation" by developing countries in the negotiating position he announced in Washington. With those words, the debates that shaped agreement back in 1995 resurfaced, with an insistence on G-77/China involvement once again linked to the level of ambition acceptable by the US. In response, the G-77/China distanced itself from attempts to draw developing countries into agreeing to anything that could be interpreted as new commitments.

COP-3: The Third Conference of the Parties (COP-3) was held from 1-11 December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan. Over 10,000 participants, including representatives from governments, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and the media, attended the Conference, which included a high-level segment featuring statements from over 125 ministers. Following a week and a half of



intense formal and informal negotiations, including a session that began on the final evening and lasted into the following day, Parties to the FCCC adopted the Kyoto Protocol on 11 December. In the Kyoto Protocol, Annex I Parties to the FCCC agreed to commitments to reduce their overall emissions of six GHGs by at least 5% below 1990 levels between 2008 and 2012. The Protocol also established emissions trading, "joint implementation" (JI) between developed countries, and a "clean development mechanism" (CDM) to encourage joint emissions reduction projects between developed and developing countries. As of 15 March 1999, 84 countries had signed the Kyoto Protocol.

POST-KYOTO FCCC MEETINGS: The subsidiary bodies of the FCCC met from 2-12 June 1998 in Bonn, Germany. SBSTA-8 agreed to draft conclusions on, *inter alia*, cooperation with relevant international organizations, methodological issues, and education and training. SBI-8 reached conclusions on, *inter alia*, national communications, the financial mechanism and the second review of adequacy of Annex I Party commitments. In its sixth session, AG13 concluded its work on the MCP's functions. After joint SBI/SBSTA consideration and extensive contact group debates on the flexibility mechanisms, delegates could only agree to a compilation document containing proposals from the G-77/China, the EU and the US on the issues for discussion and frameworks for implementation.

COP-4: The Fourth Conference of the Parties (COP-4) was held from 2-13 November 1998 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and was attended by over 5,000 participants. During the two-week meeting, delegates deliberated decisions for the COP during SBI-9 and SBSTA-9. Issues related to the Kyoto Protocol were considered in joint SBI/SBSTA sessions. A high-level segment, which heard statements from over 100 ministers and heads of delegation, was convened on Thursday, 12 November. Following hours of high-level "closed door" negotiations and a final plenary session that concluded early Saturday morning, delegates adopted the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. Under the Plan of Action, the Parties declared their determination to strengthen the implementation of the Convention and prepare for the future entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol. The Plan contains the Parties' resolution to demonstrate substantial progress on: the financial mechanism; the development and transfer of technology; the implementation of FCCC Articles 4.8 and 4.9, as well as Protocol Articles 2.3 and 3.14; activities implemented jointly (AIJ); the mechanisms of the Kyoto Protocol; and the preparations for the first meeting of the Parties (COP/MOP-1).

RECENT MEETINGS

IEA WORKSHOP ON POLICIES AND MEASURES: The International Energy Agency (IEA) held an international workshop from 15-16 April 1999 in Paris to exchange the experiences of Member countries in the design and implementation of policies and measures aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions from energy. The workshop's key messages include:

- while policy responses may differ based on national circumstances, the challenges remain the same across countries, in particular in the energy sector. Countries can benefit from information exchange on policies and measures;
- the gap between the present situation and Kyoto objectives requires new domestic policies and measures in the energy sector to achieve the agreed emissions reduction goals;
- the distinction between economic instruments and regulatory approaches is artificial. Both types of policies are needed;

- the implementation of economic instruments such as taxes requires accompanying measures to account for social and competitiveness concerns; and,
- CO₂ emissions from transport are growing rapidly and few policies seem to have had significant impacts on this trend so far. Policies to reduce emissions from transport should aim at changing behavior as well as changing technology.

For more information contact: IEA; e-mail: info@iea.org;
Internet: <http://www.iea.org/workshop/p&magend.htm>.

TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON MECHANISMS UNDER ARTICLES 6, 12 AND 17 OF THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: The FCCC Technical Workshop on Mechanisms under Articles 6, 12 and 17 of the Kyoto Protocol was held from 9-15 April 1999 at La Redoute in Bonn-Bad Godesberg, Germany. The workshop was designed to advance the discussion on technological and methodological aspects of Article 6 (JI), Article 12 (CDM) and Article 17 (emissions trading) so that the Conference of the Parties can take decisions on all three mechanisms at its sixth session. The workshop was attended by approximately 100 invited participants, including experts from Parties and representatives from governments, UN agencies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. Core topics at the workshop included reference case/baseline methodologies, additionality, verification and reporting in relation to the CDM and Article 6 (JI) projects. Further issues addressed included the validation and funding of projects under the CDM and the adaptation component, and reporting, verification and accountability issues related to emissions trading. Participants also exchanged views on capacity building for developing country Parties. The ENB report is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/techwork/>

INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE ON ENERGY: The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), in September 1998, decided to establish an Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Task Force on Energy with a view to ensuring a collaborative contribution of UN organizations to the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) process on energy and sustainable development. The first meeting of the Task Force took place on 8 April 1999 in New York. The Task Force agreed that activities to be undertaken should be complementary and mutually supportive and that duplication of work, such as that undertaken by the FCCC, should be avoided. Task Force members reviewed activities currently underway and/or planned by them in preparation for the ninth session of the CSD (CSD-9). To enhance coordination and promote synergies among these activities, they decided to establish an electronic network and agreed to provide updated information on ongoing and envisioned work so that a matrix of UN activities geared towards CSD-9 could be established. The Task Force will meet again in September/October 1999 to follow-up on preparations for CSD-9. For more information contact: Kyaw Kyaw Shane; e-mail: shane@un.org

THINGS TO LOOK FOR

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS: Informal consultations on Agenda Item 10 (compliance under the Protocol) will be held from 9:30 am to 12:00 pm.

BRIEFING ON THE TECHNICAL WORKSHOPS: The Chairs of the technical workshops on the Protocol mechanisms will hold a briefing from 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm.

SBSTA: SBSTA is scheduled to meet at 3:00 pm.

SBI: SBI is scheduled to meet at 4:00 pm.