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REDD+ Bulletin

A Briefing Note on the First Voluntary Meeting on the Coordination of Support for the Implementation of REDD+ Activities in Developing Countries

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BRIEFING NOTE ON THE FIRST VOLUNTARY MEETING ON THE COORDINATION OF SUPPORT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF REDD+ ACTIVITIES IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: 8 DECEMBER 2014

At the nineteenth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 19) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Warsaw, Poland, delegates adopted Decision 10/CP.19 on the coordination of support for the implementation of activities in relation to mitigation actions in the forest sector by developing countries, including institutional arrangements, agreeing to encourage national entities or focal points, parties and relevant entities financing forest-related activities to meet to discuss these matters on a voluntary basis, in conjunction with the first sessional period meetings of the subsidiary bodies. On 8 December 2014, the first of these annual voluntary meetings convened in Lima, Peru, gathering parties, national entities or focal points, and relevant REDD+ financing entities to consider procedural matters to facilitate the discussions at future meetings, and invite input and participation from relevant bodies under the Convention, international and regional organizations, the private sector, Indigenous Peoples and civil society.

Antonio Garcia Revilla, COP 20/CMP 10 Presidency, and Tomasz Chruszczow, COP 19/CMP 9 Presidency, co-facilitated the meeting, which took place alongside UNFCCC COP 20.

OPENING

Co-Facilitator Revilla opened the meeting, saying it provided a setting for participants to express their views freely outside of the negotiation process. Co-Facilitator Chruszczow described it as an opportunity to exchange views in an inclusive and transparent manner. He invited Panama, the EU, Ghana and Indonesia to serve as rapporteurs and assist the Co-Facilitators to prepare a summary report of the meeting. He emphasized that the discussion was to concentrate on procedural matters related to the next meeting, to be held in conjunction with the 42nd sessions of the subsidiary bodies, before potentially addressing the issue of coordination of support and other matters. He invited parties to offer initial comments on establishing procedures for the current session. In response to a request from Bolivia to include joint mitigation and adaptation approaches for the integral and sustainable management of forests in the discussion, Co-Facilitator Chruszczow reiterated that this is outside the mandate of the meeting.

STATEMENTS

While encouraging the inclusion of a large body of stakeholders in the discussion, Panama, for the Coalition for Rainforest Nations (CfRN), highlighted their role as observers and said parties may seek their views.

Norway underscored the need to exchange ideas among parties, civil society and organizations funding REDD+. He suggested, supported by many, that future meetings should be held in an interactive space to facilitate such an exchange, and include workshops, expert presentations and other formats to share the wealth of information on the rapid movement of country-level activities. He stressed the need for documenting the meeting's proceedings, including through *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* (ENB) and rapporteurs representing civil society, financing organizations and others.

Many participants supported the co-facilitation of future meetings by the outgoing and the current COP presidencies, and stressed that the meeting should serve as an experience-sharing platform.

The US urged the participation of all stakeholders implementing REDD+ on the ground, including civil society, as well as those supporting implementation, including international finance institutions and other funders, without differentiating between parties and observers. Saying that the meeting has no status under the Convention, she noted the need to come to an understanding on: the identification of facilitators; capturing the ideas discussed, including by the ENB; and the structure of future meetings, highlighting knowledge fairs, small group discussions and thematic panels as good options.

Mexico supported dynamic presentations through workshops and expert presentations, and the inclusion of a rapporteur from civil society.

Ghana, for the African Group, with Nigeria, Sudan, Tanzania and others, supported a Co-Facilitator's summary of the proceedings and outcomes, and welcomed the participation of Indigenous Peoples and local communities. Stressing that the meeting is not a platform for the continuation of negotiations, the Climate Action Network (CAN) International also supported ENB reporting on these meetings, and the inclusion of REDD+ focal points and their teams in the discussions.

Guyana prioritized a "light touch approach" with minimum rules and procedures; called for the Secretariat to play a role in note taking; and, with Fiji, stressed that agreements be forwarded to the COP. Japan called for participation of civil society and the private sector. Fiji emphasized that the coordination of implementation support should adhere to the principles of equity, fairness and inclusivity.

Panama, for CfRN, underlined that the meeting had been mandated by the COP to provide information and recommendations, and will be reviewed by the COP, and thus "has status." Co-Facilitator Revilla clarified that the meeting has no "negotiating status."

Thailand supported the participation of civil society, experts and financial institutions, noting the need for transparency when selecting rapporteurs. She underscored the need for safeguards for REDD+ financing.

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On reporting, Co-Facilitator Revilla also welcomed inputs by civil society and financial institutions.

India called for dedicating more time to substantive matters, such as financing, and space to seek clarification from Convention bodies, such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF). He stressed the importance of the recommendations coming out of the voluntary meeting, and questioned which UNFCCC body would be charged to act upon them. Brazil questioned the “legally-binding” nature of the recommendation-making process, and whether this would be based on the no-objection rule.

On setting the agenda for the next meeting, Austria stressed inclusiveness and transparency, and suggested: parties and observers send one proposal for an agenda item to co-facilitators before 31 March 2015; co-facilitators take into account selection criteria based on Decision 10/CP.19 and cluster proposals as appropriate; and co-facilitators publish the proposed agenda on the REDD Web Platform.

Cameroon, for the COMIFAC, as well as Mozambique, Ghana, for the African Group, Japan, Thailand, the US, Namibia and Costa Rica called for the participation of a broad range of stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities, as set out in paragraph 8 of decision 10/CP.19.

Tanzania, for the least developed countries (LDCs), as well as Suriname, Namibia, Belgium and many others, supported co-facilitation by the COP incoming and current presidencies, with Brazil also noting the relevance of the Secretariat’s support throughout the process. LDCs stressed the need to focus on developing countries’ technical and financial capacity needs in setting the agenda for the next session. Brazil pointed to paragraph 3 of Decision 10/CP.19, noting a “permanent” agenda to be structured around sharing of views first, followed by recommendations. He stressed: the procedural nature of the meeting; focus to be restricted to coordination of support for REDD+ implementation as mandated by Decision 10/CP.19 paragraph 3; and participation of specialists only through their respective national entities or focal points, and not in a workshop setting. On the outcome of the meeting, Brazil welcomed a summary report of the co-facilitators to be published on the REDD Web Platform.

Indigenous Peoples Caucus stressed their willingness to participate and contribute to the process, underlining the solidarity and complementarity of CSO and Indigenous Peoples’ involvement.

Underlining the need for coordination and efficient information flow, Mozambique, Ecuador and Colombia called for populating the REDD Web Platform. He said REDD+ relates to more than forests, including land use, poverty alleviation and many other issues. He further stressed insufficient funding, difficulties in accessing it, and ensuring national sovereignty and ownership against funding conditionalities.

Uganda expressed concern about barriers to effective implementation, and highlighted the need to coordinate technical, financial and other support to identify and overcome these barriers. He underlined the added value of having the current and outgoing COP presidents serving as co-facilitators for the meeting.

Malaysia highlighted the need to focus on the coordination of support and, time allowing, on methodological issues. She urged the Co-Facilitators to seek inputs from all relevant groups and underscored the importance of reporting the meeting outcomes to the SBI. Thailand stressed the need for transparency and adherence to the COP mandate for the meeting in order to ensure good guidance.

Nigeria cautioned against complex procedures, saying they lead to failure and delay. Papua New Guinea underscored the importance of transparency and recognized the contributions from the Coalition for Rainforest Nations.

Germany and Nigeria expressed the desire to share their national experiences. Germany encouraged swift procedural rules to facilitate the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples, civil society, the private sector, and others.

Guyana suggested basing the agenda of future meetings on gaps identified in the coordination of support, which could benefit from a standing committee on finance. He supported linking the REDD Web Platform and GCF logic model, as relevant bodies under the Convention, to provide inputs to the meeting.

WWF underlined the importance of an inclusive process, focused on discussing substantive issues rather than interpreting decisions, adding that a “lecture hall type atmosphere” impeded exchange among a diverse and large number of stakeholders.

Noting extensive engagement, richness of views and “not so divergent” proposals, Co-Facilitator Revilla assured that the Co-Facilitators will derive concrete points to contribute to a proposal on the procedure for upcoming meetings. He said the Co-Facilitators would continue facilitating the June meeting. Zimbabwe stressed the need for regional coordination in support of REDD+ projects.

Stressing the need to go beyond procedural matters, the Democratic Republic of the Congo called for, *inter alia*: operationalizing the REDD Web Platform and linking it with the GCF hub; inviting the GCF to provide inputs; and creating a space for experts to engage.

Colombia requested that the Co-Facilitators’ summary be made available on the REDD Web Platform. Supporting Co-Facilitator Chruszczow’s suggestion not to use the no-objection procedure, Colombia noted the informal nature of the meeting and opposed formal negotiation blocs.

Noting the diverse challenges faced by developing countries in the implementation of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+, Malawi stressed the need to focus on all three phases of REDD+. Ethiopia called for discussions to focus on substantive issues, not on procedure.

Indigenous Peoples Caucus emphasized communication and requested translation services for upcoming meetings to support their full participation and sharing of experiences. He called for clarity on the agenda to allow for their preparation.

Panama, for CfRN, stressed that: the time has come for the SBSTA to complete its work on REDD+ and for the focus to shift to the implementation of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+; and coordination must target results and gather momentum towards results-based payments. While recognizing the need for sharing best practices, he called for updating and improving guidance missing in the official UNFCCC process. He urged parties to put differences aside and make this meeting “the most powerful engine for REDD+ implementation.”

Viet Nam called for establishing carbon markets and urged support from international finance institutions and the private sector for REDD+ implementation.

CLOSING

Co-Facilitator Revilla said the co-facilitators would provide an agenda in advance of the next meeting and prepare a summary based on the rapporteurs’ notes with the help of the Secretariat. He emphasized that the needs of civil society and Indigenous Peoples must be taken into account and expressed encouragement at the level of interest parties and other stakeholders took in the meeting.

Co-Facilitator Chruszczow said the meeting was important for initiating the implementation of the Warsaw Framework for REDD+ and noted that it was carried out in the inclusive way needed to ensure the effective coordination of support. He said the co-facilitators’ summary would be uploaded to the REDD Web Platform.