

THIRD SESSION OF THE *AD HOC* WORKING GROUP ON LONG-TERM COOPERATIVE ACTION AND SIXTH SESSION OF THE *AD HOC* WORKING GROUP ON FURTHER COMMITMENTS FOR ANNEX I PARTIES UNDER THE KYOTO PROTOCOL: 21-27 AUGUST 2008

The third session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA 3) and the first part of the sixth session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (AWG-KP 6, Part I) are taking place from 21-27 August 2008 in Accra, Ghana. These meetings are part of ongoing discussions to enhance international cooperation on climate change, including for the period after 2012, when the Kyoto Protocol's first "commitment period" expires.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE UNFCCC AND KYOTO PROTOCOL

The international political response to climate change began with the adoption of the UNFCCC in 1992. The UNFCCC sets out a framework for action aimed at stabilizing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases to avoid "dangerous anthropogenic interference" with the climate system. The UNFCCC entered into force on 21 March 1994, and now has 192 parties. In December 1997, delegates at the third Conference of the Parties (COP 3) in Kyoto, Japan, agreed to a Protocol to the UNFCCC that commits developed countries and countries in transition to a market economy to achieve emission reduction targets. These countries, known under the UNFCCC as Annex I parties, agreed to reduce their overall emissions of six greenhouse gases by an average of 5.2% below 1990 levels between 2008-2012 (the first commitment period), with specific targets varying from country to country. The Kyoto Protocol entered into force on 16 February 2005, and now has 180 parties.

The first Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP/MOP 1) in Montreal, Canada in 2005 established the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP). In addition, COP 11 agreed to consider long-term cooperation under the UNFCCC "without prejudice to any future negotiations, commitments, process, framework or mandate under the Convention" through a series of four workshops constituting a "Dialogue" that would continue until COP 13.

COP 13 and COP/MOP 3 took place in December 2007, in Bali, Indonesia. The focus of the Bali conference was on post-2012 issues, and negotiators spent much of their time seeking agreement on a two-year process, or "Bali roadmap," to finalize a post-2012 regime by COP 15 in December 2009. This roadmap sets out "tracks" under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol. Under the Convention, negotiations on the follow up to the Convention Dialogue resulted in agreement on a Bali Action Plan that established the AWG-LCA, with a view to launching a comprehensive process on long-term cooperative action, to be completed in 2009. The Bali Action Plan identifies four key elements: mitigation, adaptation, finance and technology. The Plan also contains a non-exhaustive list of issues to be considered under each of these areas and calls for addressing a "shared vision for long-term cooperative action."

The first session of the AWG-LCA and fifth session of the AWG-KP took place from 31 March to 4 April 2008, in Bangkok, Thailand. The second session of the AWG-LCA 2 and the resumed fifth session of the AWG-KP took place from 2-12 June in Bonn, Germany. For additional history of the process, see http://www.iisd.ca/process/climate_atm-fccintro.htm.

INTERSESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

G8 LEADERS SUMMIT 2008: The annual G8 Summit of industrialized country leaders was held from 7-9 July 2008, in Japan. The Summit resulted in a declaration on the need for a long-term vision for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Leaders undertook to "consider and adopt... the goal of achieving at least 50% reduction of global emissions by 2050." The declaration stressed that this goal should be shared by all parties to the UNFCCC and also urged an ambitious global post-2012 climate regime.

The declaration recognized that developed economies' actions will differ from those of developing economies, adding that "each of us [in the G8] will implement ambitious economy-wide mid-term goals in order to achieve absolute emissions reductions."

MAJOR ECONOMIES MEETING: A fourth "Major Economies Meeting on Energy Security and Climate Change" was held on 9 July 2008, alongside the G8 Summit in Hokkaido, Japan. The meeting involved leaders from the G8 countries, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Mexico, South Africa and the EU. Leaders adopted a declaration affirming the commitment of major economies from both the developed and developing world to combat climate change, taking into account their "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities." The

declaration stresses the importance of a long-term goal and mid-terms goals, commitments and actions, and the role of carbon sinks, mitigation, adaptation, technology, and financial resources. It also announces that “our nations will continue to work constructively together to promote the success of the Copenhagen climate change conference in 2009.” There was no agreement on emission reduction targets for either the medium or long term.

UNFCCC MEETINGS: A number of UNFCCC workshops and other events have taken place since the Bonn climate talks in June. From 25-27 June 2008, a workshop was held in Tokyo, Japan, on methodological issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (see: <http://www.iisd.ca/climate/wedfd/>).

Other recent UNFCCC events in Bonn include: a meeting of the Enforcement Branch of the Compliance Committee (14-15 June 2008); two meetings of the Clean Development Mechanism’s Executive Board (15-17 June and 30 July to 2 August); the eleventh meeting of the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee (16-17 June); and the second meeting of the Adaptation Fund Board (16-19 June).

THE ACCRA NEGOTIATIONS

The climate change talks in Accra represent one in an ongoing series of meetings leading up to Copenhagen in December 2009 – the deadline for an agreement on a post-2012 framework. This section outlines the current status of discussions under the AWG-KP and AWG-LCA, including the key agenda items under each body.

AWG-LCA: The AWG-LCA has a mandate to launch a comprehensive process to enable the full, effective and sustained implementation of the Convention through long-term cooperative action, now, up to and beyond 2012. The AWG-LCA is currently engaged in substantive consideration of five key areas: a shared vision for long-term cooperative action, including a long-term global goal for emission reductions; mitigation; adaptation; technology development and transfer; and financing.

Shared vision: This issue was the subject of considerable discussion in Bonn in June. Many parties supported an aspirational global goal for 2050, although some, such as the G-77/China and African Group, added that developed countries must take the lead with ambitious and binding targets in the short term (2020).

Mitigation: In Bonn, discussions on mitigation centered on measuring, reporting and verifying commitments or actions, sectoral approaches and reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation in developing countries (REDD). In Accra, a workshop will be held on two connected issues: approaches and incentives relating to REDD; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. This workshop is expected to consider the drivers of deforestation and forest degradation, as well as how to build the capacity of developing countries to reduce emissions.

A second workshop related to mitigation will be held on sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions. In Bonn, some countries, particularly Japan, expressed support for sectoral approaches. However, others, such as China and India, expressed reservations, particularly regarding any discussion on sectoral targets that do not focus solely on Annex I parties.

The AWG-LCA 3 is also expected to establish a contact group on mitigation in the context of technology transfer and financing. In Bonn, several parties proposed new funding mechanisms, which are likely to be the subject of some of the discussions in Accra.

Adaptation: Discussions on adaptation issues in Accra will focus on technology transfer and financing. In Bonn, delegates raised a number of issues, including the needs of least developed countries, national adaptation programmes of action, the Nairobi Work Programme, and concerns relating to funding for adaptation. Several specific proposals for financing were made by countries including Mexico, Switzerland, Norway, China, and others. The AWG-LCA 3 is expected to establish a contact group on enhanced action on adaptation in the context of technology development and transfer, and financing.

Technology and financing: In Bonn, two in-session workshops were held on technology development and transfer, and on financing. In Accra, delegates are invited to consider “institutional arrangements for delivering enhanced cooperation on technology and financing for adaptation and mitigation” to allow delegates to consider ideas and proposals in more detail, including technical issues such as the structure and governance of any possible new funds or institutional frameworks under the Convention.

AWG-KP: The AWG-KP is taking up an analysis of the means available to reach emission reduction targets and identification of ways to enhance their effectiveness and contribution to sustainable development. The four means identified by the AWG-KP in its work programme are: the flexible mechanisms; land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF); sectoral approaches; and greenhouse gases, sectors and source categories. In Accra, the AWG-KP is scheduled to conclude its analysis, allowing parties to negotiate actual emission reduction ranges at the COP/MOP in Poznań, Poland in December 2008.

Flexible mechanisms: In Bonn, a workshop was held on the topic, with many parties voicing support for continuing the mechanisms after 2012. In particular, possible changes to the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) were debated, with some differences over the inclusion of activities such as carbon capture and storage. Some parties urged a broader scope for CDM activities and simpler rules, while others emphasized the need to ensure environmental integrity.

LULUCF: Differences remain among parties on the rules that might be applied for the second commitment period. Brazil, AOSIS and others opposed fundamental changes to the existing architecture, while Australia and Canada suggested that improvements could be made.

Sectoral approaches: Developing countries have stressed that sectoral approaches should apply only to Annex I parties, and should supplement rather than replace national caps on emissions. Developed countries have generally sought to explore the idea of sectoral approaches in more detail.

Greenhouse gases, sectors and source categories: Discussions on this topic have focused on possible inclusion of new gases under a future framework and also on emissions from international aviation and maritime transport. Parties have expressed strong differences on inclusion of aviation and maritime emissions under the Protocol, with the EU, Norway and others supporting more discussions on this topic under the UNFCCC process, while others have noted that the issue is also being addressed under the International Civil Aviation Organization and International Maritime Organization. Other methodological issues, such as methodologies for estimating anthropogenic emissions and the global warming potentials of greenhouse gases, are also likely to be addressed.