

Bonn Highlights: Monday, 6 June 2022

The opening of the Bonn Climate Change conference was marked by heated discussions on the organization of work of the Subsidiary Body meetings. Despite a delay to allow for consultations among Heads of Delegation in the morning, differences could not be resolved before the respective opening plenaries of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI), where disagreements persisted. Agreement was nevertheless eventually found and delegates began engaging in informal consultations on a number of agenda items.

Opening statements

Addressing the assembled delegates, Patricia Espinosa reflected on her time as Executive Secretary to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is nearing its end. She spoke about the “waves of unprecedented challenges” which had rocked the climate regime during her tenure: the temporary withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement; Fiji’s extraordinary presidency of the 23rd session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 23); the last-minute move of COP 25 from Chile to Spain; the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic; and, not least, her own cancer diagnosis, from which she is now fortunately in remission. She spoke of her pride in what has been achieved in this time, because “the process held,” delivering a finished Paris Agreement Work Programme and the Glasgow Climate Pact. Visibly moved, she thanked NGOs and non-party stakeholders, for the solutions they inspire; Secretariat staff, for their work; and her family, for their support.

Turning to the meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs), she highlighted as priorities: urgently delivering more ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and long-term plans; defining the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA) and addressing loss and damage constructively; and overcoming the lack of finance which persists as the main obstacle for collective climate action. Noting that nations have “everything we need” for implementation, Espinosa stressed the importance of political interventions and decisions to deliver a balanced package to COP 27. Underlining that climate change is “not an agenda we can afford to push back on the global schedule,” she exhorted nations not to lose hope or focus, and to use the united efforts of the climate regime as the “ultimate act of unity between nations.”

Pakistan, for the G77/CHINA, stressed adaptation as a crucial priority, calling for substantial progress on key deliverables, including the Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation. He emphasized the need to fully

operationalize the Santiago Network, but that progress “should not be at the cost of getting it right.”

Declaring that the outcomes of Glasgow “showed the Paris process is working,” France, for the EUROPEAN UNION, called on all parties to focus on improving individual and collective mitigation efforts. He stressed that aligning global financial flows with the Paris Agreement will require working outside of the UNFCCC, including with multilateral banks, national public policies, and the private sector.

Australia, for the UMBRELLA GROUP, urged all parties, especially major emitters whose emissions are not aligned with a 1.5°C pathway, to increase the ambition of their NDCs. He emphasized the importance of the call in Glasgow to double adaptation finance and looked forward to discussions to develop the Santiago Network.

Switzerland, for the ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY GROUP (EIG), called on the presidencies of COP 26 and COP 27 to undertake immediate high-level outreach to countries who have yet to submit enhanced NDCs. He stressed the important roles of a mitigation work programme and of markets in avoiding a 1.5°C overshoot.

Antigua and Barbuda, for the ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES (AOSIS), spoke to the need for draft text which sets out clear actions for a no-overshoot 1.5°C pathway, including through phasing out fossil fuel subsidies. Noting that implementation mode means “turning priorities into credible action,” he called for the elaboration of a loss and damage finance facility by COP 27.

Zambia, for the AFRICAN GROUP, called for, among others: working arrangements to be inclusive and transparent; the work programme on the GGA to deliver “substantial progress”; and needs-based financial and technical support for National Adaptation Plans.

Senegal, for the LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES (LDCs), underlined that the limits of adaptation are now being reached, and that loss and damage “cannot be ignored.” She outlined priorities, including a loss and damage financial mechanism; the development of the Santiago Network on loss and damage; reinforcing mitigation, adaptation, and financing; and specific and accessible finance for adaptation.

Bolivia, for the LIKE-MINDED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (LMDCs), lamented that finance for adaptation remains “woefully low” and that depending on the private sector for adaptation funding has not yielded, nor is likely to yield, the desired results. He expressed hope that this meeting will adopt conclusions leading to agenda items on adaptation and on loss and damage at the next SBs.

Saudi Arabia, for the ARAB GROUP stressed that all Paris Agreement outcomes should be respected and addressed equally. Chile, for the INDEPENDENT ASSOCIATION OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN (AILAC) urged “bringing science to life,” keeping “1.5°C alive,” and integrating risk management into long-term planning.

Papua New Guinea, for the COALITION OF RAINFOREST NATIONS, said the Glasgow outcomes on Article 6 are a good start but urged rejection of standards and methodologies that are outside the mandate of Articles 5 and 6 of the Paris Agreement. He supported the creation of a work programme to build developing countries’ capacity to participate in Article 6, and called for the development of a national registry under Article 6 to promote trust and confidence.

India, for BRAZIL, SOUTH AFRICA, INDIA, and CHINA (BASIC), called for strong climate action supported by consistent financial flows to developing countries. Venezuela, for ALBA, urged inclusive and participatory multilateralism, calling for continuing efforts to ensure the participation of all countries.

Brazil, for ARGENTINA, BRAZIL, and URUGUAY (ABU), noted that 2022 is the UNFCCC’s 30th anniversary and said there is an opportunity now to strengthen support for developing countries. He stressed the GGA requires everyone to work in an innovative way and said the work programme must be led by countries in a transparent manner, leaving no one behind.

Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

SBSTA Chair Tosi Mpanu Mpanu (Democratic Republic of the Congo) opened the meeting, welcoming delegates to the first in-person session in Bonn since 2019. He invited all present to observe a moment of silence in honor of long-time climate negotiator Hugh Sealy, who passed away earlier in 2022, commemorating his “good faith, fairness, and open mindedness.”

ANTIGUA & BARBUDA pledged to honor Hugh Sealy’s legacy by delivering on the “collective ambition to safeguard 1.5°C.”

Organizational Matters: Adoption of the agenda: Pointing to consultations with Heads of Delegation on the supplementary provisional agenda, Mpanu Mpanu proposed, and parties agreed, for agenda item 18 to read “Glasgow–Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA *as referred to in decision 7/CMA.3.*”

Delegates had a lengthy debate about the number of informal consultations to be held on this agenda item, noting divergent views as to whether the compromise achieved in the Heads of Delegation meeting was to have “two” or “at least two” informal consultation slots. EIG preferred to hold “two” sessions. The G77/CHINA, the AFRICAN GROUP, the LMDCs, the ARAB GROUP, and other parties, preferred holding “at least two” sessions, with an option for more if so required. Mpanu Mpanu suggested a compromise of holding at least two informal consultations—one opening and one closing—and possibly convene additional “informal informal” consultations. AILAC and France, for the EU, underscored the need to launch work. NORWAY noted that the number of time slots for informal consultations is normally not negotiated in plenary. Mpanu Mpanu proposed and parties agreed to hold at least two meetings.

Parties adopted the agenda (FCCC/SBSTA/2022/1/Add.1) as amended and agreed to the organization of work.

Organization of the work: Contact Groups will convene on:

- Matters relating to the Global Stocktake;
- Second periodic review of the long-term global goal under the Convention and of overall progress towards achieving it;

- Response measures; and
- Work programme under the framework for non-market approaches referred to in Article 6. 8 of the Paris Agreement and in decision 4/CMA.3.

Informal consultations will convene on:

- Nairobi work programme;
- Koronivia joint work on agriculture;
- Matters relating to the Santiago Network;
- Matters relating to the work programme for urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation referred to in paragraph 27 of decision 1/CMA.3;
- Research and systematic observation;
- Training programme for review experts for the technical review of GHG inventories of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention;
- Training programme for review experts for the technical review of biennial reports and national communications of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention;
- Revision of the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories for Parties included in Annex I to the Convention;
- Guidelines for the technical review of information reported under the Convention related to GHG inventories, biennial reports and national communications by Parties included in Annex I to the Convention;
- Common metrics to calculate the carbon dioxide equivalence of GHGs;
- Emissions from fuel used for international aviation and maritime transport;
- Matters relating to reporting and review under Article 13 of the Paris Agreement;
- Guidance on cooperative approaches referred to in Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement and in decision 2/CMA.3;
- Rules, modalities and procedures for the mechanism established by Article 6, paragraph 4 of the Paris Agreement and referred to in decision 3/CMA.3; and
- Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA, as referred to in decision 7/CMA.3.

The following items were deferred to SBSTA 57:

- GHG data interface; and
- Annual report on the technical review of GHG inventories of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention.

Nairobi Work Programme (NWP): In informal consultations, Co-facilitator Julio Cordano (Chile) shared two primary expectations for the session: to take stock of operational and institutional modalities for the NWP and to identify ways of strengthening those modalities. On strengthening modalities, some developing countries suggested enhanced engagement with specific regions (i.e., Latin America and Africa) and the integration of new regionally-relevant thematic areas (such as biodiversity, forest and grasslands, and oceans). Several developing countries emphasized the need to improve the accessibility of knowledge and resources, recognizing limitations in internet access and that most materials are currently available only in English. A developed country suggested utilizing communities of practice to build on thematic expert groups as a source of knowledge. A developing country suggested that the NWP connect networks of people and organizations that can help implement adaptation actions, and provide more comprehensive information about specific implementation practices and techniques to measure collective progress.

Guidance on cooperative approaches referred to in Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement and in decision 2/CMA.3: In

informal consultations co-facilitated by Kuki Soejachmoen (Indonesia) and Peer Stiansen (Norway), discussions focused on parties' expectations and approach to discussing the issues referred to the SBSTA by the CMA, including in relation to the Article 6 technical expert review, and national and international registries for recording and tracking under the mechanism. Several parties noted that some of these issues may not require immediate attention, and suggested advancing discussion on how to implement Articles 6.2 and 6.4. Other parties stressed the need for balanced treatment of the agenda items on Articles 6.2, 6.4, and 6.8, calling for all three to become simultaneously operational by next year. On expected outcomes, several parties called for conclusions that, among other things, mandate intersessional work such as workshops and submissions by parties.

Market and non-market mechanisms under the

Convention: The SBSTA Chair reported on pre-session consultations with parties regarding possibly concluding consideration of this agenda item at this meeting. Noting that Parties signaled readiness to conclude this item, the SBSTA Chair will prepare conclusions for consideration by the Parties.

Cooperation with other international organizations: The Secretariat will organize an information event and the SBSTA Chair will prepare draft conclusions.

Subsidiary Body for Implementation

SBI Chair Marianne Karlsen (Norway) opened the session by noting that the SBI is now in the "era of implementation" across all areas of climate change governance.

Organizational matters: Adoption of the agenda: Karlsen proposed that the agenda be adopted with the following amendments: that, per discussions under SBSTA, item 21, on the Glasgow—Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the GGA, as well as item 22, on the Glasgow Dialogue on loss and damage, be excluded from approval for the time being, pending consultations on a way forward; and that item 4a, on national communications of non-Annex I parties, be held in abeyance pending consultations.

A prolonged discussion followed, with CHINA, supported by LMDCs, proposing that discussion on item 6, on scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation, be limited to two sessions to allow for more time for discussion of items 21 and 22, and ensure balance between discussions on mitigation and on adaptation. The UNITED STATES argued against linking the number of meetings from one agenda item to another, arguing that such an approach is "unconstructive for the process going forward." CHINA further proposed establishing a working group to create draft recommendations on the global goal on adaptation.

SBI Chair Karlsen clarified a process whereby the agenda would be adopted, and each item's organization of work considered in turn by parties. The supplementary provisional agenda (FCCC/SBI/2022/1/add.1) was adopted, holding sub-item 4a (information contained in national communications from Annex I parties) in abeyance. After a suspension, SBI Chair Karlsen reported agreement found on the organization of work for items 6 and 21.

Organization of the work: Contact Groups will convene on:

- Matters relating to the Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement;
- Second periodic review of the long-term global goal under the Convention and of overall progress towards achieving it;
- Matters relating to the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures serving the Convention, the Kyoto Protocol and the Paris Agreement; and

- Arrangements for intergovernmental meetings.

Informal consultations will convene on:

- Provision of financial and technical support;
- Matters relating to the clean development mechanism registry;
- Koronivia joint work on agriculture;
- Matters relating to LDCs;
- National adaptation plans;
- Matters relating to the Santiago network under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts;
- Development and transfer of technologies and implementation of the Technology Mechanism;
- Matters relating to the Adaptation Fund;
- Matters relating to capacity-building;
- Gender and climate change; and
- Matters relating to Action for Climate Empowerment.

There will be joint informal consultations on:

- Revision of the modalities and procedures for international assessment and review; and
- Revision of the modalities and guidelines for international consultation and analysis;

The following items were deferred to SBSTA 57:

- Status of submission and review of national communications and biennial reports from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention;
- Compilations and syntheses of biennial reports from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention; and
- Reports on national greenhouse gas inventory data from Parties included in Annex I to the Convention.

Matters relating to the LDCs: The LDC Expert Group (LEG) reported on its work, noting the LEG's mandate was extended at COP 26.

Administrative, financial and institutional matters:

UNFCCC Deputy Secretary Ovais Sarmad reported on budget performance for the biennium 2020-2021; the continuous review of the functions and operations of the Secretariat; and the UNFCCC annual report, among others. He further noted that the Secretariat's legal status has been left in abeyance since 2001, requesting clarity from parties on the subject, and that parties' outstanding contributions amount to almost EUR 29 million.

In the Corridors

"Talk about a rough welcome," one delegate was overheard muttering outside the plenary halls on Monday after a half-day agenda battle. Those who had returned to Bonn after more than two years of distanced meetings with joyful hearts and the spirit of compromise found their hopes of a smooth start quickly derailed. "Total chaos," another complained: the opening plenaries of the Subsidiary Bodies stretched well into the afternoon due to heated discussions on the time to be allocated for adaptation discussions, leading to feverish rescheduling of other events—and much head-scratching for first time attendees trying to figure out where to go next.

Yet Chairs and experienced negotiators were quick to remind others that, although the venue is unchanged and many familiar faces remain, the tenor of discussions has necessarily shifted. "We are now in the era of implementation," SBI Chair Karlsen told the assembled delegates. Concretely bringing the Paris Agreement into the world will require hard decisions and concessions from everyone involved. "Let's hope this was just a blip," a seasoned delegate offered. "We have the right people at the right time—if we can come back tomorrow to collaborate, not clash, we can do the work we need to do."