

SBSTA begins work on wide range of issues

Bonn, June 4 (Hilary Chiew) -The 38th session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) began its work on June 3 in Bonn, Germany and will conclude its work on 14 June.

Parties expressed what they saw as issues of priority for them, with developing countries stressing the need to for developed countries to raise their mitigation ambition and address the emissions gap. Concerns were expressed over the issue of agriculture, new market-based mechanisms, and general guidelines for monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) for domestically supported nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing countries (NAMAs). Developed countries wanted progress on modalities for new-market mechanisms.

Representing the **Group of 77 and China, Fiji** stressed that mitigation actions were widely explored for the longest time but not adaptation, which is necessary for developing countries. It said the SBSTA must request the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to undertake a comprehensive approach to adaptation as it is in the best position to provide Parties with scientific input. It said the realities and concrete experience show that adaptation and mitigation are two faces of the same coin in addressing climate change.

Thailand representing the **Like-Minded Developing Countries** said at Doha, Parties could not definitively settle several key issues under consideration in the Bali processes and some of these issues now form part of the SBSTA agenda. Resolution of these issues is critical to the work under the Durban Platform and a fruitful outcome in 2015.

It reminded Parties of its call in Doha for Annex I Parties under the KP to raise their ambition levels to 40-50% below 1990 levels with other Annex I Parties taking comparable commitments. Only then would the emissions gap be addressed. It expressed extreme disappointment over the Annex I ambition, which impacted the various discussions being held under the Convention. A process has been agreed to raise the ambition levels of KP Annex I Parties before 2014.

Thailand said there is no parallel process available to ratchet the ambition levels of non-KP Annex I Parties in a comparable manner. The work programme under SBSTA must continue the process of clarifying the QERTs of developed countries and must deliver on establishing comparability of mitigation commitments among developed countries through inter alia development of common accounting rules.

On the 2013-15 review, it called for focus, in an integrated and holistic manner, on the assessment of the adequacy of long term global goal and of the overall progress in achieving this, particularly through the implementation of commitments under the Convention. The assessment of gaps in the implementation of commitments will be an eye-opener to guide our future actions. It wanted the review to be initiated without delay in a transparent and inclusive manner.

Thailand said that discussions in SBSTA on the issues related to technology transfer and implementation of Technology Mechanism must facilitate access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies including addressing barriers such as IPRs. It expressed disappointment with the Doha outcome on the

issue of IPRs and called for a revisit of this issue including in the context of the Technology Mechanism.

On the development of general guidelines for domestically supported mitigation actions in developing countries, it stressed that the purpose of these guidelines is only to provide a general guidance and not to create MRV standards for developing countries. Any work on guidelines for domestic MRV of domestically-funded NAMAs must be consistent with the principles set forth in Doha and not introduce new obligations for developing countries.

In relation to agriculture, Thailand stressed that the focus of discussions must remain on adaptation only and not on mitigation. We do not agree that the work programme should address mitigation, especially when developing countries are undertaking subsistence agriculture and struggle for food security, whereas those in developed countries perform commercial farming and enjoy heavy agricultural subsidies.

On the issue of developments on climate change matters in the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), Thailand expressed concern. The move to forge market-based measures (MBM) in disregard of the positions of a large number of developing countries and without regard to CBDR and equity is an unfortunate development. On emissions from the international aviation and maritime sectors, it called for guidance to be provided to ICAO and the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) to ensure that they respect and adhere to the principles of the Convention, in particular, CBDR. Any MBM adopted, including a framework for MBMs, should be voluntary and with mutual consent of participating countries. By adopting CBDR in its resolution recently, the IMO has sent a message to the world community that CBDR is not a hindrance to addressing issues of climate change.

On the Forum for Response Measures, it welcomed the partnership between Parties to further the understanding of the direct or indirect adverse impacts of response measures on social and economic activities of developing countries that include, but are not limited to, impacts on labour markets, impacts on economic growth and impacts on trade. It looked forward to continuing the work on the Forum and the work program on response measures in order to produce assessment tools for policies and the

impacts of these policies on developing countries. We also realize the need for deliverables that would allow Annex I Parties to report on their efforts to avoid or at least minimize the implications of their mitigation actions.

Thailand also questioned the utility of a new market mechanism given the prevalent low levels of Annex I ambition and the poor state of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) market. It believed that Annex I Parties who do not have legally binding economy-wide quantified emission reduction and limitation targets should not be allowed access to market mechanisms. It stressed that focus of discussions under various approaches should be on non-market approaches in order to preserve environmental integrity.

Speaking for **BASIC comprising Brazil, India, South Africa and China, India** said the low ambition of developed country Parties that is far below the 25% to 40% below 1990 level as required by science and historical responsibility remains a great concern. It urged Annex 1 members in the Kyoto Protocol to adopt the amendments agreed to in Doha (in relation to the second commitment period) and other developed countries to undertake comparable efforts.

It said the low ambition level has already created an oversupply of carbon credits driving down the market price. Therefore, the work programme to clarify quantified economic-wide emission reduction targets (QERTs) will contribute significantly to the ADP discussion. It said the framework for various approaches should not be in isolation and equal attention needs to be paid to non-market based approaches.

India said the actions of developing countries can be enhanced further with financial support and technology transfer and expects SBSTA to discuss the issue of intellectual property rights (IPRs), which was not satisfactorily addressed at the last session in Doha. On agriculture, it stressed that the focus must remain on adaptation only, in light of the linkages to the livelihood for billions, food security and poverty eradication.

It also called for clear guidelines for ICAO and IMO to follow. Noting the recent resolution on technology cooperation and technology transfer of the IMO, which acknowledge the principle of CBDR, it said, this clearly showed that CBDR is

not a hindrance and similar message need to be sent to the ICAO as well.

Nauru for the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)**, referred to the breaching of the 400 ppm of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, reminding Parties that those countries most in peril and which face the prospect of extinction are the small island States. At this rate, the target set in Cancun of limiting global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels is becoming more difficult, much less the target demanded by AOSIS of limiting warming to as far below 1.5°C as possible. Therefore, when we address the issue of the 2013 to 2015 review, the adequacy of the long-term global goal should be the focus of discussions. The review must be based on the best, the latest and the most relevant science.

It wanted the review to also consider the impacts of a business as usual scenario, a 4 degree C scenario, a 2 degree C scenario and the 1.5 degree C scenario on the most vulnerable countries. It wanted consideration of what needs to be done to change the trend in emissions to reduce concentrations of greenhouse gases to 350 ppm.

On the work programme on clarification of the QERTs of developed countries and the workshop organized by the Secretariat, the deliberations under this agenda item can contribute significantly with respect to assessing how Annex I Parties are meeting their obligations to reduce their emissions both under the Convention and under the Kyoto Protocol. This can then be used to ascertain what needs to be done and by whom to meet the 1.5 degree target. In this regard, it noted the IPCC 4th Assessment Report calling for Annex I Parties to reduce their emissions by 25% to 40% below 1990 levels, in order to keep within the 450ppm scenario; however, according to the UNFCCC technical paper done last year, current Annex I Party targets only point to 12%-18% emissions reductions. It called for the work programme to help build the political momentum for the adoption of more ambitious targets by developed countries. A failure by developed countries to show leadership to close the pre-2020 mitigation ambition gap will have profound implications for the scale and nature of obligations under the 2015 agreement.

Egypt representing the **Arab Group** called on Parties not to hide behind science solely but to stick to the principles of the Convention with

regards to historical responsibility. Parties need to intensify actions and they can only adapt if they are working together and that scientific input must be sourced from scientists from all over the world and not favour a select few. It also noted that there can be no technology transfer if it is not linked to the funding mechanism, as currently there are no guidelines on funding for technology transfer, particularly in the Green Climate Fund.

Speaking for the **Least Developed Countries (LDC)**, **Nepal** said the group is gravely concerned about the current climate change crisis we are facing. Recently, the atmospheric research lab on Mauna Loa, Hawaii identified the very disturbing fact that carbon dioxide concentrations in the atmosphere have now reached 400ppm and called for urgent action.

On the Nairobi Work Programme (on adaptation), it believed that work should begin to focus on creating outcomes that deliver actions on the ground and in different ecosystems. Therefore, it believed that some elements of the programme could best be addressed under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). It wanted joint work between SBSTA and SBI in this regard.

On the Technology Mechanism, Nepal was satisfied with the progress made by the Advisory Board of the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN). It hoped that modalities and procedures of the CTCN can be adopted without further delay. It also wanted finalisation of the institutional arrangement between the Technology Executive Committee (TEC) and the CTCN so that work can progress in a coordinated manner.

On agriculture, it noted that this is a controversial topic. Some of these issues are beyond the mandate of SBSTA. It believed that SBSTA should develop work on identifying means of addressing the impacts of climate change on agriculture. For most LDCs, agriculture is a mainstay of our economies and contributes significantly to food security and poverty reduction.

On methodological issues under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol, Nepal believed that the biennial reports, national communication and national inventories by developed country Parties must ensure transparency, accuracy and verifiability. On the 2013-15 review, the LDCs

believe that the centrality of science is fundamental and the structured expert dialogue should have a significant scientific input in its work.

Bolivia representing **ALBA (Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America)** said that the developed countries have forgotten their historical commitments and responsibilities under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol and are shifting the responsibilities to the developing countries.

On the issue of the impact, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, Bolivia said this is an issue of the highest priority and is closely related to the provision of finance, technology and capacity building. It called for implementation of the Technology Mechanism that will allow access to technologies at no cost to developing countries.

On the issue of reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD-plus), it stressed the importance of funding, which must come from public sources and be channelled through the Green Climate Fund. It called for the promotion of a joint-mechanism for sustainable management of forests for mitigation and adaptation.

On the issue of market mechanisms, Bolivia stressed the importance of this to the ratification by the developed countries of the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol and the need for increased ambition. It said that there cannot be a decision on the markets if these are focused to further promote global warming without achieving a real reduction in greenhouse gases, sustainable development and environmental integrity. It said the non-market mechanism is the only chance to build a holistic approach to advance the protection of the integrity of Mother Earth and the rights of nature.

Swaziland speaking for the **African Group** said that the guidelines for measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) of domestically supported NAMAs for developing countries should not be too prescriptive.

The European Union said it would like to see enhancement of the Nairobi Work Programme including dissemination and exchange of

information. It also would like to have more clarity on mitigation actions including clarification of pledges and work towards agreement of modalities on market mechanism. It said science must be at the core of the discussion of the 2013-2015 review and look forward to a positive start to the expert dialogue.

South Korea speaking for the **Environmental Integrity Group (EIG)** said the guidelines for domestic MRV of domestically supported NAMAs is a crucial pillar and must be advanced. It would like to have substantial decisions on the framework for various approaches and new market mechanisms at COP 19. On REDD-plus, it hoped to see the completion of methodologies on MRV and safeguards reporting.

Representing the **Umbrella Group, Australia** said the Nairobi Work Programme should be reinvigorated by organising work around key sectors and ensuring that the new phase of the programme is targeted on adaptation. Recognising that there is considerable work on REDD-plus, it said Parties need to prioritise efforts on methodological issues, adding that discussion on institutional arrangements for forests is premature. It wants to see progress on agriculture where moving forward with MRV of mitigation in the sector is its priority. On new market mechanisms, it said enhancing the role of market in the pre-2020 and post-2020 agreements would incentivise foreign investment and technology transfer.

Philippines viewed the 2013-2015 review as an important component of the work of SBSTA. It wanted focus, on the assessment of the adequacy of long term global goal and of the overall progress in achieving this, particularly through the implementation of commitments under the Convention. This will require Parties to look at the impacts of climate change; the emissions reduction efforts and trajectories of Parties, particularly of Annex 1 Parties taking the lead in mitigation; the extent to which Parties are adapting to climate change impacts; and the extent to which developed countries are assisting developing countries to undertake mitigation and adaptation under the Convention. The assessment of gaps in the implementation of commitments, particularly, will be an eye-opener to guide future actions, it added.