

## Call for balanced progress in Paris Agreement work

Bonn, 10 May (T Ajit) – Developing countries reiterated the call to ensure balanced progress on all items related to the implementation of the Paris Agreement (PA) across the various bodies under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

This call was led by **China** and echoed by **Saudi Arabia** at the first contact group meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA) held on 9 May.

(The UNFCCC's Conference of Parties in Paris, in 2015, had given specific mandates and assigned various tasks across the bodies of the Convention, including the APA, the subsidiary bodies and other constituted bodies in order for Parties to implement the PA.

A major concern of developing countries is to ensure even progress across all the elements of the PA, including adaptation, finance, technology transfer and capacity-building and not just the mitigation element. Developed countries on the other hand, have tended to focus on the mitigation element, the Transparency Framework especially in relation to 'actions' rather than 'support' and the development of market mechanisms under Article 6 of the PA.)

At the APA contact group meeting, **China** suggested to the APA Co-chairs to send a message to the Co-chairs of the subsidiary bodies so that all the items related to the PA implementation could have a similar approach, especially on the items related to means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity building).

"If we do not have similar progress in all the items, it will not be a balanced approach," said China.

**Saudi Arabia** also echoed China's views and also cautioned against progress in some issues over others. "We would expect the same progress to be made on the Paris mandate under the Subsidiary

Body for Implementation (SBI) and Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA)," stressed Saudi Arabia.

In response, APA Co-chair **Jo Tyndall (New Zealand)** said that the Co-chairs had already delivered the message to the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies and that they would continue coordination on the issue. (**Sara Baashan of Saudi Arabia**) is the other APA Co-chair.)

Tyndall also said that on Saturday (13 May), there would be a session with relevant constituted bodies to look at linkages of work. Additionally, she informed Parties that the Co-chairs were consulting with the SBI and SBSTA about the possibility of designing and arranging a joint meeting of the three bodies.

While launching work, Tyndall said that when the APA convened its opening session on 8 May, she had heard Parties express the need to start focusing on the development of elements in relation to the various agenda items, supplemented with textual proposals, where possible.

Tyndall said that while more detailed texts would follow subsequently, a step-wise approach would provide the solid foundation of work. She also added that she had heard Parties' call for the work ahead to proceed in a balanced, coherent manner, while being cognizant of the PA implementation work ongoing in other bodies (see related [TWN Update 2](#)).

(The APA had agreed at the opening plenary on 8 May to launch work through informal consultations facilitated by [two co-facilitators](#) for each of the item.)

Explaining the mode of work in the informal consultations, Tyndall said that the outcome of the work would be captured in a process that was Party-driven and based on the inputs of Parties.

"Given the breadth and diversity of items, co-

facilitators must draw from a variety of approaches, but any approach used must support coherence of items in the agenda. Specific outcomes in this session would be captured in informal notes by the co-facilitators under their own responsibility and with the guidance of the Co-chairs. The general matters will be reflected in APA conclusions,” she said.

“Informal notes could be based on inputs from Parties, such as skeletal outline, headings, bullets or text inputs. The informal notes could also include placeholders for cross referencing that could be included elsewhere. We need to ensure coherence across all the items,” added Tyndall further.

“Every issue must be followed so that they are all completed by 2018. We have been coordinating with chairs of the subsidiary bodies and conveyed the expectation of shifting from concepts to technical work across all bodies,” said the APA Co-chair.

She also encouraged Parties in the forthcoming days to express their views on a clear programme of work not only for COP23, but through to 2018.

She also said that engagement of non-Party stakeholders played an important role in the UNFCCC and suggested that all meetings, including the informal consultations, be open to observers, but if needed, could be restricted to Parties only. She said that typically the informal consultations would be an hour-long each, but there would be at least one two-hour session for each of the agenda items.

In response, developing country Parties outlined their views on the outcome of work of the informal consultations.

**China** sought an explanation on whether the informal notes of the co-facilitators would be consulted with Parties before they are finalized.

Tyndall responded that the informal notes would be prepared on the basis of iterations in the informal consultations. The co-facilitators would put the iterations out and those could be discussed within the individual agenda items. She assured China that the final informal notes would be available before or by the end of the session.

**Saudi Arabia** proposed that Parties’ submissions should serve as the basis and foundation guidance in producing informal notes. “Our technical discussions should clarify the understanding for the co-facilitators to produce informal notes, but for small delegations who cannot attend all the

meetings, and for specific use of terms that are very carefully crafted in submissions, those should provide guidance to the co-facilitators,” it said further.

**India** welcomed the Co-chairs’ idea that the process would remain Party-driven and transparent and that the capturing of progress by the APA Co-chairs and co-facilitators would be based on the inputs of Parties.

“In an attempt to drive to text negotiations, Parties should not lose the range of views that are still emanating. We may move towards conclusions, may have placeholders coming from other sections, but we know that at this juncture, it is important to capture all shades of opinion. There should be no attempt by the co-facilitators to drive conclusions on some items. Many times, it is seen that the range of opinions are not adequately captured. The fact that this is a Party-driven process must be reinforced,” said India.

“We know nothing is agreed till everything is agreed,” India added.

**Brazil** emphasized that Parties should start building a skeletal outline, bullet points and text inputs in the informal consultations. It also suggested that depending on the discussions, APA could think of conducting joint facilitation for items with interlinkages.

Tyndall encouraged Parties to start thinking about intersessional work in relation to individual items and that the Co-chairs would consult with the heads of delegations on the issue.

Referring to the time allocation to the items, **Switzerland** said that not all items needed to be given as much time. It said that while item 3 (on NDCs) had three sub items, it would not be fair for item 3 and item 8 (on matters related to the Adaptation Fund) to be allotted the same amount of time.

Responding to Switzerland on the time allocation to the agenda items, Tyndall said that “While you may have views about the issues to be prioritized, others may have different views.” “So, you will have to trust us,” she added.

Tyndall informed Parties that the groups would be expected to finalize work by 1 pm on 17 May, to allow draft APA conclusions to be available in all six UN languages, and that the closing plenary on 18 May will consider the draft conclusions and the mode of work going forward.

Following the contact group, several informal consultations began on different issues such as on NDCs, the transparency framework, facilitating implementation and compliance, the Adaptation

Fund and matters related to the implementation of the PA.

The APA contact group will next meet to take stock of work on 11 May.