

No consensus on way forward on pre-2020 issues in COP23 agenda

Bonn, 13 Nov (Meena Raman)- Consensus could not be reached on the way forward on addressing pre-2020 issues under the agenda of the 23rd meeting of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC (COP 23) taking place in Bonn, Germany.

On behalf of the Fijian Presidency, Morocco's Foreign Minister, Salaheddine Mezouar, who was COP 22 President, convened informal consultations among Parties on Nov. 10 and 11 to consider a proposal by the **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** to include pre-2020 actions onto the COP 23 agenda.

(The LMDC had proposed the inclusion of the agenda item, which called for more ambitious and accelerated climate action to be taken in the pre-2020 period and was entitled "*Accelerating the implementation of the pre-2020 commitments and actions and increasing the pre-2020 ambition in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 4 of decision 1/CP.19*".)

(Decision 1/CP.19 refers to decisions taken in Warsaw in 2013. An informal consultation was also convened on 8 Nov on the issue, where developed countries expressly rejected the LMDC proposal. See [TWN Update 7](#) for more on this.)

Following the discussions on 8 Nov, the COP22 President presented a proposal to Parties, which was the basis of discussions in the informal consultations held on 10 Nov and 11 Nov.

According to sources, the COP22 President's proposal comprised three items: pre-2020 to be included as part of the facilitative dialogue in 2018; an annual stocktake and an annual high level dialogue to take stock of collective progress on pre-2020 implementation from 2018-2020; and an online portal on pre-2020 actions, where Parties could upload what they are doing on pre-2020.

According to sources, developed countries did not accept the proposal, whereas developing countries wanted to build on the proposal, even though they said that the proposal did not respond to what they were looking for. Further proposals were presented during the consultations by the **LMDC** and the **European Union (EU)**, but Parties could not reach any consensus.

Sources said that **Iran** for the **LMDC** agreed with the inclusion of pre-2020 issues as part of Facilitative Dialogue 2018, but wanted the inclusion to be based on the mandates of the Warsaw decision. It also wanted to have more concrete action than just dialogues and stocktakes, and proposed that the United Nations Secretary General be requested to organize a high-level event in New York by May 2018 for the deposit of instruments of ratification of the Doha Amendment.

Iran also proposed that developed countries should make submissions to the UNFCCC Secretariat, by May 2018, on the actions they have taken to implement the Warsaw decision, wherein they indicate information on the implementation, revisit and enhancement of their 2020 targets pledged under Cancun decision; review and remove the conditions for enhancement of their 2020 targets; provide increased financing, technology transfer, capacity building; and a roadmap with quantified targets for the provision of financing to 2020. Iran also proposed that pre-2020 issue must be in the COP agenda as a standing item for 2018-2020 and these should be captured in a formal decision.

On the other hand, sources said that the **EU** proposed that the Fijian Presidency create a space to discuss pre-2020 action during the high level segment of the talks in Bonn (which begin on 16 Nov.)

It seems that **Ecuador** for the **G77 and China** expressed disappointment and frustration that the proposal by the COP22 President was so distant from the initial proposal (by the LMDC) of having a specific item on meeting the pre-2020 commitments. Ecuador also said that there should be a framework of solutions and a deadline of 2018 for countries to submit their instruments of ratification for the Doha Amendment, thus bringing into force the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol. Ecuador also conveyed that the proposals of the COP22 President and the EU were still far from their position to include a comprehensive treatment of pre-2020 actions and implementation in the COP.

Sources revealed that the **Umbrella Group** in particular, maintained that the pre-2020 issues were already being discussed under several other agenda items and the issue did not need any more dedicated space in the negotiations. They were also of the view that Parties had their hands full in relation to the Paris Agreement implementation work programme and could not afford to spend time on pre-2020 issues.

According to sources, **Japan** and **Australia**, for the **Umbrella Group**, objected to the LMDC proposal.

Japan referred to the LMDC proposal as “all talk and rhetoric” whereas the world needed “action”. It also conveyed further that it took “great pride” in its pre-2020 actions.

(Japan had communicated a target of 25 per cent emissions reduction by 2020 compared to 1990 levels under the Cancun decision, but revised its target by a 3.8 per cent decrease relative to 2005 levels, which translates into roughly a 3 per cent compared to 1990 levels.)

Australia said that there was a “false dichotomy” being presented as if nothing was happening on pre-2020 action and **New Zealand** said that there was a lot of work happening.

Sources revealed that the **United States** said that except for the Paris Work Programme agenda items, all the other items on the COP agenda address pre-2020 issues. The US was also reported to have said that Parties had the responsibility to keep the agendas reasonable and not duplicate things. It supported the approach proposed by the EU.

In response to Japan, **India** reportedly stressed the ratification of the Doha Amendment and said that

the LMDC was reminding Parties about their obligations and that could not be just “rhetoric”. It also said that Parties were faced with an ambition gap and finance gap and that the world is 40 per cent short to keep up with the global goal of 2°C. It pointed out that these gaps remain despite the Cancun pledges and the idea for a dedicated agenda item was so that Parties could discuss how to close the gap.

China, also in response to remarks by developed countries, wanted to know which agenda item would address the timing of the entry into force of the Doha Amendment; which item would address the enhanced ambition of developed countries; and which item would address the effective solution of support to be given to developing countries in the pre-2020 period. It also stressed that the only solution to address these matters was via the LMDC proposal.

Venezuela and **Pakistan** echoed India and China, while **Nicaragua** underscored that not approving the pre-2020 in the agenda would hit hard on the current negotiation processes.

Malaysia said that numbers did not lie and that more than half of the developing countries had ratified the Doha Amendment, while the number of developed countries that had done so was fewer than those in the annex of the Convention.

South Africa for the **Africa Group** said that the COP 22 President’s proposal to take stock should be in the context of the Warsaw decision and it should happen each year from 2018 to 2020. It also suggested that there should be a synthesis of information from Parties’ biennial reports (under the Convention). South Africa also clarified that the issue was not about whether existing agenda items related to pre-2020 or not. The issue is about closing the ambition gap.

Brazil agreed that the workload was heavy but asked of Parties not to hide behind procedural issues and that not including the pre-2020 agenda was “inexplicable”. It was reported to have said that hiding behind procedural matters indicated that some Parties did not want to enter a focused discussion on how to deal with the issue. It called on the COP22 Presidency to compile all the proposals from the floor and present to Parties for their consideration.

China also agreed with Brazil on the Presidency compiling the proposals of Parties, with attribution if possible and added that Parties could spend some time thinking about the proposals.

In response, the **US** wanted only those proposals to be brought forward, which enjoyed “broad support”.

The COP 22 Presidency assured Parties that he would get back to Parties on the next steps.