

## What to expect at the UN climate talks in Bonn

Bonn, 6 June (Meena Raman) – After the Glasgow climate talks held last year under the United Nations Framework on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement (PA), governments are meeting in Bonn, Germany, from 6 to 16 June, 2022, to advance further work under the Subsidiary Bodies.

The Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) are holding their 56th session meetings (SB 56) to arrive at conclusions and agreement on various matters, in the run up to COP 27, which will take place in November this year in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt.

### Backdrop of the talks

The Bonn intersessional talks are taking place against the backdrop of two recently released reports this year of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) that are part of the 6th Assessment Report (AR 6).

The IPCC's Working Group 2 report on 'Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability' which was released in February this year, has been described by the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, as an "atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership."

The Working Group 3 report on 'Mitigation of Climate Change', was released in April this year. The UN SG in response said that "This report of the IPCC is a litany of broken climate promises.

It is a file of shame, cataloguing the empty pledges that put us firmly on track towards an unliveable world", adding that that "we are on a pathway to global warming of more than double the 1.5°C limit agreed in Paris." The SG lamented that "some government and business leaders are saying one thing, but doing another. Simply put, they are lying. And the results will be catastrophic. This is a climate emergency."

The IPCC's Working Group 1 report on the 'The Physical Science Basis' was released last year, and has been referred by the UNSG as a "code-red" for the future of humanity and the planet. That report notes that from 1850 till 2019, approximately 2,390 gigatonnes carbon dioxide equivalent (GtCO<sub>2</sub>) of greenhouse gases (GHGs) were emitted, and this was responsible, along with lesser contributions from other GHGs, for an increase in global surface temperatures of about 1.07°C compared to pre-industrial times.

According to some developing country experts, the Working Group 1 report reveals that for a 50% probability of limiting temperature rise to below 1.5°C, the total carbon budget remaining is only 500 GtCO<sub>2</sub> of emissions, and with current emissions trends, this will be exhausted within a decade or so, and that global emissions databases reveal that developed countries have been responsible for over 60% of these past emissions.

These reports of the IPCC are expected to be cited by negotiators at the Bonn intersessional to bolster their arguments for greater ambition on

mitigation, adaptation, address loss and damage and climate finance.

Casting a pall over the atmosphere of the talks will certainly be the war in Ukraine, which has serious implications for the climate, especially with many developed countries planning to continue reliance and expansion in the use of fossil fuels, due to energy security concerns and energy prices.

## **SOME KEY ISSUES UNDER NEGOTIATIONS**

### *Call for issues to be added to the agenda of the SBs*

At the opening of the SB sessions, the adoption of the provisional agendas of the respective bodies is expected to see some fireworks.

The **Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** have proposed the addition of two new agenda items to be included for the consideration of the SBs. One is on the 'Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation' and the other is on 'Matters relating to the Glasgow Dialogue on loss and damage'.

- *The Glasgow-Sharm el-Sheikh work programme on the global goal on adaptation*

In Glasgow last year, Parties decided to establish and launch a comprehensive two-year work programme on the global goal on adaptation (GGA), and it was also agreed that the work programme will be carried out jointly by the SBs.

While provisions have been made by the Chairs of the SBs, (Marianne Karlsen of Norway who is SBI Chair and Tosi-Mpanu-Mpanu of the Democratic Republic of Congo who is the SBSTA Chair) to hold an in-session workshop under the work programme that will be conducted from 8 to 9 June under what is called 'Mandated events' in the provisional agendas, there is no separate dedicated agenda item on the GGA.

The LMDC proposed a dedicated agenda item on the GGA to enable Parties to consider all relevant matters under it, in addition to the in-session workshop that will be organized. TWN has learnt that the

LMDC proposal has received support from all the sub-groups of developing countries, leading to a common position of the Group of 77 and China for the inclusion of this agenda item.

(Normally, every item on the agenda will lead to the establishment of a contact group for the consideration of matters by Parties to advance further work, as per the mandates of previous decisions adopted on the matter. The contact group discussions and negotiations usually lead to conclusions that are agreed to and adopted as further decisions on that matter).

In the decision adopted at Glasgow, Parties agreed on the objectives of the GGA work programme, which are to:

- (a) Enable the full and sustained implementation of the PA, towards achieving the GGA, with a view to enhancing adaptation action and support;
- (b) Enhance understanding of the GGA, including of the methodologies, indicators, data and metrics, needs and support needed for assessing progress towards it;
- (c) Contribute to reviewing the overall progress made in achieving the GGA as part of the global stocktake referred to in Article 7(14), and Article 14 of the PA with a view to informing the first and subsequent global stocktakes;
- (d) Enhance national planning and implementation of adaptation actions through the process to formulate and implement national adaptation plans and through nationally determined contributions and adaptation communications;
- (e) Enable Parties to better communicate their adaptation priorities, implementation and support needs, plans and actions, including through adaptation communications and nationally determined contributions;
- (f) Facilitate the establishment of robust, nationally appropriate systems for monitoring and evaluating adaptation actions;

(g) Strengthen implementation of adaptation actions in vulnerable developing countries; and

(h) Enhance understanding of how communication and reporting instruments established under the Convention and the PA related to adaptation can complement each other in order to avoid duplication of efforts.

Hopefully, the issue of including the GGA work programme as a dedicated agenda item will be accepted without objections to advance work on the matter.

- *Glasgow Dialogue on Loss and Damage*

The LMDC made a similar call for the inclusion of a dedicated agenda item on ‘Matters relating to the Glasgow Dialogue on loss and damage’, in addition to this being treated as a ‘Mandated event’ under the provisional agenda. TWN has also learnt that this proposal has been agreed to by all developing countries under the G77 and China.

In Glasgow, Parties agreed to “establish the Glasgow Dialogue between Parties, relevant organizations and stakeholders to discuss the arrangements for the funding of activities to avert, minimize and address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change, to take place in the first sessional period of each year of the SBI, concluding at its sixtieth session (June 2024)”.

Discussions on loss and damage were particularly contentious in Glasgow, with developing countries pushing for a facility for loss and damage finance, while developed countries, especially the US were firmly opposed to this. The eventual compromise was just to have a dialogue instead of a loss and damage finance facility.

At the present SB session in Bonn, a first Dialogue is being convened over three half-days from 7, 8 and 11 June, which according to the scenario note by the Chair of the SBI “will deliberate on and explore the landscape of how the implementation of relevant approaches are, and can be funded under and outside the UNFCCC process...”. The SBI Chair’s note

further states that “...it is my understanding that the Glasgow Dialogue will focus specifically on arrangements for funding...” as regards averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage.

Whether the call for a dedicated agenda item to discuss this matter is agreed to remains to be seen.

### *Santiago network under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage*

Another related matter is the Santiago network on loss and damage (SNLD) which was established at COP 25, to catalyse technical assistance for averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage in developing countries. In Glasgow, the functions of the SNLD were agreed on and also that funds will be provided to support its functions. It was also decided that at SB 56, recommendations for a decision to be adopted at COP 27 are to be developed on the institutional arrangements for the network.

### *Global Stocktake*

The first global stocktake (GST) will take place in 2023, as agreed under the PA to assess the collective progress of Parties in achieving the Agreement’s goals, including on mitigation, adaptation, and the means of implementation and support, in light of equity and the best available science. The issues of loss and damage as well as response measures are also being considered by the GST.

Under the PA, the outcome of the GST is to inform Parties in updating and enhancing their actions and support in accordance with the relevant provisions of the PA. The GST process has therefore been viewed as a ‘ratchet’ mechanism for enhancing ambition on all elements of action and support.

The GST consists of three components: information collection and preparation, which commenced at SB 52–55; technical assessment, which will start at SB 56 and conclude at SB 58 (June 2023); and consideration of outputs, which will take place at CMA 5 (November 2023).

## ***Mitigation Work Programme***

In Glasgow, Parties had agreed to “to establish a work programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation” in this critical decade, and requested the SBs to recommend a draft decision on this matter for consideration and adoption by CMA 4 (in November 2022) “in a manner that complements the GST”. (The CMA refers to the Conference of Parties to the PA).

Some developing countries in Glasgow were very concerned with the purpose of the mitigation work programme, when there already exists the GST process, whose outcome is to scale up of ambition not only on mitigation, but also on adaptation and the means of implementation.

According to the scenario note of Chairs for SB 56, the scope and modalities of the work programme will be discussed, “taking into consideration that the work programme should add value to and complement the GST”.

What exactly will the work programme consist of, its time-frame and modality can be expected to be the subject of intense discussions.

## ***Matters on climate finance***

In relation to finance, matters on the agenda of the SBI include the following –

- ***The Adaptation Fund (AF)***

The two issues that will be addressed are (a) membership of the AF Board and (b) the fourth review of the AF.

The AF was initially established under the Kyoto Protocol (KP) in 2001. In 2018, it was decided that the AF shall serve the PA. The AF is financed by a share of proceeds from the Clean Development Mechanism under the KP and other sources. It was agreed that once the share of proceeds becomes available under Article 6(4) mechanism of the PA, the AF shall no longer serve the KP.

On the issue of the membership of the AF, presently, the Board is composed of 16 members and 16 alternates. At SB 56, Parties have to consider the matter of ensuring that developing and developed countries that are Parties to the PA are eligible for membership on the Board. (The United States and Canada are not a Parties to the KP but are Parties to the PA).

On the fourth review of the AF, Parties agreed in Glasgow to undertake the review of the AF in accordance with the terms of reference which were agreed to. Work on this will continue at SB 56.

- ***New collective quantified goal on climate finance (NCQG)***

At CMA 3, Parties agreed to the establishment of an ad hoc work programme on the NCQG from 2022 to 2024, with the conduct of four technical expert dialogues (TED) per year. The first TED was held in March this year, while the second will be held in conjunction with SB 56 on 13 – 14 June.

The purpose of the work programme is to set a NCQG prior to 2025, taking into account the needs and priorities of developing countries.

At the first TED this year, Zaheer Fakir from South Africa (who is also the climate finance coordinator for the G77/China) said that the new finance goal should be in the range of USD 1- 2 trillion. Fakir came to this conclusion after considering the UNFCCC’s Standing Committee on Finance’s ‘Needs Determination Report’ which costed the needs of developing countries. (For further details, see <https://www.twn.my/title2/climate/info.service/2022/cc220305.htm>).

It can be expected that developed countries would resist arriving at any target number for the NCQG at the second TED, despite the availability of information on the needs of developing countries in implementing their NDCs.

The above are among the key issues that will be important to watch at SB 56.