



## Making the Mitigation Work Programme a “safe space”

Bonn, 22 June (Radhika Chatterjee) - Countries shared their views on what it would take to make the ‘Mitigation Work Programme’ (MWP) a “safe space for overcoming barriers and take actionable solutions”, in the first two informal consultations held on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> June, at the on-going Bonn climate talks scheduled to end on 26<sup>th</sup> June.

Discussions were presided over by co-facilitators **Ursula Fuentes (Germany)** and **Maesela John Kekana (South Africa)**. They began the session by laying out the structure for discussions under the MWP in the first week of the talks where time would be spent on exchanging views on: how they think the programme could be a safe space, the digital platform proposal by Brazil and potential elements of a draft decision to be considered at the 7<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA.7).

Several developing countries including the **Like-minded developing countries (LMDC)**, the **African Group**, **Arab Group**, **India**, **China**, **Egypt**, **South Africa** and **Algeria** expressed that the MWP would remain a safe space so long as its mandate was respected. **India** also pointed out that developing countries were already doing much more than their fair share of mitigation action, but a key barrier they were facing in implementing those actions is the lack of financial and

technological support.

Calling the MWP a valuable space for exchanging knowledge and learning, these countries stressed the importance of the digital platform. They also highlighted the need for bringing back the ‘pitch hub events’ under the ‘investment focused events’ (IFE) of the programme to provide the space for matchmaking the mitigation projects of developing countries with donors for their implementation.

On the other hand, developed countries like the **European Union (EU)**, the **Environmental Integrity Group (EIG)**, the **United Kingdom (UK)**, **Norway**, **Australia**, **South Korea** and some developing country groupings like the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)**, the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Nations (AILAC)** and the **Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS)** said discussing key messages and recommendations from the fifth global dialogue (GD5) and the IFEs for scaling up mitigation action would make the MWP a safe space. Stressing on the need for keeping the 1.5 °C temperature goal alive, they expressed disappointment with the functioning of MWP.

[According to the mandate of the MWP as

provided in [decision 4/CMA.4](#), two global dialogues and IFEs are supposed to be held for exchange of views and experiences. In 2025, the GD5 and IFE was held in Panama City on 19-20<sup>th</sup> May, presided over by its co-chairs, **Angela Churie Kallhauge (Sweden)** and **Gao Xiang (China)**. The topics for the dialogues this year are “Enabling mitigation solutions in the industry, AFOLU (agriculture, forestry, and other land uses) and waste sectors, drawing on national and regional experience”. During the fifth GD, Parties discussed the topic of ‘Enabling mitigation solutions in the forest sector, drawing on national and regional experience’. A report of the session is to be prepared by the co-chairs, which is not yet available.]

**China** for the **LMDC** said that work under MWP has progressed through the exchange of views that has helped Parties learn from each other” and that “we gained a lot from it”. It also added that some Parties “wished to enlarge the scope of the MWP” by linking it to the mitigation components of the global stocktake (GST) outcomes and shift the burden of mitigation on to the global South, without providing the means of implementation. It said none of the Annex I Parties (developed countries) will fulfill their nationally determined contributions (NDCs), and that it is those groups “who are not willing to implement” are the ones who are “trying to undermine” work on mitigation. This it said is “not a good signal” to send about what countries should do in the future. It said that a basic requirement for making MWP as a safe space is “to stick to the mandate” and start from issues on which consensus already exists amongst Parties. It said that a good starting point for discussions on MWP would be to speak about ways by which the GDs can be made more efficient in the future. It also asked for the discussions to focus on the function of the IFEs to unlock the finance and said that the previous format of pitch hub events were “really helpful” in matching donors with projects. It also hoped that the GDs would provide more support to developing countries for implementation by closing gaps in financial support. It emphasized that developing countries “need support from developed countries, especially from public finance” for which the implementation of Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement (PA) is required.

**Zimbabwe** for the **African Group** said that Africa’s ambitious NDCs remain unsupported with little or no financial support. Neither does the continent witness any technology transfer. It added that African countries have limited access to affordable finance, experience a narrow fiscal space and high indebtedness. It pointed out that the conditional aspect of most African countries’ NDCs remain unimplemented due to these reasons. It cautioned against the idea of setting new targets and asked for taking a holistic approach in protecting forests.

**Saudi Arabia** for the **Arab Group** said the GDs contribute directly to the objectives of the MWP and that mitigation pathways and sectoral priorities would vary, and strategies in the programme must also reflect that. It suggested that the MWP should continue as a platform for sharing solutions from the ground for learning and knowledge transfer. It said the GDs “are delivering” and “creating space for real world exchange of knowledge on what works and what doesn’t work.” It added that taking action without having means of implementation is difficult. It said it is the structured flow of MWP that makes it a safe space, adding that factors that would contribute further to this are “real progress” and “technology transfer”. It said there is a need for shielding the process from political signals because giving guidance through such signals involves “oversimplification” of discussions that are technical and complex in nature. It said further that MWP is a knowledge exchange platform that “cannot prescribe” and should not “infringe on countries’ sovereign choices and their nationally determined mitigation pathways.”

**Egypt** said that it is important to have a common understanding of paragraph 2 of decision 4/CMA.4, which operationalized the MWP and elaborated on the elements mentioned. [Paragraph 2 of decision 4/CMA.4 reads: “Decides that the work programme shall be operationalized through focused exchanges of views, information and ideas, noting that the outcomes of the work programme will be non-prescriptive, non-punitive, facilitative, respectful of national sovereignty and national circumstances, take into account the nationally determined nature of NDCs and will not impose new targets or goals].

It said, “the adjective ‘prescriptive’ means telling people what should be done or how something should be done. All Parties agreed that the outcomes will not tell them what to do...The adjective ‘punitive’ means inflicting, or intended as punishment. All Parties agreed that the outcomes would not punish or harm them... ‘Sovereignty’ is defined as the supreme power or authority of a state to govern itself. All Parties agreed that they will fully respect each other’s authority to define their own NDCs and their own targets.”

It said, “Parties agreed that NDCs are determined by each individual nation, rather than being imposed or standardized by an international body.” Parties agreed that the outcomes will not provide for any new target or goal.” It said further that ‘facilitative’ is defined as “making something easier or assisting the progress of something.”

Egypt said that MWP “could fulfill its mandate of being facilitative and provide a safe space for all Parties,” and that its outcomes “must not be prescriptive in nature and impose any new targets or goals.”

**India** said a key aspect for ensuring that MWP remains a safe space would involve respecting its mandate. “Continuous attempts to renegotiate the mandate hinder constructive dialogue.” Adding further it said, “we do not think the MWP is failing to deliver on its mandate. In fact, the GD is a space where we can speak about our experiences, challenges, and barriers and also listen to experiences of others. As long as the spirit of this exchange is honoured, i.e. that we learn from one another and this learning informs us on how we can do better, we are upholding the spirit of the MWP and its mandate.”

It said further that guidance to “Parties on where and how emissions can be reduced” would translate into being “prescriptive”, which would create barriers to the dialogue. It added, “many developing countries including India have ambitious targets. Targets that are far higher than what our fair contribution to climate change mitigation would entail, given our low historical responsibility... Most of our targets are being met through our own efforts, even as they create not just double but triple burdens for us as we still have developmental gaps have to meet.” Responding to

the repeated calls for increasing mitigation ambition, it said, “there is no discussion on the substantial gap between the needs of developing countries and the support available from developed country Parties.” It said further that “frank discussions about these issues can go a long way in creating a safe space for MWP. But more than just a frank discussion, the actual faithful implementation of the principles of the Convention and its PA... without cherry picking elements based on convenience can go a long way in not just making the MWP room a safe space but also in strengthening multilateralism that is really needed right now.”

**South Africa** said it realises that “up to now the GDs have worked well to share best practices, experiences and lessons learnt for mitigation based on the central mandate of the MWP...However, we have always maintained that we need funding to scale up mitigation ambition at a country and regional level. We have always emphasized that the IFEs could be the safe space for overcoming barriers and in exploring and implementing actionable and practical solutions...This could be a space for matchmaking between project developers and funders especially for developing countries through the pitch hubs. Through the GDs and IFEs, it is clear that most countries have projects and programmes to implement.” It added that “a fundamental principle...is that higher mitigation ambition in developing countries requires higher ambition of support.”

**Algeria** said it saw « the MWP as a successful experience as it has provided a space to promote experience sharing and concrete examples of mitigation actions on the ground and a channel to enhance international cooperation. And this space will remain a safe one for as long as we will respect its mandate... Resetting mandates and attempts to undermine the very nationally determined nature of this process constitute a huge impediment and prevent us each time from capitalizing on the successful outcomes of the dialogues and leading us to waste valuable time in this time of urgency trying to avoid.” It said further that “as a developing country Algeria, has a very high ambition and we have invested an equally high cost in implementing the unconditional part of our NDC which we have achieved way ahead of time. However, without predictable and concrete international financing, a

frank discussion on the international barriers burdening our economies, access to the best available technologies and most importantly a reinstated trust within this multilateral process, the conditional part of most of developing countries NDC's will unfortunately remain unfulfilled."

**China** in its national capacity said that the MWP is a "valuable platform for the exchange of views and ideas across different sectors," and that it has "effectively delivered on its mandate". It said discussions under MWP should not go beyond the scope of its mandate. It said that the bottom-up nature of the PA must be kept in mind rather than in imposing any prescriptive targets through a top-down approach.

**Bangladesh** for the **LDCs** said the GDs and IFEs "provided good opportunity to deepen our understanding on best practices, challenges, barriers, opportunities." It also said that the world is out of track to align with 1.5 °C pathways and that countries should try to benefit from other discussions happening around implementation and referred to the GST outcomes. It also said that matchmaking platforms have "great value" and stressed the need to "consider discussion around the performance of the MWP."

**Brazil** said the mandate of the MWP had been crafted very carefully and that discussions under the programme could be made safe "as determined by qualifiers." It said MWP can be useful as a "cooperative space for enhancing mitigation ambition and implementation without taking us back to prescriptions, commitments without means of implementation", by exploring "actionable solutions in the form of messages" that "constructive rather than coercive" and in line with the mandate of MWP. Regarding the issue of discussing key messages from the GD5, it said, "it would be wise to wait for the report before discussing what those messages" should be. It proposed that the role of Indigenous Peoples as stewards of forests could be recognized as one of the key messages, and that it was "not necessarily conflictive" and could "be implemented in a nationally determined manner."

**Samoa** for **AOSIS** said the MWP is not delivering for small islands, both operationally and in terms

of outcomes. It said MWP is not "fit for purpose" for scaling up and implementing mitigation ambition. It said MWP would become a safe space if Parties listened learned from each other to collaborate and co-create. Adding further, it said the MWP discussions should focus on keep the 1.5 °C goal alive. Calling it a "lived reality" for SIDS, it said the MWP is "lacking in implementation" and reminded everyone that AOSIS has been repeatedly emphasizing the need for linking the MWP to the GST outcomes. It said that the "MWP is the primary work programme that can follow up on GST commitments", particularly in relation paragraphs 28 (on transitioning away from fossil fuels) and 33 (on ending deforestation), keeping in mind the need for submitting 1.5 °C aligned pathways in NDCs, and best available climate science. It also mentioned the need for phasing out fossil fuel subsidies and making efforts for a "just, orderly, equitable" (energy) transition to ensure that "SIDS don't sink".

**Colombia** for **AILAC** said that the MWP has not "led to substantive outcomes" and that it is important to consider how the programme could contribute to the GST. It said the MWP is "not fit for purpose" and that "it has lost momentum" by becoming "more of information sharing platform with limited impact". It said they had "invested significant efforts to ensure strong evidence-based inputs to the programme" but those insights "have not been translated into actions." It added that the gap between mitigation ambition and implementation is not being addressed in the programme. It also recognized that responsibilities have to be shared in a differentiated manner and that "not everyone will take the same action."

The **EU** said that the functionality of the MWP will be put on the spot in terms of its relation on where Parties stand while assessing mitigation actions for 2030 and 2035. It said Parties should work on messages they want to include from the GD5 in the decision text of the MWP. It said these messages should focus on where and how Parties plan to reduce their emissions. It asked for messages for safeguarding forests from deforestation. It said MWP is a space to talk about mitigation options, solutions, barriers and opportunities. It also said that Parties should start discussing "elements" of the draft decision structure, including messages from the GDs, improvements to the dialogues and

IFEs and the next steps, adding further that the “nature of the MWP is to facilitate climate action.”

**Switzerland** for the **EIG** said that the MWP is needed to help deliver 1.5 °C. Referring to the GD5, it highlighted the importance of forests for climate and expressed a desire for a “robust” and “forward looking decision.” It acknowledged the “target fatigue” and said it upheld the nationally determined nature of NDCs. It said that the “MWP has fallen short of delivering on its objective of keeping 1.5 °C within reach.”

The **UK** said the MWP would be a safe space if it provided “a space to discuss the outputs” from the GD5 held recently and that there should be space to hear from Parties on how discussions at the dialogue support Parties to achieve their targets. It added that these discussions should “always reflect the need for addressing the global crisis. A safe space in MWP would also allow Parties “to see opportunities and problems in this process, [and] if we are not able to do so – we will not be able to deliver on the mandate.”

**Australia** acknowledged that the GDs had helped in learning practical lessons but that it found it “hard to see how those discussions alone are expected to address the MWP’s core objectives.” It

said “it is useful to start reflecting on how the MWP is addressing mitigation needs.” It added that it is “not suggesting new targets or goals” and asked for the inclusion of key messages and recommendations on forests and the waste sector. It said there is a “need to discuss appropriate framing” and that it is “not looking to impose anything.”

**South Korea** said the MWP decision adopted last year set a precedent which made it a safe space by incorporating some outcomes from the GDs held. It said this was done without imposing any new targets and disrespecting the sovereignty of Parties.

**Norway** wanted discussions on important elements from the dialogue on forests and incentives to achieve them “through a broad range of instruments” including “carbon pricing.” It said progress on these elements would send “positive signals for international cooperation.”

Discussions also began on the creation of a digital platform and the draft structure of the decision towards the end of the first week of the SB sessions, which will continue in the second week of the climate talks.