

## Mitigation work programme to continue with global dialogues

New Delhi, 19 Dec (Radhika Chatterjee): Parties adopted a [decision](#) for advancing the work of the 'Sharm-el-Sheikh mitigation ambition and implementation work programme' (MWP) on the concluding day of COP28, Dec 13. The decision was adopted by the fifth meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement (CMA.5) and requests the Co-chairs of the MWP to guide the UNFCCC secretariat in organizing future global dialogues and investment focused events to enable "effective engagement of participants".

The manner in which the decision would include a reference to the findings of the [annual report](#) that contains "a compilation of the two individual reports on the global dialogues held in 2023" under the MWP, was one of the main bones of contention amongst Parties.

Also in contention was the push by developed countries, as well as the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** to include "high-level messages" that would be aimed at raising mitigation ambition and acknowledge the urgency for keeping the goal of 1.5 °C alive, and for the MWP to be the "follow-up" mechanism for the global stocktake (GST) in relation to the mitigation element.

This was strongly resisted by major developing country groupings such as the **Like-minded developing countries (LMDC)**, the **African**

**Group** and the **Arab Group** who insisted that the objective of the MWP was to facilitate dialogues and exchange views to provide an opportunity to Parties to share experiences and learn from each other and that the focus should rather be on improving those dialogues to ensure Parties are able to make the most out of the global dialogues conducted under the work programme.

After much wrangling among Parties, the "high-level messages" were not included in the final MWP decision text, and neither is the MWP a follow-up mechanism of the GST.

According to sources, the differences over this issue were bridged by Parties agreeing to the inclusion of some of those "high-level messages" in the mitigation section of the GST outcome, which included the following:

- "(a) Tripling renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency improvements by 2030;*
- (b) Accelerating efforts towards the phase-down of unabated coal power;*
- (c) Accelerating efforts globally towards net zero emission energy systems, utilizing zero- and low-carbon fuels well before or by around mid-century;*

- (d) *Transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science;*
- (e) *Accelerating zero- and low-emission technologies, including, inter alia, renewables, nuclear, abatement and removal technologies such as carbon capture and utilization and storage, particularly in hard-to-abate sectors, and low-carbon hydrogen production;*
- (f) *Accelerating and substantially reducing non-carbon-dioxide emissions globally, including in particular methane emissions by 2030;*
- (g) *Accelerating the reduction of emissions from road transport on a range of pathways, including through development of infrastructure and rapid deployment of zero-and low-emission vehicles;*
- (h) *Phasing out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies that do not address energy poverty or just transitions, as soon as possible."*

However, the MWP decision adopted only took "note" of the "key findings, opportunities, barriers and actionable solutions summarized in the annual report on the work programme, recognizing that it does not represent an exhaustive summary of all views including, inter alia, in relation to renewable energy, grid and energy storage, carbon dioxide capture and use and carbon dioxide capture and storage, energy efficiency, deploying and shifting to collective and non-motorized modes of transport, energy and resource efficiency in the transport sector, electrification of vehicles and shifting to low or zero-carbon fuels, as well as the information in the annual report on associated policies and measures, financing issues, technology and capacity, and sustainable development and socioeconomic impacts..." (See paragraph 6 of the decision.)

The MWP consultations witnessed intense negotiations in the first week of COP28 on these matters (See [TWN Update no. 12](#)) in the informal consultations presided over by Co-facilitators **Kay Harrison (New Zealand)** and **Carlos Fuller (Belize)**.

Major developing countries during the informal consultations, had expressed concerns as they did not want to see a "cherry picking" of findings from the annual report of the MWP in the decision text.

**Saudi Arabia**, speaking for the **Arab Group**, said,

"the challenge, however is capturing the views in a nuanced and comprehensive manner given the richness and depth of the discussions that took place...it is not acceptable to cherry pick and highlight certain solutions or messages from the annual report/dialogues in decision as some have suggested. The dialogues have shown the diversity of solutions and various pathways/approaches to chart out and choose from. There will not be one solution that applies uniformly across all countries."

**China**, speaking for the **LMDC** said "we do not support capturing any views from the annual report in this decision, especially the unbalanced conclusions with policy-prescriptive judgement, bearing in mind the report is not produced in a Party-driven manner". It also said that in the future it would like to be given an opportunity to discuss the annual report before it is released so that if its findings are incorporated in any decision text, at least Parties have had a chance to share their views on it.

Developed countries like **Australia**, the **European Union (EU)**, the **Environmental Integrity Group (EIG)**, **Japan**, and **Norway** had insisted on urgently scaling up mitigation ambition through the inclusion of high-level messages aimed at enhancing mitigation activities. They also called for linking the mitigation aspects of the GST to the MWP, and for the MWP to provide for a "follow up" on the GST.

**Japan** justified the linking of MWP and GST by saying that the mandate of MWP provided that the MWP would be established "in a manner that complements the global stocktake". **Norway** expressed that the MWP should become an "implementing vehicle" of the GST. **Australia** and **Japan** argued for the inclusion of "high-level messages" that were being negotiated in the discussions of GST in the MWP text to reflect mitigation ambition, to send "strong messages" and "signals" to the world on achieving the energy transition.

**EU** and **Canada** called for a message on the need for formulating more ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs) by Parties. Some developing countries like the **AOSIS**, the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and**

**Caribbean nations (AILAC)**, and the **Least Developed Countries (LDC)** also echoed those calls for raising ambition.

The **LMDC, African Group, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay (ABU)** and the **Arab Group**, on the other hand, emphasized the importance of respecting the mandate of the MWP as laid out in decision the decision from Sharm-el-Sheikh and avoid duplication of work that was already being carried out under the GST.

**India** said that its primary concern on the MWP “is that it should not serve as a burden-shifting mechanism from developed countries to “everyone’s responsibility,” including developing countries and non-state actors, private sector financiers.” It further added, “MWP must not be a vehicle for developed countries to impose further obligations on developing countries which will undermine the nationally determined character of our NDCs. The purpose of MWP is not to pressurize developing countries to increase their ambition, with developed countries not following suit, and neither providing support to developing countries”. On the question of including ambitious language for NDCs, India said, “MWP cannot become a way to impose sector specific mitigation efforts, beyond what is a part of its NDCs. This is more-so important to preserve the nationally determined nature of the commitments”.

The **Arab Group** and **LMDC** pointed out that the mandate of the MWP provided for the establishment of a platform for exchanging views and learning from each other’s experiences, and that the focus of the discussions at COP28 should be on improving these dialogues, and not renegotiating the mandate of MWP as decided last year at CMA 4.

Another major point of contention amongst Parties was the question of whether or not “regional dialogues” should be held under MWP in 2023-2024. In the final decision adopted, the text mentions the following in paragraph 11 on the issue of regional dialogues:

*“Recalls paragraph 9 of decision 4/CMA.4, in which it was decided that other in-person or hybrid dialogues may be held each year in conjunction with existing events, such as the regional climate weeks,*

*at the discretion of the Co-chairs of the work programme with a view to ensuring inclusive and balanced geographical representation at the dialogues;”*

The demand for holding regional dialogues was raised by some developing countries like the **AOSIS** and developed countries. **Belize**, speaking for **AOSIS** said, “We reiterate the importance of having regional dialogues, mini dialogues, located in different regions focused on needs that are related to that region. So that the issues related to particular regions can be called for dialogues.” They were supported in this call for regional dialogues by **Australia, Canada, and the United States (US)**.

Other developing countries however opposed the idea of holding regional dialogues as they wanted the dialogues held under MWP to be inclusive of all geographies and not be restricted to specific areas only.

**Saudi Arabia**, speaking for the **Arab Group** said, “the decision makes it clear that the MWP must ensure inclusive and balanced geographical representation at the dialogues, hence why they are global in nature, and not restricted to certain regions. Which is the whole purpose behind a global dialogue. If Parties wish to host mitigation discussions in conjunction with regional climate weeks, they are welcome to do so; however it will fall outside the scope of the MWP and will not be captured in any MWP summary report.”

**Zimbabwe** speaking for the **African Group** said, “it will be best to ensure that dialogues must be held in global context, though it must include regional elements”. **India** too emphasized on retaining the global nature of the dialogues.

According to the MWP decision, the work of the MWP will be presided over in 2023-24 by the same Co-Chairs as the ones in the previous year, **Amr Osama Abdel-Aziz (Egypt)** and **Lola Vallejo (France)**.

Keeping in line with the mandate provided by the decision agreed to last year in Sharm-el-Sheikh ([decision 4/CMA.4](#) paragraphs 1-3), it also requested the UNFCCC’s Subsidiary Bodies to “consider progress, including key findings,

opportunities and barriers, in implementing the work programme... at each of their sessions, starting ...June 2024 until Nov. 2026”.

The operative part of the decision regarding the actions that the Co-chairs have to take for facilitating engagement of participants in MWP is detailed in paragraph 10 of the decision as follows:

*“(a) Announcing the topic, date and venue and sharing the agenda well in advance;*

*(b) Enhancing the participation of relevant experts and other non-Party stakeholders, particularly from developing countries, including by expanding virtual participation opportunities, while encouraging the high-level champions to support the effective participation of non-Party stakeholders;*

*(c) Enhancing the investment-focused events, with a view to unlocking finance, including through presentations by Parties to potential financiers, and by inviting to the events more multilateral development banks, financial institutions and*

*representatives of relevant multilateral climate funds, including the Green Climate Fund;*

*(d) Taking into account, under the guidance of the co-chairs of the work programme, linkages of subtopics between the global dialogues and investment-focused events when organizing these dialogues and events;”.*

Parties, observers and other non-Party stakeholders can submit suggested topics for discussions in the global dialogues to be held in 2024 by 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2024. Based on the submissions received, the Co-Chairs will decide on the topics for the dialogues and communicate that by 1<sup>st</sup> March, 2024.