

ADP Workstream 2 Should Not Remain an Academic Exercise, Say Developing Countries

Geneva, 13 February (Hilary Chiew) – Developing countries pointed out that workstream 2 (WS2) of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) risks being an academic exercise if there is no ‘more, faster and now’ implementation.

There was also concern that so far the discussion on the technical examination process (TEP) of WS2 has been overly emphasising the mitigation potential of developing countries compared to similar potential of developed country Parties.

This was expressed at the one-day dedicated meeting on ways and means to advance the TEP in 2015, which was co-facilitated by Tosi Mpanu Mpanu of the Democratic Republic of Congo on the sideline of the ADP on 10 February.

(WS2 deals with enhancing ambition in the pre-2020 period in order to ensure the highest possible mitigation efforts under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change by all Parties.)

The developing countries also pointed out that so far the work under WS2 of the ADP has been merely an academic exercise that identified the areas of high mitigation potential but that concrete actions are needed to accelerate the work in closing the ambition gap in the pre-2020 period. Means of implementation to enable them to enhance their actions was stressed.

Several developing country Parties also expressed deep concern over the presentation by the Food and Agriculture Organisation that highlighted the mitigation potential in the agriculture and land use sector. Brazil lamented over the focus on mitigation actions in developing countries, while little attention was given to the fact that without global efforts, mitigation actions in the forestry sector of Brazil will be seriously compromised. Argentina called for respect for the objective of the Convention,

that is to ensure food production, and said that agriculture in the Convention is in the context of cooperation on development and transfer of technologies but not on mitigation in absolute terms.

The meeting was divided into two parts with a set of three questions each to facilitate discussion.

Part one was titled *Consultations on impacts and outcome of the TEP in 2015*. Parties were asked to discuss and share their views on the ways to implement the Lima Call for Climate Action with regard to the TEP in 2015 in light of the global political momentum and the need for enhanced climate action in the run-up to Paris.

The questions were: How could the technical examination process contribute to enhancing mitigation ambition and implementation of high-impact climate action in developed and developing countries? Building on the previous meetings, how could the technical examination process be strengthened and focused on actionable policy options in 2015? What should be done to ensure dissemination of information and engagement of non-State actors?

Part two was on *Consultations on the ways to engage the UNFCCC institutions and relevant leading international organisations in the TEP in 2015*. (More details below.)

Speaking for the **Group of 77 and China, Mali** said that Parties have been exchanging views on this matter for three years now and the challenge is to turn the identified potential into reality. It said actions in a ‘more, faster and now’ manner should be adopted not in 2020, 2025 or 2030 but now in 2015.

It said it is important that WS2 not be just a developing countries’ effort but due consideration be given to harness the mitigation potential in developed countries as well.

‘That has been the main challenge. We had said time and time again that when we designed the work,

our colleagues (in Annex 1) also engage in a meaningful manner so that the potentials are unlocked,' Mali stressed.

Representing the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), the Maldives** reflected that WS2 is to rapidly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to close the pre-2020 mitigation ambition gap and is something that was agreed in Durban that was a high priority.

However, it said, emissions are not reduced by climate negotiators sitting in meetings but by concrete actions by governments and the private sector. The TEP cannot stop there as this is not an academic exercise.

Noting that there exist concrete actions that are transforming the way we produce and use energy not only for addressing climate change but also to increase energy security, extend energy access, improve public health etc, it added that both developed and developing countries to some extent are already doing these things but we need to do more, faster and now and these efforts can be accelerated through more effective international collaboration.

It pointed out that in many areas, this will require mobilising resources in an efficient and effective manner where the infrastructure built under the Convention can play an important role. Despite the principle that action should be country-driven and therefore the impetus is on the individual country to access the support mechanisms under the Convention, that does not mean there cannot be better focused coordination of the Convention bodies around specific opportunities.

WS2, it said, should serve as a vehicle for the financial mechanism, the technology mechanism and the capacity-building forum to interface with each other and with relevant outside entities to coordinate their efforts and make it easier for Parties to take advantage of specific mitigation opportunities.

On barriers to implementation that are not being effectively addressed by any of the Convention bodies, the Maldives said WS2 should be the incubator of new initiatives that could take any number of forms – an innovative financial instrument, a specialised capacity building task force or maybe a narrow technology sharing agreement, adding that if the international cooperation is not happening, then let's make sure it starts.

Brazil was of the view that to turn the ideas identified in previous technical expert meetings (TEMs) into reality is closely related to means of implementation, in particular finance, and the intention here should be focused on how to scale up incentives for finance, scale up liquidity of resources

to allow voluntary engagement to bring results in implementing policy options in key sectors. It said what is required at the political level is recognition of efforts.

It proposed that a TEM this year should address the question of how to recognise the social and economic value of voluntary mitigation activities and to translate their verified results into units of convertible financial value, for the purpose of leveraging scalable, replicable, innovative and complementary funding, to further promote the implementation of mitigation policy options by Parties, based on nationally-determined sustainable development priorities.

India said it is important to recognise that actions under WS2 must be undertaken by the developed countries to enhance implementation of their commitments to ensure the highest possible mitigation efforts under the Convention. In this regard, WS2 must also focus on the provisions of means of implementation including technology transfer, finance and capacity building support to be provided by developed country Parties to the developing country Parties to enhance ambition in the pre-2020 period. It suggested the development of a catalogue of available technologies, identifying the costs and the financing options.

In its written intervention submitted to the secretariat, India said there is a need to move forward from the present stage of WS2 that primarily provides generic information on high potential areas. Future work shall be focused on translating potentials into workable options, in both developed and developing countries, that take into consideration country-specific requirements. This may require quantification of opportunities and establishing linkages with technology providers and financing institutions, mapping capacity building requirements and facilitating the same. It further said that in the absence of these, WS2 may remain largely an academic exercise.

China said while many countries are excited over the Paris agreement (expected at the year-end COP), in terms of the post-2020 actions, the discussion in WS2 is equally important as dealing with the issue of increasing ambition is for both pre- and post-2020 actions. It said the TEP cannot be treated in a vacuum but needs to bring in the information from other processes such as the multilateral assessment (for developed countries) and the Standing Committee on Finance that is assessing the financial flow for climate financing.

It also noted the lack of early planning for the TEP where many Parties could not engage actively in last year's TEMs as the agenda was only made

available right before the session. It is important to create a positive atmosphere to identify best practices by Parties and give recognition to those best practices.

South Africa said it is an opportune moment to move to the implementation phase instead of going on with presentations by experts, and risk WS2 being a dialogue. For the next phase, it said the TEP should clearly identify high mitigation potential actions that had been undertaken and scale them up with clarity on support to be provided, noting that the various UNFCCC institutions can overcome some of the challenges.

It said the main message is ‘we need implementation and implementation now’, stressing that increasing ambition is not a matter for developing countries only but for all Parties. To that extent, it said, we can all contribute by making sure we ratify the second commitment period (of the Kyoto Protocol).

Saudi Arabia reminded Parties that WS2 forms the basis for and is an enabler of post-2020 climate action and is essentially about accelerating the implementation of existing commitments. In this regard, it said the G77 and China have highlighted several areas where more is to be desired, particularly by developed countries.

As such, Parties would be ill-advised to rush into any new actions without going back and seeing these commitments through, it cautioned.

As far as the TEMs are concerned, it valued them as a space to exchange practices and experiences to better inform actions at home. However, as useful as these TEMS had been, it said they were lacking in terms of adaptation co-benefits.

‘As a developing country and as a region, adaptation is an area that we are eager to explore and exchange experiences on. Furthermore, continuing to focus on mitigation will not undermine adaptation but mitigation itself since each is a side of the same climate action coin,’ it stressed.

Saudi Arabia, therefore, requested the TEMs to be readjusted in favour of adaptation co-benefits and proposed the following areas:

1. Water resources and conservation – this area has further trickled down mitigation co-benefits as water is conserved and reused in arid and semi-arid regions, thereby reducing water distillation
2. Marine protection and blue carbon
3. Economic diversification
4. Desertification and land use
5. Urban planning
6. Food security.

Colombia said it believed WS2 will maintain the political momentum to close the ambition gap and lead us safely to a post-2020 regime. It would support moving into more implementation as a priority for 2015 and said that it is important to continue exploring policy areas, both that are missing like the transport sector but also to dive more in-depth to other identified areas.

The United States said WS2 is engaging a broad range of actors and not just purely state actors. It agreed with the acronym of MFN (more, faster and now) suggested by Mali but it also felt that the mode of implementation needs to be built over time. Let the institutions develop themselves and continue to refine what we are doing here (in the WS2). It said the discussion so far is not enough to carry the work forward and it is time to dive even deeper and focus on specific areas of work.

The European Union said the TEP is an important part of facilitating actions and creating an enabling environment to close the gap. It said the TEP needs to link better with the technology mechanism and financial mechanism. However, it noted that this technical process needs to be linked to the political process where a summary for policy makers can give options to ministers to rally the issue at high level events.

Friends of the Earth International (FOEI) said the clear mandate of WS2 is to increase the mitigation ambition of Parties and that focus on non-state actors and sub-national entities is a form of distraction. The representative said he would like to see a reorientation of the process to close the mitigation gap of Parties to create a safe environment, noting that FOEI has made several submissions like distributed energy system in both developed and developing countries and is heartened that we are not just addressing demand side but also supply side of the energy system. He asked if Parties could look at ending fossil fuel subsidies and shifting them to renewable energy sources and financial transaction taxes to address the financial barriers for renewable energy.

In the second part of the meeting, five UNFCCC institutions, namely the Technology Executive Committee (TEC), the Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN), the Durban Forum for Capacity Building, the Executive Board of Clean Development Mechanism, the Green Climate Fund, as well as the Global Environment Facility (an operating entity of the UNFCCC financial mechanism) updated participants on actions taken in relation to the TEP and informed about their planned activities in 2015 relevant to the TEP.

Participants were invited to discuss and share views on the way for the UNFCCC institutions to contribute more effectively to the TEP and identify opportunities to further enhance collaboration and synergies among these institutions and provide support for implementation work.

Mali speaking for the G77 and China welcomed the TEC 2014-2015 workplan but the challenge is how do we inject the sense of urgency into the workplan. It hoped that there will be clear indication of the development of the linkage between the technology mechanism and the finance mechanism. It said the Durban Forum on capacity building should foster concrete actions on the ground.

Brazil said one might have the wrong impression that WS2 is for action in developing countries only and Parties should bear in mind that there is a broader range of Parties that are targeted for the exercise of WS2. It said the voluntary cancellation of the certified emission reduction (CER) units of the Clean Development Mechanism provides a clear mitigation option and low hanging fruits and could do with some marketing expertise to mainstream this opportunity and what is needed is to increase demand for CER.

China shared the views of Brazil about the impression that WS2 is on developing countries' actions which was definitely not the case. It said it has been said many times that the UNFCCC institutions are handling tasks that are relevant to the work of WS2 and are important for enhancing the collaboration and would need linkages between the institutions to support the projects. It is not sure if the CTCN has sufficient resources to address all the requests that it received.

Australia said it appeared that under the WS2, Parties are also similarly interested in mitigation and adaptation and since Parties are considering what to do in the TEP this year, it wondered if the work of TEC can be accelerated.

To this, the **Chair of the TEC, Gabriel Blanco**, replied that Parties should give TEC the mandate but unfortunately at the Lima COP Parties cannot agree to do so. He said there are almost 300 projects in the technology needs assessment (TNA) pipeline and there is a need to work with CTCN to strengthen those project ideas and for the GCF to finance them.

Switzerland said it got the impression that Parties are saying there is money (for project implementation) but maybe Parties should hear this in the other workstream to depoliticise the process (referring to workstream 1 on the 2015 agreement).

In the afternoon, the discussion on the role of international organisations was divided into action

areas, namely energy, cities, land use and agriculture, and non-CO2 gases.

Responding to the presentation on non-CO2 gases, **Brazil** said in WS2, Parties must avoid over-emphasising short-live climate pollutants and the exaggerated importance assigned to industrial gases that will distract from the actual greenhouse gas emissions. Citing the example of nitrous oxide, it said Brazil managed to bring the emission to zero but due to the lowered price of the CDM credits, these projects are facing many difficulties.

In response to the Food and Agriculture Organisation's presentation on the mitigation potential in land use and the agriculture sector, **Argentina** highlighted the fundamental importance of the relationship between agriculture, climate change and food security, taking into account the need to feed a growing world population in the coming decades.

'In this sense, two main elements should be taken into account when dealing with these matters: the central role of agriculture in food production and in the achievement of economic and social development and poverty eradication, in particular in developing countries; and the particular vulnerability of the agricultural sector to climate change adverse effects,' it stressed.

Argentina said there is a need to respect the objective of the Convention that the stabilisation of greenhouse gas emissions should be achieved in such a manner as not to threaten food production, while taking into account that in the Convention agriculture is mentioned only in the context of the cooperation on development and transfer of technologies, but not on mitigation in absolute terms.

'At the same time, it is worthy to note that as decided in the Subsidiary Body on Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in the agenda item on issues relating to agriculture, the SBSTA will address the issue of adaptation of agriculture to the adverse effects of climate change and, in this regard, we are looking forward to engaging in the four technical workshops that will be held on this matter in 2015 and 2016,' it added.

It asked how the work presented by the organisations on 10 February will be consistent with the principles and provisions of the Convention with the UNFCCC being the primary forum to address climate change and the main priority of the international community is to safeguard food security.

FAO's representative Xiangjun Yao said mitigation in the agriculture sector should not be distinguished between developed and developing countries. She said there should be collective efforts if there is mitigation potential.