

Bonn Highlights: Wednesday, 15 June 2022

On the penultimate day of the Bonn Climate Change Conference, the critical question in many of the negotiating rooms was whether parties could reach substantive agreement or if they would defer discussions to subsequent meetings of the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs). As the clock ticked down toward the SB Chairs' midday deadline to conclude informal discussions, the list of issues being carried forward grew longer.

Contact Groups and Informal Consultations

Matters relating to the work programme for urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation: Co-Facilitators Carlos Fuller (Belize) and Kay Harrison (New Zealand) presented draft conclusions and an informal note capturing participants' views, stressing that the note does not prejudice further work, imply consensus, or have any formal status.

Parties could not agree to take note of the informal note in the draft conclusions, with some developing country parties suggesting to take note of "the progress that transpired." Many expressed their disappointment that the note was not more streamlined, with one developing country group arguing that some elements would "change the nature of the Paris Agreement."

Views diverged on whether to hold intersessional work, with some opposing, and others proposing virtual or hybrid workshops. There was also disagreement with regard to a developing country group's suggestion to add language on avoiding duplication with the Global Stocktake (GST).

The co-facilitators invited further input, noting they will submit draft conclusions to the SB chairs by the end of the day.

Matters relating to the Global Stocktake under the Paris Agreement: Co-Chairs Alison Campbell (United Kingdom) and Hana AlHashimi (United Arab Emirates) presented a draft decision for parties' consideration. Saudi Arabia, for the LIKE-MINDED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, supported by ALGERIA, INDIA, BRAZIL, and CHINA, and opposed by CANADA, AUSTRALIA, and Colombia, for the INDEPENDENT ALLIANCE OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN, requested additions to the text to emphasize the "party-driven" nature of the GST, and a new paragraph whereby the SB chairs would request the co-chairs of the Technical Dialogue to host a reflection session with parties after drafting the dialogue's first summary report.

After extensive deliberations, parties agreed to:

- note that the process is party-driven, with the participation of non-party stakeholders;
- a new paragraph encouraging the co-chairs of the Technical Dialogue to engage with parties and non-party stakeholders; and

- encourage stakeholders to hold events in support of the GST at the local, national, regional, and international levels.

Guidance on cooperative approaches referred to in Article 6.2 of the Paris Agreement: Co-Facilitator Peer Stiansen (Norway) introduced revised draft conclusions for parties' consideration. The draft conclusions, among other things, invite parties and observers to submit views on "any of the elements" in specific paragraphs of decision 2/CMA.3, but no longer list the elements in the conclusions. Regarding the request for the Secretariat to prepare a technical paper, the draft conclusions specify that the request is "with a view to facilitating relevant discussions but without prejudging possible outcomes" and that the technical paper would have no formal status. Parties agreed on the draft conclusions with minor amendments relating to the Secretariat preparing the technical paper to facilitate "understanding of relevant issues," and organizing an in-person technical workshop with "options for virtual participation."

Rules, modalities and procedures for the mechanism established by Article 6.4 of the Paris Agreement: Co-Facilitator Mandy Rambharos (South Africa) introduced revised draft conclusions. As was the case in the discussions on Article 6.2, parties specified that an in-person workshop should have "options for virtual participation" and the aim of a technical paper is to facilitate "understanding of relevant issues." With these amendments, parties agreed to the draft conclusions.

Work programme under the framework for non-market approaches referred to in Article 6.8 of the Paris Agreement: Co-Chair Maria AlJishi (Saudi Arabia) introduced revised draft conclusions. Most paragraphs were agreed without further comment.

On a paragraph inviting parties and observers to submit views on a variety of topics, parties discussed how to reflect a call for submissions on criteria for non-market approaches (NMAs). Senegal, for the AFRICAN GROUP, provided two options. The first option would invite submissions on criteria for determining which initiatives and programmes will be included within the NMA framework, including the process for and benefits of inclusion. The second option would invite submissions on how NMA initiatives and programmes consistent with the framework for NMAs have addressed the elements outlined in decision 4/CMA.3 and other relevant criteria.

Following further consideration, parties agreed on the second option.

Training programme for review experts for the technical review of greenhouse gas inventories of parties included in Annex I to the Convention: Co-Facilitator Harry Vreuls (the Netherlands) noted that parties had previously agreed to "mirror" the decision taken under the agenda item on the technical expert review of biennial reports and national communications of Annex

I parties. Parties thus agreed to continue consideration of the matter at SBSTA 57.

Training programme for review experts for the technical review of biennial reports and national communications of parties included in Annex I to the Convention: Co-Facilitator Jae Hyuk Jung (Republic of Korea) presented three options for draft conclusions: to not extend the implementation of the reviewers' training programme and conclude consideration of the matter at this session; to extend the current online training format to the end of 2023; or to continue consideration of the matter at SB 57. The Secretariat reported that the extension of the online training programme would cost approximately EUR 13,000.

Developing countries preferred to extend the online training until the end of 2024 and to revisit the agenda item at SBSTA 61. Developed countries preferred not to extend the programme and to end consideration of the item at this session.

Despite both developed and developing countries' offering a number of bridging proposals, parties could not agree to substantive conclusions. Parties will revisit the matter at SBSTA 57.

Revision of the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories for parties included in Annex I to the Convention: Co-Facilitators Thiago Mendes (Angola) and Daniela Romano (Italy) invited views on a new iteration of draft decision text containing options and bracketed elements on: reporting on harvested wood products, and reporting through an alternate web application using the Global Warming Potential (GWP) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Fifth Assessment Report. While developing countries considered the outstanding issues could not be resolved at this meeting, several developed countries expressed disappointment over the fact that discussions would carry over to SBSTA 57.

Delegates made various textual proposals, notably with regard to: indexing the submission date of greenhouse gas inventories in 2024 to the availability of the alternate web application; and confirming that only a single inventory needs to be submitted in 2024 by parties that are both parties to the Convention and the Paris Agreement. All suggestions were inserted as bracketed text, with the entire draft decision text also bracketed.

Delegates agreed to procedural SBSTA conclusions, including a footnote to an informal note containing the draft decision text as amended.

Arrangements for intergovernmental meetings: SBI Chair Marianne Karlsen invited parties' views on a new iteration of draft text.

With respect to a workshop, CHINA reiterated that his agreement to the workshop was conditional on the provision of support for developing country observer participation.

With respect to a technical paper to be prepared by the Secretariat, parties debated options for a paragraph on the participation of observers from developing countries. The options mainly differed with respect to references to: enhancing, improving, or promoting such participation; balanced geographical representation or balance between observers from developing and developed countries; and the provision of "support" or "financial support."

Despite lengthy discussions in a huddle, parties did not emerge with a bridging proposal. They subsequently agreed to a proposal by Chair Karlsen whereby the SBI: invites parties and observers to submit further views on approaches and initiatives for increasing the efficiency of the UNFCCC process; requests the Secretariat to prepare a synthesis report of these submissions; and requests the Secretariat to prepare an information paper on all issues identified

in the previous iteration of draft text, except for options for enhancing participation from developing country observers.

Many delegates expressed disappointment that no agreement could be reached on holding a workshop, expressing their hope for agreement at SB 58, when the SBI will resume consideration of this agenda item.

Mandated Events

Ocean and Climate Change Dialogue: In opening remarks, Zac Goldsmith, Minister for Pacific and the Environment, UK, emphasized the importance of deep emission cuts, including in the shipping sector, to provide nature the chance to recover. He pointed to examples of leadership on ocean-climate linkages, including Chile who brought about "the blue COP" in 2019, noting "we have all the knowledge and tools to turn things around."

Peter Thomson, UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean, lauded COP 26 for answering the call for better integrating the ocean into the UNFCCC's work. He called upon countries to leverage blue carbon measures to increase ambition in their nationally determined contributions (NDCs). He noted the financial sector's role in supporting the development of ocean-based climate solutions.

Vladimir Ryabinin, Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, called for addressing the combined stressors of ocean warming, acidification, and deoxygenation. He urged developing more comprehensive inventories of blue carbon ecosystems and embracing the concept of climate-smart marine spatial planning.

Patricia Espinosa, UNFCCC Executive Secretary, noted that "despite all the damage that humankind has done to it," the ocean still offers great potential for its recovery and for climate change mitigation and adaptation. She called upon parties to "blue" their NDCs and long-term strategies.

Youth representatives called for ensuring young people have a seat at the decision-making table and urged reversing the mismanagement of the ocean.

Participants then heard presentations and discussed issues such as: near-term opportunities to decarbonize the shipping sector; climate-resilient fisheries and aquaculture; and strengthening ocean-climate finance under the UNFCCC.

In the Corridors

Wednesday was an emotional day for delegates, with expressions ranging from frustration, to disappointment, to anticipation, depending on which issue they found themselves covering. While in many of the agenda items, parties managed to agree on draft conclusions, the contents of the conclusions left a lot to be desired. Taking the floor during the discussions on the Global Stocktake, one delegate said they were "disappointed and confused"—a refrain that was echoed in other sessions. Those following the Santiago Network on loss and damage were also dismayed that despite meeting informally for over 21 hours during this meeting, they could only agree on procedural conclusions. "The struggle continues," one frustrated delegate was overheard saying.

In what was for some a "stunning" reversal, Article 6 consultations, on the other hand, generated a lot of smiles and applause. In back-to-back sessions on each of the sub-items, parties agreed on conclusions that will enable intersessional work to be carried out, thereby bringing the goal of operationalizing the Article 6 provisions even closer. "We're certainly not there yet, but we are moving forward" was how one relieved delegate put it.