

SB 34 AND AWG HIGHLIGHTS: MONDAY, 6 JUNE 2011

In the morning, the opening plenary of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) convened. The opening plenary of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) remained suspended throughout the day and was finally postponed until Tuesday, pending consultations on the agenda.

SBSTA

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS: SBSTA Chair Mama Konaté (Mali) invited parties to introduce their proposals for new items on the provisional agenda (FCCC/SBSTA/2011/1).

On the proposed item on a work programme on agriculture, NEW ZEALAND, with CANADA, said the work programme would allow the SBSTA to explore technical and methodological issues relating to adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture sector. NEW ZEALAND clarified that the proposal would support the work of the AWG-LCA and result in a decision at COP 17.

On blue carbon: coastal marine systems, PAPUA NEW GUINEA explained that the agenda item would include consideration of wetlands and coastal ecosystems.

On rights of nature and the integrity of ecosystems, BOLIVIA called for a space to discuss the impacts of climate change on ecosystems.

On the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures, SAUDI ARABIA said the mandate was based on Decision 1/CP.16 (outcome of the work of the AWG-LCA) and that the proposed item would replace the agenda item on economic and social consequences of response measures.

On the impacts of climate change on water resources and water resource management, ECUADOR highlighted the human right to water.

Commenting on the provisional agenda, Argentina, for the G-77/CHINA, warned against transferring unresolved issues from the AWG-LCA to the SBSTA, saying the AWG-LCA should maintain an overview of specific issues that were mandated for consideration by the SBSTA. He also called for another meeting of the SBs before Durban.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, for the AFRICAN GROUP, with Grenada, for AOSIS, recommended that parties commence work on the items traditionally included in the SBSTA agenda while consulting on the proposed new items. Australia, for the UMBRELLA GROUP, highlighted the importance of the SBSTA's work on REDD and the Nairobi Work Programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation (NWP). The Gambia, for the LDCs, highlighted research and systematic observation and enhancement of the NWP to support adaptation implementation in LDCs. Grenada, for AOSIS, stressed the need for accelerating work under the NWP.

Switzerland, for the ENVIRONMENTAL INTEGRITY GROUP (EIG), underscored the need for methodological work on REDD+. Papua New Guinea, for the COALITION OF RAINFOREST NATIONS, highlighted the progress made in Decision 1/CP.16 on REDD+, but noted the importance of guidance on safeguards. SOUTH AFRICA highlighted the party-driven nature of the process and expressed commitment to a transparent process at COP 17 and COP/MOP 7 in Durban.

SBSTA Chair Konaté suggested that parties adopt the agenda, allowing work to progress on items previously addressed by the SBSTA, including work on issues requested by COP 16. He further proposed holding new issues in abeyance pending consultations. Konaté also explained that the SBI Chair was conducting consultations on the economic and social consequences of response measures, and forum on implementation of response measures, saying the solution

reached there could be imported to the SBSTA. He emphasized the proposal would allow work to progress and countries to express their views on new issues.

The US, ARGENTINA, the EU, VENEZUELA, SURINAME, COLOMBIA, EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, BRAZIL, AUSTRALIA, the PHILIPPINES, ECUADOR, SWITZERLAND, INDONESIA, CHINA, COSTA RICA, SINGAPORE, MALAYSIA and TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO supported this approach. VENEZUELA emphasized that the consultations could result in issues being dropped. ARGENTINA supported the proposal but clarified that all new items should be held in abeyance pending outcome of consultations, and suggested that dropping some issues could be an outcome of the consultations. PAPUA NEW GUINEA said she could support launching work on issues traditionally on the SBSTA agenda if there is agreement that the SBSTA plenary will reconvene in one week's time to provide an update on the inclusion of new items in the agenda.

The UMBRELLA GROUP supported having agriculture as a separate item. The US called for addressing response measures, blue carbon and water under existing agenda items. INDONESIA opposed discussion of issues under consideration by the AWG-LCA, such as agriculture, but supported consultations on the agenda. PAKISTAN called for adequate consideration of water resource management and agriculture as separate agenda items or as separate elements under the NWP. COLOMBIA, with BRAZIL, supported consideration of agriculture and water resource management under existing agenda items.

BRAZIL noted that other proposed items, including blue carbon, are not mature enough for consideration. He also said that those items under consideration by the AWG-LCA, including agriculture, should not be considered separately. The AFRICAN GROUP, with SWITZERLAND, expressed concern with opening up sectoral issues as separate agenda items.

BOLIVIA opposed inclusion of REDD on the agenda, noting that including items on the agenda stemming from the Cancun Agreements, which were not adopted by consensus, was not acceptable. She said she could accept holding this item in abeyance with the other items and proposed broadening the title of the agenda item to "measures with regard to forests."

COLOMBIA, with MALAYSIA, underscored the importance of keeping REDD on the agenda. TUVALU, with the PHILIPPINES, noted sympathy for Bolivia's position on REDD, but said there are ways to accommodate different positions. Noting that REDD has been on the SBSTA agenda before, AUSTRALIA said REDD should not be considered in the same category as other new issues. GUYANA, with COSTA RICA and SURINAME, said the decision to bring REDD to SBSTA was made by the COP and that no party subsequently has the right to

remove it from the agenda. PAPUA NEW GUINEA, GUYANA and COSTA RICA objected to changing the name of the agenda item. In response, BOLIVIA proposed naming the item "REDD and forest-related actions."

TUVALU called for more transparency in REDD negotiations. He stressed that REDD negotiations should be facilitated by Annex I and non-Annex I country representatives from countries that do not have a material interest in an outcome on REDD. He said all consultations should occur in a contact group so that indigenous peoples and other stakeholders can have direct input into the negotiations.

SBSTA Chair Konaté informed delegates that he would conduct consultations on REDD, while consultations continued under the SBI on response measures, and that the SBSTA would resume in the afternoon. The plenary was then suspended.

At 7:25 pm the SBSTA reconvened briefly. SBSTA Chair Konaté informed parties that consultations were ongoing and that the SBSTA would resume on Tuesday.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The Bonn Climate Change Conference opened at the familiar Maritim Hotel against the backdrop of blue skies and warm summer sun. The day ended, however, with cloudy weather, mirroring the mood inside the conference venue.

Apart from a SBSTA meeting in the morning, the opening plenaries of the two Subsidiary Bodies remained suspended throughout the day. The delay was due to parties' divergent views on the proposed agendas of the two bodies. In addition to modifications on the "traditional" agendas based on the Cancun outcomes, various parties proposed new items, some of them apparently controversial.

Most delegates therefore spent the day either waiting for the meetings to begin, or trying to reach agreement on the agendas behind closed doors. Just before the reception hosted by the Mayor of Bonn, scheduled for 7 pm, the Chair announced that the SBI opening plenary would be postponed until Tuesday morning. The delay prompted some delegates to mention the "Bangkok track." One noted: "I hope we don't raise the ghosts of Bangkok, though I expect that we'll have to spend some time trying to agree on the agenda."

The SBSTA plenary got off to an early start, but the morning's discussions revealed differing views on how to proceed, including on REDD. Informal consultations therefore followed. In the evening, some negotiators seemed optimistic that agreement had been reached on how to address REDD. Just before 7:30 pm, however, the Chair announced that the SBSTA plenary would also be postponed until Tuesday. "Looks like we are going back to the future," said one delegate, as he hurriedly exited the Maritim.