

Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

Second Focal Point Forum

COP 14, Poznan, Poland

Saturday, 6 December 2008, 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Summary note

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its twenty-eighth session, requested the secretariat to regularly organize focal point forums with representatives from interested Parties during the sessions of the Conference of Parties (COP), with a view to taking stock of activities undertaken by organizations and institutions in support of the objectives of the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, and to promoting a periodic dialogue between Parties and engaged organizations and institutions.¹

B. Background

2. The Nairobi work programme is a five-year programme, covering the period 2005–2010, the objective of which is to assist all Parties, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS), to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change on a sound scientific, technical and socio-economic basis, taking into account current and future climate change and variability.²

3. The focus in implementing the Nairobi work programme is on catalysing actions on adaptation, ensuring that products and deliverables are targeted at stakeholders at all levels and across all sectors. The second phase of the programme began in June 2008; concrete mandates were established to further engage organizations, with a greater focus on catalysing actions at the community, national and regional levels, and actions on education, training and awareness-raising.

4. There are now 125 Nairobi work programme partners which have expressed their willingness to participate in the implementation of the Nairobi work programme. These partners play a key role, as fulfilling the objective of the programme depends on a multi-stakeholder approach.

5. Nairobi work programme partner organizations are invited to submit Action Pledges, which provide an interactive way for all partners to identify and commit publicly to undertaking activities towards the objectives and expected outcomes of the Nairobi work programme. There are now 65 Action Pledges responding to the objectives of the Nairobi work programme and the needs identified through mandated activities, as well as Calls for Action.

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/6, paragraph 29.

² Decision 2/CP.11, annex, paragraph 1.

II. Proceedings

6. The second focal points forum was held in Poznan, Poland on 6 December 2008, during the fourteenth session of the COP. The forum was chaired by Ms. Helen Plume, the Chair of the SBSTA, and was attended by more than 72 representatives from Nairobi work programme partner organizations and Parties. The annex to this summary contains the agenda for the meeting.

7. Opening the forum, the Chair welcomed the participants and stressed that the Nairobi work programme was currently halfway through its implementation. She also reminded participants that the objective of the forum was to facilitate dialogue between Parties and Nairobi work programme partner organizations with a view to promoting the exchange of views and sharing of information on the progress of, and results from, projects and activities implemented by partner organizations.

8. Additional introductory remarks were made by the UNFCCC secretariat which addressed the following issues:

- (a) discussions on adaptation under the Convention process, including those within the context of the forthcoming agreed outcome in Copenhagen;
- (b) the role of the Nairobi work programme in knowledge sharing to assist Parties in facilitating the planning and implementation of adaptation actions;
- (c) the new mandates for the second phase of the Nairobi work programme with regard to engaging organizations;
- (d) the current status of involvement of organizations, including the private sector; and
- (e) the new Call for Action in the area of work on climate modelling, scenarios and downscaling.

9. The forum was divided into two parts: sharing of experiences on planning and implementing activities towards the objectives of the Nairobi work programme; and discussions on ways and means to promote networks and cooperation in order to assist Parties under the Nairobi work programme in its second phase.

10. In the first part, partner organizations provided updates on and results from ongoing relevant activities, including research/assessment, capacity-building, knowledge management and policy support (i.e. from global initiatives to community-based activities). Two new Action Pledges were made during the forum by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) and the Environmental Development Action in the Third World (ENDA) Programme. In the second part, participants suggested a number ways to enhance the exchange and sharing of knowledge, and to facilitate the uptake by Parties of information and knowledge shared under the Nairobi work programme.

III. Sharing of experiences on planning and implementing activities towards the objectives of the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

A. Updates on activities

11. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) noted that a large number of adaptation-related activities had already been undertaken by various agencies within the United Nations system alone; therefore, initiatives such as the Nairobi work programme would provide a highly valuable platform for coordination and collaboration. The focus on tourism is important, as it links to a number of sectors, such as water and health, which are highly sensitive to climate change and variability. Work on adaptation at UNWTO aims to identify good practices through private sector initiatives, moving from awareness-raising to piloting adaptation through educational programmes and projects. UNWTO highlighted that the Nairobi work programme could be the leading network in that regard, and emphasized the need to move from documenting and disseminating good practices to replicating them.

12. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) reported on its new initiative, in partnership with key United Nations and other international organizations, to establish a Global Climate Change Adaptation Network. The network aims to enhance the adaptive capacity of developing countries by mobilizing global knowledge and technologies to help build the climate resilience of vulnerable human systems, ecosystems and economies. A series of regional consultation meetings on the development of the network are scheduled for the first half of 2009.

13. Practical Action stated that its work is based on the concept of “learning by doing” and focuses on sharing knowledge and adapting to climate change at the community level; it also highlighted a publication on community-based adaptation. Practical Action has encountered challenges in scaling up its work, but is now working on online information sharing, with technical briefings, working drawings and participatory videos; its website also includes a section dedicated to adaptation. With a new grant, a project will be initiated to produce participatory videos in Sudan.

14. Christian Aid welcomed the Nairobi work programme as a platform for networking and for sharing experiences, knowledge and information. However, it raised two issues: first, it is not yet clear to what extent Parties have responded to recommendations from the previous Nairobi work programme focal point forum, which raises the issue of accountability; second, it would be helpful to have an indicator of the level to which knowledge and information generated through the Nairobi work programme process has reached the LDCs and SIDS, and how those Parties have been making use of this knowledge and information.

15. The Interagency Secretariat of the United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR) indicated that it works with a range of organizations (e.g. United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations, etc.) and is now working on an assessment report on risks and vulnerability. It has prepared submissions on issues related to the adverse effects of climate change under decision 1/CP.10 and will organize, jointly with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a scoping meeting to be held in March 2009 on the possible IPCC special report on risk management and strategies to adapt to climate-related risks.

16. The global change SysTem for Analysis, Research, and Training (START) International Secretariat highlighted that, in collaboration with a number of partners, and through its regional science committees, research centres and research nodes, the organization is undertaking research, capacity-building, knowledge management and science-policy dialogues. Funding for a new five-year project on adaptation has been confirmed and START is co-organizing a workshop on climate risks in cities to take place in February 2009 in Bangkok, Thailand.

17. The World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted the importance of climate change impacts on the health sector and the disproportionately low level of financial support for work in that sector. It stressed the need to further scale up work on adaptation in the health sector.

18. The IPCC confirmed that, jointly with UNISDR, it was organizing a scoping meeting on a possible IPCC special report on climate risk management, as UNISDR had previously mentioned. It also noted that for the next IPCC assessment report (AR5), the production of scenarios (including socio-economic, emissions, climatic and other environmental components) will be undertaken by research organizations and institutions and facilitated by the IPCC. In addition, the mandate and detailed terms of reference for its Task Group on Data and Scenario Support for Impact and Climate Analysis (TGICA) are currently under discussion.

19. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) reported that its work on climate change and adaptation has achieved significant prominence in recent years and noted that some financial resources are now available to support the implementation of regional projects. The ADB stressed the benefits of the regional cooperation that it has initiated throughout Asia and, responding to the intervention by WHO, highlighted that it finances a number of health projects. The bank noted further that it has established a small number of community-based adaptation projects, but knowledge and experience is limited; it is therefore also going through a period of “learning by doing”.

20. The Institute of Development Studies (IDS) explained that it promotes knowledge sharing and has successfully reactivated its climate change adaptation network. With the World Bank and other partners, IDS recently organized a joint workshop on tools for climate risk screening; a new publication on the evaluation of climate change adaptation has also been produced. It stressed the need to further understand adaptation, both in theory and in practice, and to increase awareness-raising activities.

21. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) highlighted the need for collaboration among the different entities working on adaptation and called on the forum participants to think about alternative and innovative ways to facilitate more effective networking and collaboration. FAO suggested that forums could be organized according to sector (e.g. agriculture), function (e.g. tool development), issue (e.g. disaster risk reduction) or practice. It noted that organizations should integrate adaptation and climate risk management into their planning processes.

22. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) reported that a series of regional climate outlook forums have been taking place and that the organization is also initiating a process to establish regional climate centres. Its work on data and observations provides the basis for the development and evaluation of climate models, as well as for downscaling climate information from the global level to levels that are more relevant for adaptation planning.

B. Action Pledges

23. The CBD secretariat, on behalf of the Ad hoc Technical Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change, convened under the CBD, pledged to undertake work on the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems. It noted that this work will fall into three main spheres of activity: development of modelling tools; evaluation of uncertainties; and the preparation of good practice guidelines.

24. ENDA noted in its Action Pledge that it shares the aspirations of the Nairobi work programme. It aims to contribute firmly to the enhancement of adaptive capacity and socio-ecological resilience in sub-Saharan Africa through a series of interconnected, field-based and knowledge management activities. The expected outcomes of the Action Pledge include: the development of ENDA as a regional centre of excellence in training and capacity-building for adaptation in Africa; the development of a suite of training tools and methods for dissemination; refining a range of knowledge and information products, and storage and exchange techniques; enhancing multi-disciplinary climate and development research institutions in West Africa; and contributing to the expected outcomes of the Nairobi work programme. In conclusion, ENDA noted that it was incumbent on the organization to support the Nairobi work programme with its Action Pledges, and to report periodically on progress during the second phase of the Nairobi work programme.

IV. Networks and cooperation to assist Parties under the Nairobi work programme in its second phase

25. Participants were invited to share views and ideas on how to further strengthen collaboration among Nairobi work programme partners. Participants suggested a number of ways to enhance the exchange and sharing of knowledge and to facilitate the uptake by Parties of that information and knowledge shared under the Nairobi work programme.

26. The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) reported on a newly funded adaptation project to be implemented in 13 countries in the Pacific Region. It stated that SIDS need assistance in each of the nine areas of work under the Nairobi work programme, and also highlighted the problematic issue of the absence of certain terms (e.g. sustainable development) in local languages. With regard to the implementation of the Nairobi work programme during its second phase, SPREP called for the following action from partners:

- (a) knowledge and information should be accessible to communities, planners and other stakeholders, as empirical evidence and knowledge increase;

- (b) a workshop (or series of workshops) could be organized to address specific issues (e.g. coastal zone management);
- (c) knowledge and information generated from the programme should continue to support adaptation under the UNFCCC process;
- (d) the outcomes of the Nairobi work programme should be utilized, in practical and measurable ways, to support adaptation on the ground.

27. The United Nations University Institute for Environment and Human Security (UNU-EHS) noted that its work focuses on insurance and migration. It inquired about ways in which the private sector could be brought into the network and noted that, sometimes, work by private sector entities may not fall explicitly under climate change adaptation, but nonetheless contributes to reducing vulnerability and enhancing resilience. Therefore, these entities would also have experience and knowledge to share. In response, the Chair informed the forum that the Nairobi work programme does have private sector partners and invited participants to visit the Nairobi work programme website for further details.

28. UNWTO indicated that, given the large number of partner organizations and the growing range of relevant activities that they carry out, there is a need to increase the number of networking activities; it suggested that focused email discussions might be one option. In addition, UNWTO suggested establishing a roster of experts under the specific areas of work of the Nairobi work programme in order to facilitate access to expertise.

29. WHO stressed the lack of knowledge at the country office level and the need for informing constituencies. With regard to funding mechanisms, it noted that health practitioners often cannot “sell” their experience; on many occasions proposals for funding are not accepted due to a lack of experience regarding standards and procedures. In addition, there is now a growing demand for resetting standards as part of mainstreaming climate adaptation, but there is a lack of expertise to perform these tasks.

30. ENDA highlighted the need to produce effective knowledge that is both employable and deployable. It proposed the idea of establishing regional focal points to assist in producing policy-relevant knowledge and in organizing regional workshops.

31. WMO inquired about the possibility of having more than one focal point, which received a positive response from the Chair.

32. The CBD secretariat raised the issue of coordinating international policies with relation to different Rio Convention processes through programmes such as the Nairobi work programme. The UNFCCC secretariat noted that such coordination would be best discussed by Parties at sessions of the COP of the respective conventions.

33. In response to an enquiry by Christian Aid on how the activities of the Nairobi work programme are taken up by Parties, the Chair stated that it is not mandatory for Parties to take up activities under the Nairobi work programme. START reiterated the need to measure the application of knowledge and information generated from the implementation of the Nairobi work programme.

34. The United States reaffirmed the great value of the knowledge and information generated from the Nairobi work programme. She noted that information contained in the report on the implementation of the Nairobi work programme during its first phase was extremely helpful and could provide substantive guidance in programme design for developed country Parties. Within the context of negotiations on the Nairobi work programme under the SBSTA, she also commented on the need for and functions of a possible expert group.

35. UNISDR noted the need to improve accessibility to partners/expertise and asked if some issues could be addressed in a proposal. UNISDR reflected on three issues: the organization of issues in each area of work and addressing barriers to implementation; organizational learning and effective communication of relevant information; and fostering collaboration, for which the Nairobi work programme is an incentive in itself.

36. IDS stressed that the Nairobi work programme partners represent a broad range of expertise. It drew attention to the need for an open-ended process to provide easy access to experts.

V. Key messages

37. A number of key messages emerged from the focal points forum:

- (a) The Nairobi work programme is a good mechanism for catalysing action on adaptation, and it has been highly effective in facilitating the exchange of experiences, knowledge and information among partner organizations;
- (b) There is a need to measure the impact of the Nairobi work programme (e.g. through the use of partnerships, knowledge and information generated) in supporting rigorous climate risk assessment, adaptation planning and decision making;
- (c) Significant efforts are required for Nairobi work programme partners to produce and share practical, accessible and policy-relevant knowledge and information in order to support and scale up adaptation planning and implementation;
- (d) There is a need to create additional opportunities for partners to exchange experiences and knowledge and to explore possibilities for collaboration. Ideas emerging from the forum include:
 - (i) Holding focal point forums more than once a year;
 - (ii) Establishing a database of experts in impacts, vulnerability and adaptation;
 - (iii) Organizing thematic online discussions (e.g. forums);
 - (iv) Establishing regional focal points.

VI. Next steps

38. The secretariat, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, will facilitate consideration by organizations and Parties of the outcomes of this forum. In particular, the secretariat will consult partner organizations and Parties on:

- (a) Ways to enhance exchange and stimulate collaboration among partner organizations and Parties;
- (b) Facilitating access to information on experts in relevant areas of work under the Nairobi work programme through, for example, the expansion of the UNFCCC roster of experts on adaptation.

39. In addition, the secretariat will provide further information on action pledges and updates on the implementation of those pledges through the UNFCCC website.

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Focal Points Forum, COP 14, Poznan, Poland

**Poznan International Fair, Room Apollo Butterfly (Pavilion 15, level C)
Saturday, 6 December, 18:30–21:00**

Chair: Ms. Helen Plume, Chair of the SBSTA

AGENDA

1. Welcome and update	
18:30–18:45	Refreshments
18:45–18:55	Welcome , Ms. Helen Plume, Chair of the SBSTA
18:55–19:20	Introductory remarks <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nairobi work programme: an introduction to its second phase UNFCCC secretariat Questions and answers
2. Sharing of experiences on planning and implementing activities towards the objectives of the Nairobi work programme	
19:20–19:50	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interventions by organizations on progress and experiences made• Questions and answers
3. Networks and cooperation to assist Parties under the Nairobi work programme in its second phase	
19:50–21:00	Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How can the Nairobi work programme and its partners support/accelerate the adaptation process during the second phase?• What can be done to foster collaboration/partnerships among organizations and other stakeholders towards achieving the objective of the Nairobi work programme?• How can the engagement of Focal Points be further strengthened to catalyse adaptation initiatives towards the objectives of the Nairobi work programme? Conclusion and next steps , Ms. Helen Plume, Chair of the SBSTA
