



AUSTRALIA

Work programme on clarification of quantified economy-wide emissions reduction targets for developed country Parties | May 2013

Further Clarification of 2020 Pledges | SBSTA

I. Introduction

Australia welcomes the opportunity to share its views on the new Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) work program to continue the process of clarification of developed countries' Quantified Economy-wide Emissions Reduction Targets (QEERTs).

II. Importance of Clarification and the new Work Program

Clarifying ex ante how the 2020 pledges are defined (including assumptions and methodologies) and their expected mitigation impacts is critically important for a range of reasons:

- It builds trust and confidence by enabling clear understanding of what other Parties are doing.
- Through this, it supports increased ambition. We know that other Parties' efforts are a key consideration for many Parties in determining their level of ambition.
- It is necessary to understand the level of collective effort and emissions reductions that will be made in the period to 2020, and to reduce uncertainty about the emissions gap.
- It enables full international recognition of the mitigation being undertaken by Parties.
- It gives the best chance of attracting support for mitigation actions that require it.
- It can inform discussions about the long-term finance goal, which is in the context of meaningful mitigation and transparency on implementation.

Since the clarification process began in 2011 we have learnt more about the pledges. The presentation of information by developed countries through templates was particularly useful. But significant uncertainties remain. The new measurement, reporting and verification processes agreed at COP17 in Durban¹ will provide regular and structured updates on the pledges and their implementation, and complement existing measures such as national inventories and national communications.

¹ Biennial Reports and International Assessment and Review; Biennial Update Reports and International Consultation and Analysis.



But there is a gap before these new processes begin. The clarification of pledges can also make clear how Parties will track their mitigation and help them prepare for these new reporting requirements.

Accordingly, Australia welcomed the decision at Doha to establish two new work programs to continue the clarification process in 2013 and 2014. Australia encourages all Parties to participate actively and constructively in both of these work programs, and to continue to provide new or updated information on their pledges as available. These work programmes provide the opportunity to further clarify existing pledges, as well as any new or enhanced pledges that Parties might come forward with in the future.

Australia has made detailed submissions on its QEERT (April 2012) and its Kyoto Protocol second commitment period Quantified Emission Limitation or Reduction Objective (November 2012) and has joined a CP2 with a defined carbon budget for 2013-2020.

III. Organisation of the work program

The QEERTs were an important achievement. All 42 developed countries have pledged a QEERT. But as Parties recognise, we have different levels of clarity around what each of these QEERTs mean.

To understand a QEERT, we need to understand how it is defined and how it will be met. Paragraph 5 of decision 2/CP.17 sets out the elements to understand a pledge: base year, global warming potential values (GWPs), coverage of gases, coverage of sectors, expected emissions reductions (which involves issues such as the methodologies used to calculate emissions and assumptions about trajectories to meet a QEERT), the role of the land sector and carbon credits from market-based mechanisms.

Over the last two years, we have gathered some of this information through submissions and the workshop process. In Doha, Parties agreed to move to a more technical mode of working, that includes focused expert meetings and technical briefings. Consistent with this approach, Australia suggests the following mode of work:

- Structured sessions looking systematically at each of the elements in decision 2/CP.17 one by one.
 - Australia expects that some of the elements will require less time to discuss, and others more. Australia suggests that the basic 'metrics' be discussed first: GWPs, sectoral and gas coverage, and base year. The next priority for discussion should be the different assumptions underlying the QEERTs and their expected emissions reductions, particularly in relation to abatement in a single-year versus a cumulative year approach, and questions such as banking and borrowing of emissions reductions between years.
- Each session would have two objectives:
 - Re-cap what information is already known about the QEERTs, and identify where there are similarities and differences in Parties' approaches and gaps in our knowledge; and
 - Analyse the impact for 1) measuring progress and 2) comparability of efforts if Parties take different approaches to each element.



This will allow us to do two things. First, build a more complete picture of where and how much difference there is between how developed countries define their QEERTs. Second, develop a common understanding of what the implications are where countries are taking different approaches.

This mode of work will also result in greater clarity about the QEERTs themselves and their mitigation impact. Australia encourages developed countries to provide more information on their QEERTs to fill any gaps identified during these discussions.

This work should build upon the very useful analysis done by the Secretariat in its technical paper (FCCC/TP/2012/5) and can also inform the further iterations of that paper, as mandated in decision 1/CP.18. It should also be informed by expert input where appropriate.

Discussions in 2013 should be captured in a structured summary at COP19; the final output at COP20 should incorporate and build upon this to provide a complete analysis. In this way, the clarification work program will develop an enduring resource that can be drawn upon to better understand Parties' approaches to QEERTs, the extent of commonality and difference in these approaches and the implications of them.

