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UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

**Dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation
of the Convention**

First workshop

Bonn, 15–16 May 2006

Dialogue working paper 14 (2006)

Submission from New Zealand*

* This submission was submitted on 27 April 2006 and has been electronically imported in order to make it available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the text as submitted.

NEW ZEALAND

ISSUES TO BE DISCUSSED IN THE DIALOGUE ON LONG-TERM COOPERATIVE ACTION TO ADDRESS CLIMATE CHANGE BY ENHANCING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

NEW ZEALAND'S INITIAL VIEWS

Context

Climate change is a global problem, affecting all countries. New Zealand, with a longstanding comparative advantage in natural resource-based sectors for example agriculture and forestry, depends on a stable climate for its economic well-being. Climate change also poses a significant threat for Pacific Island Countries, which are on the front line of climate change impacts.

A constructive dialogue is needed on how to take meaningful, early and concerted action on climate change, and at the same time provide for future economic growth and sustainable development aspirations. The UN Climate Change Conference in Montreal launched a number of work streams related to this, one of which is the Dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation of the Convention.

An effective global response will require all countries – developed and developing – to contribute as best they can. Anything less than broad and balanced participation and action will be inadequate to deal with the magnitude of the challenge.

National circumstances are important. Different countries have different economies. New Zealand is unusual as a developed country: One issue we have is how to deal with non-carbon dioxide emissions from natural life processes (enteric fermentation in ruminant animals) and pastoral agriculture, for which effective solutions are not currently available. Thought needs to be given as to how to address and deal with emissions for which solutions are not currently available, particularly in areas where there are co-benefits.

Addressing climate change is a challenge that requires urgent as well as sustained action over the long-term. Solutions developed need to be durable and have environmental, scientific and economic integrity.

There is no single answer to dealing with climate change. In this context, we need to ensure that all possible avenues and opportunities are explored as fully as possible. The dialogue needs to address the full range of measures and approaches available. Complementary processes to address the problems can only add value to the overall solution.

New Zealand recognises that climate change is a serious and urgent challenge. We are working hard to address climate change and reduce our emissions. In areas where technology is available, for example in renewable energy, New Zealand is making good progress.

New Zealand looks forward to exchanging its experiences and joining others in analysing strategic approaches to long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation of the Convention.

Views on issues to be discussed

New Zealand supports the Convention Dialogue including the four areas as identified in the Decision text. We provide some initial views on each of those areas and, through the Dialogue, look forward to discussions on these and any other areas that may arise.

Advancing development goals in a sustainable way

Internationally, climate change is increasingly recognised as one of the most significant global environmental issues for developing countries. This is particularly the case for Small Island Developing States in the Pacific, which have identified the mainstreaming of adaptation to climate change and sea-level rise into national development planning as a major priority for their sustainable development.

Development assistance should be aligned to national sustainable development strategies and/or national development plans. For example solutions for Small Island Developing States need to be made available in ways that enable adaptation priorities to be met within their own development plans and processes, and to control national climate change activities in the context of strictly limited capacity and resources. Mechanisms for the delivery of financial resources need to be simple and timely as well as efficient.

The situation for developing countries is diverse, including within the Small Island Developing States of the Pacific. While there are common national priorities, there are also significant differences. International decisions on adaptation, capacity-building, and financial support to developing countries need to be sufficiently nuanced to allow for often-different development contexts, particularly those of Small Island Developing States.

Addressing action on adaptation

The world is already committed to a certain level of climate change because of greenhouse gas emissions that have already happened. This means that at the same time as taking action to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, we must also be preparing for and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The SBSTA five-year programme of work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change provides a solid foundation for action on adaptation under the Convention. Activities under the SBSTA five-year programme of work include addressing information gaps and improving access to information, sharing experiences etc.

The Dialogue workshops provide another forum for adaptation-related information/experiences to be shared, and should include an opportunity for all Parties to be reminded of the work already envisaged under the SBSTA five-year programme of work.

Adaptation is a principal focus of Small Island Developing States in the Pacific. Harmonised donor support to regional and national strategies will be critical to meeting these needs. For example, the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change is a high-level, Pacific-owned, strategy for regional action which can be used to guide regional assistance.

Realizing the full potential of technology

The development and deployment of technology will be fundamental to addressing long-term climate change challenges and for achieving sustainable development. Climate change innovation requires durable, long-term support.

There is also a need to accelerate the use of existing GHG-efficient technologies, now. Timing is crucial: locking in climate-unfriendly investments will limit our future options, making it harder and more expensive later.

Some economic activities, for example non-carbon dioxide emissions from natural life processes (enteric fermentation in ruminant animals), currently have no or limited mitigation options and solutions will require major scientific and technological advances. In finding solutions, we need to account for differences.

There is no single technological solution; climate friendly technologies will take many forms. It is important that options are kept open for the use of a wide portfolio of technologies.

There is a need to increase efforts to stimulate research and development into new technologies. In addition to supporting new and innovative strategies and initiatives, the expertise and resources of existing fora and international agencies should be utilised where possible.

Bringing technologies that are effective in addressing climate change efficiently and effectively to market is vital. There is an important role for policy research and the development of integrated instruments to achieve this.

Research and innovation is risky. It is important that the role of government, business and market actions in the pursuit of outcomes are considered carefully.

Transfer of appropriate technology to developing countries, particularly for energy purposes, is both a development priority, and an important component of long-term mitigation.

Realizing the full potential of market-based opportunities

New Zealand is a strong supporter of market-based mechanisms. To be sustainable, climate change measures need to be compatible with future economic growth and development aspirations. In turn this requires international mechanisms to address climate change at the lowest possible cost: those best able to achieve emissions reductions at least cost should be encouraged to do so.

New Zealand supports the ongoing development of more efficient and effective mechanisms for emissions trading. To succeed, robust and credible international frameworks must underpin such mechanisms.

To realise the full potential of market-based opportunities requires as few barriers as possible that could discourage the reduction of emissions. Markets should have the scope to consider all activities that aim to reduce emissions. This should include activities aimed at reducing emissions from land-use change and through forestry.

There may be ways to maximise non-market opportunities at the same time as pursuing the full potential of markets, for example afforestation projects under the Clean Development Mechanism could also have significant adaptation components.

Process

New Zealand considers that the following should be used to guide the workshops held under the Convention Dialogue:

- Wherever possible, the workshops should be attached to the existing meeting schedule to allow maximum participation and transparency.
- The experiences and lessons learned with the implementation of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol to date should be used to inform the workshops.
- Information is a necessary ingredient for informed dialogue. In addition to information from the IPCC, the Convention Dialogue should provide an opportunity for Parties to listen to the views of non-State actors, for example think tanks involved in climate change.
- The Dialogue should provide an opportunity to explore all options, rather than close off any options, for moving forward under the Convention.
- Parties should be flexible as to the order in which matters are taken up in the Convention Dialogue.
- The utility of the workshops would be augmented if Parties were provided with, or invited to submit, analysis of the relevant strategic approaches in each area.
- We consider the first meeting in May to be a preparatory and organisational session only. Following which there will be up to four substantive workshops on the issues identified in the Decision.
- The May meeting should set the agenda and agree on the modalities and timetable for the substantive workshops. In this regard, we should aim to maximise the time available for substantive dialogue in the workshops.
- We consider the following could be a useful approach to follow in all areas of the Dialogue:
 - As Parties to the Convention, how far along are we, collectively, in meeting the objectives of the Convention since it was negotiated?
 - What information do we have available now, that we did not have when the Convention was negotiated?
 - What lessons can we, the global community, take forward from that analysis and from new information to enhance implementation of the Convention?
 - How can we keep things simple? We need simplicity without sacrificing environmental integrity.
