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UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

Thirty-third session

Cancun, 30 November to 4 December 2010

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Research and systematic observation

Views on issues related to the research dialogue, including possible ways to enhance its effectiveness and the workshop to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 34

Submissions from Parties

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its thirty-second session, agreed that the research dialogue between Parties and regional and international climate change research programmes and organizations should be continued at SBSTA 34 and beyond (FCCC/SBSTA/2010/6, para. 47). It also noted the need to further enhance interaction between the science and policy communities by strengthening the research dialogue (FCCC/SBSTA/2010/6, para. 48).

2. At the same session, the SBSTA invited Parties to provide to the secretariat their views on:

(a) Possible ways to enhance the effectiveness of the research dialogue in the future, as referred to in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/6, paragraphs 48 (a–d);

(b) The workshop to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 34 to give further in-depth consideration to issues addressed in the research dialogue, as referred to in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/6, paragraph 49 (a);

(c) Ways to make information from research programmes and organizations available on the UNFCCC website, as referred to in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/6, paragraph 49 (b).

3. The SBSTA further requested the secretariat to make these views available as a miscellaneous document by SBSTA 33 (FCCC/SBSTA/2010/6, para.50).

FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.12

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4. The secretariat has received two such submissions. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions are attached and reproduced* in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

* These submissions have been electronically imported in order to make them available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

Contents

| | <i>Page</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Belgium and the European Commission on behalf of the European Union and its member States* (Submission received 20 September 2010) | 4 |
| 2. Belize (Submission received 21 September 2010) | 7 |

* This submission is supported by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia.

SUBMISSION BY BELGIUM AND THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION ON BEHALF OF THE EUROPEAN UNION AND ITS MEMBER STATES

This submission is supported by Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia

Brussels, 20 September 2010

Subject: Research and systematic observation (SBSTA): Views on possible ways to enhance the effectiveness of the research dialogue and on the workshop to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 34, to consider issues addressed in the research dialogue as well as on ways to make information from research programmes and organizations available on the UNFCCC website, as referred to in paragraph 4 (a-d) and 5 (a-b) of the document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/L.8., respectively.

The European Union and its Member States, welcome the conclusions of SBSTA at its thirty-second session (FCCC/SBSTA/2010/L.8) and the invitation to submit views on ways to enhance the interaction between the scientific and policy community and to strengthen the research-policy dialogue, as well as on themes for in depth considerations in the workshop to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 34. In addition to the EU's previous submissions on these issues (FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.4, FCCC/SBSTA/2006/MISC.3 and FCCC/SBSTA/2002/ MISC.15), the EU would like to propose its views with regard to the issues raised in paragraph 4 (a-d) and 5 (a-b) of FCCC/SBSTA/2010/L.8.

Possible ways to enhance the effectiveness of the research dialogue in the future.

SBSTA 32 identified four possible ways to enhance the effectiveness of the research-policy dialogue in the future (FCCC/SBSTA/2010/L.8, paragraph 4, a-d). The EU recognises that bridging the gap between scientists and policy makers is very important and warrants attention. Scientists' communication in this context needs to be on both basic and policy-relevant aspects as policy makers need a broad and general knowledge on the underlying science of climate change and, even more so, on targeted scientific input in support of relevant policy questions. The dialogue should therefore be reciprocal and interactive.

Enhancing the communication between scientists and policy makers benefits from engagement of institutes, programmes or organizations that study explicitly science-policy interfaces or have practical experience in organising and facilitating science-policy communications, e.g. IHDP or UNEP GRID-Arendal. The EU therefore requests the UNFCCC secretariat to consult and involve such bodies to identify effective and creative modes of information exchange between policy makers and scientists, modalities, and mechanisms. Likewise, the EU considers as a useful initiative the collection of success stories at national or regional level in the climate change field or from other research domains in order to promote the development of innovative ways to communicate research outcomes and findings to Parties.

The EU recommends that the dialogue between scientists and policy makers should be a continuous and iterative process. A workshop should be organised annually in conjunction with the SBSTA. The themes addressed in this workshop should reflect, in a balanced way, the themes of the three IPCC working groups (i.e. science, mitigation and adaptation); short and long term needs; local, regional and global issues; and

scientific outcome in support of specific policy questions and the general scientific basis. Special attention should be given to issues relevant to developing countries and highly vulnerable regions.

To enhance the communication of scientific outcomes, research results from international research projects should be made available in a user-friendly way, accessible to the general public and policy makers, cf. EU 7th Framework Programme (FP7). To this end, the EU invites regional and international research programmes to engage in a continuous dialogue with the UNFCCC. Further developments on making information available on the website of the UNFCCC could be useful.

The EU recognises that in developing countries there is often a lack of scientific data, observations and publications, making it important to increase capacity building in these countries. We suggest that in all UNFCCC research dialogue activities, particular attention is given to inviting developing countries to present research outcomes of their national and regional research efforts, and those linked to capacity building programmes such as START or to a certain extent also IHDP.

Themes to be addressed in the workshop to be held in conjunction with SBSTA 34:

The EU welcomes the idea of a workshop to be held in the framework of the research dialogue in conjunction with SBSTA 34. The EU proposes the technical and scientific aspects of following issues for discussion:

- New observations of climate change, impacts and atmospheric composition: current state of essential climate variables, extreme hydrological events, the evolution of the sea ice in the Arctic, permafrost and other cryospheric components, as well as other key regional phenomena in the world.
- Socio-economic aspects of climate change: new estimates on global and regional costs and benefits of conjoined mitigation and adaptation measures (both in the short and long term) and the technological and lifestyle transition to a low-emission society.
- Emission reductions and trajectories to reach different levels of climate change targets, also including estimates of thresholds and probabilities for tipping points to abrupt or irreversible events and also the associated (avoided) impacts, especially for the countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, of alternative pathways.
- The scientific aspects related to the mitigation impact and cost of short- and long-lived greenhouse gases and additional forcing agents (non-Kyoto agents, especially ozone, aerosols and black carbon).
- Identifying scientific gaps and research needs, particularly with respect to an assessment of the implementation of the Copenhagen Accord by 2015. This would include consideration of strengthening the long-term goal in the light of the Convention's ultimate objective.

The workshop should take stock of recent assessments, overviews and syntheses from regional and international programmes and organizations such as EC FP7, IPCC, ESSP, WCRP, IGBP, DIVERSITAS, IHDP, START, APN, SCAR, Arctic Council, NOAA, OECD and GCOS. Themes to be addressed during the workshop should be flexible considering that between this submission and the planned workshop two UNFCCC meetings (14th session of the AWG-KP and 12th session of AWG-LCA (Tianjin) and COP16 (Cancún)) will be held. The EU therefore suggests keeping open the possibility for complementary submissions after Cancún.

Consider ways to make available on its website information from the research programmes and organizations

The EU recognizes the usefulness of making information from the most relevant international or regional research programmes and organizations available on the UNFCCC website. The EU requests the international research programmes and organizations to contribute actively to this and provide relevant information or updates to the UNFCCC secretariat at regular intervals (e.g. every 3-6 months), preferably using a fixed format. The “Methods and Science” section of the UNFCCC website could be developed further to become the vehicle for conveying this information.

Finally, a questions and answers part could be an interesting addition to increase interaction between policy makers and scientist. This would require developing a method of collection questions, a system to provide science responses and an interface for archiving the dialogue for easy access.

Paper no. 2: Belize

BELIZE

Submission to the
Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice
on Research and Systematic Observation

September 2010

The submission addresses the issues raised in UNFCCC/SBSTA/2010/L.8ⁱ and in particular focuses on the content of a workshop to organise pursuant to paragraph 5(a). The workshop provides an opportunity for the scientific community to communicate issues of concern to policymakers, and the policymakers in turn provide feedback to the research committee on areas that may require further research, particularly in the lead up to the review of the Copenhagen accord in 2015, and further work is needed in the context of the IPCC AR 5 now beginning.

AOSIS concern is to increase the level of research and dialogue with the research community on matters relating to 1.5°C. Under the Copenhagen Accord this level of warming will be examined in the context of a review of the 2° goal of the accord. AOSIS considers that there is a full range of issues for deliberation by the research community within the next few years which is of high interest to policymakers generally, and in particular to those in the most vulnerable countries. In order to advance this discussion AOSIS believes that the workshop proposed under agenda item 6 should include consideration of the following issues, with presentations from the research community and the opportunity to dialogue with researchers and identify further issues relevant to policymakers:

1. Vulnerabilities, risks and impacts at different levels of global mean warming from present levels, or 1.5°C, 2°C, and upwards, and how all these risks, vulnerabilities and impacts scale with increasing levels of global mean warming.
2. Adaptation needs and costs at different levels of global mean warming from present levels, 1.5°C, 2°C, 3°C and so on to the highest levels projected warming.
3. Low mitigation scenarios, including *inter alia*, technological and economic feasibility, policy implications for short, medium and longer term and including regional economic implications of mitigation pathways and.
4. Gaps in the mitigation literature in relation to low levels of warming, including keeping temperatures below 2°C as called for by the Copenhagen record, many warming back to below 1.5°C as fast as possible, low levels of CO₂ concentration including to return CO₂ concentrations below 350 ppm as soon as possible; and how these gaps may be filled.
5. Advances in knowledge since the fourth assessment report in relation to the effects and consequences of ocean acidification on the marine environment and ecosystems;
6. Advances in knowledge in relation to the risks of sea level rise from global warming
7. Sea level rise impacts for different levels of sea level rise over time, from present levels up to several metres, resolving these at the finest scale of SLR increments possible.
8. Co-benefits of mitigation actions and pathways for sustainable development.
9. Gaps in knowledge, scientific uncertainties and possible priorities for further research that could feed in to the IPCC AR5

ⁱ The SBSTA noted the need to further enhance interaction between the science and policy communities by strengthening the research dialogue.

Possible ways to enhance the effectiveness of the dialogue in the future may include:

- (a) Better identification and communication of research themes and topics of interest to policymakers;
- (b) Greater opportunities for developing countries to present research results and related capacity-building activities;
- (c) Further activities to share information;
- (d) Identification of additional ways to communicate research outcomes and findings to Parties.

5. In this regard, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to:

- (a) Organize a workshop, in conjunction with its thirty-fourth session, subject to the availability of resources and under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, to allow further in-depth consideration to be given to issues addressed in the research dialogue and to prepare a report on the workshop to be made available for consideration by the SBSTA at its thirty-fourth session;
 - (b) Consider ways to make available on its website information from the research programmes and organizations.
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