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Item 11(b) of the provisional agenda

Methodological issues under the Kyoto Protocol

Implications of the inclusion of reforestation of lands with forest in exhaustion as afforestation and reforestation clean development mechanism project activities

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Submission from Brazil

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Summary Report of the Workshop on the “Eligibility of Areas containing Forests in Exhaustion for the Development of A/R CDM Project Activities”

Brazil, 25-27 April, 2012

Introduction

On the 25th and the 26th of April 2012, the Government of Brazil organized an informal workshop on the “Eligibility of Areas containing Forests in Exhaustion for the Development of A/R CDM Project Activities”, which was held at the Ministry of External Relations, in Brasília. On the 27th of April, a field trip to the Rio Doce valley region was organized. Representatives from Angola, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Phillipines, Tanzania, Zambia, as well as experts in their individual capacity, attended the meeting.

The workshop drew upon the conclusions of the 35th session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), which took note of Brazil’s intention to organize an informal workshop, with a view to providing more clarity on the definition of forest in exhaustion.

A summary report of the discussions is reproduced below. It was prepared by Brazil, under its own responsibility as chair of the workshop.

Main points of the workshop

- 1) Participants reiterated the importance of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) for promoting sustainable development in developing countries and contributing to the ultimate objective of the Convention, while helping Annex I Parties in achieving compliance with their emission reduction commitments under the Kyoto Protocol. The need for scaling up afforestation and reforestation (A/R) project activities in the CDM was generally supported, as a means to enhance developing country participation in the CDM.
- 2) The eligibility of areas containing forests in exhaustion under CDM was considered as one alternative to improve and promote A/R CDM project activities. It would create significant mitigation opportunities in developing countries, while preserving the environmental integrity of the climate change regime.
- 3) With regard to the definition of forest in exhaustion and its links to related LULUCF definitions, the following points were noted:
 - a. The issue of forests in exhaustion is in line with the current definitions of forest and reforestation.

- b. The issue of forests in exhaustion must not create perverse incentives for deforestation. It must be sufficiently clear that the definition of forests in exhaustion does not apply to areas that contained natural forests.
 - c. The definition of forest in exhaustion suggested by the Executive Board of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM EB) provides a good basis for discussions under SBSTA.
 - d. As suggested by CDM EB, the definition of forest in exhaustion should be restricted to areas that contained forests established through planting, seeding, and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources.
 - e. Some aspects of the CDM EB definition require additional consideration by Parties under SBSTA. A number of participants expressed the view that a 5-year-period, included in the CDM EB definition, would create an arbitrary deadline to the occurrence of final harvesting.
- 4) With regard to eligibility, additionality and other methodological issues, the following points have been highlighted:
- a. The eligibility of forests in exhaustion would not require the creation of a new type of CDM Project Activity. Rather, forests in exhaustion should be considered in the context of reforestation project activities.
 - b. The eligibility of forests in exhaustion would not require the modification of current additionality criteria and eligibility procedures. In line with the CDM EB Report to CMP.5, the current modalities and procedures for the development of A/R CDM project activities, as well as existing methodological provisions, including baseline and additionality tools, and procedures to determine the eligibility of lands would also be applicable to the development of A/R CDM project activities in areas containing forests in exhaustion.
 - c. Some participants noted that the reference to a 1989 cut-off date included in the reforestation definition is actually a provisional clause, as it refers specifically to the first commitment period.
- 5) In general, participants agreed that the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice should provide sufficient time for discussions on this issue, with a view to facilitating agreement among Parties on the definition of forest in exhaustion and its eligibility for the development of A/R project activities under CDM.

Annex I - Field Visit

On Friday, April 27, 2012, a field visit was organized with the objective of presenting some examples of forests in exhaustion and demonstrating the potential role of the CDM in the promotion of reforestation activities in developing countries. The visit took place in the Rio Doce valley region, in the State of Minas Gerais, covering areas in different municipalities that surround the city of Ipatinga.

In the morning, participants visited three sites that illustrated the reality of forests in exhaustion at different stages, including lands that had already been converted to pastureland, areas that had just undergone final harvesting and areas that contained planted forests in the process of being exhausted. In the afternoon, participants visited a reforestation area established by a small producer with the support of a local company in degraded lands, a nursery for the production of clone seedlings and an area that contained planted forests in exhaustion, which has been recovered through reforestation with native species.

At the end of the field visit, participants considered that it was helpful to improve their understanding of the concept of forest in exhaustion and the potential use of the CDM to reforest such areas.

Annex II – Relevant References for the Debate on Forest in Exhaustion

- CDM EB definition of forests in exhaustion:

“Forest in exhaustion is an area of land that contained forest – established through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources – on 31 December 1989 and/or at the starting date of the project activity. If the land at the starting date of the project activity is forest then, in the absence of the project activity, it would be converted to non-forested land through final harvesting within [5] years of the proposed starting date of the project activity. If the land at the starting date of the project activity is non-forested land then, in the absence of the project activity, it is expected to remain as non-forested land.” (CDM EB Report to CMP.5)

- Definition of reforestation in the Marrakesh Accords:

“Reforestation is the direct human-induced conversion of non-forested land to forested land through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources, on land that was forested but that has been converted to non-forested land. For the first commitment period, reforestation activities will be limited to reforestation occurring on those lands that did not contain forest on 31 December 1989” (Decision 16/CMP.1)

- Definition of forest in the Marrakesh Accords:

“Forest is a minimum area of land of 0.05–1.0 hectare with tree crown cover (or equivalent stocking level) of more than 10–30 per cent with trees with the potential to reach a minimum height of 2–5 metres at maturity in situ. A forest may consist either of closed forest formations where trees of various storeys and undergrowth cover a high proportion of the ground or open forest. Young natural stands and all plantations which have yet to reach a crown density of 10–30 per cent or tree height of 2–5 metres are included under forest, as are areas normally forming part of the forest area which are temporarily unstocked as a result of human intervention such as harvesting or natural causes but which are expected to revert to forest” (Decision 16/CMP.1)

Annex III – Agenda of the Workshop on the “Eligibility of Areas containing Forests in Exhaustion for the Development of A/R CDM Project Activities”

Day 1 – April 25, 2012

25/04/2012 - Wednesday	
09:00 - 09:30	Opening session – Welcome remarks and objectives of the workshop
09:30 - 10:50	Forests in exhaustion in the context of developing countries 09:30 – 10:30 Presentation 10:30 - 10:50 Q&A
10:50 - 11:10	Coffee break
11:10 - 13:00	Overview of previous negotiations and submissions by Parties 11:10 - 11:40 Negotiations from Poznan to Durban: overview of the process, main issues and work previously conducted 11:40 - 12:30 Discussion on submissions by Parties 12:30 - 13:00 Q&A
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 15:00	Further elucidation on the definition of Forests in Exhaustion 14:00 - 14:40 Presentation 14:40 – 15:00 Q & A
15:00 - 16:00	Eligibility, additionality and other methodological issues 15:00 – 15:40 Presentation 15:40 – 16:00 Q & A
16:00 – 17:00	Implications for Sustainable Development 16:00 – 16:40 Presentation 16:40 – 17:00 Q & A
17:00 - 17:30	Coffee Break
17:30 - 19:00	Summary of discussions, with a view to the next session of SBSTA

Day 2 – April 26, 2012

26/04/2012 - Thursday	
09:00 - 11:00	Summary report of discussions, with a view to the next session of SBSTA
11:00 - 11:15	Coffee Break

Special Session on associated forestry issues: ways to improve A/R CDM from the supply and demand perspectives

26/04/2012 – Thursday	
11:15 - 13:30	Approaches to non-permanence Constraints from the demand side
13:30 - 14:30	Lunch
14:30	Departure to the Site Visit

Day 3 – April 27, 2012

27/04/2012 - Friday	
09:00 - 18:00	Site visit to areas containing forests in exhaustion and sustainable forest activities. - Field Trip
