

Note on progress

Note by the Co-Chairs

13 August 2013

I. Progress towards bridging the pre-2020 ambition gap and delivering a new agreement by 2015

1. This note on progress has been prepared in response to an invitation from the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP), on the basis of the discussions that took place during the first and second parts of the second session of the ADP and under our own responsibility.¹ In it, we provide our perceptions of and reflections on the progress made by the ADP, noting that our thinking has evolved as the work of the ADP has progressed.²

2. In handing over our responsibilities to the new Co-Chairs of the ADP, we would like to share with Parties our observations, which Parties may wish to consider in preparing for the third part of the second session of the ADP in Warsaw and the year 2014:

(a) The ADP has laid foundations and is ready to shift gears, moving on to defining the content of the agreement and deciding on concrete steps regarding pre-2020 ambition. It is ready to capture its progress in written form;

(b) Workstream 1: science, equity, national circumstances and flexibility, effectiveness and participation are emerging as guiding elements in the design of the 2015 agreement;

(c) Workstream 2: building on the extensive exchange of views on the options available, there is now an opportunity to set a clear direction in order to ensure that the useful exchange yields tangible results.

3. Having had the honour of facilitating the work of the ADP, we would like to thank all Parties for their constructive spirit and for the confidence demonstrated over the past year. We encourage all Parties to maintain their positive spirit and to work with the new Co-Chairs and with each other in the endeavour of the ADP to accelerate progress towards bridging the pre-2020 ambition gap and adopting a new agreement by 2015.

4. The ADP has advanced its work in various ways over the past year.³ Parties have engaged in an open exchange of views and have explored concrete ideas and proposals thoroughly and in a constructive spirit. There is a wealth of material and growing understanding of the matters under negotiation.⁴ Parties have generally agreed that the ADP has laid the foundations that will allow it to move from developing an understanding of concepts to defining the content of the 2015 agreement and achieving results on pre-2020 ambition.

Workstream 1

5. At its eighteenth session, the Conference of the Parties (COP) identified important milestones for 2013, 2014 and 2015, including that the ADP will consider elements of a negotiating text no later than at its session to be held in conjunction with COP 20 (December 2014) and that a draft negotiating text will be made available before May 2015.⁵

6. Parties have made progress in clarifying their understanding of the scope, structure and design of the 2015 agreement, and its contours are beginning to emerge. There is a broad understanding that the 2015 agreement should be: informed by science; based on equity; flexible and sensitive to national circumstances; and

¹ FCCC/ADP/2013/2, paragraph 38.

² For our reflections on individual sessions of the ADP, see documents <ADP.2012.4.InformalNote>, <ADP.2012.9.InformalNote> and <ADP.2013.8.InformalNote>.

³ See the reports on the sessions of the ADP in 2012 (FCCC/ADP/2012/2 and FCCC/ADP/2012/3) and 2013 (FCCC/ADP/2013/2).

⁴ The ADP has had in-depth discussions in round tables and workshops under both workstreams. Detailed summaries have been prepared by us and by the workshop facilitators, which are listed in document FCCC/ADP/2013/2, annex II. Submissions from Parties are available at <<http://unfccc.int/7398>> (2013) and <<http://unfccc.int/6656>> (2012); submissions from observer organizations are available at <<http://unfccc.int/7023>>.

⁵ Decision 2/CP.18, paragraph 9.

environmentally effective; and that it needs to enable broad and deep participation, with contributions from all Parties in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. These key elements – science, equity, flexibility, effectiveness and participation – are intimately interlinked and could guide Parties in their approach to constructing the 2015 agreement.

7. There is a need to bring together these guiding elements with the substantive elements identified in decision 1/CP.17, paragraph 5, including mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology, capacity-building and transparency, into a coherent design. There is a broad understanding that all of these elements of the 2015 agreement should be considered holistically, since they are closely interrelated. The ADP has laid the foundations, allowing it now to proceed with fleshing out the details, which inevitably will bring more complexities and challenges. While fleshing out the details, it will also be important to start thinking about the legal character of each aspect of the agreement.

8. Regarding mitigation, Parties have explored in more detail bottom-up and top-down elements and how they can be combined. In this regard, Parties broadly acknowledge the need for internationally agreed rules to enable ex ante clarity of nationally determined contributions and to provide for a robust process, framework or mechanism to ensure that Parties' contributions are ambitious in accordance with science as well as equitable and fair. Greater clarity is needed on how this vision could be realized, including on possible steps and time frames.

9. Following the second part of the second session of the ADP, it is now becoming clearer that adaptation will feature as an integral part of the 2015 agreement and that the relationship between mitigation and adaptation will require particular attention. Several Parties have begun to explore the concept of an adaptation goal and adaptation commitments, which they see as being linked to success in global mitigation efforts, support for adaptation, and loss and damage. Parties have also started to exchange views on how the 2015 agreement would link to the existing adaptation infrastructure under the Convention. Parties will need to deepen this initial exploration and develop more concrete ideas as to how to address the adaptation elements of the 2015 agreement.

10. All Parties agree that finance, technology and capacity-building are important elements of the 2015 agreement. Parties also acknowledge the crucial role that existing institutions and arrangements under the Convention have in delivering finance, technology and capacity-building support, and a few proposals have been made on how the 2015 agreement could add value to these existing arrangements. The potential role of economic instruments such as market-based mechanisms has also been identified. However, Parties still need to engage more closely with each other to determine how these means of implementation will be elaborated in the design of the agreement.

11. Parties converge on the crucial importance of transparency for mutual trust, comparability and accountability. They also agree on the need to take into account, and build on, the existing arrangements for measurement, reporting and verification, noting that many of these are just coming into effect and need to evolve. In this respect, discussions on transparency of action seem to be more advanced and concrete than those on transparency of support.

12. Other areas which need to be explored in greater detail include: the relationship with the 2013–2015 review and how the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5) of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will inform the relevant deliberations; the role of market and non-market mechanisms; and the role of forests and land use.

13. The notion of a broader 2015 package was suggested by several Parties, comprising the 2015 agreement itself, the implementing decisions, and other decisions needed to complete and balance the overall package. Parties may wish to further exchange views on the aforementioned package, the components of the 2015 agreement and, as the discussions progress, on what work will be needed during 2016–2019 to enable the agreement to come into effect and be implemented from 2020.

Workstream 2

14. In Doha, Parties decided to identify and to explore in 2013 options for a range of actions that can close the pre-2020 ambition gap, with a view to identifying further activities for the plan of work of the ADP for 2014, ensuring the highest possible mitigation efforts under the Convention.⁶ We believe that the ADP has made good progress in exploring such options and many ideas and proposals for concrete actions and activities under workstream 2 have been discussed.

⁶ Decision 2/CP.18, paragraph 5.

15. In moving forward, Parties may give consideration to what actions and activities could be agreed and undertaken now and until 2015, what steps may be recommended by the ADP to the COP to ensure that efforts to increase ambition continue beyond 2015, and which of the options and ideas discussed will also remain relevant in the long term and therefore need to be factored into the 2015 agreement.

16. There is a shared sense of urgency concerning pre-2020 mitigation ambition, because of both the impacts of climate change and the growing awareness of untapped mitigation potential. Parties called for a prompt ratification of the Doha amendment to the Kyoto Protocol. Parties have also recognized that in many cases the actions that Parties are implementing go beyond their pledges and that some Parties are likely to overachieve on their pledges, which should be further encouraged. Parties have also considered assessing and removing the conditions associated with pledges, moving to the upper range of pledges and broadening their scope. There is a growing interest in considering at the 2013 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Warsaw an invitation to Parties to take new and more ambitious pre-2020 mitigation actions.

17. There is a broad understanding that pre-2020 ambition should be considered in a comprehensive manner and Parties recognize the need to deliver on existing commitments and decisions, including on support. Furthermore, there is broad agreement that the pre-2020 mitigation and adaptation actions are equally important and should, as such, both receive adequate political attention and support.

18. The role of finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building has been recognized as a critical factor in the facilitation of enhanced action by developing countries prior to 2020. In particular, accelerating the delivery of effective support is essential to delivering results before 2020. In the context of increasing the ambition of support, Parties have emphasized the need to enhance synergy and collaboration between institutions and processes under the Convention.

19. In exploring ways to address pre-2020 ambition, Parties have shared information on national actions and cooperative initiatives and discussed their potential to bridge the emissions gap and overcome barriers. However, Parties still need to identify areas where additional actions and initiatives may be required and to accelerate and scale up international cooperative initiatives in helping Parties to take the actions necessary to bridge the gap.

20. With regard to actions and initiatives in a range of thematic areas, the ADP has held a series of workshops on pre-2020 ambition.⁷ Other thematic areas that have been identified include urbanization, transportation and agriculture. In considering actions and initiatives in specific thematic areas, Parties have emphasized the importance of national circumstances and the need to consider the impacts on the livelihoods of vulnerable groups. In addition, some Parties have raised concerns over unilateral measures that may affect the economies of other Parties.

21. We consider it necessary for Parties, in identifying further activities for the plan of work of the ADP under workstream 2 in 2014, to set a more clear direction to the work in order to ensure that the useful exchange of views that they have had yields results. It is encouraging to see growing support for making 2014 the year of ambition and for connecting this theme with the high-level event that the Secretary-General will convene in September 2014.

II. Accelerating progress

22. In retrospect, we believe that, since the birth of the ADP in December 2011, Parties have laid solid foundations both for the 2015 agreement and for raising pre-2020 ambition. We are confident that the ADP has moved on from its broad conceptual and scoping discussions into the content-forming phase and is ready to undertake more specific and detailed work.

23. All Parties have reaffirmed that the work and results of both of the workstreams of the ADP will be under the Convention, guided by its principles, and link to and draw upon existing institutions, mechanisms and arrangements. In this context we would like to recall a diagram that we prepared previously as an attempt to visualize this general understanding.⁸ As discussions have deepened, the importance of workstream 2 in helping shape elements of the 2015 agreement has become clearly evident. Progress on pre-2020 ambition in workstream 2 will contribute to progress in workstream 1 and may help design the 2015 agreement, especially its

⁷ The summary reports on the workshops on pre-2020 ambition are listed in document [FCCC/ADP/2013/2](#), annex II. The workshops focused on: low-emission development opportunities; opportunities for mitigation and adaptation related to land use; and energy transformation, including scaling up renewable energy, enhancing energy efficiency and the consideration of carbon capture and storage.

⁸ See document [ADP.2013.8.InformalNote](#), paragraph 6.

ambition mechanism. At the same time, concrete progress in workstream 1 may prove helpful for aiming at a more ambitious approach for workstream 2.

24. The ADP is to be informed by the IPCC AR5, the 2013–2015 review and the work of the subsidiary bodies.⁹ To learn from experience and avoid duplication of work, Parties have expressed an interest in maintaining an overview of the relevant existing and evolving work of other bodies. We believe that the briefings¹⁰ have been helpful in this respect and that the overview of the institutions, mechanisms and arrangements under the Convention to be prepared by the secretariat will also contribute to this end.¹¹ We suggest that besides being informed by focused briefings at future ADP sessions on the IPCC AR5, the 2013–2015 review and the work of the subsidiary bodies, as appropriate at various stages of the work of the ADP, Parties may also like to consider how other UNFCCC bodies can assist the ADP in furthering its work.

25. Parties have pointed to various dimensions, including balance between the two workstreams, within each workstream, and across various thematic areas and the specific issues under discussion. Maintaining balance will continue to be essential. This is what negotiations are all about. It is the endeavour of the Co-Chairs to sustain this delicate balance amid the progressing work of the ADP.

26. The ADP needs to build on the perceptible common understanding by engaging in an effort to bridge differences on more specific and difficult aspects. Building on Parties' exchanges of views, we have suggested in this note some topics which, in our view, merit further work. In addition, at the second part of its second session, the ADP agreed on a number of steps for the immediate future, including further submissions to explore specific ideas and proposals, as well as requests for technical inputs by the secretariat, which will contribute to moving discussions forward.¹²

27. In order to accomplish its task, it is essential that the ADP preserve and deepen the trust among Parties and continue to ensure a transparent and inclusive mode of work. It is also constructive to promote an approach that facilitates decision-making while remaining flexible and responsive to new challenges. In this regard, it is our perception that the ADP is ready to shift gears by adding new modalities that would better reflect the level of maturity of the process, allowing it to speedily move into a more focused and formal mode of work. Time is precious. At the end of the 2013 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Warsaw, half of the lifetime of the ADP will have passed. In order to meet the deadlines established at COP 17 and 18 and to reach the agreed milestones, the ADP will need to start recording its progress more formally in written form.

28. We are aware that a broad range of climate action is already happening around the world and Parties have provided many examples from their domestic contexts. The ADP may turn its attention to the question of what is needed from the international level this year and what will be needed in order to advance its work in 2014 and finalize it in 2015. In our view, it would be important to start clarifying what preparatory work Parties need to initiate in capitals now on their domestic efforts. One area for such 'homework' would be to ensure that clarity on national contributions can be provided if and when it is called for.

29. At its eighteenth session, the COP underlined the importance of high-level engagement on matters related to decision 1/CP.17, which Parties have echoed throughout the year. There is a strong interest in engaging ministers at the 2013 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Warsaw in a high-level dialogue on pre-2020 ambition and to build further momentum in the construction of the 2015 agreement, which can be helpful for the work of the ADP in 2014.

30. Finally, we would like to state that, although the Co-Chairs of the ADP can help Parties to focus their discussions and bring ideas forward, they depend on the Parties to bring focus to the work of the ADP. Focus needs to come from all participants and, in the spirit of a Party-driven process, Parties need to provide focus through their submissions, interventions and other contributions. At the same time, Parties will need to move beyond elaborating their preferred positions and work with each other to find and formulate a balanced and effective outcome that everyone can support.

⁹ Decision 1/CP.17, paragraph 6.

¹⁰ Information on the ADP briefings organized so far is available at <<http://unfccc.int/7695>>.

¹¹ FCCC/ADP/2013/2, paragraph 37.

¹² FCCC/ADP/2013/2, paragraphs 29–40.