Summary report on the workshop on low-emission development opportunities
ADP 2, part 1
Bonn, Germany, 30 April 2013

Note by the facilitator

23 May 2013

I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. In its conclusions agreed at the second part of its first session, held in Doha, Qatar, from 27 November to 7 December 2012, the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP) decided to hold in-session round tables and workshops in 2013 under the two workstreams initiated in 2012,[1] and invited the Co-Chairs of the ADP to set out focused questions for those round tables and workshops, taking into account the relevant submissions from Parties and accredited observer organizations.[2]

2. In response to that decision, the Co-Chairs of the ADP made arrangements for two workshops under workstream 2, one addressing low-emission development opportunities and the other opportunities for mitigation and adaptation related to land use, and set out focused questions for the workshops in an informal note on the second session of the ADP.[3]

3. This note summarizes the discussion that took place during the workshop on opportunities for low-emission development, which was held on 30 April 2013 at the World Conference Center Bonn in Bonn, Germany, during the first part of the second session of the ADP.

B. General objectives of and approach to the workshop

4. In the informal note referred to in paragraph 2 above, the Co-Chairs of the ADP formulated the goals for the first part of its second session and invited Parties to build on the broad, conceptual discussions carried out in 2012 by engaging in a more practical and results-oriented approach to increasing pre-2020 ambition. In accordance with that note, the workshop was designed to explore the opportunities for low-emission development, bearing in mind

(a) The role of national action in increasing ambition;

[1] FCCC/ADP/2012/3, paragraphs 28 and 30. Workstream 1 relates to a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention (the 2015 agreement) and workstream 2 relates to pre-2020 ambition.

[2] FCCC/ADP/2012/3, paragraphs 30–32.

[3] Available at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/adp2/eng/1infnot.pdf>.

(b) The role of international cooperative initiatives in strengthening national action; and;

(c) The role of means of implementation in facilitating an increase in ambition.

5. In addition, the workshop was aimed at defining the next steps necessary to increase the level of ambition under workstream 2 of the ADP.

II. Summary of the proceedings

6. The workshop was opened by the Co-Chairs of the ADP, Mr. Jayant Moreshver Mauskar (India) and Mr. Harald Dovland (Norway), and facilitated by Ms. Alexa Kleysteuber (Chile). The Co-Chairs outlined the objectives of the workshop in the broader context of the ADP and the facilitator informed Parties of the general approach to the workshop. She encouraged Parties to use the workshop to discuss how best to promote the move towards low-emission and climate-resilient development in a frank and concrete manner.

7. The workshop was divided into three parts. During part I two introductory presentations were provided to set the scene and to highlight the opportunities which exist to promote low-emission development. Mr. Ron Benioff, Director of the Low Emission Development Strategies (LEDS) Global Partnership, made a presentation entitled "Advancing Climate-Resilient Low Emission Development around the World", while Mr. Dolf Gielen, Director of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) Innovation and Technology Centre, made a presentation entitled "Opportunities for Renewable Energy Deployment".[4]

8. Part II included a panel discussion, with the panel comprising Professor Zou Ji (China), Ms. Fatuma Hussein (Kenya), Mr. Henrik Harboe (Norway), Mr. Ben Lyon (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland), Ms. Merlyn Van Voore from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on behalf of the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC) and Ms. Teresa Wills from the C40 Cities Climate Leadership Group (C40). The panellists shared their experiences in undertaking action to raise ambition through the implementation of low-emission development strategies.

9. Part III of the workshop was a general discussion open to all participants, building on the presentations and the panel discussion. The facilitator highlighted the following questions to focus the discussion:

(a) What action has been taken by your country to facilitate low-emission development?

(b) What mitigation benefits have you identified as a result of such action?

(c) What barriers are you facing at the national level in the transition towards low-emission development?

(d) How are you addressing such barriers? How can enhanced means of implementation contribute to their removal?

(e) What incentives have you put in place to encourage low-emission development?

10. Seventeen Parties, three of whom spoke on behalf of groups of Parties, and one observer organization took the floor to share experiences related to developing and implementing low-carbon development strategies, including opportunities and barriers encountered.

[4] The presentations are available at the workshop page of the UNFCCC website: <http://unfccc.int/7489>.

11. The facilitator concluded the workshop by thanking all participants for their rich contributions and active participation. She informed them that a report of the workshop would be prepared and made available on the UNFCCC website.[5]

III. Summary of the workshop discussion

A. Presentations and panellists' reflections

12. Mr. Benioff showcased initiatives around the world which focused on advancing climate-resilient low-emission development through the implementation of low-emission development strategies. The presentation illustrated the rich diversity of action occurring at the national level, the significant opportunity to further scale up such action and how international cooperation though the LEDS Global Partnership is providing a unique global platform to support developing countries in enhancing action through regional networks aimed at capacity-building for policies, finance, inventories and planning and coordination at all levels.

13. Mr. Gielen highlighted opportunities for renewable energy deployment. He provided an overview of the state of global renewable energy deployment and the role of IRENA in supporting countries in their transition to a sustainable energy future. Currently, approximately 50 per cent of the new electricity generation capacity worldwide is based on renewable energy and this share had doubled in recent years. He noted that many opportunities exist for renewable energy deployment and, as a result, the rate of renewable energy deployment has been continually increasing globally. Globally they are interesting cost- effective opportunities to deploy renewables for power generation. IRENA is currently in the process of analyzing manufacturing opportunities in cities and in the transportation sector. Currently there is a 9% share of renewables in the manufacturing sector; however IRENA estimates that this can be increased to 35% assuming the implementation of some kind of global carbon pricing and ample availability of low-cost biomass resources. If there is no carbon price and strong competition for biomass resources, it is more likely that a 15% share will be achieved which, although a 50% increase of current levels, illustrates that policies matter. IRENA actively contributes to the renewable energy stream of Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL), which is an initiative launched by the United Nations Secretary-General in 2012 as a public-private partnership involving key actors such as governments, finance institutions, equipment manufacturers, utility companies, international organizations and foundations to make sustainable energy for all a reality by 2030.

14. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland started the panel discussion by presenting relevant aspects of its low-carbon transition plan, aimed at facilitating an emission reduction of 80 per cent of 1990 levels by 2050 through a series of five-year carbon budgets. This ambitious target is backed by legislation and the United Kingdom has implemented a range of policies and measures, including a regulatory framework, a renewable energy roll-out and carbon capture and storage, to achieve the target. The United Kingdom has implemented a series of energy efficiency initiatives, seeking to illustrate that reducing emissions and supporting economic growth are not mutually exclusive tasks.

[5] In addition, the facilitator has summarized her take home points from the workshop, <http://unfccc.int/files/bodies/awg/application/pdf/adp2_worsktream2_led_facilitator.pdf>, which have been made available at the workshop webpage (see footnote 4).

15. Kenya presented its experience in embarking on a low-carbon climate-resilient development pathway. Kenya's economy is dependent upon climate-sensitive resources, which makes the country highly vulnerable to the impacts of a changing climate. As a result, Kenya developed and is currently implementing an ambitious climate change strategy which combines mitigation and adaptation priorities, with some assistance from several developed countries and international organizations, geared towards achieving long-term economic growth up to and beyond 2030. Although support has been provided, Kenya still requires additional financial, technological and capacity-building support to successfully complete the implementation of this initiative over the coming years.

16. China presented its national efforts to promote low-carbon growth through the implementation of its 12th Five-Year Plan. China stated that new and innovative pathways for low-carbon development are required to ensure that future emissions do not continue to follow 'business as usual' trends. It suggested that this could be achieved by acquiring the necessary technologies, launching relevant policies and setting up relevant institutional arrangements. It was noted that, although the goals should be ambitious, it is more important to find feasible solutions to ensure that the goals can be achieved. In this regard, China identified the following four major drivers which were being used to find solutions to achieving their strategy: (1) energy efficiency, (2) energy fix/energy shares, (3) income sources, i.e., how will wealth be increased and (4) population, since emissions result from the activity of people. China also stated that because promoting low-carbon growth was a priority for the government, fiscal money had been allocated to leverage private sector finance, even though their national fiscal situation was not so good.

17. Norway highlighted its national and international experience in implementing low-carbon polices, noting that, although all countries must act nationally, it is equally important to support international efforts. The Norwegian climate policy represents such a combination of both national and international action. At the national level, Norway has implemented carbon taxes and cap-and-trade systems, established green certificate markets for renewables and an agency specifically addressing energy efficiency, and started a climate technology fund. In Norway's view, economic instruments such as carbon taxes are cost-effective measures which directly address the 'polluter pays' principle, generate government revenue and stimulate investment.

18. Speaking on behalf of CCAC, the representative of UNEP stated that the initial focus of CCAC is on addressing methane, black carbon and hydro fluorocarbons (HFCs). The coalition intends to serve as a forum for assessing progress in addressing the challenge of short-lived climate pollutants and for mobilizing resources to accelerate action. Addressing short-lived climate pollutants could benefit short-term climate change mitigation and could complement and supplement, rather than replace, long-term global mitigation action by governments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

19. The representative of C40 discussed how cities could play a substantial role in promoting sustainable action on climate change and deliver measurable results. Cities can play a leading role in addressing climate change, owing to the large share of emissions associated with their activities and their unique capability to directly introduce and implement policies and measures in their jurisdiction that have a direct impact on such activities. Mitigation actions at the city level not only have the potential to catalyse larger national actions but can also serve as case studies which can later be scaled up to the state and/or national level. Moreover, mitigation activities at the city level translate into national emission reductions, which directly contribute to national mitigation targets.

B. General discussion

1. Mitigation potential in exploring low-emission development

20. From the presentations, panel interventions and general discussion it was clear that a wide range of mitigation action is already taking place both at the national and international levels, and that ample opportunities exist to further scale up such action at all levels. It was noted, however, that, although much is being done, further action is still possible, since Parties representing approximately 20 per cent of the global GHG emissions have not yet announced mitigation pledges.

21. A few Parties expressed the view that, in order to be on track to meet the 2 ^{o}C goal, developed countries should lead the effort, with all countries contributing their fair share towards making transformational changes without being bound by the least-cost policy options. It was noted that pre-2020 mitigation commitments and actions should be translated into real actions backed by predictable national policies and robust legal frameworks, based broadly on bottom-up initiatives and solutions.

22. Many Parties referred to the following as areas where mitigation potential is still untapped and called for a more focused discussion of these specific areas in future sessions:

(a) Energy efficiency, in particular in housing, industry and transport;

(b) Use of renewable energy sources;

(c) Land use and forestry, including reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD);

(d) Fossil fuel subsidy reform;

(e) Phasing out HFCs.

2. Increasing the level of ambition by enhancing national action

23. It is widely recognized that national action is the cornerstone of global efforts to reduce GHG emissions and, over the years, Parties have gained experience in developing and implementing low-emission development strategies and promoting sustainable development while addressing climate change mitigation, adaptation and poverty eradication priorities.

24. Several Parties cited the creation of the right enabling environment as a key component of enhancing national action. Some of the enabling conditions implemented by Parties include creating the necessary institutional policy and regulatory framework, mobilizing climate resources, knowledge management and capacity-building structures, a strategy for promoting research and technological innovations and a monitoring, reporting and verification framework system. It was suggested by some Parties that implementing a global carbon tax could send a positive signal for low-emission development both in the short and long term, thereby catalysing further action at the national level.

25. The importance of broad stakeholder participation was also identified as a key contributor to the successful implementation of national climate change policies. Engaging local businesses, industries, civil society and academia in the implementation of national action through voluntary agreements, innovative solutions and community engagement has proven to be successful in many countries. Parties suggested that the UNFCCC forum could be used to mobilize, promote and enhance stakeholder engagement.

26. Parties highlighted the value of public–private partnerships and how engaging the private sector can help to scale up action. It was noted that, owing to a strong sense of corporate responsibility, the private sector is getting more environmentally aware and actively seeking to engage by considering the environmental impacts of their operations and by undertaking responsible investing.

27. Several Parties also highlighted the importance of high-level political support in ensuring the coherence and continuity of national policies. The process of preparing and implementing low-emission development strategies requires the highest level of political engagement to facilitate inter-ministerial support and the coherent anchoring of climate change strategies in national sustainable development plans. Facilitating effective cross-sectoral cooperation at the national level and engaging the ministries of planning, economy and finance through various institutional arrangements was highlighted as a critical element in achieving transformational change.

3. Benefits of enhanced action to increase ambition

28. It is widely accepted that increasing the level of ambition by undertaking ambitious mitigation efforts produces not only environmental but also socioeconomic benefits. In this regard, Parties highlighted some of the immediate benefits which can result from the successful implementation of such enhanced action, including:

(a) Improved public health;

(b) Enhanced agricultural yields;

(c) Improved access to clean water;

(d) Improved waste management;

(e) More reliable and efficient transport fleets;

(f) Poverty alleviation and the economic security of large populations through job creation and job security;

(g) Enhanced economic growth and a more competitive economy.

29. Parties noted that effectively communicating the socioeconomic benefits of action can create the political impetus needed at the national level to undertake transformational action.

4. Barriers to enhancing the ambition of national action

30. It was stated that the successful implementation of low-emission development strategies in developing countries is linked to access to enhanced means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building). Many Parties identified the lack of financial resources to cover the costs of developing and implementing low-emission development policies and technologies as the primary barrier at the national level.

31. In addition, several Parties expressed concern over the high upfront costs of many renewable energy technologies compared with conventional energy technologies based on fossil fuels. This often prevents access to, and increased deployment of, renewable energy technologies in many developing countries. A few Parties noted, however, that the cost of renewable energy technology has reduced as a result of effective national policies, development of affordable technologies and an increase in fossil fuel prices.

32. Parties highlighted the lack of inter-ministerial collaboration as a barrier at the national level, as it hinders the coherent anchoring of climate change strategies in national sustainable development plans.

33. Furthermore, it was noted that the lack of awareness of the general population regarding the social and economic benefits which could be derived from moving towards a low-emission pathway continues to be a challenge. Communicating the benefits of action by undertaking cost–benefit analyses could assist in this regard.

5. The role of means of implementation (finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building) in facilitating an increase in ambition

34. Parties recognized that access to predictable and sustained sources of financing is important for securing a successful transition to low-emission development. They also recognized the importance of enhancing and scaling up efforts to engage the private sector, including through the use of public funds to leverage private financing.

35. Making relevant technologies more affordable was seen as a practical way to enhance further national action. Despite the reduction in technology costs, renewable energy uptake remains low in developing countries, even in regions with high renewable energy potential. National action could be further enhanced as a result of targeted investment in research and development, technology development and transfer, and the building of new capacity for low-carbon development. Technology needs assessments and technology road maps are instrumental in the assessment of technology penetration in developing countries.

36. Parties highlighted the importance of capacity-building support in several areas, including in the development of innovative project financing options, the development of renewable energy and low-emission development policies and strategies, and the development of technology road maps and action plans.

6. The role of international action and international cooperative initiatives in catalysing national action

37. Parties acknowledged the important role that international action plays in catalysing action at the national level and increasing ambition generally. Several initiatives were highlighted in this regard, including the LEDS Global Partnership, CCAC, C40 and partnerships supporting energy efficiency and renewable energies such as the SE4ALL initiative. The REDD+ Partnership, which seeks to scale up actions and finance for initiatives to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, including conservation and sustainable management of forests and the enhancement of carbon stocks, was cited as a concrete example of a quick and easy way to accelerate pre-2020 ambition through cooperative action. The Tropical Forest Alliance 2020 was also mentioned as a forum working to eliminate deforestation from palm oil, soya, beef and paper supply chains by 2020.

38. Parties noted that such initiatives play a role in enhancing national action by providing advisory support, collecting and disseminating relevant information on success stories, capacity-building, networking, and providing financing opportunities and direct support for the implementation of activities at all levels.

39. In addition, international initiatives were credited with stimulating economic growth and decreasing emissions while creating jobs and reducing poverty. Some partnerships were seen to play a catalytic role in strengthening the implementation of climate-resilient low-emission

development at a national level through capacity-building activities as well as through learning and collaborative initiatives across ministries and countries.

40. The role of the UNFCCC process in acknowledging international cooperative initiatives and providing a platform which gives visibility to such initiatives was reiterated. It was stated that the UNFCCC should engage with other international organizations to promote information-sharing and cooperation.

C. Next steps under the ADP

41. Parties expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the benefits, opportunities and challenges in relation to moving towards low-emission development. They highlighted issues requiring further in-depth discussion at future sessions of the ADP, starting at the second part of the second session of the ADP in June 2013:

(a) Energy efficiency, in particular in housing, industry and transport;

(b) Use of renewable energy sources;

(c) Land use and forestry, including REDD+;

(d) Fossil fuel subsidy reform;

(e) Phasing out HFCs.

42. The role of the UNFCCC process in facilitating or acknowledging international efforts to increase ambition was highlighted by many Parties. In addition, it was suggested that the UNFCCC secretariat should cooperate with other relevant international organizations on issues of common interest, such as with the Ozone Secretariat on the phasing out of HFCs.

43. Parties acknowledged the need to mobilize high-level engagement to enhance pre-2020 ambition. Many Parties therefore suggested that a ministerial meeting on mitigation ambition should be convened at the 2013 United Nations Climate Change Conference in Warsaw. It was felt by some that such a meeting could build momentum and facilitate the adoption of concrete, results-oriented decisions.