



Summary report on the multilateral assessment of Austria at the forty-first session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. The Conference of the Parties, by decision 1/CP.16, decided that developed country Parties should enhance the reporting in their national communications and submit biennial reports on their progress in achieving emission reductions. It also established a new process under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) – the international assessment and review (IAR) of emissions and removals related to developed country Parties' quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets – that aims to promote the comparability of efforts among all developed country Parties. The first round of the IAR process is to be conducted during the period 2014–2015.

2. According to the modalities and procedures for IAR specified in annex II to decision 2/CP.17, the multilateral assessment (MA), being part of the IAR process, is to be conducted for each developed country Party at a working group session of the SBI, with the participation of all Parties. The aim of the MA is to assess each Party's progress in implementation towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target.

3. The first MA of Austria took place at a working group session during SBI 41, on 6 December 2014. Such a working group session is preceded by a three-month period of questions and answers; in the first month, any Party may submit written questions to the Party being assessed, which may respond to the questions within the remaining two months. Questions for Austria had been submitted in writing two months before the working group session by the following delegations: Algeria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and United States of America. The United States also submitted written questions after the deadline. A list of the questions received and the answers provided by Austria can be found on the IAR web page for Austria.¹

¹<http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/biennial_reports_and_iar/international_assessment_and_review/application/pdf/sbi41-austria-full.pdf>.

II. Proceedings

4. The working group session was chaired by the SBI Chair, Mr. Amena Yauvoli. Austria was represented by Mr. Helmut Hojesky, Director of the Division for Climate Change and Air Quality of the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management.

5. Mr. Hojesky made an opening presentation, addressing the questions received prior to the working group session and the answers provided. He described Austria's greenhouse gas (GHG) emission trends since 1990, highlighting a decoupling of emissions from gross domestic product and population growth and stating that Austria's GHG emissions per capita are close to the European Union (EU) average. Mr. Hojesky elaborated on the national circumstances of Austria as a country located in the heart of Europe, its changing political situation since 1988 and its role as a transit country located at the crossroads between Western and South-Eastern Europe.

6. Mr. Hojesky explained that as an EU member State, Austria is committed to achieving the joint unconditional quantified economy-wide emission reduction target of the EU of 20 per cent by 2020 compared with 1990 levels. He highlighted the country's target of a 16 per cent reduction, by 2020, in emissions not covered by the EU Emissions Trading System. Regarding the progress made towards this target, it was acknowledged that additional measures will be needed. To that effect, Austria is in the process of elaborating a programme, expected to be finalized in 2015, that focuses on transport, buildings and energy supply. A strong emphasis is placed on the increase in the use of renewable energy sources, with the very ambitious target of reaching a 34 per cent share of renewables in the energy mix by 2020. Mr. Hojesky presented emission trends and key drivers for the transport and buildings sectors since 2005, and explained the ongoing decoupling of GHG emissions and economic growth.

7. The opening presentation was followed by further questions from Brazil and China. These questions were on additional domestic policies and measures (PaMs) included in the emission projection scenario for the period ending in 2020 and on EU-wide and domestic planned and additional PaMs in the transport sector. In response to these questions, the Austrian delegation provided further explanations. Details can be found in the webcast of this session on the IAR web page for Austria.

8. In closing, the SBI Chair reminded Austria that any other observations by the Party on its MA process can be submitted within two months of the working group session, and that this will form part of its Party record for the MA. The SBI Chair thanked the delegation of Austria, all the other delegations and the secretariat for this successful MA session.
