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UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGY ADVICE

Eleventh session

Bonn, 25 October - 5 November 1999

Item 10 (c) of the provisional agenda

COASTAL ADAPTATION TECHNOLOGIES

Submissions from Parties

Note by the secretariat

Addendum

1. In addition to the submissions included in document FCCC/SBSTA/1999/MISC.11, a further contribution has been received from the Netherlands and is included in the present addendum.
2. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, this submission* is attached and is reproduced in the language in which it was received and without formal editing.

* In order to make this submission available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web, this submission has been electronically scanned and/or retyped. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

FCCC/SBSTA/1999/MISC.11/Add.1

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PAPER NO. 1: THE NETHERLANDS

Comments by the Netherlands, as requested by SBSTA 11 (agenda item 5c, conclusion Vc para 55) on the UNFCCC document:

- Coastal Adaptation Technologies (technical paper)

Comments

1. Technical paper: Coastal Adaptation Technologies (FCCC/TP/1999/1)

The Netherlands would like to thank the secretariat for having prepared this technical paper. The report is clear and contains interesting material for further discussion on climate change and coastal adaptation. Maybe readability could be improved, for sometimes long and difficult sentences are being used.

General points

- The feeling is that traditional “hard” engineering may be getting too much attention. Soft engineering solutions (building-with-nature; taking the ecological characteristics and natural dynamics of the coast into account) are mentioned but should get more attention; the description of building-with-nature techniques on page 41 should be elaborated for the current text does not give a clear picture of what such techniques embrace and what they actually aim at. The challenge for future engineering and coastal adaptation technologies is to strike the balance between hard and soft in developing and managing coastlines. The concept of resilient coast, with high adaptive potentialities, should be introduced here.
- Coastal engineering, be it hard or soft, should always form a part of an integrated framework for Coastal Zone Management (CZM). This integrated framework should be the context in which coastal adaptation technologies are to be developed and applied. This means long-term projects (no hit-and-run projects), multi-disciplinary approaches, governance, training, capacity building and ownership. This is mentioned in the report, but we feel this is so essential that it deserves to be stated as a core principal from the beginning.
- Table 2 of Annex III is perhaps the most important part of the report. It would gain in strength if more could be said about the techniques, specific aims, pro’s and contra’s for which types of coast, and if some illustrations could be given.
- The rationale behind the division into three groups in paragraph 19 needs some explanation. It looks as though category 1 (data gathering and monitoring for understanding of the dynamics) is a prerequisite for the other two categories. In many cases, however, techniques have been applied with a poor understanding.

More specific points

- Paragraph 7 states that “none of the coastal adaptation technologies described in the paper are in any way endorsed as appropriate or sustainable”. Would it be possible to say a bit more on the value of certain techniques with respect to their impacts and/or

sustainability? For example, how do building-with-nature techniques compare with other traditional techniques?

- Annex III, table 1 could do with more socio-economic monitoring, for example inventory of current and planned land use and its economic values.
- The intent of including para 28 is unclear to us.
- The statement that “it is unlikely that much can be done to reduce the cost of concrete, steel, etc. (para 31) is confusing with para 50 where it says that “the cost/unit volume of material pumped has been significantly reduced in recent years”. Further explanation of the two last sentences in para 31 will improve its value.

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