

June 11, 2014

Submission of the United States on the review of the Forum and work programme on the impact of the implementation of response measures

The United States is pleased to submit its views on the Forum and work programme on the impact of the implementation of response measures and specifically on the United States' assessment of the Forum and the steps needed to complete the Parties' collective review of its work. The United States looks forward to a timely conclusion of the review after Parties have been able to exchange their views and have agreed on conclusions related to their review of the Forum.

At SB39, Parties were allowed only a brief discussion of their individual reviews of the Forum. During that initial discussion, Parties expressed significantly different views on the gaps and positive and negative aspects of the Forum, as well as ways to improve upon the structure and mode of work. The time provided did not allow Parties to fully discuss and come to agreement on a collective assessment. It is the view of the United States that, had Parties been given more time for a thorough and systematic review, they would have been able to reach agreement on a way forward on this issue in Warsaw. The United States hopes that Parties will be able to exchange views and come to agreement on their assessment in a timely manner in order to continue to make progress on this issue.

The United States thinks the Forum was a useful exercise; the dynamic of our discussions on this issue has improved over the past few years. The United States believes that the decision in Durban to be practical in how we addressed response measures, in particular by consolidating all discussions in one place, contributed to this improvement. The agenda items that are now being held in abeyance should be permanently closed in order to lock in this new dynamic.

Parties should conclude, as part of the review, what mode of work might best allow us to fulfill our mandate under this agenda item. We think that working under a joint agenda item of the Subsidiary Bodies, and operating in accordance with the procedures applicable to contact groups, has served us well, because it allows for us to move from workshops to discussions, and then on to negotiations, according to the agreed timeline established for our work in relevant COP decisions.

We should not, however, assume that a Forum is the best mode of work available to enhance our collective understanding of this issue. Other UNFCCC modes of work offer options that could fulfill the functions that Parties have requested as well. The United States believes that a dialogue process is a good model to consider as it could help us focus on the substance of the issue. The dialogue format promotes more presentations by issue experts and then allows for discussion among Parties. This would help us move away from repetitions of well-known country positions. The mode of work that Parties identify to continue our work should entail greater input from experts, relevant organizations, and practitioners, including from the private sector, and should focus on the presentation of case studies, concrete examples, and recommendations on best practices.

Whatever mode is chosen, our work on response measures should continue to be reviewed regularly, and Parties should not hesitate to make adjustments to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of our work so that we can better achieve our objective of improving the understanding of the positive and negative impacts of the implementation of response measures, particularly with respect to maximizing the positive and minimizing the negative impacts of the implementation of response measures.

The consolidation of all discussions and negotiations on response measures in one place was the first step in allowing us to better focus on subjects that we all agree deserve our time and attention. Over the past two years, the Forum has discussed a wide range of topics, which allowed Parties to identify the issues that lend themselves to substantive, productive conversations. Going forward, however, we should narrow and more carefully select the issues we include in our program of work. We should place greater emphasis on issues related to the positive impacts of the implementation of response measures. We should also recognize that there have been areas of convergence and divergence in Forum discussions to date, and that future work will need to focus on areas of convergence in order to maximize the benefit of the Forum to all Parties. Doing so would mean addressing topics in which many Parties have expressed the need for more information, such as economic diversification, just transition, and health.

We should also reduce the number of topics we discuss at each meeting in order to better focus our attention. Each meeting should discuss a single issue, which will provide for a focused and in-depth presentation of facts, followed by a thorough discussion where all Parties can react and express areas of concern.

The United States believes that holding meetings in conjunction with the COP also significantly impedes our ability to focus. The extreme time pressure does not allow for productive, effective discussions. Going forward, the Dialogue should meet once a year, in conjunction with the intercessional meeting of the Subsidiary Bodies.

In addition to the above assessment and recommendations for future work, the United States would like to put forward suggestions for issues that could be included on a new joint work programme on the impact of the implementation of response measures under the Subsidiary Bodies.

1. Gender
  - a. Positive impacts of climate change response measures on women and girls
  - b. Gender-sensitive climate policies, with a particular focus on cleaner cookstoves
2. Economic diversification and transformation
  - a. Case studies
  - b. Multilateral and bilateral assistance
  - c. Best practices
  - d. Benefits to workers
  - e. Private sector engagement (focus on small and medium enterprises)
3. Health
  - a. Health Impacts on Improved Ambient Air quality
  - b. Health Impacts on of Green Urban Transport
  - c. Health Impacts of Climate Smart Agriculture
  - d. Health Impacts of Cleaner Household Energy
4. Just Transition of the Workforce
  - a. Country Case Studies
  - b. Existing International Processes and Bilateral and Multilateral Assistance
  - c. Best Practices
  - d. Worker Training Programs – Domestic Case Studies
5. Environmental co-benefits
  - a. Bio-diversity Preservation
  - b. Ocean Health, including, inter alia, prevention of ocean acidification

- c. Potential improvements to soil fertility, reductions in soil degradation, and improved water infiltration
  - d. Improved Water Quality
- 6. Economic Benefits