

Submission by the United States of America

Possible Areas of Further Work Under the Nairobi Work Programme

29 August 2013

At its thirty-eighth session, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice invited Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the Secretariat, their views on ways to enhance the relevance of, and to support the objective of, the Nairobi Work Programme, taking into account, inter alia:

- a) Considering the scope of the work of the Nairobi Work Programme as agreed in the annex of decision 2/CP.11 through additional cross-cutting issues;
- b) Sequencing activities so that they build on each other, and engaging adaptation practitioners; and
- c) Developing linkages with adaptation-related work streams and bodies under the Convention, including the Subsidiary Body for Implementation, as appropriate.

The United States welcomes the opportunity to submit, pursuant to paragraph 8 of FCCC/SBSTA/2013/L.9, its views on enhancing the relevance of and supporting the objective of the possible areas of the Nairobi Work Programme (NWP).

The NWP has made significant progress in achieving its objective of assisting Parties to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability, and adaptation to climate change, and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures based on sound scientific, technical, and socioeconomic information.

The nine work areas¹ of the NWP continue to be as valuable today as they were when they were first established. However, the relevance of the NWP could be further enhanced, and its objective further supported by:

- **Focusing activities under the nine work areas on practical, cross-cutting issues, and sequencing the activities so that they build upon each other**

Scientific and technical information, knowledge and tools for adaptation are most effective when they address challenges faced by adaptation practitioners, such as food insecurity, coastal inundation, or threats to livelihoods. A focus on practical, cross-cutting issues, such as food security, water, coasts, urban and ecosystems, will improve the utility of NWP products for addressing adaptation challenges. Furthermore, NWP objectives could be further supported if activities were designed to build upon each other and be well sequenced, thus building substantial bases of knowledge necessary to inform adaptation planning and action.

¹The nine work areas are: Methods and tools; Data and observations; Climate modeling, scenarios and downscaling; Climate related risks and extreme events; Socio-economic information; Adaptation planning and practices; Research; Technologies for adaptation; Economic diversification

- **Connecting the NWP and its activities to the other adaptation work under the Convention**

NWP activities should be better linked to other adaptation activities under the Convention. As the one adaptation activity solely under the SBSTA, the NWP can contribute to coherence by supporting the scientific and technical needs of other adaptation items under the SBI. In practice, the NWP could jointly support workshops, technical papers, case studies, etc. that are taking place under other relevant UNFCCC adaptation agenda items.

- **And, continuing to engage non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, national and regional institutions, UN agencies, academia, the research community, and the private sector, and enhancing this engagement where necessary to support NWP objectives and activities.**

It is important to continue to include, on a voluntary basis, non-Parties as critical partners in the next phase of the NWP. Climate adaptation poses significant challenges that require many perspectives and types of scientific and technical expertise to address. Non-Party partners can contribute this much-needed expertise to advance work in the areas that Parties identify as critical.

To illustrate what we envisage in concrete terms, we would like to offer examples of cohesive sets of activities for two cross cutting issues – ecosystems and coasts – that utilize the existing work areas and build on previous interim activities.

Illustrative example 1 – Ecosystems:

- First, the NWP could perform a literature review on the socioeconomic benefits of ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation, drawing on resources provided by a range of Parties and non-Party partners.
- Then, the NWP could hold a workshop with Parties and Partners with relevant expertise on the benefits and costs of green vs. grey infrastructure to advance understanding of when different approaches are useful. The NWP could produce a short summary report to make the information from the workshop broadly available.
- Finally, the NWP could hold a series of webinars that present the results of the literature review and workshop to support integration of ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation into national adaptation planning processes.

Illustrative example 2 – Coasts:

- First the NWP could hold a workshop involving scientists and coastal zone managers that would discuss the systematic observation of and data collection related to sea level rise and coastal inundation and their impacts on coastal communities and ecosystems. The workshop could discuss how to enhance access to and the sharing and use of data to facilitate the

assessment and management of sea level rise. The NWP could then produce a short summary report to make the information from the workshop broadly available.

- The NWP could hold a second workshop on how to incorporate such information into risk and vulnerability assessments, including exploring the interactions between slow onset and extreme events. The content of this workshop could also be summarized in a short report to make the information from the workshop broadly available.
- Finally, the NWP could develop a set of detailed case studies that build off of the workshops and select responses to “calls for action” to NWP Partners that summarize lessons learned from various communities that are making notable progress in this area. These case studies could contribute to national adaptation planning processes and efforts to address loss and damage.

The United States appreciates the opportunity to submit our views on enhancing the relevance and supporting the objective of the NWP. It looks forward with anticipation to working with Parties to develop a series of activities for the NWP in line with these aforementioned elements.