

## ORAL REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE SBSTA ON THE IN-SESSION WORKSHOPS ON

**Impacts of, and vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change:  
Vulnerability and risks, sustainable development, opportunities and solutions**

AND

**Climate change mitigation:  
Vulnerability and risks, sustainable development, opportunities and solutions**

Delivered to the SBSTA Plenary on 21 June 2004

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- As delegates will recall, the SBSTA at its nineteenth session, requested the secretariat to organize a **workshop on each of the new agenda items** during the twentieth session. These workshops were to **begin to explore** the themes of vulnerability and risk, sustainable development and opportunities and solutions. The workshops were organized **under my guidance**, and took into account the views of Parties on these matters.
- Both workshops were **open to all participants** at these sessions and were **widely attended**.
- Presenters at the workshops were drawn from Parties, and other experts and practitioners in the field. The discussion period allowed for an **active and productive exchange** of experiences and views between the panelists and delegates.
- With respect to the **workshop on impacts of, and vulnerability and adaptation to, climate change**, held on Friday, 18 June, a **number of topics** were addressed during the four sessions:
- First, the workshop participants discussed **different approaches to assess** climate change **risks** at different spatial and temporal scales. We learned about the strengths and limitations of different methods.
- Second, we had very lively discussions on the **perception of risk** in numerous countries, regions and communities. We learned that these perceptions are different, but that there are also some **commonalities**.
- Third, the workshop participants discussed **linkages between sustainable development and adaptation to climate change**. The panelists spoke about new developments in this area relating to the integration of climate change adaptation into sustainable development programmes and projects in both developing and developed countries.

- Finally, the workshop provided for **sharing of information on practical experiences** in adapting to different climate related risks in different sectors of the economy of countries as well as at the community level.
- A **broad range of issues** was raised in **relation to adaptation**, but I think it would be useful for a contact group to focus on just a few of the topics:
  - I think there is a need for **further discussion** of different **approaches, methodologies and tools for assessing risks and vulnerability**, as well as of the ways for promoting their improvement and dissemination, especially in developing countries.
  - We may need **further consideration** of the **appropriateness** of, and **uncertainties** associated with different methods for assessing key impacts, vulnerabilities and risks at different temporal or spatial scales.
  - We also may need to give **further consideration** to **economic and social damages and costs** of climate change impacts.
  - It may be useful to **further explore perceptions** of key risks and thresholds at global, regional and local levels.
  - We need to give **further thought to adaptive capacity** and how it can be characterized, evaluated, monitored and enhanced.
  - And finally, it would be useful to **further exchange experiences** as to how adaptation activities can be integrated into sustainable development, current policies.
- During the **workshop on mitigation**, held on Saturday, 19 June, **three sessions** were held:
  - The first session was on the relationship of climate change mitigation to other policy and development objectives.
  - The second session looked at case studies and costs and benefits of climate mitigation, and
  - The third session examined the role of technology, particularly how innovation occurs.
- In keeping with the Delhi Declaration, the **energy and agriculture sectors** were discussed throughout the workshop **as a starting point** for exploring the themes of sustainable development, opportunities and solutions, and vulnerability and risk as they relate to climate change mitigation.
- A **number of observations** were made that are relevant for SBSTA's ongoing consideration of **agenda item 8 on mitigation**:

- Workshop discussions emphasized that developed and developing countries share many common challenges in meeting their needs for energy, food security, economic development and environmental goals. But we all know that the technical capacity of developing countries needs to be enhanced.
- Many panellists suggested that climate mitigation needs to be integrated into, and be consistent with, broader sustainable development objectives. We should not forget that the most successful climate projects are those that yield other benefits at the local level.
- We heard that the demand for energy services is likely to grow in all countries, but particularly in developing countries. The need for transportation is also a growing challenge in all countries. In most cases, the infrastructure to support this future demand has yet to be built. The choices we make now will affect long-term sustainable development and associated emission levels.
- It was noted that there is a need to distinguish energy use in households from the industrial sector, as their characteristics are very different.
- It was also suggested that linking carbon investments in the LULUCF sector can be a catalyst for improving livelihoods in rural areas, particularly for the poor.
- The challenges and solutions for sustainable development are different in developing and developed countries, in urban and rural areas and we need to be cognizant of these differences.
- A few participants cited the need to support biomass energy development, as it can play an important role in sustainable energy development, and, thus, climate mitigation.
- The critical role of technology in addressing the climate change problem was also discussed. Government policy and research and development are the primary forces for stimulating new technologies, but access to information and ‘know-how’ is also important.
- The workshop also highlighted that technology development is a highly interactive process that requires balanced economic, social and environmental policies that can lead to invention, innovation, adaptation and diffusion.
- **In conclusion**, we have had a **rich exchange of information** from speakers of developing and developed countries. We need to **keep in mind the differences**, but it would be useful to **explore further** how the experiences in different countries **can be made available** to others.
- I would like to thank the secretariat for their support in making these **in-session** workshops a worthwhile and successful experience

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