



Working paper No. 2 (2005)

Summary of the informal workshop on the SBSTA programme of work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation

Proceedings and scope

1. In developing the five-year programme of work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change, requested by the Conference of Parties (COP) at its tenth session,¹ the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA),² at its twenty-second session, requested the secretariat, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, to organize an informal workshop to facilitate the development of the programme of work. The workshop was held in Bonn, Germany, from 17 to 19 October 2005 with support from the Government of Canada.
2. Fifty-one participants took part in the workshop.³ Participants had Working paper No. 1 (2005),⁴ prepared by the secretariat to focus the discussion at the workshop. The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* covered the workshop.⁵ Two facilitators appointed by the Chair of the SBSTA chaired the workshop – Ms. Helen Plume (New Zealand) and Mr. Kishan Kumarsingh (Trinidad and Tobago).
3. The summary below represents, in the view of the facilitators and the Chair of the SBSTA, the general common understanding of the major components of the programme of work that emerged from the discussion at the workshop.

Summary

4. The programme of work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation would consist of three thematic areas:
 - (a) Impacts and vulnerability
 - (b) Adaptation planning, measures and actions
 - (c) Integration.
5. The issues of methodologies, data and modelling would be an integral part of the three thematic areas.
6. The programme of work would be organized along the following levels:
 - (a) Thematic areas (see paragraph 4 above)
 - (b) Sub-themes

¹ Decision 1/CP.10, paragraph 23.

² FCCC/SBSTA/2005/4, paragraphs 12–14.

³ <http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/methodologies_for/vulnerability_and_adaptation/application/pdf/provisional_lop_121005.pdf>.

⁴ <http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/sbsta_agenda_item_adaptation/application/pdf/discussion_paper_wp1.pdf>.

⁵ <<http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb12279e.pdf>>.

(c) Specific activities.⁶

7. The expected outcome of the programme of work would be enhanced capacity at the international, regional, national, local and sectoral levels in order:

- (a) To identify and understand possible impacts and vulnerability and possible adaptation responses;
- (b) To enable countries to select and implement practical, effective and high priority adaptation actions;
- (c) To provide the COP and, as appropriate, its subsidiary bodies, with information and advice on issues relating to the scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation, including by facilitating the implementation of decision 1/CP.10, where relevant.

8. For each of the thematic areas the following action-oriented sub-themes were identified:

- (a) Impacts and vulnerability:
 - (i) Promoting development and dissemination of methodologies for impact and vulnerability assessments and sharing of experiences and lessons learned from undertaking such assessments
 - (ii) Improving access to high quality data and information on current climate variability and likely future climate variability and change, including on extreme events
 - (iii) Promoting understanding of climate risks, key vulnerabilities and thresholds of climate change, in particular with regard to sea-level rise, water, agriculture, health, energy, ecosystems and infrastructure
 - (iv) Improving availability of socio-economic information on vulnerable sectors and on the socio-economic impacts of climate change.
- (b) Adaptation, planning, measures and actions:
 - (i) Promoting the development and dissemination of tools for analysis, decision-making, monitoring and evaluation of adaptation planning, measures and actions
 - (ii) Collecting and disseminating lessons learned from current practice, practical adaptation actions, and short- and long-term adaptation strategies
 - (iii) Promoting research on adaptation solutions and the development and diffusion of technologies, know-how and practices for adaptation, including local and indigenous knowledge
 - (iv) Promoting cooperation among Parties, relevant organizations, business and civil society aimed at assisting countries in enhancing their resilience and managing climate change risks, giving priority to the most vulnerable countries.

⁶ Participants expressed a range of ideas about possible activities under the sub-themes. The activities mentioned at the workshop will be included in a separate document, Working paper No. 2/Add.1 (2005), by 10 November 2005 and posted on the web at http://unfccc.int/adaptation/methodologies_for/vulnerability_and_adaptation/items/3509.php.

- (c) Integration:
 - (i) Enhancing synergy and complementarities between actions to adapt to climate change and other sustainable development objectives.

9. Specific activities would be identified under each of the above-mentioned sub-themes to launch implementation of the programme of work. These specific activities should be in line with the mandate of the SBSTA⁷ and would be guided by the general requirements of:

- (a) Responsiveness: including a sufficient range of topics of concern to as many Parties as possible;
- (b) Inclusiveness: taking into account a range of approaches to assessment and adaptation, and also taking full account of traditional and indigenous knowledge;
- (c) Continuity: taking into consideration ongoing actions on vulnerability and adaptation, both within and outside the Convention;
- (d) Practicality: having a maximum potential for application in future work on adaptation under the UNFCCC, while being practical and feasible to implement in five years;
- (e) Action orientation: taking into consideration whether practical benefits can emerge from the actions in the programme of work.

10. For each of the activities, relevant actors, stakeholders and milestones would be identified. The result of the activities would be presented to the SBSTA for consideration and provision of guidance on further action. Some of these specific activities might be launched in the short term; others might require additional information before they are launched. This process would enable a broad involvement of relevant international organizations, institutions and experts. The programme of work would take into account the findings in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fourth Assessment Report and other new scientific and technical information.

11. The selection of modalities for implementation would depend on the nature of the specific activities. The following modalities were discussed at the workshop:

- (a) Holding of workshops and meetings (including in-sessional and intersessional, regional and/or sectoral) as well as providing for relevant outcomes from the three regional workshops and expert meeting (referred to in paragraph 8 of decision 1/CP.10) to be used as input for further development of the programme of work
- (b) Establishing limited ad hoc working groups of experts (formed to address a particular task) that would report to the SBSTA
- (c) Building on/updating existing web-based resources (e.g. UNFCCC Compendium on Impacts, Vulnerability and Adaptation Methods, the Technology Information Clearing House – TT:CLEAR, and the Least Developed Countries Expert Group database of local coping strategies)
- (d) Questionnaires to Parties
- (e) Targeted submissions from Parties: inviting Parties to submit their views and relevant information on a particular topic/issue to be considered by the SBSTA for further action
- (f) Inviting existing UNFCCC expert groups to contribute input to the work

⁷ In accordance with Article 9 of the UNFCCC, it includes providing the COP and its subsidiary bodies “with timely information and advice on scientific and technological matters relating to the Convention”.

- (g) Synthesis and technical papers by the secretariat and UNFCCC expert groups
- (h) Involving relevant organizations and individual experts in preparing proposals on specific issues for action, and presenting them to the SBSTA for consideration
- (i) Other stocktaking activities.
