

TECHNICAL EXPERT MEETING TO UNLOCK MITIGATION OPPORTUNITIES IN RENEWABLE ENERGY IN PRE-2020 PERIOD

Monday, 10 March 2014, 16.30 – 18.00
Wednesday, 12 March 2014, 10.00 – 13.00

Summary at the closing session of the technical expert meetings by the facilitator Mr. Youba Sokona (Mali)

At the technical expert meetings on renewable energy held on 10, 11 and 12 March 2014, presentations were made by Parties, international organizations, international partnerships, sub-national entity and civil society organization about their efforts and perspectives in scaling up deployment of renewable energy technologies. Delegates deliberated about various policy options and choices that have the potential to address challenges and remove barriers to scaling up deployment of renewable energy technologies and contributing towards raising the pre-2020 ambition.

Policies, practices and technology – global state of play

Delegates pointed out the need to urgently close the pre-2020 ambition gap. They all agreed that high potential exists and acknowledged that large scale deployment of existing and readily available renewable energy technologies can help increase mitigation ambition both pre-2020 and post 2020, with significant economic, social and environmental co-benefits.

A number of institutional, financial, technical, technological and geographical challenges and barriers related to scaling up deployment renewable energy technologies were raised.

Some of the challenges and barriers are listed below:

- Lack of affordable up-front finance;
- High cost of technology and high operational and maintenance costs;
- Grid network, connections and dispatch issues;
- Supply and demand imbalance;
- Lack of tailored R&D to suit local conditions such as high temperature, dust and sandstorm, which have impact on efficiency of some of the technologies;
- Lack of capacity to develop and implement stable policy options;
- Lack of access to information;
- High transaction cost of small-scale renewable energy systems.

Various policy options, actions and technologies that can assist countries in addressing the challenges and removing barriers faced in scaling up deployment of renewable energy technologies were raised by delegates. It was pointed out that there is no one size fits all policy and technological solution and that the choice of policy and technology depends on a country's national circumstance. The policy options raised during the meeting include:

- Renewable energy targets that provide stable long-term policy and legal framework;
- Economic instruments, such as carbon pricing or setting up of price stabilization fund;
- Feed-in tariffs/guaranteed access to grid;

- Smart grids and smart metering;
- Direct subsidies or tax credits, and removal of fossil fuel subsidies;
- Strengthening of the institutional, legal and regulatory framework to promote renewable energy.

Implementing actions: finance, technology and capacity building

Delegates mentioned that policy options in themselves are not sufficient if countries do not have means to put in place and operationalize stable policy frameworks needed to scale up deployment of renewable energy technologies. To that end, the meeting also heard from a wide array of international organizations namely IRENA, SE4ALL, GCF, GEF, World Bank, CTCN, and ICLEI about their vision, experience and on-going effort in supporting developing countries to put in place stable policy frameworks to attract investment and scale up deployment of renewables.

Delegates also mentioned that for a more ambitious development and deployment of renewable energy technologies, it is critical to enhance collaboration among a wider range of national, sub-national and international entities. There is also a continuous need to support research, development and innovation to develop technologies in line with national and regional circumstances and also to identify and use innovative financing models.

Way forward

The way forward discussion saw a number of delegates providing concrete actionable suggestions on what the UNFCCC process can do to help Parties address barriers and realize their ambition in deploying renewable energy. These proposals are summarised below:

Action by Parties

- Delegates expressed expectations that as a result of engagement in the TEMs process and relevant initiatives and partnerships, they might be in a position to the launch new and ambitious policies and actions around the options identified above with potential to contribute toward pre-2020 ambition and also towards preparing for post-2020 period;
- Parties could make use of existing platforms, such as NAMA registry, to seek support for implementation of policy options.

International Organizations

- Delegates expressed their views that existing institutions under the UNFCCC namely the Technology Mechanism, the Technology Executive Committee and Climate Technology Centre and Network need to be actively engaged to assist countries in scaling up deployment of renewable energy;
- Guidance to UNFCCC institutions including Green Climate Fund could be provided to build pipeline for future funding of programmes and policy options;
- International organizations such as IRENA and SE4ALL could be invited to continue to engage in the TEMs process, to assist Parties in areas of their needs, and to coordinate enhancing of existing partnerships with a view to facilitate scaled up support for deployment of renewable energy; The right signal to investors and private sector entities to leverage further investments could be sent through such organisations.

UNFCCC secretariat

The secretariat could facilitate the process by:

- a. Developing a common platform for countries to register their policies, challenges, success and failures to be shared and for their further discussion through the TEMs process;
 - b. Assisting Parties in finding the information on organizations and partnerships that best meet their needs.
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