

## Information note on the forty-first session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

### Note by the Chair

24 November 2014

### Introduction

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) will hold its forty-first session in Lima, Peru, from 1 to 6 December 2014. SBSTA 41 will open on Monday, 1 December at 11.30 a.m.<sup>1</sup> to adopt its agenda and to launch all issues, followed by first negotiation groups in the afternoon, and will hold its closing plenary meeting on Saturday, 6 December at 3 p.m. to adopt all conclusions.
2. This is the first time that such a note has been issued for a SBSTA session. I am pleased to address you as the current SBSTA Chair to outline my approach to and vision for the forthcoming session and to highlight a few issues of particular interest to the SBSTA.
3. Following the SBSTA session in June, which helped to prepare important groundwork for decisions to be taken in Lima, we are now on the eve of SBSTA 41, the outcome of which is a prerequisite to a successful implementation of the second commitment period (CP2) of the Kyoto Protocol.

### Approach to the session

4. Based on the SBSTA mandate to provide scientific and technological advice to the Convention and to function as a science–policy interface, our focus during this year of significant scientific findings from the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the forthcoming 2013–2015 review should be on how to reflect these findings in our conclusions and on how to contribute accordingly to the forthcoming agreements in Lima and in Paris, France.
5. My particular attention for the forthcoming session will be on essential issues which have an important role to play in the successful ratification of the Doha Amendment, such as:
  - (a) Sub-item 10 (a) *Work programme on the revision of the guidelines for the review of biennial reports and national communications, including national inventory reviews, for developed country Parties*, the finalization of which is instrumental for the implementation of the review process in the first half of 2015 as well as for the finalization of the review guidelines under the Kyoto Protocol;
  - (b) Sub-item 11(a) *Implications of the implementation of decisions 2/CMP.7 to 4/CMP.7 and 1/CMP.8 on the previous decisions on methodological issues related to the Kyoto Protocol including those relating to Articles 5, 7 and 8 of the Kyoto Protocol*, the finalization of which is imperative so that Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol can submit their initial report and fulfil annual reporting requirements in April 2015 to make CP2 effective and to contribute to the successful negotiations of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action on the 2015 agreement;
  - (c) Sub-item 11(b) *Clarification of the text in section G (Article 3, paragraph 7 ter) of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, in particular the information to be used to determine the "average annual emissions for the first three years of the preceding commitment period"*, the finalization of which is necessary so that all Parties will be able to ratify the Doha Amendment.
6. Proper time management is a well-discussed issue in our process. The Presiding Officers of all bodies have now committed to undertake activities which will ensure that the necessary improvements are implemented to enhance related efficiency, work conditions and results. This was welcomed and approved by the last Bureau meeting. Consequently, the SBSTA will implement a couple of innovations as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> Following the completion of the “organization of work” of the COP.

- (a) The SBSTA opening plenary will start at 11.30 a.m.<sup>2</sup> and finish at 1 p.m. to maximize negotiation time and to allow group coordination to take place. Plenary time will be used to adopt the agenda and to launch all issues;
  - (b) Once all work has been launched, the floor will be opened for three-minute statements, highlighting key points, from the four negotiating groups with no overlapping membership, with the longer statements to be posted as early as possible on the UNFCCC website.<sup>3</sup> Other statements, including those by civil society, can be made time permitting or, alternatively, will be posted on the web;
  - (c) Cut-off deadlines for the completion of work in the various negotiation groups will be noon on Friday, 5 December and 6 p.m. on the same day for document processing. These deadlines will allow all L-documents to be made available in English for the closing plenary;
  - (d) I will be requesting facilitators to actively implement and monitor time management in opening and closing their groups, supported by the secretariat. A detailed briefing will take place on 1 December;
  - (e) The SBSTA closing plenary will start and finish punctually at 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., respectively, to allow for a timely closure of SBSTA 41 and for preparations for week 2 to be made;
  - (f) Organizational information will be provided on the SBSTA 41 web page.<sup>4</sup>
7. Observer engagement is an important ingredient for the advancement and implementation of Convention objectives.<sup>5</sup> Based on exchanges with observers during SBSTA 40 and in view of space and time constraints in Lima, some pilot activities have been launched to provide further opportunities for observer organizations:
- (a) An “Observer corner” has been provided on the SBSTA web page<sup>6</sup> to enable observers to link to and from their landing pages and to enable Parties to find related information of interest to them;
  - (b) A “Virtual platform” will be provided shortly to enable observers to make information available on their concrete suggestions for contributing to the work of the SBSTA and to enable Parties to access and consider such information while looking at the future role the SBSTA may play. This input from observers is not bound by submission mandates; it rather aims at advancing the work of the SBSTA.<sup>7</sup>
  - (c) A meeting of “Observer friends of the Chair” to informally gather ideas which may contribute to advancing the work of the SBSTA and, in particular, issues which are on the agenda and are struggling to get a consensus decision, will take place in Lima;<sup>8</sup>
  - (d) Early observer statements will be made accessible via the SBSTA 41 web page.<sup>9</sup>

### **Concluding remarks**

8. When I took on the role of SBSTA Chair, I committed to doing everything possible to advance the SBSTA in its important task. To be able to do so I rely on you, the delegates, and the secretariat. Only together can we advance. We need commitment to change the way we conduct our business to get an outcome that will advance all the work of the SBSTA. I will consult groups of Parties informally on all aforementioned issues in the days prior to the forthcoming session to get direct feedback and to gather any additional ideas and suggestions on how the SBSTA can best fulfill its mandated role.

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<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Parties' statements will be posted on <<http://unfccc.int/8499.php>>.

<sup>4</sup> <<http://unfccc.int/8499.php>>.

<sup>5</sup> A good example for observer engagement under the SBSTA is the Technology Executive Committee which promotes transparency with webcasting and inclusion of observers in thematic dialogues and task forces.

<sup>6</sup> See footnote 2.

<sup>7</sup> See footnote 4.

<sup>8</sup> A corresponding invitation will soon be sent by the secretariat. Regular meetings with observer organizations will continue with the next one planned for Wednesday, 3 December from 10 to 11A.M..

<sup>9</sup> Observers can send their statements to [cool@unfccc.int](mailto:cool@unfccc.int).