

Forum and Work Program on the Impact of the Implementation of Response Measures Submission of the United States of America

Following the 35th Session of the Subsidiary Bodies in Durban, South Africa, the COP adopted a work program on the impact of the implementation of response measures with the objective of improving understanding in several specified areas. During the first meeting of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures at the 36th Session of the Subsidiary Bodies in Bonn, Germany, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Assistance (SBSTA) and the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) agreed to implement the work program, as contained in an annex to FCCC/SBSTA/2012/L.18 and FCCC/SBI/2012/L.25. The aforementioned annex calls for submissions from Parties and relevant organizations with respect to the “areas” listed in the work program. It specifically calls for submissions in advance of the 37th session of the Subsidiary Bodies for the following three areas:

- 1. Sharing of Information and Expertise, including reporting and promoting understanding of positive and negative impacts of response measures (area (a));**
- 2. Relevant aspects related to the implementation of decisions 1/CP.10,1/CP.13 and 1/CP.16 and Article 2, paragraph 3 and Article 3, paragraph 14, of the Kyoto Protocol (areas (f)); and**
- 3. Building collective and individual learning towards a transition to a low greenhouse gas emitting society (area (h)).**

The COP has noted that the modalities for the operationalization of the work program could include, as appropriate and subject to the availability of financial resources, convening workshops and meetings; receiving input from experts, practitioners and relevant organizations; and preparing reports and technical papers. The COP further noted that the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures was created to implement the work program and to provide a platform allowing Parties to share, in an interactive manner, information, experiences, case studies, best practices and views.

The United States’ views with respect to the three areas listed above are contained in the remainder of this submission. Given the agreed modalities laid out by the COP, we have focused our comments on the types of organizations, agencies, and individuals that we believe should be included in the discussions of these areas and that we feel would contribute to an effective, comprehensive dialogue on these issues. The United States does not feel at this time that it is necessary to prepare additional reports or technical papers beyond those already agreed in the annex. As the areas of the work program are quite broad, however, we have suggested potential areas of focus for the in-sector workshops. We believe that the structure for the in-session workshops should be a short series of presentations followed by a question and answer session with the presenters, and then a general discussion among the Parties.

Sharing of Information and Expertise, including reporting and promoting understanding of positive and negative impacts of response measures (area (a))

The United States believes that the sharing of information and expertise, including reporting and promoting understanding of positive and negative impacts of response measures will constitute an important element of our work going forward in this area.

The United States suggests that the Secretariat invite Parties or organizations with specific case studies relating to the positive and negative impacts of response measures to present their research during the in-session workshop. In particular, we suggest that the Secretariat invite organizations that have studied the positive economic and social impacts of response measures to give presentations. Learning more about the positive impacts of response measures will be critical if we are to ensure that considerations of the negative impacts of response measures are put in their proper context.

The United States views several categories which the Parties could focus on as we more closely consider and take into account the positive impacts of response measures, including health benefits, economic benefits, and environmental co-benefits. The United States suggests that organizations and/or government agencies, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Meteorological Society, and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration be invited to participate. There are comparable organizations in many countries in the world, as well as at the international level that could be invited to present. Useful research is also being undertaken on these issues at many universities, public and private research laboratories, and other non-governmental organizations. We suggest that these types of organizations should also be invited to participate and present their findings with respect to the positive impacts of the implementation of response measures to climate change.

Relevant aspects related to the implementation of decisions 1/CP.10, 1/CP.13 and 1/CP.16 and Article 2, paragraph 3 and Article 3, paragraph 14, of the Kyoto Protocol (areas (f))

Area (f) was incorporated into the work program in order to ensure that no issues related to response measures were omitted from further work unintentionally as a result of the consolidation of all discussions related to response measures, in accordance with decision 2/CP.17. The United States was happy to include this area in the work program in order to satisfy concerns that this may have been the case. Given time to review the various elements contained in the decisions listed in area (f), however, we have not found any relevant aspect of the aforementioned decisions that we believe requires additional discussion, beyond that which is already called for in the work program. In our view, all aspects of these decisions have been adequately incorporated into the work program or are already being dealt with elsewhere.

One issue which may receive special attention during our discussions at the next meeting of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures is Decision 1/CP.10. The United States welcomed the agreement at the 36th Session of the Subsidiary Bodies to refrain

from holding separate discussions on this issue. Decision 2/CP.17 clearly consolidated all discussions related to response measures under the forum, and all 1/CP.10 work on adaptation is being fully addressed under other agenda items. The United States greatly supports those adaptation discussions and is committed to making progress under those items. In order to be efficient in the work of the Subsidiary Bodies, therefore, the United States would recommend that the Parties have a conversation about the closure of 1/CP.10 in the near future, either under the 1/CP.10 agenda item or as a part of a larger conversation about the organization of our work under the Subsidiary Bodies. Due to the crowded agenda for COP 18, we would suggest that we continue to hold 1/CP.10 in abeyance in Doha, and take up the issue of closure at the following session.

Building collective and individual learning towards a transition to a low greenhouse gas (GHG) emitting society (area (h))

The United States believes that the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures can be particularly helpful in this area. We believe that one focus of the dialogue with respect to area (h) should be on the use of education to help societies build collective and individual learning towards a transition to a low greenhouse gas emitting society. In the United States, we have many examples of ways in which we are using educational programs and activities to further our GHG reduction efforts, starting from the grade school level and going up. We suggest that the leaders of teacher training programs like those conducted in the United States at U.S. Department of Energy National Laboratories, or educational challenges, like the U.S. Department of Energy's Solar Decathlon, should be invited to present on their efforts. Other countries surely have equivalent efforts that would also serve as great case studies. Speakers should be chosen that can provide examples of activities that build replicable models that fill local needs while also addressing GHGs.

Another focus of the dialogue with respect to area (h) should be on preparing workers to transition to a low-GHG emitting society. In the United States, Department of Labor programs provide employment assistance and job training to individuals transitioning into jobs associated with a more sustainable economy. The Department of Energy's "Better Buildings Initiative" focuses on job opportunities related to building sustainable commercial buildings, improving federal and local policies, and enhancing access to information, financing, and tax incentives for sustainable buildings. Other countries will be able to provide more examples. We suggest that the leaders of programs like these be invited to present during the next meeting of the forum.

Conclusion

We hope that the Parties and the Secretariat find our comments useful in preparation for the second meeting of the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures. The United States looks forward to hearing the views of other Parties and engaging in a productive discussion.