

**SOUTH AFRICAN SUBMISSION ON MITIGATION**  
**UNDER THE AD HOC WORKING GROUP ON THE DURBAN PLATFORM FOR**  
**ENHANCED ACTION**

The Government of South Africa welcomes the opportunity to submit views regarding the issue of mitigation in the context of Workstream I of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (paragraphs 2 to 6 of decision 1CP/17).

**MITIGATION IN THE 2015 AGREEMENT**

It is of paramount importance that the international climate change regime is effective (i.e. science based and sufficiently ambitious) and equitable (i.e. provides developing countries access to sustainable development). In this regard, South Africa is of the view that only a multilaterally rules-based system with targets/commitments/actions for all Parties will have the legitimacy to mobilise sufficient ambition.

The second commitment period under the Kyoto Protocol will come to an end in 2020 when the new legal instrument being negotiated under the Durban Platform will come into effect. The new legal instrument must be a legally binding protocol under the Convention with sufficiently ambitious targets/commitments/actions for all Parties based on the principle of equity and CBDR&RC.

Under the new protocol, all Parties should commit to a common global commitment to keep the rise in average global temperatures to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and prevent dangerous climate change. There should furthermore be differentiated legally binding individual commitments for all Parties.

It is proposed that the following **elements** pertaining to the mitigation part be included in the new instrument and be legally binding:

- All Parties to take mitigation commitments for implementation periods of e.g. 5, 10 or 15 years;
- Targets/commitments/actions should be set domestically, with Parties to propose targets/commitments/actions that are stronger/more ambitious for the period 2020 to 2025 than they submitted for the period up to 2020, and then further strengthening for 2030 and 2035;
- The domestic setting of targets/commitments/actions will be done in accordance with multilaterally agreed criteria pertaining to three major elements: form, stringency and rules;
- Provision for an *ex ante* multi-lateral assessment process of domestically determined targets/commitments/actions;
- Targets/commitments/actions implemented from 2020 will be inscribed in an annex/schedule to the instrument;
- A period of implementation of commitments (5, 10, 15 years) will follow;

- Regular reporting of progress in implementation of commitments including international assessment and review (IAR) and international consultation and analysis (ICA) during the agreed period;
- Periodic review of the implementation of individual commitments and the adequacy of aggregate efforts, based on science and equity. The periodic review under the Convention should enable dynamic adjustments of commitments. Future reviews would then specify individual numbers within the ranges; and set new longer-term ranges;
- Compliance will therefore be linked to countries applying the agreed criteria and rules and following the process in formulating their domestically determined targets/commitments/actions;
- Lack of achievement of a number will not lead to punitive compliance measures, but will inform the process of putting forward further targets/commitments/actions.
- Provision of finance, technology development and transfer and capacity-building commitments by Annex II countries to developing countries, with financial obligations that are measured, reported and verified.

According to this model, all Parties have the same legally binding obligations, i.e. of following agreed criteria to formulate their targets/commitments/actions, and there will be no need to amend (and therefore ratify the amendments to) the protocol for further periods of implementation beyond e.g. 2025, 2030 or 2035. Adjustments may be enabled by schedules that describe long-term trajectories, with single numbers five years ahead, a narrow range of numbers ten years ahead, and a wider, indicative range fifteen years ahead.

It is believed that this approach has the most potential to mobilise ambition, being multilaterally agreed, rules-based, applicable to all and responsive to science and equity.

The elements of criteria and the *ex ante* process are further elaborated below, as well as possible timelines on how to conclude the new instrument.

## **MULTILATERALLY AGREED CRITERIA TO BE USED DOMESTICALLY TO SET TARGETS**

### Criteria for developed countries

- Reduce absolute economy-wide emission reduction commitments or targets, against a 1990 base year (with flexibility for EITs). Mitigation commitments would take the form of QELROs, or QEERTs for multiple years, defining a trajectory to 2030, with every year defined.
- Zero carbon emissions pathways should decline up to 2030, and define a long-term goal for each Party in 2050. The commitments and targets should be comparable among developed countries.
- Common accounting rules for developed countries must comprise base year, GWP values, sectors and gases; treatment of LULUCF and carbon credits; associated assumptions and conditions related to the ambition of the pledges and demonstrating progress towards QELROs/QEERTs. The Kyoto accounting rules, together with the clarification of these matters for pre-2020 pledges should provide the basis for a

common accounting framework for developed countries' commitments with effect from 2020.

- Lessons can also be learned from the Kyoto accounting rules enhancing comparability.

#### Criteria for developing countries

- Growth of emissions is expected from developing countries as they address their developmental challenges, particularly poverty eradication. For the period 2020-2030 however, developing countries must strive to slow their emissions growth. If actions are specific to some sectors only, developing countries are encouraged to move to economy-wide actions over time and to adopt low-carbon development plans. For developing countries, there should be co-benefits to link climate action with economic and social development opportunities and also linked with finance, technology and capacity-building support.
- Relative emission reduction commitments and actions. This might be expressed in the form of intensity targets (reducing carbon intensity of GDP). Other developing countries may submit sets of NAMAs.
- Rules related to developing country NAMAs should include underlying assumptions and methodologies, sectors and gases covered, GWP values used, support needs for the implementation of NAMAs and estimated mitigation outcomes.
- All commitments and actions should be measurable, reportable and verifiable, and enabled by MRV support.
- Over time, developing countries can phase in similar accounting rules as for developed countries – but they need time to make the transition. In many cases, developing countries already voluntarily apply stronger rules than required (e.g. SA uses 2006 IPCC guidelines for inventories, although only the 1996 guidelines are prescribed).
- In determining their targets/commitments/actions, Parties will also be able to take into account their national circumstances, emissions profiles/actions, responsibility and capability and formulate their mitigation, adaptation, finance, technology and capacity building contribution to the global effort.

#### **EX ANTE ASSESSMENT PROCESS**

- Provision for an *ex ante* assessment process with Parties obliged to present their domestically determined contributions to the UNFCCC, arrived at in accordance with multilaterally agreed and legally binding criteria in agreed templates and following agreed rules. A process of assessing the adequacy and fairness of these targets/commitments/actions against the demands of science and/or an equity tool, such as an equity reference framework (ERF), will also be part of this process.
- The outcome of the assessment process could encourage or compel (through a facilitative process) Parties to reconsider and adjust their targets/commitments/actions.

## TIMELINES FOR SETTING THE INITIAL TARGETS

- The timing of setting mitigation targets/commitments/actions is an important issue. The process whereby countries determine their respective contributions to the global effort should take place according to a multilaterally agreed process, with two templates agreed by COP19 (2013), one for developed countries and another for developing countries, according to which countries will put forward their initial offers.
- Parties will then commence to develop nationally initial offers during 2014, in order to submit to the COP the information required by the templates as a minimum, as well as any additional information the Party wishes to submit.
- South Africa proposes that initial targets/commitments/actions are presented at COP21 in 2015, and that an *ex ante* assessment process to assess the adequacy and fairness of these targets/commitments/actions take place at the same time, with a view of inscribing the targets by 2017 at the latest. This would mean that Parties should agree upfront that, despite the fact that the agreement would only be implemented from 2020, the criteria and rules for setting the targets/commitments/actions and the *ex ante* process will be applied to these processes.
- Information relating to mitigation commitments has been carried forward in information documents under the Kyoto Protocol (for QELROs) and the Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA) (for QEERTs and NAMAs) for several years. The Copenhagen Accord had two appendices with tables for developed and developing countries to submit their pledges. Templates can be developed, building on those tables, information documents (FCCC/SB/2011/INF.1/Rev.1 and FCCC/SBI/2013/INF.12/Rev.2), and a technical paper (FCCC/TP/2012/5).
- In order to achieve the proposed timelines for setting the initial targets, it is suggested that the work programme of the ADP focus on reaching agreement on criteria and the templates by COP19.
- The process of setting the targets/commitments/actions could be initiated by a political call, for example from the UN Secretary-General's Climate Change Leaders Summit in September 2014 in New York, for countries to bring commitments to COP21. Preparatory work should precede this call, in order for countries to initiate domestic processes in 2014 and intensify their national work in 2015.
- Parties would bring initial offers in the agreed templates to COP20. This would enable targets/commitments/actions, rules and form to be considered together. It will also enable Parties to have a view on what others are doing, thereby addressing a fundamental condition for collective action (knowing that others will also act, and perceiving their relative efforts as fair).
- A rigorous multilateral process would precede COP21 to review the initial offers, based on science and equity. It would assess the adequacy of the aggregate effort and the fair distribution of relative efforts. While the focus in these steps is on mitigation commitments, they must also be assessed in relation to adaptation and support. The *ex ante* assessment process will have to be informed by the science

and equity, with the 2013-15 Review also concluding at this time, and by an equity reference framework (ERF). Based on the review of what others are doing, the COP will make recommendations to Parties to adjust their numbers.

- The results of the multilateral process should be recommendations to Parties who have put forward inadequate commitments, encouraging them to increase their contributions at COP21. Adjustment of offers and inscription of commitments in schedules to the new protocol at COP21.