

G77 and China statement for the SBSTA workshops on early warning systems,

June 2015

The G77 and China had contributed positively during SBSTA-40 in paving the way for conducting these in-session workshops that will be held consecutively in SBSTA-42 and SBSTA-44 according to CoP-20 decision. The Group will continue to engage constructively on the SBSTA-42 technical and scientific discussions, taking into account the conclusions of SBSTA 38, and towards the consideration at SBSTA 43 of the reports of both workshops. In this sense, the reports need to be comprehensive and to capture the views of developing country parties, taking into consideration that agriculture is the backbone of developing countries' and economic systems . In this context there is an urgent need to increase the adaptive capacity of agriculture to deal with the adverse effects of climate change. This continues to be the key priority for developing countries in light of the particular vulnerabilities of the agricultural sector and its relationship with the livelihood of millions, food security and poverty eradication.

On development of early warning systems and contingency plans:

The areas of early warning systems and risk assessments and vulnerability of agricultural systems merit specific attention, as there is enough evidence to support that climate change is increasing the frequency and intensity of adverse climatic events, such as torrential rains, long droughts, frost, and hail, among others, threatening seriously the future development of the agricultural production systems, according to conditions of each country or local area. Moreover, the increase of temperatures is generating favorable conditions for the proliferation and outbreak of pests and diseases that will make agriculture productive systems even more vulnerable.

Early warning systems coupled with contingency plans contribute immensely to Adaptation of Agriculture system in developing countries, particularly small holders. Due to diversity of agro-ecosystems, small holders and supporting institutions, taking them to the ground level needs huge investments and large scale implementation strategies. If these plans are implemented, with supporting capacity building at regional and sub-region level; adaptive capacity of Agriculture Systems can be strongly enhanced.

Thus, extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and more severe, threatening the reliability and productivity of agriculture, exacerbating already extreme levels of poverty, and reinforcing persistent inequity and chronic under-nutrition. There is scientific knowledge of climate change impacts on agriculture that have not yet been assessed, developed, and/or modelled either due to data limitations or shortcomings in conceptualizing the problem.

In this context, early warning systems are one of the major tools to reduce climate change impacts in agriculture, as they can estimate the probability of occurrence of risky climatic events, and help making decisions that prevent or reduce damages. At the same time, vulnerability assessments are necessary to identify risks and design appropriate measures to prevent or reduce the negative effects of climate change.

Due to the aforementioned, the G77 and China considers that the SBSTA needs to address the following issues in order to assist developing countries on the areas covered by this workshop, taking into account the diversity of their agricultural systems and the differences in scale and the short, medium and long-term challenges:

- Provide access to scientific and technical information and means of implementation of early warning systems and contingency plans, including different information and communication technology (ICT) platforms and processes;
- Information, experience, tools and technology of real-time monitoring, data visualization, data sharing and management;
- Assist governments and communities with expertise in developing early warning systems and contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events and their effects including Models and technologies of early-warning of extreme climatic events ;
- Encourage the collaborative participation by farmers in any contingency plans in relation to extreme weather events and climate change that will affect them;
- Provide means of implementation to developing countries in the assessment of risk and vulnerability of agricultural systems to different climate change scenarios at regional, national and local level, taking into consideration that developed countries should play a role in technology transfer and capacity building for developing countries on adaptation;
- Enhancing regional systems that would remove barriers to the use and uptake of EWS messaging that would encompass, Packaging of information appropriately to meet the needs of end users; Timely access of EWS messages by end users;
- Downscaling of regional information to local level for actual actions; Building capacity of the coordinating institutions, including technical, financial and human; Promoting and strengthening Public Private People Partnerships (PPPP) in the design and implementation of EWS.
- Support research in addressing climate change related contingency planning, risk and vulnerability assessment and early warning systems, including in terms of potential economic impacts for example predictions of resulting impacts on agriculture production ;
- Develop tools to analyze climate data and assess the risks and vulnerabilities of agricultural systems at regional, national, and local levels; according to different national and/or regional characteristics;
- Strengthen national systems for collecting, analyzing, and disseminating risk and vulnerability data and information;
- Collect and establish accessible regional climate data bases;

- Support research and development to promote better understanding of the trends as well as promote use of appropriate control and management methods for climate-related pest and diseases;
- To develop more timely and accurate forecasting system for rainfall and inflow seasonally and annually.
- To support accurate forecasting of demand in agricultural products.

G77 and China countries believes there is a wide space for collaboration among parties in order to build better early warning systems, adapted to the local national and regional circumstances. There are also big opportunities to draw and share lessons from the experience of the different Parties. Developed countries with high capacities can play a very positive role in the means of implementation with developing countries in addressing adaptation. Article 4.1.e. of the convention stated clearly that parties should “Cooperate in preparing for adaptation to the impacts of climate change” among various issues including agriculture.

G77 remain on its position to undertake scientific and technical work on impacts of climate change impacts on agriculture consistent with SBSTA mandate in Art.9 taking into account the commitments in articles 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 of the convention.