

Chair's summary
In-session mitigation workshop: agriculture, forestry and rural development
SBSTA 24

Chair: Mr. Kishan Kumarsingh

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, at its twenty-third session, agreed to continue its work on the scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of mitigation, and to focus on exchanging information and sharing experiences and views among Parties on practical opportunities and solutions to facilitate the implementation of the Convention as mandated by decision 10/CP.9. For this purpose, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to organize workshops at each of its next four sessions, on specific themes.

The first in this series of mitigation workshops focused on agriculture, forestry and rural development, and was held on Tuesday 23 May 2006. Fourteen expressions of interest for presentations at the workshop were submitted by Parties to the secretariat. All 14 presentations and their abstracts can be found on the UNFCCC web site.

The workshop was open to all participants and was well attended. It was organized in three segments (two in the morning and one in the afternoon) each followed by a question and answer session. The workshop concluded with a general discussion. Both the question and answer and the general discussion sessions allowed for an active and productive exchange of views and lessons learned between the workshop participants.

The speakers of the workshop addressed a wide range of issues related to mitigation under agriculture, forestry and rural development, and shared with us information on a variety of mitigation options and experiences in mitigation efforts in different countries.

We heard presentations that covered economic aspects of climate change mitigation options in those sectors, the associated costs and co-benefits, the role of policies, markets, technology and needs, but also presentations showing the contribution that mitigation in these sectors can make to sustainable development, the promotion of sustainable forest management and the role of carbon sequestration. Other presentations focussed on specific sources of emissions, such as livestock, or identified possible mitigation options under different national circumstances. We also heard about the mitigation potential of biomass utilization for energy production.

I would like to offer some observations from the presentations and discussions that followed:

- Forestry and agriculture are important for the sustainable development of communities and national economies, for both developed and developing countries.
- Both sectors provide potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions as part of global mitigation efforts through for example increased use of biomass, afforestation and/or reforestation project activities under the CDM, reducing deforestation, forest conservation, sustainable forest management and sustainable land management.

- Markets, partnerships and policy frameworks can play an important role for the mitigation portfolio in agriculture, forestry and rural development.
- Options for mitigation also largely depend on national circumstances and regional differences.
- Analysis of socio-economic impacts of mitigation options as well as their spillover effects is essential when considering mitigation options. In this regard, it was noted that agriculture and forestry activities could have lower spillover effects compared to other economic sectors.
- Given the linkages to other environmental issues, a large number of mitigation options offer multiple co-benefits, for example for water quality, biodiversity, poverty alleviation.
- For many developing countries, there is a significant need for technical innovation and technology transfer. International cooperation and support is essential for promoting both technical innovation and technology transfer.
- New technologies for mitigating GHG emissions from agriculture sector must be cost effective and environmentally sound. Furthermore, there is a need to overcome barriers, for example, the lack of financial resources to develop and transfer technologies and increasing public awareness on the use of new technologies that reduce emissions.

Finally, I would like to thank the presenters for their valuable contributions and the secretariat for its support in organizing a productive and interesting workshop.