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Agenda item 4

Methodological guidance for activities relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries

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Draft conclusions proposed by the Chair

Addendum

Recommendation by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, at its thirty-fifth session, decided to recommend the following draft decision for adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its seventeenth session:

Draft decision -/CP.17

Draft decision on guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected and modalities relating to forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels as referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I

The Conference of the Parties,

Recalling decisions 2/CP.13, 4/CP.15 and 1/CP.16,

Recalling also decision 1/CP.16, paragraphs 69–71 and appendices I and II,

Noting that guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16 are addressed and respected should be consistent with national sovereignty, national legislation and national circumstances,

Recognizing the importance and necessity of adequate and predictable financial and technology support for developing all of the elements referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71,

Being aware of the need for any modalities for the construction of forest reference levels and forest emission reference levels to be flexible so as to accommodate national circumstances and capabilities, while pursuing environmental integrity and avoiding perverse incentives,

Guidance on systems for providing information on how safeguards are addressed and respected

1. *Notes* that the implementation of the safeguards referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16, and information on how these safeguards are being addressed and respected, should support national strategies or action plans and be included in, where appropriate, all phases of implementation referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 73, of the activities referred to in paragraph 70 of the same decision;

2. *Agrees* that systems for providing information on how the safeguards referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16 are addressed and respected should, taking into account national circumstances and respective capabilities, and recognizing national sovereignty and legislation, and relevant international obligations and agreements, and respecting gender considerations:

(a) Be consistent with the guidance identified in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 1;

(b) Provide transparent and consistent information that is accessible by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis;

(c) Be transparent and flexible to allow for improvements over time;

(d) Provide information on how all of the safeguards referred to in appendix I to decision 1/CP.16 are being addressed and respected;

(e) Be country-driven and implemented at the national level;

(f) Build upon existing systems, as appropriate;

3. *Agrees also* that developing country Parties undertaking the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, should provide a summary of information on how all of the safeguards referred to in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, are being addressed and respected throughout the implementation of the activities;

4. *Decides* that the summary of information referred to in paragraph 3 above should be provided periodically and be included in national communications, consistent with relevant decisions of the Conference of the Parties on guidelines on national communications from Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention, or communication channels agreed by the Conference of the Parties;

5. *Requests* the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, at its thirty-sixth session, to consider the timing of the first and the frequency of subsequent presentation of the summary of information referred to in paragraph 3 above, with a view to recommending a decision on this matter for adoption by the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth session;

6. *Also requests* the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice, at its thirty-sixth session, to consider the need for further guidance to ensure transparency, consistency, comprehensiveness and effectiveness when informing on how all safeguards are addressed and respected and, if appropriate, to consider additional guidance, and to report to the Conference of the Parties at its eighteenth session;

Modalities for forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels

7. *Agrees* that, in accordance with decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71(b), forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels expressed in tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent per year, are benchmarks for assessing each country's performance in implementing the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70;

8. *Decides* that forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, in accordance with decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71(b), shall be established taking into account decision 4/CP.15, paragraph 7, and maintaining consistency with anthropogenic forest-related greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks as contained in each country's greenhouse gas inventories;

9. *Invites* Parties to submit information and rationale on the development of their forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels including details of national circumstances and if adjusted include details on how the national circumstances were considered, in accordance with the guidelines contained in the annex and any future decision by the Conference of the Parties;

10. *Agrees* that a step-wise approach to national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level development may be useful, enabling Parties to improve the forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level by incorporating better data, improved methodologies and, where appropriate, additional pools, noting the importance of adequate and predictable support as referenced by decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71;

11. *Acknowledges* that subnational forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels may be elaborated as an interim measure, while transitioning to a national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level. And that, interim forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels of a Party may cover less than its entire national territory of forest area;

12. *Agrees* that a developing country Party should update a forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level periodically as appropriate, taking into account new knowledge, new trends and any modification of scope and methodologies;

13. *Invites* developing country Parties, on a voluntary basis and when deemed appropriate, to submit proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, in accordance with decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 71(b), accompanied by the information referred to in paragraph 9 above;

14. *Requests* the secretariat to make available information on forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels on the UNFCCC REDD web platform,¹ including submissions with proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels;

15. *Agrees* to establish a process that enables technical assessment of the proposed forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels when submitted or updated by Parties in accordance with paragraph 12 above and in accordance with guidance to be developed by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at its thirty-sixth session.

¹ <<http://unfccc.int/4531>>.

Annex

Guidelines for submissions of information on reference levels

Each developing country Party aiming to undertake the actions listed in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, should include in its submission transparent, complete,¹ consistent with guidance agreed by the Conference of the Parties (COP), and accurate information for the purpose of allowing a technical assessment of the data, methodologies and procedures used in the construction of a forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level. The information provided should be guided by the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change guidance and guidelines, as adopted or encouraged by the COP, as appropriate, and include:

(a) Information that was used by Parties in constructing a forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level, including historical data, in a comprehensive and transparent way;

(b) Transparent, complete, consistent and accurate information, including methodological information, used at the time of construction of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, including, *inter alia*, as appropriate, a description of data sets, approaches, methods, models, if applicable and assumptions used, descriptions of relevant policies and plans, and description of changes from previously submitted information;

(c) Pools and gases, and activities listed in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, which have been included in forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels and the reasons for omitting a pool and/or activity from the construction of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels, noting that significant pools and/or activities should not be excluded;

(d) The definition of forest used in the construction of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels and, if appropriate, in case there is a difference with the definition of forest used in the national greenhouse gas inventory or in reporting to other international organizations, an explanation of why and how the definition used in the construction of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels was chosen.

¹ Complete here means the provision of information that allows for the reconstruction of forest reference emission levels and/or forest reference levels.