



Summary report on the multilateral assessment of Belgium at the forty-fifth session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. The Conference of the Parties, by decision 1/CP.16, decided that developed country Parties should enhance the reporting in their national communications and submit biennial reports on their progress in achieving emission reductions. It also established a new process under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) – the international assessment and review (IAR) of emissions and removals related to developed country Parties' quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets – that aims to promote the comparability of efforts among all developed country Parties. The second round of the IAR process is to be conducted during the period 2016–2017 (the first round of the IAR process was conducted during the period 2014–2015).

2. According to the modalities and procedures for IAR specified in annex II to decision 2/CP.17, the multilateral assessment (MA), being part of the IAR process, is to be conducted for each developed country Party at a working group session of the SBI, with the participation of all Parties. The aim of the MA is to assess each Party's progress in implementation towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target.

3. The second round of MA of Belgium took place at a working group session during SBI 45, on 12 November 2016. Such a working group session is preceded by a three-month period of questions and answers; in the first month, any Party may submit written questions to the Party being assessed, which may respond to the questions within the remaining two months. Questions for Belgium had been submitted in writing two months before the working group session by the following delegations: Brazil and China. A list of the questions received and the answers provided by Belgium can be found on the IAR web page for Belgium.¹

¹ <<https://unfccc.int/9702.php>>.

II. Proceedings

4. The working group session was chaired by the SBI Rapporteur Mr. Sidat Yaffa. Belgium was represented by Mr. Peter Wittoeck, Head of Climate Change Section, Directorate-General for the Environment.

5. Mr. Wittoeck made an opening presentation, summarizing Belgium's progress in implementation towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target. Emissions, excluding those from the land use, land-use change and forestry sector, decreased by 22.0 per cent between 1990 and 2014. Mr. Wittoeck noted that, over the same period, Belgium's gross domestic product and population increased by 51.0 and 12.0 per cent respectively, which indicates a significant decoupling of emissions from growth in the economy and the population.

6. Mr. Wittoeck presented Belgium's target for 2020 for the emissions from sectors not covered by the European Union Emissions Trading System (non-ETS sectors) as contained in the European Union 2020 climate and energy package, namely a 15 per cent reduction below the 2005 level. Mr. Wittoeck also mentioned Belgium's target for non-ETS sectors for 2030 (a 35 per cent reduction below the 2005 level), which is currently under consideration in the context of the European target for 2030. According to Mr. Wittoeck, Belgium's emissions from the non-ETS sectors in the periods 2013–2017 and 2018–2020 are projected to be lower and higher, respectively, than its annual emission allocations (AEAs) under the European Union effort sharing decision (ESD). Nevertheless, Belgium expects to be able to meet its target for non-ETS sectors for 2020 with existing measures by carrying over the surplus AEAs from the previous years using the flexibility allowed under the ESD. In order to achieve its 2020 target, Belgium has put in place a range of policies and measures at both the regional and the federal level, in particular for the renewable energy, building and transport sectors.

7. The opening presentation was followed by interventions and questions from the following delegations: Canada, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea and Zimbabwe. The questions were on: the reasons for the sharp increase in emissions in the years 2009 and 2010 and their subsequent decrease to normal levels; Belgium's federal monitoring, reporting and verification law; the internal mechanism for exchange of information between parliamentary assemblies and governments, and the processes established to ensure consensus among the regions towards development of climate policies; and the composition of Belgium's National Climate Commission. In response, Belgium provided further explanations. Details can be found in the webcast of this session on the IAR web page for Belgium.

8. In closing, the SBI Rapporteur reminded Belgium that it can submit any other observations on its MA process within two months of the working group session, and that they will form part of its Party record for the MA. The SBI Rapporteur thanked the delegation of Belgium, all other delegations, and the secretariat for this successful MA session.
