



Summary report on the multilateral assessment of Belarus at the forty-seventh 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) – that aims to promote the comparability of efforts among all developed country Parties. According to the modalities and procedures for IAR specified in annex II to decision 2/CP.17, the multilateral assessment (MA) 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.

2. The second round of MA of Belarus took place at a working group session during SBI 47, on 10 November 2017. 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. The MA of Belarus was originally planned to take place during SBI 46; however, owing to national circumstances, Belarus was not able to attend that session. Questions for Belarus had been submitted in writing two months before the working group session at SBI 46 by the following delegations: Brazil, China, European Union, France and Thailand. A list of the questions received and the answers provided by Belarus as well as the webcast of this session can be found on the IAR web page for Belarus.¹ The Party can submit any other observations on its MA process within two months of the working group session.

¹ <https://unfccc.int/10091.php>.

II. Proceedings

3. The working group session was chaired by the SBI Chair, Mr. Tomasz Chruszczow. Belarus was represented by Mr. Andrei Pilipchuk, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection.

4. Mr. Pilipchuk made an opening presentation, summarizing Belarus' progress in implementation towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target. Under the Convention, Belarus made a commitment to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 8.0 per cent by 2020 below the 1990 level.

5. Total GHG emissions excluding emissions and removals from land use, land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) decreased by 34.6 per cent between 1990 and 2015 (from 136,914.91 to 89,607.64 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (kt CO₂ eq)). The decrease in total GHG emissions can be attributed mainly to the decrease in fuel consumption in the energy sector related to the reduction in industrial production and the economic recession at the beginning of the 1990s, the implementation of energy-saving policies in various sectors of the economy, as well as changes in the structure of fuel consumption related to switch from coal and fuel oil to natural gas.

6. Mr. Pilipchuk presented key policies and measures to achieve the target, including: the Renewable Energy Law (enforced in 2010), the Energy Savings Law (enforced in 2015), the State Programme on Sustainable Environment for 2015–2020, the State Programme on Energy Efficiency for 2015–2020, the Action Plan on Implementation of the Paris Agreement (adopted in February 2016) and the draft State Programme on Implementation of the Paris Agreement (prepared in September 2017), as well as the draft Strategy on Low Carbon Development up to 2050, the draft Strategy on Adaptation of Forestry up to 2030 and the draft Strategy on Adaptation of Agriculture up to 2030 (prepared in September 2017). Mr. Pilipchuk highlighted the success of the implementation of the new State Programme on Sustainable Environment for 2015–2020 and explained that the energy intensity and carbon intensity of the Belarusian economy (in relation to gross domestic product (GDP)) have been constantly decreasing since 1990. For example, carbon intensity decreased to 0.44 kg CO₂/USD in 2015 from 2.6 kg CO₂/USD in 1990. Mr. Pilipchuk emphasized the high mitigation potential of Belarus, which is about 30 million tonnes of CO₂ up to 2030. Regarding the main challenges highlighted in the Party's presentation, Mr. Pilipchuk referred to the low GDP per capita in the country (USD 4,900), the very limited institutional capacity in the field of climate change, and limited foreign investments in the country (6.5 per cent of GDP, or USD 680 per capita), which is much lower than in other countries with economies in transition.

7. On the use of units from LULUCF activities, during the review of its second biennial report, Belarus confirmed that the contribution of the LULUCF sector is not considered in its emission reduction target. With regard to the use of units from market-based mechanisms under the Convention and other mechanisms, Belarus also confirmed that market-based mechanisms under the Convention are not applicable to the Party, and other market-based mechanisms are not used in Belarus.

8. Belarus' total GHG emissions excluding LULUCF in 2020 and 2030 are projected to be 88,120.09 and 104,027.86 kt CO₂ eq, respectively, under the 'with measures' scenario, which is a decrease of 36.7 and 25.2 per cent, respectively, below the 1990 level. Under the 'with additional measures' scenario, emissions in 2020 and 2030, amounting to 86,870.09 and 100,278.36 kt CO₂ eq, respectively, are projected to be lower than those in 1990 by 37.6 and 27.9 per cent, respectively. The 2020 projections suggest that Belarus expects to overachieve its 2020 target under the Convention.

9. The opening presentation was followed by interventions and questions from the following delegations: Austria, European Union, India and United States of America. The questions were related to: the introduction of the policy on low-carbon and carbon-free technologies and the sectors where this policy will be implemented, as well as the results of the reductions or potential reductions in GHG emissions expected from implementation of the related measures; the current progress of the renewable energy legislation and policies, the specific measures currently implemented, ways of strengthening the national energy policies and current progress towards the Party's renewable energy objective; the mitigation measures that have been implemented in the transport and waste sectors and the plans to reduce GHG emissions in those sectors; the type of support currently provided to developing countries and whether there are plans to scale up such support; and the estimation of the climate benefits of the plans to ecologically rehabilitate disturbed wetlands between 2015 and 2030 and the extent of the use of the methodologies of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in the estimation of those climate benefits.

10. In response, Belarus provided further explanations. In particular, Belarus explained that without the use of carbon-free technologies, the Party would not achieve the planned reductions in GHG emissions provided that the growth of the GDP is maintained. Regarding the renewable energy legislation, Belarus confirmed the progress made in its implementation, namely an increase in the share of renewable energy in electricity production from 0.2 per cent in 2009 to 5.8 per cent in 2016, and explained that the objective for 2030 of a 15 per cent share of renewable energy has been revised in the draft Strategy on Low Carbon Development up to 2050 to a target of 22 per cent. Belarus also provided details on measures in the transport sector focused on the construction of infrastructure for electric cars and buses in cities with more than 400,000 inhabitants (18 such cities in the country) by 2020 and the construction of 25 electric car charging stations in cities with 50,000 inhabitants by 2020, which would result in a decrease in total GHG emissions of 4.5 per cent by 2020.

11. Regarding support provided to developing countries, Belarus indicated that this support is focused in particular on countries of the former Soviet Union and covers capacity-building, institutional strengthening, development of legislative frameworks, and graduate and postgraduate studies in a variety of fields, such as forestry (Belarus has more than 50 years of experience in this field), and these fields will be further developed to cover the industry, energy and transport sectors. Lastly, Belarus indicated that there are no established methods in the country for estimating climate change impacts and the benefits of the rehabilitation of disturbed wetlands and that it would welcome any international cooperation in this area.