

SCIENCE, RESEARCH AND SYSTEMATIC OBSERVATION UNDER THE CONVENTION

Issues relevant to science, research and systematic observation in the context of climate change are regularly being considered by the SBSTA under the agenda item *Research and systematic observation*.

Key elements and activities under research and systematic observation include:

- a regular dialogue with regional and international research programmes and organizations active in climate change research, and the IPCC;
- cooperation with the relevant global observing systems, such as the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS), the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), and other partners.

SBSTA Research dialogue

The research dialogue was initiated by the SBSTA in response to decision 9/CP.11 *Research needs relating to the Convention* as a way to enhance communication between Parties and regional and international climate change research programmes and organizations on research needs and priorities relating to the Convention.

At SBSTA 26, Parties agreed to develop and maintain such dialogue, and invited relevant research programmes and organizations to regularly inform the SBSTA of developments in research activities relevant to the needs of the Convention, as outlined in FCCC/SBSTA/2007/4, paragraph 47 (a-f).

Further information on the research dialogue, including links to previous research dialogue meetings, can be accessed through the UNFCCC web page on research:
http://unfccc.int/methods_and_science/research_and_systematic_observation/items/3461.php.

Recent developments

Both SBSTA 28 and SBSTA 30 emphasized the usefulness of a continuous and enhanced dialogue during future sessions of the SBSTA. In particular, SBSTA 30 affirmed the valuable role of the research dialogue in providing new scientific information that emerges from climate change research and noted its importance for informing deliberations within the UNFCCC process.

Key outcomes

The SBSTA has encouraged the research programmes and organizations to continue to undertake further studies to enhance the understanding of climate change and to address key uncertainties identified in the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, and enhance efforts towards greater integration of climate-related research across all disciplines.

The SBSTA has also encouraged Parties and research programmes and organizations to enhance existing efforts to build capacity for research in developing countries, in particular those aimed at supporting adaptation efforts.

Updates on developments in research activities provided by regional and international research programmes and organizations for this session of the SBSTA are included in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.6.

Submissions received from Parties, containing views on topics to be discussed at the dialogue meeting during this session of the SBSTA are included in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.4.

SBSTA Dialogue on developments in research activities relevant to the needs of the Convention

Developments in climate change research activities
Research needs and priorities

With contributions and participation of:



THURSDAY, 3 JUNE 2010

11:00 to 14:00, Saal Beethoven
Hotel Maritim, Bonn, Germany



United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

DEVELOPMENTS IN CLIMATE CHANGE RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

RESEARCH NEEDS AND PRIORITIES

RESEARCH DIALOGUE - Meeting the needs of the Convention

Increases in global average air and ocean temperatures, widespread melting of snow and ice, and rising global average sea level - these are some of the changes which have already been observed in the climate system. Projections of future changes in climate, as reported in the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, include scenarios which describe severe potential impacts.

All Parties to the UNFCCC pursue the ultimate objective of the Convention, which is stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Though COP15 in Copenhagen concluded with an outcome that responded only partially to the high expectations, the conference highlighted a strong political desire to respond adequately to this challenge, including through the Copenhagen Accord. The Accord refers to the need for deep cuts in global emissions according to science, as documented by the IPCC AR4, and aims at holding the increase in global temperature below 2 degrees Celsius, consistent with science and on the basis of equity. It also calls for an assessment by 2015, referencing various matters presented by the science, including in relation to temperature rises of 1.5 degrees Celsius. Just as importantly, COP 15 raised climate change policy to the highest political level and significantly advanced the negotiations on the infrastructure needed for well-functioning, global climate change cooperation.

The endeavour of addressing climate change requires a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach to climate change research. Ensuring continued provision of robust and up-to-date scientific information to support the work of the various bodies under the Convention is essential. The research dialogue under the SBSTA provides a valuable setting to discuss and identify research needs and priorities of policy makers. It also enables Parties to gain understanding of the on-going developments in climate change research activities from the science community in-between the publication of the IPCC assessment reports, thereby helping policy makers determine what is required in terms of future and immediate action on climate change.

Yvo de Boer
Executive Secretary of the UNFCCC

OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the event is to enhance communication between Parties and the climate change research community on climate change research needs and priorities of the Convention.

MAIN ACTIVITIES

- Inform Parties about ongoing and planned climate change research developments and activities
- Engage in a dialogue with regional and international climate change research programmes and organizations on emerging scientific findings and other developments in research activities, including in relation to developing countries
- Communicate Parties' views on research needs and priorities in support of the Convention to the scientific community.

TOPICS TO BE ADDRESSED

Developments in research activities relevant to the needs of the Convention, including:

- Emerging scientific findings;
- Research planning activities, including those undertaken in response to key uncertainties and research needs identified by the IPCC or raised by Parties;
- Research priorities, and gaps in the implementation of these priorities;
- Research capacity-building activities, particularly in developing countries;
- Regional climate change research networks;
- Relevant communication issues.

For more information, see:

Decision 9/CP.11
(FCCC/CP/2005/5/Add.1)

SBSTA 26 conclusions:
(FCCC/SBSTA/2007/4, paragraphs 40-50)

SBSTA 30 conclusions:
(FCCC/SBSTA/2009/3, paragraphs 43-66)

Preliminary AGENDA

Opening address

Mr. Mama Konaté, Chair of the SBSTA

Presentations by international research programmes and organizations active in climate change research and the IPCC

Earth System Science Partnership (ESSP) on behalf of ESSP and its member programmes: World Climate Research Programme (WCRP), International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), International Human Dimensions Programme (IHDP) and DIVERSITAS - Mr. Rik Leemans, Chair of the ESSP Scientific Committee

WCRP - Mr. Ghassem Asrar, Director, World Climate Research Programme

IGBP - Ms. Sybil Seitzinger, Executive Director, International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - Mr. Ottmar Edenhofer, Co-chair of Working Group 3

Short questions and answers to international programmes and organizations, and the IPCC

Presentations by research programmes and organizations active in climate change research with focus on research-related capacity-building and activities in the regions

Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN) - Mr. Andrew Matthews, APN National Focal Point and Scientific Planning Group Member for New Zealand and APN SC Member

7th Framework programme (FP7) - Ms. Elisabeth Lipiatou, DG Research EC
START - Mr. Jon Padgham, International START secretariat

Short questions and answers to regional programmes and organizations

Overview presentations by Parties and panel discussion on climate change research needs and priorities of the Convention

Belize
European Union
Japan
Mali

United States of America

Discussion on on-going research activities and priorities in support of the Convention

Concluding remarks by the Chair