

Heads of Delegation briefing on informal ministerial consultations on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement

Summary by the Chair

23 June 2021

The incoming Presidency held a briefing on 23 June 2021 for Heads of Delegation on the upcoming informal ministerial consultations on Article 6 of the Paris Agreement. ¹

Mr Archie Young, Lead negotiator for the incoming Presidency, opened the briefing by explaining that the informal ministerial consultations were a response to the request from many Parties for ministerial engagement in Article 6 issues ahead of COP26. Three issues commonly identified by Parties are: a) how to avoid the double claiming of emission reductions generated outside of the scope of host Party NDCs, through the Article 6.4 mechanism; b) the use of units generated before 2020 to meet NDCs; and c) how activity under both Article 6.2 and Article 6.4 can generate predictable finance to support adaptation action. The purpose of the consultations is to explore bridging solutions at the ministerial level in advance of the COP. It was highlighted that the consultations are complementary to the work under the UNFCCC SBSTA at Heads of Delegation and expert level and the incoming Presidency's engagement.

The incoming Presidency explained that as announced to the attendees of the Petersberg Climate Dialogue in May 2021, it had requested Singapore and Japan to facilitate these discussions during this part of 2021. The incoming Presidency thanked Japan for its willingness to facilitate these discussions and regretted that Japan had subsequently had to decline. The incoming Presidency thanked Norway for being able to step in, and work together with Singapore to facilitate the consultations. Minister Fu (Singapore) and Minister Rotevatn (Norway) will thus facilitate these discussions and report back to the president-designate for COP 26, Minister Sharma (UK).

The representatives of the facilitating Ministers explained their vision for these consultations, as providing space for Ministers to discuss and find tangible ways to make progress on difficult issues under Article 6 in advance of COP-26. They encouraged Ministers to come to the upcoming ministerial consultations prepared to share their key concerns and interests on the three issues and offer concrete ideas on how to address them and find common ground solutions. They highlighted that the facilitating Ministers' role is to listen to the concerns and views of all Parties and work collectively towards finding bridging solutions.

All recognized the need for Article 6 implementing rules to be adopted at COP26, with the incoming Presidency highlighting that this was essential if Article 6 cooperation is to be able to make a meaningful contribution to the first NDC cycle.

Substantive issues

The representatives of the facilitating Ministers outlined the proposed topics. They noted the importance of ministerial engagement to identify landing zones. They cautioned that the options for compromise that were apparent for these issues at CMA.2 in Madrid may not necessarily still be current.

¹ [Information here](#)

Most Heads of Delegation supported the initial focus on the proposed topics. Some Parties considered that other topics (such as the governance structure for the framework for non-market approaches, or overall mitigation in global emissions in cooperative approaches) also merited ministerial level attention, and that the guiding questions for the consultations did not reflect the importance of those topics. The incoming Presidency and representatives of the facilitating Ministers acknowledged that other matters were important and in need of progress, but that the three topics selected had been identified by Parties as those most in need of ministerial level discussion at this time. They also highlighted that they had provided some space at the second session explicitly to enable Parties to raise any other issues or concerns and that the initial focus did not preclude ministerial attention on other issues in due course. They also noted that important discussions on other issues were taking place at the HoDs and technical levels so no issue would be left behind at COP26. The need for balanced progress among the three Article 6 instruments and between adaptation and mitigation was noted by some Parties.

Logistics and organizational matters

In relation to the invitation being aimed at Ministers, the representatives of the facilitating Ministers highlighted that group coordinators and Chairs are invited to consult within their groups to identify which Ministers could attend. It was noted by some Heads of Delegation that the Party may wish to attend but the Minister might not be available. The representatives of the facilitating Ministers clarified that interventions by Ministers would be prioritized and taken before interventions by any Heads of Delegation.

In relation to the organization of the consultations, a number of delegations requested more notice time for future consultations, noting the usually busy schedule of Ministers and the risk as to their availability when notice times are short.

In relation to the need for inclusivity, the representatives of the facilitating Ministers highlighted that group chairs and coordinators could coordinate within their groups to identify Ministers that would attend, ensuring that the discussions were inclusive while also recognizing that not all Ministers would be able to attend due to other commitments. Some Parties expressed concerns that an imbalance could arise between Parties who were able to send Ministers to attend and those who could not.

In relation to the time slots scheduled for the meetings, a number of Heads of Delegation wondered whether there would be sufficient time to hear all views. The representatives of the facilitating Ministers indicated the need for each minister to be brief, and to the point, focused on options that could represent compromise.

In relation to interpretation, the representatives of the facilitating Ministers indicated that while it would not be possible to provide interpretation, participating Ministers could bring their own interpretation if required.

In relation to the choice of time zones for the informal ministerial consultations, it was acknowledged that the times are inconvenient to some, but also that the availability of the facilitating Ministers was a factor in the selected time slots.

In relation to the virtual format, some Parties indicated the format was not conducive to discussions.

The representatives of the facilitating Ministers noted in response to a question that the event was open to be watched by Parties but would not be broadcast to observers.

In relation to the proposed in-person ministerial meeting in late July in the UK, the incoming Presidency indicated that that meeting would cover more than Article 6 of the Paris Agreement and more information would be provided in due course, including in relation to Covid 19 related travel requirements, remote participation and other organizational matters.

In relation to any ministerial level discussions after July, the incoming Presidency and facilitating Ministers would consider progress after July and determine what may be useful to narrow options and find landing grounds at this ministerial level.