

Co-chairs' summary of the Presidencies' informal consultations on the work programme on just transition for discussion of pathways to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement

5 April 2023

As part of our joint effort to support progress towards COP 28 in a transparent and inclusive manner, we, the COP 27 Presidency and the incoming COP 28 Presidency, convened the third in a series of multilateral informal consultations. This consultation took place on 5 April 2023 with an aim to understand Parties' expectations and priorities for the work programme on just transition for discussion of pathways to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement with a view to better facilitating Party engagement in this topic (decision 1/CMA.4, para. 52).

We provided discussion questions and invited the heads of delegation to address them in their interventions while focusing on the elements of greatest importance to them. We were very pleased with the active engagement by Parties and groups of Parties on the topic, which sent a strong signal on the importance of just transition to enable more ambitious actions to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. We are also thankful to the SBI Chair, Nabeel Munir, and the SBSTA Chair, Harry Vreuls, who emphasized the importance of making progress on the work, especially in order to arrive at a draft decision on the work programme under the subsidiary bodies at SB 58 and 59. Below, we provide a summary of responses to each of the three discussion questions.

I. Question 1: What are your expectations regarding the outcome at COP 28 of the work programme as it relates to pathways to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement? How can the work programme enable just transition in a manner that leaves no one behind?

1. Parties emphasized that the work programme should be guided by the Convention, the Paris Agreement, the latest IPCC findings, sustainable development, inclusive growth, energy security, social and climate justice, human rights, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, different national circumstances or local context, and the concerns of the countries with economies most affected in the response to climate change. Parties also emphasized that just and equitable transition encompasses different pathways and should take into account the social and economic circumstances of different countries.

2. Parties viewed the work programme as a space or platform for sharing knowledge, best practices, experience and challenges on undertaking just transition and noted the work programme should promote solutions focused on guiding Parties and non-Party stakeholders in undertaking just transition. There were also some references to using the Nairobi work programme as a model. Some Parties indicated that the work programme should be a multilateral system that reflects a collective effort and serves as a collaboration framework, with developed countries taking the lead to support developing countries to facilitate just transition and that the work programme should not be prescriptive or create additional mitigation action commitments, sectoral benchmarks or reporting obligations beyond those already existing under the Convention and the Paris Agreement.

3. While some Parties indicated that the work programme should support the achievement of the long-term temperature goals of the Paris Agreement, other Parties added that the work programme should support just transition through adaptation goals, transitioning to a resilient economy and means of implementation (mainly finance).

4. Furthermore, some Parties expressed that the work programme should be a joint agenda item at SB 58, including informal consultations for Parties to share views and a contact group, in order to reach a decision on its elements. Some Parties expressed the need for a call for submissions from Parties, non-Party stakeholders and observers, prior to the sessions of the subsidiary bodies, on elements, scope and modalities, including objectives, while other Parties highlighted the importance of the participation of non-Party stakeholders in the negotiation process on this topic, and still other Parties suggested a need for an intersessional workshop with a synthesis report to obtain input on elements, focus and modalities.

5. Parties indicated that work on just transition within and outside the UNFCCC can be strengthened under the work programme, and that tapping into the work of cross-cutting bodies such as the Paris Committee on Capacity-building, the Standing Committee on Finance and the Katowice Committee of Experts on the Impacts of the Implementation of Response Measures can help to operationalize the lessons learned under the work programme.

6. Some Parties proposed that efforts under the work programme should give attention to gender, youth, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities and other groups in the most vulnerable situations, particularly to address social and economic inequalities and to ensure more economic opportunities are made available to these groups of stakeholders who traditionally face systemic barriers to employment. Some Parties also indicated that, in order to be effective, the work programme should be accessible to those undertaking climate actions on the ground, and outcomes of activities under the work programme should be concrete and implementable and should guide Parties and non-Party stakeholders undertaking just transition.

II. Question 2: What are your expectations for the elements, scope and modalities of the work programme?

7. Some Parties indicated that the elements of the work programme should include principles, objectives, scope and modalities (inputs, outputs and institutional arrangements), while other Parties and groups of Parties elaborated these elements as presented below.

A. Objectives of the work programme

8. Some Parties indicated that the work programme should enhance the understanding and implementation of just transition to catalyse climate ambition in a fair and inclusive manner and to help countries maximize the socioeconomic opportunities of the transition and garner social support while minimizing adverse impacts, which could include identifying and removing barriers for just transition at all levels and scaling up support from international communities, supporting economic transitions underpinned by inclusive climate policies and partnerships, sending clear political signals about the importance of just transition, addressing the impacts of a rapid economic shift and supporting a just transition strategy including parameters and indicators to monitor and track progress.

B. Scope

9. One Party proposed the scope of the work programme should be as per decision 1/CMA.4, paragraph 52, which is to discuss pathways to achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement outlined in Article 2, paragraph 1, in the context of Article 2, paragraph 2.

10. Some Parties noted that the work programme should be cross-sectoral and should consider all sectors that are included in the NDCs or cover all sectors of national economies and society, with prioritization to be agreed by Parties. Other Parties noted the importance of focusing the work programme on the energy sector. Still other Parties proposed that the work programme include elements on fairness and inclusiveness, including in the decision-making process, and encompass climate and social justice, also by including elements that address the adverse impacts of climate change and the effects of just transition on lives and sustainable livelihoods.

11. For some Parties, efforts under the work programme can build on work on just transition outside the UNFCCC, including by the International Labour Organization, and inside the UNFCCC, including by operationalizing lessons learned from cross-cutting bodies such as the Paris Committee on Capacity-building and the Standing Committee on Finance.

12. Best practices, experience, challenges and general views from the consultations were the themes and topics that were of interest to most Parties, while recognizing that each Party can face unique challenges. Other specific topics proposed by Parties and groups of Parties include the following:

- a. Structuring national climate investments to support impacted workers and communities and creating economic opportunities, including through social protection instruments;
- b. Ensuring social dialogue and properly addressing intersectional and cross-cutting issues, including gender;
- c. Supporting skills development and training on just transition;
- d. Developing policies to integrate just transition into climate policies as an overall approach with different pathways to just transition;
- e. Ensuring support for low-income or marginalized communities;
- f. Developing policies to help meet the cost of the transition;
- g. Securing equitable access to the benefits of the transition;
- h. Publishing lessons learned from the implementation of a just energy transition partnership initiative.

C. Modalities

13. Parties identified a need for various types of modality such as forums, workshops (including regional workshops) and negotiation meetings under the work programme.
14. Some Parties provided additional specifications on the types of modality, as listed below:
 - a. Joint workshops developed under relevant workstreams, such as the forum on the impact of the implementation of response measures and its Katowice Committee on Impacts, and the mitigation work programme;
 - b. Technical or high-level dialogues and workshops with non-Party stakeholders that can inform the formal process to produce decisions. Parties had different opinions on whether these dialogues and workshops, which could include technical dialogues or regional workshops to bring a regional perspective, would be organized during a session or intersessionally;
 - c. Dialogues and workshops to be delivered in hybrid format (virtual and in-person) to allow wider participation;
 - d. Submissions from Parties and non-Party stakeholders on their experience and programmes in undertaking just transition;
 - e. Existing bodies, forums or other work programmes under the UNFCCC;
 - f. Technical papers.

D. Duration and timeline

15. Many Parties supported operationalizing the work programme at COP 28. Parties expressed differing views on the duration of the work programme, including that the work programme should be time bound with timelines and milestones, or continuous with decisions taken at each session of the COP. Some Parties who supported the latter view indicated a need for taking stock of the work programme or for regular reviews at specified frequencies, including an initial duration of two to three years. Other Parties suggested continuing the work programme until 2027 in order to provide input to the second global stocktake in 2028 or revisiting the design and the continuation of the work programme at COP 30 (2025). Some Parties mentioned the possibility of extending the work programme to 2030 in order to align with the NDC cycle.

E. Institutional arrangements

16. While a few Parties indicated that the work programme should be operated under the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies, one Party referred to the possibility of creating an executive or expert committee for operationalizing the work programme. Some Parties referenced the possibility of recommending decisions under the CMA on the basis of the outputs of the work programme.

F. Outputs

17. Parties expressed a range of proposals on possible outputs of the work programme, including an annual report prepared by the secretariat under the authority of the Chairs of the subsidiary bodies or an annual report prepared by the executive committee of the work programme. Some Parties proposed publishing a final synthesis report at the conclusion of the work programme. On the technical outputs, some Parties proposed developing a toolbox of best practices that Parties can apply to advance just transition in different sectors or publishing technical papers.

G. Annual high-level ministerial round table on just transition

18. Parties emphasized the importance of a high-level ministerial round table on just transition and noted holding the round table annually on the margins of the session of the COP serves as a political signal to encourage countries to push the boundaries of climate action and as an opportunity for Parties to announce or share new policies taken at the domestic level to support and facilitate just transition and to enhance international cooperation, as well as an opportunity to assess progress and give guidance on subsequent work of the work programme. One Party suggested harnessing synergies from the round table on just transition with those from the round table on the mitigation work

programme, and a group of Parties proposed that the first round table focus on opportunities, challenges and pathways and be arranged on the basis of inputs and submissions from Parties and constituted bodies.

H. Non-Party stakeholder participation

19. There was general consensus that the work programme must be inclusive and involve all stakeholders. Some Parties pointed out specific groups of stakeholders that need to be involved and participate in the work programme, such as women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities, experts including from intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, trade unions, private sector stakeholders, members of scientific communities and researchers.

III. Question 3: How do you envisage the role of the work programme in enhancing the implementation of relevant COP and CMA decisions and complementing other relevant workstreams under the Convention and the Paris Agreement?

20. Parties indicated that the work programme should be complementary to, build on and avoid duplication with relevant workstreams under the Convention and the Paris Agreement, but did not elaborate on how this can be achieved.

21. Parties emphasized energy (e.g. energy poverty and phasing down coal), the mitigation work programme, response measures, long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies and financing as relevant workstreams to consider. Some Parties expressed that the relevant workstreams should also include work outside the UNFCCC and the work of non-Party stakeholders. Other Parties expressed that relevant workstreams within and outside UNFCCC should feed into the work programme and that the work programme can feed into the relevant workstreams.

22. Parties noted a close link between the just transition work programme and the mitigation work programme, including as they relate to NDCs and long-term low-emission development strategies, and underlined the need for coordination between the work programmes. Some Parties noted the importance of identifying ways to complement work and prevent duplication with the forum and its Katowice Committee on Impacts, specifically regarding its work on just transition and economic diversification. One Party suggested that the Katowice Committee on Impacts take on any technical work that may result from efforts under the work programme.

23. Some Parties suggested that the outcome of the global stocktake can be an input to the work programme, and the outcome of the work programme can be an input to the global stocktake process. Under the financial processes workstream, Parties mentioned links with the new collective quantified goal on climate finance and the work of Standing Committee on Finance. Parties also referred to links to the workstreams under Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, the global goal on adaptation, loss and damage workstreams and transparency.

24. Among the references to work outside the UNFCCC process, some Parties noted links to the contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC and climate-resilient pathways, as well as the work of the International Labour Organization, including its guidelines for just transition towards environmentally sustainable economies and societies for all.