Framework Convention on Climate Change

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Record of the facilitative sharing of views under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at the UNFCCC Climate Dialogues 2020: South Africa

Note by the secretariat

Abbreviations and acronyms

BUR	biennial update report
CDM	clean development mechanism
CO_2 eq	carbon dioxide equivalent
COP	Conference of the Parties
FOLU	forestry and other land use
FSV	facilitative sharing of views
GHG	greenhouse gas
ICA	international consultation and analysis
non-Annex I Party	Party not included in Annex I to the Convention
SBI	Subsidiary Body for Implementation

I. Background and mandate

1. COP 16 decided to conduct, under the SBI, ICA of BURs from non-Annex I Parties, in a manner that is non-intrusive, non-punitive and respectful of national sovereignty, with the aim of increasing the transparency of the mitigation actions and their effects reported by those Parties.[1]

2. COP 17 adopted[2] the ICA modalities and guidelines,[3] according to which the ICA process consists of two steps: technical analysis of non-Annex I Parties' BURs by teams of technical experts, resulting in a summary report for each Party; and FSV, to which the BURs and summary reports serve as input.[4]

3. Pursuant to the ICA modalities and guidelines, the SBI convened remotely, from 24 to 27 November 2020 at the UNFCCC Climate Dialogues 2020, the ninth FSV workshop, open to all Parties, for the 17 non-Annex I Parties, including South Africa, for which there was a BUR and final summary report by 31July 2020.[5] Interested Parties were able to submit

[1] Decision 1/CP.16, para. 63.
[2] Decision 2/CP.17, para. 56.
[3] Decision 2/CP.17, annex IV.
[4] Decision 2/CP.17, annex IV, para. 3.
[5] The BURs and the summary reports are available at https://unfccc.int/BURs and https://unfccc.int/ICA-cycle3, respectively.

written questions in advance through the secretariat. South Africa received 17 written questions in advance from Australia, Canada, the European Union, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, Switzerland and the United States of America.

4. The workshop, chaired by the SBI Vice-Chair, Yeonchul Yoo, and SBI Rapporteur, Constantinos Cartalis, comprised five sessions and covered the 17 Parties.

5. This FSV record for South Africa summarizes the proceedings and, together with the summary report on the technical analysis of its third BUR,[6] constitutes the outcome of the third round of ICA for the Party.

II. Summary of proceedings

6. On 27 November 2020, South Africa made a brief presentation on its third BUR. The presentation was followed by a question and answer session.

7. The Party was represented by Sandra Motshwanedi from the National Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries of South Africa.

8. In its presentation, South Africa provided an overview of its national circumstances and institutional arrangements, national inventory of anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all GHGs not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, mitigation actions and their effects, support needed and received, and experiences and lessons learned from the ICA process.

9. South Africa presented its nationally appropriate mitigation action pledge under the Copenhagen Accord and nationally determined contribution target under the Paris Agreement, which are to deviate from the level of GHG emissions projected under the 'business as usual' scenario through the 'peak, plateau and decline' scenario by a reduction of 34 per cent by 2020 and 42 per cent by 2025 and to limit its emissions to 398 Mt CO_2 eq and 614 Mt CO_2 eq by 2025 and 2030, respectively.

10. South Africa highlighted that its total GHG emissions in 2015 were 512,383 Gg CO_2 eq (with removals) and that they increased between 2000 and 2015 by 20.2 per cent with removals and 23.1 per cent without removals , owing mainly to the energy sector (79.6 per cent of total emissions without removals) followed by the agriculture sector (9 per cent), the industrial processes and product use sector (7.8 per cent) and the waste sector (3.6 per cent). South Africa explained that the main drivers for the increase in total emissions were increased energy consumption in the stationary energy and transport categories due to population growth, increased economic activity in iron, steel and ferroalloy production and increased amount of waste due to population growth.

11. South Africa presented key policies and measures for achieving its target, including national-level policies and legislation frameworks, such as the nationally determined contribution, carbon tax, sectoral emission targets, company-level carbon budgets, draft regulations for carbon offsets, draft climate change bill, regulatory standards and controls for identified GHG pollutants, GHG pathways, national waste management strategy and green transport strategy; and key sectoral actions and measures such as nationally appropriate mitigation actions and CDM projects in various sectors, a renewable energy programme, an energy efficiency programme and a bus rapid transit system. There are also measures to facilitate cleaner production in industries, improve solid waste management and disposal, support sustainable land-use practices, raise awareness of and promote resource conservation ethics and develop grasslands. The annual emission reduction from the mitigation actions and measures were estimated at 96 Mt CO_2 eq, 101 Mt CO_2 eq, 112 Mt CO_2 eq and 115 Mt CO_2 eq for 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015, respectively. The implemented mitigation actions contributed to estimated emission reductions of 119 Mt CO2 eq in 2015. In addition, South Africa provided information on its involvement in international market mechanisms, including 56 registered CDM projects.

[6] FCCC/SBI/ICA/2019/TASR.3/ZAF.

12. Furthermore, South Africa provided information on barriers, support received and needed, and capacity-building needs. It identified a limited availability of updated information and data, as well as technical issues, regarding the inventory and emission estimates, and a lack of institutional capacity and measurement, reporting and verification system as the main barriers. South Africa reported its support needs primarily for tracking the progress of implementation of its mitigation actions using the *2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories* to prepare its national GHG inventory and preparing its BUR in adherence to the "UNFCCC biennial update reporting guidelines for Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention". The Party received the following international support between 2015 and 2017: (a) multilateral loans of USD 950,000 from the World Bank and multilateral grants of USD 44,429,257 from various donor agencies (Global Environment Facility, USD 42,066,000; Green Climate Fund, USD 380,000; European Commission, USD 1,963,619; and Adaptation Fund, USD 20,000); (b) bilateral support of USD 160,734,349 from various donor countries and agencies; and (c) technical and capacity-building support from various donor agencies for activities related to mitigation assessment GHG expert reviewer training and training on an energy and emissions model (the 2050 Pathways Calculator), as well as courses on energy efficiency and green industrial development. South Africa identified several capacity-building needs for different aspects of GHG inventory compilation, such as research and data gathering, developing and improving country-specific emission factors and producing updated land-use change maps; and mitigation actions such as assessing and tracking mitigation policies and measures.

13. Following the presentation, the following Parties made interventions commending South Africa on its efforts and asked questions seeking further clarification: Australia, China, European Union, Germany, India, Singapore, Slovakia, Switzerland and United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. The questions were related to (a) experiences in introducing carbon tax and progress made so far; (b) progress and effects of the implementation of energy efficiency projects; (c) important factors that supported the introduction of renewable electricity generation in South Africa; (d) challenges and experiences in estimating emission reduction from mitigation actions; (e) advantages and limitations to implementing climate change projects with both mitigation and adaptation aspects; (f) energy balances referred to as a source of activity data; (g) recalculation of emissions; (h) uncertainty assessments for the agriculture, forestry and other land use and waste sectors; (i) limitations with respect to including a GHG inventory calendar year less than four years prior to the date of a BUR submission; (j) ongoing or planned legal arrangements to ensure access to all the data needed for GHG inventory compilation; and (k) the data collection process in energy industries.

14. In its responses to the questions, South Africa explained that there was a great deal of discussion and lobbying with the industries and stakeholders before designing and introducing a carbon tax in the country. Industries and stakeholders had concerns over double taxation and over taxation on top of existing energy and excise duty taxes and loss of jobs while moving away from emission-intensive industry. In order to accommodate these concerns, South Africa assured the industries and stakeholders that the carbon tax serves as an explicit price on emissions, offered the special tax-free allowance of a maximum of 10 per cent for certain sectors and committed to ensuring that the transition to a lower-carbon economy generates more green jobs. South Africa learned from the experience of Chile, Indonesia, Mexico and Singapore in developing and introducing a carbon tax in a country-specific context. The carbon tax officially came into force as recently as 2019 so South Africa is yet to realize its progress and success. Regarding energy efficiency projects, South Africa mentioned that very good progress is being made, but information on actual results achieved could not be presented owing to the limited availability of data.

15. In terms of the advantages of implementing climate change projects that have both mitigation and adaptation components, South Africa explained that it was able to reduce emissions and adapt to climate change at the same time by efficiently and effectively mobilizing international support received. For example, climate change projects in cities are aimed at offering cleaner energy for all inhabitants through various technologies. This is assisting the country to reduce its emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change by ensuring clean energy access for all. With regard to the quantification of emission reductions of mitigation actions, South Africa explained that the 2011 National Climate Change

Response Policy has provided a firm basis for setting up a monitoring and evaluation system to track the Party's transition to a low-carbon economy and climate-resilient society. Consequently, South Africa has been working to develop approaches and methodologies to track the implementation of mitigation actions, quantify their GHG impacts and assess their non-GHG impacts.

16. South Africa developed supporting technical guidelines to assess and track its mitigation policy, strategies and actions, a series of mitigation forecast indicators to quantify mitigation and tracking and an evaluation web portal to collect information and data on mitigation actions. In terms of energy balances, South Africa explained that it is now using a mix of activity data sources, including energy balances prepared by the Department of Energy and other domestically published reports, to prepare its GHG inventory. Accordingly, the Department of Energy and other sources have been cited as sources of data in the reference list of the BUR. Regarding uncertainty assessments, South Africa explained that it could not incorporate uncertainty assessment of the agriculture, forestry and other land use and waste sectors in the 2015 GHG inventory because of the capacity constraints and that uncertainty estimates for these two key sectors will be presented in its 2017 GHG inventory. In term of recent GHG inventory calendar years, South Africa mentioned that it intends to include a GHG inventory calendar year less than three years prior to the date of a BUR submission and plans are in place to avoid challenges that hinder this being done. Regarding legal arrangements for acquiring the data needed for the GHG inventory, South Africa explained that it has regulations on mandatory reporting by industries on GHG emissions on an annual basis. These regulations are helping to formalize institutional arrangements for data collection and flow among various agencies for compiling the GHG inventory.

17. The presentation and subsequent interventions are accessible via the webcast of the workshop.[7]

18. In closing the workshop, the SBI Rapporteur congratulated South Africa for successfully undergoing FSV and completing the third round of its ICA process. He thanked South Africa and all other participating Parties for engaging in the workshop in a facilitative manner. He also thanked the secretariat for its support.

[7] Available at https://vimeo.com/485520651.