

Australian statement – GST Technical Dialogue – Closing Plenary

Australia was pleased to have participated in the third and final technical dialogue of the first global stocktake.

We are grateful to you, to all facilitators and participants including non-party stakeholders, and to the secretariat for their roles in these productive discussions. In particular we welcome the open and consultative way you have conducted the entirety of this first technical dialogue, and the innovative approaches you have used to elicit the technical insights we have heard over the past three sessions.

We also respect the fact that you have used the autonomy that parties have given you in paragraphs 6c and 31 of decisions 19/CMA.1 to conduct this dialogue and deliver the two summary reports received to date in a balanced manner. We expect that you will deliver the synthesis report for this session and the final factual synthesis in a similar spirit, listening to the views of parties but considering these technical matters before us on their own merits and within our mandate from 19/CMA.1 structuring the reports as you see fit.

We look forward to a balanced set of messages in the third summary report and the factual synthesis that will signal Parties to the Paris Agreement are ready and capable to achieve the Agreement's goals under Article 2, paragraph 1(a–c) and 7.1, to deliver ambitious NDCs, and to enhance action in this critical decade in order to keep 1.5 degrees within reach.

For us the key messages have been related by Australia's experts at each of the roundtables and we have provided them in writing. I will highlight just a few overarching themes

- Firstly ambitious post-2030 mitigation commitments will be necessary in the NDCs of all parties whose emissions matter to achieving the long term temperature goals to close the gap towards the achievement of those goals, as well as urgent action in this critical decade, including to peak emissions and achieve rapid reductions thereafter in order to keep 1.5 degrees within reach.
- Secondly, as the IPCC has said, the choices and actions implemented in this decade will have impacts now and for thousands of years. We agree wholeheartedly with AOSIS that for those born today, the extent to which they will experience a more dangerous climate will be determined by the decisions we make right now.
- Thirdly, that as the G77 observed, Means of Implementation are crucial to achieving the goals we have agreed under the Paris Agreement in article 2.1 and 7.1. We believe there are strong processes in our system to work on delivering these goals, including under the NCQG and our work on Loss and Damage. We would also note that in addition to that, 'There is sufficient global capital to close the global investment gaps but there are barriers to redirect capital to climate action. We must address these barriers, including by ensuring our international financial architecture is fit for purpose.

- And finally I would like to underline that climate action is an enabler of sustainable development, and conversely that the severe changes that we will experience above 1.5 degrees will be a significant impediment to parties' development.

I would like to make some observations about the issue of pre-2020 action. We do not see this included under the mandate of the GST or in 19/CMA.1 and don't see the need to capture content about this issue. But I note that there have been some comments by some parties that deserve a response.

Australia is committed to the Paris Agreement, under which all parties have committed to undertaking action on climate change, and which is implemented to reflect equity and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of different national circumstances.

We recognise that under Paris developed countries take the lead by undertaking economy wide absolute emissions reduction targets. We developed our economies during a time when there was no alternative to fossil fuel based energy sources, and when there was little scientific understanding or multilateral consensus on the harm represented by greenhouse gas emissions and the need to address climate change as an international issue.

In that light acknowledge that action under the Paris Agreement owes a significant debt to the work that was undertaken prior to 2020 by parties to the Convention and to the Kyoto Protocol. This action contributed in several different ways to action under Paris, including

- Reduction in developed countries' collective emissions under the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol – meeting their commitment to cut their greenhouse gas emissions by an average of 5 per cent below 1990 level.
- Many countries achieving more ambitious commitments under the subsequent Cancun Agreements and the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol – which will be trued up this year.
- Parties with pre-2020 commitments contributed substantively to our understanding of climate policy implementation, with the pre-2020 period seeing the practical implementation of price and quantity mechanisms, regulatory mechanisms and fiscal approaches, which are there to learn from for all Paris parties.
- Similarly, the development of low- and zero-emissions technologies was incentivised in large part by pre-2020 mitigation measures and investment.
- Finally, the multilateral policy architecture – including transparency, markets and other technical arrangements – was largely developed to facilitate pre-2020 action.

Developed countries alone are not responsible for greenhouse gas emissions. According to the Global Carbon Project, since 1992, shortly after the IPCC's first assessment report concluded that multilateral action was necessary and the UNFCCC Convention was adopted,

parties not included in Annex I to the Convention have been responsible for 57 per cent of CO2 emissions. Annex I countries were responsible for 39 per cent. We also note that this data estimates that for the total incremental warming from CO2, methane, and N2O since 1992, nearly 70% is due to emissions from non-Annex I countries while 30% is due to emissions from Annex I countries.

Of course, those emissions are not equally distributed through either cohort and emissions per capita vary greatly between them. But this is part of the story.

Countries in command of significant economic power have the capacity to make significant contributions to climate action. This is the context in which developed countries take the lead in their mitigation activities. Similarly, countries with reduced economic capabilities, including the LDCs and most SIDS, will continue to require assistance in transitioning to a net-zero world, and in adapting to the effects of the changing climate.

We reaffirm that developed countries take the lead. We have taken the lead since accepting obligations under Article 4 of the Convention, nominating binding targets under Kyoto and committing to take the lead on under Paris.

We do not accept the argument that that there is an unambiguous debt owed by developed countries for actions taken prior to 2020. The picture is not that clear – in terms of the historical responsibility for emissions, or in terms of the impacts of policy, technology and investments that were undertaken during the pre-2020 period.

What this demonstrates is the need for action under the Paris Agreement not on the basis of historical responsibility but on the obligation we have all accepted under the Paris Agreement to act according to our highest possible ambition, based on our common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, in light of our different national circumstances.

We underline the importance of the stocktake getting this right. It will take parties acting in accordance with our highest possible ambition if we are to keep our Paris goals within reach, and thereby safeguard the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

Thank you