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Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change

**Progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi
work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation
to climate change**

Note by the secretariat

Summary

This report provides an overview of the progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change since the thirty-fourth session of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA). It describes the continued engagement of organizations, institutions, experts, communities and the private sector in the activities of the Nairobi work programme, as well as the progress made in implementing the interim activities mandated by the SBSTA at its thirty-fourth session. The report further provides information on the dissemination of outputs produced under the Nairobi work programme and on collaborations that have been catalysed between Nairobi work programme partner organizations and Parties. It concludes with a brief overview of possible next steps.

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I. Introduction

A. Mandate

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), at its twenty-eighth session, requested the secretariat to provide a report for consideration at each of its sessions, starting from SBSTA 29, on progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change.¹

B. Background

2. The overall objective of the Nairobi work programme is to assist all Parties, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS), to improve their understanding and assessment of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change and to make informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures to respond to climate change on a sound scientific, technical and socio-economic basis, taking into account current and future climate change and variability.²

3. Upon completion of the first phase of the Nairobi work programme,³ the SBSTA, at its twenty-eighth session, agreed on further activities for inclusion in the Nairobi work programme, to be implemented by its thirty-third session.⁴

4. In line with decision 2/CP.11, paragraph 6(e), the SBSTA undertook, during its thirty-third and thirty-fourth sessions, a review of the Nairobi work programme. The review took into account the outcomes of the informal meeting of representatives of Parties and organizations and experts to consider the outcomes of completed activities under the Nairobi work programme,⁵ the summary report on the implementation of the second phase of the Nairobi work programme⁶ and the views of Parties and relevant organizations on the effectiveness of the Nairobi work programme.⁷

5. At its thirty-fourth session, the SBSTA encouraged further efforts to assist Parties in improving their understanding and assessment of the impacts of, and their vulnerability to, climate change and in making informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures.⁸ It also mandated the secretariat to carry out interim activities until SBSTA 35⁹ (see chapter II.B below).

6. The progress made between SBSTA 28 and SBSTA 34 in the different areas of work is described in the previous progress reports.¹⁰

¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/6, paragraph 18.

² Decision 2/CP.11, annex, paragraph 1.

³ A summary of the results of the implementation of the Nairobi work programme during that first phase is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2008/12.

⁴ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/6, paragraphs 10–74.

⁵ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/12.

⁶ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/10.

⁷ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.8 and Add.1 and FCCC/SBSTA/2011/MISC.3.

⁸ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 18.

⁹ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 23(a–d).

¹⁰ FCCC/SBSTA/2008/INF.5, FCCC/SBSTA/2009/INF.3, FCCC/SBSTA/2009/INF.5, FCCC/SBSTA/2010/INF.2, FCCC/SBSTA/2010/INF.7 and FCCC/SBSTA/2011/INF.2.

C. Possible action by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

7. In accordance with its conclusions at its twenty-eighth and thirty-fourth sessions, the SBSTA may wish to consider this progress report at its thirty-fifth session.

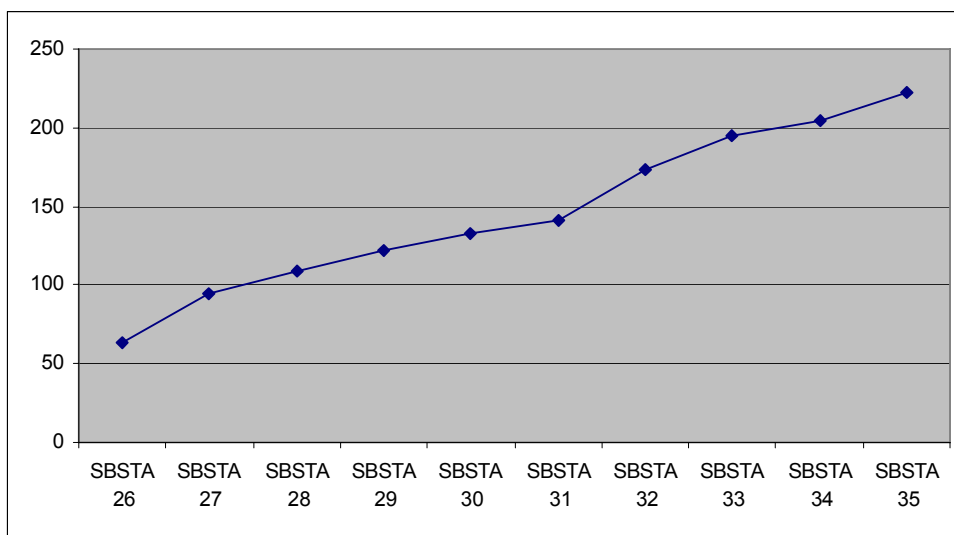
II. Progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme

8. The activities and expected outputs of the Nairobi work programme are structured around the two thematic areas of impacts and vulnerability and adaptation planning, measures and actions, as set out in the annex to decision 2/CP.11, and the nine areas of work identified at SBSTA 25.¹¹ This chapter provides information on the progress made in implementing activities in those areas, including through the engagement of Nairobi work programme partner organizations, on mandated activities carried out since the last progress report and on new publications and outputs that the secretariat has made available.

A. Engaging organizations, institutions, experts, communities and the private sector

9. Engaging organizations, institutions, experts, communities and the private sector is key to the successful implementation of the objective of the Nairobi work programme. Figure 1 illustrates the rising number of partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme over the years, demonstrating a continuously increasing interest in active participation in the work programme’s activities.

Figure 1
Number of Nairobi work programme partner organizations over time



Abbreviation: SBSTA = Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice.

10. Since the publication of the last progress report, the number of partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme, including those from the private sector, has risen from 205

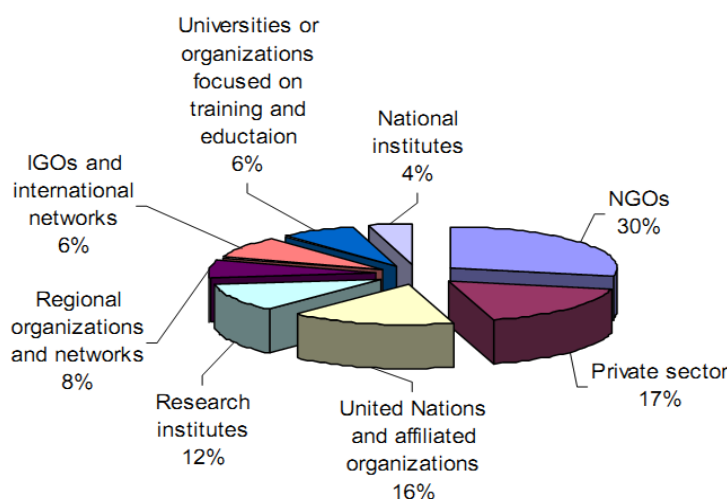
¹¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2006/11, paragraphs 32–71.

to 227 (as at 19 October 2011). The 22 newly joined partner organizations and enterprises are: the Adaptation Partnership; the Adapting to Climate Change in China project; the Association of Climate Change Officers – Adaptation Working Group; the Climate and Development Knowledge Network; the Climate Business Network; the Climate Corporation; Climate Himalaya; Cultura Ambiental; the Fantsuam Foundation; the International Atomic Energy Agency; the International Business Leaders Forum; the International Road Federation; the Kyoto Club; Maplecroft; the Participatory Development Action Program; the Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation; RÉSEAU environnement; SA Environment; Soul City; the Stanford University Center for Integrated Facility Engineering; the Water and Climate Coalition; and the Water Research Commission.

11. The steadily increasing number of partner organizations with different work focuses and organizational and institutional backgrounds ensures that the spectrum of experiences and knowledge gathered under the Nairobi work programme is continuously broadening. Figure 2 provides an overview of the Nairobi work programme partner organizations by category as at 19 October 2011.

Figure 2

Nairobi work programme partner organizations by category as at 19 October 2011



Abbreviations: IGOs = intergovernmental organizations, NGOs = non-governmental organizations.

12. A full list of all partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme can be found in the searchable database of partners and action pledges on the UNFCCC website,¹² which also contains details of adaptation experts nominated by partner organizations. Partner organizations and experts are encouraged to complete their profiles and keep them updated in the database.¹³ In addition, Parties are invited to nominate experts to the UNFCCC roster of experts.¹⁴

13. The success of the Nairobi work programme depends largely on the active engagement of and collaboration among all its partner organizations. Action pledges have

¹² <<http://unfccc.int/5005.php>>.

¹³ This can be done by filling out the respective forms on the UNFCCC website, which are available at <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/nwp_organizations_form> for organizations and at <http://unfccc.int/adaptation/nwp_experts_form> for associated experts.

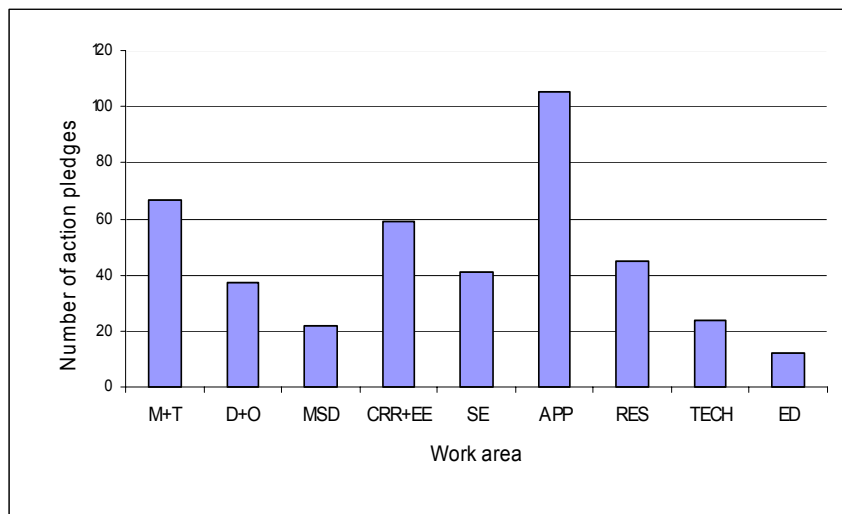
¹⁴ <<http://unfccc.int/534.php>>.

proved to be an effective way for partner organizations to contribute to the implementation of the work programme and to showcase their commitment to carrying out adaptation-related activities towards its objective and expected outcomes. As mentioned in paragraph 5 above, the SBSTA, at its thirty-fourth session, encouraged further efforts, including through action pledges by organizations and the provision of information to the SBSTA on the implementation of those pledges, to assist Parties in improving their understanding and assessment of the impacts of, and their vulnerability to, climate change and in making informed decisions on practical adaptation actions and measures.¹⁵

14. During this reporting period, the number of action pledges has further increased, by an additional 19, with the total number of pledges received to date now amounting to 159 from 69 partner organizations. The following partner organizations have submitted pledges since the publication of the last progress report: the Adapting to Climate Change in China project; the Climate Corporation; the Climate and Development Knowledge Network; the German Committee for Disaster Reduction (four action pledges); the Global Climate Adaptation Partnership; the Global Water Partnership; the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (three action pledges); the International Network for Bamboo and Rattan; the International Union of Railways; the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute; the Participatory Development Action Program; the Programme of Research on Climate Change Vulnerability, Impacts and Adaptation; and the World Bank (two action pledges). Moreover, the secretariat has received updates on the progress made in pledged activities from three partner organizations.

15. More details on all action pledges received to date can be found in the database mentioned in paragraph 12 above. Figure 3 provides an overview of the action pledges submitted by partner organizations, covering all nine areas of the work programme.

Figure 3
Action pledges under the Nairobi work programme by area of work



Note: One action pledge can cover more than one work area.

Abbreviations: APP = adaptation planning and practices, CRR+EE = climate-related risks and extreme events, D+O = data and observations, ED = economic diversification, M+T = methods and tools, MSD = climate modelling, scenarios and downscaling, RES = research, SE = socio-economic information, TECH = technologies for adaptation.

¹⁵ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 18.

B. Interim activities mandated by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice at its thirty-fourth session

16. At its thirty-fourth session, the SBSTA requested the secretariat to undertake the following interim activities under the Nairobi work programme, subject to the availability of resources, until SBSTA 35.¹⁶

1. Conduct a survey of national focal points to identify priority needs for the dissemination of products related to impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change under the Nairobi work programme

17. Following this request, the secretariat contacted all national focal points with an invitation to complete an online survey. The survey consisted of 27 questions and was divided into the following sections:

- (a) Awareness of Nairobi work programme knowledge products;
- (b) Ways to enhance the dissemination of those knowledge products;
- (c) The role of Nairobi work programme partner organizations in disseminating them.

18. Fifty Parties not included in Annex I to the Convention (non-Annex I Parties) and 17 Parties included in Annex I to the Convention fully answered the survey. The overall result of the survey indicates that there is potential for increasing awareness about knowledge products produced under the Nairobi work programme. About 20 per cent of the respondents indicated that they are not familiar with any of its publications and/or knowledge products. Awareness of the existence of the database of Nairobi work programme partner organizations, action pledges and experts also needs to be improved. Some respondents are not aware of the contribution made by the over 200 organizations that are partners to the work programme. Parties do, however, recognize the importance of partner organizations in disseminating the work programme's knowledge products and rank the importance of the database as very high.

19. With regard to the audience for these knowledge products, several Parties pointed out that the Nairobi work programme knowledge products are yet to reach their target audience in their countries. Adaptation practitioners and local communities were identified as audiences for which this is particularly the case. Half of the respondents also affirm that they are yet to identify the target public in their countries.

20. Further feedback received in response to the survey relates to, inter alia, means of disseminating information on the Nairobi work programme to Parties and partners, including suggestions for different channels for different audiences, the need to include the term "adaptation" upfront in the name of the work programme, the availability of its products in different languages, communication between the secretariat, partner organizations and national focal points, and suggestions for the nomination of adaptation focal points by Parties. The full evaluation of the results of the survey will be made available on the UNFCCC website.¹⁷

2. Compile information on ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation

21. The resulting compilation, available as document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/INF.8, presents a synthesis of the state of knowledge on ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation. It provides an overview of the role ecosystems can play in helping people adapt

¹⁶ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 23(a–d).

¹⁷ <<http://unfccc.int/3633.php>>.

to climate change, through the compilation of global examples and relevant knowledge products, and a discussion of issues related to the understanding and implementation of the different approaches. In order to make the global examples of ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation accessible in a user-friendly way, the secretariat has also compiled the descriptions of some of the examples in a web-based knowledge product, available on the UNFCCC website.¹⁸

3. Prepare a technical paper on water and climate change impacts and adaptation strategies

22. The technical paper provides an overview and assessment of the current knowledge on climate change impacts on freshwater resources, as well as of the adaptation strategies undertaken in different parts of the world to adapt to those impacts. The paper draws on existing scientific, technical and socio-economic information available on climate change impacts on freshwater resources and identifies key issues and gaps in designing and implementing adaptation strategies, including the development and proposition of future adaptation plans and policies. The technical paper, contained in document FCCC/TP/2011/5, also takes into account, and is complemented by, information included in the publication referred to in paragraph 24 below.

4. Organize a joint Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice/Subsidiary Body for Implementation in-session workshop to consider the outcomes of the Nairobi work programme, to highlight the scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change most relevant to the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

23. The workshop is scheduled to take place during the thirty-fifth sessions of the subsidiary bodies. More information on this can be found in chapter IV below.

C. Disseminating outputs¹⁹

24. A publication entitled *Climate Change and Freshwater Resources: A Synthesis of Adaptation Actions Undertaken by Nairobi Work Programme Partner Organizations*, which was made available online in July 2011, is now available in print. The Global Water Partnership collaborated with the secretariat in the production of the publication, which synthesizes information on the voluntary contributions of 21 Nairobi work programme partner organizations, demonstrating their commitment to successfully addressing adaptation to climate change. The scope of the information provided in the publication is limited to concrete adaptation actions that address climate change impacts on freshwater resources.²⁰

25. The production of that publication, as well as of the technical paper mentioned in paragraph 22 above, is in line with an agreement made by Parties at the thirty-fourth session of the SBSTA to discuss the impacts of climate change on water resources and integrated water resource management under the SBSTA agenda item on the Nairobi work programme.

26. Another new publication, prepared in response to recommendations made at the informal meeting of representatives of Parties and organizations and experts to consider the

¹⁸ <<http://unfccc.int/6227.php>>.

¹⁹ All publications mentioned in this chapter are available at <<http://unfccc.int/4628.php>>.

²⁰ The scope of the impacts on freshwater resources is based on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change definition, namely climate change impacts on surface water, groundwater, including floods and droughts, erosion and sediment transport.

outcomes of completed activities under the Nairobi work programme,²¹ is entitled *Assessing Costs and Benefits of Adaptation Actions: An Overview of Approaches*. It is intended to serve as a guide, providing an introduction to a range of different assessment approaches, methodologies and case studies. It shares best practices and lessons learned and builds upon activities of and contributions from the Nairobi work programme and its partner organizations. The publication aims to:

- (a) Elaborate on the role and purpose of assessing the costs and benefits of adaptation options in the adaptation process;
- (b) Introduce a range of key methodological issues;
- (c) Explain the most commonly used assessment approaches;
- (d) Describe lessons learned and good practices;
- (e) Provide a glossary of the most commonly used terms;
- (f) Provide a bibliography of useful resources and references.

27. In addition, the Spanish Climate Change Office, as part of the action pledge of the Ibero-American Network of Climate Change Offices (RIOCC) to promote the dissemination of selected material, has made available the Spanish translation of a technical paper reviewing existing literature on the potential costs and benefits of adaptation options (FCCC/TP/2009/2/Rev.1). The translation is available on the UNFCCC website.²²

28. A synthesis publication entitled *Assessing Climate Change Impacts and Vulnerability, Making Informed Adaptation Decisions. Highlights of the Contribution of the Nairobi Work Programme* is currently being updated. A final version will be available on the UNFCCC website and in print before the start of the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa.

29. The web page of the Adaptation Private Sector Initiative (PSI)²³ has been revised in order to facilitate the understanding of private companies of adaptation to climate change. The new page provides information on partnership with the PSI and contains details of what partners are doing to address adaptation issues and information on relevant publications. The secretariat is currently developing an online database of practical business cases and examples of private companies that are delivering goods and/or services to address climate change in vulnerable regions in a sustainable and profitable manner. The first part of the database will be made available before the end of 2011 on the UNFCCC website.

30. The latest eUpdate, which is the regular newsletter sent to Nairobi work programme partner organizations and Parties, was issued in July. The next issue will be made available in November.

III. Catalysing collaboration between Nairobi work programme partner organizations and Parties

31. An informal meeting on the Nairobi work programme took place at the margins of the thirty-fourth session of the SBSTA on 7 June 2011. The new format of the meeting, namely for it to be organized and facilitated by partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme, arose from suggestions made during the last forum of Nairobi work

²¹ FCCC/SBSTA/2010/12.

²² <<http://unfccc.int/3990.php>>.

²³ <<http://unfccc.int/4623.php>>.

programme focal points, held in December 2010. At the invitation of the secretariat, Practical Action and the Institute of Development Studies agreed to organize the half-day meeting of Parties and partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme jointly.

32. The format for the main portion of the meeting was based on the ‘open space’ methodology, encouraging discussion among the Parties and partner organizations in attendance. The meeting was designed and facilitated with the aim of meeting three overarching objectives:

(a) To provide participants with an update on work accomplished under the Nairobi work programme;

(b) To create an interactive space for exchange between Parties and partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme on issues of shared concern;

(c) To co-produce a set of ‘take-home points’ on the basis of the experiences of Parties and partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme.

33. To that end, the following themes were discussed:

(a) The application of climate projections and models for local adaptation;

(b) Measuring adaptation outcomes;

(c) Ecosystem-based approaches to adaptation;

(d) Integrating approaches to national-scale adaptation;

(e) Challenges to getting best practices shared with and taken up by SIDS and the LDCs;

(f) Stimulating better coordination between knowledge service providers.

34. The full report on the meeting is available on the UNFCCC website.²⁴

35. Another positive development in the area of catalysed cooperation is the identification of ‘national disseminators’ by RIOCC for several of its member States (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay). This is in line with the conclusions of the seventh annual meeting of RIOCC in September 2010.²⁵ RIOCC plans to provide capacity-building and awareness-raising to the national disseminators, aimed at strengthening the dissemination and use of technical documents and information products, including web-based resources, made available through the Nairobi work programme at the national level. This new regional pilot initiative could elucidate valuable lessons on how to bring the vast amount of knowledge generated under the Nairobi work programme to the level at which it is most needed and can be used. This could enhance the role of the Nairobi work programme as a possible clearing house mechanism.

36. As announced in the previous progress report, the United Nations Development Programme National Communications Support Programme (NCSP), in collaboration with the UNFCCC secretariat, held a technical workshop to support non-Annex I Parties from the Asia-Pacific region in the preparation of the vulnerability and adaptation (V&A) component of their national communications. The workshop, entitled “NCSP-NWP Technical Backstopping Workshop on V&A Assessments”, took place from 3 to 5 May 2011 in Bangkok, Thailand.²⁶ Representatives of 22 Parties attended the meeting, together with resource persons from several partner organizations to the Nairobi work programme.

²⁴ <<http://unfccc.int/4300.php>>.

²⁵ <http://www.lariocc.net/riocc_principal/es/documentos/archivos/con_riocc/vii_encuentro_riocc.pdf>.

²⁶ See <<http://ncsp.undp.org/event-workshop/workshop-va-assessment-asia-pacific-region>>.

As a result, a useful collaboration between technical experts and Parties was catalysed, which is still continuing beyond the workshop. The collaboration between NCSP and the Nairobi work programme could be replicated in other regions and in the context of implementing other adaptation activities on the ground.

IV. Next steps

37. At its thirty-fourth session, the SBSTA recognized²⁷ the need for the Nairobi work programme to further support work carried out under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and, as appropriate, possible future work of the Adaptation Committee through the provision of scientific and technical information on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change. It recalled the relevant information and advice that was provided to the SBI by the SBSTA at its twenty-ninth session.²⁸

38. The SBSTA also recalled,²⁹ at its thirty-fourth session, that it may provide information and advice on the scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change arising from the implementation of the Nairobi work programme for consideration by the SBI, following consideration by the SBSTA of outputs from preceding activities. In that context, the SBSTA requested³⁰ the secretariat to organize a joint SBSTA/SBI in-session workshop to consider the outcomes of the Nairobi work programme, to highlight the scientific, technical and socio-economic aspects of impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change most relevant to the SBI. The workshop will take place during the thirty-fifth sessions of the SBSTA and the SBI and is currently scheduled to take place on 30 November 2011.³¹

39. Further, also at its thirty-fourth session, the SBSTA agreed³² to consider, at its thirty-fifth session, possible areas of further work on impacts, vulnerability and adaptation to climate change under the Nairobi work programme, including, inter alia, consideration of potential activities as outlined in annex I to the report of the SBSTA on its thirty-fourth session,³³ with a view to defining the duration of and activities for its next phase. To facilitate those considerations, the SBSTA invited³⁴ Parties and relevant organizations to submit to the secretariat, by 19 September 2011, their proposals for upcoming activities under the Nairobi work programme, taking into consideration the above-mentioned potential activities. The proposals are contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2011/MISC.6.

40. The fourth forum of Nairobi work programme focal points will be convened, under the guidance of the Chair of the SBSTA, during SBSTA 35.

41. The next report on the progress made in implementing activities under the Nairobi work programme will be made available for consideration by the SBSTA at its thirty-sixth session.

²⁷ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 21.

²⁸ The information is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2008/13, annex I.

²⁹ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 22.

³⁰ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 23(d).

³¹ This date is subject to confirmation. Please consult the Daily Programme issued during the session.

³² FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 24.

³³ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2.

³⁴ FCCC/SBSTA/2011/2, paragraph 25.