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UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Dialogue on long-term cooperative action to address climate change by enhancing implementation of the Convention

Fourth workshop

Vienna, 27–31 August 2007

Dialogue working paper 15 (2007)

Submission from Australia*

* This submission was submitted on 27 August 2007 and has been electronically imported in order to make it available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the text as submitted.

**Statement by Australia
at the fourth Dialogue workshop**

Vienna, 27-31 August 2007

Co-facilitators,

The exchanges and submissions at this Dialogue workshop and the previous three sessions have proved very valuable in teasing out the essential building blocks of a post-2012 climate change regime.

Australia certainly agrees with the sentiment expressed by many others throughout the previous Dialogue workshops that Annex I Parties must continue to demonstrate leadership on acting to mitigate climate change emissions. For its part, Australia is committed to managing its emissions on a long-term basis. Australia will continue to contribute to addressing global climate change and is tracking well towards its target of 108 per cent of 1990 emissions by 2008-2012. Further, Australia will set a long-term aspirational goal and short- to medium-term trajectories for reducing its greenhouse gas emissions, following detailed, careful economic analysis. Australia will introduce in 2011 and by no later than 2012 a broad-based national emissions trading system as the primary mechanism for achieving our long-term emissions goal.

While Annex-I Parties will continue to show leadership, Australia acknowledges that no effort to reduce emissions in Annex I Parties alone will be successful in meeting the objective of the Convention in the absence of non-Annex I action. Effective action by all major economies to limit global emissions is an essential objective of any genuine long-term and sustainable solution to climate change.

Co-facilitators,

An environmentally robust and effective international response to climate change should be based on the following three principles: it should include all major emitters; it must take account of differing national circumstances; and it must be flexible enough to recognise and facilitate a range of policies to reduce emissions, including market based approaches such as emissions trading, and measures to develop new technologies and promote energy efficiency measures. These three principles need to be at the core of our post-2012 multilateral climate change regime.

Action to curb future emissions from all major emitters is an essential objective of any comprehensive solution to climate change. And Australia supports efforts to develop a global consensus on an appropriate common goal for reducing emissions. In this context we welcome recent positive developments – such as the G8 communiqué and the initiative of the United States to convene a series of meetings of major economies, including Australia, to work together on a common approach towards climate change, including on a long-term global goal for emission reductions, and to feed the results of this process back into our UN deliberations.

Australia expects that the meeting of APEC Economic Leaders in Sydney on 7-9 September will provide valuable political impetus to important upcoming forums, including the UN High Level Event, the Washington meeting and the COP in Bali. APEC comes at a crucial juncture, and we see it as a major step in building a global consensus on the way forward.

Co-facilitators,

Imposing a one-size-fits-all solution on countries is unlikely to be effective, efficient or fair.

An effective multilateral approach must be practical and flexible enough to account for the differences in national interests and circumstances. The approach suitable to post-industrial Western Europe may not be appropriate to rapidly industrialising nations such as China, India and Brazil. What works in Australia's case may not be appropriate in other countries. Countries with different economic and political structures will invariably choose different policy paths. Differences in stage of development, economic growth rates, demography and natural resource endowment should all be accommodated. It is important that we actively support the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of developing nations to reduce poverty and build living standards.

An effective international agreement must recognize and harness the diversity of policy measures that countries can adopt and deploy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, rather than prescribe or favour certain approaches. Such an agreement should also facilitate cooperation between countries across a range of actions with climate-friendly outcomes, including the incremental development of emissions trading markets based on mutual agreement amongst participating countries,.

Co-facilitators,

The Dialogue has proved to be an excellent vehicle for Parties to share views about the way forward on international climate change cooperation. As the mandate for the Dialogue expires at Bali, it is natural that we turn our minds to how best take forward the important contribution that the Dialogue has made to concrete actions.

The natural successor to the Dialogue is for us to agree in Bali on a mandate for the Convention to move beyond Kyoto to forge a comprehensive new agreement post-2012 that leads to a global reduction in emissions. Australia has called for this.

These negotiations should first and foremost seek to address ways in which we can better mobilize and recognise mitigation actions by the major economies. Such actions should be ambitious for all, and include mitigation actions by developing countries that are measurable, reportable and verifiable.

It is crucial that a new negotiating mandate take a comprehensive view of emissions, including both emissions from energy sources and emissions from the land, particularly deforestation.

Co-facilitators,

To be comprehensive, it is desirable that a new negotiating mandate elaborate supporting actions that will provide Parties with additional confidence as they move to put in place enhanced national mitigation policies and measures. Such supporting actions could include the matter of technology development and diffusion; cooperative means to support implementation of policies and measures; impacts of response measures as set out in Articles 4.8 and 4.10 of the Convention; and effective adaptation strategies.

Co-facilitators,

Thank you for your efforts in taking this Dialogue forward over the past two years. Australia looks forward to the successful launch at Bali to a mandate for a new global agreement.

Thank you
