Africa Partnership Forum

SPECIAL SESSION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

Hosted by UN Economic Commission for Africa

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
3 September 2009

Enhanced Action on Mitigation of Climate Change

Contents

This document was prepared for the Special Session of the Africa Partnership Forum on Climate Change, in Addis Ababa on 3 September 2009. It has been shared in draft between the AU Commission, the NEPAD Secretariat, the UN Economic Commission for Africa, and the Support Unit. The final version is issued under the responsibility of the lead institution responsible for the drafting of each paper – in this case the AU Commission.

I. Overall Context

1.1 Introduction

1. According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)[1], in 2004 developed countries listed in Annex 1 to the UN Climate Change Convention held a 20% share in world population, produced 57% of world Gross Domestic Product and accounted for 46% of global greenhouse gas emissions[2]. The 2007 IPCC Report recommended that the international community should aim at limiting temperature increases to 2 degrees if the world is to avoid dangerous climate change impacts. Based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities[3], developed countries that have had the advantage of past growth based on abundant use of carbon, leading to greater infrastructure, technology, human and social capacity[4] should take the lead in greenhouse gas emissions reductions.

1.2 Previous and On-going Initiatives on Mitigation of Climate Change

2. The Kyoto Protocol to the UN Climate Change Convention that was adopted in 1997 and entered into force in 2005 has established innovative mechanisms to assist developed countries to meet their emissions commitments. The Protocol created a framework for the implementation of national climate policies, and stimulated the creation of the carbon market and new institutional mechanisms that could provide the foundation for future mitigation efforts. The first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol within which developed countries included in Annex 1 to the Protocol are to achieve their emission reduction and limitation commitments will end in 2012. The Protocol has an accounting and compliance system for this period with a set of rules and regulations. Developed countries are under an obligation to demonstrate that they are meeting their commitments. Current statistics indicate the 5% reduction target under the Kyoto Protocol for Annex 1 countries appears achievable[5].

3. In addition to stipulating the domestic actions that should be undertaken by development country Parties, the Protocol has mechanisms through which developed countries can achieve their emissions reduction commitments. These include, Emissions Trading, Joint Implementation (JI), and Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). Of interest to Africa is the clean development mechanism which allows developed countries to invest in green projects that reduce carbon emissions in Africa and other developing countries. The credits earned from CDM projects can be purchased and used by industrialized countries to meet a part of their emission reduction commitments under the Kyoto Protocol. However, CDM has, so far, largely by-passed the African continent – partly because of reasons specific to the CDM (e.g. preference for large-volume projects) and partly because of the policy framework and investment conditions in many African countries. While the CDM was initially praised as an opportunity for Africa to achieve sustainable development, it has not worked for Africa. The potential for CDM growth in Africa

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[1] See IPCC, 2007: *Summary for Policymakers. In: Climate Change 2007: Mitigation. Contribution of Working Group III to the Fourth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change* [B. Metz, O.R. Davidson, P.R. Bosch, R. Dave, L.A. Meyer (eds)], Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA at page 3

[2] See also Laila Gohar, 2009 (Met Office Hadley Centre); *Modelling and Assessment of Contributions of Climate Change published at* http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/ad_hoc_working_groups/lca/application/pdf/3_gohar.pdf

[3] See Article 3.1 of the UNFCCC

[4] See Martin Khor, South Centre; *Historical responsibility as a guide to future action on climate change* at http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/ad_hoc_working_groups/lca/application/pdf/2_khor_rev.pdf

[5] See http://unfccc.int/files/press/backgrounders/application/pdf/press_factsh_mitigation.pdf

seems to be further impeded by the continent's low greenhouse gas emissions and the sectoral bias in favour of heavily polluting industries, the development of large-scale CDM projects is more limited. Furthermore, while the Kyoto Protocol allows for the registration of afforestation and re-forestation projects under the CDM framework, current regulations within the European Emissions Trading Scheme (EU-ETS), the world's largest carbon emission credit market, does not allow for the use of emission credits from forest-based projects.

4. The need for capacity building to assist parties especially Least Developed Countries, and Small Islands Developing States to respond to climate change is recognized. In 2001, parties agreed on capacity building frameworks to support developing countries. Parties also agreed to conduct periodic reviews of the capacity building frameworks to address emerging issues. A first comprehensive review of the framework was completed and the second comprehensive review of the implementation of the capacity-building framework in developing countries was initiated in June 2008 and should be completed by COP 15 (December 2009). A report on the review of the capacity building in developing countries is expected to result into, among other things, (i) evaluation of the effectiveness of capacity-building activities in developing countries, (ii) lessons learned and best practices, (iv) future opportunities, challenges and barriers, (iii) possible areas for improvement; (iv) the availability of and access to resources, and the effectiveness of their deployment; and (v) the sustainability of capacity-building activities and the extent of national engagement.

II. Status of Negotiations on Mitigation

5. In 2007, the 13th Conference of Parties to the Climate Change Convention (COP 13) resolved to urgently enhance implementation of the Convention. To achieve this objective, COP 13 launched Bali Action Plan, which identifies seven specific issues relating to mitigation that should be addressed and they include:

- Mitigation commitments or actions by all developed country Parties taking into account differences in their national circumstances;
- Nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing country Parties in the context of sustainable development;
- Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD); and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries;
- Cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions, in order to enhance implementation commitments by all countries so as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Various approaches, including opportunities for using markets, to enhance the cost-effectiveness of, and to promote, mitigation actions, bearing in mind different circumstances of developed and developing countries;
- Economic and social consequences of response measures on climate change; and
- Ways to encourage multilateral bodies, the public and private sectors and civil society as a means to support mitigation in a coherent and integrated manner[6].

6. At the negotiating meeting in June 2009[7], countries expressed divergent views on enhanced action on mitigation. Several developing countries including the African Group and developed countries

[6] See Decision 1/CP.13, *Bali Action Plan*
[7] See IISD Reporting Services, Earth Negotiations Bulletin, *Summary of the Bonn Climate Change Talks: 1-12 June 2009* ; published at http://www.iisd.ca/climate/sb30/

highlighted the need for legally binding emission reduction targets by all developed countries. A number of developed countries stressed the need for mitigation commitments from advanced developing countries.

7. Below is a summary of the contentious issues in the current negotiations on enhanced action on mitigation:

- Whether or not to have legally binding emission reduction targets for all developed countries or only those listed in Annex 1 to the Kyoto Protocol;
- Whether or not to have legally binding emission reduction targets for advanced developing countries;
- The sufficiency of nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs) and whether or not NAMAs should be legally binding;
- Links between developing country mitigation action and developed country financial support;
- Whether or not monitoring, reporting and verification of mitigation actions (MRV) should be voluntary or mandatory; and
- The relative importance of public finances and sourcing from carbon markets to support mitigation actions in developing countries.

III. Africa's Concerns and Expectations[8]

8. The African Group in the climate change negotiation process has proposed the following key measures to achieve enhanced action on mitigation:

(i) ***Mitigation commitments by developed countries:*** Mandatory quantified emission reduction commitments should be established for all developed country parties. The emissions reduction commitments should be absolute, and be verified for compliance. Mitigation commitments by developed country Parties as a group must be at the top of the range indicated by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) in order to achieve the lowest stabilisation levels assessed by the IPCC in its 4th Assessment Report. The aggregate number should apply to all developed country parties, regardless of whether they have ratified the Kyoto Protocol or not. It is proposed that in numerical terms; developed countries listed in Annex I Parties to the Protocol should undertake to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2020 and at least 80% to 95% below 1990 levels by 2050, so as to make a meaningful and fair contribution to achieving the lowest level of stabilisation assessed by the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report.

(ii) ***Mitigation actions by developing countries***: It is proposed that the extent of developing countries' mitigation efforts should depend on support by developed countries. Developed countries should provide finance, technology and capacity-building to developing countries to facilitate monitoring, review, and verification of mitigation actions. It is further proposed that by 2020, scale of financial flows to support mitigation in developing countries should be $ 200 billion (0.5% of GDP of Annex II Parties). In order to demonstrate measurable, reportable and verifiable progress towards the targets for support, developed country Parties should be obliged to report, in their national communications, financing and technology transfer to developing countries in their national communications.

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[8] Most of the material in this section has been obtained from the submission made by Algeria to the UNFCCC on behalf of the African Group in April 2009 available at http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2009/awglca6/eng/misc04p01.pdf

(iii) ***Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs):*** It is proposed that NAMAs by developing countries will be reportable through national communications (if done with own resources) or in a separate registry for those with multi-lateral, measurable, reportable and verifiable support. The African Group has stressed that developing country action must be conditional on technology, financing and capacity-building by developed countries. In order to demonstrate measurable, reportable and verifiable progress towards the targets for support, each developed country Party should report in its national communications the nature of financing and technology transfer to support mitigation actions extended to developing countries. The application of "verifiable" to unilateral mitigation actions by developing countries must be differentiated from those that are supported internationally. For actions with own resources, verification should be by national entities working with international guidelines. For multi-laterally supported actions, verification should be through the UNFCCC

(iv) ***REDD-Plus Mechanism****:* It is proposed that a REDD-Plus mechanism should be designed in such a way as to accommodate different national circumstances and respective capabilities. Adequate, predictable and sustainable funds from a variety of sources, including global carbon markets, are vital for the provision of incentives at the kind of scale that is necessary for reducing emissions in Africa and globally.

IV. Recommendations to Parties

9. In order to move forward the discussions on mitigation of climate change, it is recommended that parties should consider the following:

African Countries:

- Strengthen regional and national institutional frameworks to tap into opportunities presented by global mitigation efforts of climate change.
- Push for the expansion of eligible categories of activities to benefit from carbon credits and other international incentives in a post-2012 climate treaty. This should embody sustainable land management, including sustainable agriculture, forest management, afforestation and reforestation. In short, an AFOLU approach to carbon sequestration.
- Push for the simplification of methodologies for sectors with high potential in Africa: This should include simplified rules for determining baselines, monitoring carbon emissions, enforcing offsets and broadening the range of eligible projects to include avoided deforestation and soil carbon sequestration.

Developed Country Parties:

- Adopt mandatory emissions reduction commitments for all developed countries including those not parties to the Kyoto Protocol.
- Ensure a climate change deal that provides predictable and sustainable international finance to support mitigation bearing in mind that developed countries are obliged to do so under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
- Make funding and policy support for reduced emissions from deforestation, forest degradation and other land uses, including agriculture and rangeland management in developing countries (including through South-South cooperation) an integral part of the new climate agreement, given its vital role in global emission reductions.