

Norway

Views on the SBI work programme on further understanding the diversity of the nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing countries

May 2013

The importance of the work programme on understanding the diversity of the mitigation actions of developing countries

- Norway welcomes the outcome in Doha with the establishment of a work programme under the SBI, to continue the process of understanding the diversity of the mitigation actions of developing countries for 2020. This process is of key importance to our work, and should be given high priority. The pledges for mitigation action and targets, from both developed and developing countries, are a cornerstone of the international climate effort up to 2020. These pledges were put forward by national governments up to and after COP15. They represent considerable political will and commitment to combat climate change.
- Further clarification of the mitigation targets of all Parties is important in order to reduce uncertainty about the emissions gap to the two degree target. According to the UNEP gap report, the uncertainty around the emissions gap is between 6 and 13 Gigatonnes. While emission reduction targets for developed countries are based on economy-wide emission reductions relative to a historical base year, the mitigation actions of developing countries vary considerably, and it is a greater challenge to understand them.
- The emission reduction targets both under the Kyoto Protocol and the Convention are set for 2020. The period between now and 2020 is highly important for the two degree target, and we are currently not on track. The possibility of increased ambition from Parties is very much influenced by insight into the actions others are taking. Further clarification of the mitigation pledges will give increased transparency and build trust in this regard. Increased trust and transparency are also key factors in the efficient provision of support.
- The SBI work programme on understanding the 2020 mitigation actions in developing countries should explore a variety of approaches to defining and implementing mitigation actions, according to national circumstances. Technical and in depth discussions of the scope and content of the different pre-2020 actions can give very valuable insights with respect to how mitigation commitments should be defined in the 2015 agreement, and what kind of common accounting rules and frameworks are needed.
- Many developing countries will need support to facilitate the full implementation of their mitigation actions. Provision for support can happen in a variety of ways, and will need to be resolved between those responsible for actual implementation and a relevant financial institution or donor. The work programme, building on experiences gained, should help and promote the effective and timely provision of support, through enhanced understanding of the mitigation actions themselves as well as practical and concrete discussions on what kind of support is needed. These insights should be taken on board as we develop a more comprehensive climate regime.

Suggested structure for the SBI work programme

The work programme decided in Doha for developing country Parties aims to further the understanding of the diversity of the mitigation actions included in document FCCC/AWGLCA/2011/INF.1 as well as subsequent information provided in later documents. These are the mitigation pledges for 2020 from developing countries, and constitute a substantial part of the pre 2020 mitigation efforts under the Convention. The work programme should facilitate the preparation and implementation of those actions. In our view, the last element of the work programme, the extent of matching under the registry, is not yet mature for discussion as the registry is still not fully operational.

We therefore suggest to start with the two first parts of the work programme – more information about the actions themselves, and information on the needs for support to specific actions and support available. We would welcome information on the extent of matching under the registry, as soon as this information is available.

1) More information relating to nationally appropriate mitigation actions

The pledges for mitigation action by 2020, submitted in 2010 by national governments, are often formulated as an aggregate ambition or goal. The information asked for in this work programme should keep to the same aggregation level and not go into detail of every aspect of implementation.

We would foresee a systematic overview of what is included in the various mitigation pledges that countries have put forward. We need to know not only the diversity of these goals, but also the scope and basis for the pledge that a country has made. This should include:

a) Basic information on the scope and coverage of the mitigation pledge, in terms of sectors and gases, base years, GWP values.

A first step is to have clarity on what the mitigation pledges actually cover. A simple overview in the form of tables or lists would be sufficient and highly useful. A starting point for the work programme could be to explore how this information can be put together in a more systematic way, covering all the actions listed in FCCC/AWGLCA/2011/INF.1. During 2013, submissions from Parties on these elements would be highly useful.

b) Assumptions around business as usual projections, for mitigation pledges that are defined in this way

Mitigation goals defined as deviations from business-as-usual projections are crucially dependent on the assumptions made in a BAU scenario. It is therefore important to build trust through international transparency on what the business-as-usual projection is. Information on key assumptions, such as population growth and GDP growth, could help increase transparency. Moreover, as projections usually are based on modelling, which can be done in different ways and that will have some inherent uncertainty, transparency on methods and models used would be helpful. Transparency with regard to what policy actions are included in the business-as-usual projection is also important. Base year inventory of emissions, covering the scope of the pledge, will be necessary. Presentations by experts and national governments, on their approach, would be useful to start a more technical discussion on the implications of different assumptions around BAU baselines, as well as uncertainties.

c) Values for GDP and CO₂ emissions in base years, for intensity targets

Some Parties have goals of reducing the emission intensity, in terms of reduced emissions of CO₂ per unit of GDP. In order to understand progress reports on achieving these goals, values

on GDP (level) and CO₂ in the base years need to be known, as well as the coverage in terms of sectors/emission sources. Projections of the GDP growth up to the target year would be necessary. Projections on CO₂ would also be highly useful.

d) Estimating the mitigation outcomes

The estimated mitigation outcome would be the ex ante emission reduction resulting from the implementation of the pledges. It is of key interest to our process to estimate this in forehand, to the extent possible. To be able to estimate the emission reduction, basic information on the scope and extent of the pledge needs to be known, as well as assumptions on what we are measuring against e.g. business-as-usual or historical emissions. The uncertainty about the estimated mitigation outcome could be large, in particular for some kinds of pledges.

However, clarification on key assumptions could reduce uncertainty. With less uncertainty we could look at how implementation can be enhanced. Sharing of experiences on how emissions are estimated for reduces deforestation and forest degradation through REDD+, could also be valuable for countries engaged in other types of mitigation action.

2) Information on the needs for support to specific actions and support available

- Under this part of the work programme, it will be useful to have a discussion on how international support best can promote and enhance nationally appropriate mitigation actions. We should strive for ambitious implementation of pledges, and would like to discuss how that can be achieved. Conditionalities need to be understood better, including the need for support. Under this work programme, we should seek coordination with ongoing work under the Technology Mechanism, which is becoming operational and which should play a key role in providing concrete support for planning and implementing mitigation actions, based on national demand. A presentation from the Technology Committee and the Technology Centre on their work would be useful.
- A key perspective is that mitigation actions need to be anchored in regular national strategies and policies. Mitigation should not be viewed as a separate set of actions. It is integrated in all policy decisions and it is about making different investments from business as usual. Investments will be made in the energy sector, the transport sector, in industry and agriculture - mitigation is about making those investments climate friendly.
- Most climate friendly investments in have incremental costs. Some options, however, are both profitable and cost-efficient, such as certain measures to increase energy efficiency. Other measures have important co-benefits. We would welcome a discussion around the differences between these kinds of investments. Moreover, more discussion on how different ways of support can be more targeted would be helpful. Understanding which finance instruments or support mechanisms that can fit the actions in question, is important to make progress.
- Furthermore, some barriers are not related to finance such as information and administration costs, and coordination and planning. Sharing experiences could be done through workshops, invited expert briefings, and question and answer sessions.
- We would also welcome a workshop to share experiences on arrangements for payment for verified results, which is currently being used too finance implemented for REDD+ activities interventions by Governments in a number of countries. For developing countries, results-based approaches can increase the predictability of

climate finance, allowing them to pursue low emission development strategies. Furthermore, results-based finance may lead to more openness about the impact and effectiveness of climate finance, helping developed country governments justify their international climate finance to domestic constituencies in a time where public budgets are under pressure.

Timeline and suggestions for progress in 2013

In 2013, we suggest that the work programme starts along the structure outlined here, and that meetings are planned with distinct topics for discussion. A workshop with expert presentations on approaches to develop business-as-usual projections, assumptions and methodologies, would be very useful. Also, an overview of the IPCC systematic approach to defining/ delineating sectors as the basis for estimating emissions would be helpful, to have a better common understanding of the issue of scope.

The work programme should deliver a progress report by COP19. Elements for such a progress report could be to sum up the elements of clarification that have been discussed in greater detail, and an updated overview of the pledges. It should also outline issues for further work, in 2014.