



Paris work programme to be coherent and balanced

14 May, Bonn (TWN) — The UNFCCC's Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA), one of the main bodies responsible for enabling the implementation of the Paris Agreement (PA), adopted [conclusions](#) at its closing plenary on 10 May, the last day of the climate talks in Bonn, Germany.

The conclusions reiterated the need to progress on all items of the Paris Agreement Work Programme (PAWP) “in a coherent and balanced manner” and ensure coordination between the APA and the other two subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) and the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) (which are also responsible for carrying out tasks related to the PAWP.)

Throughout the Bonn talks, which began on 30 April, developing countries emphasized on the need for balanced progress on all the elements of the PAWP (*See TWN Updates 2 and 7 in this regard*). They were especially concerned that adaptation and finance related issues were lagging behind.

(While developed countries were primarily preoccupied with progress on the mitigation contributions of Parties, the transparency framework and market mechanisms, developing countries put emphasis on finance, technology transfer and capacity-building issues, as well as on adaptation. Some countries also stressed the need to advance work on ‘loss and damage.’)

(The Bonn talks also revealed that an unsettled issue is what exactly is the PAWP and what are decisions that must be adopted at the first meeting of Conference of Parties to the PA [CMA 1] to be held in Katowice, Poland in Dec. this year. The **G77** and **China** had called

for “a holistic package approach” and that this must include aspects related to ‘modalities for biennially communicating finance information on the provision of public financial resources to developing countries in accordance with Article 9.5 of the PA. Developed countries on the other hand have argued that there is no mandate from Paris for any modality in this regard.)

In the conclusions adopted by the APA the Co-chairs were requested “to coordinate closely with the Chairs of the SBSTA and the SBI to work towards a comparable level of progress and preparedness with respect to all PAWP items.” The APA Co-chairs are **Sara Bashaan (Saudi Arabia)** and **Joe Tyndall (New Zealand)**.

In addition, the APA requested its Co-Chairs to consider a “joint-reflections note”, with the Chairs of the SBI and SBSTA, addressing progress made on the PAWP elements, and which would also propose ways forward. (So far, the practice of issuing a ‘reflections note’ was limited to only the APA Co-chairs.). According to the conclusions, the joint-reflections note should be available by mid-August 2018.

A key agreement reached by the APA was for the Co-chairs, to prepare by 1 August 2018, “tools” that “are additional to and based on the informal notes” towards the “development of an agreed basis for negotiations”.

(The APA conclusions contain, in an addendum, all the [informal notes](#) prepared by co-facilitators on the various agenda items on nationally determined contributions (NDCs), adaptation communication, transparency framework for action and support, global stocktake, compliance, Adaptation Fund and

further matters related to implementation of the PA. Work on these matters happened in informal consultations during the Bonn session, where Parties further engaged with each other and in clarifying options and their understanding of issues, so as to enable the next steps towards producing a text for the basis of negotiations.)

Before agreement was reached on the additional “tools” to be prepared, divergent views were expressed on what mandate should be given to the Co-chairs to facilitate deliberations for the forthcoming negotiations.

In the first iteration of the APA’s draft conclusions, the Co-chairs had proposed three options on how to advance further work. Option 1 proposed that the Co-chairs would “streamline the outcome of the APA at this session;” option 2 proposed that the Co-chairs would propose examples of how Parties could further progress towards the development of either a draft elements text or an agreed basis for negotiations on the outcome of the APA work, while option 3 was that the Co-Chairs would prepare draft elements of text on the outcome of the work of the APA.

Parties expressed a range of views. The **Umbrella Group (UG)** led by **Australia**, wanted the Co-chairs to further develop “materials” and emphasized the need to continue work based on the text built at the Bonn session while the **Environment Integrity Group (EIG)**, led by **Switzerland**, wanted to give the strongest mandate to the Co-chairs to do the work needed. The **European Union (EU)** said it “leaned towards” option 3, which was to give the mandate to the Co-chairs to draft elements of text.

Maldives for the **Alliance of the Small Island States (AOSIS)** said the group was ready to engage with “text”, which should capture all Parties’ views. **Gabon** for the **Africa Group** said it was in favour of option 2 while **Ethiopia**, for the **Least Developed Countries (LDCs)** said the Co-chairs should streamline the outcomes of the session and prepare an informal document in the form of “draft elements of text for consideration.” **Chile** for the **Independent Alliance of the Latin America and the Caribbean (AILAC)** was in favour of a combination of options 1 and 3 while **Argentina**, for **Argentina, Brazil,**

Uruguay (ABU) said it preferred the option 2.

Iran, for the **Like Minded Developing Countries (LMDC)** stressed that the best approach would be to keep the process “Party-owned and Party-driven” and for the Co-chairs to provide Parties their reflections on how the discussions had been at the Bonn session, and what needs to be done to move the process forward in a balanced and comprehensive manner, “while keeping the informal notes as is at the conclusion of our session here in Bonn”.

It added that at the next session, “we can re-start our negotiations on the various agenda items on the basis of these informal notes,” adding further that the Co-chairs together with the Co-facilitators could produce “additional tools that Parties can use to keep our process moving forward while ensuring that the process remains Party-owned and Party-driven.”

Iran said further that any tool that sought to streamline the contents of the informal notes should ensure that all options expressed by Parties are kept and not removed and the streamlining should be mechanical and focused on removing duplicative texts. “There should not be any insertion of views, perspectives, or options, nor any rewording of such, that otherwise were not previously in the informal notes. If the level of maturity reflected in the informal note for an agenda item shows a delicate balance achieved that any streamlining might upset, such streamlining should not be done. Any streamlined text or document that might be produced inter-sessionally under option 1 should not be taken to mean as becoming automatically the basis for negotiations, unless Parties engaged in that particular agenda item agree that it can be so.”

After further deliberations, the APA decided that its Co-Chairs would prepare, by 1 August 2018, “tools that are additional to and based on the informal notes...including proposals for streamlining the outcome of the APA at this session and examples of how Parties could further progress towards the development of an agreed basis for negotiations, taking account of the level of maturity and delicate balance achieved to date for individual items. The streamlining should not imply the insertion or deletion of substantive concepts and textual

narratives.”

The APA also agreed on conducting a one-day roundtable focused on “substantive linkages” and noted the utility of “expanding the focus of the round table to address linkages to the PAWP items outside the APA mandate, and requested its Co-chairs to consult on this with the Chairs of the SBSTA and the SBI”. The roundtable is open to Parties only.

Another issue that got considerable attention was the issue of submissions. In the first iteration of the draft conclusions, the APA had invited Parties to submit their views on areas of work of the APA, which need particular attention in the light of the progress made at the Bonn session to facilitate further work.

However, several groups of Parties, including the **UG, EIG, EU**, said there was no need for further submissions from Parties. Following the exchange, the Co-chairs proposed removing the paragraph on submissions. Objecting to the removal of the paragraph, **Gabon** for the **African Group** stressed that Parties had the right to submit and if a Party chose to submit proposals, these should be attached to the informal notes of the May session and included in the work for the forthcoming session.

(During the Bonn climate talks, developing countries had put forth submissions in the form of conference room papers on matters related to finance but developed countries refused to consider these as the basis for discussions. See TWN Update 5 for more on the matter.)

A long discussion ensued but developed countries maintained their objection to submissions. After several rounds of language formulations, the APA agreed that “...at this stage in the negotiations it will be important to ensure all options identified by Parties remain on the table, recalling the right of any Party to make submissions to be considered under the relevant agenda items”.

The next stop to advance further work in the run up to Poland would be Bangkok, where Parties agreed to an additional negotiating session to be held from 3-8 September, to advance negotiations on the PAWP, which will see the resumption of the meetings of the APA, the SBI and the SBSTA.

(Edited by Meena Raman)