



Parties clash over future of the mitigation work programme

New Delhi, 23 June (Radhika Chatterjee): Only a procedural conclusion was adopted on the 'Sharm-el-Sheikh Mitigation Ambition and Implementation Work Programme' (known as Mitigation Work Programme or MWP) at SB64 in Bonn, Germany, as the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) "could not conclude considerations of this matter at this session."

Throughout the Subsidiary Bodies (SB) sessions, Parties engaged in very tough negotiations over ten informal consultations, presided over by Co-facilitators **Ursula Fuentes (Germany)** and **Maesela John Kekana (South Africa)** mainly over how the MWP should continue.

In order to advance work, the Co-facilitators produced draft conclusions towards the end of the negotiations and also produced an [informal note](#) to capture discussions and a '[non exhaustive reflection of the exchange of views](#)' under their own responsibility. They said that both the informal note and the non-exhaustive reflection of the exchange of views had "no formal status". However, this informal note and non-paper were rejected by Parties in advancing further work. exchange of views was a document that was supposed to reflect the views exchanged by Parties in response to [three guiding questions](#) that

had been shared to facilitate discussions during SB64. These included:

1. "How can a range of topics under the scope of the MWP be addressed most effectively over the course of its duration with a view to achieving its objective?"
2. How to improve modalities of the MWP to better facilitate implementation of concrete actions, including through more effective engagement of experts, practitioners, financiers and project developers?
3. How do you see operationalization of linkages with other processes and workstreams under the UNFCCC with a view to strengthening effectiveness of the MWP, including, inter alia, the Financial Mechanism, the Technology Mechanism, capacity-building, the Non-Market Approaches Platform, Global Stocktake, Global Climate Action Agenda?"

A final version of [draft conclusions](#) were proposed by the SB Chairs on the last day of the SB64, which was also not agreed to by Parties.

The main point flashpoint among Parties was over how discussions related to the continuation of the MWP would be framed i.e. whether it be prescribed by "safeguards" such that the

outcomes will be “non-prescriptive, non-punitive, facilitative, respectful of national sovereignty and national circumstances, take into account the nationally determined nature of nationally determined contributions (NDCs) and not impose new targets or goals.” These “safeguards” are from contained in para 16, decision 13/CMA.7 from Belem.

Several developing countries like the **Like-minded Developing Countries (LMDC)**, the **African Group (AG)**, and the **Arab Group** wanted para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 to frame the MWP’s continuation, while others like **European Union (EU)**, the **Independent Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Nations (AILAC)**, and **Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS)** did not want that approach.

In fact, **AILAC** and **AOSIS** wanted the discussions to be framed by para 1 of decision 4/CMA.4 on the objective of scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation. More specifically, they did not want any kind of “safeguards” that are contained in para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 to apply in discussions related to the future work of MWP at SB65 to be held in Antalya, Turkiye at COP31. **AILAC** stressed the need for “further safeguards” to the “safeguards”. [See interventions below for details.]

[The relevant part of para 13 of decision 13/CMA.7 reads: “...the work programme’s objective is to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade, that its continuation shall be operationalized through focused exchanges of views, information and ideas, and that the outcomes of the work programme will be non-prescriptive, non-punitive, facilitative, respectful of national sovereignty and national circumstances, take into account the nationally determined nature of nationally determined contributions and not impose new targets or goals;”

The relevant part of para 1 of decision 4/CMA.4 reads: “Confirms that the objective of the work programme for urgently scaling up mitigation ambition and implementation referred... shall be to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation in this critical decade in a manner that complements the global stocktake;”]

Other key areas of divergence included issues related to the scope and modalities of the MWP, in light of improvements to the programme and its continuation.

The contention over the scope of the MWP centred around the issue of whether or not there should be a linkage of the MWP to the outcomes of the first global stocktake (GST1), particularly its mitigation section which has goals related to energy transition and halting deforestation). At the heart of the matter is the question of whether MWP should act as a vehicle of monitoring and implementing GST1 outcomes, and if it should impose any mitigation targets in a top down manner.

On the modalities, divergences hinged around questions of whether there should be a technical expert group/committee constituted under the MWP, what should the timeframe of MWP be, if Parties agreed to continue it, the manner in which topics for future global dialogues are selected, and the kind of improvements that were needed in the investment focused events and pitch hub events to facilitate implementation of mitigation projects in developing countries. (See related [TWN update](#) for details.)

Parties were unable to find consensus at the final informal consultation held on the concluding day of SB64. Following which SBI Chair, **Julia Gardiner (Australia)** and SBSTA Vice Chair, **Carol Franco (Dominican Republic)** convened consultations at the level of heads of delegations (HODs) behind closed doors.

According to sources, Parties were invited to these consultations to consider draft texts related to Global Goal on Adaptation, Response Measures and the MWP on “take it or leave it basis.” Parties were asked whether the draft conclusions for the MWP as produced by the Co-facilitators were acceptable to them or not. It is learnt that while **LMDC** expressed its willingness to go ahead with the draft conclusions, the **EU** asked for opening of the text in relation to the “safeguards” as discussed in the morning. [The EU was referring to **AILAC**’s proposal of including “further safeguards” on the “safeguards” to ensure that para 16 does not guide discussions on the continuation of MWP.]

The **Arab Group** on the other hand expressed

concerns about the linkage of the MWP to the GST in the informal note produced by the Co-facilitators. Finally, the SB Chairs proposed a procedural conclusion on the MWP agenda, due to lack of agreement amongst Parties on the draft conclusion text.

BRIEF HIGHLIGHTS OF INTERVENTIONS

Egypt for the **LMDC** emphasised the need to include a reference to para 16 of the Belem decision in the draft conclusions text. It expressed its disagreement with the non-exhaustive reflections note and said it found the note to be biased. Elaborating further, it said the reflection note “includes issues which are outside of the mandate of the MWP, which should not be discussed under the MWP. If we go into this route, we can bring in issues we consider them relevant to the mandate (for example definition of mitigation pathways based on common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) and historical responsibility, the need for support under Article 9.1 of the Paris Agreement and unilateral trade measures and the list continues).”

It also expressed frustration about the views of three major developing country groups not being fully reflected in the non-exhaustive reflections note of the Co-facilitators. It pointed out that these groups, comprised of the LMDC (24 countries with a total population of 4.5 billion), African Group (54 countries with a total population of 1.58 billion) and Arab Group (22 countries with a total population of 500 million), had repeatedly said MWP should not be implementing GST1 outcomes as that was outside MWP’s mandate, and yet it was not included in the reflection note.

It also said that there is a fundamental difference amongst Parties regarding the issue of what lies inside and what lies outside the mandate, and proposed that Parties should first come to an agreement on this point before continuing further discussions.

At the closing plenary, **China** for the **LMDC** said a lot of groups had demonstrated “their maximum flexibility on many issues” despite having serious concerns. It said if Parties could accumulate this positive element together, it could pave the way for

Antalya. It said at SB64 there was common ground about the fact that no one wants to reopen decisions that were adopted in Belem. It pointed out that “no one is against mitigation implementation and ambition. We would like to increase ambition, accelerate the implementation” with the required support and enablers. It highlighted various ideas like the digital platform, improvement of investment focused events and conducting the global dialogues in a more efficient manner that constituted different aspects of MWP related discussions.

The **Arab Group** expressed concerns at “a growing tendency to frame the MWP primarily as an ambition-raising exercise rather than an implementation-focused platform. The ambition discussion is not new. Parties have already communicated their NDCs. Parties have already set out their national commitments, priorities and pathways. The question before us is therefore not whether more political signals or targets are needed. The question is how to support the implementation of commitments that Parties have already made. It said further that for many developing countries, including in its region, the challenge is not the absence of ambition. The challenge is translating commitments into action while addressing realities such as water scarcity, desertification, food security concerns, energy access, economic diversification, growing populations and broader sustainable development priorities. This is precisely why Parties agreed to establish the MWP as a facilitative platform focused on implementation. Its purpose was not to renegotiate ambition, prescribe pathways, or generate political messages. Rather, it was established to facilitate focused exchanges of views, information and ideas, and to improve understanding of opportunities, challenges and barriers to implementation, with a view to supporting Parties in delivering their NDCs in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.”

Adding further it said, “if we are serious about implementation, we should be asking why the longstanding gaps in finance, technology development and transfer, and capacity-building continue to persist. We should be asking why barriers to implementation remain unresolved. We should be asking why developing countries are

repeatedly being asked to do more while many of the commitments that would enable implementation have yet to be fully delivered.” It said the success of the MWP should “be measured by whether it helps Parties implement existing commitments, not by whether it generates new political messages targets and goals or scaling up ambition.”

It shared concerns about the focus on “targeting particular energy sources rather than addressing emissions. Such approaches risk oversimplifying a highly complex challenge and overlook the different national circumstances, development priorities and starting points of Parties. For many developing countries, climate action must be pursued alongside energy security, poverty eradication, economic development, industrialization and access to affordable energy. Ignoring these realities does not strengthen implementation; it makes implementation more difficult. The Paris Agreement recognizes that Parties will pursue nationally determined pathways reflecting their own circumstances. Attempts to promote a single pathway, a single technology, or a singular focus on specific energy sources fail to reflect this diversity of circumstances and risk undermining the balanced approach to sustainable development embedded in the Convention and the Paris Agreement.”

The **African Group** asked for the inclusion of reference to para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 in the draft conclusions. It asked for the inclusion of caveat related to the informal note in the draft conclusions [it was referring to the caveat related to the draft conclusions not prejudging the draft decision that would be considered and adopted at SB65.]. It also expressed a preference for not having any intersessional workshops ahead of COP31. It did not agree to including the reference to the non-exhaustive reflection note in the draft conclusions and informal note as some of the group’s views had not been included in the reflection note.

India, referring to the safeguards contained in para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 said, “These safeguards are important – to ensure that we engage in discussion under the work programme in manner that is acceptable to all of us... any agreement on the continuation of the Work Programme, for us is

conditional on the safeguards under decision 4/CMA.4, reaffirmed once again in 13/CMA.7.”

Adding further, it said issues related to availability and access to finance, technology transfer, capacity building, institutional and administrative barriers like those related to intellectual property rights, climate related unilateral trade measures need to be addressed to significantly advance Parties understanding of what the barriers to mitigation implementation are. Active consideration of equity and CBDR-RC would allow Parties to understand the dilution of the gap in developed countries’ emission reduction, it added. India expressed strong support for enhancing linkage of financial and technology mechanisms with MWP. Regarding the linkage of MWP with GST, it said, “our task is to implement the Paris Agreement and not just some elements of it. We cannot accept linkage to specific processes that have their own mandates” here in MWP.

Stressing the importance of arriving at a common understanding of MWP’s mandate, it said there is a “need to find common ground on how we understand the mandate of the work program. What we consider non-prescriptive is not how we think our partners understand the concept of non-prescriptive. We are all aware of how narratives are created around certain kinds of targets and pathways and inevitably imposed on countries. Just as the disproportionate use of the carbon budget, there is also a disproportionate occupation of the narrative space, with those who have higher resources being able to convert what we think is fairly benign into top-down targets, before we even realise what has happened.”

Egypt in its national capacity stressed that topics of global dialogues should not arise from the GST as that was not part of MWP’s mandate. It pointed out that this was clarified in Belem through para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7. It said asking for a linkage of MWP to GST as facilitating implementation at domestic levels amounts to providing domestic prescription and cautioned against such measures. It pointed out that Parties have already shared their experiences of how GST informs their NDC preparation through the annual GST dialogue and there was no need to replicate that. It stressed it “will not allow any infringement on our national sovereignty; we will not allow any prescription on

how Parties should implement NDCs.” Responding to calls for linking MWP to the Global Climate Action Agenda, it pointed that, that agenda was formed by a “coalition of willing” and did not have full participation, and asking the CMA to follow on any outcomes or messages from that agenda would be unacceptable to it. It said the timeframe of MWP should not go beyond 2030. Regarding the proposal on separation of global mitigation ambition and following up on past CMA decisions, it said this would amount to a “monitoring mechanism under MWP” and this was not part of its mandate. It said ‘Pitch Hub’ events should be not regarded as “capacity building” sessions, as had been called for by some Parties and said this is not a constructive proposal and would “kill the facilitative nature of MWP.” It said Pitch Hub events should allow facilitation of implementation. It said MWP needs tools to help implement NDCs and Long Term-Low Greenhouse Gas Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS).

Colombia for **AILAC** said the timeframe of the MWP as captured in its scope refers to the critical decade, in light of the need for near term mitigation action. It said this cannot be used as a justification for not extending the work programme beyond 2030. It said it is “entirely feasible for the MWP outcome to serve as guidance for Parties to implement in a nationally determined manner.” It pointed out that Article 16.4 of the Paris Agreement provides for the regular review of the implementation of the agreement. And said the dialogues under MWP cannot create new obligation and that it did not see any contradiction in giving guidance to Parties. Referring to the safeguards mentioned in para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7, it said, “we need our own safeguards” and that it views guidance as a crucial element in the scope of MWP. Adding further, it said, collective action signals were provided in the GST1 outcome and stressed the need for addressing cross cutting topics like tripling renewable energy and transitioning away from fossil fuels (TAFF). In this context it also mentioned the need for enabling conditions for TAFF.

It said further that the future of the UNFCCC and its mitigation regime is inherently connected to the way forward of the MWP and emphasised the need for substantive discussions on how MWP can be linked to the GST. It stressed the need for

safeguarding technical integrity of the process and address the issue of how Parties will advance the long-term goals of the Paris Agreement.

AOSIS said that the MWP is the only space where Parties have the mandate to discuss scaling up of mitigation ambition in this critical decade in a manner that complements the GST. It called the three documents produced by the Co-facilitators useful but added that “further refinement is necessary.” It showed a preference for organising the intersessional workshop under the guidance of SB Chairs and for including reference to institutional arrangements, governance, objectives and principles in the reflection note and called them elements of “critical importance”. It said the addition of reference to para 16 of decision 13/CMA.7 to the informal note was unacceptable to it as it does not form the basis for Parties discussion at SB65; rather it is para 1 of Decision 4/CMA.4 which forms the basis of MWP’s mandate.

Sierra Leone for **Least Developed Countries [LDCs]** welcomed all three documents produced by the co-facilitators and emphasised the need to capture linkage of MWP with GST. It said it wants to see the establishment of a technical committee and asked for that to be captured under the section on ‘institutional arrangements’. It also asked for including MWP as a permanent agenda item to maintain momentum of discussions related to mitigation. It expressed support for proposal for the intersessional workshop to advance discussions.

The **EU** said it is possible to understand broad range of issues and said this should be reflected in the chapeau to the potential improvements and adjustments section of the informal note. It called for adding an acknowledgement of the “divergent views on MWP, including the scope.”

The **United Kingdom** supported the compilation of views (reflection note prepared by the co facilitators). It said it wants to see a linkage of GST with MWP and expressed a preference for intersessional work ahead of COP31 to help advance discussions.

Switzerland expressed disappointment with the documents and said they were missing references to MWP’s role in informing mitigation action in the

domestic context. It said the scope section of the reflections note should mention reference to GST outcomes and related calls for the work programme and other constituted bodies to take up this work. It said the investment focused events could benefit more from support in the project preparation phase and emphasised the need for ensuring projects are ready to be financed. It said the idea of technical experts committee belonged to the institutional arrangement section of the reflections note.

Japan said outcomes of the global dialogues should be utilized for informing domestic implementation of NDCs. It said the format of the dialogues should be so designed that it permits the participation of a wide range of stakeholders. Highlighting the need for enhancing effectiveness of MWP, it emphasized the need for efficient linkage of MWP with other workstreams, including the Belem Mission 1.5 and the Global Climate Action Agenda.

New Zealand said that the MWP must continue if the need for mitigation is relevant. It asked for a focus on enhancing MWP and mentioned the need for having regional dialogues as practical improvements for MWP. It stressed the need for grounding topics of the global dialogues in IPCC [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change] informed sectors and GST signals. This it said was within the mandate of MWP complementing the GST. It asked for more targeted exchanges around energy transition. It called the investment focused events a “critical modality for scaling up mitigation implementation”. It said sharing of experiences ahead of NDC submission is in line with MWP’s objective of complementing GST. This it said is not about prescribing or altering national determination, but simply to exchange information. It emphasized the need for strengthening MWP’s complementarity with GST.