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“Nationally determined contributions – Support by Germany for developing countries” SB40 Side Event Report

Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center, Japan (OECC)
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This is a report of a side event held at the 40th Session of the Subsidiary Bodies of Implementation of the UNFCCC from June 4th to 15th 2014, in Bonn, Germany.

- Title : “Nationally determined contributions - Support by Germany for developing countries”
- Date : June 11, 2014 (18:30-20:00)
- Organizer(s) : BMUB, Oeko Institute
- Venue : Solar, Ministry of Environment
- Presenter(s) :
 - Ms. Anke Herold, Oeko Institut
 - Mr. Niklas Hohne, Ecofys
 - Ms. Alexa Kleysteuber, UNDP
 - Mr. Norbert Goriben, BMUB
 - Mr. Sebastian Wienges, GIZ
- Abstract: In accordance of Art. 2d of the Warsaw decision, Germany provides support through bilateral and multilateral channels to other Parties’ domestic preparations on intended nationally determined contributions. During this side event different stakeholders shared their experiences and first lessons learned.

Summary

1. Mr. Norbert Goriben: Opening remarks
 - Mr. Goriben explained the origin of the so called intended nationally determined contributions, and also its importance as the timeframe to present it (first quarter of 2015) is approaching.
 - He remarked that the idea is to operationalize the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and also assure equity.
 - He added that since responsibilities should come with targets and targets means some compromises, it is necessary to provide support, and so, the role of additional support needs to be analyzed.

- This side event was intended to present some analysis on this regard.
2. Mr. Niklas Hohne: “Intended nationally determined contributions under the UNFCCC”
- Mr. Hohne’s presentation is a summary of a paper prepared by Ecofys with cooperation from GIZ.
 - In order to prepare the paper Ecofys interviewed many people from developing countries and they have received several open questions such as: why do countries have to do contributions?, what are the technical requirements?, what is in such contribution?, what are the information requirements?, etc.
 - The paper is divided in 4 parts: 1) Global emission pathways towards 2°C, 2) Experiences from the past, 3) Elements of contributions, 4) Conclusions.
 - In relation to experiences from the past, Mr. Hohne explained that since Copenhagen many countries came with very diverse pledges, some of them very ambitious and some of them somehow ambiguous. One important fact is that pledges once made, cannot be changed.
 - He also explained about type of pledges made such as economy wide emission reduction targets, energy targets, policies and projects. One important conclusion is that energy targets not necessarily less ambitious than emission reduction targets.
 - Analyzing the process he found that often times, there is an inspirational goal first, then national implementation comes in a top down manner, and requires strong national political leadership. There is also a bottom up process which supposes national implementation as for example the development of specific NAMAs.
 - Contributions could include many elements such as: inspirational national long term emissions goals, national short term emissions targets, energy targets, policies and projects, international support needs for mitigation and adaptation, etc.
 - As a final conclusion, Mr. Hohne indicated that the important lesson is that all countries should think on energy targets, and regardless of the target, explain why this is an ambitious contribution based on the context of the specific country.
3. Ms. Anke Herold: “Up-front information for mitigation contributions”
- Ms. Herold also introduced a background paper made by Oeko Institute which is available on its website.
 - After making a historical description of the origin of the term, she clarified the purpose of INDCs saying that information to be provided is necessary in order to achieve clarity, transparency and a better understanding of NDCs.
 - The purpose is to assess comparability of NDCs and make it possible to compare to

other countries' measures. Specifically, she refers to type and elements, scope, ambition, fairness, and equity. This will allow to evaluate the aggregate impact on global future emissions level, and to assess in which areas common accounting and MRV rules are required.

- The categories required for up-front information are: Information to define contributions, specific types of contributions, accounting approach for forest and land use sector, market-based mechanism, ambition, equity an fairness, and finally finance and support needed.
- She remarked that in order to understand the ambition it is necessary to take a look at key mitigation policies, domestic mitigation related targets, mitigation potentials and costs comparison of contributions with independent studies providing top down analysis and references to background information.
- As a conclusion, she indicated that some of the decisions required to take at the COP are: reporting requirements, quantitative information for different types of contributions that enables the conversion of one type of contribution into another type; the balance needed between technically optimal and political acceptable level of detail, etc.

4. Ms. Alexa Kleysteuber: “Regional technical dialogues on intended nationally determined contributions to the 2015 agreement under the UNFCCC”

- Ms. Kleysteuber’s presentation was a summary of conclusions given at UNDP’s side event titled “Supporting the preparations for Nationally Determined Contributions” held on June 8, 2014. (Refer to side event report uploaded in the new mechanism information platform).
- Ms. Kleysteuber provided an historical summary and how these dialogues were designed and conducted in partnership with UNFCCC.
- She provided results obtained in a survey made at the first two regional dialogues made in Latin America (Colombia) and Africa (Ghana).
- She concluded by explaining next actions such as uploading presentations to the website, and planning the second round of dialogues.

5. Sebastian Wienges: Presentation in relation to GIZ support for preparation of NDCs.

- Mr. Wienges provided a summary of activities made by GIZ to support developing countries efforts.
- He also indicated that they were able to provide information in those countries where they currently have projects.
- As for country selection, they have ongoing projects to collaborate with Vietnam,

Thailand, Indonesia, Georgia, Morocco, Jordan, Ghana, Maldives, Dominican Republic, Peru, Marshall Islands, Ukraine, Egypt, Argentina, and Lebanon.

- He remarked that it is vital that all countries submit INDCs, and at the same time, GIZ would support as many countries as limited resources allow to. This support is referred to develop process guidance on how to develop ambitious but feasible INDCs.
- They are currently working with the international partnership on mitigation and MRV, exchanging information and experiences.
- He concluded by encouraging all parties to prepare mitigation efforts, according to their differentiated responsibilities and capabilities. But it is uncertain what that means for individual countries, since targets need to be ambitious, as well as realistic and feasible.

■ Q&A

- Q.1 (Xuenan Wang, WB): We all know that it is difficult for countries to measure growth projections. This makes me think if it is too early to talk about 2020. Countries are facing many challenges and goals are related to the development agenda.
- A.1 (Niklas Hohne): We know about challenges faced by countries and we are studying what countries are doing to meet the pledges. In terms of setting targets, I think it shouldn't be a problem as far as countries give an ambitious contribution. I repeat that for example setting energy targets might be ambitious enough.
- A.1 (Anke Herold): We need first to see what countries put forward. You will see that this is a learning process in relation to contributions, but also a learning process in information. For example we saw that when developing national communications sometimes it doesn't provide tables with good info.
- Q.2 (representative from Peru): There is contradiction in relation to ambition. What is ambition? You can commit to a dream, but being realistic maybe can be understood as not being ambitious enough, so how to set ambition goals?
- A.2 (Sebastian Wienges): It is understandable but you have to start with something and add something in order to be ambitious. You need to discuss and determine what stakeholders are ready to try. Beyond that level, it would be unrealistic. At the same time, I believe it is rather a process.



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