

## Bodies

### Permanent subsidiary bodies

Two permanent subsidiary bodies, the SBSTA and the SBI, assist the parties in their negotiating work. All the UNFCCC's important decisions are drafted by the subsidiary bodies and then submitted to the COP for approval in a plenary session.

### Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice - SBSTA



Participating in the SBSTA is important for the agriculture sector because decisions are taken regarding:

#### Mitigation

- Techniques and methodologies for the preparation of GHG inventories and reports that include the agriculture sector.
- Procedures for preparing mitigation strategies in the countries, such as workshops for the preparation of nationally appropriate mitigation actions (NAMAs).
- Guidelines and approaches to support the implementation of REDD+ action plans that impact the activities of the agriculture sector (higher production with fewer emissions).

#### Adaptation

- Good adaptation planning practices.
- Methodologies for developing adaptation plans and strategies.
- Platforms for sharing and transferring technologies for the preparation of adaptation plans such as the Nairobi Work Programme and the Mechanism for Loss and Damage.

#### What is it?

The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) is responsible for the technical and methodological aspects of the negotiating agenda, such as the discussion of the guidelines on methods to be used for evaluating GHG emissions, the rules and procedures for the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), the Nairobi Work Programme, and for the committees on adaptation and technology transfer, systematic observation networks, and others.

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### How does it operate?

The SBSTA meets twice a year, in May/June and simultaneously with the COP in November/December.

The SBSTA works through a pre-established agenda, which in some cases is agreed several years in advance. When the countries have reached unanimous agreement on a given matter, the SBSTA forwards its conclusions (draft decisions) to the COP for approval, at which point they become decisions. All the decisions of the COP, and therefore of its subsidiary bodies, are taken unanimously. No voting takes place; even if only one country or party is not in agreement, no decision can be adopted.

### Who takes part?

All members of the COP are involved in the SBSTA's deliberations. The countries prepare submissions on specific topics requested by the chair of the SBSTA or the COP. During the deliberations these submissions are presented in a miscellaneous work document (the name given to the working documents containing a compilation of the submissions that the Convention receives from the countries), so the parties can then draft a decision for approval by the COP. Depending on the nature and importance of a given issue, groups of countries prepare submissions that are negotiated in the meetings. For each issue negotiated, there are two co-chairs, one representing the Annex 1 countries and one representing

Non-Annex 1 countries. The co-chairs facilitate the negotiations among the parties in order to arrive at a draft for a final decision.

### How is it related to agriculture?

The SBSTA is the body that makes technical decisions; hence, the technical aspects of responding to climate change in the agriculture sector are negotiated there. For example, the procedures for the agricultural emissions report have been adopted within the SBSTA, and the methodological guidelines based on the IPCC guidelines and the rules for reports and accounting under the convention and the Kyoto protocol are also the product of decisions adopted by the SBSTA.

The procedures for the preparation of NAMAs that include the agriculture sector also form part of the SBSTA's work program. With regard to adaptation, the procedures of the numerous committees such as the one on adaptation, the systematic observation network, the technical training workshops for the development of vulnerability assessments and adaptation plans, and the workshops for the preparation of NAMAs have all been negotiated under the aegis of the SBSTA.

The COP requested submissions on different topics related to agricultural practices, technologies and impacts of climate change, which were discussed during SBSTA sessions in 2015 and 2016.

## Subsidiary Body for Implementation - SBI

### What is it?

Like the SBSTA, the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) supervises the application and administrative matters of the UNFCCC and is in charge of implementation of COP decisions and matters relating to the financing required for the implementation of decisions. For example, the SBI establishes how national communications are to be funded and how capacity-building activities will be implemented, and forwards its decisions to the COP as drafts.

### How does it operate?

Like the SBSTA, the SBI meets twice a year, in May/June, and then simultaneously with the COP in November/December. It works with a pre-established agenda that in some instances is agreed years in advance. Once the work on the items on the agenda has been completed, the SBI submits its conclusions to the COP for final approval of the decisions that it recommends.

### Who takes part?

All members of the COP are involved in the SBI's deliberations. The countries take part by preparing submissions on specific subjects requested by

the chair of the SBI or the COP. Those submissions are presented in a miscellaneous document so the parties can then draft a decision for approval by the COP. Depending on the nature and importance of a given issue, groups of countries prepare submissions that are negotiated in the meetings. For each issue negotiated, there are two co-chairs, one representing the Annex 1 countries and one representing Non-Annex 1 countries. The co-chairs facilitate the negotiations among the parties in order to arrive at a draft for a final decision.

### How is it related to agriculture?

Numerous decisions related to the allocation of Global Environmental Facility (GEF) funds for the sector, for example, for the implementation of workshops, platforms, and training forums on subjects related to mitigation and adaptation, are the product of SBI decisions. Some examples are the allocation of funds for capacity-building workshops for the preparation of NAPAs stemming from the SBI's conclusions, as well as workshops related to the exchange of experts and cooperation among countries. It is up to each country to prepare proposals requesting funds from the GEF or the Adaptation Fund. The latter gives priority to least developed countries. There are also other funds available (see the fourth note in this series).



*Participating in the SBI is important for the agriculture sector, as it would enable the sector to stress the need for financing for mitigation and adaptation actions. Furthermore, more active participation could result in funding options better suited to the needs and priorities of the agriculture sector.*

## Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage

### What is it?

Part of the Cancun Adaptation Framework, the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage was officially established at the COP 19 held in Poland in 2013 to address loss and damage associated with climate change, including extreme events and slow onset events, in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

The Mechanism for Loss and Damage fulfills the Convention's function of promoting the implementation of approaches to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change in a comprehensive, integrated and coherent manner.

### How does it operate?

The Executive Committee for Loss and Damage was tasked with drafting its own terms of reference and reporting on progress to the COP. The procedure of the Executive Committee, and of the mechanism itself, has yet to be defined.

The Paris Agreement treats Loss and Damage as a separate article, recognizing that there are limits to adaptation.

### Who takes part?

The Executive Committee is comprised of ten developing country and ten developed country members. The committee met for the first time in Bonn, Germany, in the third week of September 2015.

### How is it related to agriculture?

This committee is expected to determine which sectors should receive compensation for damage caused by climate change. One of those sectors is agriculture, especially because changes will occur on land suitable for production. The changes may be slow but some will be permanent, affecting the livelihoods of many people. However, the parameters to be

Participating in the Warsaw Mechanism is important for the agriculture sector because:

- The effects of climate change on agriculture will be manifold, including losses caused by more intense and frequent extreme climate events, and changes in productivity as a result of slowly evolving elements of climate change, such as rising temperatures, changes in precipitation regimes, melting of glaciers, and salinization of soils.
- It is estimated that climate variability is responsible for between 32% and 39% of variability in yields worldwide. This situation will be exacerbated by climate change and it is vital that the sector receive part of the compensation.
- This mechanism can establish the guidelines for dealing with the impact of climate change on agricultural production, food security, and the wellbeing of the rural population.
- Greater involvement of agricultural specialists could increase the prospects of the sector gaining access to compensation for the effects of climate change, and make it possible to more easily share the costs of damages in rural communities that do not usually receive funds.

used to determine which sectors could receive compensation have yet to be established.

The countries have yet to agree on a methodology for establishing whether loss and damage are actually caused by climate change, as they have little experience with methodologies of this kind.

In addition, the Executive Committee has requested information on internal and cross-border displacement and migration and been asked to establish a task force on displacement to make recommendations for averting displacement due to the impacts of climate change. Impacts on agricultural production and livelihoods may well affect displacement.

### More information

Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage Related to the Impact of Climate Change <http://goo.gl/xRF9CR>

<sup>1</sup>Ray, DK; Gerber, JS; MacDonald, GK; West, PC. 2015. Climate variation explains a third of global crop yield variability. *Nature Communications* (6):59-89.

## Adaptation Committee (AC)

### What is it?

The Adaptation Committee (AC) was set up in 2010 at the COP 16 in Cancun as part of the Cancun Adaptation Framework. The countries created the AC to promote the coherent implementation of strengthened adaptation measures within the framework of the UNFCCC. It coordinates the actions of the Nairobi Work Programme, and the development of national adaptation plans and the workplan on loss and damage. The AC has the following additional functions:

1. Providing technical support and guidance to the countries.
2. Sharing of relevant information, knowledge, experience and good practices.
3. Promoting synergy and strengthening engagement with national, regional and international organizations, centers and networks.

Participating in the committee's work is important for the agriculture sector because:

- Although proper representation of the sector is somewhat complex, the countries could ask their representatives from the GRULAC to ensure that subjects related to agricultural adaptation are discussed, and the ways in which the AC can potentially support the sector through technical support and technology transfer.
- It can facilitate the provision of technical support for the countries for the preparation of their national adaptation plans for the agriculture sector.
- It could facilitate the management of centers and networks working on adaptation, specifically supporting the countries' adaptation efforts.

Source: UNFCCC. 2014. Adaptation Committee. Consulted on 16 March 2016. Available at <http://goo.gl/YRkTVf>



4. Providing information and recommendations, drawing on adaptation good practices, for consideration by the COP when providing guidance on means to incentivize the implementation of adaptation actions, including finance, technology and capacity building.

### How does it operate?

Its work is based on the decisions taken at the COP 17 and 18, as well as those adopted at the COP 19. The AC meets regularly to take decisions, and has a three-year workplan (2016-2018) that was approved in Bonn in early 2016 and responds to the mandates given during the COP21. To date, the AC has produced two thematic reports and prepared a general report in 2015.

### Who takes part?

The AC is comprised of 16 members of the five regional groups of the United Nations, including representatives of the least developed countries (Non-Annex 1 and Annex 1).

### How is it related to agriculture?

The AC is a technical support body for the countries and organizations whose work involves adaptation; it not only provides assistance, but also offers technical support and facilitates the sharing of experiences on subjects related to adaptation in the sector. The AC also maintains an information hub that provides information about how to secure financial support for implementing adaptation initiatives in the sector.

### More information

UNFCCC Adaptation Committee website: <http://goo.gl/2GTpgn>

Knowledge resources and database related to adaptation: <http://goo.gl/hLCmWZ>





## Standing Committee on Finance (SCF)

### What is it?

The Standing Committee on Finance assists the COP in exercising its financial functions and thereby improves coordination of the mobilization and delivery of financing. The committee supervises the GEF, which manages the Special Climate Change Fund (SCCF), the Adaptation Fund (AF), the Least Developed Countries Fund (LDCF), and the Green Climate Fund (GCF).

### How does it operate?

The committee meets twice a year as mandated by the COP and produces materials that the COP draws upon when making decisions related to the existing financial mechanisms.

### Who takes part?

The committee is comprised of 20 representatives of 10 Annex 1 and 10 Non-Annex 1 countries. Two of the latter 10 countries (Suriname and Nicaragua) represent the GRULAC.

### How is it related to agriculture?

Given the general nature of this committee's work, and as is the case with the rest of the committees, it is unlikely that the participation of sectoral specialists will be prioritized. However, the experts of each country should take note of the documents and recommendations that this committee presents to the COP, as they can have implications for the sector in terms of financing. State officials should make an effort to keep abreast of the negotiations of this committee and bring pressure to bear with a view to achieving greater access to sources of funding for the sector, for both mitigation and adaptation actions.

### More information

<http://goo.gl/YWJRHi>

## Technology Executive Committee (TEC)

### What is it?

The Technology Executive Committee (TEC) is the policy component of the technology mechanism, which was established in 2010 at the COP 16 in Cancun. It began its work in 2012. The TEC is in charge of implementing the technology transfer framework, with particular emphasis on supporting developing country efforts and prioritizing their technological needs through technology needs assessments (TNAs).

The Poznan Strategic Programme on Technology Transfer provides assistance with the TNAs.

### How does it operate?

The TEC's mandate is established in the decisions of the COP, and consists of guiding implementation of the Warsaw International Mechanism. Details of its roles, mandates, and functions are to be found at the following link:

<http://goo.gl/FUUCBw>

The TEC, like the other committees, is comprised of experts from the Annex 1 and Non-Annex 1 countries. It also includes prestigious global research centers.







The Climate Technology Centre and Network (CTCN) is part of the technology mechanism and currently responds to requests for assistance from the parties. The CTCN endeavors to provide a rapid, flexible response by means of projects costing up to USD 250,000 and lasting less than 12 months.

### How is it related to agriculture?

The TEC has prepared a document on technologies for adaptation in the agriculture sector, which contains information about the technologies currently available. The report can be downloaded from the following address: <http://goo.gl/IyLmaS>

Participating in the TEC is important for the agriculture sector because such participation could:

- Greater sector participation could increase access to, and/or the generation of, technology and tools designed to help make the agriculture sector more resilient and with a lower emissions intensity.
- Provide an overview of technology needs and an analysis of the sector's problems and facilitate the implementation of successful technologies for reducing emissions from crop and livestock production.
- Facilitate the recommendation of actions for promoting technology development and transfer.
- Allow for guidance to be provided on policies and programs targeted at addressing climate change in the agriculture sector.
- Promote and facilitate collaboration among different parties interested in agricultural technology for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Catalyze the development and use of technology road maps or action plans in individual countries.

Source: <http://goo.gl/adsgv5>

The importance of these forums lies in the fact that they are platforms for accessing and sharing technologies for adaptation, including for agriculture. Some of the areas in which the CTCN can provide support are capacity building for adaptation in agriculture in different agro-ecosystems using diverse technologies, and the tapping of the sector's potential for mitigation.

### More information

UNFCCC Technology work: <http://goo.gl/LewkL7>

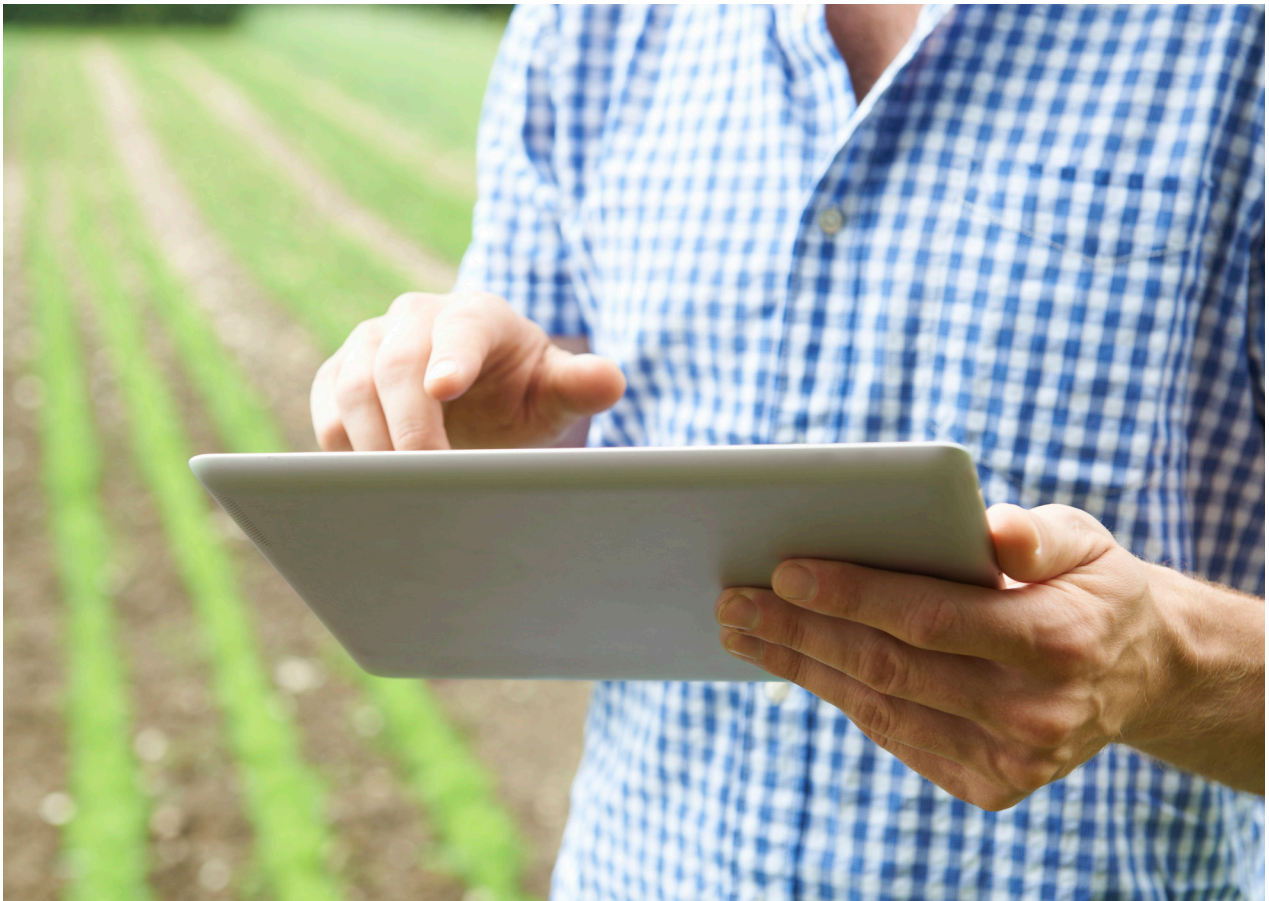
## Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP)

### What is it?

The ADP is an ad hoc working group created in 2011 at the COP 17 in Durban where it was given the mandate of developing a new climate agreement or legal mechanism by 2015 in order for it to be adopted at the COP 21 in Paris. This new agreement will come into effect in 2020 and replace the Kyoto Protocol when it expires.

A key characteristic of the ADP is that it does not distinguish between the Annex I (developed) countries and Non-Annex I (developing) countries. This means that, in theory, all the countries would have to meet the emissions reduction commitments assumed under the new climate agreement due to be approved in 2015.<sup>2</sup> The ADP is carrying out its work via two workstreams, which were established previously by the COP and the ADP:

- **Workstream 1 - 2015 agreement:** Responsible for designing the new post-2020 climate agreement, including its structure, legal form, and scope. The draft text that is at an advanced stage of preparation contains sections calling for adequate mitigation



<sup>2</sup> Bickersteth, S. 2013. The current climate of agriculture in the UNFCCC (on line). London, England. Retrieved Oct 14, 2015. Available at: <http://goo.gl/JWC6N4>

actions and others aimed at adaptation, capacity building, and financing.

The text of the ADP was the subject of intense negotiations until August 2015. A consolidated 80-page text has been produced for approval in December in Paris. Efforts were made to shorten the text in order to speed up the final negotiations.

- **Workstream 2 – pre-2020 ambition:** Review and negotiation of pre-2020 measures and their capacity to meet the UNFCCC's objective, how to enhance mitigation ambition and thereby close the gap between the objective and the current trend in emissions. The gap is currently estimated at between 8,000 and 10,000 million tons of carbon dioxide equivalent.<sup>3</sup>

It is hoped that the financial commitments, as well as technology transfer, will be sufficient to enable countries to adapt to climate change. One of the provisions of this workstream is the development of the intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs), which specify the determined goals or efforts of both developed and developing countries, in order to reduce their domestic emissions and take concrete actions to adapt to climate change. All this is governed by the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities for the parties to the UNFCCC.

In 2013, at the COP19 in Warsaw, the COP adopted the decision made by the ADP to INDCs.

### How does it operate?

The results of the ADP's work have been under negotiation since 2012 (COP 18), with the work expected to conclude at the COP 21 in Paris in 2015. Ten meetings have taken place so far and two more are expected during the COP 21. The ADP's mandate is to produce the text of a climate agreement (Dec. 1/CP.18) and the countries that

are parties to the UNFCCC are required to work according to that mandate. Two chairs facilitate the deliberations. The Secretariat of the Convention also facilitates the work.

The ADP managed to produce a negotiating text for both workstreams that served as a basis for the new climate agreement. The main part of this text refers to mitigation (emissions reduction contributions), adaptation, technology transfer, financing, and capacity building. The ADP met its goals for the COP21 in Paris, and based on the decisions made there, is no longer functioning.

### Who takes part?

Participation is similar to involvement in the COP and the subsidiary bodies.

### How is it related to agriculture?

Like other sectors, agriculture's inclusion in the process is implicit and crosscutting. Perhaps the most important areas for agriculture are those related to the INDCs and how the sector can contribute to both mitigation and adaptation, and the impact that the sector's contributions will have in the countries.

The adaptation negotiations will also affect the agriculture sector because decisions were made on financing, capacity building, and technology transfer.

### More information

Report of the Conference of the Parties on its seventeenth session, held in Durban from 28 November to 11 December 2011:

<http://goo.gl/gLc6St>

Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP):

<http://goo.gl/Qn8LLK>

<sup>3</sup>UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) 2014. Emissions Gap Report. Nairobi, Ke. 57p

## Ad Hoc Working Group on the Paris Agreement (APA)

### What is it?

The APA is the body designated to guide the preparation for the implementation of the Paris Agreement. Established during the COP21 in December of 2015, it has been mandated to prepare draft decisions on several specific topics linked to the Agreement's entry into force, for consideration of by the COP, including:

- guidance relating to the nationally determined contributions (Article 4),
- procedures and guidelines regarding transparency in action and support (Article 13),
- modalities for implementing the global stocktake that will be conducted every 5 years starting in 2023 to measure progress towards the long term goals of the Agreement (Article 14), and
- Modalities and procedures for a mechanism to facilitate implementation and promote compliance with the Agreement (Article 15).

As a newly established working group, little information currently exists about its structure or how it will operate. Given the importance of the

Paris Agreement, it can be expected that the APA will have an extremely important role in defining the operational mechanisms and monitoring processes for measuring progress made towards commitments.

The first meeting of the APA was held in May of 2016, with discussions focusing on the INDCs, transparency, a mechanism to facilitate implementation and compliance with the Paris Agreement, and the global stocktake.

### How is it related to agriculture?

The majority of the countries in the Americas – and the world – included the agricultural sector in their INDCs, both from a mitigation and adaptation perspective. As the INDCs are the principal mechanism to advance the goals of the Paris Agreement at the national level, this demonstrates the importance (and vulnerability) of the sector for many countries. As the plans and actions stipulated in the contributions will have an impact on the agricultural activities, representatives from the sector should actively participate in the decision making as processes allow. To be able to achieve the goals laid out for agriculture in the INDCs, technical support and funding must be channeled towards the sector.

### More information

<http://goo.gl/vSfomk> ■



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