

RINGO Members Report

12th Meeting of the Adaptation Committee of the UNFCCC

19-22 September 2017 - UN Campus, Bonn, Germany

NOTE: Documents prepared for the AC meeting, presentations at the AC meeting, and summary of outcomes from the twelfth meeting of the Adaptation Committee (AC12) by agenda item are available at

http://unfccc.int/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/items/10375.php

The Adaptation Committee (AC) meeting began on Tuesday morning, 19 September. The co-chairs announced that Ming Pen of China (a former co-chair) could not attend and that Kari Peterson of the USA was a new member of the AC. AC members and observers introduced themselves. All AC members were present except for Ming Pen. About 25 observers attending the first day meeting. Observer participation decreased as the week went on.

Day One

The meeting began with short reports from AC members on the first meeting of the Task Force on Displacement, the Paris Committee on Capacity Building, and the CTCN.

The AC members then addressed the recommendations in document 5a – Institutional Arrangements

(http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/5a_institutional_arrangements.pdf)

They focused on recommendations in this and all the subsequent reports. AC members paid attention to specific language and discussed what the recommendations should state (e.g., should recommendation “e” state “periodically”).

Post break and post-lunch AC members discussed recommendations regarding methodologies for assessing adaptation needs with a view to assisting developing countries

(http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/5b_needs_assessments.pdf)

They discussed methodology needs and also focused on language in the recommendations. AC members commented at length on “gaps.” Some members wanted the recommendations to include a developed introduction or chapeau.

Day Two

Wednesday first focused on the Green Climate Fund, specifically an “Information paper on experiences of countries in accessing the readiness programme for adaptation of the Green Climate Fund”

(http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/8ai_gcf_readiness.pdf)

Daniel (we don’t recall last name) of the GCF joined the meeting to discuss the readiness programme. He noted that the GCF and the Standing Committee on Finance had worked together to prepare useful guidelines for accessing readiness funds.

In the morning sessions AC members also shared ideas about conducting a workshop on this matter. Due to budget constraints the workshop would be delayed until 2018 and may be held in conjunction with the NAP Expo (April 2018).

AC members next discussed the new Adaptation Finance Bulletin (Item 8a ii). AC members and observers alike thought that this would be a useful tool. The AC agreed to issue the bulletin twice a year, after the COP and after the SB meetings. AC members decided to maintain flexibility in timing to accommodate crucial relevant information as it would become available.

After a coffee break AC members took up the issue of the GCF and a Private Sector Facility. This discussion included comments on the GCF's Readiness Program.

The AC members then returned to recommendations coming out of Day One – institutional arrangements and methodologies for assessing adaptation needs. The Secretariat prepared handouts (distributed to AC members and observers) that included the new language. The discussion was extensive.

In the afternoon the AC focused on methodologies to facilitate the mobilization of support for adaptation in developing countries (Item 5d) and methodologies for reviewing the adequacy and effectiveness of adaptation and support (Item 5e). See:

http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/adaptation_committee/application/pdf/5cde_ac-leg.pdf

The discussion of these items was lengthy with AC members addressing the wording in the sets of recommendations.

Day Three

This day began by considering the TEP-A Report (the Technical Examination Process). One AC member presented the current status of the report (a full version is not yet ready), followed by questions and comments.

Following the TEP-A Report, the AC focused on national adaptation goals and indicators as related to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Sendai Framework. Observers made interventions, including one written statement sent via email. David Stevens from UNISDR read a lengthy statement that expressed a strong commitment to working with the AC. Both statements referred to UNGA Report A/72/259 dd. 17 July 2017, in response to UNGA Resolution 71/226, which explicitly calls for improved alignment of CCA and DRR. Both DRR national plans (due in 2020) and NDCs/NAPs are part of the SDG 13.1 progress reporting. Alignment may help avoid unnecessary duplication.

As part of this discussion AC members and observers contemplated a conference that would bring together interests regarding adaption, SDGs, and DRR.

Throughout the rest of the day the AC members addressed their workplan – activities for 2018, discussed the Adaptation Forum and platforms such as the CTCN. Much of the time, though, was devoted to discussing revisions in recommendations made on various issues, such as recommendations related to recognition of adaptation efforts of developing countries.

Day Four

The original agenda called for breakout sessions on Friday morning but none occurred. Instead, AC members continued their discussion of revised recommendations regarding items

5B and 5C. Specifically, the AC members worked their way through the “mobilization of support” recommendations.

Summary Observations

(from Gregg Walker) Although observers are invited to comment on agenda items (after AC member discussion), observers offered fewer comments than in past meetings (note that Walker participated in AC 10 and 11). This may have been the case because AC members devoted significant time to discussing the language or wording of specific recommendations. Since the recommendations come from the AC and not the observers (the AC “owns” the recommendations), observer comments regarding language seemed inappropriate. I (Walker) talked with both the co-chairs about this and they agreed.

(from Lindsey Cook) When I first attended an Adaptation Committee (AC) in 2015, I admit struggling to understand what exactly they did. I was also, and continue to be, concerned that they engage on a theoretical level of temperature rises to 2C, when in reality we are on track for +4C. Engaging in this reality would bring greater urgency to their work, which is the human face to the UNFCCC, along with Loss and Damage.

Two years on, the AC seems more clear on their purpose, but in turn the engagement has brought greater politics into the technical. Outgoing members Montenegro and Netherlands expressed concern over this; these two are technical voices and the AC has brought in several negotiators from the UNFCCC. While gifted negotiators, the result is that this September 2017 meeting was often stuck in, as Professor Walker describe, ‘wordsmithing’. This is not a positive development; these committees should inspire negotiator progress, not absorb it. The final challenge, when the US noted a concern after a matter had been closed, thus creating a procedural challenge, was tense. It was over the word ‘effective’, which had been removed. As one delegate later said, this is not needed, who would willing seek ineffective adaptation? This reflects the level of some (not all) discussion we spent hours observing.

On the positive note, there were some excellent reports presented by the UNFCCC, which I would recommend reading.

Respectfully submitted:

Lindsey Cook – Friends World Committee for Consultation (FWCC, as Representative for Climate Change with the Quaker United Nations Office – QUNO)

Cees Van de Guchte – Director, Global Agenda & International Organizations at Deltares (member of AGWA hosted by SIWI)

Gregg Walker – Oregon State University professor representing Mediators Beyond Borders International and the International Environmental Communication Association