UNFCCC 2017
6th meeting of the Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanisms for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (Excom 6)
UN Campus, Bonn, Germany
11-13 October 2017

RINGO Notes

Excom 6 began on Monday, October 9, and spent two days in closed sessions. Observers were invited to join the meeting on Wednesday.

Seventeen members of the Excom attended the meeting. Observers included 9 parties, 9 IGOs and 12 NGOs. RINGOs members in attendance included Doreen Stabinsky, Marilyn Averill, Lindsey Cook, Lisa Vanhala, and Elisabeth Gilmore.

Opening of the meeting

Co-chair Orville Grey from Jamaica opened the meeting. He announced that Monika Antosik from Poland, has resigned as co-chair. Thomas De Lannoy from France was chosen to take her place.

Adoption of agenda and organization of work of the meeting

It was announced that there would be a discussion on engagement with the IPCC under the agenda item "any other matters".

The meeting broadly followed the indicative schedule of work which can be found here: http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/loss_and_damage_executive_committee/application/pdf/excom_6_tentative_schedule-ver_12_oct.pdf

The modality of work proposed for the three days was

- Launch most items this am
- Conclude in plenary today those items where work ahead is clear
- Parallel working groups as needed
- How to finalize work here or continue work intersessionally as appropriate

The Excom would continue in a closed setting Wednesday and Thursday in the afternoon. (The Excom closed setting meetings continued to close to midnight both nights).

Friday would be a decision-making day on outstanding items.

Awareness raising, outreach, information sharing

- Members discussed the many formal meetings that will be held at COP 23 and determined who would represent the Excom at these meetings.
    - IPCC-SBSTA joint meeting
    - SBSTA chair and earth observation community
    - GCF board and UNFCCC thematic bodies
- The Excom will hold a COP 23 side event on financial tools and instruments for slow onset events. The Secretariat made a powerpoint presentation on the side event that can be found on the website.
- Members will work intersessionally on a communications plan to be presented at Excom 7.

Engagement with IPCC

- There was debate about the nature and extent of engagement between the Excom and the IPCC on loss and damage. Some members expressed concern about the further "politicization" of the IPCC on loss and damage whereas others felt that there is a need for a genuine attempt at a technical dialogue.
- RINGO representatives fed into this debate by noting that the IPCC doesn't do research, they do summaries of research and the role of the Excom is to take existing work and related it to their workstreams and to identify areas needing additional research; that the IPCC's role is not to be policy-prescriptive but policy-relevant and that it is helpful to play a role in catalysing future scientific research.

Compendium on Slow Onset Events

- Another item that was discussed very briefly was a compendium of recommendations to improve knowledge and capacity to address slow onset events and their impacts.
- There was a question about the audience for this document. Whether it would remain an internal document; whether it should be broken up into factsheets; what decisions this is meant to help with.
- It was agreed that work will go forward inter-sessionally with the idea of taking some decisions at Excom 7.

Development of activities for the 5-year rolling workplan

The latest pre-edited version of the 5-year workplan is available here: http://unfccc.int/files/adaptation/groups_committees/loss_and_damage_executive_committee/application/pdf/draft-five-year-rolling-workplan-12-oct.pdf

This topic dominated much of the Excom meeting (although many of these sessions were closed to observers). At the close of the meeting one of the co-chairs of the Excom estimated that the group had spent 60 to 70 hours over the five days working on the workplan (along with the other issues addressed by the Excom).

- In the two days preceding the Excom meeting the group had met, with Leon Charles of Grenada who acted as a facilitator, to work on developing activities for the 5-year rolling workplan. The following methodology was used: a long-list of more than 120 activities proposed by Parties and observers through a submission process was put together by the secretariat; those activities were divided into activities by Excom alone, with partners, or by other bodies other than the Excom; criteria were developed by Excom members related to both the severity of the impact and the timing in which an activity could be completed. A short-list of activities for the first two years of the workplan was then generated according to a scoring exercise, which also captured the activities not yet finished from the first 2-year workplan, and the results were discussed by members split into two groups.
- A draft of the 5-year rolling workplan was shared with observers on the first day of the Excom and observers were given a space to meet and discuss the workplan and prepare comments. In particular, the Excom asked for contributions on
    - Where can observers contribute to the workplan.
    - Where the Excom can be catalyst for meaningful work for other organizations.
- Observers were given the opportunity to feed in their comments on the second day. Comments from observers included some scepticism regarding the criteria by which activities were scored and particularly the emphasis on timing (as this could by definition always preclude taking more topics that require more time to complete); the limited resources and limited numbers of meetings of the Excom to address their broad mandate; the lack of ambition in the language of the work plan; the failure to mention gender; an

over-emphasis on climate-risk management activities at the expense of activities in the strategic workstream on finance; the need to help other thematic bodies understand how to incorporate loss and damage issues into their work; on slow onset events the need to link to the Sendai framework; on the opportunity to reach out to the GCF on whether they would like guidance on non-economic losses; appreciation for the fact that vulnerable communities and the human face are part of the strategic outlook but this is not reflected in the activities.

COP 21 mandates: Task force on displacement

- The first meeting of the task force on displacement and migration was held in May 2017 as well as delegation of roles and responsibilities between different agencies including the International Organization on Migration (IOM), the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD) and Advisory Group on Climate Change and Human Mobility.
- Discussion about the workshop in Geneva in May 2018 that will be hosted by the Platform on Disaster Displacement and the International Organization for Migration
- Discussion about feeding into the Global Compact on Migration processes and the sequencing of events.
- Recommendations from the Task Force to be finalized August 2018 and forwarded by ExCom for COP24.

Date and venue of meetings in 2018

The dates of the meeting are to be confirmed but members were asked to hold the weeks of March 12th and 17th September 2018 for potential meetings of the Excom.

COP 21 mandates: Clearing house for risk transfer

- There was a presentation by the coordinator of the intersessional working group and the Excom's partners on the Clearing House for Risk Transfer of the Beta version of the Clearing house. The beta version of the clearing house can be found at Unfccc-clearinghouse.org. User name: Excom; Password: Clearinghouse
- The website had a dynamic, system-learning component called "Risk Talk" with the aim of creating a vibrant community discussing risk transfer. The success of the project will depend on recruiting experts and others to participate in the discussion.
- The Clearing House will be launched at COP 23.

Discussion about intersessional work and close of meeting

- There was some dividing up of labour for the intersessional work.
- Thanking of the secretariat, co-chairs, committee members who are leaving, observers.

Additional Comments from Lindsey Cook (QUNO)
Overall impression

The difference between the 5th and 6th Meeting of the ExCom was striking, and comparison helps describe this October setting.

At the 5th Meeting in March, ExCom members and observers were involved in workshops over several days, to identify priorities for the 5 Year Work Plan. This was facilitated by Grenada Negotiator, Leon Charles, and was unique in our experience for the depth of exchange made possible between observers and Members.

The 6th Meeting was quite different. It is possible that the March experience was intense – there was certainly more input than was possible to implement, and it appears that Members decided to reduce the list in the absence of observers. Observers were not allowed in the first two days of the meeting, and opportunities for observers to speak from Wednesday-Friday were less, and Member discussions were extensive. On Thursday a space dedicated for observers to respond to the evolving 5 Year Work Programme, including observer support of activities. Input was specific and supportive, and Members seemed genuinely engaged and appreciative.

In my discussions with Members, it was evident that the intense and long hours (up to 11pm most nights) were exhausting and disheartening at times, for developing countries to believe the mandate was being pushed to its full potential. But following the Thursday observer input, there seems a confidence rise, a recognition of the significance of their work to the wider world, and Members from developing countries told me on Friday that they felt the decisions made following the Thursday input were more positive, enabling them to leave the week-long meeting with a better sense of result than they have felt earlier that week. As we had asked the ExCom in our Thursday intervention:

1. Are you fulfilling your mandate to its maximum potential?
2. If not, why not, and who will suffer as a result? Many Caribbean islands could not cope with the severity of recent storms, but neither could Houston.
3. Do you fully use the potential of WIM to engage the very technical substance of the UNFCCC negotiation process with the consequences of insufficient global climate action - particularly the non-economic losses of life, health, human security, territory, biodiversity, and eco-system health on which our livelihoods depend? This would help the negotiations better engage in urgency before us.