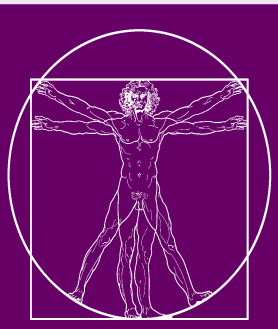

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2020 Regional Training Webinar for the Caribbean

17 November 2020

The 2020 Regional Training Workshop for the Caribbean, held on 17 November 2020, trained 30 young negotiators from the region on the historical and scientific background of the global climate change negotiations under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). Senior negotiators from the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) also discussed the key priorities for the Group, and for the Caribbean region.

The workshop was chaired by Kishan Kumarsingh, Lead Climate Negotiator for Trinidad and Tobago.

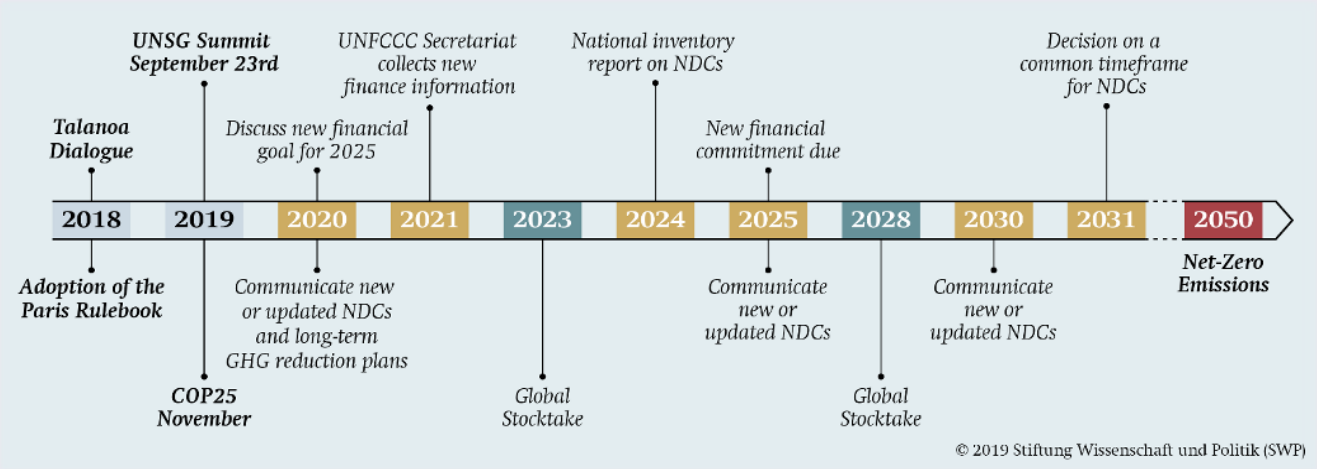
In an opening speech, Ambassador Diann Black-Layne from Antigua and Barbuda, representing the incoming AOSIS Chair, said the workshop will reduce the learning curve for new negotiators, and help ensure that AOSIS and the Caribbean region maintain a strong position during the implementation phase of the Paris Agreement.

REGIONAL PRIORITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE DIALOGUES 2020

Ambassador Janine Felson from Belize, the outgoing Chair of AOSIS, presented on the UNFCCC Climate Change Dialogues 2020. She highlighted the vulnerability of the Caribbean region, and said it is important that 2020 is still an important year to advance action on climate change despite the COVID-19 pandemic. She listed the following activities with a 2020 timeline in the negotiations:

- Submission of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Low-Emission Development Strategies.
- Submission of reports by developed countries under Article 9.5 of the Paris Agreement, on support to be provided.
- Update on the provision of US$ 100 billion annually by developed countries.
- Launching processes for the long-term temperature goal, under the periodic review.
- Pre-2020 Roundtable to review pre-2020 targets.

Figure 1: Key UNFCCC milestones up to 2050



She listed the incomplete elements of the Paris Agreement that need to be completed at the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow in 2021, including the rules for: Article 6 of the Paris Agreement; transparency; and common time frame/s for NDCs. She said the question of the US$ 100 billion by 2020 to be provided to developing countries, and the future finance goal, will also have to be addressed.

Ambassador Felson noted that the November Dialogues will contribute to momentum building, and will be split into three different types of events:

- **Updates and special events**, including updates from the Subsidiary Bodies (SBs) and special events by constituted bodies such as the Paris Committee on Capacity Building (PCCB).
- **Mandated events**, webcast for open viewing, including:
  - Structured Expert Dialogue
  - Facilitated Sharing of Views
  - Multilateral Assessments
  - Long-term finance in session workshop
  - Land Dialogue
  - Pre-2020 Roundtable
  - Ocean Dialogue
- **Informal consultations** (for which registration is required), on Article 6, transparency, and common timeframes.

She concluded by providing a timeline of key UNFCCC milestones until 2050 (see **Figure 1**).

SCIENCE OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Carlos Fuller, Lead Negotiator for AOSIS and International and Regional Liaison Officer of the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre, presented on the science of climate change. Fuller noted that:

- Global average temperatures have risen over 1.1°C the past 150 years since systematic observation began, which a much steeper rise over the past three decades, indicating that temperature rise is accelerating. For the Caribbean region, data going back to 50-60 years indicate a similar rise.
- Sea levels have risen by about three millimetres each year over the past 200 years, but this rate has accelerated over the past 50 years, to five millimeters. The rise is taking place because 90% of the additional energy caused by global warming goes into the oceans, causing them to expand; and due to melting polar ice caps, which are now contributing more to sea level rise than the warming of the oceans.
- Precipitation patterns have changed, making it dryer across the Equator (including in the Caribbean), and wetter in the polar regions. The intensity of the rainfall is also changing, causing extreme drought followed by extreme rainfall and flooding. For instance, St. Lucia experienced the worst drought in 40 year over 2009-2010, followed by Hurricane Tomas which produced 25 inches of rainfall over a period of 24 hours.
- Heat waves are increasing, and the Caribbean region is experiencing stronger hurricanes, which are closely associated with higher sea surface temperatures.
- The damages associated with these events are increasing.

Since the Industrial Revolution around 1750, Fuller said, the amount of carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere has risen due to the burning of fossil fuels and the rise of agriculture, creating the greenhouse gas effect. Projections indicate that temperatures will continue to rise around the world in the next 100 years, and if the amount of greenhouse gas emissions does not change, global average temperature could rise by 4-5°C by the end of the century. Parts of the Caribbean could see temperatures rise by as much as 5°C by the 2080s, resulting in a drier Caribbean except for western Cuba , south Bahamas, Costa Rica, and Panama; and a pronounced north/south gradient in rainfall change during the dry season (January to April).

Fuller noted that atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide are at a unprecedented level of 420 parts per million. Even if greenhouse gas emissions were to stop entirely, they will take 100 to 300 years to stabilise in the atmosphere, and for global temperatures to stabilise. Sea levels could take centuries to millennia to stabilise. This will have serious impacts on socioeconomic and biological systems, including on health, agriculture, forestry, water, and ecosystems. Sea level rise in Guyana is already five times greater than the global average, at about 10.2 millimetres per year. Fuller listed the following predicted impacts for the Caribbean:

- Over 2,700 km^2 land area lost, valued at over US$ 70 billion.
- Over 100,000 people displaced (8% of population in Suriname, 5% of the Bahamas, 3% Belize). The cost to rebuild basic housing, roads, and services (water, electricity) for this displaced population is estimated at approximately US $1.8 billion.
- Annual GDP losses of US$ 1.2 billion (over 6% in Suriname, 5% in the Bahamas, 3% in Guyana and Belize).
- At least 16 tourism resorts lost, with a replacement cost of over US$ 1.6 billion, and with the livelihoods of thousands of employees and communities affected.
- Over 1% agricultural land lost (4% in Suriname, 3% in the Bahamas, 2% in Jamaica), with implications for food supply and rural livelihoods. Studies in Belize show that a 1-2°C rise in temperature and changes of precipitation of 12-20% will result in a 12-17% decline in sugarcane production, 3- 5% decline of in citrus; 90% decline in beans; 10- 14% decline in rice production; and 17-22% decline in corn production. Similar losses will be replicated across the Caribbean.
- Transportation networks will be severely disrupted, with a loss of 10% of Caribbean island airports at a cost of over US$ 715 million; inundation of lands surrounding 14 ports (out of 50), at a cost of over US$ 320 million; and reconstruction cost of lost roads exceeding US$ 178 million (6% of road network in Guyana, 4% in Suriname, 2% in the Bahamas).
- Coral bleaching and ocean acidification could result in losses of US$ 1.5 billion in the fisheries and tourism sector. The loss of mangroves, and migration of fish species could increase these costs.
- Forests will be impacted due to rise in temperatures and pest infestations. This could result in biodiversity loss, massive soil erosion, and impacts on the timber industry.

Fuller concluded by listing the science-related discussions that will take part during the 2020 Climate Change Dialogues:

- A **research dialogue** under the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) on 24 and 25 November 2020, focused on enhancing understanding to accelerate mitigation and adaptation. It will have two themes: updates on advancements in research and modelling; and factors for enhancing understanding to accelerate adaptation and mitigation.
- A **Structured Expert Dialogue** on 26 and 27 November 2020 focused on the second periodic review of the global goal under the UNFCCC. Experts from the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) will discuss, on the basis of IPCC special reports produced in 2018 and 2019: new knowledge on the long-term global goal; scenarios compatible with the long-term global goal; information and knowledge gaps; and challenges and opportunities.
- **Earth Information Day** on 30 November 2020. Participants will discuss updates on the state of the global climate system and its observation, including impacts of COVID-19; and recent advances in Earth observation technology and data processing.
- Two **dialogues based on the IPCC special reports**: a dialogue on the relationship between land and climate change adaptation on 30 November and 1 December 2020; and another on oceans and climate change to consider how to strengthen adaptation and mitigation action on 2 and 3 December 2020.

CLIMATE GEOPOLITICS AND THE INTERNATIONAL GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Kishankumar described the international policy response to address climate change. He described key milestones towards the development of an international response, including:

- A UN General Assembly (UNGA) resolution adopted in 1988, declaring climate change a common concern of mankind.
- The first IPCC Assessment Report in 1990, which had considerable influence on policy makers.
- The formation of an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC) in 1990, by UNGA. The INC met five times between February 1991 and May 1992.
- The adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992, at the UN Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. The UNFCCC entered into force in 1994. The Convention recognised the "common but differentiated responsibilities" of countries for climate change.
- The adoption of the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, setting emissions reduction targets for developed countries. The rules for the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol were subsequently agreed in 2001, in the Marrakech Accords. The Protocol came into force in 2005, with a first commitment period up to 2012.
- The establishment of a dialogue on long-term action on climate change in 2005, to allow for an exchange of views on how the evolving climate change regime can be further strengthened.
- The adoption of the Bali Action Plan in 2007, setting up a two-year work programme to develop a new regime for adoption at COP15, in 2009.
- The failure of COP15 in 2009 to adopt an agreement – instead, the "Copenhagen Accord" was "*noted*". Although this was viewed as a failure, Kishankumar said it played a key role in future progress.
- The adoption of the Cancun Agreements in 2010, which formally adopted many elements of the Copenhagen Accord on finance, technology, means of implementation, mitigation, adaptation, etc. It also formalised pledges by developing countries to reduce emissions through voluntary measures.
- The adoption of the Durban Platform in 2011, advancing the outcomes of Copenhagen and Cancun to negotiate a new instrument.
- The adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015, and its entry into force in 2016. Most of the rules for the implementation of the Paris Agreement were adopted in 2018, in Katowice.

Kishankumar then described elements of the UNFCCC. He said the Convention, led by the Conference of the Parties (COP), seeks to address:

- Scientific concern about rise in global temperature.
- How to act in the face of uncertainty.
- Unfairness in distribution of effects and costs of the climate change problem.
- Unsustainable development.

Article 2 of the UNFCCC defines the objective of the Convention: "*... to achieve stabilization of atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases at levels that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system... within a timeframe sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure food production is not threatened and to enable economic development in a sustainable manner*".

The goal at this point was therefore stabilisation, and not reduction, Kishankumar said – no levels for reduction or timeframes are specified. The UNFCCC is based on the following principles:

- Intergenerational equity.
- Common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR).
- Precautionary principle.
- The rights of all Parties to sustainable development, and to promote a supportive and open international economic system.

While the UNFCCC calls for leadership by developed countries, he said it relies more on declarations than firm commitments. It includes two Annexes: Annex I includes the 41 developed countries and countries with economies of transition; while Annex II is a sub-set of Annex I and includes the 21 highly developed members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Developing countries are referred to as "non-Annex I Parties".

The negotiations for the Kyoto Protocol were based on an understanding, reached in Berlin at COP1 in 1995, that the negotiations should not introduce any new commitments for

developing countries. The Protocol sought to address:

- Growth in GHG emissions.
- How to make economies more climate-friendly.
- Equity of responsibility.
- Equity of costs.

The Protocol, led by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP), included the following elements for Annex I countries:

- Commitments, including legally-binding emissions targets to reduce their emissions by an average of 5% by 2012, based on 1990 levels. The Protocol covered a "basket" of six gases: carbon dioxide; methane; nitrous oxide; hydrofluorocarbons; perfluorocarbons; and sulphur hexafluoride.
- Implementation, at the domestic level and through three market mechanisms (Joint Implementation, Clean Development Mechanism or CDM, and Emissions Trading); and also through some carbon sequestration activities in the land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector.
- Elements on minimising impacts on developing countries, including through a 2% levy on CDM for adaptation funding.
- Accounting, reporting and review, including in-depth review of national reporting.
- Compliance measures, enforced through a Compliance Committee.

Non-Annex I countries, meanwhile, also had some commitments under the Protocol, including to:

- Improve quality of emissions data.
- Implement national mitigation and adaptation programmes.
- Promote environmentally friendly technology.
- Cooperate in scientific research and international climate observation networks.
- Support education, training, public awareness, and capacity-building initiatives.

Describing the process that led to the adoption of the Paris Agreement, Kishankumar said the Durban COP established an Ad Hoc Working Group on the Durban Platform for Enhanced Action (ADP), to work towards a "*protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force*" for adoption by COP21 in 2015. He described key milestones along the way, including:

- The launch of a new commitment period for the Kyoto Protocol in Doha, at CMP8 in 2012.
- The decision to call on Parties to submit NDCs in Warsaw, in 2013 – this call was reiterated in Lima in 2014, where a decision was taken on what these NDCs should contain.

Following intense negotiations, Krishnakumar said, the Paris Agreement was adopted in 2015. It was decided that the Agreement will enter into force upon ratification of 55 Parties accounting for 55% of global emissions. The modalities for implementing the Agreement were to be agreed in time for implementation to begin in 2020.

Kishankumar highlighted the following key elements of the Paris Agreement:

- A long-term goal for Parties to limit global average temperature increase to "*well below*" 20°C, while urging efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.
- A long-term goal call for Parties to achieve global peaking "*as soon as possible*", by achieving a balance of emissions with sinks in the second half of the century.
- Undertaking a global stocktake in 2023 and every five years thereafter to ensure collective progress towards achievement of the long term goals.
- Special recognition of the circumstances of SIDs.
- Commitments for all Parties to submit NDCs; pursue domestic measures aimed at achieving them; report regularly on their emissions and the progress made in implementing and achieving their NDCs, and to undergo international review; and to submit NDCs every five years with the clear expectation that they will be more ambitious than previous NDCs.

On adaptation, Kishankumar said the Agreement calls for:

- Adaptation planning process, including action plans and policies.
- Assessments of vulnerability, including of people, places, and ecosystems.
- Building climate resilience, including through economic diversification, and sustainable management of natural resources.
- Monitoring and evaluation of implementation.
- The submission of Adaptation Communications, which will be considered in the global stocktake.

The Agreement also includes an Article on loss and damage, he said, which extends the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage resulting from climate change.

On finance, Kishankumar listed the following key elements:

- The extension of the goal for mobilising US$ 100 billion a year until 2025, with a call for a new, higher goal to be set for the period after 2025.
- A call for developed countries to provide finance, with an invitation for developing countries to voluntarily do so. Developed countries will continue with their obligations under the Convention, and "*shall*" provide financial resources to assist developing countries with mitigation and adaptation.

On technology transfer and development, the Agreement calls for:

- Strengthened cooperative action.
- Continuation of the Technology Mechanism.
- A new Technology Framework to provide overarching guidance to the Technology Mechanism.
- Finance from developed countries.

On transparency, the Agreement calls for an enhanced transparency system for all countries. A critical component of the Agreement, Kishankumar said the transparency framework ensures that all countries are on a level playing field with flexibility for developing countries, and aims to facilitate tracking of progress through links with the global stocktake. Countries are expected to report on greenhouse gas inventories; information necessary to track progress in implementing NDCs; and information on financial, technology transfer, and capacity building support provided and received.

Kishankumar then pointed participants to further information on the Katowice rulebook for the Paris Agreement in his presentation. He noted that some elements of the rulebook still remain to be decided, including Article 6 on cooperative approaches, common timeframes, and elements of the transparency framework, but work has been delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the postponement of COP26.

KEY ISSUES FOR THE CARIBBEAN REGION/ AOSIS UNDER NEGOTIATION

Ambassador Black-Layne presented on the issue of climate finance, as a key element in the negotiations for the Caribbean region and for AOSIS. She noted that discussions on the Secretariat's budget are usually ignored by climate finance negotiators, but it is important to pay attention and participate because budget cuts will affect how the budget is allocated.

Black-Layne said the early morning AOSIS coordination meetings are important to attend, to track other areas under negotiation that will have an implication on the finance negotiations. She also noted that:

- Finance decisions are normally the last to be decided, for leverage.
- Caribbean SIDS negotiate as AOSIS as well as the Group of 77 and China, although they are not homogenous groups.
- Coordinating over nine finance-related decisions and getting good outcomes is a challenge to Caribbean negotiators.

She described the increase in climate-related losses and damages to the region, and the need to "de-risk" the banking sector, as most of the banks in the Caribbean are now saying they cannot take on those risks anymore.

Noting that the finance available to the region does not even cover 1% of the funding needed to address the issue of climate change, she highlighted the importance of Article 2.1.c of the Paris Agreement, which calls for "*Making finance flows consistent with a pathway towards low greenhouse gas emissions and climate-resilient development*". This calls for a review of financial rules and regulations, and social and science-based rules and regulations to mainstream climate finance and discussions into the banking sector.

Ambassador Black-Layne also highlighted the importance of ensuring the replenishment and continued growth of climate funds.

INTERACTIVE SESSION

A brief interaction session facilitated by Ambassador Felson followed, where participants introduced themselves and their key areas of interest in the negotiations.

Ambassador Felson noted the importance for all negotiators to have a broad overview of where negotiations stand under all thematic areas, and how they impact each other. She said the virtual format is not conducive for negotiations, and therefore this year, only a Dialogue will take place, not a negotiation, though informal consultations will take place among registered delegates. Efforts are being made to make

as much progress as possible, she said, and the SBs have been meeting, as have other bodies such as the GCF and Adaptation Fund. The stage is being set for a more measured approach at COP26. Key areas to agree are the common tabular formats for reporting under the transparency negotiations; rules for the Article 6 mechanisms, including a levy on market transactions for adaptation funding; and a common timeframe for NDCs, which are considered necessary for motivating ambition under the Paris Agreement.

She invited participants to watch the mandated events that will be part of the November Dialogues and broadcast online, including a Facilitative Sharing of Views where developing countries will present, and Multilateral Assessments where developed countries will present on what they have done for their 2020 NDC targets.

WHAT'S JUSTICE GOT TO DO WITH IT?

In response to a question from a participant, Müller made a brief presentation on climate justice.

He said climate change is not a natural disaster or an "act of god" – it is anthropogenic (caused by humans), who can be expected to take responsibility for their actions and be held responsible for them. Climate change can have negative impacts on humans – it is a situation where humans can impose harm on others without their consent, which is generally seen as being unjust.

There are two ways this sort of injustice can be dealt with, Müller said:

- **Compensatory justice**, by providing compensation for the harm caused.
- **Punitive justice**, by punishing the perpetrators or the people who have caused harm.

He noted that there are several difficult issues associated with these approaches. For example, in the case of compensatory justice – in the context of environmental pollution also known as the 'polluter pays principle' – key questions include:

- Who decides what constitutes an adequate compensation?
- Who should provide it and what share?
- Should it be in proportion to their responsibility for the harm, or should it in proportion to what one can afford, what one is capable to provide?

Müller said the distinction between "responsibilities" and "capabilities" also plays an important role in deciding how to share the effort or burden involved in addressing climate change in a fair manner. This is an issue of what is called "**distributive justice**", to establish what it means to do one's "fair share" in combatting climate change. The UNFCCC has adopted the CBDR principle in this context. Article 3.1 states that: "*The Parties should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind, on the basis of equity and in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Accordingly, the developed country Parties should take the lead in combating climate change and the adverse effects thereof*".

This shows how justice has very concrete and practical implications, and raises another crosscutting justice issue: climate change not only affects people here and now, but also future generations. How can we make sure they are not unfairly harmed by us, or forced to take an unfair share of the burden, given that they clearly cannot have any responsibility for the problem. This is known "**intergenerational justice**".

Müller encouraged participants to delve into the issue more deeply, because climate justice is the heart of the whole regime and cannot be ignored even in the more "bottom up" context of the Paris Agreement.

Thanking the presenters and participants, Anju Sharma, head of the Publication and Policy Analysis Unit of ecbi, invited feedback both on the webinar and on the publications that were sent to participants in advance.

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