

Submission by Saudi Arabia

SBSTA 44 agenda item 6 (b)

Matters relating to science and review

Advice on how the assessments of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change can inform the global stocktake.

Saudi Arabia in the UNFCCC welcomes the opportunity to submit its initial views on how the assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) can inform the global stocktake (GST) pursuant to paragraph 5 of the conclusions of the SBSTA at its 44th session in Bonn May 2016.¹ Before addressing specific issues, we would like to make the following guiding comments:

- Saudi Arabia recognizes and respects the IPCC as an independent, neutral, scientific body and stresses the importance of safeguarding the integrity of the IPCC and its products to ensure the objectivity and the soundness of the research without encroachment that may dilute or skew the science.
- The IPCC reports continue to play a role in providing Parties with policy-relevant scientific information that is comprehensive and peer-reviewed. Their objective role is clearly recognized under the UNFCCC process.
- In addition to scientific assessments of climate change, Parties would benefit greatly from a socioeconomic framing of the issue at hand in terms of the means of implementation and support available as they devise their policies to combat climate change.
- However, the policy-relevance and feasibility of the IPCC's assessments in relation to Parties commitments and actions are exclusively within the sphere of activity and decision-making of the COP under the UNFCCC.
- Therefore, any introduction of policy-relevant findings from the IPCC reports into the UNFCCC process should be subject to Party-driven conclusions of the SBSTA to be subsequently adopted by the COP in relation to the specific IPCC reports.
- Moreover, it is vital to stress that the identification of information gaps that would need to be addressed should be done by Parties through their submissions, which continue to serve as the main bases of information collected going forward.

Global Stocktake

GST is an opportunity for the comprehensive and integrated assessment of Parties' actions going forward, within the context of the Paris Agreement and the achievement of the objective of the Convention. Saudi Arabia believes that Parties collective efforts, and the role of GST as it relates to those efforts, is to ensure the fulfillment of the objective of the Convention, which is the "stabilization of greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. Such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow

¹ See FCCC/SBSTA/2016/L.16, at <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2016/sbsta/eng/l16.pdf>

ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner.”²

As such, with regards to the role of the IPCC in informing the GST, Saudi Arabia trusts that scientific information provided by the IPCC can be used in an accurate, comprehensive and scientific way that is free of bias and undue selectivity in IPCC findings to ensure its relevance to all Parties.

Furthermore, given that policy makers are the primary audience in question, it is imperative that the IPCC’s input to the GST address the socioeconomic context these policy makers have to work within as they formulate their climate change policies among other priorities. In particular, policy makers need to be informed of the projected social and economic costs associated with different pathways of combating climate change in addition to environmental costs. Furthermore, policy makers need to be informed of the availability and feasibility of various means of implementation, such as technology and finance, to enable them to make practical and effective decisions.

While the IPCC has its own scientific independence, which all Parties should safeguard and respect, its reports and findings however will not provide all that is required to inform GST as GST will include sources of input from adaptation efforts, support, and communication, climate finance efforts, the transparency framework, the support of technology development and transfer for developing countries, and most importantly, submissions communicated by Parties through their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

It is therefore imperative that a balance is maintained between IPCC and other sources of inputs and information, in order to guarantee that Parties have a comprehensive base of information from which to draw conclusions and decisions.

² See full Convention text, at http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/background/application/pdf/convention_text_with_annexes_english_for_posting.pdf