

PHILIPPINE SUBMISSION ON SBSTA 56 AGENDA ITEM 12:

Guidance on Cooperative Approaches Referred to in Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement and Decision 2/CMA.3

(Emissions Avoidance Issue)

August 2022

Pursuant to paragraph 3 of Decision 2/CMA.3, Parties are to develop recommendations, for consideration and adoption by the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Paris Agreement at its fourth session in November 2021, on several issues that would make the Guidance on Cooperative Approaches referred to in Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Paris Agreement fully operational. The Philippines specifically refers to paragraph 3(c) of the decision on the “consideration of whether Internationally Transferred Mitigation Outcomes or ITMOs could include Emissions Avoidance”.

As the main proponent for the inclusion of Emissions Avoidance as an eligible class of mitigation actions under the cooperative market and non-market mechanisms of Article 6 of the Paris Agreement, the Philippines would like to make the following points:

- 1) In the context of threat management which is understood to be the main goal under the Climate Convention and its Protocols, Parties need to systematically address the problem in all its potential forms and manifestations: as risks, as well as impacts.
- 2) Under the risk management framework for crisis management, Prevention of the adverse impacts can be achieved if the source of the problem is Avoided. If Parties have accepted Emissions reduction as a risk management measure which will prevent the potential adverse impact of the risk source partly, as well as, Sinks as an impact mitigation measure, more so, Emissions Avoidance which will thoroughly prevent the problem from happening or aggravating.
- 3) Risk management is a standard, normative process which is globally accepted and applied to address problems systematically. It is even surprising that the Convention and PA Parties have not applied the whole slew of mitigation options comprising this Framework sooner. Even more surprising is that the inclusion of the most important class, Emissions Avoidance, which will provide the biggest opportunity to address the global warming sooner, is still being debated.
- 4) The Convention and its Protocols have consistently recognized and affirmed the right of developing country Parties to sustainable socioeconomic development. No developing country Party intends to remain in its current state of under development. It will always aspire to develop more, especially if it has a segment of its population below the poverty line.

- 5) This chronic development problem will force developing countries to examine and assert their right to develop socioeconomically using every means at their disposal. Asserting this right can be problematic if they do not have the means to leapfrog to a clean and climate benign future... for them and the rest of the world. It, therefore, makes sense for them to have their means, especially climate benign technologies and knowhow now instead of later.
- 6) The emissions trajectory of developed and developing country Parties are not the same and therefore, not comparable. Developing countries' will be notionally increasing under a worst-case scenario of not having enough means to pursue a climate benign future. This will still be true even if what developing countries emit are survival emissions.
- 7) Given these points, the debate on the inclusion of Emissions Avoidance in cooperative approaches should not be prolonged. It should be accepted as a class of eligible actions under Cooperative approaches as soon as possible.

Definition of Emissions Avoidance in the UNFCCC

The Philippines would like to respond to an issue that the concept of avoidance is not defined under the UNFCCC or the IPCC and not important for the operationalization of Article 6.2.

The concept of Emissions Avoidance is embedded in the risk management concept: actions that prevent, reduce and address the causes and impacts of a threat, in this case, climate change.

The main concept of elaborating it is "avoiding or averting climate change" as stipulated in the preambular paragraphs of the Convention and all throughout the operative text.

The specific word may not be there but the concept is distributed all over the text. The principle, from which are drawn successive actions includes the precautionary principle (Principle 3 of the Convention) that affirms that – "Parties should take precautionary measures to anticipate, prevent or minimize the causes of climate change and mitigate its adverse effects."

As long as the concept or idea is in the main agreement (the UNFCCC) subsequent decisions can interpret according to practiced rules and standards where Prevention or Avoidance is one of them. Parties should not just be satisfied with given palliative solutions like Emissions reduction or even Emissions absorption like sinks which will never result to net zero global emissions if they do not drastically use the option of Emissions avoidance.