

Energy Community Climate Action Group – 2nd Meeting

Bonn COP23, Bula Zone, 15 November 2017

REPORT

On November 15, 2017 the Energy Community, with the support of the European Commission Directorate General for Climate Change, convened the second meeting of the Climate Action Group at COP23 in Bonn. The meeting, which took place during the high-level segment of the COP, in the Bula Zone (the negotiation area), was co-chaired by Connie Hedegaard, former EU Commissioner for Climate Action, and Ostap Semerak, Ukrainian Minister of Ecology and Natural Resources. Besides the Energy Community Secretariat and DG Clima, representatives of Contracting Party ministries in charge of climate change, energy and environmental policies and partner organizations (GIZ, CAN, UBA) participated in the meeting.

Janez Kopac, Director of the Energy Community, updated participants on developments since the first Climate Action Group, including the appointment of focal points at expert level for each ministry, the launch of a study to develop an EU-convergent methodology for the calculation of the 2030 targets and the draft Recommendation on integrated National Energy and Climate Plans (NECPs) proposed by the European Commission, to be further discussed at the PHLG meeting and at the upcoming Ministerial Council in Prishtina (14 December 2017). Serbia informed the CAG of its submitted NDCs, which includes a pledge to reduce GHG emissions by 2030, as well as ongoing preparation of the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. Serbia and FYR of Macedonia asked for the possibility of providing written comments on the recommendation before December 14 and additional background on the procedural aspects of its adoption. Contracting Parties also requested further clarifications on the agenda of next Ministerial Council.

The meeting was also the occasion to exchange information and coordinate on a number of topics of the Paris work programme. Yvon Slingenberg, Director, DG Clima, provided an update on the first week of negotiations, highlighting that relevant progress were achieved on each item of the Paris Agreement at technical level. However, there may be need of an additional meeting to streamline the guidelines and finalise pending issues prior to Katowice COP24. The Facilitative Dialogue, or “Talanoa Dialogue”, launched by the Fijian Presidency, will be discussing in a constructive and participatory way how to achieve Paris ambitious objectives. Ukraine noted that the Talanoa Dialogue should provide an early opportunity to consider the collective impact of mitigation ambitions by showcasing early action. Also, it was

highlighted that, if avoiding over-complexity, the Dialogue will celebrate progress and inspire action and long-term ambition. DG Clima referred to it as a very encouraging and forward looking tool for negotiations.

A good part of the discussion focused on Article 13 of the Paris Agreement on the enhanced transparency framework, whose key objectives include providing a clear understanding of modalities, procedures, and guidelines (MPGs), tracking progress towards NDCs and clarifying support offered and received by Parties. Discussions on this topic were constructive at COP level and the possibility of a regional peer review mechanism, engaging experts in countries with similar circumstances (e.g. Pacific States), was also put on the table. Serbia asked for further clarification on such a mechanism and expressed doubts on its benefits, given the political sensitivity of some regions. FYR of Macedonia inquired on harmonization between the transparency framework and the NECPs, especially in terms of deadlines and reporting obligations. In addition, the representative required additional information about the adoption of the proposed recommendation and discussions at the PHLG. Ukraine highlighted that there should be one reporting rule for Annex-I and non-Annex I countries; also, it was stressed that not all parties of the UNFCCC are parties of the Paris Agreement yet, therefore the MPGs do not apply universally. DG Clima explained that harmonization between the governance proposal and the transparency framework has been ensured; deadlines and set-up are aligned. There will be flexibility for developing countries that need it, however, it would be of paramount importance to avoid duplication and ensure one reporting channel.

EU Member States are already starting with the preparation of NECPs, before the adoption of the Governance Regulation, in order not to miss any deadline and to arrive prepared. It would be good also for Contracting Parties to start preparations in a timely manner and adopt the draft Recommendation as a first step.

For future meetings of the CAG, it was agreed to ensure that both Ministers responsible for energy and for climate policies would receive directly the relevant material from the Secretariat, thus enabling better and timely coordination internally and in the respective governments. Also, a short background material on the new initiatives to be discussed will be shared prior to the meetings.

FOLLOW-UP

- Communicate the date of next CAG meeting March (21 March);
- Share the interim results of the ongoing study on 2030 targets;
- CPs to provide comments on the draft Recommendation on NECPs;
- The EnC Secretariat and the EC to provide additional written background on the process of adoption of the draft Recommendation on NECPs.