

## **COP29 adopts decision on Mitigation Work Programme**

New Delhi, 2 Dec (Radhika Chatterjee) - Parties adopted a [decision](#) to continue work of the 'Sharm-el-Sheikh Mitigation Implementation and Ambition Work Programme' (called MWP for short), at the recently concluded climate talks held in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Adopted on the concluding day of COP29, the decision was declared by the COP29 Presidency to be a part of the "[Baku Climate Unity Pact](#)" along with decisions relating to the New Collective Quantified Goal on finance (NCQG) and the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA).

The MWP decision was adopted following intense disagreements between Parties. [For details of the decision, see below].

The main areas of contention that surfaced during the two weeks of consultation on the MWP included: the manner in which key findings from the [annual report](#) [of the dialogues and investment focused events held under it] are reflected in the final decision; the issue of using the MWP as a vehicle to implement the outcomes of the first global stock take (GST) through "high level messages", especially those relating to paragraph 28 [on global mitigation efforts in relation to energy, including the transitioning away from fossil fuels] of [decision 1/CMA.5](#); and inclusion of

specific messages relating to science and urgency in the context of keeping the goal of 1.5 °C alive.

Another point of disagreement that arose in the later part of the consultations was that of discussing cross-cutting issues like the impact of the implementation of response measures in future global dialogues of the MWP. [Impacts of implementation of response measures refer to the effects arising from the implementation of mitigation policies and actions in countries]. (For further details of the intense negotiations over these issues see [TWN update](#)).

Developing country groups like the **Like-minded developing countries (LMDC)**, the **African Group**, and the **Arab Group**, insisted that the objective of the MWP was to facilitate dialogues and exchange views, to provide an opportunity to Parties to share experiences and learn from each other, and that the focus should be on improving those dialogues and the investment focused events, to ensure Parties are able to make the most out of the exchanges facilitated by the work programme.

They also stressed that the programme should not be a vehicle to impose or prescribe national mitigation targets through the inclusion of

“high level messages” and in “cherry picking” findings from the MWP annual report without taking into account the varying national contexts of countries. Doing this, they asserted, would undermine the nationally determined nature of each country’s contributions to climate action, and would change the mandate of the work programme. These groups along with **Group SUR (Brazil, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Uruguay)**, also highlighted the importance of means of implementation in raising their ambition.

On the other hand, developed countries such as the **United States (US), European Union (EU), Environmental Integrity Group (EIG), Australia,** and some developing countries especially the **Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)** and the **Least developed countries (LDCs)** also, insisted on having “strong outcomes” from the MWP by messages to Parties to scale up mitigation ambition, keeping in mind the “urgency” of the situation. This they said was to be done through the insertion of key messages under the MWP. Some of the key elements they emphasized for these messages are: having mitigation action aligned with the 1.5 °C goal; creating a strong linkage between the MWP and the GST in accordance with paragraph 186 of the GST decision; scaling up mitigation action in line with paragraph 28 of the Dubai GST decision; and using the MWP to inform the process of updating the Nationally Determined Contributions [NDCs] of Parties.

[Paragraph 186 of the **GST decision** states: *“Invites the relevant work programmes and constituted bodies under or serving the Paris Agreement to integrate relevant outcomes of the first GST in planning their future work, in line with their mandates;”*.

**China**, for **LMDC** emphasized the need to stay within the mandate of the MWP and not include any kind of targets in the decision as that would be against the bottom-up nature of the Paris Agreement [PA]. Asking to keep any kind of linkages between MWP and GST at bay, it said the outcomes of GST could be used to inform NDCs as provided in Article 14 of the PA. It also shared several inputs for improving the organisation of the MWP. It said that the scope of the dialogues under the MWP should not deviate from what has been in decision from Egypt [4/CMA.4] and that

they should not duplicate topics that have already been discussed. It also asked for a clear indication in the decision for the discussion of crosscutting topics like “negative impacts of response measures, barriers and challenges of unilateral measures”, gaps relating to financing, consideration of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) and equity, and discussion of issues relating to just transitions.

Regarding the investment focused events, the LMDC said the digital platform proposed by **Brazil** could be considered in the context of a mitigation implementation platform to connect mitigation projects with funders. It asked developed countries to present progress on delivering on their finance and technology obligations to developing countries. It also asked for the need to discuss the adequacy levels of support from developed to developing countries, and the unintended consequences of developed countries’ actions. It also asked for the need to consider a “wide range of flexible financing options” including concessional loans and grants that could meet diverse needs of sectors “without preconditions.” [See details on the Brazilian proposal below under Group Sur].

On the issue of including messages related to science, **India** said, “To parse these messages to pick ones that suit one or other issue out of context will not be acceptable. We do not see how this could be a way forward, as it will by definition have to be an exercise in cherry picking. We have heard from colleagues that they think it is important to highlight the science. But we think Parties are aware and apprised of science constantly through various processes both within and outside the Convention...We do not think that it is some paragraphs within the GST that do this....We have heard that Parties want the reflection of some specific elements of the GST in the decision because these reflect the best available science....It must be emphasized that a large part of the references in the GST that ...colleagues have referred to here are actually based on economic analysis and assumptions. They cannot be viewed therefore, as removed from all the other elements of the GST. Parties have adopted the entire GST decision, not just some paragraphs at the exclusion of others. So, to reflect this, ...would mean referencing all 196 paragraphs in the decision. We do think that Parties are capable of reading the GST outcome in

its entirety and that it will inform their NDCs. It is in fact quite heartening to hear, not only in this room, but in many different rooms that Parties indeed intend to use the GST, or signals from the GST to have national discussions as to how their NDCs could be not only more ambitious but also more equitable. These are conversations that we must have domestically and this is the trust we place in the process of implementation of the PA.”

**India** further added that “there could be clear indication for the global dialogues [under the MWP] to include cross-cutting elements. For example, the operationalisation of equity and CBDR-RC in ensuring fair access to the carbon budget, the impact of coercive unilateral measures on trade flows and on opportunities in developing countries, the benefits of removing intellectual property rights in the diffusion of renewable energy technologies, among others. We submit that these are very much linked to mitigation.”

**Saudi Arabia** for the **Arab Group** made similar remarks and added that accepting the invitation of paragraph 186 of the GST outcome “would muddy our [MWP’s] scope and expand it in a way which would not like to see.” Expressing its reluctance to include key findings from the annual report of the MWP in the decision, it said that the report “is not a final negotiated product”, and the topics and sub-topics that were discussed in the dialogue were chosen by co-chairs of MWP, which “eventually leads us to a report” that is produced in a process that is “not Party- driven”. It also added that the “resulting basket of solutions” that are summarized in the report “cannot be applicable and relevant to all contexts” and “cherry picking” messages from the report “would ignore the contextual differences of Parties.”

**Zimbabwe** for the **African Group** said there is a difference in the understanding of mandate and scope of MWP. Commenting on various aspects of the [informal note](#) produced by the co-facilitators on Nov 15, it said “the AGN recognizes that it contains multiple elements of a top-down approach” and is “prescriptive in nature”, which would be “difficult for us to accept”. Emphasizing on the usefulness of existing modalities of global dialogues and investment focused events, it said “there is still room for improvement...and there is still scope for focusing on enhancements.” It also

mentioned the need for improving matchmaking between projects and relevant stakeholders, and discussing issues relating to investment flows and grant financing, so that mitigation implementation could be discussed in this critical decade. It added “we think it is unfair to use MWP as a placeholder for policy messages and GST elements”.

**Brazil** for **Group SUR**, elaborated on its proposal which it had shared earlier in the discussions. Calling it a “mitigation implementation facilitation platform”, it said, this platform would connect mitigation projects with relevant stakeholders. In this context it also mentioned NDCs and the need to be “in line with the purpose and objectives” of the PA. It said it would like the scope of the platform to include projects with adaptation co-benefits and wanted this platform to be a hub that could be linked to other platforms like the platform for Article 6.8 [which is a non-market approach mechanism], Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) platform [set up under the Convention], platforms related to agriculture, technology networks, and other platforms outside the regime of UNFCCC.

It added further that “we would have one year to think about this... it would have submission from Parties” and that it would be “built through negotiations.” Regarding the topics that this platform and MWP could work on, it mentioned the need for a “sectoral progressive approach” and engaging in other sectors like “forest restoration, bioeconomy, ...and the whole GST, including paragraphs, “where we recognize that developed countries are not taking lead because we know there is a gap in their mitigation ambition, provision of finance and means of implementation” to developing countries.

Expressing its agreement with LMDC’s proposal on improving organisational aspects of MWP, it supported the inclusion of crosscutting topics like the negative impact of response measures, aspects related to just transition, and the need for “balance between developed and developing countries.” It also asked for the discussion of “biodiversity, synergies between... Conventions, related topics and crosscutting issues of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.”

Developing countries like **Iran** and **Qatar**

supported the views of the LMDC and Arab Group and **Egypt** supported LMDC and the African Group.

The **US** asked for reaffirming messages related to the urgency of keeping 1.5 °C pathways alive and including “high level messages based on emerging science”. It also supported the inclusion of key messages relating to the rapid acceleration of deployment of renewable energy, expansion of grids and energy storage, phasing out coal, addressing methane emissions, measures relating to enhancing energy efficiency and so on. Highlighting the need to “send signals” it said, “we are not here to prescribe any specific actions. We are here to reflect on how we can accomplish what we have agreed on, including the GST decision... We want to make sure MWP fulfils its mandate and that we build on the first GST decision.” Adding further, it said, “we can’t wait another five years. We need to consider mitigation aspects of the GST decision”, especially the “forward looking aspects” as detailed in paragraphs 28 and 33 [on reducing deforestation and degradation by 2030] of the GST decision in future global dialogues of the MWP.

It said there is a need for discussing opportunities to “facilitate acceleration of mitigation actions”. Stressing the importance of reflecting on mitigation aspects of GST, it said “it is natural to pick up relevant things from it [GST] in the MWP... the MWP is not a static programme... It said the US “would support a clear call” and reference to paragraph 186 of GST decision and to highlight “MWP is following” up on “what we agreed to last year.”

Regarding the point of discussing cross-cutting issues like the impact of response measures on developing countries in future global dialogues, it said Co-chairs of MWP are empowered for selecting topics for the dialogues and that it “doesn’t support bringing other issues” as MWP is the “one place for talking about mitigation action.” Calling Brazil’s proposal on a digital platform “interesting”, it said it has “concerns about duplication and effectiveness of it” and that there were “practical questions about how it would be set up.”

[Observers in the room who heard the US intervention raised eyebrows on how exactly the US intends to show more mitigation ambition

when its President designate Trump has indicated that the country will exit from the PA.]

Other developed countries and groups like the **EU, EIG, United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Japan,** and **South Korea** expressed positions similar to that of the US.

## THE BAKU MWP DECISION

The MWP decision that was finally adopted by Parties took “note” of the “key findings, opportunities, barriers and actionable solutions summarized in the annual report on the work programme for 2024” in its paragraphs 6 and 7, “recognizing that they do not represent an exhaustive summary of all views expressed in this regard and taking into account different national circumstances.” Paragraphs 6 and 7 of the decision read as follows:

“6. *Also notes* the key findings, opportunities, barriers and actionable solutions summarized in the annual report on the work programme for 2024 on the topic “Cities: buildings and urban systems”, recognizing that they do not represent an exhaustive summary of all views expressed in this regard and taking into account different national circumstances, including:

(a) In relation to reducing operational emissions (from heating, cooling and appliances), designing building envelopes for energy efficiency (for retrofitting and new construction), reducing embodied emissions (from building materials), spatial planning and low-carbon infrastructure, electrification and switching to clean and low-emission technologies, and enhancing carbon storage through green and blue infrastructure;

(b) The importance of international collaboration and means of implementation, including finance, technology transfer, capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and awareness-raising, for urgently scaling up implementation of mitigation actions, particularly in developing countries;

(c) The need to tailor solutions to sociocultural and economic contexts, noting that there is no ‘one size fits all’ approach owing to the diversity of national and local circumstances;

(d) The importance of enhancing collaboration

between cities, subnational authorities, local communities and national Governments on developing and implementing mitigation actions;

(e) The importance of integrating climate action into work on buildings and urban system planning to reduce emissions through long-term planning in the context of sustainable development and efforts to eradicate poverty and inequality;

7. *Further notes* that addressing the key findings, leveraging the opportunities, overcoming the barriers and considering the actionable solutions referred to in paragraph 6 above is voluntary and can be enabled by country-specific action in the light of different national circumstances, international cooperation and the mobilization of financial, technology and capacity-building support to developing countries;”

High level messages relating to the GST outcome were not included in the MWP decision. The MWP decision in its paragraph 10 also encouraged Parties, observers and other stakeholders to “submit views on opportunities, best practices, actionable solutions, challenges and barriers relevant to the topic of each dialogue under the work programme”, which may include information on:

“(a) The experts, potential financiers and investors to be invited to participate in the global dialogues and investment-focused events;

(b) The specific needs and circumstances of developing country Parties, especially those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, as provided for in the Convention and the PA.”

The decision also requested the secretariat [in paragraph 11], to organise future global dialogues and investment focused events under the guidance of its co-chairs in a manner that:

“(a) Enhance regional and gender balance among invited experts;

(b) Increase the number of participants from each Party, particularly from developing country Parties, including by expanding virtual participation opportunities;

(c) Enable Parties to contribute to determining the agenda, subtopics and guiding questions for the dialogues and events with a view to enhancing transparency;

(d) Enhance the matchmaking function to assist Parties in accessing finance, including investment, grants and concessional loans;

(e) Enhance understanding of regional perspectives;”

The decision also took note of the proposal made by **Brazil** on behalf of **Group SUR** for the creation of a digital platform for facilitating the implementation of mitigation in paragraph 13 and invited submissions from Parties to share their views on the design and features of this platform in paragraph 14. Both paragraphs of the decision read as follows:

“13. *Notes* the discussion at this session regarding the creation of a digital platform to facilitate implementation of mitigation actions by enhancing collaboration between governments, financiers and other stakeholders on developing investable projects in a country-owned and nationally determined manner;

14. *Invites* Parties, observers and other stakeholders to submit via the submission portal by 1 May 2025 views on the design and features of the platform referred to in paragraph 13 above with a view to an exchange of views on the platform taking place at the sixty-second sessions of the subsidiary bodies (June 2025);”

[During the high-level ministerial round table on pre-2030 ambition, it was also shared that the tenure of existing co-chairs of MWP, **Amr Osama Abdel-Aziz (Egypt)** and **Lola Vallejo (France)** was ending in 2024 and that new co-chairs would be appointed by the subsidiary body Chairs for the next year.]

## SIMILAR CALLS IN THE MWP AND THE UAE DIALOGUE

The calls under the MWP on scaling up mitigation ambition and messages from the GST paragraph 28, were also mirrored in the negotiations in the

UAE dialogue under paragraph 97 of the GST decision.

In fact, some of these messages on scaling up mitigation ambition were reflected in paragraphs 9,10,11 and 14 of the decision [text](#) that was proposed by the COP29 Presidency for the UAE dialogue on implementing the GST outcomes. However, during the closing plenary session of the Baku COP, the same Parties who wanted to see more mitigation ambition in the draft decision text of the UAE dialogue, expressed their disappointment and objected to its adoption. For instance, paragraph 14 of the UAE dialogue decision [text](#) read as follows: “14. Also reaffirms the need for deep, rapid and sustained reductions

in greenhouse gas emissions in line with 1.5 °C pathways and calls on Parties to contribute to the global efforts referred to in paragraph 28 of decision 1/CMA.5 in a nationally determined manner, taking into account the PA and their different national circumstances, pathways and approaches.”

Subsequently, the COP29 President, **Mukhtar Babayev** announced that since discussions on the UAE dialogue could not be completed, the item would be continued in the next session of subsidiary bodies in June 2025.

[Further article will follow on the UAE dialogue].