

AWG-KP Numbers Group: The ambition is far too low, close the big gap, Annex I Parties told

Bonn, 3 June (Lim Li Lin) - Developing countries have strongly criticized the level of ambition of developed country pledges for their further commitments to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and their attempts to push the burden of reducing their emissions to developing countries.

The gap between the pledges and what the science requires is enormous, and developed countries should close this gap. A proposal was made for a workshop to discuss this issue.

Figures given by China and Bolivia showed that a majority of developing countries have demanded that Annex I parties to the Kyoto Protocol reduce their emissions by an aggregate of 40-50 per cent or more by 2020 (compared to 1990). However the national pledges (of Annex I parties in the Kyoto Protocol, which exclude the US) have added up to only 17-25 per cent reduction, according to UNFCCC secretariat data. If the US is included, the number becomes significantly lower.

China said there is a gap of 13 to 19 percentage points between the aggregate reduction number pledged by Annex I parties in the KP compared to what the science demands, and they have the responsibility to “close the gap” and improve their ambition level.

These points were made by the developing countries at the AWG-KP in a contact group meeting on the scale of emission reductions by Annex I Parties (known as the “numbers group”) on 2 and 3 June. AWG-KP is the Ad hoc Working Group on further commitments by Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol.

However there was a distinct lack of positive response from the developed countries, with a number of them saying that efforts also have to be made by developing countries.

The work in the numbers group is the main focus of the AWG-KP. So far, Annex I (developed country) Parties have made emission reduction pledges announced to the AWG-KP and under the Copenhagen Accord that was only noted by the UN climate change conference in December last year. However the work of the AWG-KP is to first decide on an aggregate level of emission reduction commitments for Annex I Parties, and then on the individual and joint contribution of Annex I Parties to this aggregate level.

A recent article in *Nature* journal indicated that range of developed country pledges (including the US) under the Copenhagen Accord could be between an increase of 6.5% and a reduction of 15.6% by 2020 on 1990 levels.

The Secretariat presented its note ‘Compilation of pledges for emission reductions and related assumption provided by Parties to date and the associated emission reductions’ which provides background information from Annex I Parties on their pledges and related assumptions, an overview of the pledges and estimates by the Secretariat of the emission reductions, and an overview of the information and estimates of possible contributing factors such as the use of the Kyoto Protocol flexible mechanisms and land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) to achieving these emission reductions.

According to the paper, emission reductions in aggregate of Annex I Parties are expected to be between 17 and 25 % below 1990 levels by 2020, whether or not LULUCF is included or excluded. These are preliminary estimates as the rules and approaches for LULUCF and the role of the flexible mechanisms are still being negotiated by the AWG-KP. Many of the pledges are also conditional. Some of the LULUCF rules may lower the overall level of ambition of the pledges and emission reductions, and

the carry-over of units from the first commitment period could reduce the aggregate level of efforts by Annex I Parties.

The Co-Chair of the contact group, Jurgen Lefevere from the EU said that this was below the range mentioned in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report of 25-40% emission reductions and that the group should focus its discussions on how to raise the aggregate level and individual contributions to the aggregate level of emission reductions, and under what conditions and requirements? How to raise the lower end of pledges that are specified as a range, and what conditionalities are linked to the pledges?

China said that it was happy to enter this discussion, but was not happy with the slowness of the discussion. The mandate and focus of the AWG-KP is to determine the aggregate scale of emission reductions by Annex I Parties, and their individual or joint contributions to this scale. It said that there has not been any meaningful proposal from Annex I Parties regarding aggregate emission reduction numbers.

On the other hand, there have been a number of proposals from G77 and China countries—37 developing countries and the African Group have proposed at least 40% emission reductions by 2020 on 1990 levels, AOSIS (Alliance of Small Island States) has proposed more than 45% reductions by 2020 on 1990 levels, and Bolivia and other countries have proposed 50% domestic reductions in the commitment period 2013-2017 on 1990 levels, it said. All these proposals are still on table, as the task was not accomplished in Copenhagen, and the mandate of the AWG-KP was extended for another year.

China said that these figures are not controversial, they are not exactly the same but they complement and support each other. They represent the legitimate rights of developing countries, reflect historical responsibility, and the fact that the atmospheric space that has been over occupied by developed countries. Current pledges are not sufficient. There is a huge gap that needs to be closed by Annex I Parties, or 13-19 percent, between what they put forward and what they need to do to fulfil their obligation as well as scientifically determined requirements. And they have the capabilities such as funds and technology to do so, it said.

China suggested having a workshop to discuss how to close the gap and determine the aggregate scale of emission reductions by Annex I Parties as soon as possible. This proposal was supported by the Philippines.

Bolivia pointed out many problems -- the pledges in KP are well below expectation and below what is needed, there is no comparability of efforts between the Annex I Parties (with one Party agreeing to cut by 40% while another wanted to increase emissions by 3%), and with at least one country saying its pledge will be in accordance with what one party outside the KP pledges. It asked, how will we drive this process -- according to science, or according to what others are doing?

It said that developing countries have proposed a range between 40-50% aggregate reductions. But there is no rationality in the proposals by Annex I Parties, whose pledges range from increasing by 3% and reducing by 40%. It asked that this be discussed now, where is the comparability of efforts? Is this some kind of agreement where some can raise and others can lower their level of ambition?

Bolivia urged the Annex I Parties to speak up. They cannot avoid the obligations that they have subscribed to in the Kyoto Protocol. It is an international commitment, a contract, and they must keep their word. What is the aggregate emission reductions required by science, and where is the comparability of efforts? Many reports have demonstrated that the current pledges will lead us to beyond 3-4 degrees Celsius temperature increase. Annex I pledges should be discussed in an open and transparent way, it said.

Gambia on behalf of the **Africa Group** encouraged Annex I Parties to fill the gap, as according to science and the IPCC, the range is 25-40%, and it is in support of at least 40% aggregate reductions. It urged moving to the upper range, and looking at means to increase pledges.

Grenada wished to record its concern at the low level of pledges which is below the scientifically recommended range, and well below what AOSIS, which represents 43 countries and 20% of membership of the group, has called for. In addition, more than 100 countries have called for an emission reductions pathway that leads to warming of not more than 1.5 degrees Celsius. There was a moral incentive to all its partners to be more ambitious, as the current pledges are below the level that gives safety and security to people in what they are already experiencing.

Micronesia, speaking for the **AOSIS** said that the aggregate pledges are far from the range mentioned in the IPCC report, and further from what AOSIS wants. It said that AOSIS has done its own calculations, and that for all Annex I countries, the range of emission reductions is 12-18%. With LULUCF, this figure is reduced by 4%, and is down

to 7-13%. The gap between the pledges and what the science requires is enormous.

It said that there was a need to examine individual country numbers and assumptions in order to figure out how to encourage Parties to increase their level of ambition. In fact, some Parties are going in the wrong direction, like Canada that increased its pledge from a 3% reduction to a 3% increase.

Micronesia said that there are now many references to the Copenhagen Accord in the Secretariat's note, and that figures for all Annex I countries should be included so that the pledges can be placed in a broader context.

Colombia supported Micronesia and called for a joint discussion on aggregate numbers of all Annex I countries, to have a space for dialogue on all developed country emission reductions. This was supported by Grenada, the Philippines and Barbados. Barbados emphasized that the two negotiating tracks (AWG-KP and AWG-LCA – Ad hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention) need to be maintained, and this should not result in their merger.

Australia and Japan called for broadening the discussion further to also include developing countries, and not just Annex I countries. The EU and Norway supported broadening the discussion to a wider group of countries.

China said that it was unfortunate that the same discussion was happening. At a workshop in Poznan which was supposed to be on mitigation potentials of Annex I Parties, the presentations were all about developing countries. It said that it was against merging the two negotiating tracks, and did not support Australia's proposal to broaden the discussion to non-Annex I countries, but that it could support Colombia's proposal to have a discussion that included all Annex I countries, not just those that are Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, as long as the mandates of the different working groups is respected.

Venezuela, Brazil, Singapore, India, Saudi Arabia, Sudan emphasized the distinct mandates of the two working groups, the two tracks of negotiations, and insisted that there should no joint working group or broadening of the discussion to include non-Annex I Parties.

Argentina added that we must be respectful of the mandate of the working groups and the Bali Road Map. It emphasized that the range mentioned in the IPCC report of 25-30% was for developed countries only, and did not include LULUCF and use of the

flexible mechanisms. It asked how to raise the level of ambition and increase transparency.

The Co-Chair concluded that he will convey the discussion on a space to discuss all Annex I country numbers to the Chair of the AWG-KP, John Ashe from Antigua and Barbuda.

The United States said that it not a Party to the Kyoto Protocol and formally objected to being included in any joint Annex I countries discussion.

Another issue that was discussed was the proposal by Ethiopia to explore innovative mechanisms for the provisional entry into force of the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol for the second commitment period of Annex I Parties' emission reduction commitments. According to Ethiopia, there could be a gap between the first (2008-2012) and second (starting in 2013) commitment periods, and the continuity between the commitment periods is important.

The AWG-KP was scheduled to finish its work, and a second commitment period should have been adopted at the 5th Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) in Copenhagen last December. Although the next commitment period should begin in 2013, it is estimated that the entry into force of the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol for the second commitment period will take around three years.

The Co-Chair proposed that the numbers group could request the Chair of the AWG-KP to set up the legal contact group to analyse legal issues relating to the entry into force of the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to avoid any gap between the commitment periods.

Australia said that it had proposed a number of legal questions in previous sessions of the AWG-KP, but there was no consensus at the time to set up a legal contact group.

The Co-Chair clarified that the numbers group could ask the Chair of the AWG-KP to set up the legal contact group to address the issue of the entry into force of the amendment to the Kyoto Protocol, and he would discuss with the Chair on how to proceed with the questions from Australia. He said that the legal group would determine the focus of its work, and that it would only address legal aspects relating to the work of the AWG-KP, and so there should be no issue of inconsistency or overlap with the work of the other contact groups.

China said that the discussion in the legal group must be consistent with the mandate of the AWG-KP.