



## Framework Convention on Climate Change

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### Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice

Thirty-third session

Cancun, 30 November to 4 December 2010

Agenda item 5

Research and systematic observation

### Research and systematic observation

#### Draft conclusions proposed by the Chair

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) noted with appreciation the statements delivered by representatives of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), the Global Terrestrial Observing System (GTOS) and the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), as well as the statement delivered by Brazil on behalf of the Committee on Earth Observation Satellites (CEOS).
2. The SBSTA welcomed the *Update of the Implementation Plan for the Global Observing System for Climate in Support of the UNFCCC* (hereinafter referred to as the 2010 updated GCOS implementation plan),<sup>1</sup> submitted by the secretariat of GCOS and prepared under the guidance of the GCOS Steering Committee.<sup>2</sup>
3. The SBSTA noted the sound assessment of requirements for climate-related observations that this plan provides and its enhanced focus on adaptation, in particular the identification of needs for improving land and coastal networks for observations relevant to vulnerability assessments and adaptation, with specific emphasis on developing countries.
4. The SBSTA urged Parties to work towards full implementation of the 2010 updated GCOS implementation plan and to consider, within the context of their national capabilities, what actions they can take at the national, regional and international levels to contribute to the implementation of the plan.
5. The SBSTA further encouraged Parties to increase consideration of GCOS-related implementation in relevant national and regional activities, such as those undertaken by regional centres and national meteorological and hydrological, terrestrial and oceanographic services and those undertaken in the context of adaptation. In this regard, the

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<sup>1</sup> A summary of this updated plan is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.9. The full report is available at <<http://unfccc.int/items/3462.php>>.

<sup>2</sup> See decision 9/CP.15 and the conclusions of the SBSTA at its thirtieth session (FCCC/SBSTA/2009/3, paras. 57 and 58).

SBSTA encouraged Parties and relevant organizations to increase coordination of relevant activities and to build upon and enhance existing national and regional centres with the aim of facilitating implementation of the GCOS regional actions plans and strengthening observation networks.

6. The SBSTA further noted the importance of historical observations as the basis for analysis and reanalysis and encouraged Parties and relevant organizations to increase their data rescue and digitization of historical observations and to establish and strengthen international coordination initiatives for these activities.

7. The SBSTA encouraged Parties, when providing information related to systematic observation in their detailed technical reports on systematic observations provided in conjunction with their national communications and in line with relevant reporting guidelines,<sup>3</sup> to take into consideration the new requirements identified in the 2010 updated GCOS implementation plan, in particular the new essential climate variables (ECVs). The SBSTA noted that any future revision of relevant UNFCCC reporting guidelines, in particular those on global climate change observing systems, should take into account the new elements identified in that plan.

8. The SBSTA invited the GCOS secretariat to report on progress made in the implementation of the 2010 updated GCOS implementation plan on a regular basis, at subsequent sessions of the SBSTA, as appropriate. In this regard it encouraged the GCOS to review, in broad consultation with relevant partners, the adequacy of observing systems for climate, such as by updating the *Second Report on the Adequacy of the Global Observing Systems for Climate in Support of the UNFCCC*.<sup>4</sup> It noted the usefulness of updating the GCOS implementation plan on a regular basis, so as to take into consideration developments under the Convention and their related observational needs. The SBSTA agreed to consider, at its thirty-fifth session, issues related to the timing of GCOS contributions to the SBSTA.

9. The SBSTA noted the relevance of global climate observations for climate research, prediction and services. In this regard, the SBSTA recalled the outcome of World Climate Conference-3, inter alia the call for major strengthening of the GCOS and all its components and associated activities, as one of the essential elements of the Global Framework for Climate Services.

10. The SBSTA welcomed the report by the GTOS<sup>5</sup> on the framework for climate-related terrestrial observations and the workplan on the development of standards and protocols for the terrestrial ECVs assessed. It encouraged the GTOS to continue coordinating the development of methodologies for climate-related terrestrial observations and to continue working with its sponsors<sup>6</sup> and the International Organization for Standardization, and in broad consultation with relevant partners, towards implementation of that workplan, including through mobilization of the necessary resources.

11. The SBSTA encouraged Parties, in close cooperation with the GTOS, to support and facilitate the development of terrestrial standards and to improve their terrestrial networks.

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<sup>3</sup> Decision 11/CP.13, which adopted the revised “UNFCCC reporting guidelines on global climate observing systems”.

<sup>4</sup> Available at <<http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/gcos/index.php?name=Publications>>.

<sup>5</sup> A summary of this report is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.10. The full report is available at <<http://unfccc.int/items/3462.php>>.

<sup>6</sup> These are the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Council for Science, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the World Meteorological Organization.

12. The SBSTA also noted the increased usefulness of the terrestrial ECVs beyond observations of climate change, such as for biodiversity and desertification, and encouraged the GTOS to increase synergy with ongoing relevant initiatives.
13. The SBSTA invited the GTOS to report at the thirty-fifth session of the SBSTA on progress made on the matters referred to in paragraphs 10–12 above.
14. The SBSTA noted that the future workplan of GOOS includes emerging ECVs on ocean chemistry and ecosystems and noted the relevance of these variables in tracking the impacts of climate change and acidification on ocean ecosystems.
15. The SBSTA welcomed the coordinated response by the CEOS<sup>7</sup> to the relevant needs of the GCOS implementation plan and those of the Convention, and the progress and commitment by space agencies involved in climate observations to address the space-based component of the GCOS and improve climate monitoring capabilities from space on a sustained basis.
16. The SBSTA encouraged Parties that support space agencies involved in global observations to continue, through CEOS, cooperation with and support to the GCOS and to respond to the relevant needs identified in the 2010 updated GCOS implementation plan. It invited the CEOS to provide, by SBSTA 37, an updated report on progress made on major achievements in relevant areas.
17. The SBSTA emphasized the important role of high-quality climate observations in underpinning climate change research, modelling and strengthening the robustness of the scientific knowledge, including that of assessments by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. It noted the critical importance of such information for supporting decision-making on climate change policies, including in the context of long-term cooperative action on climate change and the review of the adequacy of the long-term goal currently under consideration under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention (AWG-LCA).
18. The SBSTA emphasized the urgent need to secure funding to meet the essential needs for global climate observations under the Convention on a long-term basis. In this regard the SBSTA noted the information related to additional funding requirements identified in the updated 2010 GCOS implementation plan.
19. The SBSTA further urged Parties in a position to do so, and invited relevant organizations, to provide the support needed to strengthen observation networks and capabilities in developing countries, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States.
20. The SBSTA invited the Subsidiary Body for Implementation to consider the funding needs referred to in paragraphs 18 and 19 above at its thirty-fourth session under relevant agenda items, as appropriate.
21. The SBSTA also invited the AWG-LCA to consider the funding needs referred to in paragraph 18 above in its deliberations with the aim that adequate financial resources are made available on a long-term basis in the future financial architecture.
22. The SBSTA noted with appreciation the updated information on emerging scientific findings and research outcomes provided by regional and international climate change research programmes and organizations.<sup>8</sup> It also took note of the views submitted by Parties on issues related to the research dialogue, including the workshop to be held in conjunction

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<sup>7</sup> A summary of this report is contained in document FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.11. The full report is available at <<http://unfccc.int/items/3462.php>>.

<sup>8</sup> FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.15.

with SBSTA 34.<sup>9</sup> It invited Parties to provide additional views on these matters by 31 January 2011, and requested the secretariat to make these available as a miscellaneous document prior to SBSTA 34.

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<sup>9</sup> FCCC/SBSTA/2010/MISC.12.