



AUSTRALIA

Work Programs for 2009

Submission to the AWG-LCA and the AWG-KP

This submission provides the Australian Government's views on the 2009 work programs of the Ad-hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action (AWG-LCA) and the Ad-hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP).

Parties have agreed that negotiations under the AWG-LCA and AWG-KP will intensify in 2009. Full negotiation mode will be necessary to ensure the post-2012 negotiations are prepared to deliver conclusions on what is required to achieve a comprehensive outcome to the 15th Conference of the Parties.

Intensified negotiations will be complex. It will be important to continue to balance the need for full participation with the need to make the most effective use of the time available in order to sustain progress.

The work plan of both AWGs and the subsidiary bodies should be carefully streamlined to ensure that time is used most efficiently and duplication of work avoided. Priority must be given to the post-2012 negotiations.

The 2009 work plans must be flexible to ensure Parties can dedicate sufficient attention to issues as appropriate. Some issues will require more time whereas others will be resolved more quickly. Establishing rigid and detailed work plans could limit time available for complex issues requiring in-depth analysis. For example, it will be important to ensure adequate time for detailed consideration of how deforestation and REDD should be treated in a post-2012 outcome.

It is desirable that the post-2012 outcome avoid multiple mechanisms and procedures, in order to streamline ratification and implementation of obligations. Much of the work on rules and mechanisms under the AWG-KP will be pertinent to future discussions in the AWG-LCA. It will be

important to draw on, rather than repeat these discussions. One possibility in 2009 may be to hold joint sessions of the AWG-KP and AWG-LCA on issues of direct relevance to both forums.

Moving to full negotiation mode will necessitate detailed legal work to implement proposals. The AWG-LCA's 2009 work plan will require a dedicated component addressing legal matters, which can build on planned legal discussions in the AWG-KP.

Intensified negotiations will also require increased resources to support the work of the UNFCCC secretariat. Current resourcing is not commensurate with the work we will undertake throughout 2009. Other international organisations with comparable negotiating agendas have the benefit of greater staffing and financial resources. For comparison, the Secretariat of the World Trade Organization in Geneva has 629 regular staff¹ and a budget of CHF 180 million (approx US \$150 million) in 2008². Many are also located in capitals with permanent representation from Parties, which enables productive discussions to continue outside of formal negotiating sessions.

Australia acknowledges the significant ongoing efforts of the UNFCCC secretariat to support Parties and service the negotiating regime, particularly given the constrained conditions under which it operates. Parties should be receptive to reasonable increases in the UNFCCC budget to ensure the secretariat is most effectively and appropriately structured and resourced in the future.

¹ Regular budget posts including posts not yet filled.

² By comparison, the UNFCCC's intended 2008 staffing level is 325, of which 140 positions are funded from the core budget. As at 30 June, 235 positions were filled. The UNFCCC's 2008 operating budget is US \$23.8 million.