



AUSTRALIA

Facilitating the exchange of information and the sharing of experiences on policies and measures of Parties included in Annex I to the Convention

At its twenty-fourth session, the SBSTA invited Parties to submit to the secretariat their views specifically on the need for further events to facilitate the exchange of information and the sharing of experiences on policies and measures of Annex I Parties (FCCC/SBSTA/2006/5, paragraph 114). Australia is pleased to provide the following submission on this matter.

Australia recognises the importance of facilitating opportunities for Parties to exchange information and share experiences on policies and measures. The exchange of accurate and reliable information and the sharing of experiences and lessons learned in the implementation of policies and measures is beneficial to all Parties' understanding of the practical advantages and disadvantages of the various approaches in responding to climate change. Such information sharing assists all Parties to improve current actions and to undertake further measures to reduce or limit greenhouse gas emissions. In Australia's view, any such opportunities should facilitate discussion on experiences with, and opportunities for, climate change mitigation amongst all Parties, including non-Annex I countries, in order to enhance and scale up our collective efforts.

It is worth noting that information sharing is already occurring through a range of formal and informal mechanisms, including bilateral dialogue and partnerships between countries, through the various workshops and seminars held both within and outside the UNFCCC framework, and through the publication of information on the UNFCCC website, such as national communications, papers, presentations and submissions by Parties. In particular, the compilation and synthesis by the secretariat of the national communications of Annex I Parties provides a useful overview of the policies and measures adopted by these countries, the effectiveness of those policies and measures, and the context within which they operate. Australia supports the continuation of general information sharing through these targeted products and processes.

Australia believes it is also important to recognise that there have been significant developments since SBSTA 24, particularly with respect to broad post-2012 negotiations, that are relevant to the further consideration of this SBSTA agenda item. In recent years a number of new mechanisms facilitating information sharing on policies and measures have emerged, including through the Dialogue on Long-Term Cooperative Action under the Convention and through the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments by Annex I Parties to the Kyoto Protocol. The Dialogue on Long-Term Cooperative Action, in particular, has provided an efficient means of exchanging information and sharing experiences on policies and measures, and a useful forum to supplement more formal discussions in an environment conducive to franker and freer exchanges of views.

In addition, external processes such as the G8 Gleneagles Dialogue and the US Major Economies Meetings (MEM) have opened up new opportunities for exchanges of information and sharing of experiences on policies and measures. The MEM process provides a clear opportunity to share information and explore opportunities relating to, in particular, sectoral approaches, as well as a number of other specific and technical aspects of policies and measures. These processes are expected to feed back into, and augment, work under the UNFCCC. Furthermore, Australia believes that the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperative Action will provide further opportunities to facilitate information sharing on approaches, policies and measures by both Annex I and non-Annex I Parties.

Australia supports reasonable and cost-effective measures to encourage and facilitate information sharing. However in considering possible additional mechanisms for this purpose, it is important to avoid duplication of effort with existing practices in other forums, or under other agenda items and reporting requirements. In our view, the role of the COP and the SBSTA in this regard should be to provide a forum for the periodic consideration of processes already in place to facilitate information sharing on policies and measures (both within and outside the UNFCCC framework) and provide an opportunity to identify and respond to any gaps identified in these processes.