

**Ministry of Environment & Forests
Climate Change Division**

Outcomes from Doha Climate Change Conference

The Doha Climate Change Conference that concluded on 8th December, 2012 has resulted in three decisions (clubbed together as 'Doha Climate Gateway') aimed at advancing the implementation of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Kyoto Protocol (KP).

The key questions for the Doha conference were: amending the Kyoto Protocol to implement the second commitment under the Protocol; successfully concluding the work of the Bali Action Plan (BAP); and planning the work under the Durban Platform (DP) for Enhanced Action which was agreed to at Durban last year. The Conference addressed all the three issues and came out with a package¹ which balanced the interests and obligations of various countries.

The Doha Conference has succeeded in carrying out amendments to the KP making the second commitment period (CP2) of emission reduction by KP parties effective immediately beginning January 1, 2013. Although the emission reduction obligations undertaken by the Annex I parties are not as ambitious as required by science, the KP parties have agreed to implement the targets over an 8 years period (2013-2020), thus providing relative degree of certainty to the carbon markets. EU, the major KP Party will reduce its emissions by 20% by 2020 compared to 1990. It has been agreed that the KP parties will revisit their targets in 2014 with a view to increasing their ambition; this will be unconditional and will have no linkage with the work of the Durban Platform. This decision, along with provisional application of the amendments on an 'opt-in' basis has ensured that there will be no gap between the first commitment period under the KP ending on December 31, 2012 and the second one commencing on January 1, 2013.

The decision permits the parties to carry over their accumulated surplus Assigned Amount Units (AAUs) from the first commitment period to the second. However, the carryover of the Certified Emission Reduction (CER) units or Emission Reduction Units (ERUs) from the first period will be limited to the extent of 2.5%. The use of these units will be permitted only for meeting the shortfall in

¹There are separate decisions in the package as they involve different sets of legal obligations for countries, depending on whether they are bound by Kyoto Protocol or not. Their significance lies in the fact that they constitute a single package balancing the interests of different parties at present and are designed to converge in implementation over the time frame of 2020.

domestic emissions reduction target. Moreover, the trading between two parties in the AAUs will be limited to 2% only of the reserve.

As per the agreement, only those KP parties that have agreed to take mandatory targets under the KP in the CP2 will be able to use the flexibility mechanisms such as Clean development Mechanism (CDM), and Joint Implementation (JI). While the facility of trading in CERs and ERUs will be available only to such KP parties, the rules allow all Annex-I KP Parties to continue to participate in ongoing and new project activities under CDM. This has created a possibility for the Annex-I parties other than those having targets under the KP to trade in units from projects as and when modalities for operation of new market mechanisms covering such projects are developed by the SBI.

At the Doha Conference, India protected its interests fully and succeeded in bringing the three issues of Equity, Technology-related IPRs and the Unilateral Measures firmly back on the table. These outstanding or unresolved issues under the Bali Action Plan (BAP) are now part of the planned or continuing work of various bodies of the Convention. At Doha, India also ensured that agriculture, being a sensitive sector of our economy, was prevented from being included in the mitigation work programme proposed to be launched at the global level.

The reassertion of the principle of Equity and CBDR which have remained muted since Copenhagen was the single biggest gain from Doha. The Conference has explicitly recognized that the action of parties will be based on equity and CBDR including the need for equitable access to sustainable development. The decisions have also avoided quantitative target for global emissions reduction or global peaking that could place a cap on emissions of developing countries and restrict their development space.

Amongst the key concerns which the Conference could not address are those relating to financing commitments of developed countries, sectoral actions and the issue of compensation for loss and damage arising from climate change. While the Conference stopped short of giving a mandate to the ICAO or IMO to initiate steps for curtailing emissions in the respective sectors, the absence of a decision on sectoral framework for such actions has left open the possibility of such actions being initiated in such sectors by the respective international organisations on their own.

The Conference could not take ambitious or meaningful decisions on financing commitments of developed countries. No specific targets for mid-term financing (2013-2020) were adopted, resentment amongst developing countries. The work programme on long term finance has been extended with a view to continue discussion on sources of likely finance in the long term. The Standing Committee

(on Finance) of the Convention has been entrusted with the task of recommending suitable arrangements for accountability of and reporting on its functions by the Green Climate Fund to the Conference of Parties. Despite pitched demand from vulnerable countries, there could be no satisfactory agreement on compensation mechanism for loss and damage resulting from climate change.

At Doha, the work of the Durban Platform (DP) set up last year for devising the post-2020 arrangements progressed satisfactorily. In a significant and positive advance, it has been agreed that the work of the Durban Platform will be based on the principles of the Convention. A Plan of Work has been agreed for 2013. The ADP will call for parties' submissions to be presented by March 2013 on 'vision' of the post-2020 arrangements as well as 'ambition' for raising the global efforts aimed at reducing emissions in the pre-2020 period. The ADP will organize a series of workshops as part of its work next year with a view to finalize a text for 2015 Agreement by the end of 2014. As announced by the UN Secretary General, the decision recognizes the possibility of holding a meeting of Heads of Governments and States in 2015 to finalize the Agreement.