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ESCAP
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REPORT

Regional Workshop on Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions in Asia and the Pacific: Scaling-up climate change mitigation efforts and prospects for NAMAs in the waste sector

I. Background and Organization

1. The "Regional Workshop on Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions in Asia and the Pacific: Scaling-up climate change mitigation efforts and prospects for NAMAs in the waste sector" was held on 18 and 19 March 2014 in Bangkok, Thailand. The Workshop was organized in the context of the project "Pro-poor and sustainable solid waste management in secondary cities and small towns", implemented by ESCAP in partnership with Waste Concern.

2. The workshop was organized to review the latest developments and thinking on NAMAs and discuss opportunities for NAMAs to bring transformational change in the waste sector in the region. The specific objectives of the workshop were to:

   - Review the current status of development of NAMAs in the Asia-Pacific region, in particular in relation to the waste sector, and understand future prospects;
   - Identify trends, challenges and relevant issues related to the development of NAMAs in the region, particularly in the waste sector; and
   - Share experiences and discuss policy, institutional, financial and technical issues associated with the development of these programmes.

3. The meeting was attended by over sixty participants, including senior policy makers from countries in the Asia-Pacific region, representatives from international organizations, academia and the private sector.

4. The following summary does not attempt to capture all of the issues raised by participants, but rather to synthesize the main points discussed.

II. Summary of Discussions

A. Overview of NAMAs in the Asia-Pacific region

5. NAMAs are a relatively recent concept in the climate change agenda, but they are gradually becoming of increasing interest to policymakers and practitioners from countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

6. NAMAs were first proposed in 2007, at the Thirteenth Conference of the Parties (COP-13) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Bali, and the definition that was agreed by member states on the Bali Action Plan is still the one that prevails: "Developing country Parties will undertake nationally appropriate mitigation actions in the context of "sustainable development" enabled by technology, finance and capacity building support, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner".

7. At COP-15 in Copenhagen in 2009 developing country Parties were requested to submit to the UNFCCC their NAMA proposals. As of March 2014, 55 parties across the globe had formally submitted their NAMAs to the UNFCCC registry, a web-based platform to record NAMAs and to facilitate the matching of support from Annex-I countries with respect to finance, technology and capacity building.

8. While Asia- Pacific accounted for almost 50% of global GHG emissions in 2010, the region has to date developed less NAMAs compared to other regions. Yet, the workshop noted that the interest among countries in the region has been increasing, and the region as a whole is quickly catching-up in terms of NAMA programmes being developed.

9. NAMA initiatives at different stages of development can be observed across the region. While countries such as Viet Nam, Indonesia and the Philippines have already initiated the design and preparation of specific NAMA programmes, other countries, such as Malaysia, Nepal or Sri Lanka, are focusing on the identification of national priorities, consultations with different sectors and the set-up of institutional arrangements for enabling NAMAs to flourish.

10. Viet Nam has been conducting a set of NAMA preparation ("readiness") activities, which include the preparation of guidelines for the development of NAMAs and the set-up of the necessary institutional arrangements to support the implementation of NAMAs. NAMA programmes on the waste and cement sectors are currently in the design stage.

11. In Indonesia NAMAs are an important component in the context of the national mitigation policy framework. A set of criteria have been defined to the selection of NAMAs that are relevant in the national context, and different NAMAs have been developed and/or are under preparation. Among these, a NAMA programme for the transport sector was formally submitted to the UNFCCC registry and was one of the four NAMA proposals eligible for funding under the first call for proposals of the NAMA Facility.

12. In the Philippines, different initiatives have been carried out in the preparation of NAMAs, such as the analysis of options for NAMAs, the conduct of capacity building initiatives and the set-up of institutional arrangements.

13. The workshop emphasized the need for NAMAs to be framed in the context of national development priorities and, in addition to GHG emission reductions, they should result in substantive and tangible sustainable development benefits. NAMAs can be framed in the context of green growth and low-emission development strategies, and have the potential to support the transformational change of national economies, including specific sectors of the economy. For example, the green growth strategy of Viet Nam has as overarching goal the mainstreaming of sustainable economic and social development, along with targets for reducing GHG emissions.

14. The choice of sectors for NAMA development varies across countries, in line with their respective national priorities. In the case of Pakistan, for example, the crisis in the energy sector and the need for additional sources of energy supply has driven the development of NAMAs on energy efficient lighting, as well as the conversion of waste into energy. In Indonesia, instead, a key priority has been the transport sector. It has been observed, nonetheless, that countries have used different methodologies to support identifying priority sectors for NAMAs. In Thailand, for example, marginal abatement cost curves have been utilized, while in the Philippines a multi-criteria assessment was employed.

B. Waste NAMAs in Asia-Pacific

15. Although emissions from the waste sector represent a relatively small share of national GHG emissions (usually in the range of 5-10%), this has been one of the main sectors for NAMA development in the Asia-Pacific, in particular in light of the potential to deliver strong sustainable development benefits (so-called "co-benefits") and contribute to bringing transformational change in host countries. In particular, strong co-benefits can be derived from NAMAs on the waste sector if they are based on the principles of reduce, reuse and recycle (3R).

16. In this connection, ESCAP, in partnership with Waste Concern, has been promoting a shift from "end-of-the-pipe" to a "waste to resource" approach by assisting local governments in the region to establish integrated resource recovery centres (IRRCs) and develop and implement city-wide solid waste management strategies that are decentralized, pro-poor, low-carbon and financially viable. The project has established pilot IRRCs in a number of countries in the region, namely Bangladesh, Cambodia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam, and is now assisting in scaling-up these sustainable solutions city and country wide. One of the avenues identified for this is NAMAs. The rationale for up-scaling the IRRC into NAMAs is based on the premise that this approach already has most elements of a NAMA, such as the potential for delivering emission reductions, alignment with government policies in many countries in the Asia-Pacific, strong co-benefits (including climate change adaptation benefits) and evidence of action on the ground with multiple projects in countries in the region.

17. A few countries in the Asia-Pacific region are already developing NAMA programmes on waste. In Viet Nam, for instance, the Institute of Meteorology, Hydrology and the Environment (IMHEN) of Viet Nam, with support from the Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center of Japan (OECC) and ESCAP, is designing a NAMA programme on the waste sector which aims at promoting 3R principles and divert waste from "end-of-pipe" solutions through the waste-to-resource approach.

18. In Indonesia, a NAMA is being developed in the waste sector using the vertically integrated approach (v-NAMA) promoted by GIZ, and has the objective of mobilizing different actors in achieving GHG emission reductions through the integration of different levels of government. The Philippines and Pakistan are also working on NAMA concepts in the waste sector, while in Thailand different components are being considered and examined (including the systems and procedures for collecting and reporting data) for adequately implementing a NAMA on solid waste management.

One of the first countries in the world to develop a NAMA in the waste sector has been Colombia, whose experiences were shared and discussed during the workshop. In this regard, one of the aspects highlighted was the need to create incentives to involve the private sector and the set-up of appropriate financial mechanisms to support the implementation of NAMAs. In the case of Colombia, these will consist of an equity fund to be financed partly with national funds and partly with international resources.

C. Recommendations for the design of waste NAMAs

19. As GHG emission reductions and strong co-benefits are expected to go hand-in hand on the NAMA framework, these programmes offer the opportunity to address some of the shortcomings of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). While the CDM has been a very successful mechanism to attract climate finance to GHG emission mitigation activities, it has been less successful in funding projects with a relatively small GHG emission reduction potential but high sustainable development benefits.

20. Another aspect highlighted in the discussions was the need to involve sub-national stakeholders, in particular local and municipal governments, as they have direct responsibilities on carbon intensive sectors, such as transport, waste management or buildings. However, effective coordination among different levels of government can be a challenge, and it is in order to overcome such difficulties that GIZ has been promoting the concept of vertically integrated NAMA (v-NAMA).

21. While there is a consensus that NAMAs provide a "win-win" opportunity to developing countries, several challenges were identified and discussed during the workshop. One of the main challenges relates to the existence of weak coordination mechanisms at national level, as well as a mismatch of priorities among different ministries and agencies. Similarly, there would be a need to enhance the participation of different stakeholders, including academia, the private sector and community-based organizations, in the design and implementation of NAMAs.

22. Obtaining reliable and good-quality data from greenhouse gas inventories to better assess the mitigation potential of different sectors was highlighted as a significant challenge, in particular for setting-up robust MRV frameworks. This challenge is compounded by the fact that international consensus is still lacking on requirements for MRV of NAMAs particularly with respect to differences in requirements between unilateral and supported