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CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES  
Second session  
Geneva, 8-19 July 1996  
Agenda item 5

**REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION AND OF  
DECISIONS OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE  
PARTIES**

**Second Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental  
Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)**

**SBSTA Chairman's summary of discussion and draft decision for consideration  
by the Conference of the Parties at its second session**

1. Discussions on this item were held during the 1st, 2nd, 9th and 10th meetings of the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) on 9, 15 and 16 July 1996.
2. The documents prepared for the session (FCCC/CP/1996/5; FCCC/CP/1996/10, FCCC/SBSTA/1996/7/Rev.1 and Add.1-3/Rev.1, FCCC/SBSTA/1996/MISC.4), the previous discussion on the item (see paragraphs 18 to 32 of document FCCC/SBSTA/1996/8) and decision 6/CP.1 outlining the terms of reference of the SBSTA, formed the backdrop for the discussion.
3. The discussion was prefaced by a statement by the Chairman of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) who also responded to questions raised.
4. Statements were made by 50 Parties, including one on behalf of the European Community and its member States, another on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and another on behalf of the Alliance for Small Island States.

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5. Representatives of two States not Parties to the Convention also made statements.
6. A representative of one non-governmental organization made a statement.
7. In general, it was considered that:
  - (a) The Second Assessment Report of the IPCC represents currently the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment of the available scientific and technical information regarding global climate change, its impacts and policy implications.
  - (b) The authors of the report and all scientists and other experts involved in its preparation were to be commended for the time, effort and dedication devoted to the report.
  - (c) The Second Assessment Report should be considered in its entirety.
8. It was noted that:
  - (a) The Second Assessment Report gives an assessment of the likelihood of current and future climate change and related impacts, taking into account remaining uncertainties.
  - (b) The Second Assessment Report considers the vulnerability of natural and human systems to climate change, and thresholds of damage, but does not quantify what constitutes "dangerous anthropogenic interference" with the climate system as defined in Article 2 of the Convention. Such an assessment will be required to fully address the ultimate objective of the Convention.
  - (c) More information will be required on regional scenarios of climate change and more effort should be directed at reducing uncertainties in current knowledge of climate change.
  - (d) "No regrets" policies and measures were available for immediate use in many countries at little or no cost. There are large differences in the costs of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and enhancing sinks, among countries due to their states of economic development, infrastructure choices, and natural resource base.
  - (e) The socio-economic impacts on, and vulnerability of most developing countries in such areas as agriculture, water resources and public health, particularly in those countries with low-lying coastal areas and the small island developing States, must be taken into account.

- (f) The vulnerability of many countries, including developing countries and countries relying on production of fossil fuels, to the economic impacts of potential policies or measures to limit or reduce greenhouse gas emissions must be addressed.
- (g) There is a need for all Parties to meet their commitments taking into account the need for equity and differentiated responsibilities.

9. There were divergent views on the implications of the Second Assessment Report for the Convention. Views were expressed that the Second Assessment Report provides a reliable basis for Parties to take further action to mitigate climate change and that it should be considered carefully by the Conference of the Parties (COP) and particularly by the Ad Hoc Group on the Berlin Mandate (AGBM), in their future activities, as a basis for urgent action. Views were also expressed that due to the scientific uncertainties and lack of sufficient economic analysis in the Second Assessment Report it would be premature to take action beyond appropriate 'no regrets' policies and measures to mitigate climate change now, and that more research is required, and that the Second Assessment Report does not provide adequate information to determine what constitutes dangerous levels of greenhouse gas concentrations to use the report for achieving the objective of the Convention (Article 2).

10. In subsequent discussion, the SBSTA prepared the following draft decision, but could not reach consensus on its paragraph 1, as indicated in the draft by two alternatives in square brackets.

11. The SBSTA authorized its Chairman to convey this draft decision to the COP, with the request that COP further consider it with a view to reaching agreement on a decision regarding the use of the Second Assessment Report of the IPCC.

### **Draft decision -/CP.2**

#### **Second Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change**

*The Conference of the Parties,*

*Recalling* the mandate of the SBSTA as given in Article 9 and decision 6/CP.1 (FCCC/CP/7/Add.1) to,

Provide assessments of the state of scientific knowledge relating to climate change and its effects (Article 9.2 (a)). In this context:

(a) Summarize and, where necessary, convert the latest international scientific, technical, socio-economic and other information provided by competent bodies, including,

*inter alia*, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), into forms appropriate to the needs of the Conference of the Parties,

(b) Compile and synthesize scientific, technical and socio-economic information on the global situation on climate change, provided by, *inter alia*, the IPCC, as well as on the latest developments in science, to the extent possible, and assess the implications thereof for the implementation of the Convention; and formulate requests to competent international scientific and technical bodies,

*Recalling also* that the SBSTA held an exchange of views on the Second Assessment Report during its second and third sessions (FCCC/SBSTA/1996/8 and ..) and the recommendations of the SBSTA,

*Notes* that the Second Assessment Report needs to be considered as a whole;

*Considers* the Second Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to be the most comprehensive and authoritative assessment now available of the scientific and technical information regarding global climate change;

1. [*Decides* that, the Second Assessment Report be used as basis for urgent action to further the implementation of the Convention and for developing a protocol or other legal instrument, as provided for in the Berlin Mandate;]

1. [*Decides* that, the Second Assessment Report should be taken into account during consideration of the implementation of the Convention, including informing the process of negotiation, bearing in mind the uncertainties and lack of certain information in the report. Furthermore, the lack of the assessment of the dangerous levels of the concentration of greenhouse gases for the climate system does not allow to use the Second Assessment Report for achieving the main goal of the Convention (Article 2);]

2. *Expresses* its appreciation to the IPCC, particularly the Chairman of the IPCC and all its authors and scientists, for their excellent work in drawing up the Second Assessment Report;

3. *Welcomes* the commitment of the IPCC to undertake the work programme requested in support of SBSTA and AGBM;

4. *Urges* continuing cooperation between the Convention bodies and the IPCC.

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