19 October 1999

ENGLISH ONLY

UNITED NATIONS FRAMEWORK CONVENTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE
Eleventh session
Bonn, 25 October - 5 November 1999
Item 9 (f) of the provisional agenda

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

OTHER MATTERS

Information on decision tools to evaluate climate change impacts and adaptation strategies

Submissions from Parties

Note by the secretariat

1. At its tenth session, the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), took note of the information provided in the informal report by the secretariat entitled "Compendium of decision tools to evaluate strategies for adaptation to climate change". It invited Parties to review the information, and to provide comments to the secretariat on its contents by 15 September 1999; and to provide information on other decision tools in a format similar to that in the above-mentioned informal report (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/6, para. 55 (b)).

2. Two submissions have been received by the secretariat. In accordance with the procedure for miscellaneous documents, these submissions* are reproduced in the language in which they were received and without formal editing.

* In order to make these submissions available on electronic systems, including the World Wide Web, these contributions have been electronically scanned and/or retyped. The secretariat has made every effort to ensure the correct reproduction of the texts as submitted.

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PAPER 1: SAMOA
(On behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States)

REVIEW OF THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN, AND COMMENTS ON, THE INFORMAL REPORT BY THE SECRETARIAT ENTITLED : "COMPENDIUM OF DECISION TOOLS TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVE ADAPTATION STRATEGIES TO CLIMATE CHANGE"

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) welcomed the informal report provided by the Secretariat at the last meeting of SBSTA in Bonn this year. AOSIS is very interested in furthering the work on adaptation, especially for coastal areas. AOSIS Member States have been grappling with the need to find cost-effective and technically feasible options for adaptation, both physically and strategically, in order to meet the challenges that AOSIS will face in dealing with climate change and sea level rise.

AOSIS has made several submissions and interventions in the past on the issue of adaptation, and this submission should be read in conjunction with those views.

AOSIS is of the view that the Secretariat has made a significant contribution to the debate on adaptation by pulling together these various aspects of the current thinking in the scientific and engineering communities. While the work is still in the early stages, it is clear to AOSIS that much more applied research will have to be made. It would be useful if the Secretariat could formalize the current paper incorporating views expressed, and bring it to the attention of the 5th Conference of the Parties. This could then serve as the basis for a more in-depth and formal approach to dealing with the issue of adaptation across the range of the agenda of the Conference of the Parties.

Many aspects of the informal paper gave rise to specific questions from several experts within AOSIS countries. As the process of developing national communications progresses in many Small Island Developing States, it is becoming clear that adaptation aspects are still in the process of development. There are many important efforts underway in terms of evaluation of integrated coastal zone management and how adaptation links with other processes such as Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), but considerations such as relative GDP costs and human resources have often stifled progress in the actual implementation of such efforts. The problematic cost benefit analysis that inevitably has to be developed is also of concern to the AOSIS personnel working at the local and national levels.

AOSIS sees the need for the development of regional climate models and strengthening of regional climate monitoring, particularly for Small Island Developing States regions. There are currently no working regional climate models with specific application to SIDS regions, and this makes it difficult to progress with the work on characterizing the nature and extent of adaptation. It would also be useful to have individual sectoral models developed, for example in agriculture, hydrology and certain coastal areas such as lagoons, as these may apply differently to SIDS. The availability of such models would greatly assist in assessing the expected climate scenarios, and hence assist with the further development and application of adaptation strategies. The IPCC could be requested to play an active role in

this process by carrying out some initial work, to be followed by a more formal consideration at the SBSTA or through a workshop. It would be important for the parameters of this work to be guided by the present work of the FCCC Secretariat and by views expressed by Parties.

In this regard, AOSIS would strongly urge that a dedicated meeting or workshop of the FCCC be held on the issues of adaptation technologies, adaptation strategies and for developing a practical long-term approach to adaptation within the context of the FCCC. An important part of such an approach would also enhance regional participation and capacity building if regional workshops could be held for national climate change teams and committees that would specifically deal with the issue of adaptation. Another consideration would be to include adaptation as an important task for regional training centers to become involved in.

In the Pacific, the University of the South Pacific will be offering a degree course in vulnerability and adaptation, which could be an important contribution to the overall work on this issue under the FCCC. Work has also been done at the University of the West Indies, but this requires much stronger support in order for the development of regional approaches to become workable for the Small Island Developing States concerned. In contrast, much needs to be done in the Indian Ocean and in Africa, the least studied of all climate-ocean systems. Consideration must be given as to how these efforts can be brought together to ensure synergy and harmony. There could also be a role for regional organizations such as the South Pacific Regional Environment Program, the University of Malta, and other institutions designated by Small Island Developing States to participate in this work. Any work of this nature and information developed from such workshops needs to be disseminated to all interested parties and organizations, such as IPCC, among others.

Funding for adaptation will be a limiting factor in the overall process of developing adaptation strategies and implementing options. While the promise of adaptation funds through the Clean Development Mechanism of the Kyoto Protocol may become a reality in the future, there is a clear distinction between that source of funds and funds available for adaptation under the FCCCC. AOSIS sees work beginning as soon as possible to see how adaptation could be funded under the FCCC, in accordance with the relevant articles of the Convention. COP5 provides an opportunity for all countries to work towards adaptation funding in the context of the financial mechanism (Decision 2 of COP4) and under national communications. Although guidance was provided to the GEF based upon this decision it is worthwhile to hear from the Global Environment Facility how they intend to respond to adaptation projects requests from non-Annex 1 Parties as contained in their national communications.

AOSIS looks forward to further discussion on these issues at the 5th Conference of the Parties.

PAPER NO. 2: THE NETHERLANDS

COMMENTS ON COMPENDIUM OF DECISION TOOLS TO EVALUATE ALTERNATIVE ADAPTATION STRATEGIES TO CLIMATE CHANGE"

General Points.

- "Decision tools" should be changed throughout the entire document in "decision support tool" (DSS).
- In the introduction it is mentioned that a broad strategic approach is necessary. We fully agree with that. This approach is missing in the compendium, however. Such an approach could compromise a coherent and comprehensive framework for management and development including institutional capacity building.
- A DSS-tool is only one tool to reach greater goal. This greater goal is not described (but should be)
- Tools are to be used. More attention in the compendium should be devoted to the introduction of adaptive strategies and tools (e.g. in the developing countries) through long term co-operation between developed and developing countries.

More specific points.

- These consider chapter 2.3 (Coastal decision tools). The other chapters have not been commented upon.
- In the introductory paragraph more attention should be given to the efforts leading to the end results, which is ICZM. ICZM has been internationally recognized to long term adaptive responses in relation to short-term activities. If this is explained, then the mutual coherence between the different tools will become clear. As an example: 1. IPCC common methodology = Vulnerability assessment, is considered as a first step of ICZM programming; 2. COSMO is a generic training tool to identify a "best" ICZM plan; 3. CORONA, a role-playing training tool, identifies the "best" approach for the implementation of a CZM plan.
- COSMO and RAMCO costs: change existing text into: "demo free of charge and to download from the website of the CZM-Centre: http://www.minvenw.nl/projects/netcoast/"

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