



Summary report on the multilateral assessment of Switzerland at the forty-first session of the Subsidiary Body for Implementation

Note by the secretariat

I. Background

1. The Conference of the Parties, by decision 1/CP.16, decided that developed country Parties should enhance the reporting in their national communications and submit biennial reports on their progress in achieving emission reductions. It also established a new process under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI) – the international assessment and review (IAR) of emissions and removals related to developed country Parties' quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets – that aims to promote the comparability of efforts among all developed country Parties. The first round of the IAR process is to be conducted during the period 2014–2015.

2. According to the modalities and procedures for IAR specified in annex II to decision 2/CP.17, the multilateral assessment (MA), being part of the IAR process, is to be conducted for each developed country Party at a working group session of the SBI, with the participation of all Parties. The aim of the MA is to assess each Party's progress in implementation towards the achievement of emission reductions and removals related to its quantified economy-wide emission reduction target.

3. The first MA of Switzerland took place at a working group session during SBI 41, on 8 December 2014. Such a working group session is preceded by a three-month period of questions and answers; in the first month, any Party may submit written questions to the Party being assessed, which may respond to the questions within the remaining two months. Questions for Switzerland had been submitted in writing two months before the working group session by the following delegations: Algeria, Brazil, China, Egypt, European Union, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand and Saudi Arabia. The United States of America submitted written questions after the deadline. A list of the questions received and the answers provided by Switzerland can be found on the IAR web page for Switzerland.¹

¹ <http://unfccc.int/files/national_reports/biennial_reports_and_iar/international_assessment_and_review/application/pdf/sbi41-switzerland-full.pdf>.

II. Proceedings

4. The working group session was chaired by the SBI Chair, Mr. Amena Yauvoli. Switzerland was represented by Mr. Franz Perrez, Head of Delegation, Federal Office for the Environment.

5. Mr. Perrez made an opening presentation, addressing the questions received prior to the working group session and the answers provided. He explained that Switzerland has a national quantified economy-wide emission reduction target of 20 per cent by 2020, compared with the 1990 level. He also outlined the national circumstances of Switzerland by providing the trends of some key indicators, such as population and gross domestic product, all of which strongly increased between 1990 and 2012, unlike greenhouse gas emissions, which decreased by 3 per cent in this period. This has resulted in a substantial decrease in emissions per gross domestic product, by 28 per cent, and in a decrease in emissions per capita of 18 per cent, with the latter equalling the global average in 2012.

6. Mr. Perrez further elaborated on Switzerland's key emitting sectors (buildings and transport), and explained that while emissions per square metre decreased significantly owing to implemented policies and measures, the Party could not yet achieve a full decoupling of emissions in the transport sector. He explained that the expected effects of Switzerland's key policies and measures (carbon dioxide levy, emissions trading system, regulations, agreements, building programme and domestic emission compensations) will not be sufficient to meet its target and that additional measures will need to be implemented, including through international efforts.

7. The opening presentation was followed by interventions and questions from the following delegations: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada and China. These questions were on the relation between the target under the Convention and that under the second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol; the difficulties encountered with adopting the conditional target of a 30 per cent emission reduction by 2020 compared with the 1990 level; the kind of additional policies and measures that could be put in place to achieve that target; the intention to use carbon credits from international market-based mechanisms to achieve the target; the progress of shifting freight transport to rail; details of measures in the transport and building sectors; and whether Switzerland has in place a long-term target for emissions from the electricity sector. In response, the Swiss delegation provided further explanations. Details can be found in the webcast of this session on the IAR web page for Switzerland.

8. In closing, the SBI Chair reminded Switzerland that any other observations by the Party on its MA process can be submitted within two months of the working group session, and that this will form part of its Party record for the MA. The SBI Chair thanked the delegation of Switzerland, all the other delegations and the secretariat for this successful MA session.
