



**Statement delivered by Nauru on behalf of
The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)
Opening Plenary SBSTA 38
Bonn**

Good morning Mr Chairman and distinguished delegates. I have the honour of delivering this statement on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States. AOSIS associates itself with the statement made by Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Mr Chairman, once again SBSTA is faced with a long agenda to discuss many issues in a limited time. While all the agenda items are important to AOSIS, I will limit my opening remarks to address only three of these issues. We will address the other agenda items when they are introduced.

Distinguished delegates, I am sure you are all aware that early last month, the atmosphere crossed a significant threshold when concentrations of carbon dioxide reached 400 parts per million, increasing the threat of catastrophic climate change. Those countries most in peril and which face the prospect of extinction are the small island States represented by my group. At this rate, the target which we set in Cancun of limiting global warming to 2°C above pre-industrial levels is becoming more difficult, much less the target demanded by AOSIS of limiting warming to as far below 1.5°C as possible. Let me remind you that in Cancun we also agreed to a review of that target especially as regard to the 1.5 target.

Therefore, we expect that when we address the issue of the 2013 to 2015 Review in Agenda Item 13, this be the focus of our discussion. The Review must be based on the best, the latest and the most relevant science. That is why it is being addressed under the SBSTA. However, this is a joint SBSTA/SBI Dialogue because the conclusions must lead to immediate implementation of the actions required to meet the 1.5 target. The review must consider the impacts of a business as usual scenario, a 4 degree scenario, a 2 degree scenario and the 1.5 degree on the most vulnerable countries, the small island States. It must also consider what needs to be done by the international community to change the trend in emissions to reduce concentrations of greenhouse gases to 350 ppm. The window of opportunity to save our islands and low-lying States is rapidly closing and we must act now.

Mr Chairman, we also recognize the importance of REDD Plus in the global efforts to bridge the mitigation gap, and so encourage Parties to work towards agreement on this item in SBSTA. Agenda item 6 on the development of transfer of technologies and implementation of of the technology mechanism. Our group is of the view that the special circumstance of the SIDS be addressed by the new bodies On Agenda Item 14 on the “Work programme on clarification of quantified economy-wide emission reduction targets of developed country Parties” and the workshop organized by the Secretariat the deliberations under this agenda item can contribute significantly with respect to assessing how Annex I Parties are meeting their obligations to reduce their emissions both under the Convention and under the Kyoto Protocol. This can then be used to ascertain what needs to be done and by whom to meet the 1.5 degree target.

From our perspective, it is important for developed countries to take the lead in combating climate change as called for under the Convention. In this regard, we note that the IPCC AR4 calls for Annex I Parties to reduce their emissions by 25% to 40% below 1990 levels, in order to keep within the 450ppm scenario, however, according to the UNFCCC technical paper done last year, current Annex I Party targets only point to 12%-18% of emissions reductions. We therefore hope that the work programme will help to build the political momentum for the adoption of more ambitious targets by developed countries. A failure by developed countries to show leadership to close the pre-2020 mitigation ambition gap will have profound implications for the scale and nature of obligations under the 2015 protocol.

Finally, Mr Chairman, we look forward to the Research Dialogue on coastal and marine ecosystems and the discussions which are to follow under Agenda Item 7 on Systematic Observations and Research. It is imperative that the Dialogue and the discussions not only focus on the potential carbon benefits to be derived these ecosystems, but also the threats they face resulting from global warming, sea level rise and ocean acidification. The small island States and low-lying States rely heavily and in some cases exclusively from the management and use of these systems for their livelihoods. It is therefore imperative that the experiences from small islands States and low-lying States be presented at the Dialogue and at the expert workshop scheduled for later this year utilizing the expertise resident in our countries.

Mr Chairman, I wish to conclude by wishing you every success during this session and extending our support to you. Please be assured that AOSIS will engage constructively on all the items on the agenda and reiterate that although we have addressed only three of them in this opening statement to enable us to get to work quickly, we will speak on the others as the agenda items are introduced.

Thank you.

