The Implementation of the Climate Change Response Working Programme

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*Submitted by Delegation of China*

***Summary:***

Resolution 4 (2015) encourages the CEP to begin “implement” the Climate Change Response Working Programme (hereinafter called “CCRWP”) as a matter of priority. To achieve this purpose, CEP established the Subsidiary Group on Climate Change Response (hereinafter called “SGCCR”) to facilitate the efficient and timely implementation of the CCRWP. On the basis of an initial review of the work of ATCM and the CEP in the past years, it is recommended that the CEP focus its efforts in the implementation of the CCRWP and:

* adopt the reformatted CCRWP using the new format agreed in 2019, which is annexed to this paper;
* emphasize the important role of scientific research and monitoring as a centerpiece of the implementation of CCRWP;
* re-confirm that SGCCR shall draft annual progress reports on the implementation of the CCRWP to the CEP, including the extent to which the related monitoring, research or management Gaps/needs are fulfilled that can be reviewed by the CEP;
* ask the SGCCR to update the CCRWP in accordance with the decisions of the ATCM or CEP, or if needed, summit specific proposals to delete, change or add the specific Gaps/needs and tasks/actions in the CCRWP and the reasons to do so, preferably with the support of sound science evidence, and report back next year.
* further discuss the implementation of the CEP’s CCRWP and the role of the SGCCR from next year.

**1. Background**

The issue of climate change is growing more and more important in the work of the CEP. To respond to the potential effects of climate change in Antarctica, the CEP developed and adopted a CCRWP in 2015，and established SGCCR to facilitate its efficient and timely implementation。During 2021/2022 inter-sessional discussion, China reviewed the working process of the ATCM and the CEP on the implementation of the CCRWP and the work of SGCCR on the basis of meeting reports and relevant papers, and provided constructive suggestions on the work of the SGCCR in the implementation of the CCRWP, with a view to facilitate the understanding of where we started this initiative, where we are now, and where we are going.

**2. The status of the CCRWP and the SGCCR**

In 2015, the CEP adopted the CCRWP (CEP XVIII Report, paragraph75), and the ATCM adopted Resolution 4 (2015) CEP CCRWP, which encourage CEP to begin implementing the CCRWP and provide annual progress reports to the ATCM on its implementation; request the CEP to keep the CCRWP under regular review with the input form SCAR and COMNAP; and recommend that members give consideration within their national program how they can address the research needs and actions identified in the CCRWP.

In 2016, the CEP updated the CCRWP (CEP XIX Report paragraph74) and agreed to encourage National Antarctic Programmes, SCAR, WMO, and relevant external expert organizations to support and facilitate research and monitoring activities identified in the CCRWP (CEP XIX Report para.80).

In 2017, with the approval of ATCM by Decision 1 (2017), the CEP established the SGCCR with a TOR to facilitate the efficient and timely implementation of the CCRWP (CEP XX Report, Appendix 2), and among others, emphasized the importance of ensuring broad participation and engagement by CEP members (CEP XX Report, paragraph76), agreed that effective communication between CEP and SCAR on the implementation of the CCRWP remained important (CEP XX Report, paragraph77).

In 2018, no work conducted on the CCRWP and SGCCR.

In 2019, an extensive work has been undertaken during the intersessional period, including the commencement of the implementation of the CCRWP (CEP XXII/WP36). The SGCCR decided that CCRWP implementation work should focus on the high priority issue *Enhanced potential for non-native species (NNS) introduction, establishment and invasion* (CEP XXII/WP36).

The SGCCR has developed a new format for the CCRWP（CEP XXII/WP36）focusing on the example of one part of the CCRWP NNS. The SGCCR reported to the CEP that should the proposed updated CCRWP format, or a modified version of it, be acceptable to the Committee, the SGCCR would i) revise the format for the CCRWP and ii) simultaneously update all of the climate-related issues contained within the CCRWP during the 2019-2020 intersessional period. The existing CCRWP (2016) would remain effective until the updating process has been completed for all the climate-related issue（CEP XXII/WP36）.The CEP agreed a revised version of the new format, and agreed to its application by the SGCCR to relevant climate issues during the 2019/2020 intersessional period (CEPXXII Report, paragraph 52 and 48), while not able to reach agreement on other recommendations.

In 2020, the ATCM and CEP meetings were cancelled.

In 2021, The SGCCR presented to CEP a revised CCRWP with both a brand-new format and brand-new contents, dramatically changing or reducing Gaps/needs and Action/task on monitoring, research and assessment (CEP XXIII/WP 14 and its attachment A). The CEP agreed that the work of SGCCR should continue in the future under its current TOR, but was not able to reach consensus on revisions to the CCRWP. (CEP XXIII Report, paragraph 40)

In the 2021/2022 intersessional period, the SGCCR took 6 rounds of discussion, focusing again on the thorough update of the CCRWP, while having a simple review of its past work.

**After an initial review of the working process on the implementation of the CCRWP since 2015, it can be observed that:**

1) the CCRWP revised and adopted by the CEP in 2016 remain effective, including the Gaps/needs and Actions/tasks of it.

2) the SGCCR should update the format of the current CCRWP (2016 version) with the new format agreed in 2019.

3) the SGCCR has never submitted the annual progress reports to the CEP on the implementation, particularly the fulfillment of the specific Gaps/needs and the achievement of Actions/tasks identified in the CCRWP in accordance with its TOR adopted in 2017, since the reported commencement of the implementation of the CCRWP from Non-native species in 2019. As a result, the CEP has never formally provided meaningful annual progress reports to the ATCM in accordance with Resolution 4 (2015).

4) the SGCCR focused its work on the update of the CCRWP and the communication with external bodies.

It is obvious that very limited time have been put on the implementation of the specific objectives and tasks of the CCRWP since it is adopted in 2015. In accordance with the 2021/2022 inter-sessional discussion, some key issues for the implementation of the CCRWP worth broader and further discussion in the CEP plenary in the future, such as the role of the CEP and the SGCCR, and the communication and publication of the work related to the CCRWP etc.

China attached great importance to the climate change issue. To facilitate further work of the SGCCR, China would like to provide a reformatted CCRWP on the basis of current CCRWP (2016 version) in accordance with the agreement of the CEP in 2019 (CEPXXII report, paragraph 48 and 52, ATCM XLII report, paragraph 50), which keeps all contents of CCRWP (2016) in the new format as a basis to guide the further implementation and update.

**3. Recommendations：**

Recalling that Resolution 4 (2015) encouraged the CEP to implement the CCRWP as a matter of priority, that the TOR of the SGCCR to facilitate the efficient and timely implementation of the CCRWP, it is recommended that the CEP focus its efforts in the implementation of the CCRWP and:

* adopt the reformatted CCRWP in accordance with the agreement of the CEP in 2019, which keeps all contents of CCRWP (2016) in the new format as a basis to guide the further implementation and update;
* emphasize the important role of scientific research and monitoring as a centerpiece of the implementation of CCRWP to guide members in the organization of their National Antarctic Programs, and contribution from SCAR, WMO, and relevant external expert organizations.
* re-confirm that SGCCR shall draft and submit annual progress reports on the implementation of the CCRWP to the CEP, including to which extent the related monitoring, research or management Gaps/needs are fulfilled, so that it can be reviewed by the CEP.
* request the SGCCR to update the CCRWP in accordance with the decisions of the ATCM or CEP, or if needed, summit specific proposals to delete, change or add the specific Gaps/needs and tasks/actions in the CCRWP and the reasons to do so, preferably with the support of sound science evidence, and report back next year.
* further discuss the implementation of the CEP’s CCRWP and the role of the SGCCR from next year.