



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the  
United Nations Climate Change Conference - Poznań

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Events convened on Monday, 8 December 2008

## Climate-Induced Human Displacement and Migration

Presented by the United Nations High Commission on Refugees

This event focused on the problems of migration in response to failed adaptation and as an adaptation strategy.

L. Craig Johnstone, UNHCR, noted that adaptation to climate change should include improved disaster response. He noted that estimates range from 250 million to over one billion refugees by 2050 and that flows may be gradual or sudden, from storms, conflicts, and natural disasters.

Philippe Boncour, International Organization for Migration, noted the climate change regime does not address migration. He noted that climate change is only one cause for migration, and that migration can be positive if it produces remittances, skills or livelihoods, or allows a degraded environment to recover.

Koko Warner, UN University, reported on a global survey of climate change-migration links, noting developing countries' vulnerability and implications for international peace and security. She reported findings that: climate change migrants are more varied than traditional ones; environmental factors already influence decisions to migrate; and mass migrations may be triggered by irreversible ecosystem changes.

Neils Scott, UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, noted that the view that mitigation would minimize the need to adapt has been proven wrong. He said nine-tenths of natural disasters are already climate related, bringing diseases such as malaria and dengue fever. He said climate change multiplies threats and exacerbates struggles over scarce resources, migration and armed conflict. He noted that many areas suffering climate-related floods, storms or droughts also have had recent conflicts or contested governance.

Elisabeth Rasmusson, Norwegian Refugee Council, reported on differences in protection provided for people displaced: voluntarily or by force; from environmental causes or conflict; within or across borders; and who have or have not lost territory due to the impacts of climate change. She called for strengthening protection regimes for displaced people and refugees, and for legal migration regimes to accommodate pre-emptive migration.

Participants highlighted, *inter alia*: migration as an adaptation instrument; the environmental effects and increased vulnerability of areas of emigration; the needs of internally displaced people; and integration of migration strategies in disaster preparations.



L. Craig Johnstone, UNHCR, noted estimates of 250 million to more than one billion climate change refugees by 2050.

### More information:

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# Trade and Investment Policy, Technology Transfer and Climate Change

Presented by IISD and Chatham House

This event presented research on intellectual property rights (IPRs), low-carbon goods trade liberalization, border carbon adjustment, subsidy reform and investment, the policy linkages between them and their implications for developing countries.

Peter Wooders, IISD, discussed border carbon adjustments (BCAs) to address competitiveness and leakage issues for domestic industries. He said BCAs include, *inter alia*, border taxes in countries that have carbon caps and mandatory carbon emissions permits purchase for importers. He noted questions on: how to detect leakage and attribute it to specific causes; how to calculate carbon dioxide emissions embedded in imports; whether BCAs are WTO-legal; and whether BCAs can substitute for a global carbon price.

Christophe Bellmann, International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development, spoke on the potential gains of liberalising trade in environmental goods and services (EGS) as an incentive for the innovation and dissemination of climate-friendly technology. He cautioned that: EGS has not been defined; some goods have “dual” environmental and non-environmental uses; and that they are coded in the WTO according to other criteria.

Bernice Lee, Chatham House, spoke on the question of whether intellectual property rights (IPRs) represent a barrier to the diffusion of clean technologies. She noted firms’ desire to ensure a share of the market later before bearing investment risks. She listed tools to overcome market failures, including: public funding; tax incentives; incentives for collaborative partnerships for research and development; and low-cost guaranteed loans.

Aaron Cosbey, IISD, spoke on subsidy and investment policies. He advocated subsidy reform to lower fossil fuel use, trade law flexibility to allow for subsidies to address climate change and increase clean energy development, and investment in clean energy for developing countries.

Tariq Banuri, UN-DESA, noted that the poorest people in developing countries have limited access to clean energy, and will have even less access if the price of clean energy is high, unless countries create differential internal pricing structures.

Eduardo Sanhueza, ECLAC, noted that small developing countries are not generally competitive, are only beginning to understand the implications of climate change on their economies, and will have difficulty grappling with economic impacts of measures to address climate change.

Jacob Werksman, World Resources Institute, commented that trade measures are the “price” for passing national climate change regulations, which could lead to friction between the trade and climate change regimes. He asked how this friction can be reduced and noted the need for legitimacy, a narrow scope, and comparability in trade measures.

Participants discussed: the absence of consideration of agricultural environmental goods within the WTO; developing country concerns about damage to domestic environmental goods producers from opening borders; the amount of production affected by trade measures; comparability versus equity; and the potential conflict between addressing environmental problems and poverty.



Aaron Cosbey, IISD, advocated allowing subsidies to address climate change and increase clean energy development.



Bernice Lee, Chatham House, advocated tools to overcome market failures such as public funding, tax incentives, incentives for collaborative partnerships for research and development, and low-cost or guaranteed loans.



L-R: Peter Wooders, IISD; Christophe Bellmann, ICTSD; Bernice Lee, Chatham House; John Drexhage, IISD; Aaron Cosbey, IISD.

#### More information:

<http://www.iisd.org/trade/crosscutting>  
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# UN Led Initiatives on Climate Change Capacity Building and Development

Presented by UNITAR

This event addressed the issue of capacity building by UN agencies to support adaptation to and mitigation of climate change impacts.

Sudhir Sharman, UNFCCC, said the need for capacity building has been highlighted through numerous UNFCCC decisions, and emphasized the need to monitor implementation and link the mandates of various UN agencies.

Adnan Amin, UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), said the UN System Delivering as One Initiative represents an unprecedented effort to align the efforts of various UN agencies, noting that capacity building is the cement that binds these efforts together.

Achim Halpaap, UNITAR, presented on needs and opportunities for skills development in developing countries, noting that UNITAR has undergone a transformation under new leadership and now emphasizes its role as service provider.

Philip Gwage, Uganda, emphasized going beyond workshops to hands-on approaches for teaching skills. He said institutional capacity building is crucial for developing countries, as well as negotiating capacity. On the CDM, he noted that though much training has been carried out, it has failed to translate into on-the-ground implementation.

John Christensen, UNEP, said UNEP supports parties in articulating their national and regional policy positions. He described preparatory workshops and country activities on the CDM, and encouraged the use of economic tools and analytical approaches to risk sharing.

Maria Netto, UNDP, urged support for policy making for capacity building. She called for moving from needs assessments to developing policies and regulatory frameworks and then accessing resources to implement these policies.

Steven Were Omamo, World Food Programme (WFP), described WFP's strategic plan, saying that WFP is a "front line agency" that aims to reduce vulnerability. He highlighted recent vulnerability assessments and food security monitoring that have been conducted.

Rafael Tuts, UN-HABITAT, noted the importance of linking urban climate change initiatives. Drawing upon examples in the Philippines and El Salvador, he said the most vulnerable groups occupy high risk areas.

Jose Miguel Guzman, United Nations Population Fund, encouraged the inclusion of poverty reduction in adaptation strategies. He noted that women are more directly dependent on natural resources and thus more vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

Mamadou Moussa Diakhité, UNITAR, said there is a huge demand for climate change training to implement current and future agreements.

Janos Pasztor, UN Secretary General's Climate Change Support Team, summarized key messages from the panel, including that existing work needs to be built upon, and that cooperation exists but can be improved.

Participants discussed: the need for both formal and practical on-the-ground training; the problem with high staff turnover; the need to listen to countries regarding their capacity building needs; and the need to include education programmes for youth.



Adnan Amin, CEB, presented the CEB Climate Action Framework, which addresses, *inter alia*, adaptation, capacity building, technology transfer, and reduction of emissions from deforestation and degradation.



Maria Netto, UNDP, said that language can be a barrier, and noted the development of a guide for negotiators that had been translated into French and Spanish.

#### More information:

<http://www.cd4cdm.org>

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# The UN-China Climate Change Partnership

Presented by China and UNDP

This event provided an opportunity for China to present the results of studies on carbon budgeting, technology transfer, and international technology cooperation by sector.

Khalid Malik, UN Resident Coordinator, China, highlighted China's importance in future mitigation strategies, noted its leadership in renewable energy and encouraged a people-first approach.

Su Wei, National Development Reform Commission (NDRC), China, said that the three studies were undertaken as part of a partnership framework with UNDP and that the climate change regime must allow developing countries the carbon space they need to develop.

Pan Jiahua, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, presented a carbon budget proposal (CBP), which allocates global carbon emissions required for basic needs, while providing incentives to reduce emissions associated with wasteful consumption, aimed at reducing global emissions by 50% by 2050. He explained that the CBP allocates a global carbon budget per capita based on a number of factors, including climate, geography and resource endowments. He said that the CBP considers each country's historical consumption of carbon, noting that many developed countries have already used up their carbon budget and would have to purchase credits from developing countries that have surpluses, and that the finances generated could be used to facilitate low-carbon development.

Luis Gomez-Echeverri, UNDP, commented on the carbon budget proposal, emphasizing the need to take equity into consideration in the post-2012 regime. He noted that the CBP provides for basic human needs, thus linking it to adaptation, and operationalizes the concept of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Wang Can, Tsinghua University, presented a sectoral analysis on technology development and transfer investigating the mitigating efforts of energy-intensive sectors. He noted that China's rapid industrialization poses challenges to reducing emissions and that phasing out old power stations may result in job losses, but noted that new technologies may generate employment.

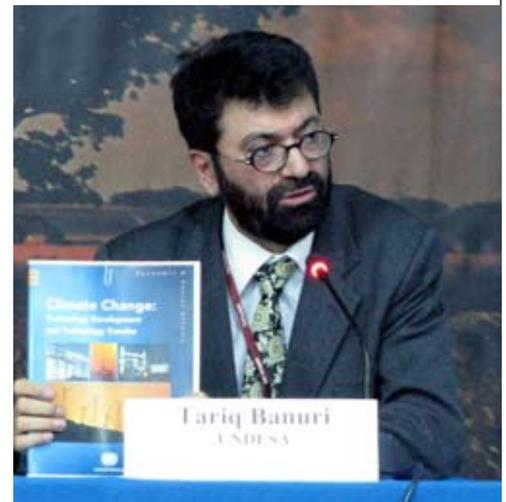
Silvia Lemmer, UNEP, noted the need to also consider "soft technologies," or skills that must accompany any transfer of technology. Regarding job losses in the transition to more efficient technology, she said that these would be more than offset by the creation of "green jobs," but acknowledged that restructuring could cause hardship.

Zou Ji, Renmin University, presented on proposals for transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs), noting that these must be supported by human capacity to use them. He urged developing countries to take the lead in transferring EST as a "global public good" capable of mitigating the impacts of climate change. He encouraged governments to play a role in accelerating the life cycle of ESTs, from invention and innovation, to diffusion and deployment.

Tariq Banuri, UN DESA, said that technology transfer holds huge potential, highlighting agricultural gains achieved by the "green revolution" in the 1960s. He urged the adoption of policies that encourage the transferring of technologies that have negative or neutral costs.



Pan Jiahua, Research Centre for Sustainable Development, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, presented on Carbon budget proposal (CBP).



Tariq Banuri, UN DESA, introduced "Acting on Climate Change: the UN System Delivering as One," a report from the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination.



L-R: Pan Jiahua, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences; Li Gao, NDRC; Su Wei, NDRC; Khalid Malik, UN China; Luis Gomez-Echeverri, UNDP.

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