



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

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Events convened on Tuesday, 9 December 2008

Technology Transfer and Development Issues for Developing Countries

Presented by Centre for Trade and Development (CENTAD)



Steve Sawyer, Global Wind Energy Council, emphasized that the private sector is expected to provide 85% of funds required to move to a low carbon economy.

This event discussed the need for financing and technology transfer (TT) to enable adaptation and mitigation actions in developing countries, including sectoral approaches and institutional TT mechanisms under UNFCCC.

Meena Raman, Third World Network, highlighted that TT does not simply consist of the sale of technologies from the North to the South, but should build domestic capacity to manufacture technologies appropriate to developing countries' needs. She reviewed key aspects of the G-77/China proposal for a technology mechanism under the UNFCCC to make relevant technologies available to developing countries. She also stressed the need to maximize the use of flexibilities provided for in the WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, and assess the availability of public domain technologies for low-carbon development pathways in developing countries.

Mozarul Alam Babu, Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies, noted that mitigation technology development and transfer depends on future reduction commitment targets, while adaptation TT is influenced by countries' level of vulnerability and adaptive capacity. He stressed that the transfer of inefficient technologies should be discouraged, while the deployment of known technologies from one area to another may be useful for adaptation. He underscored the need to strengthen enabling environments, institutional capacity and national centers of excellence in developing countries.

Tilman Santarius, Wuppertal Institute, highlighted aspects of the TT agenda in need of further consideration, including: capacity building for developed countries on how to maximize global benefits from TT investments; the development of concrete mechanisms for TT; emerging TT opportunities; and policy coherence in industrialized countries. He underscored that the export crediting system must be realigned with TT objectives, and the need to distinguish between goals that can be achieved within UNFCCC and those that must be addressed outside the Convention.

Steve Sawyer, Global Wind Energy Council, presented on effective renewable energy TT and how to design it in a pro-poor way. He noted that the objective of TT is the maximum diffusion of existing technologies; cooperative research and development on future technologies; and concessional or grant access for least developed countries (LDCs) to mitigation and adaptation technologies. He stressed that multilateral institutions should invest their money to build an enabling environment for companies to operate, rather than directly engage in the provision of renewable energy.

In the ensuing discussion, participants highlighted: the scarcity of knowledge regarding relevant state-of-the-art technologies; issues surrounding intellectual property rights, including waivers for LDCs to use proprietary technologies for adaptation purposes; the unprofitability of small markets; and domestic efforts to develop national manufacturing capacity.

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Findings of the CBD Expert Group on Biodiversity and Climate Change

Presented by Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD)

This event presented findings from the report of the ad-hoc technical expert group (AHTEG) on biodiversity and climate change. The AHTEG was convened in response to CBD Decision IX /16, with the mandate to provide relevant information to the UNFCCC.

Jaime Webbe, CBD, introduced the report, which addresses, *inter alia*: tools, methodologies and best practices for assessing the impacts of climate change on biodiversity; opportunities to deliver multiple benefits; and suggestions to ensure that REDD is consistent with CBD objectives.

Guy Midgley, South African National Botanical Institute, said the AHTEG report indicates that conservation strategies can enhance natural adaptation, but that extreme events can push the environment beyond its adaptive capacity. He said that extinction risks associated with climate change increase by 10% for every one degree Celsius rise in global average temperatures, and that if temperatures rise between 5°C and 10°C there is a risk of mass extinction. He added that increasing carbon dioxide concentrations are altering the basic environmental underpinnings of life.

Jochen Flasbarth, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Germany, presented on the German approach to addressing biodiversity and climate change. He said that the Life Web Initiative had resulted in protected area proposals by over 40 countries and that it is now up to donors to finance these. He noted that Germany has committed 500 million Euros to biodiversity from 2009 to 2012, to be followed by 500 million Euros per year thereafter.

Håvard Toresen, Ministry of Environment, Norway, presented on the establishment of the Norwegian Climate and Forest Initiative, and stressed that Norway wishes to establish a framework that will reduce the increase of average temperatures below 2°C. He noted that next year the Fund's endowment will amount to 3 Billion Norwegian Kroner. He noted challenges, including: monitoring; carbon leakage; forest management capacity; governance; and safeguarding indigenous peoples' interests and rights.

Bill Hare, Potsdam Institute, emphasized that a REDD mechanism must result in overall reductions in both emissions and biodiversity loss. He said that a market-based approach will require high levels of verification compared to a fund-based approach, and cautioned that introducing large amounts of REDD credits could depress carbon markets. He proposed a "hybrid market link mechanism" whereby funds generated from Annex 1 obligations would be used to fund Tropical Deforestation Emission Reduction Units. He said a REDD strategy plan would be required, including safeguards for biodiversity and indigenous peoples.

Participants discussed the lack of attention that biodiversity is receiving within the REDD debate and risks associated with a market-based approach, and questioned the rationale behind "discounting" REDD credits.



Jaime Webbe, CBD, noted that REDD may be appropriate for areas with high carbon stocks and biodiversity, but said that it must recognize traditional land tenure, include free, prior and informed consent; and be consistent with the CBD.



Jochen Flasbarth, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Germany, expressed doubts regarding including reduced deforestation into the carbon trading system, noting the methodological complexities involved in monitoring and verification.



L-R: Håvard Toresen, Ministry of Environment, Norway; Guy Midgley, South African National Botanical Institute; Jochen Flasbarth, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Germany; Jaime Webbe, CBD.

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