

A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP 15 and COP/MOP 5)

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Events convened on Monday, 7 December 2009

Delivering the Message: Civil Society Speaks Out

Presented by Denmark



The Danish government offered civil society representatives the opportunity to present their conclusions and recommendations to governments at COP 15. Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark, said civil society voices will influence the climate change negotiations. He expressed hope that, along with recommendations to governments, the COP would allow for cross-civil society exchanges.

José María Figueres Olsen, CEO Concordia 21 and former president of Costa Rica, moderated the panel. He said with political leadership and multi-stakeholder action it is possible to “mitigate a lot, adapt less, and hardly suffer” from the effects of climate change.

Katherine Richardson, Vice-Dean, University of Copenhagen, presented the International Scientific Congress on Climate Change’s synthesis report, which elaborates recent scientific evidence that reinforces the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). She highlighted that while technology to control climate change is available, political and public will are still needed.

David Blood, Generation Investment Management, on behalf of the Copenhagen Climate Council, stated that the business community is calling for an ambitious global climate treaty. He emphasized the need to put a price on carbon and unleash capital and investment for transitioning to a low-carbon economy.

Wang Guangtao, Global Legislators Organisation for a Balanced Environment, said legislators can drive the transition to a low-carbon economy, and must take responsibility for ratifying the outcomes of COP 15 and holding governments accountable for their commitments.

Kumi Naidoo, Executive Director, Greenpeace International, said civil society groups are calling for a “FAB” deal in Copenhagen: a treaty that is Fair, Ambitious, and legally Binding.

Youth delegates Sophie Bogø, Denmark, and Mohamed Axam Maumoon, Maldives, offered youth perspectives. Bogø encouraged the development of an international green foundation to make sustainable technologies available to all. Maumoon emphasized the importance of education and awareness. He stated that survival is not negotiable, and encouraged leaders to “hold hands, work together, and [not] hesitate to share.”

In closing, Wangari Maathai, Greenbelt Movement and Nobel Peace Laureate, encouraged civil society to continue its work, regardless of the outcomes of Copenhagen. She said action on climate change is an issue of justice and moral responsibility.

More information:

<http://www.copenhagenclimatecouncil.com>
<http://www.globeinternational.org>
<http://climatecongress.ku.dk>
<http://tckctck.org>
<http://www.greenpeace.org/international>

Contacts:

Morten Holm Østergaard (Coordinator)
mho@stm.dk

Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee: Question and Answer Session

Presented by the UNFCCC Secretariat

This event summarized recent activities of the Joint Implementation Supervisory Committee (JISC).

Olof Bystrom, JISC, recalled that there are two tracks for verification of emission reductions and enhancement of removals under Joint Implementation (JI). He explained that under Track 1, verification of emission reductions and issuance of Emission Reduction Units (ERUs) are left to the country hosting the JI project, whereas the JISC manages and administers Track 2. He elaborated the role of accredited independent entities (AIEs), which are private third-party verifiers that determine whether JI projects conform to JI requirements and whether emission reductions and removals are accurate and additional.

Derrick Oderson, JISC, summarized the JISC's responsibilities, including to: review determinations regarding Project Design Documents (PDDs); approve project design and verification of emission reductions; accredit AIEs; and elaborate project design documents and new rules of procedure for consideration by the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP). He noted that the JISC has developed guidance on baseline setting and monitoring. Oderson said the JI Accreditation Panel, which supports the JISC in accrediting AIEs, has received 15 applications for accreditation.

James Grabert, JISC, presented the JISC's finances. He said although parties' contributions for 2008-2009 amounted to US\$1.7 million, the JISC is undergoing a financial shortfall. Oderson added that the JISC's aim to be self-financing by 2010 through fees has not materialized, and both speakers urged Annex I parties to make early contributions for the next biennium to ensure continued JI operations.

Agnieszka Galan, JISC, introduced the Determination and Verification Manual (DVM), which was completed in December 2009. She said the DVM is a living document whose goals include assisting AIEs to systematically undertake determinations and verifications. She described the Manual's structure and contents, noting that these differ significantly from the pre-existing Clean Development Mechanism Validation and Verification Manual. She said the DVM contains no new mandatory requirements.

Presenting on JI programmes of activities (PoAs), Benoît Leguet, JISC, said the JISC has adopted JI PoA procedures and guidelines for users of the JI-PoA design documents. He explained that JI PoAs are coordinated actions by legal or governmental entities, and are comprised of one or more inter-related types of JI programme activities that have been, or will be, replicated. He said JI PoAs are aimed at achieving economies of scale and reaching wider groups of stakeholders, and can cover more than one country in their geographical boundaries.

In response to questions, panelists noted, *inter alia*, that: the JISC will likely consider the issues of materiality and level of insurance on its 2010 agenda; activities falling under JI PoAs might relate to energy efficiency and fuel switches; and without more financing, the JISC will have to choose which activities to cut.



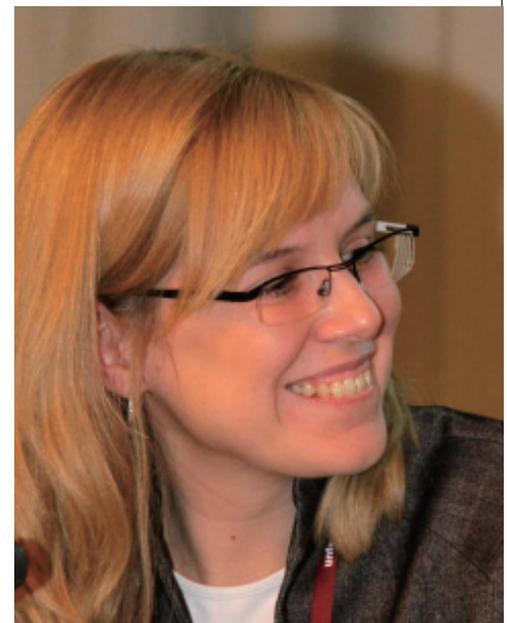
Derrick Oderson, JISC, highlighted that 200 PDDs have been submitted under Track 2 since the start of the JI programme in 2006, representing approximately 315 metric tonnes of carbon dioxide reductions between 2008-2012.

More information:

<http://ji.unfccc.int>
http://ji.unfccc.int/Sup_Committee/Meetings/019/Reports/Annex4.pdf

Contacts:

Derrick Oderson (Chair) <doderson@unfccc.int>
 Olof Bystrom <obystrom@unfccc.int>
 James Grabert <jgrabert@unfccc.int>
 Agnieszka Galan <agnieszka.galan@mos.gov.pl>
 Benoît Leguet <benoit.leguet@caissedesdepots.fr>



Agnieszka Galan, JISC, explained that the new Determination and Verification Manual is based primarily on existing CMP and JISC documents.

What Copenhagen Talks Must Deliver From a Climate Justice Perspective

Presented by the Third World Network (TWN)

Bernarditas Müller, South Centre, lamented that 17 years after the UNFCCC came into force, developed countries remain reluctant to commit to legally binding emission reductions. She explained that the Bali Action Plan is being undermined by poor reporting on mitigation activities by Annex I countries, and that in real terms, their emissions continue to increase.

She reported that the large majority of financial resources committed to climate change are being devoted to mitigation, ignoring the need to support adaptation, capacity building and technology transfer to developing countries. Müller stated that developing countries are entitled to an equitable level of atmospheric space in line with their populations' development needs.

Mithika Mwenda, Pan African Climate Justice Alliance, called for an agreement founded on environmental and social justice principles. He outlined his organization's manifesto, agreed to by over 200 African NGOs, which is founded on the following principle: "if climate justice means ensuring that people everywhere are safe from danger and free from suffering due to climate change, then climate justice means not ignoring that some people somewhere are exposed to danger and yoked to suffering due to climate change." He concluded that COP 15 offers an opportunity to deprived communities to ensure a promising livelihood for future generations.

Kamel Djemouai, African Group Chair, argued that there is a credibility gap between developed countries' statements on the seriousness of climate change and their negotiating positions. He also cautioned developed countries against leaving the Kyoto Protocol and called on them to renew their commitments within the Protocol's framework.

Martin Khor, South Centre, expressed concern that developed countries may try to extricate themselves from the Kyoto Protocol, arguing that unless the negotiations continue according to the Bali understanding, the negotiations will have entered a state of "total anarchy." He said developed countries must show leadership, and that non-binding "pledged" reductions would amount to a "shocking climbdown."

Khor also drew attention to the fact that while Annex I parties are considering reductions of 12-16%, the science demands that they commit to much larger cuts. He argued for a fund, managed by the COP, to operate as the entity to finance mitigation, adaptation, capacity building and technology transfer.

Participants discussed the effects of climate on the labour force and how it affects different sectors, the weaknesses inherent in the Kyoto Protocol's compliance mechanism and indigenous perspectives on reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD).



Bernarditas Müller, South Centre, urged developed countries to make strong commitments and argued for an equitable level of atmospheric space for developing countries.

More information:

<http://www.thirdworldnetwork.org>

<http://www.southcentre.org>

<http://www.pacja.org>

Contacts:

Lim Li Lin (Chair) <lin@thirdworldnetwork.net>

Bernarditas Müller <muller@southcentre.org>

Mithika Mwenda <mwemithika@yahoo.com>

Martin Khor <mkhor@igc.org>



Martin Khor, South Centre, called on developed countries to renew their commitments within the Kyoto framework and according to the Bali understanding.

Latest Second National Communications Submitted by Non-Annex I Parties

Presented by the UNFCCC Secretariat

During this event, non-Annex I parties elaborated their second national communications as well as challenges faced in preparing them.

Dominique Revet, UNFCCC Secretariat, opened the event. Yamil Bonduki, UN Development Programme, praised the number of countries that have completed their second national communications. George Manful, UN Environment Programme, commended the progress on preparations on the third national communications.

Taulant Bino, Albania, stated that his country's adaptation policy focuses on: integrating adaptation action into all aspects and levels of its development policy and planning; preparing disaster relief and hazard reduction programmes; enacting new legislation on water use; and reforesting eroded lands. He said next steps include transferring biomass to energy, developing wind farms and improving the efficiency of lighting.

Isidore Dianzinga, the Republic of Congo, stated that national data show measurable climate change between 1950-2000 and that corresponding mitigation strategies include reforestation, afforestation and engaging with REDD. He concluded by stating that his country is working on a comprehensive energy policy, with its main objective to maximize energy efficiency with minimal environmental impact.

Marina Shvangiradze, Georgia, explained that her country's key challenges have been a lack of national experts, unreliability of existing data and low awareness among local decision makers. She said Georgia's greenhouse gas national inventory shows: an increase in mean temperatures, with corresponding sea-level rise; sedimentary processes in deltas of glacier-fed rivers; and wind erosion. Shvangiradze highlighted Georgia's goal of preparing project proposals for the third national communication with a greater focus on ecosystems.

Abdelkrim Ben Mohamed, University Abdou Moumouni de Niamey, Niger, described key challenges, including the availability of reliable data and the lack of national forest inventories. He said mitigation and poverty alleviation actions included the restoration of degraded lands and carbon sequestration by planting gum trees. He drew attention to the health effects of climate change, such as increases in the incidence of malnutrition, malaria and meningitis.

Mauricio Zaballa Romero, Bolivia, stated that Bolivia's second national communication focused on the elaboration of its greenhouse gas inventory, public awareness and institutional strengthening. He noted key findings, including that: extreme events have intensified; half a million Bolivians are affected by climate change; glaciers have receded by 80%; and the Amazonian wetlands are disappearing. He concluded by stating that the second national communication's three key outcomes are national adaptation mechanisms, vulnerability assessments and implementation of adaptation programmes.

Panelists responded to questions regarding: the causes of deforestation and land degradation; REDD; declining yields of rain-fed crops and options for irrigation; funding for conducting the third national communication reports; and the consequences and feasibility of adaptation strategies such as migration.



Marina Shvangiradze, Georgia, presented her country's second national communication, which shows an increase in mean temperatures.

More information:

http://unfccc.int/national_reports/non-annex_i_natcom/items/2716.php
<http://ncsp.undp.org>

Contacts:

Dominique Revet <drevet@unfccc.int>
 Yamil Bonduki <yamil.bonduki@undp.org>
 George Manful <george.manful@unep.org>
 Taulant Bino <tbino@moe.gov.al>
 Isidore Dianzinga <isidore.dianzinga@undp.org>
 Marina Shvangiradze <mshvangiradze@gol.ge>
 Abdelkrim Ben Mohamed <benoam@yahoo.com>
 Mauricio Zaballa Romero <comunicacion.nacional.bol@gmail.com>



Dominique Revet, UNFCCC Secretariat, applauded the efforts of countries who had engaged in the second national communication process.