



SUMMARY OF THE UNFCCC SEMINAR OF GOVERNMENTAL EXPERTS: 16-17 MAY 2005

The Seminar of Governmental Experts was held on 16 and 17 May 2005, at the Maritim Hotel in Bonn, Germany. The decision to hold a Seminar was taken by Parties at the Tenth Conference of the Parties (COP-10) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in December 2004. The decision, which followed lengthy discussions at COP-10, sought to address the question of how to engage on some of the broader issues facing the climate change process. Foremost among these for some Parties was the question of a future framework and commitments to combat climate change in the post-2012 period (the Kyoto Protocol sets emissions targets for the years 2008-2012). There was also some interest in other issues, such as how to respond to the increasingly strong evidence of climate change, address the differences of opinion over Kyoto, and move forward in dealing both with climate change mitigation and adaptation.

The issue of a post-2012 framework proved to be particularly sensitive at COP-10. While the Kyoto Protocol requires Parties to begin considering the post-2012 period by 2005, many developing countries have objected in the past to attempts to expand the group of nations that have binding emissions targets from Annex I Parties into the ranks of the Group of 77 and China (G-77/China). Developing countries argue that industrialized countries should take the lead, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. There was also the question of how to include non-Parties to Kyoto in talks on subsequent commitments.

As a result of these concerns, the terms of reference set for the Seminar were kept broad and general, with no specific reference to a post-2012 framework or other controversial matters. Parties at COP-10 agreed that the Seminar should encourage an "informal exchange of information on: (a) actions relating to mitigation and adaptation to assist Parties to continue to develop effective and appropriate responses to climate change; and (b) policies and measures adopted by their respective governments that support implementation of their existing commitments."

While the Seminar had no formal outcome, such as recommendations or a negotiated text, many participants felt that it had been a very constructive and open dialogue that had demonstrated a willingness among Parties to understand others' positions and circumstances, and to begin the search for innovative ways to accommodate them. However, while being widely viewed as a step in the right direction, there were few signs that the differences between Parties had actually narrowed.

REPORT OF THE SEMINAR

UNFCCC Executive Secretary Joke Waller-Hunter welcomed participants to the Seminar of Governmental Experts on Monday morning, 16 May. Stating that this Seminar was the "first of its kind in UNFCCC history," she said time would tell if it will be remembered as an historic event. She suggested that, following the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol in February 2005, this was an opportune moment to consider the implementation of the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. She said participants would be informed about the broad range of approaches Parties have taken to tackle climate change, reflecting countries' diverse circumstances, and highlighted that the Seminar was taking place against a backdrop of rising atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations.

Delegates then heard two keynote presentations. Jürgen Trittin, German Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature

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Conservation and Nuclear Safety, highlighted the need for action on climate change to avoid a rise of more than 2°C in global temperatures and the “disastrous and irreversible damage” that would result. He stated that the Kyoto Protocol is a first step, but said progress must continue beyond 2012. He underscored the need for political will to ensure climate protection, and said this Seminar could provide the basis for a successful start at the first Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (MOP-1) in December 2005, with regard to the process of developing a post-2012 framework.

COP-10 President Ginés González García, Minister of Health and the Environment of Argentina, said the Seminar was an opportunity to rebuild trust and confidence, noting the challenge of designing and building the post-2012 structures. He urged industrialized countries to address developing countries’ concerns, including turning pledges into concrete actions, supporting the various climate funds that exist, and engaging in technology transfer and supporting adaptation. He indicated that political will would be critical to building trust and “facilitating developing countries’ active participation in post-Kyoto architecture.”

Following the opening presentations, Co-Chair Masaki Konishi explained that the Seminar would consist of several sessions, each involving speeches from several different government experts, followed by an interactive question-and-answer period. Emphasizing the informal nature of this meeting, Co-Chair Chow Kok Kee said there would be no Co-Chairs’ conclusions.

SESSION ONE

The first session, held on Monday morning, 16 May, involved presentations by government experts from China, Brazil, Switzerland and the UK, followed by an interactive question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: China: Feng Gao drew attention to China’s current reliance on coal, stressed the need to improve energy efficiency, and outlined China’s efforts to optimize its energy structure. He called for international cooperation to introduce and apply energy saving technologies, corresponding policy incentives and capacity building, and increased efforts and new mechanisms to transfer such technologies to developing countries.

Brazil: André Corrêa do Lago urged cooperation to ensure the success of the UNFCCC, Kyoto Protocol and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) beyond 2012. Outlining Brazil’s experiences with the CDM, he highlighted the CDM’s contribution in achieving the UNFCCC’s objective, helping Annex I countries to meet their commitments, engaging developing countries in mitigation efforts that would not otherwise be feasible, while raising their living standards.

Switzerland: Beat Nobs recognized the need to increase efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions after 2012. He said the international framework should ensure sustainable development, include all major emitters, reduce greenhouse gas emissions everywhere, promote the development, use and transfer of environmentally friendly technology, make use of market forces, and possibly include timetables and targets for emissions reductions.

United Kingdom: David Warrilow, on behalf of the European

Union (EU), underscored positive feedback and possible catastrophic impacts as drivers for the EU’s proposal to limit warming to less than 2°C, emphasizing that the challenge is to meet growing demand for energy while reducing emissions. He also stressed the need to address the problem as a matter of urgency.

DISCUSSION: Japan welcomed China’s emphasis on energy savings and efficiency, asked for details on how China plans to achieve these, and offered technology cooperation. In response, Feng Gao stressed China’s need for energy, noting that, with hydro and nuclear energy both being criticized, it raised issues about what options China had. He added that a strong agreement on technology transfer would be necessary.

The Cook Islands and Indonesia raised issues about the future role of the CDM and Joint Implementation (JI), and Luxembourg, for the EU, asked Brazil about its renewables programme. In response, André Corrêa do Lago said Brazil has demonstrated that it is possible for a developing country to have a very high ratio of renewable energy in the matrix.

China raised the question of when developed countries could be expected to show significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and set an example for developing countries. Romania raised questions about the role of nuclear power in the second commitment period. He noted the risk of positive feedback, such as emissions from manufacturing the cement needed for sea walls and other infrastructure to adapt to sea level rise.

SESSION TWO

This session, held early Monday afternoon, involved presentations from South Africa, Norway, the European Commission and the US, followed by a question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: South Africa: Alf Wills said the future should involve a strengthened Kyoto Protocol that includes all countries and recognizes their common but differentiated responsibilities. He stressed that the science of adaptation is relatively underdeveloped, highlighted that mitigation and adaptation in South Africa is an “energy story,” and called for a “roadmap” for negotiations to be developed at COP-11/MOP-1 in Montreal in late 2005.

Norway: Harald Dovland underscored that 2012 is only seven years away, a very short time given the long planning periods needed for many sectors. Commenting on the shape of a future climate regime, he said it should contain the Kyoto Protocol’s positive elements, such as differentiated commitments, flexibility and reporting.

European Commission: Artur Runge-Metzger outlined the EU’s progress in achieving the Kyoto targets, stressing its emphasis on cost-effective policies, a multi-stakeholder approach, and the use of market-based instruments, regulations and standards, labeling and voluntary measures. He reported on the EU’s Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), which allows linking with Joint Implementation (JI) and the CDM. He also noted work on the aviation sector, carbon capture and storage, and adaptation.

United States: Harlan Watson outlined his country’s policies to address climate change, stressing its commitment to the UNFCCC and the need for sustained efforts by all nations across generations. Noting President Bush’s “ambitious goal” to reduce



greenhouse gas intensity by 18 percent from 2002-2012, he noted progress to date, with slightly lower emissions in 2003 than 2000 in spite of population growth and a significant rise in gross domestic product (GDP). He emphasized the US commitment to engaging fully at the international level and to sustainable development, noting initiatives on carbon capture and storage, hydrogen, nuclear energy and methane recovery and use.

DISCUSSION: Responding to a question from Luxembourg about existing technologies, Harlan Watson agreed that these had an important role. In response to a comment from Bolivia on the role of forestry in reducing climate change impacts, Artur Runge-Metzger noted that the sector was only partially dealt with under the Kyoto Protocol, as deforestation was not adequately addressed. Harlan Watson emphasized sequestration focused on forests and farmland. Harald Dovland noted that he had not been especially satisfied with how forestry and sinks issues had been addressed under the Kyoto Protocol, and hoped that in future regimes they would be dealt with through constructive discussions. Alf Wills noted concerns that South Africa's particular conditions, including its water limitations, meant forestry issues are considered more in terms of vulnerability and adaptation than carbon sinks.

Responding to Bulgaria's question about the exclusion of aviation from the Kyoto Protocol, Artur Runge-Metzger said the European Commission was considering this complex issue, and that aviation should be addressed in a future climate regime. Harlan Watson noted that the aviation sector is experiencing growth in some parts of the world, although not in the US. Harold Dovland noted discussions on this issue in the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the EU.

Indonesia asked about the post-2012 period. Artur Runge-Metzger indicated that neither the EU ETS Directive nor the Linking Directive to the CDM and JI have an expiration date. Harold Dovland said care must be taken not to establish a regime that is so complex that compliance cannot be monitored effectively. He expressed a personal view that a future framework should involve multiple stakeholders, rather than "the dichotomous world of Annex I and non-Annex I" Parties.

SESSION THREE

This session, which took place on Monday afternoon, included speeches from Tuvalu, Albania, the Republic of Korea and the Netherlands, as well as a question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: Tuvalu: Ian Fry said Annex B countries should focus on energy efficiency and renewable energy and that countries that are not Parties to the Kyoto Protocol should reduce their emissions levels. He called for a renewable energy and energy efficiency technology fund to assist non-Annex I countries in reducing emissions and purchasing the necessary technologies. He also opposed nuclear power as an option. Fry said adaptation measures should focus both on building resistance to the impacts of climate change, and on restoring the damage caused by its impacts. He highlighted the need for a new financial facility for adaptation funding, but said there was no need for an adaptation protocol.

Albania: Ermira Fida said Albania's First National Communication has been used to mainstream climate change into national policies, including the development of the national energy strategy and identifying ways to meet technology needs.

Republic of Korea: Boo Nam Shin noted that energy demand is projected to grow both in the Republic of Korea and globally. He highlighted international cooperation based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, and called for the development and diffusion of more efficient technologies, and technological assistance for non-Annex I countries.

The Netherlands: Yvo de Boer speaking for the EU, focused on policy integration, noting increasing energy consumption. He underscored the need to make emissions reductions economically attractive, and to use the lessons learned from the Kyoto Protocol. He said the international community should take advantage of the synergies between combating climate change and achieving development.

DISCUSSION: In the subsequent discussion, India asked for clarification on the new approaches to differentiation among Parties, and Yvo de Boer said these should be built on the UNFCCC framework. Pakistan highlighted the role of renewable energy sources in economic empowerment of the poor and Samoa stressed the importance of renewable energy technology transfer. Ian Fry called for discussions on how to engage more effectively with international financial institutions and to evolve in a way that meets poverty reduction requirements as well as emissions reduction requirements.

SESSION FOUR

This session, which was held late Monday afternoon, included presentations from Canada, Japan, Morocco and India, as well as a question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: Canada: Norine Smith reported on Project Green, which sets out steps to ensure that Canada can meet its Kyoto commitments. She underscored Project Green's focus on market mechanisms, a partnerships fund, large emitters, information for Canadian consumers, carbon sequestration and environmentally-sustainable infrastructure. She also highlighted mounting evidence for climate change and a realization that that much more needs to be done beyond Kyoto, with climate change already occurring and affecting communities such as those in northern Canada. Outlining preparations for COP-11/MOP-1 in Montreal, she drew attention to the pre-meeting consultative process, welcoming advice and input to help move the climate process forward and to operationalize the Kyoto Protocol.

Japan: Mutsuyoshi Nishimura drew attention to Japan's new plan to implement its Kyoto commitments, describing it as a "huge package" of measures involving various stakeholders. Stressing that climate change is real and that delays in dealing with it will lead to further damage, he highlighted technological innovation, on which Japan has taken a leading role, and also advocated global action. He supported a free and frank dialogue and a "new paradigm" that was "encouraging and enabling" rather than "capping and punishing." He supported a roadmap to a low carbon society.

Morocco: Taha Balafrej highlighted Morocco's vulnerability to climate change, including its impact on precipitation and water supply. On the way forward, he said Morocco would entertain any proposal to combat global warming in a substantial way. He stressed that commitments from all developed countries are needed, highlighted business sector concerns about the economic impacts of climate change, suggested making this process less



complicated and more flexible, and called for procedures for the CDM to be streamlined. He also urged greater efforts on adaptation.

India: Surya P. Sethi stated that emissions in Annex I countries are rising and that their reductions have not resulted from new climate policies and measures but from “one time” events such as the economic transition in Eastern Europe, and the shift from coal to gas in the UK. He emphasized the limits of different models forecasting emissions trends and drew attention to the barriers to technology transfer and financing. He noted that India’s low emissions levels do not result only from poverty but that they can also be attributed to lifestyle choices.

DISCUSSION: Responding to questions from various participants concerning technology transfer, Surya P. Sethi highlighted that the transfer of certain technologies should be moved to the public domain, as the speed of commercially-driven technology transfer will be insufficient to affect climate change in any meaningful way, due to the lack of resources in developing countries. Taha Balafrej underscored the need to have a clear picture of the efforts made to date by developed countries, and the results achieved. He noted the need to improve the system and equity in CDM project distribution, emphasizing Africa’s under-representation. Responding to a question from Germany on the inclusion of the private sector in reducing carbon emissions, Mutsuyoshi Nishimura explained about Japan’s voluntary programme and Norine Smith reported on Canada’s consultation with large emitters, which resulted in an emissions intensity approach. Responding to a question from the UK on their long-term climate policy perspectives, Mutsuyoshi Nishimura and Norine Smith underscored that long-term planning is needed to secure the necessary investments in infrastructure. Mutsuyoshi Nishimura noted Japan’s significant investments in energy efficiency and conservation over many years. Norine Smith said the similarities in different countries’ approaches probably reflect the influence of academic literature.

SESSION FIVE

On Tuesday morning, 17 May, delegates heard presentations from government experts from Papua New Guinea, Mexico, Australia and France, and engaged in a question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: Papua New Guinea: Robert G. Aisi underscored that the Kyoto Protocol excludes action by developing countries to avoid deforestation. He proposed an optional protocol with tradable credits issued against avoided deforestation, and questioned whether the Marrakesh Accords should be amended.

Mexico: Fernando Tudela said a signal should be given to the markets on the future of the climate regime, and raised the possibility of a “Montreal Mandate” at COP-11/MOP-1. He suggested that further differentiation among developing countries was necessary, and introduced the idea of flexible convergence of *per capita* emissions. While noting some positive aspects of the CDM, he listed various concerns, including transaction costs and an imbalance between environmental integrity and effectiveness.

Australia: Jan Adams said the major emitters should take action to reduce emissions and identified the growing global energy demand as a major challenge. She highlighted cooperation on the development of both renewable energy and

cleaner fossil fuel technologies, and identified thermal power generation, carbon sequestration and clean coal technologies as promising alternatives.

France: Paul Watkinson, on behalf of the EU, focused on the investment challenge. He highlighted the need to influence private investment decisions and emphasized the importance of integrating climate in other policies, the role of trade regimes and the World Trade Organization, and noted that post-2012 uncertainty is already affecting carbon markets.

DISCUSSION: In the ensuing discussion, Monaco said *per capita* emissions should be a relevant consideration in determining future commitments. Egypt, the Russian Federation, Monaco and others underscored problems with the CDM, including its complexity. Morocco noted that, while the CDM needs to be improved, it does link action on climate change to development. Fernando Tudela suggested that the CDM could focus on economic sectors and that sectoral baselines be developed.

Hungary and Japan asked what was meant by differentiation among developing countries, and Fernando Tudela replied that if a country can do more to reduce emissions then it should do so, thus avoiding a “race to the bottom.” Morocco proposed that the Secretariat put up a Carbon Thermometer on its website, based on Annex I national contributions, to increase the visibility of carbon emissions. The Russian Federation highlighted the need for post-2012 certainty to encourage private sector investment. Tuvalu raised the issue of small developing country participation in the climate process. Paul Watkinson observed that, as a result of the EU ETS, businesses in the EU are aware of their emissions levels.

SESSION SIX

On Tuesday morning, delegates heard presentations from New Zealand, Germany, Argentina and Finland, and engaged in a question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: New Zealand: Helen Plume noted her country’s responses to climate change, including a carbon tax to be introduced in 2007. She drew attention to New Zealand’s unique circumstances and highlighted the need for flexible solutions, while emphasizing that all the major emitters should be involved in the process and that broad participation is essential.

Germany: Karsten Sach, on behalf of the EU, spoke about technology and innovation. Highlighting the need to find ways to bring technologies to the market, he outlined a range of “push and pull” policies, and discussed the role of public-private partnerships. He said the Kyoto framework serves as a good basis for the post-2012 period, and stressed that there should be no gap in the process.

Argentina: Vicente R. Barros acknowledged warnings about the 2°C global warming threshold, and noted that warming is expected to be greater in some tropical and sub-tropical areas, with impacts on, *inter alia*, precipitation, water supplies, hydro power and agriculture. He stressed the importance of taking action on the post-2012 period, arguing that “we must start now” to discuss these issues. He highlighted the importance of the CDM and said its scope should be expanded. He also discussed the important roles of carbon sequestration and reforestation.



Finland: Outi Berghäll stressed the urgency of adaptation, and called for the integration of climate change and adaptation into development policies, as well as into national and subnational decision-making. She emphasized the need to enhance cross-sectoral communication, avoid duplication of efforts, and find synergies between international institutions and other multilateral environmental agreements.

DISCUSSION: Responding to a question from Hungary on long-term goals, Helen Plume indicated that New Zealand has not adopted a long-term global warming target, but accepted that international consensus on such a target would provide greater certainty for the business sector. Responding to a question from Pakistan, Karsten Sach highlighted the value of networking to promote renewable energy, and agreed with Kenya on the need to build capacity for Africa to participate more effectively in the CDM. Vicente R. Barros identified the need for mechanisms to encourage larger emissions reductions and further develop the CDM. Responding to Kenya, Outi Berghäll said the recognition of differences in the impacts of climate change on countries must be the starting point for adaptation, and that responses must be tailored to fit national circumstances.

PRESENTATIONS FROM CIVIL SOCIETY

Representatives of civil society groups were invited to speak early on Tuesday afternoon. Nick Campbell, representing the business and industry organizations at the Seminar, emphasized the willingness of the business community to continue to participate in climate efforts and urged Parties to consider the wider impacts of climate policies.

Sanjay Vashist, Climate Action Network, underscored that climate change is already having an impact, and said a mandate for negotiations on the post-2012 period must come out of COP-11/MOP-1 in Montreal. He urged limiting warming to under 2°C compared with pre-industrial levels. He said a future framework should address issues such as access to clean technologies, justice and equity, new financing, and adaptation. He argued that “we cannot delude ourselves that we can engage the US at this point,” and should begin discussions immediately to ensure continuity between the first and second commitment periods. He also urged India to take a “fresh approach” and support a Montreal mandate.

Saleemul Huq, on behalf of Research and Independent Non-Governmental Organizations (RINGOs), supported a more robust response to climate change, and strengthened action on mitigation and adaptation. He said RINGOs are committed to this process and contributing as it moves forward in the direction agreed by Parties.

SESSION SEVEN

On Tuesday afternoon, delegates heard presentations from representatives of Peru, Mali and Saudi Arabia, and engaged in a question-and-answer session.

PRESENTATIONS: Peru: María Paz Cigarán focused on practical action to address climate change at the national level. She elaborated on public awareness campaigns and adaptation issues, noting that adaptation is local but needs international support. She underscored the need to identify critical actors and target audiences for public awareness campaigns, noting their campaign slogan: “Climate is changing, so should we.”

Mali: Mama Konate elaborated on Mali’s national monitoring plans and meteorological information systems to provide weather information to farmers, which are an example of local adaptation and allow rural population to take action.

Saudi Arabia: Fareed Al-Asaly said Annex I Parties are not fulfilling their commitments under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol, particularly in reducing emissions or providing assistance and technology transfer. He underscored that international action should be based on the articles of the UNFCCC, and stating that the Buenos Aires Programme on Adaptation was inadequate, he called for a focus on modeling, insurance and economic diversification.

DISCUSSION: Namibia, Burkina Faso, Togo and others expressed interest in Mali’s experiences with national monitoring plans and meteorological information systems, and raised the idea of turning them into a regional programme. Egypt and Malaysia stressed the importance of technology transfer and the role of the private sector in technology transfer. The Russian Federation highlighted the need for better forecasts on the consequences of climate change, together with historical and long-term perspectives.

Responding to a question from France about adaptation, María Paz Cigarán said it is very difficult to generalize about the experiences of different countries because of their diverse circumstances. She indicated that, at present, focusing on capacity building against climate variability would be the most beneficial action, along with dissemination of information. Mama Konate said Mali’s information system is an example that can be applied to any developing country. Fareed Al-Asaly said that, at present, the development of cleaner fossil fuel technologies tends to focus on coal, whereas Saudi Arabia would like to see similar efforts put into oil technologies. Responding to Nigeria, the UK, Algeria and Hungary on economic diversification, Fareed Al-Asaly said Saudi Arabia is focusing its economic diversification efforts on the petrochemical sector, while in terms of adaptation, the emphasis is on coastal zone management.

CLOSING SESSION

Co-Chair Chow Kok Kee opened the closing session late Tuesday afternoon. Observing that the Seminar had produced some very fruitful discussions, he asked experts to present their views on three key issues: technology transfer, adaptation and mitigation.

Reflecting on the Seminar, several participants were positive about the open, frank discussions that had taken place. Luxembourg, on behalf of the EU, identified a “large consensus” among delegations on the common challenges ahead. He noted the EU’s determination to reinvigorate discussions on the post-2012 period and looked forward to further steps in Montreal at COP-11/MOP-1.

TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER: On technology transfer, participants commented on how to increase the flow of technology transfer and improve the effectiveness of the Kyoto Mechanisms. Canada supported strategies targeted at specific technologies. The US noted the framework agreed under the Marrakesh Accords. He questioned calls for new mechanisms, and praised the Expert Group on Technology Transfer on its



work to date. He also highlighted the focus on public-private partnerships. Tuvalu suggested a new funding mechanism to support technology transfer.

On the CDM, Botswana said procedures needed to be simplified. China highlighted difficulties with the CDM, and suggested strengthening it and considering additional options. Nigeria highlighted the CDM's role in catalyzing technology transfer, supported strengthening the CDM, and stressed the importance of technology needs assessments. Canada offered to host an informal workshop on the CDM prior to COP-11/MOP-1, possibly in September 2005. Germany said the CDM should be strengthened without renegotiating the Marrakesh Accords. Qatar emphasized a strong compliance system with financial penalties as a means to ensure an active CDM market. Uganda said the renegotiation of CDM modalities would be too slow, and drew attention to problems caused by the commercially-driven nature of technology transfer.

Calling for a signal to the market on post-2012 commitments, Bulgaria highlighted the success of JI and described the Green Investment Scheme, suggesting that Parties develop guidelines for this new mechanism if necessary. Algeria lamented the complexity of the CDM procedure. Indonesia said stricter emissions targets for industrialized countries would speed up technology transfer by reducing the cost of climate-friendly technologies, and emphasized that the sustainability of lifestyles was more important than technology. On the CDM, Indonesia said ways should be found to make transport projects and projects that specifically reduce carbon dioxide emissions more attractive. Kenya suggested measures to encourage manufacturing in developing countries, and called for changes to the CDM to ensure the equitable distribution of projects. Bangladesh noted that allowing the market to drive CDM investment concentrates projects in countries with better infrastructure, and called for a mechanism to guarantee wider distribution of CDM projects.

ADAPTATION: Participants were then asked to discuss adaptation issues. Finland underscored that mitigation is the key to tackling climate change, but said adaptation is also required. She stressed that adaptation and mitigation are complementary, not alternative actions, and that the international approach to adaptation should be different to that on mitigation.

India emphasized that adaptation measures should not attempt to replicate mitigation models, such as incremental costs. Senegal said technology transfer should be integrated into political decision making, and stressed the need for information transfer and scientific cooperation. Japan and Bangladesh emphasized the need to enhance monitoring and assessment of climate impacts and vulnerability. Bangladesh underscored the need to integrate disaster management into adaptation strategies. Botswana stressed the importance of public awareness on adaptation.

MITIGATION: On mitigation, the Republic of Korea highlighted common but differentiated responsibilities and noted that, given the current global reliance on fossil fuels, it was time to look at the nuclear energy option more positively. He also said economic considerations should help guide discussions on the post-2012 period.

Canada said the key question now was how to move forward in a way that builds constructively on the UNFCCC and Kyoto

Protocol. She noted similarities in the way many countries are addressing the climate change problem, and felt that there was a great deal of scope for pooling efforts across countries and sectors.

Luxembourg, on behalf of the EU, supported seeking synergies between combating climate change and sustainable development objectives, and said EU Heads of State had agreed to restrict warming to within the 2°C threshold. The UK highlighted benefits of taking both a long-term and short-term approach, noting that its ambitious long-term goal had provided a context and incentive for short-term action.

Saudi Arabia said the UNFCCC has set out a clear approach on mitigation and Parties should meet their obligations. India highlighted the issue of how to shape development policies in ways that produce co-benefits on climate change. He noted that developing countries are already implementing extensive and successful packages of measures on climate change.

CLOSING REMARKS: Responding to questions about the outcome of the Seminar, UNFCCC Executive Secretary Joke Waller-Hunter noted that COP-10 had invited the Secretariat to make the proceedings of the Seminar available. She indicated that a video webcast of the proceedings is available online, and said a compilation of all the presentations and discussions would be prepared (<http://unfccc.int/meetings/seminar/items/3410.php>). This would be descriptive and factual, but would contain no interpretation of events.

Co-Chair Masaki Konishi indicated that the Seminar had produced a "useful and constructive exchange of information on a wide range of issues." He said a lot of information had been exchanged, and it should help make individual and collective efforts more efficient, and create confidence among Parties. He thanked all participants, and expressed the hope that the Seminar had helped pave the way for COP-11/MOP-1. He expressed his gratitude to the Secretariat, interpreters, and the German Government for hosting the meeting, and everyone who had made it possible for the Seminar to take place.

Co-Chair Chow Kok Kee noted the frank exchange of information, and congratulated participants on their upbeat and positive approach. He said he detected a common vision, adding that, although "we may take 100 different paths," he hoped they would all end up achieving the same goal of combating climate change on the road to sustainable development. He declared the Seminar closed shortly after 7:00 pm.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE SEMINAR

"This Seminar... is the first of its kind in UNFCCC history. [But] time will tell if it will be remembered as an historic event," observed UNFCCC Executive Secretary Joke Waller-Hunter at the opening of the Seminar of Governmental Experts on Monday morning, 16 May. Waller-Hunter's comments reflected the sentiments of the participants as the meeting began. Many were unsure of exactly what to expect from the Seminar. This uncertainty was due in large part to the importance and sensitivity of the issues many participants hoped to discuss.

The decision to hold the Seminar was taken at COP-10 in December 2004, following heated discussions on how to engage on some of the broader issues facing the climate change process. Foremost among these issues for some Parties was



the future framework and commitments to combat climate change in the post-2012 period. Developing countries were sensitive to attempts to discuss emissions targets for non-Annex I Parties, and there was also the difficult question of how to include non-Parties to the Kyoto Protocol in talks on subsequent commitments. In addition, there was interest in other issues, such as the increasingly strong evidence of climate change, differences of opinion over Kyoto's future, and mitigation and adaptation. As a result of these concerns and sensitivities, the terms of reference set for the Seminar were left both broad and, in some countries' opinions, quite vague.

FRANK DIALOGUE AND THE "COMFY ARMCHAIR THEORY"

Given the difficulties at COP-10 during the discussions on the Seminar and its mandate, most participants seemed pleasantly surprised by the positive atmosphere as the Seminar began. Several participants felt that the relaxed setting played its part. The Seminar's Co-Chairs, Japan's Masaki Konishi and Malaysia's Chow Kok Kee, adopted a laid-back approach that seemed to put participants at ease. In addition, many delegates commented on the comfortable red armchairs placed on the stage for the government experts. The podium was lowered to make it more on a level with participants – again to lessen the formality of the occasion. Some compared it to a "television talk show" setting, while others likened the use of "comfy chairs" and the informal approach to a "nice fireside chat."

Whether or not these organizational details were instrumental in generating the positive atmosphere, the dialogue was certainly open, frank and broad-ranging. There was a free exchange of information on actions countries are taking on mitigation and adaptation, and to support implementation of commitments under the UNFCCC and Kyoto Protocol. There were also no objections when speakers began discussing the post-2012 period and other previously-sensitive issues.

In an unusual departure from previous climate change meetings, participants appeared open to discussing not only what their positions are, but also the concerns underlying these positions. There was considerable discussion on national circumstances, and many observers noted a desire to understand other Parties' positions and preoccupations. One participant suggested that the broad terms of reference for the meeting, and the fact that it was not linked to any specific agenda item, had allowed speakers to think and talk "outside the box."

SUBSTANCE AND STYLE

As well as the "user-friendly" organizational style, many observers were also pleased with the substantive nature of the discussions, noting the focus on issues rather than procedure. Controversial issues were discussed openly. These included free-flowing debates on technology transfer, the benefits and shortcomings of the CDM, adaptation and mitigation, and even nuclear energy.

Discussions about technology played an important role in the Seminar. On technology transfer issues, developing nations articulated a clear desire for a greater commitment on this issue on the part of industrialized countries. Participants generally saw the CDM as a positive and innovative contribution, but they also recognized the need to review and streamline the procedures and

expand the mechanism's scope. They also focused attention on the need to develop new technologies. Some observers detected a greater willingness to engage on technology issues that the United States and some other countries have focused on recently, including carbon sequestration and "clean" fossil fuels.

Many experts emphasized the financial aspects of addressing climate change, especially the need to ensure that actions provide economic opportunities and are cost-effective. Again, some felt this reflected a desire to accommodate the perspectives of those who had criticized Kyoto on economic grounds. Business and industry's desire for long-term certainty was stressed repeatedly, as were companies' concerns about their inability to plan properly with the post-2012 framework still so unclear. There appeared to be consensus that such uncertainty was bad for long-term investment. Many Parties also stressed the increasing evidence about the economic impacts of climate change, which several participants felt contributed towards the more open dialogue at the Seminar. In particular, recent meetings affirming the dangers of allowing temperatures to rise more than 2°C above pre-industrial levels seemed to have strengthened many Parties' conviction that urgent action is needed.

Another message from the Seminar was the long time-lag for translating political decisions into effective policy. This view seemed to inspire a greater openness to talking about the post-2012 period. Some Parties clearly hoped for a "Montreal Mandate" from COP/MOP-1 that would lay out a roadmap for the post-2012 negotiation phase. Whether that road makes its way directly through Kyoto territory, within the UNFCCC framework, or heads down several different paths, was a question most Parties were careful to avoid.

With COP/MOP-1 still six months away, the outcome and potential for a "Montreal Mandate" is far from clear. While there was definitely a constructive dialogue at the Seminar, some observers felt that there were few signs that the differences between Parties had actually narrowed, and that these differences could soon translate once more into heated discussions and intransigence once formal negotiations resumed. On the other hand, few would disagree that the Seminar built confidence and demonstrated a willingness to understand other positions and circumstances, and even begin the search for innovative ways to accommodate them. One participant summed it up as "just a small first step in a new phase for the climate process," but quickly added that, "at least the step was in the right direction."