



# CLIMATE-L.ORG Bulletin

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## LATEST NEWS - FRIDAY, 22 AUGUST 2008

### FAO Calls for Information on Underutilized Bioenergy Crops



**GIPB**  
Global Partnership Initiative  
for Plant Breeding Capacity Building

August 2008: The Global Partnership Initiative for Plant Breeding Capacity Building (GIPB), a platform and partnership of public, private and civil society institutions hosted by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), in collaboration with the FAO Inter-Departmental Working Group on Bioenergy, has called for expanded, up-to-date information on genetic resources and breeding of selected underutilized species, together with detailed analysis of their potential as bioenergy crops adaptable to sustainable smallholder production systems. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/fao-calls-for-i.html>

### FAO/UNECE Workshop to Discuss Harvested Wood Products and Climate Change

August 2008: The UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) have announced a workshop on Harvested Wood Products in the Context of Climate Change, to be held from 9-10 September 2008, in Geneva, Switzerland. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/faonece-worksh.html>

### MCPFE Delegates to Discuss Draft European Guidelines for Afforestation and Reforestation

August 2008: The revised draft of the Pan-European Guidelines for Afforestation and Reforestation in the context of the UNFCCC will be considered by the Ministerial Conference on the Protection of Forests in Europe (MCPFE)/Pan-European Biological and Landscape Diversity Strategy (PE-BLDS) drafting meeting, which will convene from 16-17 September 2008, in Malahide, Ireland. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/mcpfe-delegates.html>

### CBD Invites Submissions on Experiences with Tools Relevant to the Sustainable Production and Use of Biofuels

August 2008: The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) has invited submissions regarding experiences in the development and application of tools relevant to the sustainable production and use of biofuels, as well as relevant information from research on, and monitoring of, the positive and negative impacts of the production and use of biofuels on biodiversity and related socioeconomic aspects, including those related to indigenous and local communities. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/cbd-invites-sub.html>

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## Guest Article

### With the global house on fire, there is no time to lose at the UN Climate Change Talks in Accra

By Yvo de Boer, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Executive Secretary

International negotiators are presently preparing for the United Nations Climate Change Talks in Accra, Ghana, which will run from 21 to 27 August. The meeting is the third major UNFCCC gathering this year and is expected to draw over a thousand participants including government representatives, participants from business and industry, environmental organizations and research institutions.



Yvo de Boer

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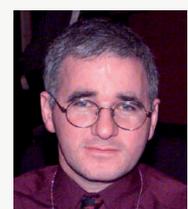
## Talking Targets

By Richard Sherman, CLIMATE-L.ORG Project Manager and Content Editor, and Peter Doran, CLIMATE-L.ORG Writer

As climate negotiators meet in Accra, Ghana, for the next session of the *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (AWG-KP) to consider Annex I parties' commitments beyond the Protocol's first commitment period ending in 2012, we focus, in this edition, on the outcomes and views expressed by recent intergovernmental meetings.



Richard Sherman



Peter Doran

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**Guest Article (cont.)**

An Ashanti proverb has it that “People in a burning house cannot afford to lose time in argument.” The UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change clearly stated last year that the global house has indeed caught fire. Climate change is not only unequivocal, but is accelerating and will above all impact the world’s most vulnerable communities to a degree hardly conceivable, unless the present growth in greenhouse gas emissions is halted over the next few years and drastically cut back by the middle of the century. Under a business as usual scenario, as many as 250 million people are expected to suffer from acute water shortages by 2020 in Africa alone.

With the scientific debate concluded and arguments over the seriousness of the challenge put to rest, a window of opportunity opened at the end of last year with the agreement to launch international negotiations on strengthened international action on climate change. These negotiations will be concluded in Copenhagen next year, to allow an agreed outcome to enter into force before the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol expires in 2012.

So where are we now in terms of putting out the fire, eight months into the negotiations? Another Ashanti proverb says that “No one tests the depth of a river with both feet.” Prudence is a healthy part of human nature, and no-one wants to jump head first into uncharted waters. That would explain the cautiousness when negotiators met in Bangkok in March this year, the first gathering since the Bali climate conference last December.

At the meeting in Bangkok, a work programme for the talks on long-term cooperative action was drawn up for 2008. Parties agreed on essential workshops that should take place, whilst also agreeing to take forward work on mitigation, adaptation, technology transfer, finance and a long-term shared vision. The Bangkok meeting was followed by the Bonn Climate Change Talks in June, during which careful progress was made both in the talks on long-term cooperative action and in talks under the Kyoto Protocol.

In Ghana, work on the rules and tools that will be available to developed countries to meet future emission reduction targets is scheduled to be concluded. This work is essential because the rules and tools that rich countries can deploy will determine the level of ambition when setting their new targets. Only when the toolbox has been established can governments move on to the crucial issue of emission reduction ranges. In Ghana, work will also continue on the main elements of the Copenhagen agreement. Some of this work will be done in two focused workshops.

One workshop will be on policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries; and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries. Given that deforestation accounts for around 20% of all greenhouse gas emissions, this is an issue of huge importance not least for African countries.

The second workshop will be on cooperative sectoral approaches and

sector-specific actions. The Kyoto Protocol’s clean development mechanism presently only allows emission reductions from projects to be credited. This and other mechanisms could be expanded to engage important sectors of the economy, for example the steel, cement or power-generating sectors. Sectoral agreements are already in place in some countries and could be given a major boost if codified and credited as part of an international agreement.

For the first time in the negotiations leading up to Copenhagen, the issue of mitigation will be discussed in Accra in relation to finance and technology in a special contact group, as will the debate on adaptation. This will create an interlinked discussion on a number of elements of the Copenhagen deal. Parties will look not only on what is needed in terms of funding, but also on how funding should be generated in the context of a new international agreement, and precisely what technologies are required. The debate will also give an indication of the infrastructure needed to implement the long-term shared vision in the areas of finance, technology and capacity building.

The Accra gathering is set to be much more than just a stop-over on the way to UN Climate Change Conference in Poznan in December 2008, and from there to Copenhagen in 2009. Governments have the opportunity to put concrete proposals on the table as to what can be written into the Copenhagen agreement. With the global house on fire, and the time for debate clearly limited, negotiators in Accra cannot afford to lose any of the precious time remaining.

**More News****UNFF Secretariat Calls for Information for Secretary-General’s Reports on Forests and Climate Change**

August 2008: The Secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests (UNFF) has called for the submission of national information on the implementation of the Non-Legally Binding Instrument on All Types of Forests (NLBI) and progress towards the achievement of the four Global Objectives on Forests. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/unff-secretaria.html>

**Sustainability Standards for Biofuels Endorsed**

13 August 2008: A UN-backed expert group, the Steering Board on Sustainable Biofuels (RSB), has endorsed a draft sustainability standard that would evaluate the economic, social and environmental effects of biofuels over their entire life-cycle. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/06/world-bank-anno.html>

**CIFOR: Registration Opens for Forest Day 2**

August 2008: The Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR) has announced that registration is open for participation in Forest Day 2, which is to be held on 6 December 2008 during the fourteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), in Poznan, Poland. More information: <http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/cifor-registrat.html>

### Talking Targets (cont.)

In Accra, the AWG-KP is supposed to conclude its analysis, therefore allowing parties to begin negotiating actual emission reduction ranges in Poznan in December. Over the last three months, the outcomes of inter-governmental meetings have highlighted many of the pre-negotiation views of industrialized and developing country groupings alike. Based on recent debates it appears that, on certain specific issues, leaders are adopting different views and approaches for how to frame the outcome or what level of detail it should contain, in particular as it relates to emission reduction targets and the issue of bio-fuels. As we approach Poznan, these different views and approaches to the post-2012 agreement, as well as the broader development issues that may occupy the minds of negotiators, are worth closer inspection.

### Emission Reduction Targets

While the AWG-KP process is yet to fully grapple with emission reduction ranges for the post-2012 period, specific proposals, or pre-negotiation views, were detailed at five key meetings in the past few months, namely the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), South Africa-EU Summit, G8 Summit, Major Economies Meeting, and G5 Leaders Meeting.

The outcomes of three of these meetings, AMCEN and South Africa-EU Summit and the G5 proposals, converge on the ranges of reductions. Both outcomes, in the form of the AMCEN Chair's Summary and the South Africa-EU Communiqué, respectively, outline a future global emissions reduction regime with targets for "all developed countries to reduce their emissions, by 2020, towards the upper end of the 25-40% range for emissions reductions below 1990 levels, and, by 2050, by between 80-95% below those levels." However, on the issue of developing countries' action, the outcomes differ slightly, insofar as they contain a degree of political nuance. While the AMCEN Summary states that with "developed countries taking the lead in that regard, developing countries would be able to deviate substantially from 'business-as-usual' baseline emissions, enabled and supported by finance, technology and capacity-building from developed countries, in a measurable, reportable and verifiable manner," the South Af-

rica-EU statement goes a step further by calling for "emission reductions below 'business-as-usual' emission trajectories in some developing country regions by 2020, and substantial emission reductions below 'business-as-usual' emission trajectories in all developing country regions by 2050. The G5 statement makes no mention of a deviation in developing country emission levels, but states that "negotiations for a shared vision on long-term cooperative action at the UNFCCC, including a long-term global goal for greenhouse gases emissions reductions must be based on an equitable burden sharing paradigm that ensures equal sustainable development potential for all citizens of the world and that takes into account historical responsibility and respective capabilities as a fair and just approach."

Meanwhile, G8 leaders agreed to "share with UNFCCC parties the vision of a goal of achieving at least a 50% reduction of global emissions by 2050, recognizing that this global challenge can only be met with contributions from all major economies, consistent with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities." The G8 stated that achieving the "ultimate objective of the UNFCCC will only be possible through common determination of all major economies, over an appropriate timeframe, to slow, stop and reverse global growth of emissions and move towards a low-carbon society, and noted the need to accelerate the deployment of existing technologies, and development and deployment of low-carbon technologies." The G8 further underscored "the importance of mid-term goals and national plans, and acknowledged their leadership in implementing ambitious mid-term goals, reflecting comparable efforts among all developed economies, taking into account differences in their national circumstances."

Following the G8 Summit, the Major Economies Meeting, which involved leaders from the G8 countries, Australia, Brazil, China, India, Indonesia, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, South Africa and the EU, adopted a declaration affirming the commitment of major economies from both the developed and developing world to combat climate change, taking into account their "common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities." The declaration stresses

the importance of a long-term goal and mid-terms goals, commitments and actions, and the role of carbon sinks, mitigation, adaptation, technology, and financial resources. It also announces that "our nations will continue to work constructively together to promote the success of the Copenhagen climate change conference in 2009."

### Climate Justice and Security

In their Colombo Communiqué, the Heads of State or Government of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) emphasized the need for assessing and managing risks and impacts and called for an in-depth study on "Climate Justice: The Human Dimension of Climate Change." They are seeking a rights-based approach that would highlight the human impact when responding to the impacts of climate change. The Communiqué further states that "every citizen must have an equal share of the planetary atmospheric space, and endorses the convergence of per capita emissions of developing and developed countries on an equitable basis." SAARC leaders are of the view that any effort should take into account historical responsibility, per capita emissions and country capability. The threat posed by climate change to security and prosperity emerged at the Sixth UK-Caribbean Ministerial Forum, and has gained prominence in the UN General Assembly with the draft resolution circulated by the Group of Pacific Small Island Developing States, which calls on the UN Security Council to consider and address the security threat posed by climate.

### Biofuels

On the issue of biofuels, the Draft Declaration of Commitment for the Fifth Summit of the Americas is at odds with the African Union Declaration on the Global Food Crisis. The draft Organization of American States declaration commits the region to "develop a set of compatible specifications (for biofuels) by the end of 2015 in order to facilitate their trade and increased use." Meanwhile the African Union Declaration calls "for an international code of conduct that would reconsider the current expansion in the production of biofuel as an alternative source of traditional energy and set the standards for the responsible utilization of grain-based biofuel." *Continued on page 4*

### Talking Targets (*cont.*)

Such a code of conduct would also reassess the actual social and environmental costs of biofuel and restrict its production to agricultural waste and specific designated non-food crops. It would reconsider the current subsidies offered to ethanol and bio-diesel producers and subject it to the rules governing world trade in order to avoid a hazardous distortion of the present international system of agricultural production and trade. The G5 statement stresses the need to “address the challenges and opportunities posed by biofuels, in view of the world’s food security, energy and sustainable development needs” and argues that “if developed sustainably, biofuels can effectively contribute to generating opportunities and achieving food and energy security altogether.” The G5 further agreed that “it is important that public policies for production of biofuels contribute to sustainable development and the well-being of the most vulnerable people and do not threaten food security.”

Ministers at the Sixth UK-Caribbean Forum adopted a more general statement noting that the food and energy crises could hinder future progress (on the MDGs), and welcomed the World Food Programme’s emergency appeal and the creation of the UN High-Level Task Force on the Global Food Security Crisis. Ministers underscored the universality of the climate change and food and oil crises, and called for inclusive international collaboration and strengthened multilateral cooperation.

The Sixth Summit of the Group of Eight Developing Islamic Countries (D8) concluded with the adoption of the “Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Meeting Global Challenges through Innovative Cooperation,” which recognizes that the food and energy crises pose a serious threat to socio-economic stability. On surging oil prices, the Declaration emphasizes the importance of collaborative efforts to enhance capacity, transfer of technology, exploration of new sources of supply, development of alternative fuels, in-

cluding renewable sources, as well as peaceful use of nuclear energy.

At the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development’s (OECD) annual Council at ministerial level, Ministers also addressed food-price inflation and its linkages to broader issues such as alternative fuels, climate change and impacts on distribution of income and growth within economies. They welcomed the analysis and recommendations of the OECD work on food prices and the OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook, and welcomed further work aimed at continuing to monitor developments in agricultural markets and promote sound international policy responses to address the long-term structural factors driving food prices.

### Conclusion

One of the conclusions to be made from the recent communiqués and declarations is that regions and political groups are moving ahead to Copenhagen at different speeds. These differences are clear both within the group of industrialized countries, but also across the developing world and at the regional levels in Africa, South Asia and Latin America. We see these differences clearly in the outcome statements regarding emission reduction targets, where unlike the AMCEN, South Africa-EU and G5 meetings, leaders of the larger group of major economies were not able to agree on specific emissions targets for the medium or long-term. In addition, the G8 preferred not to detail their proposed long term goals with a baseline or medium-term targets. Not surprisingly countries remain divided on the issue of biofuels and how it should be addressed within a global climate and development paradigm. Similarly, while the issues of climate and security have re-emerged in global debates, previous experience has shown that views remain divided on how to address this issue, particularly in relation to any potential role for the UN Security Council. However, while differences remain, the outcomes of these and other intergovernmental meetings are driving

the global political response to the post-2012 frameworks. Even though these outcomes are not yet part of the official negotiating process, they shed greater clarity on where consensus exists and where potential disagreements may emerge. The one plausible area of coherence is that all the groups and regions want to see an outcome secured at the Copenhagen climate meeting in December 2009.

### Summit Meeting Dates and Venues

**1.** The fifteenth Summit meeting of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC), held from 2-3 August 2008, in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

**2.** The Draft Declaration of Commitment for the Fifth Summit of the Americas was presented during a meeting of National Coordinators of the Summit Implementation Review Group, held at the headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington DC, US on 24 July 2008. The draft will be considered for adoption at the OAS Fifth Summit, scheduled to take place from 17-19 April 2009, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

**3.** The Sixth UK-Caribbean Forum took place in London, UK, from 14-16 July 2008.

**4.** The Sixth Summit of the Group of Eight Developing Islamic Countries (D8) convened from 7-8 July 2008, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

**5.** The Group of Eight Industrialized Countries (G8) Hokkaido Toyako Summit took place from 7-9 July 2008, in Japan. The Leaders Meeting of the Major Economies took place on 9 July 2008, in Hokkaido, Japan, in conjunction with the G8 Summit.

**6.** The eleventh African Union (AU) Summit took place from 24 June to 1 July 2008, in Sharm El-Sheik, Egypt.

**7.** The Twelfth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN-12) took place from 7-12 June 2008, in Johannesburg, South Africa.

**8.** The annual OECD Council at ministerial level convened in Paris, France, from 3-5 June 2008.

## UN SECRETARIAT

### • UN to Assist in Establishment of Inter-Agency Climate Change Centre for Pacific Countries

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/un-to-assist-in.html>

### • UN Secretary-General Stresses the Consequences of Climate Change on Youth

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/un-secretary--1.html>

## UN AGENCIES, PROGRAMMES AND FUNDS

- **FAO Highlights Indigenous Peoples' Role in Climate Change Adaptation**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/fao-highlights.html>

- **IAEA Deputy Director General Stresses the Potential Role of Induced Mutations in Plants in Curbing Climate Change Effects**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/iaea-deputy-dir.html>

- **ICAO Journal Outlines Civil Aviation's Current and Future Efforts to Reduce Emissions**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/icao-journal-ou.html>

- **Preliminary Findings of World Bank Study on Water and Climate Change Released**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/preliminary-fin.html>

- **Toyota Joins UNEP's Climate Neutral Network**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/toyota-joins-un.html>

- **UN and Philippines Sign Joint Programme to Strengthen the Country's Adaptation Capacity**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/un-and-philippi.html>

- **UNDP Introduces Youth Version of 2007-2008 Human Development Report**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/undp-introduces.html>

- **UN-HABITAT: Sustainable Communities Course to Examine Risk and Vulnerability Reduction of Cities**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/un-habitat-sust.html>

- **UN/ISDR Secretariat and Norway Propose an IPCC Special Report on Managing the Risk of Extreme Events**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/unisdr-secretar.html>

- **Young Somalis Should Engage in Tackling Climate Change**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/young-somalis-s.html>

## MULTILATERAL TREATY BODIES

- **CBD Notification on Preparations for the Global Biodiversity Outlook**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/cbd-notificatio.html>

- **"New-look" UNFCCC Newsletter Published**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/new-look-unfccc.html>

- **On International Youth Day, CBD Executive Secretary Stresses Linkages between Biodiversity and Climate Change**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/on-internationa.html>

- **UNCCD Launches Webpage on Land and Climate**

<http://www.climate-l.org/2008/08/unccd-launches.html>



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