



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

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Events convened on Monday, 3 December 2007

Mitigation potential for Australia, or: should Australia receive a special deal?

Presented by the Climate Action Network Australia



Julie-Anne Richards, Climate Action Network Australia (CANA), launched two reports: *Leader, Follower or Free rider? The economic impacts of different Australian emission targets* by the Climate Institute; and *Australia's mitigation potential: why Australia should not receive another special deal* by the CANA. Noting that Australia's GDP per capita is higher than that of the EC, she said it can afford to mitigate its emissions.

Ben Pearson, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, stated that public support for emission reduction measures is immense and that Australians are prepared to pay higher prices for electricity. He stressed that no institutional barriers impede the implementation of a mechanism to reduce emissions effectively.

Tony Mohr, Australian Conservation Foundation, pointed to the "quick wins" Australia can use to reduce its emissions, such as removing fossil fuel subsidies. He called for a 25% renewable energy target by 2020, improved energy efficiency, and increased funding for research and development.

Erwin Jackson, Climate Institute, described the three scenarios presented in the Climate Institute's report, namely the free rider, follower, and leader scenarios which would respectively yield 40%, 60% and 100% emissions reduction by 2050. Stressing that Australia is one of the countries most at risk to the impacts of climate change, he showed that achieving a 40-100% reduction in net emissions is cost effective and could be reached through contributions from all sources other than waste and fugitive emissions. He said making substantial cuts in emissions is compatible with continuing growth in income, employment and standards of living.

Tim Costello, World Vision, referred to Australia's common but differentiated responsibility in tackling climate change, which he said is not only a moral justice issue, but also one of security.

Discussion: Participants discussed the role nuclear power can play in reducing emissions in some OECD countries, and the choice among the "low-hanging fruits" in Australia's future emission reduction strategy. One participant called for moving away from subsidizing forestry to sustainable forestry management, which would have development benefits.

Julie-Anne Richards, Climate Action Network Australia, noted that Australia has one of least efficient electricity sectors of any Annex I country, but also one of the best solar capacities in the world

More information:

<http://www.cana.net.au>
<http://www.acfonline.org.au>
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Understanding the CDM: rules and pitfalls

Presented by Climatedenet

Axel Michaelowa, Perspectives, described the many layers of rules that guide the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), including the Kyoto Protocol, COP decisions, and CDM Executive Board decisions. He emphasized that sound rulemaking is critical to the CDM's credibility, and that the CDM guidebook can help improve transparency and consistency.

Steve Abrams, EcoSecurities, highlighted the importance of the monitoring component of the CDM project cycle, noting that this is often overlooked. He described pitfalls associated with monitoring, and stressed the importance of understanding human as well as technological factors.

Lambert Schneider, Oeko Institute, said CDM methodologies must be improved to assure the quality of projects and increase consistency. He identified key methodological difficulties, including isolating and attributing project impacts and "double counting" of emission offsets.

Agus Sari, Advisor to the President of UNFCCC COP 13, noted that new technologies such as web broadcasting can help improve transparency. He cautioned that excessive scrutiny of certified emission reductions may create a barrier to good projects applying for CDM credit.

Martin Hession, UK Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, stated that credibility and verification are critical to the CDM's success, and that a robust and transparent system is in everybody's interest.

Participants discussed: government policies as barriers to implementation; the cost of small-scale CDM; and reasons for the lack of forestry-related projects.



Axel Michaelowa, Perspectives, gave an overview of the CDM Guidebook and described the various types of CDM methodologies

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<http://www.perspectives.cc>

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Overcoming the communication deficit: how Panos is encouraging debate on climate change in the South

Presented by Panos

Rod Harbinson, Panos London, UK, noted that despite increased media interest in developing countries, resources, skills and knowledge related to climate change are limited. He elaborated on a community project in "oral testimony" to develop interview skills and establish a forum for "bottom-up" communication to policy makers.

Harry Surjadi, Knight International, Indonesia, highlighted the resistance of editors to cover climate change stories and the problems in identifying true climate impacts as opposed to other environmental issues.

James Fahn, Earth Journalism Network, presented a case study on Vietnam's mass media coverage of climate change, showing a marked increase between 2006 and 2007. He identified key challenges, including the media's: focus on problems as opposed to solutions; poor coverage of incremental changes; focus on the urban, business and middle class, as opposed to the rural poor; and lack of resources, time and scientific expertise.

Eneya Maseko, Panos Southern Africa, Zambia, called on governments to further invest in communicating with the people they represent, as well as to mainstream climate change into national policy plans for development.

Indi McLymont-Lafayette, Panos Caribbean, Jamaica, discussed an initiative on public perceptions of climate change in Jamaica, highlighting general complacency and indifference, lack of disaster preparedness and a growing concern about health impacts.

Discussion: participants discussed whether the media should communicate the complexities of science or focus on the individual issues feeding into climate change. Panelists responded that both were important in achieving effective lifestyle changes.



Indi McLymont-Lafayette, Panos Caribbean, Jamaica, highlighted the need for effective communication between scientists and journalists

More information:

<http://www.panos.org.uk>

<http://www.knight.icfj.org>

<http://www.panos.org.zm>

<http://www.earthjournalism.org>

<http://www.panoscaribbean.org>

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Building grassroots power for action on global warming: Sierra Club's Cool Cities and other models

Presented by the Sierra Club - US

Glen Besa, Sierra Club-US, gave an overview of the Cool Cities initiative, stressing the importance of generating political will at the municipal level. He noted that since February 2005, over 700 cities in 50 states in the US have signed onto the Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, adding that this represents over 75 million people. Besa then introduced the Cool Cities Activist Toolkit, which outlines strategies for getting cities to reduce emissions.

Tyla Matteson, Sierra Club-US, described her experience in getting her home town of Richmond, Virginia, to become a "Cool City," noting that the popularity of Al Gore's documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" was pivotal in achieving public support. She described measures Richmond has taken to become more environmentally friendly, including switching to waterless urinals and planting trees.

Rosa Corrie, Sierra Youth Coalition-Canada, emphasized that universities can play a major role in reducing emissions, and stressed the need for a participatory approach. She encouraged building relationships with people who will implement the changes needed, ranging from university decision makers to staff responsible for waste disposal.

Discussion: participants shared experiences in working at the grassroots level to reduce emissions in their own cities.



Glen Besa, Sierra Club-US, emphasized the need to understand municipal politics and identify people who are able to influence the mayor

More information:

<http://coolcities.us>
<http://syc-cjs.org/sustainable>

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Global warming and human rights: perspectives of Inuit and other vulnerable peoples

Presented by the Center for International Environment Law

Martin Wagner, Earthjustice, argued that government failure to take action regarding climate change not only constitutes a violation of moral obligations but also of human rights, giving rise to international law considerations.

Ben Namakin, Conservation Society of Pohnpei, described how climate change is impacting the Federated States of Micronesia, particularly in the tourism, fishery and agriculture sectors.

Cynthia Awuor, African Centre for Technology Studies, highlighted the implications of climate change on development in Africa, stating that it hampers achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and of energy security, which depends largely on hydropower.

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, stated that indigenous peoples are impacted not only by climate change, but also by some of the solutions to it, including carbon sequestration and agrofuel plantations.

Amjad Abdulla, Ministry of Environment, Energy and Water, Maldives, introduced the Malé Declaration on the Human Dimension of Global Climate Change, whose call to the UN Human Rights Council to convene a debate on human rights and climate change in March 2009 was accepted.

Participants discussed implications of a human rights-based approach, including on: national versus per capita emissions targets; government obligations regarding compensation; and the present need to address adaptation.



Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, described how indigenous peoples approached the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination in response to the Kalimantan Oil Palm Mega-Project, a project which will lead to mass displacement of the indigenous population

More information:

<http://www.ciel.org>
<http://www.earthjustice.org>
<http://www.serehd.org>
<http://www.acts.or.ke>
<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii>
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Investment and financial flows to address climate change

Presented by the UNFCCC

Preety Bhandari, UNFCCC Secretariat, explained that the study "Investment and financial flows to address climate change," which looks at investment and financial flows needed to meet worldwide mitigation and adaptation to climate change requirements, was launched in 2007 in response to a mandate delivered at COP 12. Emphasizing that the study is an initial assessment, she highlighted some key conclusions. On mitigation, she said the report estimates that global additional investment and financial flows of 200-210 billion dollars will be necessary in 2030 to return greenhouse gas emissions to current levels. On adaptation, she said the estimated overall additional investment and financial flows needed in 2030 amount to several tens of billions of dollars.

Erik Haites, Margaree Consultants Inc., explained that, due to time constraints, the study relied on existing data, and highlighted challenges in obtaining disaggregated data for projections. He explained that, for most sectors, over 50% of investments for mitigation and adaptation would be best directed to developing countries where they would be most cost-effective. Haites stated that with appropriate policies and incentives, a substantial part of additional investment and financial flows could be covered by currently available funds, but that shifts in investment patterns and optimizing their allocation would be critical. He stressed that new and additional funds would also be required and highlighted options to raise funds internationally, noting that they require future research and international agreement.

Maria Netto, UNFCCC Secretariat, described the consultative process that informed the study and key recommendations from consultative partners. She said the consultative process included four workshops with: experts; experts and international organizations; representatives from the financial sector; and representatives from the insurance sector. Netto highlighted recommendations, including to: improve the systematic collection of current data; increase the amount of disaggregation and include investment flows in projections; and engage more national entities, such as central banks, national statistical agencies, and revenue services, particularly in developing countries.

Participants discussed: the study's assumptions regarding the energy sector; tradeoffs between mitigation and adaptation; investment in research and development; and risk mitigation and investments. One participant expressed concern that future energy investments in the report include significant investment in nuclear energy and carbon capture and storage.



Erik Haites, Margaree Consultants Inc., highlighted the important role the private sector must play in enhancing investment and financial flows for climate change mitigation and adaptation, and stressed the need for international financial assistance, particularly for adaptation in developing countries



Maria Netto, UNFCCC Secretariat, explained that consultative partners from the financial sector identified the creation of an enabling environment at the national level, the need for good projects, and long-term political clarity as crucial to stimulating financial sector involvement

More information:

<http://www.unfccc.int>

http://unfccc.int/cooperation_and_support/financial_mechanism/items/4053.php

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L-R: Preety Bhandari, UNFCCC Secretariat; Maria Netto, UNFCCC Secretariat; and Erik Haites, Margaree Consultants Inc.