



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

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Events convened on Thursday, 13 December 2007

UNCCD: Sustainable land management for adaptation to climate change

Presented by the UNCCD



Luc Gnacadja, UNCCD Executive Secretary, argued that climate change mitigation and adaptation cannot be achieved without addressing sustainable land management, and said he hoped sustainable land management would become central to talks on a post-2012 regime

Luc Gnacadja, Executive Secretary, UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), explained that a "fresh look" at the UNCCD reveals two components: addressing drought and desertification in drylands; and tackling global environmental issues, as they relate to sustainable land management. He emphasized the role of science in linking climate change and desertification.

Cristina Narbona, Minister of Environment, Spain, and UNCCD COP 8 President, stressed that climate change and desertification cannot be addressed separately, and that common solutions, such as adaptation, must be encouraged. She urged immediate action on activities related to carbon sinks and increased land production, as well as enhanced coordination between the Rio Conventions, in particular with regards to science and technology.

Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, Minister of Development, Germany, commended the UNCCD's ten-year strategic plan, noting that it commits all UNCCD institutions to examine and act on linkages between land degradation and climate change. She lamented that GHG emission reductions from agriculture, land use and vegetation have received insufficient attention.

Goodspeed Kopolu, UNCCD Secretariat, presented on the potential role of biochar, a type of charcoal produced from biomass, to enhance sustainable land management and sequester carbon. He listed benefits of biochar as a carbon sink under the CDM, noting that additionality and permanence of sequestration are assured, and the baseline is simple. He described actions required for biochar to be recognized under the CDM, namely: revision of the additionality test and of LULUCF rules to include biochar; and the engagement of all stakeholders to ensure its inclusion in a post-2012 climate regime.

Wolfgang Zech, Bayreuth University, Germany, emphasized that land degradation affects all continents. He described the positive effects that charcoal, used in conjunction with mineral fertilizers, can have on improving soil organic matter and land productivity, and sequestering carbon.

Christoph Steiner, University of Georgia, US, stressed that use of charcoal as a soil amendment is not new. He highlighted research and development into the production of biochar as a by-product of gasification, with simultaneous sustainable land management and carbon sequestration benefits. He noted that a CDM market could make biochar widely available.

Participants discussed strategies for ensuring inclusion of biochar within the CDM in a post-2012 regime.

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<http://www.unccd.int>

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Challenges and Solutions Energy Efficiency Offers to Climate Change

Presented by the IEA and the IPCC

Nobuo Tanaka, International Energy Agency (IEA), provided an overview of findings from the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, and stressed the need for implementation. He stated that unless policies make emitting carbon dioxide costly, carbon capture and storage will never be an attractive option.

Ogunlade Davidson, IPCC, emphasized that the status quo scenario for climate change is “frightening,” and that developing countries must be assisted towards a less carbon-intensive development pathway. He stressed the co-benefits of mitigation.

Richard Bradley, IEA, noted the “energy inertia” linked to long-lived major capital investments such as transportation networks, buildings and power plants, and noted that “time is not on our side.”

Lenny Bernstein, IPCC, discussed the control of industrial emissions, noting the efficiency benefits of improving operating procedures. He underlined that the most cost-effective emission reductions can be obtained from the steel, cement, and pulp and paper industries.

Hans Holger Rogner, International Atomic Energy Agency, discussed mitigation potential and costs, stressing the need for consideration of local conditions and strong policy signals. He noted that US\$20 trillion in infrastructure investment decisions will be made between now and 2030.

Debra Justus, IEA, discussed energy technology scenarios and strategies. She highlighted the potential of carbon capture and storage, and recommended that pilot projects be undertaken immediately.



Ogunlade Davidson

Ogunlade Davidson, IPCC, highlighted that the private sector can play an important role, but that governments must provide strong policy direction

More information:

<http://www.iea.org>

<http://www.iaea.org>

<http://www.ipcc.ch>

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Launch of a new adaptation support facility: reducing climate change vulnerability in sub-Saharan Africa

Presented by Denmark

Amb. Geert Aagaard Andersen, Department for Environment and Sustainable Development, Denmark, launched the UNEP/UNDP initiative “Climate Change and Development - Adapting by Reducing Vulnerability” (CC DARE), and indicated that Denmark will provide US\$8 million of support.

Mark Mwandosya, Minister for Environment, Tanzania, explained that all the sectors upon which his country's economy depends are climate sensitive. He outlined national programmes and strategies that mainstream climate change issues but underlined difficulties in implementation.

Olav Kjørven, UNDP, underscored that climate change can reverse progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and stressed the need to reconcile the rule of law with natural law.

Sylvie Lemmet, UNEP, indicated that the CC DARE initiative will fund small projects and underlined the importance of pricing ecosystem services in order to address climate change issues.

Bubu Pateh Jallow, LDC Expert Group, said one of the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA) process' shortcomings is that it provides projects rather than programmes, and noted the difficulties in differentiating climate change from development issues. He listed achievements from NAPAs, including: building confidence of development partners; catalyzing mainstreaming of adaptation; and establishing good working relations with the Global Environment Facility.

John Christensen, UNEP Risø Centre, stated that CC DARE will provide demand-driven, targeted and rapid financial and technical support to sub-Saharan Africa. He gave examples of eligible activities for support through CC DARE.

Participants discussed mainstreaming of climate change issues into development programmes.



Amb. Geert Aagaard Andersen, Department for Environment and Sustainable Development, Denmark, stressed that in the field of adaptation to climate change, lack of action will be very costly, but that early action can bring “win-win” benefits

More information:

<http://www.um.dk>

<http://www.unep.org>

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Dispelling the myths: biofuels for climate change mitigation and adaptation

Presented by IUCN-The World Conservation Union

Julia Marton-Lefèvre, Director General, IUCN-The World Conservation Union, described IUCN's wide range of interactions with governments, NGOs and organizations in considering ecosystem management in the context of climate change adaptation and mitigation.

Fitrian Ardiansyah, World Wide Fund for Nature, highlighted Indonesia's production of palm oil for biofuels, which is affecting forests and peatlands, and underscored the importance of evaluating costs versus benefits.

Frances Seymour, Centre for International Forestry Research, stressed that increasing demand for palm oil foodstuffs affects forest sustainability outside of biofuel demands.

Barbara Bramble, National Wildlife Federation, highlighted trade-offs in biofuels production. She introduced the Roundtable on Biofuels, which is developing principles and criteria for sustainable development under four working groups that look at social, environmental, greenhouse gas and implementation issues.

Jacqueline Cramer, Minister of Environment, the Netherlands, outlined a study that assesses the following biofuel sustainability criteria: balance of greenhouse gases; competition with food; and impacts on biodiversity, economic prosperity, environment and social welfare.

Four breakout groups discussed: developing sustainability criteria; greenhouse gas life cycle efficiency analysis models; biofuels and forest analysis; and local impacts of a global biofuels market. The feedback session highlighted: the ranking of sustainability criteria; the need for further research on biofuel lifecycles at all levels; local-scale benefits; biodiversity impacts; food/forest trade-offs; sugarcane ethanol successes; palm oil and second generation biofuels; peatlands problems; and the need for intergovernmental action on this issue.



Barbara Bramble, National Wildlife Federation, said the Roundtable on Biofuel's methodology will include indirect impacts, especially land-use changes

More information:

<http://www.iucn.org/energy>
<http://www.bioenergywiki.net>
<http://www.wwf.or.id>
<http://www.cifor.cgiar.org>
<http://www.nwf.org>
<http://www.minvrom.nl>

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Towards REDD: the Papua New Guinea national system to monitor and report GHG emissions from forest land

Presented by Papua New Guinea

Wari Iamo, Secretary of Environment and Conservation, Papua New Guinea (PNG), described PNG's role in initiating the discussion of REDD. He highlighted PNG's medium-term development strategy for poverty reduction, and stated that the sustainable utilization of natural resources is written into PNG's constitution.

Joe Pokana, PNG Forest Authority, explained that the objective of the national monitoring and reporting system is to enable forest estimates of cover change within 10% and noted that this system is able to detect the main drivers of deforestation. He also discussed methodologies to analyze the change in carbon stocks according to forest type based on permanent sample plots.

Danilo Mollicome, Max Planck Institute of Biogeochemistry, provided an overview of the methodology that will be used to report on REDD, and emphasized that PNG has a strong and growing capacity to report on their forests. He highlighted that this work was initiated by an International Tropical Timber Organization project in 1992.

Participants discussed: the inclusion of forest management in REDD; whether carbon credits will be sought for logging concessions; and the need for equitable distribution of REDD funds.



Joe Pokana, PNG Forest Authority, stated that PNG will be ready to report on REDD in two to three years, and noted that remote sensing and soil laboratories are being upgraded

More information:

<http://www.fri.pngfa.gov.pg>
<http://ww3.datec.com.pg/government/forest/default.htm>

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A global CO₂ tax

Presented by Switzerland

Bruno Oberle, State Secretary for Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications, Switzerland, highlighted that the current funding mechanisms for adaptation fall far short of what will be required, and added that finance activities for adaptation must be based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Othmar Shwank, INFRAS Policy Consulting and Research, Switzerland, presented a Swiss funding scheme for adaptation that will generate US\$46 billion per annum through a small tax on carbon dioxide emissions from fossil fuels of US\$1-2 per ton, with Annex I countries paying the higher tax. He further elaborated that this tax will be channeled into National Climate Change Funds (NCCFs) and a Multilateral Adaptation Fund (MAF) through a differentiated split between Annex I and non-Annex I parties, with the former contributing 90% of their taxes to the MAF and the balance to their respective NCCF. He said the MAF would have a prevention and insurance pillar to address climate change impacts in developing countries.

Thomas Kolly, Ambassador, Switzerland, José Romero, Department of Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications, Switzerland, and presenters responded to questions on: minor mitigation impacts of the tax; integration with proposed US schemes; the possibility of stronger commitments under the Kyoto Protocol driving an expansion of CDM activities and thus boosting the Adaptation Fund; how to bring the Swiss proposal to the negotiation table; the proposed International Air Travel Levy; and reasons for not including non-carbon emissions, including deforestation emissions.



Mr. Bruno

Bruno Oberle, State Secretary for Environment, Transport, Energy and Communications, Switzerland, said one of the merits of the CO₂ tax scheme is that it also taxes coal

More information:

<http://www.infras.ch/e/index.html>

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High-level roundtable on climate change and sustainable development

Presented by the UN DESA

Han Seung-soo, Special Envoy on Climate Change of the UN Secretary-General, noted that developing countries had hoped for stronger debates on technology transfer in Bali.

Alexander Karsner, US Department of Energy, emphasized the need to consider how a growing “demand pull” for clean energy technologies in the developed world will impact the supply base available to the developing world.

Alfonso Pecoraro Scanio, Minister of Environment and Protection of Land and Sea, Italy, said combined use of markets and planning can connect climate policies and sustainable development.

Zhenhua Xie, National Development and Reform Commission, China, stressed the need for technology transfer, especially in key sectors, to prevent lock-in of carbon-intensive infrastructures in China.

Elizabeth Thompson, Minister of Energy and Environment, Barbados, underscored that climate change and sustainable development must be mainstreamed throughout national macro-policy frameworks.

Halima Tayo Alao, Minister of Environment, Nigeria, emphasized that capacity enhancement, technology transfer and financial assistance are essential for addressing climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Feng Gao, UNFCCC Secretariat, reiterated the urgency of technology transfer to ensure that global GHG emissions peak in the next 10-15 years.

Karsner stressed the need to: protect any individual’s right to capitalize on their innovations; and develop a policy regime that encourages development and diffusion of these innovations. Participants further discussed intellectual property rights.



Zhenhua Xie, National Development and Reform Commission, China, said his country calls for an international regime of technology transfer in which governments play the central role, supported by partnerships with business and other stakeholders



Elizabeth Thompson, Minister of Energy and Environment, Barbados, described how her country used “carrots” rather than “sticks” to stimulate growth of the solar water heater industry

More information:

<http://www.un.org/esa/desa>