



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

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Events convened on Monday, 1 December 2008

Responding to the GCOS Implementation Plan

Presented by the Government of Ireland



William Westermeyer, GCOS Secretariat, emphasized that greater climate monitoring coordination is required at national, regional and international levels.

This event brought together representatives from seven countries to share their experiences in responding to the implementation plan of the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS). GCOS was established in 1992 to meet climate observation needs and is sponsored by: the World Meteorological Organization; the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UN Environment Programme; and the International Council for Science.

William Westermeyer, GCOS Secretariat, described activities conducted in support of GCOS' mission, including regional workshops and resource mobilization. He emphasized that greater coordination is required at national, regional and international levels in order to ensure better information exchange and identification of synergies.

Régis Juvanon du Vachat, Météo-France, presented on the French response to GCOS. He noted the use of new implementation guidelines and said that budgetary restrictions had required the redefinition of the strategic network used for implementation. Regarding observation of terrestrial systems, he said that four glaciers in the Alps were being monitored, as well as several in Peru and Antarctica.

Wim Monna, Royal Netherlands Meteorological Institute, said that monitoring requires a multi-disciplinary approach, and described atmospheric composition and radiation observation work being carried out at a facility in Paramaribo, Suriname.

He highlighted challenges, including that observations are done on a project-by-project basis, threatening the continuity of data, and recommended increasing structural funding.

Ned Dwyer, University College Cork, said that Ireland's approach had been to first identify which GCOS implementation actions were applicable to the country, and then to focus the review on these. He said that of the 43 action items deemed to be relevant, 26 of them were fully implemented, with the rest requiring need additional work.

Stefan Rösner, Deutscher Wetterdienst, presented on Germany's response to the GCOS implementation review, noting that four GCOS stations had been established in Germany. He said that while cooperation had been improved between ministries, fragmentation still existed among those responsible for implementation.

Gabriela Seiz, Switzerland, described Switzerland's GCOS implementation activities at the national level, including a multi-agency roundtable and an implementation report. She said that additional funding for climate measurement and glacier monitoring had been approved. She described outreach activities, including the creation of a website and brochure, and emphasized the need for national coordination.

Linda Moodie, US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, noted that GCOS falls under the US Climate Change Science Program, which coordinates 13 departments with a total of nearly US\$2 billion in resources. She described domestic monitoring activities and regional efforts, such as the Pacific Island Global Ocean Observation System. She recommended the designation of an organization in each region to be responsible for advancing GCOS.

More information:

<http://www.gmes.info>

<http://www.gcos.ch>

<http://www.climate-science.gov>

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Analyzing Adaptation: a Financial and Risk Perspective

Presented by Free University Amsterdam, Institute for Environmental Studies

This event focused on international financing of adaptation and discussed: burden sharing of financing; means to raise additional revenue; the impact of mitigation strategies on adaptation costs; and community-based adaptation.

Rob Dellink, Institute for Environmental Studies (IES), identified a number of questions relevant to determining the contributors, and respective levels of contribution, to international adaptation financing.

Michel den Elzen, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, stated that if burden sharing is determined by historical responsibility alone, the contribution of Annex I countries would be 50-60% of estimated adaptation costs. However, if burden sharing is based on both historical responsibility and capacity to pay, he said that Annex I contributions could be as high as 70% of adaptation costs.

Laurens Bouwer, IES, described a research project that assesses new financing mechanisms for adaptation, such as carbon taxes, insurance schemes, and levies on carbon trading and airline and maritime transport.

Andries Hof, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, discussed the share of adaptation costs in non-Annex I countries that could be financed by a two percent levy on certified emission reductions issued for Clean Development Mechanism project activities. He noted that the percentage depended on both mitigation targets and burden-sharing.

Ralph Lasage, IES, presented on community-based adaptation projects. He identified the need for integration of small-scale measures into national-level policies, and argued that community-based adaptation projects require access to funding.

Participants discussed: additionality of financing mechanisms; types of insurance schemes; the difference between development costs and adaptation costs; and governance of financing mechanisms.



Michel den Elzen, Netherlands Environmental Assessment Agency, discussed the contribution of Annex I countries under different burden sharing scenarios.

More information:

<http://www.adaptation.nl>

<http://www.vu.nl/ivm>

<http://www.mnp.nl>

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China's Emissions: Energy Research and Policy Perspectives

Presented by the Institute of Development Studies and Sussex Energy Group

This event provided climate change policymakers the opportunity to discuss the results of recent academic studies on China's emissions and, in particular, the importance of the latest modeling on carbon emissions in providing guidance on domestic policy initiatives.

Jim Watson, Sussex Energy Group and Tyndall Centre, discussed low carbon scenarios in China and acknowledged the role of private firms in the development and transfer of appropriate technologies. He noted that although carbon capture and storage projects have not been scaled up, these technologies will be crucial in the future.

Frauke Urban, Institute of Development Studies, described three different scenarios for energy transition in the Chinese power sector: business as usual; renewable energy; and atomic energy. She noted that if no action is taken in this sector, emissions will double between 2005 and 2030.

Tao Wang, University of Sussex, argued that carbon emissions should be considered from a trade perspective and noted that joint ventures are responsible for 70% of emissions growth in China. He argued that short-term economic stimulation may conflict with long-term development objectives and stressed the need to pursue harmonization between trade and climate policies.

Fuqiang Yang, World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), emphasized the importance of China's efforts on improving energy efficiency. Rob Bradley, World Resources Institute, argued that although current knowledge on consumption-based emissions in China is limited, it is possible to start addressing climate change through nationally appropriate mitigation actions.

Participants discussed the need to identify key technologies in China, which are critical to achieving a low-carbon emissions scenario, and the role of the Global Environment Facility in supporting technology transfer and capacity building activities.



Frauke Urban, Institute of Development Studies, argued that a transition to low-carbon energy sources is possible in the Chinese power sector, and that this holds significant potential for mitigation.

More information:

<http://www.ids.ac.uk>

<http://www.ccd-centre.org>

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