



A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the Cancún Climate Change Conference

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Events convened on Thursday, 2 December 2010

Delivering as One: Achievements and Lessons Learned from REDD+ Readiness Activities

Presented by UNEP, UNDP and FAO



Yemi Katerere, UN-REDD Programme, stressed the importance of strategic partnerships in “delivering as one.”

This event discussed experience to date in REDD+ readiness activities. Henning Wuester, UNFCCC, expressed hope that the event would provide lessons to improve the UN system’s work in “delivering as one” on REDD+.

Heru Prasetyo, Indonesia, discussed strategies to “deliver as one” on REDD+ activities in Indonesia. Drawing on lessons learned from cooperation during the reconstruction of Aceh after a tsunami, he stressed that the Indonesian government “stands ready” to cooperate with UN organizations to deliver these lessons to REDD+. He said Indonesia is currently focusing on building strong institutions for finance and monitoring, reporting and verification, as well as a REDD+ agency that will report directly to the Indonesian President.

J. Warren Evans, World Bank, said “delivering as one” does not mean “holding hands on everything,” but rather understanding and taking advantage of comparative strengths between agencies. He highlighted challenges, including developing common guidelines, but emphasized the need to not wait for all problems to be solved, but to “learn quickly and improve while we go.”

Yemi Katerere, UN-REDD Programme, highlighted existing and emerging partnerships on policy, capacity building and delivery, and funding. He stressed that the UN-REDD Programme’s five-year strategy provides a shared vision for participating organizations to respond to country needs, emphasizing that coordinated action is required on the ground.

Noting that civil society organizations (CSOs) and indigenous peoples organizations (IPOs) have full member status on the UN-REDD Policy Board, Mariana Christovam, Amazon Environmental Research Institute (IPAM), noted recent successes and challenges. She highlighted a one day meeting prior to the most recent UN-REDD Policy Board meeting for CSOs and IPOs to consolidate their views. On challenges, she noted, inter alia, allocating time and staff, and working on the harmonization of rules between the World Bank and UN-REDD Programme.

Panelists discussed, inter alia: if additional UN agencies would be included in UN-REDD in the future.

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Reducing Vulnerability: Sustainable Constructions for Climate Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction

Presented by International Network for Bamboo and Rattan (INBAR)

This event presented options to reduce disaster risk through climate-resistant building constructions. Alvaro Cabrera, INBAR, said urban migration increases disaster risk because migrants lack techniques for appropriate housing construction. He described that INBAR takes traditional construction techniques and uses legally-harvested, native bamboo species in designs appropriate for hillsides and at-risk areas to make houses that last for 30-50 years.

Julio Garcia, UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), said that flood risks rise from non-climatic factors, including: weak governance; rapid and unplanned urbanization; poverty; and environmental degradation. He called for developing synergies between the Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) and climate change adaptation communities, and emphasized the importance of meeting the Millennium Development Goals.

J. Warren Evans, World Bank, described the Bank's competitive grant opportunity that stimulates and scales-up new development designs, such as INBARs. He emphasized the need to: merge the Bank's DRR and climate programs; develop "holistic" financing models; and focus on ecosystem-based adaptation. Priyanka Kochhar, TERI, described research on building technology and energy efficiency in construction, noting that TERI developed India's green building rating system, and that the housing sector significantly contributes to carbon emissions. She said architects need to scale-up use of bamboo in India to meet population demand.

Alberto Jimenez Merino, Mexico, said his country is working to become a member of INBAR, adding that there are 30 native bamboo species in Mexico, ten million hectares available for their growth, and two million houses needed for the poor. Participants discussed, inter alia: housing emissions; housing design as a part of technology transfer; migration concerns; bamboo forestry and invasive species; and property rights.



Julio Garcia, UN ISDR, said poor urban planning and weak governance, in addition to climate change, enhance disaster risk.

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Mountains in Peril: Mainstreaming Sustainable Mountain Development into Climate Change Agreements

Presented by International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD)

Madhav Karki, ICIMOD, explained that the event would illuminate the unique impacts of climate change on mountain ecosystems. Paolo Bonasoni, Institute of Atmospheric Sciences and Climate, discussed the impacts of black carbon and ozone on mountain systems. He said, inter alia: black carbon reduces plant growth; its deposition is a major driver of glacial melt in the Hindu-Kush-Himalayan-Tibetan region; and it presents health threats for local communities.

Matthias Seebauer, Unique, discussed a recent study that tried to assess the biodiversity value of community forests, and the climate adaptation value of forests in Nepal. He concluded, inter alia, that community forest users in Nepal can monitor ecosystem assets and function, but monitoring systems are not currently linked to financing mechanisms. Nabaraj Dahal, Federation of Community Forest Users Nepal (FECOFUN), discussed a REDD+ pilot project in Nepal, saying its primary objective is to strengthen the capacity of civil society actors.

Tashi Jamtsho, Bhutan Climate Summit Secretariat, Karumuri Ashok, Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, and Batu Krishna Uprety, Nepal, highlighted national experiences in Bhutan, India and Nepal respectively. Jamtsho announced the upcoming "Climate Summit for a Living Himalayas" which aims to adopt a ten-year road map for adaptation in the eastern Himalayas.

John Drexhage, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), concluded the event, commending the work carried out on this issue by ICIMOD and some countries, in particular on their intention to develop a truly sustainable approach. He stressed the importance of building linkages at the regional level. During the discussion participants discussed, inter alia: impacts of black carbon and other mountain initiatives.



Madhav Karki, ICIMOD, said that mountain communities are facing new hazards, vulnerabilities and climatic risks, which must be addressed in a more comprehensive manner.

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