

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

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Events convened on Thursday, 1 December 2011

African Countries in the Global Carbon Market: Challenges, Opportunities and Initiatives

Organized by the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU)



Silke Karcher, BMU, stressed the need for close inter-linkage with national mitigation strategies.

Silke Karcher, BMU, introduced the rationale for German involvement in the African carbon market saying Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) initiatives are under-represented in the Region. She called for more equitable regional distribution for untapped mitigation proposals, presenting the "Future of the Carbon Market" Foundation to which BMU will provide €10 million seed capital to start commercially-viable Programmes of Activities (PoAs).

Axel Michaelowa, Perspectives, spoke about the opportunities of "suppressed demand" for carbon credit projects and explained the need for an emissions baseline. He identified challenges, such as lack of: energy demand from least developed countries (LDCs) and infrastructure, saying the key policy issues is the choice and definition of service level. He introduced the Blueprint document and outlined development of methodologies with the highest-replicability potential in LDCs and small island developing states.

Bill Farmer, Uganda Carbon Bureau, lauded German agencies' support for African PoAs, and presented his experiences with the Uganda Ministry of Water and Environment. He emphasized the advantage of having an ethos of fair trade and open access.

Florian Sekinger, KfW Development Bank Carbon Fund, talked about the PoA Support Center, and outlined KfW's actions to: host country workshops; identify PoAs; find strategic partners; advise on implementation and operations; develop further tools and concepts for carbon markets; and compile the PoA Blueprint book from lessons learnt.

Geoff Sinclair, Standard Bank South Africa said his organization's focus is to provide: capacity building in the form of training workshops on carbon credits; and small grants to carbon credit projects such as cookstoves and renewable energy developments. On the hesitance from banks to invest in PoAs, he suggested risk mitigation as tool to overcome the inexperience and lack of a wholesale market, and stressed the role of the private sector in providing risk guarantees.

In response to a question about standardization, the panel emphasized the need to update guidelines, and tackle additionality. The panel agreed that uncertainty in financing Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action is a problem, and concluded that it is an evolutionary process.

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UNEP Bridging the Emissions Gap Report

Organized by The European Climate Foundation and UNEP

Jimmy Adegoke, CSIR Natural Resources and the Environment, introduced the technical and policy discussion on the analysis of the UNEP Bridging the Emissions Gap Report.

Joseph Alcamo, UNEP Chief Scientist, summarized the report findings, highlighting the existence of a large gap, which could be bridged using the existing potential in each sector; and narrowed with actions in negotiations. He expressed that no technical breakthrough is required and that time is running out.

Niklas Höhne, Ecofys, warned that options are diminishing, and urged action from countries during negotiations.

Mikiko Kainuma, National Institute for Environmental Studies (NIES), stressed urgency for action stating that costs are currently feasible yet likely to increase.

David Lee, Manchester Metropolitan University, presented the inclusion of a chapter on international emissions (including aviation and shipping) that are not covered under the Kyoto Protocol and are therefore not included in country pledges. He reported that mitigation potential in both technology and operation are available and would result in a significant contribution in closing the gap.

In ensuing discussions, questions were raised on the technical aspects of the report, such as the: carbon neutrality of biomass; issues regarding "black carbon"; and short-term solutions impacts in the long-term.

Artur Runge-Metzger, European Commission, acknowledged the practical relevance of the report for COP17 negotiations. He expressed interest in linking the science available with funding, and noted that the decision to postpone action on hydrofluorocarbons emissions was disappointing.

Leon Charles, Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), acknowledged the objectivity of the report to provide policy makers with pragmatic conclusions and recommendations. He reiterated the urgency for action, advising the use of existing solutions rather than developing new processes or workshops. He requested that UNEP continue to provide annual reports to track progress.

Yeon-chul Yoo, Republic of Korea, shared the plan to utilize energy efficiency to define green growth as a national system change for his country.

Francisco Barnés Regueiro, Mexico, relayed Mexico's commitment and approach, stating that focus should be on developing a package to implement existing agreements, clarify pledges, and ensure economic growth is part of the final answer.



Leon Charles, AOSIS, explained that small island States' approach to climate negotiations is based on survival.



Joseph Alcamo, UNEP, informed of three reports from UNEP on: closing the gap; near-term climate protection and benefits; and HFC substances.

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The panel of contributing authors presented technical aspects of the UNEP report on Bridging the Emissions Gap.

Building the knowledge base for African Adaptation Choices

Organized by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and START International

John Padgham, START International, explained IDRC efforts on adaptation research and capacity building for Africa.

Fatima Denton, Climate Change Adaptation in Africa, underlined the importance of knowledge vis-à-vis adaptation activities, and how knowledge can increase capacity, change behavior and promote partnerships.

Felix Olorunfemi, Nigerian Institute of Social and Economic Research, said that under the African Climate Change Fellowship Program (ACCFP), he was able to analyze flood risk management in the informal settlements of Cape Town.

Chipo Mubaya, ACCFP, explained the ACCFP Phase Two to: generate broad support and advocacy within and throughout Africa for the devolution process; and develop integrative programme activities.

Moussa Na Abou Mamouda, AfricaAdapt, outlined innovative adaptation projects, and key lessons learnt, such as: trust is crucial for knowledge sharing; and monitoring and evaluation for knowledge-sharing initiatives is a challenge.

Abdulai Jalooh, West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (WECARD), spoke about how to translate research into policy to improve adaption in Africa.



Fatima Denton, Climate Change Adaptation in Africa, explained how sustaining the knowledge base for African policy provide responses to climate change.

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Low Carbon Development in the Asian Countries

Organized by the Tsinghua University, Global Climate Change Institute (GCCII) and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

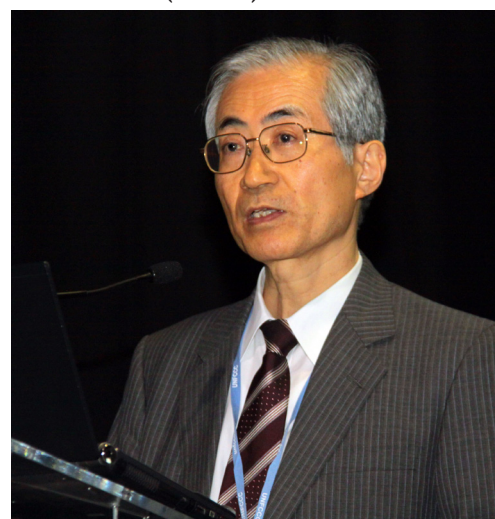
Liu Bin, Tsinghua University, outlined China's future five-year plan for GHG emission reduction, which includes: reasonable control of energy consumption; establishment of low-emitting industries; and strengthening of energy-efficient technological innovations.

Jusen Asuka, IGES, shared Japanese experiences and changes in energy policies 2011 post-earthquake and ensuing Fukushima nuclear disaster. He argued that there is not enough focus on climate change policies in Japan, but noted that one of the consequences of the disaster was to make disaster risk reduction and the sustainability of energy production cost matters of primary concern.

Yasushi Ninomiya, IGES, summarized Japanese carbon schemes, and illustrated some lessons learnt that were shared with the Chinese regarding their carbon market, including: comprehensive rules; systematic measurement, reporting and verification guidelines; a fragmented carbon market due to lack of strong policies; and limitations of voluntary schemes.

Teng Fei, Tsinghua University, stressed key issues such as uncertainty about economic growth and the future energy demand. He said the basic issue is the design of the trading carbon market and market readiness.

During the panel discussion, Su Wei, Director-General of Climate Change Department, National Development and Reform Commission (China), said his government takes the lessons from Japan very seriously to understand the constraints and benefits of the low. Sun Chengyong, Deputy Director-General, Ministry of Science and Technology (China), stressed the need for improved development goals and to contribute to low-carbon science and technology improvements.



Hironori Hamanaka, Chair of the Board of Directors, IGES, said the event's prime objective was to show the results from low-carbon development projects.

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Climate Change Adaptation and ICTs: Enabling Innovative Strategies

Organized by the UNFCCC Secretariat

Kevin Grose, UNFCCC, said the event would analyze concrete examples of how public and private sectors can implement information and communication technology (ICTs) at regional and national levels.

Gift Buthelezi, Deputy Director-General International Affairs and Trade, South Africa, said ICTs are essential to assist developing countries in adapting to climate change and require a more holistic approach.

Angelica Ospina, University of Manchester, UK, discussed how to integrate ICTs on national, sectoral, and community levels. She noted that climate change vulnerabilities must be addressed in combination with other stressors.

Youssef Nassef, UNFCCC, explained that the most vulnerable people to the adverse impacts of climate change are the least economically endowed. He identified potential next steps for using ICTs, including: awareness raising; replication; and stimuli for innovation.

Arun Panda, Tata Consultancy Services, talked about the economic and social impact of ICTs that can assist 80 million farmers in India to adapt to climate change. He highlighted how mobile telephones are used as information devices. Panda described the mKRISHI software that provides automatic weather station information and sensors for agriculture with precise personalized advice based on soil moisture, crop-stage, and farm operation history.

Randy Ramusack, Microsoft, presented his work with a heat-retention and slow-cooking device called “Wonderbag” that saves energy and gathers local level data when the product is bought. He described other innovative technologies to help reduce water and energy consumption, including: “one computer. Multiple users” evolving from the idea of one computer per person for use in schools and refugee camps; and the “eyearth” cloud computing that creates a way for citizens to interact with environmental data that governments put in place.

International Telecommunication Union (ITU), presented an ITU report on adaptation and ICTs in Ghana and stressed the importance of ICT as a powerful tool for adaptation, especially regarding floods, coastal erosion, and droughts. She noted that ICTs assist: farmers to improve overall efficiency of water use; and citizens to receive early-warning messages on potential disaster strikes.



Kevin Grose, UNFCCC, moderated discussions on the ICT sector and concrete actions that can be taken to meet adaptation needs.



Randy Ramusack, Microsoft, described a variety of ICT initiatives that are being developed by Microsoft.

More information:

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Gift Buthelezi, Deputy Director-General International Affairs and Trade, South Africa, emphasized that ICTs are the best tool to assist in climate change adaptation, especially in his region.