



Special Report on Selected Side Events at UNFCCC SB-20
published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
in cooperation with the UNFCCC Secretariat



Online at
<http://www.iisd.ca/climate/sb20/enbots/>

Volume 14, Issue #4 | SB-20: 16 - 25 June 2004 | Bonn, Germany | Monday, 21 June 2004

Events convened on Saturday, 19 June 2004

Deployment of new common reporting format software

Presented by the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)



James Grabert, UNFCCC, highlights automatic aggregation and calculations as features of the CRF software.

Roberto Acosta, UNFCCC, noted that the purpose of the side event was to inform Parties of the technical complexities involved in creating the common reporting format (CRF) software.

James Grabert, UNFCCC, said the new CRF reporting software was created to facilitate data reporting and processing and ensure the overall quality of data. He noted the software's functionality, including user-friendly category-based navigation, cell-level comments for input values, and consistency checks. He stated that the new software is currently in the implementation and acceptance phase, and its deployment will occur around September 2004. Grabert said that formal testing of the software includes technical, functionality, substantive and full-cycle testing. Highlighting that a questionnaire was sent to all Annex I Parties to gather information to support the new system, he said that 150 responses were received from 40 organizations, and noted the diversity of results. He concluded that the CRF software will include support systems.

Vincent Lalieu, UNFCCC, demonstrated the new CRF software, highlighting the navigation categories, including energy, industrial processes, agriculture and cross-cutting information. Lalieu stated that the CRF accepts data imports and exports and has the capability to visually represent information visually. He concluded that Parties can use the software to publish and submit data and noted that a help manual is included.

Sevdalina Todorova, UNFCCC, highlighted, COP-9 Decision 13/CP.9 (Land use land-use change and forestry (LULUCF) Good Practice Guidance), which requests the Secretariat to incorporate CRF tables for LULUCF in the UNFCCC reporting guidelines on annual inventories, and prepare a single document containing updated UNFCCC reporting guidelines for annual inventories by July 2004. This, Todorova noted, is under preparation. Todorova explained that the LULUCF CRF is in a trial period and is liable to change. Todorova said that an Excel module is utilized in the CRF for LULUCF, which includes information that cannot be currently integrated in the CRF Reporter; and is based on the tables in Annexes I and III to Decision 13/CP.9; and includes the LULUCF-relevant sections from the cross-sectoral tables. Todorova concluded that after the trial period, the the Secretariat would revise the CRF for LULUCF by 2006.

Grabert concluded that the content and development process for the CRF software has been complex, but he believes it will assist Parties and the Secretariat in maintaining the greenhouse gas inventory reporting system. Grabert said the CRF would be ready for use in 2005 inventory preparations.

Acosta closed the side event saying that the Secretariat is exploring the possibility of organizing training on the use of the CRF.

More information:

<http://unfccc.int>

Contact:

Roberto Acosta <racosta@unfccc.int>
James Grabert <jgrabert@unfccc.int>
Vincent Lalieu <vlalieu@unfccc.int>
Sevdalina Todorova <stodorova@unfccc.int>

Contribution of renewable energy technology transfer to China in global climate protection

Presented by the German Emissions Trading Association



Robert Tippmann, Ecosecurities, showcases a prototype of a trading board on the Ecosecurity website.

Michael Bröge, Berlin Energy Agency, outlined the EU-China Partnership in CDM Implementation, which aims to increase public and private sector involvement in renewable energy development in China. He noted that the project works to: develop legal and organizational frameworks for renewable energy; identify renewable energy opportunities; assist China in capacity building on CDM-related issues; and enhance the transfer of renewable energy technology between EU member states and China.

Zheng Shuang, China's National Development and Reform Commission, provided a comprehensive review of the status of renewable energy development, policies and strategies in China. She outlined the driving forces for renewable energy development in China, including: rapid economic growth; energy security; the need to make China's energy technology internationally competitive; health concerns; and environmental and economic impacts. Shuang noted China's achievements in renewable energy development, including energy-related laws, a national programme for renewable energy promotion, economic incentives, and measures to remove barriers to renewable energy development. She also drew attention to best practices and a pilot CDM project. Shuang added that the overall objective of renewable energy planning in China was to increase the share of renewable energy to 10% of total energy by 2020. Responding to a question on the percentage of renewable energy in China, Shuang noted that renewable energy accounts for 6% of the total supply. She emphasized cost and lack of political will as barriers to renewable energy development in China.

Jens Dencker, Gascon, outlined the potential uses of landfill gas in China, including power generation, heating, and use in industrial projects, and highlighted that such projects could create cheap carbon credits.

Robert Tippman, Ecosecurities, noted the high potential for coal-based CDM projects in China. He introduced the EcoSecurities carbon facility, an open-ended carbon purchasing facility that focuses on contracts tailored to individual investors. Demonstrating a prototype of the trading board on the Ecosecurity website, he said that buyers could use this facility to order credits for compliance or purchase them on the spot.

In the ensuing discussion, Tippmann emphasized the need for capacity building in both Annex I and non-Annex I countries with regard to CDM. Bröge added that many EU countries have yet to submit their national allocation plans for the EU emissions trading scheme.

More information:

<http://www.cdm-res-china.net>

<http://www.ecosecurities.com>

<http://www.gascon.dk>

Contact:

Michael Bröge <broege@berliner-e-agentur.de>

Zheng Shuang <zheng@eri.org.cn>

Jens Dencker <jens@gascon.dk>

Robert Tippman <robert@ecosecurities.com>

Climate change and the concept of ecological debt

Presented by Ghent University's Center for Sustainable Development

Erik Paredis, Ghent University, explained that the concept of "ecological debt" was originally coined by Latin American non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the early 1990s, and refers to the ecological damage caused by industrialized countries in developing countries and/or to the use of ecosystems and ecosystem services at the expense of developing countries. Noting that the concept is almost exclusively used by NGOs, particularly in developing countries, and that scientific research on this topic has been limited, he outlined his research project that aims to, *inter alia*, clarify the concept, develop methodologies for calculating ecological debt, and assess its political implications.

Paredis emphasized that the definition of ecological debt should take into account that, through the process of accumulating wealth, countries cause ecological damage elsewhere and use ecosystem services, thereby limiting the possible use of these services by others. He drew attention to other considerations, such as: defining equitable rights; determining the debtors and creditors; and deciding whether to use physical or monetary quantifications. Paredis concluded that the concept of ecological debt may add a meaningful new dimension to the North-South sustainability debate, and could have political implications for Kyoto Protocol commitments after 2012.

Discussing ecological debt in the context of global climate change, Bernard Mazijn, Ghent University, drew attention to the ecological damage caused by fossil fuels, as well as the exploitation of ecosystem goods at the expense of the equitable rights of others. He noted the complexity of defining equitable rights and absolute levels of sustainability.



Erik Paredis, Ghent University, discusses methodologies for calculating ecological damage and use at the expense of equitable rights.

(Continued on page 3)

Climate change and the concept of ecological debt

(Continued from page 2)

Introducing the concepts of historical and generational carbon debt, Mazijn concluded that developed countries should recognize and compensate for their carbon debt.

Frank Maes, Ghent University, noted that although there are no direct references to ecological debt in multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), several MEAs contain indirect references, such as the principle of intra and intergenerational equity, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, the Kyoto Protocol's Adaptation Fund, and equitable benefit sharing under the Convention on Biological Diversity. Observing that there is a lack of political support to introduce the concept of ecological debt into international law, he concluded that the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and the polluter pays principle seem, for the moment, to be the most suitable principles to provide a legal basis for ecological debt.

More information:

<http://cdonet.rug.ac.be>

Contact:

Bernard Mazijn
<bernard.mazijn@skynet.be>
Erik Paredis <erik.paredis@rug.ac.be>
Frank Maes <frank.maes@rug.ac.be>

Presentation of the draft European Environmental Agency report on climate change indicators in Europe

Presented by the European Community

André Jol, European Environmental Agency (EEA), presented the EEA's draft report on climate change indicators in Europe. He said that future data could be improved by using the Global Climate Change Observation System.

Thomas Voigt and Marc Zebisch, European Topic Centre on Air and Climate Change, described and categorized the indicators in the Report. Using a series of graphs, they demonstrated the correlation between increasing greenhouse gas concentrations and air temperatures in Europe and globally. They also drew attention to the following trends: retreating glaciers in Europe; decreasing snow cover and Arctic sea ice; rising sea levels; and increasing surface sea temperatures and marine growing season. They noted that the number of plant species has decreased and non-climatic factors such as habitat fragmentation might limit their migration capabilities.

Noting that the European terrestrial biosphere was a net sink for carbon from 1990 to 1998, Voigt and Zebisch said that the potential for additional carbon storage is relatively small. They showed an increase in bird survival during winter in Europe as well as a longer growing season for plants. They also predicted a decline in river discharge in southern Europe, and an increase in the North. They suggested that crop yield may increase, but cautioned that this increase could be offset by water stress in Southern Europe. They also noted the deleterious impacts of climate-related events, such as floods and heat waves, on economic activities and human health and highlighted the need for an action plan to address these issues.

Rachel Warren, Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research, discussed how to respond and adapt to climate change when constructing buildings in Europe. She said that the maximum temperature in buildings is rising and stressed the need for energy efficient air-conditioners. She also described joint Tyndall-EEA project activities that lay the groundwork for adaptation policy.

Underscoring the importance of cultural factors such as risk perception, Torsten Grothmann, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, discussed some examples of adaptation to flood events.

When asked whether the EEA intended to develop targets or assess progress toward the implementation of EU climate change adaptation plans, Jol responded that presently there are no such targets but expressed willingness to develop indicators for the success of adaptation measures.



André Jol, EEA, presents the mandate, resources, clients and products of the EEA before presenting its draft report on climate change indicators in Europe.

More information:

<http://www.eea.eu.int>
<http://www.umweltbundesamt.de>
<http://www.pik-potsdam.de>
<http://www.tyndall.ac.uk>

Contact:

André Jol <andre.jol@eea.eu.int>
Thomas Voigt <thomas.voigt@uba.de>
Marc Zebisch <zebisch@pik-potsdam.de>
Rachel Warren <r.warren@uea.ac.uk>
Torsten Grothmann
<grothmann@pik-potsdam.de>

Experiences and best practices related to improving synergies when implementing the Convention

Presented by the European Union



Uli Piest, UN University, highlights that international environmental governance focuses more on rules than implementation.

More information:

<http://unfccc.int/sessions/workshops.html>
<http://www.unu.edu/env>
<http://www.geic.or.jp>

Contact:

Eoin Driscoll <eoin.odriscoll@coford.ie>
 Claudio Forner <cforner@unfccc.int>
 Ines Verleye <ines_verleye@pandora.be>
 Hernan Carlino
 <hacarlino@medioambiente.gov.ar>
 Brett Orlando <brett.orlando@iucn.org>
 Uli Piest <piest@hq.unu.edu>

Eoin Driscoll, EU, introduced the side event on efforts being taken to promote synergies among the Rio conventions.

Claudio Forner, UNFCCC Secretariat, presented the results of a 2003 UNFCCC workshop on synergies between conventions, held in Espoo, Finland. He said the workshop aimed to prepare guidance for national focal points and identify options for coordination in specific areas.

Ines Verleye, Belgium's Federal Ministry of Environment, provided insights from Belgium's experience in synergizing conventions. She emphasized that while the institutional mechanisms for policy coherence are in place, there is still a need to build implementation coherence. Verleye concluded that some methods of promoting synergies could include improved information sharing between focal points, harmonized reporting, and prior assessment of project proposals.

Hernan Carlino, Argentina's Secretariat of Environment and Sustainable Development, showcased the Youth and Environment project in Argentina, as an example of a concrete project that facilitates synergies between the UN Conventions on climate change, biodiversity and desertification through reforestation of degraded land.

Brett Orlando, IUCN, presented a paper titled "Bringing synergies down to Earth," stressing the importance of addressing synergies in field activities. He outlined an IUCN initiative that addresses adaptation and includes strategies, such as incorporating climate change in water resource decision making and forest landscape restoration, protecting and restoring ecosystems, and reducing current vulnerabilities.

Uli Piest, UN University, presented the InterLinkages project that addresses challenges in implementing synergies between conventions at the national level, especially in developing countries.

In the ensuing discussion, one participant noted that national reporting is a tool that can be useful for creating synergies. Another participant expressed concern that there was a lack of desire for creating synergies at the national level.

World Bank carbon finance and capacity building activities in support of the CDM

Presented by the World Bank

Johannes Heister, World Bank, presented a video on the BioCarbon Fund (BioCF) which described the benefits of carbon financing in dealing with poverty, biodiversity impacts and climate change in developing countries.

Ian Noble, World Bank, elaborated on the goals of the BioCF, which seeks to provide atmospheric, environmental and social benefits. He said the Fund will operate through two separate windows: projects generating Kyoto-compatible emission reductions; and projects that are currently excluded from the Kyoto Protocol. He presented indicative land management projects in Costa Rica, China, Honduras and Tanzania.

Showcasing a video on the Community Development Carbon Fund (CDCF), Heister explained that this Fund provides carbon finance to small-scale projects in least developed countries. He said these projects would reduce poverty, build a market for emission reductions, leverage private capital for sustainable development initiatives, and generate know-how for UNFCCC Parties and others involved in small-scale CDM projects.

Walter Vergara, World Bank, showcased three recent CDM projects in Colombia on wind power, run-of-the-river hydro and wastewater treatment. He explained that these projects provided revenues that were reinvested into development and conservation-related projects in the community

Eduardo Dopazo, World Bank, presented Carbon Fund-Assist, a World Bank initiative that promotes capacity building and technical assistance for CDM and Joint Implementation projects. He also mentioned other World Bank capacity-building initiatives, such as National Strategy Studies, Prototype Carbon Fund (PCF) *Plus* and the PCF *Plus* Fellowship.



Walter Vergara, World Bank, says the carbon finance operations in Colombia provided greenhouse gas reductions as well as environmental and social benefits

More information:

<http://www.worldbank.org>
<http://www.prototypecarbonfund.org>
<http://www.carbonfinance.org>

Contact:

Johannes Heister <jheister@worldbank.org>
 Ian Noble <inoble@worldbank.org>
 Walter Vergara <wvergara@worldbank.org>
 Eduardo Dopazo <edopazo@worldbank.org>