

A Special Report on Selected Side Events at the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and Fifth Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (COP 15 and COP/MOP 5)

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Events convened on Wednesday, 9 December 2009

Indigenous Sensitive Climate Change Solutions and Implications of the Present State of Negotiations

Presented by Tebtebba Foundation



Patricia Cochran, Alaska Native Science Commission, urged other indigenous peoples to find a balance between the wisdom of elders and the needs of future generations.

The event focused on human rights approaches to climate change. Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Tebtebba Foundation, stated that while indigenous peoples are not the cause of climate change, they suffer its effects most severely. This COP, she said, must address this “climate injustice.”

Joseph Ole Simel, Manyito Pastoralist Integrated Development Organization, explained how pastoral communities across Africa are suffering from the effects of climate change. He called on African countries to review their approach to mobile communities and to better appreciate these communities’ resilience and ability to use traditional knowledge for adaptation. Patricia Cochran, Alaska Native Science Commission, explained how Alaskan communities are incorporating traditional knowledge into science-based approaches to adaptation, and are exploring opportunities for alternative energy production from a variety of sources, including wind, geothermal and solar.

Tarcila Rivera Zea, Chirapaq, described how climate change is affecting indigenous women in a variety of ways, including threatening food security, causing increased illness in children and leading to biodiversity loss. These combined effects, she said, are having negative impacts on indigenous peoples’ culture. Sarimin Boengkih, Kanak Agency for Development, detailed how communities in New Caledonia are working to adapt to sea level rise, but explained that if they are forced to move from their lands, they face a bleak future due to a lack of ecological knowledge about the new land to which they are moved.

John Henriksen, Saami Parliament, lamented that parties to the UNFCCC are reluctant to reference international human rights instruments such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). He argued that the reverse should be the case, with human rights standards being the foundation of the anticipated COP outcome. Joji Cariño, Tebtebba Foundation, underscored the fact that REDD projects are likely to fail if they are not based on the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples, and if they do not involve these peoples in implementation of REDD projects and other mitigation and adaptation activities.

Participants discussed the rights of Arctic peoples, livestock keepers’ rights and UNDRIP Article 18 relating to the involvement in decision-making processes that affect indigenous peoples’ lives.

More information:

<http://www.tebtebba.org>
<http://www.mpido.org>
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Kiribati: Our Road to Copenhagen

Presented by Kiribati

This session presented the vulnerabilities and adaptation activities of the small island nation of Kiribati. In a video address, Kiribati's President, Anote Tong, appealed to the global community to take action on climate change for the sake of vulnerable countries. He called climate change the "greatest moral challenge of the 21st century." Participants also watched a video highlighting the impacts of increased high tides and seasonal storms, droughts, and saltwater intrusion in Kiribati.

Riibeta Abeta, Kiribati, provided an overview of various projections of climate impacts on Kiribati, including sea level rise, temperature increases and drought. He said Kiribati is on the front lines of climate change. Michael Foon, Kiribati, described adaptation and mitigation efforts including the Kiribati Adaptation Project (KAP) and the Phoenix Islands Protected Area. He highlighted the need to protect the islands' freshwater resources, noting the high level of infant mortality, owing largely to water contamination.

Robert Kay, Coastal Zone Management (CZM), Australia, presented findings from a community risk assessment process conducted in South Tawara, and showed maps of a structured risk assessment from permanent and temporary inundation. Tessie Eria Lambourne, Kiribati, stated that the people of Kiribati do not want to become environmental refugees.

A video of the "frigate bird song" was shown, followed by a statement from by Betarim Rimon, Kiribati, calling for "bold, brave and binding decisions" in Copenhagen.

Participants discussed, *inter alia*: negotiations with other countries for relocation space; coastal erosion; the need for data on the impacts of climate change on corals; the role of traditional practices in adaptation; and activities undertaken by vulnerable countries for mitigation.



Maria Timon, Edmund Rice Center, performed a traditional dance.

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Development of Social and Environmental Standards for National REDD+ Programmes

Presented by Nepal

Phil Franks, CARE International, detailed the REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards Initiative (the Initiative). He explained that the goal is to provide effective social and environmental standards for REDD programmes in order to make a substantial contribution to poverty reduction and biodiversity conservation goals.

Dinesh Devkota, Nepal, discussed Nepal's experiences with community forest management, including the challenges faced, lessons learned and national expectations of the Initiative.

Tannya Lozada, Ecuador, set out her country's approach to REDD, which it considers to be a mechanism that delivers short- and long-term social and environmental benefits. She outlined the SocioBosque Programme, which pays communities to retain the forest within which they live. Bhasar Singh Karky, International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development, stated that the Initiative is a tool to ensure that REDD operates in a fair, transparent, equitable and accountable manner. He concluded by stating that it is important that REDD supports conservation of biodiversity in areas outside protected areas and ecosystem-based adaptation strategies for vulnerable communities.

Joanna Durbin, The Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance, explained that the Initiative is currently testing at the global and national levels the social and environmental standards it has developed. She added that a key challenge is balancing the need to reflect different country contexts and ensure that the future standards retain consistency across countries.

Participants discussed: the Ecuadorian government's record on indigenous peoples; the methods by which communities can become empowered within the context of REDD; and how REDD can support communities' struggles for communal land tenure.



Phil Franks, CARE International, outlined the eight core principles of the draft REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards Initiative that is being developed in partnership with Nepal, Ecuador, Tanzania and Brazil.

More information:

<http://www.care.org>

<http://www.npc.gov.np>

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Bridging the Water and Climate Change Agendas

Presented by Global Water Partnership (GWP), Global Public Policy Network (GPPN), and Stockholm International Water Institute (SIWI)

The event considered the challenges of water management in the context of climate change and the integration of water in climate negotiations.

Mike Muller, GWP, commented that water is largely absent from the formal negotiating text, although the images used to describe the impacts of climate change are usually related to water. Ainun Nishat, IUCN, presented on Bangladesh's climate change strategies, highlighting the integration of water-related concerns into its National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA).

Hannah Stoddart, Stakeholder Forum, explained the need for water to be included in the COP 15 negotiating text, and outlined the GPPN's suggestions for where it could be added. She recommended including references to regional and international cooperation, and to integrated water resource management.

John Matthews, WWF US, lauded efforts to consider capacity building as a process rather than an outcome, and encouraged using water to integrate ecosystem considerations into development and adaptation plans across sectors. Karin Lexén, SIWI, said that climate adaptation is already occurring in the water sector, and encouraged building on the experiences of the water community. She recalled the Millennium Development Goals on water, and outlined steps for the future, including the further integration of water projects in NAPAs and considering the linkages between water and energy.

Participants considered, *inter alia*: the reasons for water's exclusion from the negotiating text; sovereignty concerns in dealing with climate change impacts; water as a cross-cutting and transboundary issue; the need for guidance under the UNFCCC on water adaptation; and dialogues with those beyond water sectors. Ania Grobicki, GWP, closed by welcoming strategic proposals for integrating water management into adaptation plans.



Hannah Stoddart, Stakeholder Forum, encouraged those in the water sector to speak the language of the climate change community.

More information:

<http://www.gwpforum.org>
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Co-benefits of Climate Change and Sustainable Development in Developing Countries

Presented by Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center (OECC), Institute of Energy Economics Japan (IEEJ), Global Environment Centre Foundation (GEC)

This event first focused on the co-benefits of climate change and sustainable development in developing countries, and then on proposals for facilitating CDM projects in least developed countries (LDCs).

Tetsushige Nishio, Japan, opened the first panel, stressing that a CDM that contributes to poverty reduction in LDCs is essential. Taka Hiraishi, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), explained that the term "co-benefits" refers to an approach that aims to achieve synergies between mitigation and sustainable development through the efficient use of scarce resources, using quantitative measurement, reporting and verification. Yuji Koresawa, Japan, described Japan's activities to promote co-benefits, including subsidy schemes and the development of the "Manual for Quantitative Evaluation of the Co-benefits Approach."

Makoto Kato, OECC, detailed a joint initiative with China, which focused on sulfur dioxide reductions in Panzhihua City and which also resulted in significant GHG emission reductions. Yoshihiro Mizutani, GEC, provided examples of quantitative evaluations of environmental impacts and presented a proposal for "Integrated Co-benefits Indicators." During a brief discussion, participants discussed, among other things, sources of carbon reductions.

Shinya Ejima, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), introduced the second panel, noting it would discuss an initiative for clean development in LDCs. Noting that the CDM has not adequately focused on promoting sustainable development, Philip Gwage, Uganda, summarized an October 2009 roundtable on "Practical Solutions for Promoting CDM in LDCs." Takahiko Tagami, IEEJ, discussed a proposal for CDM reform, focusing on the need to exempt LDC projects from proof of additionality and on the application of a default emission factor. Shigeru Kiyama, JICA, closed the session by summarizing the presentations.



Makoto Kato, OECC, outlined how a joint initiative between Japan and China resulted in reductions of both sulfur dioxide and GHG emissions.

More information:

<http://www.iges.or.jp/en/index.html>
<http://www.oecc.or.jp>
<http://gec.jp>
<http://enenken.ieej.or.jp>
<http://www.jica.go.jp>

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UN-Land Revitalizing Drylands: Benefits from Coordinated Action

Presented by UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Sergio Zelaya, UNCCD Secretariat, stressed the importance of working across the UN and other organizations to address land degradation, which in turn is linked to other issues, including climate change. He introduced UN-Land, a coalition of UN institutions that have a mandate on land. He said the first meeting, hosted by UNEP's Environmental Management Group and the UNCCD, was held in November 2009 and attended by 16 relevant UN organizations. Zelaya explained that UN-Land intends to operate in a bottom-up fashion, support the climate change regime and develop a "rapid response report" on drylands. He said the report will include recommendations for action on desertification, land degradation and drought, and sustainable land management, using input from the UNFCCC COP 15.

Sarala Gopalan, International Federation of Agricultural Producers, said crop and water management, implemented and applied in a systemic manner, can help to combat climate challenges. She called on the UNCCD and others to help "demystify" scientific information to make it available to farmers. Gopalan suggested that the best insurance available to farmers is knowledge based on scientific facts, highlighting this point with an example of a participatory hydrological monitoring project in India.

Noting that less than 1% of farmers worldwide are large-scale commercial farmers, Silvia Donato, International Fund for Agricultural Development, stressed the importance of smallholder farmers in mitigating and adapting to climate change. She stated that smallholder agriculture can sustain steady increases in food production if water is managed effectively and stressed that an integrated approach to water management is critical to climate change adaptation. She called for combining traditional techniques and innovative approaches to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Alejandro Kilpatrick, Global Mechanism, emphasized the need to recognize the social and economic benefits of drylands, noting that their valuation will influence how resources are allocated at the national and international levels. He highlighted the importance of partnerships and engagement with the private sector for mobilizing resources from multiple sources. Regarding climate financing for drylands, he noted adaptation and carbon market funding, said funding from the CDM is limited, and called for more attention to REDD and REDD+ in low forest cover areas.

Sergei Chernikov, UN Office for Outer Space Affairs, highlighted various workshops held around the world on the role of space technologies for monitoring climate change, water management, forest management, food security and other issues.

Stephen Muwaya, Uganda, stressed the importance of land tenure, including for pastoral communities, in relation to sustainable land management. He highlighted the link between land degradation and food security and conflict. Muwaya called for mainstreaming sustainable land management in local development plans and actions.

During the discussion, participants emphasized that the relationship between degraded lands and forests is under-recognized. In this regard, a representative from the UN Forum on Forests highlighted that they have received funding for countries with low forest cover and for Small Island Developing States.

Participants also: stressed the link between maintaining forest cover and soil carbon in drylands; discussed how payment for ecosystem services could be included within the UNFCCC; highlighted the difficulty of running verification systems for smallholder farmers in relation to soil carbon and organic processes; and stressed the need for UN-Land to link to on-the-ground work.



Sergio Zelaya, UNCCD Secretariat, stressed the links between drylands, sustainable land management, REDD, drought and risk management, as well as with climate change and biodiversity.

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Sarala Gopalan, International Federation of Agricultural Producers, said scientific knowledge can be simplified and "demystified" such that it becomes "common knowledge" for farmers and helps them to avert disasters.