

ECO



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Africa Must Seize the Opportunity

Africa being a G8 priority this year, alongside climate change, should embolden its negotiators to seize the opportunity that exists here in Montreal. Africa needs an outcome from this conference that will provide a firm prospect of avoiding the ever-worsening situation of starvation and poverty that is inevitable without an effective and equitable multilateral regime to address climate change. The ugly face of adverse climate impacts that are currently affecting its communities and economies is creating a context of far greater urgency than that of 1997 when the Kyoto Protocol was launched. Continuity of the multilateral regime is therefore an urgent imperative.

A package deal serving African interests, which must include a process for negotiating a future framework that delivers deeper Annex 1 reductions, will be more secure going forward under the Protocol than within a forum which includes Parties pushing an agenda of avoiding absolute targets. Funds contributing to realising sustainable development rights and meeting the adaptation needs of African countries will be more reliable and predictable where there is direct linkage to flexible mechanisms.

Voluntary pledges have not delivered significant finance for adaptation and the Adaptation Fund remains primarily dependent on Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) investments. Current projects also depend on continuity under the Protocol. The CDM has yet to live up to the objective of providing substantial support to sustainable development, with most African countries having little

prospects of attracting projects. The Protocol allows for creating additional mechanisms, as well as amendments and new annexures, which could broaden the revenue base for the Adaptation Fund or for more innovative and targeted instruments.

A finite process to develop a post-2012 framework to address these challenges can and should be decided here in Montreal. Sustainable development policies and measures, consistent with Article 10 of the Protocol, are urgently needed in Africa anyway for their public benefits. Such measures could be recognised as future action in a new annex that does not carry the same legally binding character as Annex B.

The prospects of achieving agreement on such a package under the COP/MOP are primarily dependent on the positions adopted by G77 & China. Developing countries have to bring something to the table if they want Annex 1 countries to agree to deeper cuts in emissions in a second commitment period under the Protocol. A willingness to participate in the global efforts to address greenhouse gas emissions, consistent with the UNFCCC Article 4.2, involves actions that are consistent with Africa's right to sustainable development.

Opportunities for addressing the urgent needs of the majority of Africans, and avoiding the catastrophe that will ensue if dangerous climate change is not averted, requires a proactive approach by the Africa Group. Playing only a defensive or stand-off role will not help negotiations. The only responsible

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New Commitments?

On Wednesday G77 & China tabled its proposal for elements of a COP/MOP decision on Article 3.9. One particular sentence raised the eyebrows of some G77 Parties, and of Parties and observers outside the G77. It says that for the second commitment period, likely between 2013 and 2017, "no new commitment shall be introduced under the Protocol of the Parties not included in Annex I." Some may argue that adoption of this statement by the COP/MOP would close the door to any contribution of developing countries to combating climate change for another decade or so, and may therefore limit substantively the chance of staying below two degrees Celsius global warming. This should not be the case.

What are "new commitments?" ECO understands that new commitments, as currently understood under the Kyoto Protocol for industrialised countries, are legally binding caps on national emissions that are subject to the Protocol's compliance system.

There are, however, a wide range of actions and policies that developing countries can implement to combat climate change which do *not* qualify as "new commitments." A positive move in this direction is the proposal by Papua New Guinea and other countries to reduce tropical deforestation. Such policies and measures can mitigate climate change while addressing a variety of non-climate concerns such as biodiversity and sustainable development. Because they are intrinsically useful, such initiatives have the support of the NGO community and many Annex I Parties, and should be an integral part of a future post-

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CCS Should Not Be in the CDM

On Tuesday, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) presented the key conclusions of their report on carbon capture and storage (CCS) at SBSTA. And yesterday, during the Contact Group meeting, China and Iran made interventions to suggest CCS be included within the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). This was the result of intense lobbying by business and industry organisations with a vested interest in CCS.

The risks of including CCS in the CDM did not escape all delegates present. Gambia, on behalf of G77, said it well: "CCS is still in its infant state and we should look at the risks related to long term storage." And Ghana recommended giving "this technology the chance to mature."

At present, the long-term storage of carbon dioxide in geological reservoirs has not been proven. It is not possible to ensure adequate characterisation of reservoirs and there is no knowledge of what monitoring approaches will work or at what cost. All of these create the possibility of technical and regulatory failure of

methodologies for including CCS, thereby creating significant permanence issues for the associated certified emission reductions.

The CDM does not have the guidance and capacity necessary to answer these difficult questions. Throwing this complex issue to this institution, already under criticism for lacking resources and capacity, is not likely to serve anyone well (unless they are looking for quick, cheap, bogus credits). A more thoughtful approach should be taken to explore this unique technology.

Moreover, including CCS in CDM risks diverting funds from the original intention of CDM – to support sustainable development in developing countries whilst reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Carbon capture and storage projects perpetuate and in fact increase dependence on fossil fuel sources and technologies, and do nothing to enhance the market for renewable energy and energy efficiency. And it certainly does not meet a sustainable development goal of providing benefits to local communities.

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2012 climate regime.

There are many synergies between sustainable development and climate mitigation. As a consequence, a growing number of governments in the developing world are adopting new policies and targets to improve energy efficiency and support renewable energy. For instance, earlier this year, China, with low per capita emissions, confirmed plans to increase renewable energy (not counting large hydro) to 15 per cent of its total energy supply by 2020. The Philippines has set an ambitious target of doubling the installed capacity of renewables by 2013. This will increase the share of renewables in the power generation mix from the current 37 per cent to approximately over 50 per cent. This will strengthen their economies by enhancing energy security and reducing import dependence of fossil fuels, lowering air pollution and health costs, as well as reducing significantly the growth of their greenhouse gas emissions.

The simple fact is that many poor developing countries with low per capita emissions also have better or similar carbon efficiencies per unit of gross domestic product than the world's largest polluter. This proves that policies are being put in place to promote sustainable development. While these policies are not adopted primarily to cut carbon, this is

a very welcome side effect.

Developing countries can therefore contribute in creative ways to reducing global emissions through such policies and measures, and these can be supported and facilitated in the post-2012 regime, without adopting "new commitments."

CAN Climate Events

Climate Action Network (CAN) Canada, together with its partner organisations, World Council of Churches, Falls Brook Centre and Energy Strategies will be organising the following events, respectively, in conjunction with COP11.

On Sunday, December 4, the "Call of the Earth: An Interfaith Celebration" will be held from 14:00 to 16:30 at l'Oratoire Saint-Joseph at 3800, rue Queen-Mary. On the same day, an event entitled 'Is all Carbon sequestration equal?' will be held at Complexe Guy-Favreau, Salle Mousseau from 09:30 to 17:00. The Geothermal Energy House, located at the Corner of Viger and Bleury near Place Jean-Paul Riopelle, will be open to visitors until December 9.

Another event related to COP11, the Global March for Our Climate rally will be held at 12:00 on Saturday, December 3 at Dorchester Square (Peel and Rene-Levesque) at the exit of Papineau Street.

"Fossil of the Day" Award

After a day's break, the fossils' awards ceremony resumed in full force yesterday with five countries receiving fossils. The US, Australia and Russia received the top award for selfishly prioritising their adaptation needs over those of the Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States. Australia, Canada and the US won second place for their interventions to limit the scope of discussions on the proposal of Papua New Guinea to reduce deforestation in developing countries. A third fossil was awarded to Japan for its intervention in the plenary, where it effectively stated it would not go ahead without the US in the post-2012 regime.

– *Africa, from front page* –
approach is to get to work on designing a package that will serve African interests and insist on its adoption under the multilateral system.

Celine

Celine, like many others around the Palais des Congrès, believes that for COP11 to be a success, the world may have to leave the US behind on the platform when this train leaves the station.

Yet, Celine has been somewhat concerned about that thought. After all, would Canada really be willing to snub its biggest trading partner? Then again, the climate (not to put to fine a point on it) has not been all that peachy between these neighbours recently due to a contentious softwood lumber dispute and a beef ban.

However, Celine started feeling better about the whole matter after reading a recent edition of the Globe and Mail. In a news report, Prime Minister Paul Martin said he had also discussed other areas of disagreement with the US, including the issue of climate change. He added: "Unlike Canada, the US is not part of the Kyoto agreement on climate change. The President and I don't see eye to eye on climate change - we don't agree." Celine is now fully motivated to step on that train.

NGO Party

One of most eagerly awaited events at every COP, the NGO party, will be held this Saturday, December 3 at Club Soda, 1225 boul. St-Laurent. It will commence at 21:00 and your badge will be your entry ticket. See you there!