

ECO



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The Importance of Being Transparent

Earlier this week, parties confirmed the importance of civil society participation in these negotiations. For example, the US reminded why this is essential and has helped made substantive progress possible.

First, though designated as ‘observers’, civil society representatives actually do much more. Providing technical and practical experience and advocating for strong provisions and outcomes, participation contributes to making these talks fairer and more balanced between rich and poor, developed and developing, and tiny and huge delegations.

Secondly, wherever they come from, whatever they think about climate change, civil society organisations represent the diversity of citizens from around the world. This provides essential input and balance to the proceedings.

Of course, the negotiations process needs periods where Parties work constructively among themselves, but the balance between

open and closed sessions needs constant attention, or closing the doors will send a negative message to the nearly 7 billion whose lives depend on the decisions being made.

Soon, hopefully really soon, global society will have to implement what delegations are thinking, writing and agreeing. How can we change this world that needs so much changing, if the outcomes are not understood and agreed among all those represented by delegations?

When the doors are open, not only do the eyes and the ears of billions come to understand these vital proceedings, it helps us all prepare a safer future.

Delegates, it is always in order to ensure that civil society inclusiveness and transparency are operationalized. Even when civil society sometimes criticize and disagree with you, we are all here to make our common future safer and to preserve this world for the next generations. Delegates, let’s open the doors!

ing national circumstances rather than accounting for increased emissions from forest harvest.

The conclusions of the pre-sessional workshop on forest management accounting were helpful in emphasizing environmental integrity, transparency, the need for confidence in data, and the broader context of Annex I Party commitments when finalizing the rules.

Sadly, though, this useful focus on ambition and environmental integrity has not yet trickled down into the LULUCF negotiations themselves. Parties remain focused on an accounting approach that weakens ambi-

Balancing the LULUCF Books

Something new and exciting is happening in the LULUCF discussion. People are starting to talk about why it matters and what it should accomplish.

We can thank the Chair of the AWG-KP for clearly identifying the proper purpose of the negotiations – to explore how the rules and mechanisms of LULUCF could strengthen the level of ambition of Annex I Parties, and also how the rules could constitute an incentive for positive domestic action. This should be a wake-up call to LULUCF negotiators who until now have focused their discussions on accommodat-

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Moving Towards an Adaptation Committee

ECO supports the call from many developing country Parties for a new adaptation institution. Adaptation is still highly fragmented under the UNFCCC. While climate impacts are already being widely felt, there are large gaps in capacity and understanding how to adapt now and in the future at all levels, from community to national.

Of the three options in para 7 of Chapter II in the LCA text, ECO favours the establishment of an Adaptation Committee. The committee would be a coordinating body to consolidate the different adaptation fragments under the UNFCCC, including elaborating recommendations to the COP as they emerge.

The committee would be composed of experts with practical or technical expertise on planning and implementing adaptation or other relevant background. The members would be nominated by Parties representing UN constituencies, with a developing country majority.

It is desirable to include non-government experts (with the right to speak in meetings) from organisations such as UN bodies, the Red Cross, NGOs and civil society more broadly. This is a bit unusual, but it makes sense as much of the expertise on adaptation currently resides outside government.

ECO also suggests limiting the role of this body so that it has no direct role in the funding of adaptation: that responsibility should be handled through new institutions set up under the proposed Green Fund.

A key function of the Adaptation Committee would be to provide guidance and support on issues that emerge through the learning-by-doing process that adaptation to climate change necessarily is. The commit-

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tee should identify themes needing further analysis and advise on best implementation practice, as well as link to any future equivalent of the Nairobi Work Programme.

Another important function would be to provide an interface between the UNFCCC and the work of regional centres (whether existing bodies or new institutions), to ensure that sufficient information and support on adaptation is available to Parties.

Finally, the Adaptation Committee would report to the COP yearly on its activities and its findings and make recommendations.

ECO is well aware that Annex I Parties generally do not favour new institutions. They are worried about the costs and possible duplication of roles with existing bodies, as well as the time needed to get a new body up and running. So why can these functions not be performed by existing bodies? Here are a few reasons:

- The LDC Expert Group already has a full work programme on supporting implementation of National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs).

- The Expert Group on Technology Transfer (EGTT) is focusing on tech transfer, of which adaptation technologies are only a minor element at the current time.

- The Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) on national communications can provide lessons learnt for adaptation strategies, but this is only a small aspect of adaptation.

- The Nairobi Work Programme does not have an expert group. While NWP has provided much information, workshops and reports, it has had no mandate to provide recommendations for implementation, and it is limited to scientific and technical support.

Taken together, therefore, the existing expert groups and the Nairobi Work Programme still do not fulfill the necessarily broad scope of an integrated adaptation effort, and changing their mandates would be more difficult than establishing a new and purpose-built body.

ECO considers that a favorable decision on forming the Adaptation Committee will be one element of an ambitious Adaptation Framework for Implementation to be agreed in Cancun. Of course, such a committee would not be expected to overcome all adaptation challenges. But putting it in operation would help to build much-needed trust, showing that Annex I countries really will support adaptation, especially in vulnerable countries.



Carroll Muffett

'Yes, it is technically transparent, but the word actually means something quite different!'

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tion and environmental integrity.

At this session, CAN has presented an analysis showing that the preferred reference level approach proposed by Annex I Parties would create an accounting gap of about 460 Mt CO₂e/yr, the greatest of any accounting options currently on the table. This gap was emphasized by several presenters at the "Numbers" workshop on Monday, showing how it contributes to the weakening of Parties' pledges. In fact, current pledges coupled with current and proposed loopholes would actually allow Annex I Parties to increase their emissions, rather than reduce them. Surely this is a shocking result. As we are rapidly running out of time to avoid dangerous climate change, it is clear that this approach takes us absolutely in the wrong direction.

Annex I Parties are fond of telling everyone not to worry about LULUCF accounting gaps, loopholes, or windfall credits because they will simply adjust their pledges to ensure ambition. ECO seriously doubts this is the case. Closing the carbon accounting gap is the only way to ensure that overall ambition and environmental integrity are strengthened by LULUCF. That means Annex I Parties must account for increased emissions from forest management. On this point too, time is running out.



Gender Equality and the Climate Fund

Delegates drafting text on the governance arrangements for a new global climate fund are reminded of a simple fact: climate change impacts and solutions are not gender neutral. The new fund must have principles of gender equality at the core.

Whether considering human vulnerability to the effects of climate change, adaptation to those effects, or ways of reducing levels of greenhouse gases – women and men are going to be impacted differently.

For example, concerning adaptation, it is women who are responsible for 60% to 80% of the food produced in most developing countries, and they are often hardest hit as increased climate variability makes agriculture more unpredictable. But it is just as true that women are the key agents in building climate-resilient solutions and food security in a world of climate change. A new fund must ensure that adequate, new and additional adaptation finance reaches them.

Similarly, mitigation efforts can turn out to be false solutions if they threaten the rights and livelihoods of women. In the rush to biofuels it is poor women who stand to lose the most, since they are reliant on the lands targeted for biofuel production, and have the least to gain, as production of cash crops is usually dominated by men.

The evidence from decades of donor aid and humanitarian programming underlines the need to address gender-differentiated realities in managing and disbursing funds. The new global climate fund must learn from this experience and build into its core responsive principles of gender equality.

Amongst other vital provisions, ECO calls for the Board of the new fund to reflect equal gender representation. Job descriptions and terms of reference should also specify the importance of a gendered perspective in articulating development issues and climate change impacts.

Ensuring that women are included on the Fund Board is an important first step to guarantee that the Fund will respond to the needs of both poor women and men and achieving greater gender parity.

No existing global climate fund has yet ensured equitable gender representation in its governance structures. This is a trend which must be reversed so that women benefit from, and are not harmed by, climate finance going forward. It's time for negotiators to bring gender into the Fund's agenda.