



## Issue 148 - November 2009

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## OUR VIEWPOINT

### - The changes necessary to change the climate change negotiations

When a house is burning down, the important thing is to put out the fire. Although the neighbours might be able to help, the fire brigade is expected to manage operations. We expect the State to provide the necessary support to put out the fire. Once it is out, experts will establish the causes of the fire and, in the event of arson, the perpetrators will be held responsible and duly punished in accordance with the law. But first the fire needs to be put out.

The results of global warming are very similar to those of a fire, but the process leading to it has been the reverse. In this case, the causes of the fire are already known (the burning of fossil fuels) and

those responsible for starting it are also known (the industrialized countries). However the fire-fighters are nowhere to be seen and the government representatives are busily negotiating deals –business deals- while the flames spread with increasing speed.

The saddest part is that for years now we have known how to put the fire out: by stopping the burning of fossil fuels (oil, coal and natural gas). Although there are other factors that aggravate climate change – such as deforestation – in fact burning fossil fuels is the only source of greenhouse gases that is increasing. It is the central cause of global warming. The solution is there for all to see and all efforts should be aimed at replacing fossil fuels by other sources of energy.

The use of fossil fuels started with the Industrial Revolution and was globalized through the economic development model imposed worldwide by the industrialized countries. As a result, the total stock of greenhouse gases in the biosphere has constantly increased, resulting in climate change. It is therefore clear that these industrialized countries are mainly responsible for the present “fire” and consequently must take on the corresponding responsibility and adopt the necessary measures to halt the process.

In this respect, the first step must be for industrialized countries to introduce drastic changes to the production and use of energy at a national level, leading to the urgent replacement of fossil fuels by other sources of energy within a clearly established time frame. Such measures should include transnational corporations, imposing on them the same restrictions regarding the production and use of energy in their operations around the world as those applied in their countries of origin.

Linked to the above, those who are mainly responsible for climate change must commit themselves not to “export” the problem to other countries, as is currently the case with agrofuels, which are produced at the expense of the resources and welfare of the inhabitants of the countries of the South.

At the same time, those mainly responsible for climate change must generate the appropriate conditions – including economic and technical assistance – to enable non-industrialized countries to pursue a path of development that is free from fossil fuels. (But not through fraudulent schemes such as the Clean Development Mechanism that allow the North to continue polluting.)

More specifically, the countries responsible for climate change should provide economic compensation to those countries committing themselves not to exploit their fossil fuel deposits. Given the debt that the North has generated to the rest of the world, because of its negative impact on the climate, this is only fair.

However, this does not imply that the other countries – the “neighbours” – cannot contribute to putting out the “fire.” This goes, to some extent, beyond North-South divisions. The present economic development model, which has been imposed all over the world, is totally reliant on the burning of fossil fuels. This implies that every country, without exception, must make the utmost effort to eradicate their use.

Of course, there is a “right to development”, as some governments of Southern countries argue. But this right cannot be exercised at the cost of the planet’s climate that belongs to everyone. This means that although such countries do not have the historic responsibility for climate change – nor the obligations this involves – they must recognize the need to adopt measures to replace fossil fuels by other alternative energies as soon as possible.

The issue of replacing fossil fuels should be the centre of the forthcoming UN climate negotiations that

will take place in Copenhagen in December. Unfortunately, it is extremely unlikely that this will happen. On the contrary, it seems extremely likely that the discussions will focus on a number of absurd “solutions”. Instead of solving the problem these “solutions” will only make it worse.

Much will be said about market mechanisms for reducing emissions from deforestation, agriculture and cattle-raising. There will also be much talk about plantations as carbon sinks, about agrofuels, about carbon trade and about a recent invention known as “biochar.” But very little will be said – and as little as possible negotiated – on the central issue: the eradication of fossil fuels.

Many years have gone by since 1992 when governments committed to do something about the Earth’s climate by adopting the UN Convention on Climate Change. Since then, however, they have achieved little or nothing. At this stage, it is more than obvious that they are not willing to do much. But things could change if the “neighbourhood” –the peoples of the world– force their governments to adopt immediately measures to put out the “fire.”

Therefore we hope that the coordinated efforts of organized civil society from all over the world will directly and indirectly put pressure on government delegates in Copenhagen. We hope that they will be effective in forcing the necessary change in course. This is not a simple fire: the future of humanity is at stake. We all have the right and the duty to demand that what needs to be done is done. Now!

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## REDD ALARM

### - Greenwashing the green desert in Copenhagen

It seems increasingly likely that no binding deal will come out of Copenhagen and that the North will attempt to scrap the Kyoto Protocol. It also seems likely that some sort of deal will be pushed through on reduced emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD). There is a serious danger that REDD will act as greenwash for the North's failure to reduce emissions dramatically. REDD could generate a massive land grab, it could pour money into some of the most corrupt governments and forestry ministries in the world, it could trample on indigenous peoples' and local communities' rights, it could accelerate conversion of forests to plantations and it could create a massive loophole allowing pollution in the North to continue. All the while allowing deforestation to continue.

But with or without a REDD deal, the UN climate negotiations have already caused serious problems for people and forests, through the Clean Development Mechanism's support of industrial tree plantations. “CDM fraud at its worst,” as WRM described it in August 2009.

The problem starts with the definition of “forest”. So far, there is no agreed definition of forest in the REDD negotiations, but under the CDM definition any area bigger than 500 square metres with crown cover of 10 per cent and trees capable of growing two metres high is a “forest”. Even clearcuts are included in this definition of a “forest”.

The FAO has long supported the myth that plantations are forests. Recently, the FAO produced a leaflet, explaining that “Negotiations need clear terminology”. That much is true. But the leaflet discusses the difference between “sustainable forest management” and “sustainable management of forests”. Needless to say both versions of “sustainable management” include industrial tree

plantations. The FAO is institutionally incapable of seeing the difference between a plantation and a forest, but will pay intelligent people very comfortable salaries to produce an analysis of the word “of”.

A look at the lending of the International Finance Corporation, the World Bank's lending arm to the private sector, illustrates why the definition of forests matters. First the good news. In August 2009, World Bank President Robert Zoellick ordered a complete moratorium on Bank investment in oil palm plantations. The change came after a complaint to the IFC's Compliance Advisory Ombudsman (CAO) by a series of NGOs about the IFC's loans to palm oil giant Wilmar.

As we're dealing with the World Bank, it should come as no surprise that there's also some bad news: The IFC is planning to increase lending for non-oil palm industrial tree plantations. In October 2009, at the World Forestry Congress in Argentina, the IFC's Mark Constantine gave a presentation titled “Increasing Private Sector Impact in the Forest Sector”. When Constantine says “forest”, he also means “plantations”.

Constantine's presentation included a section titled “What have we learned?”. But he apparently didn't mention the problems caused by Wilmar's oil palm plantations. Nor did he mention a US\$50 million loan that the IFC gave in 2004 to the Brazilian pulp company Aracruz. The loan was hastily repaid shortly after Aracruz and the local police violently removed the Tupinikim and Guarani indigenous peoples from their villages that they had reclaimed from Aracruz's monocultures.

Among the “new approaches” that Constantine suggested are to “increase forest access to carbon market” and to “invest in plantations and forest industries”. He talked about the need to “Ramp up investments in forest plantations”. While Constantine mentioned the risk of “monoculture / 'green desert’”, this does not mean that the IFC will not be handing out money to expand the green desert.

On 18 November 2009, the IFC announced that it is planning to invest in 250,000 hectares of industrial tree plantations in Indonesia. In the IFC's press release, Adam Sack, IFC Country Manager for Indonesia said that “This new program is part of IFC's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emission.” IFC states that the plantations could cut approximately 90 million tons of carbon emissions each year and that this supposed reduction in emissions could be traded under the CDM.

IFC describes its proposed projects as “reforestation” that “sequesters carbon by removing CO<sub>2</sub> from the atmosphere.” But it is not reforestation – it is replacing a degraded landscape by a monoculture. And any carbon dioxide stored in the trees will be quickly released, when the trees are used to produce paper or bioenergy.

When the CAO carried out its review of IFC lending to Wilmar's palm oil plantations in Indonesia it found that “Because commercial pressures dominated IFC's assessment process, the result was that environmental and social due diligence reviews did not occur as required.”

In his presentation at the World Forestry Congress, IFC's Constantine asked “How do we measure success?”. His answer, for plantations was “Number of hectares in new plantations. Dollars invested. Number of projects.” History, it seems, is due to repeat itself.

The solution to this is simple. The UN needs a definition of forests that excludes plantations. Then the IFC's plans in Indonesia could be seen for what they are. Not as “reforestation,” or part of a “commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emission,” but as a subsidy to the socially and environmentally destructive plantation sector.

By Chris Lang, <http://chrislang.org>

## THE COPENHAGUEN CIRCUS

### **- Let the show start!**

According to Wikipedia, "a circus is commonly a travelling company of performers that may include acrobats, clowns, animals, trapeze acts, hoopers, tightrope walkers, jugglers, unicyclists and other stunt-oriented artists."

Unfortunately, it has a strong similarity with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change where acrobats, jugglers, magicians and trapeze acrobats have been trying to entertain the world audience making people believe that they are seriously discussing ways of addressing the current climate crisis.

Though originally intended as a means of avoiding climate change, the UNFCCC original aim was soon diverted into a corporate-led performance focused on profit. Since then, it has travelled to a large number of countries trying to sell its exhibitions. Next stop is Copenhagen.

At this point in time, when climate change is acknowledged as the main threat that Humanity is facing, it is good to remember that traditional circuses have been forced to introduce a number of important changes to their performances as a result of public pressure. We hope that this will be the case in Copenhagen.

### **- Planting trees in the deserts**

A team of biologists and climate modellers at NASA have come up with a very "practical" alternative to phasing out fossil fuels. Their plan is to plant massive blocks of fast growing trees –for example eucalyptus- in the deserts of the Sahara and Australian outback. Lack of water? No problem! The trees would be watered by seawater treated by a string of coastal desalination plants and channelled through a vast irrigation network. Easy.

Such plan would of course destroy deserts, which are not wastelands but rich and diverse ecosystems in their own right. It completely disregards the fundamental interdependence of all phenomena in the subtle web of life and doesn't even question about where, when and how the impacts of this massive change would be felt.

The acknowledged costs of the scheme are enormous -\$1.9 trillion a year. Yet, the inventors consider "it is the most promising and practical (!) option in terms of current technology to solve the biggest parts of the problem."

They are aware that there are some drawbacks, but say that "If sacrifices are required to stem global warming, the almost non-existent ecosystems of the central Sahara and the outback seem like reasonable candidates compared to the alternatives." If the idea is so "practical", why don't they

sacrifice “reasonable candidates” such as the abundant US deserts, instead of those in Africa and Australia? As Alice would say: climate solutions are getting “curiouser and curiouser”.

Information source: Forests in the desert: the answer to climate change?, David Adam, [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk), <http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2009/nov/04/forests-desert-answer-climate-change>

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### **- Under the fancy name of “biochar”**

Some jugglers of the climate circus are tossing up charcoal to catch it again but now with a fancy name. The proposal of turning residues into fine-grained charcoal and ploughing billions of tonnes of it into the soil every year convert charcoal into “biochar”.

The charcoal is produced through a process called pyrolysis, whereby biomass is exposed to high temperatures in the absence of oxygen. This produces two types of fuels in addition to the charcoal (syngas and bio-oil), which can be used for heat and power, or further refined into agrofuels for cars or, potentially, for aviation.

Biochar advocates say it might “cool the planet”. Billions of tonnes of biomass mainly from trees and crop residues would be turned into biochar. They neglect the fact that this would require manyfold millions of trees to be planted... Up to 1 billion hectares of tree plantations would be needed to grow the trees necessary for biochar production on a scale large enough to impact climate.

Where would this major “geo-engineering solution to global climate change” take place? Not in the United States, nor in Europe: Africa is a particular target for biochar.

Conveniently perceived as a continent with abundant land available waiting for “development”, Africa is already experiencing massive land grabbing for agrofuels production and foreign agricultural investment. Indigenous communities, forests, water resources and food production have been heavily impacted by evictions, food insecurity and land conflicts that add up to the impacts of climate change.

Though biochar is clearly in no position to gain UNFCCC accreditation as a solution to climate change, the atmosphere of climate urgency makes the advocates of this reductionist tech-fix hope that their product will be fast-tracked into the carbon market and gain accreditation through international climate negotiations. And the climate circus might like the product.

Information source: “Biochar Land Grabbing: the impacts on Africa”, at <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/documents/Biochar%20Africa%20briefing.pdf>

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### **- A host of acrobatics: Cloud ships, space mirrors, iron powdered seas and the like**

Now come the acrobats. The Copenhagen Consensus Centre think-tank is working hard to weigh

really true solutions to altering the altered climate. Let's see.

The "cloud ships" stands out as one of their most cheap and viable projects: 1,900 wind-powered, unmanned ships directed by satellite would ply the oceans sucking up seawater and spraying minuscule droplets of it out through tall funnels to create large white clouds. These clouds, it is predicted, would reflect around one or two per cent of the sunlight that would otherwise warm the ocean. It is acknowledged that the scheme may affect rainfall patterns and the solution is to put them rather far away -from the land, though not from marine ecosystems...

This "brilliant" idea would cost as cheap as \$9 billion to test and launch within 25 years. A bargain. Other projects include sending mirrors into space by rocket to deflect the sun's rays, scattering iron powder into the seas to boost CO<sub>2</sub>-absorbing plankton, and mimicking the effects of volcanic eruptions in shielding the sun's rays with a chemical haze and creating a global cooling effect that can last for over a year. All these have been dismissed as unviable and expensive. Imagine!

The director of the Copenhagen think-tank, Bjorn Lomborg, has clear thoughts and fortunately calls a spade a spade. He believes the schemes could prove that there are better ways of addressing climate change than simply reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: "We need to have a debate about all of the options, not just the politically correct one of reducing CO<sub>2</sub>."

We cannot help but quoting some comments on this piece of news at telegraph.co.uk (<http://tiny.cc/pYIlv>) that reflect the feelings these "solutions" arouse in sensible people: "Brilliant: Why didn't I think that? Spray ocean water into the air to mitigate rising sea levels and cure obesity? And my plan will only cost you taxpayers \$230,000,000,000." "Call me stupid but isn't Venus covered in clouds? Clouds which have allowed the surface temperature to rise high enough to melt lead." "How are you going to protect these ships from somali pirates. Alright, this made me laugh. And if I'm the only one who thought 'Star Wars' when I saw these, I'm going to be one sad panda."

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### **- Carbon trading: flying on the trapeze without a net**

There is nothing like creating a problem for finding a good business opportunity . Or at least this is so for seasoned business men and women. It is thus that behind wars one can easily find the arms business. Behind citizen insecurity -largely resulting from social and economic inequity- is the business of security: insurance monitoring systems, bars, alarms and heavy-handed "saviour" politicians. Behind disease is the "health" business: the drug industry and corporate medical power. And behind climate change -as you may have already guessed- are the companies and governments that, with their extractivist, globalizing and consumption development model, have caused it. With the Industrial Revolution they opened up the Pandora's Box of fossil fuels, which had been buried underground for millions of years, releasing them in the form of greenhouse gases and causing the Earth's atmosphere to warm up. After many years, the serious negative impacts this has caused have been demonstrated. But these corporations and governments show no sign of changing and, above all, they want to make money. And here is where the flying trapeze acrobats appear on scene.

Carbon trading, adopted by the United Nations Climate Change Convention's Kyoto Protocol, is a very complex system promoted by governments, financial institutions and companies to meet climate

change. It is mainly based on treating the earth's cycling capacity of carbon dioxide -one of the main greenhouse gases causing climate change- as a new scarce resource to be commodified, priced and traded for use by the highest bidder. This avoids corporations and companies from truly fulfilling the objective of reducing the emission of their greenhouse effect gases. Thus they are aiming at a "market solution," that is to say, the creation of carbon trading systems, divided up into measurable units. Supposedly the market's "hidden hand" will provide the solution. And behind it are the people on the flying trapeze, swinging on their markets, gracefully pirouetting in the air. The pirouettes are such that they end up by fulfilling the objectives of reduction without any reduction taking place at all!

Carbon trading comes under two main schemes: the mechanism known as "cap and trade" and "offsetting." (1)

Under "cap and trade" schemes, a central government authority (such as for instance the European Commission) establishes a cap on the quantity of greenhouse gases that can be released within a specific area. All the companies have specified pollution permits (carbon credits) and those exceeding the cap can buy credits from those who pollute less. To date, most of these permits have been granted for free. The number of permits granted are calculated according to present levels of greenhouse gas pollution and thus, those who most polluted in the past are today those most rewarded by the subsidy. The European Union Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS), presently the world's largest carbon market, operates this way.

Carbon "offsetting" is another form of carbon trading. This system authorizes companies, governments, international financial institutions and individuals – initially in the countries of the North – who carry out polluting activities, to finance elsewhere, -in impoverished countries in the South who need "development"- projects that supposedly make it possible to avoid carbon emissions. With this scheme it is supposed that they are offsetting emissions – which they continue releasing anyway. The formula is: I contribute to climate change, I pay you not to do so (supposedly), but I continue to do so! Sorry – what about reduction? This is the way that the United Nations' Clean Development Mechanism operates.

Various stock exchange agents and economists of the same school that was behind the recent financial crisis were the ideologists of carbon trading, which has turned out to be a failure in terms of its so-called objective of dealing with climate change. In fact, since its creation it has done just the opposite of encouraging and gathering funds for a transition towards a fossil fuel-free economy: not only does it enable the main fossil fuel polluters to elude their responsibility of making a dramatic structural change, but also continues to "export" this destructive model to the countries of the South. An example are the projects for large scale tree plantations as "carbon sinks," or for agrofuels, occupying territories, displacing people, and destroying ecosystems.

Furthermore, the commoditisation of carbon emissions has led to a new "climate colonialism." Carbon trading is a way of privatizing clean air, the atmosphere and the privatisation of permission to pollute. Those who can afford to pay can purchase "permission" to pollute other peoples' air.

Other proposals, such as the use of biochar, nuclear energy and other fanciful ideas such as those referred to in some of the articles in this bulletin, are seriously being considered by various carbon trading systems. The multimillionaire investor, George Soros spelt it out very clearly: "it is possible to speculate with the system: that is why it appeals to financial guys like such as myself – because that is where financial opportunities are to be found."

Beyond the senselessness and irresponsibility of these acrobats on the flying trapeze to launch



themselves – and launch us – blithely into the void and without a net, the tragedy is that they create entelechies such as “carbon credits” or “compensation” of emissions, and make the world believe that they operate like commodities. Or even that they do work. Thus enormous brainy structures have been set up with economists and Nobel Prize winners involved and fed by substantial amounts of money around a huge incoherency. This incoherency is to equate biospheric carbon emissions (from plants, the soil, the oceans, animals and humans), whose carbon has maintained its circulation in a balanced way since human life started on the planet, with carbon emissions from fossil fuels -the underground carbon that began to be brought into the atmosphere only some 200 years ago and altered this balance. This carbon simply cannot be returned to the depths of the earth at present. (2) And all the proposals made from carbon trading just put everything in the same bag without considering the measure of halting what is at the root of the problem: the extraction of fossil fuels.

The carbon trading solution is very distant from the true solution to climate change: that of finding for humanity a way of keeping under the ground what are left of fossil fuels and reorganizing the energy, transport and housing systems of industrialized societies!

(1) “Carbon Trading. How it works and why it fails”, Tamra Gilbertson and Oscar Reyes, Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, November 2009, [http://www.dhf.uu.se/pdfiler/cc7/cc7\\_web.pdf](http://www.dhf.uu.se/pdfiler/cc7/cc7_web.pdf)

(2) “An Introduction to Carbon Trading”, European Youth for Action, [http://eyfa.org/eyfa\\_newsletter/carbon\\_trading](http://eyfa.org/eyfa_newsletter/carbon_trading)

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### **- Carbon neutral: it's magic!**

There is no doubt that public opinion has become aware of the climate change issue. However, for most people this is but a headline in the newspapers and they tend to think that although this is in fact a major problem, there is no need to worry about it because the UN is working to solve it and that surely science will invent something to prevent it from happening.

Thus, specialized agencies outline “scenarios,” models, forecasts, complex formulas presenting the issue in an aseptic and depoliticized way, without addressing the root of the problem: the consumption of fossil fuels. On the contrary, formulas are invented that distract attention and postpone solutions. This is what is happening with the idea that it is possible to become “carbon neutral”: magicians put tons of carbon dioxide into their top hats and then show them empty for the public to applaud.

This is the way it works: companies or individuals are told that they can reduce to zero the carbon emissions they release from their activities (their “carbon footprint”). All they need to do is to put money into projects that will supposedly offset from the atmosphere the same amount of carbon they release. This has become another “market niche.”

*The Carbon Neutral Company* has cashed in on this. In its webpage it offers a system to calculate the “carbon footprint” of people’s or companies’ activities: travel by plane, car or public transport, or the consumption of energy, heating, etc. All these activities, specified by the interested party, lead to a result measured in tons of carbon dioxide emissions. And here is the telltale trail! But do not despair; do not even consider changing your lifestyle, because the company provides the solution: in order to “neutralize” those emissions, just invest a specific amount of money – also a result of this calculation –

into some of the projects from its portfolio. As expected, one of the sectors of these projects implies the planting of tree monocultures.

But, like the hat trick, this is just a hoax! As has already been argued by author Kevin Smith, not only is it impossible to assess just how much CO<sub>2</sub> is taken up by trees but basically, the locked-up fossil carbon is entirely different from the carbon which is part of the live carbon-cycle. Every time fossil fuels are burnt, the locked-up carbon that was trapped underground is converted into active carbon. However, the reverse process is impossible. Once active, carbon might be fixed in a tree trunk for a while, but in the long run the wood will be burnt or rot away releasing the carbon back into the atmosphere. It will add to the active carbon pool.

Offsetting carbon emissions is a deception. The carbon neutral magicians want to do business by generating a state of complacency and, what is more serious, in this way they are postponing awareness about the need to adopt the necessary drastic measures to curb climate change.

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## SENSIBLE VOICES

### **- Relevant statements for addressing the climate crisis**

Even when everything would seem to indicate that the future of the planet's climate is in the hands of a group of clowns, the possibility always exists of recovering common sense, that is to say, the sense of ordinary people.

And it is precisely from there, from the grass roots, the social organizations, NGOs and from sensible people that the drive and the force will stem to propose, denounce and scatter the word that will shake world society and make it demand that those responsible for public policies act in accordance with the seriousness of climate change.

#### **- La Via Campesina: Small farmers cool down the earth!**

Small farmers – women and men - from around the world will gather in Copenhagen in December to defend their proposal for solving the climate crisis. Sustainable farming and local food production are actually cooling down the earth. Peasant agriculture allows carbon to be sequestered in soils and uses less fossil fuel-based machines and chemical inputs.

[http://www.viacampesina.org/main\\_en/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=811&Itemid=75/](http://www.viacampesina.org/main_en/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=811&Itemid=75/)

#### **- RECOMA: Do something serious for the climate and stop monoculture tree plantations!**

It is now 17 years since the international community agreed that the climate crisis was serious and that something had to be done. The two simple measures that needed to be taken were to halt the extraction of fossil fuels and to halt deforestation. Year after year the problem becomes more serious.

<http://www.wrm.org.uy/COP15/RECOMA.pdf>

#### **- Asian Women's Quilt on Climate Change: Climate Talks for People's Needs, Not Corporate Greed!**

We, women, environmental, indigenous people's and women's rights organizations from Mongolia, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and other Asian countries today unite by unfurling a giant collaborative quilt on the impacts of global warming on Asian communities and the people's

responses to these problems in front of the United Nations ESCAP building for the ongoing United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change intersessional meeting.

(<http://www.climatechangeaction.net/blog/asian-womens-quilt-climate-change-climate-talks-peoples-needs-not-corporate-greed>)

- Declaration of Women in Asia on Climate Change

We, the indigenous, peasant, fisher, labour, rural and urban women, face the bulk of negative impacts of climate change and the false solutions offered to us. We produce and provide food; work inside and outside homes to augment our family income and are often the principal income earners; and through our productive and reproductive labour, ensure the welfare of our families and communities.

([http://www.gendercc.net/fileadmin/inhalte/Bilder/UNFCCC\\_conferences/Road\\_to\\_Copenhagen/Asian Women Declaration on Climate Change.pdf](http://www.gendercc.net/fileadmin/inhalte/Bilder/UNFCCC_conferences/Road_to_Copenhagen/Asian_Women_Declaration_on_Climate_Change.pdf))

- Climate Justice Now!: False Climate Solutions in Barcelona. November 2009

The international civil society network Climate Justice Now! deplores the downplaying of expectations for the Copenhagen Climate Summit in Barcelona by industrialized countries, UNFCCC officials and the host of the Copenhagen Summit.

(<http://www.twinside.org.sg/title2/climate/info.service/2009/climate.change.20091103.htm>)

- Declaration of the Climate Vulnerable Forum, comprising the 11 countries considered most vulnerable to climate change: Maldives, Kiribati, Bangladesh, Nepal, Vietnam, Ghana, Kenya, Tanzania, Barbados and Bhutan

We, Heads of State, Ministers and representatives of Government from Africa, Asia, Caribbean and the Pacific, representing some of the countries most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. (<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/11/10/fresh-demands-from-front-line-states-in-climate-fight/>)

- Quito Declaration: Resistance. Good Living (Buen Vivir). Good Shared Living

Mujeres y hombres de diversas organizaciones y redes (nos reunimos) para escuchar, conversar y debatir acerca de la estrecha relación que hay entre los proyectos de energía, la deuda externa y ecológica, el cambio climático, el despojo de los territorios, la represión y la resistencia.

(<http://www.deudaecologica.org/Noticias/DECLARACION-DE-QUITO>

-[Resistencia-Buen-Vivir-Buen-Convivir-ASAMBLEA-INTER-REDES.html](http://www.deudaecologica.org/Noticias/DECLARACION-DE-QUITO))

- Memorandum to the Government of India by Indian Social Organisations

We, the undersigned people's organisations, social movements, trade unions and concerned citizens, submit this memorandum to the Government to draw your attention to the several urgent and so far unaddressed concerns about the climate crisis and the Indian Government's response to them, especially in light of the upcoming 15th Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) at Copenhagen from 7-18 December 2009.

(<http://www.wrm.org.uy/COP15/MEMORANDUM.pdf>)

- Further climate-related actions worldwide: From the UNFCCC international COP14 held in Poznan, Poland, in 2008, to next COP 15 to be held in December 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark, there has been a trail of actions from people around the world. All of them stress policy makers the urgency to take true actions to really deal with climate change.

(<http://www.wrm.org.uy/COP15/cop15.html#ontheroad>)

## BROADENING THE DEBATE

### - Climate change policy – does gender make a difference?

International negotiations about global climate protection have been slow, delivering meagre results. The debate began over 20 years ago, articulating the target of achieving 20 per cent in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions reductions, and ended up in the Kyoto Protocol with a mere 5 per cent – and even this has been questioned time and again.

This chapter is written from our perspective as gender experts and civil society activists working to raise awareness of gender and climate-change issues, and to integrate gender considerations into climate-change policy making, particularly at the international level. We have been active in this area and the broader gender and sustainable development discourse for the past ten plus years, and founded the network GenderCC – Women for Climate Justice. GenderCC is connecting women and gender experts from around the world, providing information and capacity development on the issues, as well as information on the process of political engagement, in order to achieve gender mainstreaming in climate-change-related policy making through increased knowledge and active participation in decision-making.

The quality of policy making will remain unacceptably low, if the discourse does not consider the gender issues, including relevant differences between women's and men's experience. If getting the social impact of climate-protection commitments and targets, mitigation and adaptation policies onto the agenda broadens the debate and changes it into a discussion framed by the principles of sustainability, then this will also provide entry points for gender considerations.

Broadening the debate may have the following positive effects for climate protection:

- The debate on climate change has been very narrow, focusing on the economic effects of climate change, efficiency, and technological problems. However, it would be better if policies and measures that aim to mitigate climate change were based on a more holistic understanding of human perception, values, and behavioural choices. That would include considering the specifics for different groups in society, including women and men. If policies are tailored to respond to the interests and needs of both women and men, and to further the goal of gender equality, they will be more effective – for example, campaigning for energy efficiency should involve consideration of who uses which appliances and for which purposes.
- Taking into account a variety of perspectives from different social groups would lead to improved measures and mechanisms – that is, solutions that reflect the interests not only of the powerful, but also of less influential groups whose voices are rarely heard at international conferences.
- If the terms of the debate are broadened to include the social impact of climate change, this would attract representatives from women's organizations to take part in the policy process and influence the debate.
- Being more inclusive of different voices, and ultimately developing policy which is more appropriate and hence more effective, would also improve the recognition and acceptance of the international policy process by the general public.

Taking a gender perspective on climate change into account in negotiations might also enable us to

avoid possible negative effects of climate-change measures and mechanisms on gender equality. For example:

- Market-based instruments can affect women in different ways from men, because of differences in income levels, and in access to markets and services. These policies would need to be very carefully designed, and informed by a full gender analysis, in order to avoid worsening gender inequality.
- Commitments made to reduce the carbon emitted by private households may have an adverse impact on gender equality. The gender division of labour, and stereotypes about women's and men's roles, leads to a disproportionate amount of work in the home being done by women. Requirements that households should use less energy would therefore have most impact on women. In general, private households are the societal institutions with the least influence and representation of their interests in the context of climate negotiations.
- Technological solutions are not always the solutions preferred by women: 'faster, bigger, further' are rather masculine principles, which one may also find in the climate-change policy process. Women tend to believe that technical solutions, such as further development of biofuels, or carbon capture and storage, are not sufficient to meet the requirements of developing a low-carbon economy.

In conclusion, climate-protection instruments and measures have potential to exacerbate existing inequalities, if they do not take full account of gender differences, and gender relations. However, when integrating gender considerations, such instruments and measures can indeed contribute to increasing gender equality.

Excerpted and adapted from "Engendering the climate-change negotiations: experiences, challenges, and steps forward", Minu Hemmati and Ulrike Röhr, chapter 13 of "Climate Change and Gender Justice", Published by Practical Action Publishing in association with Oxfam GB, 2009.

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