

Your guide to COP20

Review of Thursday 11 December 2014

No option for a non-text Ban Ki-Moon urges parties

During the opening of the Lima platform for action on the 9th day of COP20, the United Nations (UN) Secretary General – Mr. Ban Ki-Moon seemed worried with the pace at which negotiations were going.



Ban Ki-Moon challenged negotiators to ensure that they deliver a draft text that sets a clear and solid foundation for Paris' negotiation, stating that a non-paper was not an option.

Strengthening this call, Dr. Rajendra Pachauri - the Chair-person for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) echoed Ban Ki-Moon's message when he delivered the scientific message. He noted that in order for the globe to maintain a below 2 degrees Celsius, the carbon budget would have to be capped at 2,900 giga-tonnes of emissions. However, between 1870 and 2011 1,900 giga-tonnes had already been emitted, thus leaving a budget of only 1,000 giga-tonnes.

To maintain this requires serious commitments by nations, which is not currently being portrayed.

Former President of Mexico - Felipe Calderón dismissed the false dilemma held by many developed countries that addressing climate change will affect their economic growth and job creation, and also urged developed nations to ensure that there is a strong agreement from Paris in 2015 that will ensure that Climate Change problem is addressed.

ADP snag

However, negotiations on the ADP have stalled a great deal with a new text coming in at 9pm on Thursday, barely a few hours before formal closure of the Lima Climate talks.

Strangely, none of this was not foreseen. The co-chairs in their opening remarks on 2 December called on parties to ensure that they are constructive and time conscious in their intervention. The COP President also stressed that it was his wish all business should close by Friday 12 December 2014. It is worth noting that even with the latest text, there is still huge divergence between parties.

All other businesses have successfully closed except for the ADP.

The most critical issue in the ADP is the discussion on the 2015 climate agreement. Lima will not be successful if it cannot decide on the needed upfront information for parties to prepare intended nationally determined contributions (INDCs). This information will be critical as parties prepare to submit their level of climate action.

Gender Concerns in draft text

Climate Change impacts women differently and more severely, hence they need to be involved at every stage of decision making, aspect and process of planning and implementation of the COP processes. ACT Alliance believes that gender concerns are not effectively addressed in the element text and the draft negotiation text.

Though there is a passing reference of Gender Responsiveness in the preamble of draft negotiation text, it is crucial that Gender concerns should be core in the whole climate discourse for sustainable development.

Despite strong voices during the gender day and since, gender equity is not yet being taken seriously in the official COP processes.



Masbore village, Burkina Faso. Alizeta Sawadag, 65, was one of five vulnerable women to receive a pair of goats for breeding as part of the Building Disaster Resilient Communities programme. She has been able to sell half of the goats' offspring to pay for her children's education and to buy cereal to last her family through the dry season and drought.
ACT/Christian Aid/Amanda Farrant

As gender equity is a human right issue, and in line with the Beijing Platform for Action ACT is proposing that the UNFCCC should agree to:

Involve women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels

Integrate gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development

Strengthen or establish mechanisms at the national, regional, and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women

In addition to this, equity must ensure the concerns of all marginalised groups are fully recognised and addressed within the COP processes. Unless gender concerns are integrated into the global climate change process, the process cannot be complete.

Meet Joycia Thorat
Project officer/ Policy desk
of CASA India



I am responsible for the programs in the western zone of CASA India which covers two states, Maharashtra and Gujarat. At the policy desk I am responsible for analysis of the national policies relevant for the programs, for example right to food, right to employment, right to education, and advocate for the same. We work closely with the communities and this year have met farmers who have sown their seed three times while waiting for rain that never came.

We also educate people on their rights. Gender becomes a key focus in this work because climate change forces women to work harder for their daily water and food requirements for the family. I see a lack of the gender issue in the discussions here at the COP, and the question is how we bring these women into the discussions.

ACT, Bread for the World host successful side event on loss and damage

On Thursday afternoon a panel of negotiators and experts discussed the critical need for the 2015 agreement to address loss and damage. Pa Jarju Ousman from the Gambia noted the “unjust set of circumstances that we are facing” and argued that both adaptation and loss and damage must be at the core of the Paris agreement. Gottfried von Gemmingen from Germany said that avoiding

loss and damage is the “reason of being” for the UNFCCC, and stressed the importance of the now operational Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage.



Koko Warner of the UN University gave the science perspective, stressing the need for strong mitigation and new approaches to sustainable development to avoid the worst loss and damage, but noted that “loss and damage is programmed into our future by choices we’ve made in the past.”

Antonio Canas Calderon from El Salvador noted the need to deal with adaptation and loss and damage at the local and subnational level, and at the national level through policies, laws and in development plans, national budgets and sectorial policies. Sabine Minninger of Bread for the World argued that loss and damage needs the political attention that will come if it is in the agreement.

Why people-centred climate actions in the SDGs are essential for avoiding dangerous climate change

On Thursday ACT member Christian Aid, along with CAFOD and PACIA, held a side event on the need to link the elements of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs - goals that will supersede the MDGs - Millennium Development Goals) to the international climate agreement in Paris.

The general consensus among the civil society panellists from Africa, Asia and Latin America is that it is important for the SDGs to be strong on climate change. The two processes are inter-related and dependent on one another, with some of the progress on MDGs eroded by climate impact.

In developing countries, there are generally two development priorities: fighting poverty, and fighting climate change, and it is impossible to address one without addressing the other. Consequently it is impossible to address the SDGs without addressing climate change, the latter being not just an environmental issue, but also a development issue.

The link between the SDGs and the new climate agreement are inter-related, with a standalone climate change goal needed in the SDGs, if not, the lessons of the MDGs will not have been learned.