

Short WORKSHOP REPORT FORM

Number and title of workshop: Roundtable on Civil Society Actions and Needs to Promote Climate Change

Coordinator: Lisa Elges, TI-S

Date and time of workshop: 12 November 2010, 09:00-11:00

Moderator: Gareth Sweeney, TI-S

Rapporteur: Krina Despota, TI-S

Panellists

Tim Clairs (TC): Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP: Senior Policy Adviser (REDD)

Estelle Fach (EF): Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP: Programme Analyst (REDD)

Liz Gallagher (LG): E3G, Third Generation Environmentalism: Senior Researcher

Izabela Ratajczak-Juszko (IRJ): Oxford Climate Policy, Oxford Brookes University and RMIT University: Academic Researcher

Caio Luiz Carneiro Magri (CM): Instituto Ethos de Empresase Responsabilidade: Gerente Executivo de Politicas Publicas

Oscar Reyes (OR): Carbon Trade Watch: Programme Manager

Amelia Thorpe (AT): Environmental Defenders Office (Australia): International Programs Director

Jake Werksman (JW): World Resources Institute: Program Director for Governance and Access Program

Main Issues Covered

The workshop considered how civil society (CS), including those not already engaged on the issue of climate change governance can better understand opportunities for and challenges to involvement. In particular the roundtable discussion centred on two primary questions. First, what role can CS play in climate governance? Second, what concrete or proposed actions are there for CS engagement in climate change and what are the challenges to achieving these actions? Contributions from participants ranged from how CS can contribute to oversight and monitoring of climate mitigation projects and disbursement of adaptation funds at local and national level, to how CS can and has provided inputs to international climate negotiations. Areas of agreement included the need for CS to support national capacity-building; the importance of coalition-building between CS groups with diverse expertise; and the need for CS to foster a human rights-based approach.

Main Outcomes

Oscar Reyes. CS has multiple roles to play, including defending multilateralism, and rejecting the trend seen at Copenhagen to concentrate decisions around a few powerful actors; monitoring climate processes (ex. Carbon Trade Watch undertakes targeted investigations into specific carbon trading projects, such as those relating to HFC projects under the CDM); and reframing the climate debate to demonstrate that there are viable alternatives to market-based mechanisms and different models for technology transfer than those currently included under the framework convention.

Liz Gallagher focused on the role of CS in Measuring, Reporting and Verifying (MRV), arguing that CS can incentivise governments to develop better methods and practices for MRV of emissions. Further, CS must disseminate the outcomes of these emissions reporting to campaigners who can hold Parties to account. CS must also play a role in addressing the fundamental barriers to a low-carbon economy and ensure that green solutions are properly governed. In short, there is a role for CS in 1) the shift to a low-carbon economy, 2) aiding knowledge management of climate policy, 3) keeping an overview of all climate projects and initiatives and pushing the agenda forward in a unified way.

Lisa Elges. There are two basic areas in which CS can contribute: monitoring and finance in mitigation and adaptation, and ensuring emissions reductions are made and climate benefits achieved. Significant deficits of transparency and integrity in the developing climate architecture can breed corruption. These shortcomings are particularly salient in the MRV system. Regarding actions, TI plans to work in coalition and via communities of practice to share expertise. To build capacity, TI is developing an e-training course on climate governance. TI will also do an analysis of climate finance allocation and its expenditure and will need support to identify risks.

Amelia Thorpe. In the South Pacific, Small Island States are already feeling the effects of climate change, and people have in some cases been displaced from their traditional homes. SMLs have limited capacity to deal with climate change and in some cases have only one person working on the issue of climate change within the government. There is therefore an opportunity for CS to work with the governments of these states to build capacity to engage in climate negotiations.

Tim Clairs. REDD has made progress and is expecting some success in Cancun, in part because there have been a number of channels for building trust and partnerships between difference groups. CS communications with negotiators has resulted in added safeguards to REDD, and CS has fed into governing bodies and has a role to play in reviewing and analysing multilateral initiatives. At the national level, early CS engagement and inputs from CS in REDD+ is essential.

Jake Werksman. In addition to the institutions specifically designed to respond to climate policy, CS will need to engage with day-to-day institutions, such as those that provide water, energy, electricity. Here CS needs to lay the groundwork for low-carbon society as these are the institutions already grappling with difficult trade-offs. This presents significant challenges, as engagement with these industries requires technical expertise for inputs to be meaningful. Therefore it will be necessary to combine sector-level expertise and anti-corruption expertise.

Caio Luiz Carneiro Magri. CS needs to continue to exert pressure on societies/governments/institutions that have not met their emissions reductions commitments. CS needs to work with social movements and sustainability movements. CS must go to Cancun with concrete proposals that call for a shift from voluntary targets to obligatory frameworks. The goal should not be just to build a low-carbon economy, but to build a sustainable and inclusive economy. CS should not just act as a government auditor, but collaborate with social movements.

Izabela Ratajczak-Juszko. At the local level, CS could work as a united group to help leaders understand risks associated with poor practices and a lack of concrete actions. At the large scale, CS can help shift climate policy to help developing countries, particularly by helping small delegations to the UNFCCC strengthen their voice. As the Adaptation Fund scales-up, CS could help countries develop applications for funds.

Estelle Fach. CS is engaged in REDD through multilateral institutions, but also on governance at the national level, for example, via participation in country-led governance assessments. CS can also help to streamline the multiplicity of standards that currently exist. Challenges include capacity, and access to information, including ensuring that feedback at the local level is fed-up to the national and international level.

Main Outputs

CS has a particular role to play in fostering a human rights-based approach to ensure that environmental goals and development priorities complement one another and to protect people from unjust displacement or disadvantaged in the name of environmental policies.

CS should help make a complex topic understandable to the layperson. This is central in helping CS and people to hold government to account.

Capacity-building at the national level is crucial and here CS can play a key role.

The level of technical knowledge often needed for CS to make meaningful contributions to climate change governance makes coalition-building vital.

Need to remind governments and people why responses to climate change are an opportunity.

Recommendations, Follow-up Actions

Lisa Elges and Caio Luiz Carneiro Magri (and any others) will try to formulate a statement to contribute to outcomes of IACC on climate change that could be brought forward in the international climate debate.