

A Side Event of Regional Commissions of the United Nations
at the 13th United Nations Climate Change Conference



Regional Perspectives on Addressing **Climate Change**

Wednesday 12 December 2007
from 13:00 – 15:00 pm

Venue: Wave Room, Grand Hyatt Hotel
Nusa Dua, Bali

The Regional Commissions, as the regional arm of the United Nations in the economic, social and sustainable development fields, have responsibility to support the global efforts to tackle climate change on all fronts, especially on issues and concerns of cross-board and regional nature.

The Regional Commissions' side event in Bali will have as its broad objective to provide countries with elements for the discussion to advance the common ground on various aspects of the climate change debate, from a regional perspective.

The event will feature presentations by two Special Envoys of the UN Secretary-General on Climate Change (Mr. Han Seung-soo and Mr. Ricardo Lagos), the Minister of Environment of Indonesia, the Executive Secretary of UNFCCC as well as the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions.

Under the umbrella theme "Regional perspectives in addressing climate change", the panelists will focus on sub-themes of selected priority interest for different regions, as follow:

- ECA - Towards Effective Regional Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change in Africa
- ESCWA - Strategies for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change in the Western Asia Region
- ESCAP - CDM Reform for Enhancing the Participation of Developing Countries in Climate Actions
- ECE - Integrated Strategies to Tackle Climate Change
- ECLAC - Climate Change from the Latin America and the Caribbean Perspective
- UNFCCC - Reflections on Regional Perspectives in Addressing Climate Change

In the panel discussion, climate change will not be addressed merely as an environmental issue, but also from the perspective of its extensive implications for the broader sustainable development agenda, involving its economic, social and environmental dimensions.

The Regional Commissions' side event will foster debate on the regions' specific perspectives in addressing climate change, with the objectives to exchange views on solutions among the regions and identify ways to maximize the impact of regional efforts to promote sustainable national strategies and process.



**Side Event of United Nations Regional Commissions at the
13th United Nations Climate Change Conference**

Regional Perspectives on Addressing Climate Change

13:00 – 15:00 hours, Wednesday, 12 December 2007

Wave Room, Grand Hyatt Hotel, Nusa Dua, Bali

Co-Chairs

Dr. Ricardo Lagos,

Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change

Dr. Han Seung-soo

Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change

13:00 – 13:25

Opening

- Welcome remarks by H.E. Mr. Rachmat Witoelar, Minister of Environment, Indonesia (5 min)
- Welcome Remarks by Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, USG and Executive Secretary of ECA, Current Coordinator of the Regional Commissions (4 min)
- Statement by Dr. Han Seung-soo, Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change (8 min)
- Statement by Dr. Ricardo Lagos, Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change, Moderator (8 min)

13:25 -14:15

**Presentation by Regional
Commissions and UNFCCC**

Moderator: Dr. Ricardo Lagos, Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change

Introduction by Moderator, Dr. Ricardo Lagos

Towards Effective Regional Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change in Africa (ECA)

Presentation by Mr. Abdoulie Janneh, USG and Executive Secretary of ECA

Integrated Strategies to Tackle Climate Change (ECE)

Presentation by Mr. Marek Belka, USG and Executive Secretary of ECE



CDM Reform for Enhancing the Participation of Developing Countries in Climate Actions (ESCAP)

Presentation by Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, USG and Executive Secretary of ESCAP

Strategies for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change in the Western Asia Region (ESCWA)

Presentation by Mr. Bader Al-Dafa, USG and Executive Secretary of ESCWA

Climate Change from the Latin America and the Caribbean Perspective (ECLAC)

Presentation by Mr. Joseluis Samaniego, Director, Sustainable Development Division and Human Settlements, ECLAC

UNFCCC's Reflections on Regional Perspectives in Addressing Climate Change

Presentation by Mr. Yvo de Boer, Executive Secretary, UNFCCC

14:15 – 14:50

Interactive Discussion Between Participants and the Panelists

Interactive Discussion Between Participants and the Panelists

Moderator: Dr. Ricardo Lagos, Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change

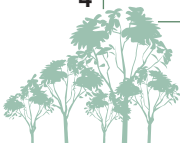
Participants will include High-level policy makers, including Ministers, as well as representatives of stakeholders, NGOs and civil society institutions.

14:50 – 15:00

Closing

Concluding remarks by Dr. Han Seung-soo, Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change

Closing remarks by Dr. Ricardo Lagos, Special Envoy of UNSG on Climate Change, Moderator



ECA: Towards Effective Regional Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change in Africa

Climate change has emerged as one of the most daunting development challenges in Africa. The continent is known to be among the regions that contribute the least to the phenomenon and, yet, the most exposed to its negative impacts. Climate change threatens to reverse decades of development efforts and to dim the prospects for sustainable development in Africa through its direct and indirect impacts on vital livelihood sectors and areas such as agriculture, fisheries, water resources, energy, health, human settlements, infrastructure, biodiversity and tourism. Although the continent should take action to contribute to mitigation strategies, strong adaptation measures will also be needed to contain the threats that climate change pose for sustainable development in Africa. And such strategies should address, in an integrated way and within a perspective of strong regional cooperation and integration, the multiple challenges for adaptation to climate change that the continent faces in terms of knowledge, technology, institutional capacity, and development policy and financing.

To address these challenges, ECA has partnered with the African Union Commission and the African Development Bank to develop and implement a major regional Climate Information for Development in Africa (ClimDev-Africa) programme, with a view to assisting member States to design and integrate climate risk management into development policies, strategies and plans throughout the continent. The Programme aims at improving the availability and use of quality climate information and services addressing the needs of local, national and regional decision makers in support of sustainable development and the achievement of the MDGs in climate-sensitive sectors and areas. ClimDev-Africa calls for concerted and collective action from all relevant national, subregional and regional institutions and stakeholders (public sector, private sector and civil society), as well as international technical and development partners, to achieve the following results:

- Political commitment at national, subregional and regional levels to integrate climate risk management and adaptation concerns in development policies, strategies and plans;
- Mainstreaming of climate risk management and adaptation practices in climate-sensitive sectors and areas for sustainable development;
- Provision of adequate information services for the full range of climate risk management practices required for appropriate adaptation; and
- Adequate capacities for improved observation, data and analysis for sectoral climate risk management.



ECE: Integrated strategies to tackle climate change

The ECE region is increasingly aware of the actual and potential problems of climate change and countries of the region are taking action to meet the challenges of the future.

However, climate change mitigation is not being looked at in isolation – it is just one issue that threatens a sustainable future for mankind and therefore integrated approaches are called for to deal with all the problems which are themselves often inter-related. Sustainable energy and climate change mitigation need to address, for example, energy efficiency, clean technology and renewable resources and policies need to extend beyond the energy sector to transport, land management, water resources, and forests etc.

Integrated approaches are a challenge for all countries, whether developed or developing but it is by taking an integrated approach that problems can be resolved without creating others.

For example, there are major benefits to be found using integrated strategies to tackle air pollution impacts, climate change and sustainable energy consumption. Air pollution and GHG emissions are often from the same sources, e.g. the burning of fossil fuels, with some air pollutants themselves being GHGs. The work under the ECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution has demonstrated that there are significant savings to be made if abatement strategies are integrated. More can be achieved to cut GHGs and air pollution for less cost, through end-of-pipe technology or structural changes. However, results have also highlighted that not all measures reduce air pollution and cut GHGs; for example, wood is a renewable energy source, but burning it often leads to increased air pollution. More scientific and technical effort needs to be directed to this area of work, and government policies need to take account of the benefits of integration. ECE countries are also beginning to think more globally in their approaches to air pollution and climate change. There is more recognition of the global movement of air pollution and the need to improve interregional collaboration. The sharing of information and knowledge will be key to future success and could achieve much to cut GHG and air pollution emissions globally.

There is a huge potential for energy savings and for improving energy efficiency in the region, which is both an economic and environmental imperative and can be achieved with existing resources and technologies, as was highlighted at CSD 15. Significant investment in energy efficiency is required. It is clear that many barriers need to be overcome for energy-efficient measures to deliver their full potential, particularly in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. This is why ECE is particularly active in this area, focussing on education and awareness-raising, capacity-building, fostering behavioural change, encouraging policy and regulatory reforms, emissions trading and the establishment of private and public-private sector investment funds or funding mechanisms.

The ECE also works at helping its member States better manage their resources in other sectors, including transport, housing, forests and timber, and managing water resources – in conclusion, it is active in the fight to mitigate the effects of the region's economic development on climate change.



ECLAC: Climate Change from the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) Perspective

LAC is highly urbanized, and fast growing transport accounts for one third of air pollution in most important cities. This, plus emissions from industry and deforestation, imply growing contributions to CO₂ emissions, though very small compared to most developed countries, both in absolute and per capita terms.

Many countries in the LAC region are at increased risk from natural disasters as a consequence of climate change. Important efforts have been made, particularly in the Caribbean and Central America, to prevent damage from natural disasters. The actions being carried out include such initiatives as building infrastructure and the preparation of response-procedures manuals.

The Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) is a very modest incentive for countries to produce emission-mitigation projects. Most countries are developing CDM projects and, in terms of number, Latin America is the leading region in CDM projects, with almost half of those presented (though not in terms of reductions, where Asia leads). But there are no international incentives to reward more significant policies and measures and this should be addressed.

The most promising project potentials identified in the region are on biomass use for heat and power, landfills methane recovery, hydroelectric projects, forest sinks, and agro-industrial methane recovery. Biofuels show potential for fuel switching and should have access to CDM. However, no biofuels methodology has been approved so far.

Forest sinks conservation is of high interest for but is still not in the Kyoto Framework and afforestation and reforestation in LAC remain very weak in the CDM. Transport projects and methodologies are very underrepresented in spite of the urgent need for its improvement in LAC cities. Recent innovations in this field still lack recognition by the CDM. With very few exceptions, the compilation of country inventories of GHG emissions still poses a challenge.

The region would benefit from:

- Improving the carbon-intensity performance of its economies
- A more strategic use of the CDM, in particular in its programmatic version.
- Planning/redesign in cities to optimize transportation/mobility needs
- Designing policies and measures to address deforestation drivers.
- Assessing the economic impact of climate change, both from productive, health and fiscal perspectives as well as from that of disasters or extreme hydro-meteorological events.
- Promoting the inclusion of sinks (REDD) in the CDM, as well as a reform of the CDM or creating market mechanisms more relevant for initiatives to reorient national policies;
- Steering financial institutions and investment evaluation criteria towards more climate-friendly practices.



ESCAP: Climate Change and Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Reform for enhancing participation of developing countries and its potential role in facilitating Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Mitigation

It has been widely recognized that the future climate regime should be based on the current regime that embodies the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities. While it should have stronger compliance mechanisms with Annex I countries committing to deeper reductions and targets that are more credible than in the current regime, active involvement by developing countries in the process of developing an effective climate change regime after 2012 will ensure that their concerns with sustainable development, energy security, and poverty eradication are incorporated more proactively than in the current regime.

Strengthening the CDM by giving a clear signal for its continuity beyond 2012 is crucial for building a successful post-2012 climate change regime. The current CDM, as an economic instrument for Non-Annex 1 countries participation, can be improved to create a virtuous cycle where Non-Annex 1 countries can raise more revenue as they initiate more emission-reduction projects and at the same time contribute to producing even more global emission reduction without fear of a binding target placing a burden on their economy.

To address such issues, UNESCAP has been proposing Certified Emissions Reduction (CER) discounting schemes as one of the market mechanisms for the climate change regime after 2012. It supports the promotion of unilateral CDM and maintains stability of CER prices, which is necessary to keep the CDM projects initiated by developing countries commercially viable. Meanwhile, a CER-discounting scheme could also function as an economic instrument to generate net global emission reduction even without imposing binding targets on developing countries. It would act as a strong incentive mechanism for Non-Annex 1 countries to undertake emission reduction projects voluntarily for their own benefit and according to their own needs and priorities.

Since its member countries have noted that the above proposal could be an innovative mechanism for a future climate change regime, ESCAP secretariat would like to share this idea with a broader audience and elicit the attention of the international community.



ESCWA: Strategies for Adaptation and Mitigation of Climate Change in the ESCWA Region

The Problem:

Despite the fact that the ESCWA Region was historically the lowest contributor to Global Warming (GW), scientific projections indicate with a high degree of confidence that it will be heavily affected by Climate Change (CC). Based on information revealed by IPCC, the ESCWA Region is bound to suffer from the rise in sea level inundating large parts of the most fertile agricultural lands of the Nile Delta in Egypt and Shatt-Al-Arab in Iraq. As one of the most arid regions of the world, the ESCWA region will suffer from reduced precipitation on the Mediterranean basin and on upstream countries supplying most of the renewable freshwater to the region. CC is expected to negatively impact water quality (pollution and seawater intrusion to groundwater aquifers), water quantity (variability in precipitation in terms of intensity, duration, distribution and seasonal shift) and ecosystems (loss of biodiversity and further desertification). CC will be posing a serious human health threat through water pollution, extreme events and reduced water allocations for water supplies and sanitation. The ESCWA Region is already witnessing extreme events such as extended drought, floods, out of season precipitation, severe hurricanes and heat waves that cannot be explained by natural variability.

ESCWA Approach:

1. *In Adaptation:* ESCWA is interested in developing a four-step regional medium-term strategy to adapt to CC by supporting member countries in (1) Adopting proactive measures to prevent losses from CC by building or modifying infrastructure; (2) Adopting measures to reduce losses to tolerable levels by reallocating water resources, redesigning crop mix and considering virtual water (the amount of water that is embedded in food or other products needed for its production) in trade exchange; (3) Sharing or spreading losses by designing a social safety net to supply disaster relief with maximum community involvement to minimize impacts on the poor, disadvantaged and marginalized groups; (4) Change of location, rehabilitate or change activity by providing alternative locations for infrastructures or communities resettlement, retraining to change professions, etc.

2. *In Mitigation:* ESCWA is interested in developing a long-term regional strategy to promote efforts in countries of the region to reduce their GHG emissions without limiting their equitable rights in socio-economic development. The proposed mitigation strategy would include the following components: (1) Promotion of climate-friendly policies and technologies that might incorporate environmental externalities in energy market prices, update environmental regulations, improve monitoring, inspecting and reporting capacities to improve compliance with emission regulations; (2) Promotion of economic incentives such as deposit-refund systems to encourage people to trade in their used cars and appliances for more



efficient models and remove barriers that slow the spread of low-emission technologies; (3) Encouragement of the countries of the region to profit from carbon trading and carbon marketing; (4) Promotion of renewable energy technologies such as solar, wind turbine and small hydro; (5) Supporting the industrial, residential and commercial sectors in reducing their energy consumption by adopting more energy-efficient technologies; (6) Assisting transport sectors in countries of the region to switch to less carbon-intensive fuel with lower CO₂ emissions and promoting policies aimed at reducing road traffic congestion and encouraging mass transport systems; (7) Promotion of methane gas collection from waste disposal sites.

