



## **Workshop 5 - Chances and Risks of Developing Countries**

The workshop started at 2 PM with 14 participants, 4 students and 1 moderator. Among the participants were Switzerland ambassador, students from Swiss National Foundation, lawyers, a medical practitioner, the international board of academia, and representatives from developing countries.

The moderator started the workshop by asking all the participants to introduce themselves, their backgrounds, where they come from, and their interest for joining this workshop. Then she projected the session's presentation by going through the concept of Kyoto protocol. Her discussion was continued by pointing out the opportunities possibly open to the developing countries mainly embodied in the clean development mechanism (CDM) and special funding (GEF, adaptation and mitigation funds, and LDC special funding) as two key mechanisms to promote their participation. However, she mentioned that institutional capacity building (scientific, political, economic, and structural) is a prerequisite for taking benefit from such opportunities.

The presentation continued with four personal student perspectives coming from developing countries (Iran, Indonesia, Palestine, and Colombia) with respect to climate change related issues.

Following this, the floor was given to the participants for further discussion regarding the risks, barriers, opportunities and challenges faced by the developing countries to take action under the so-called contraction and convergence approach.

Questions were distributed among participants to stimulate such discussion in an attempt to address the aforementioned issues.

What are the barriers to developing country full participation in climate change action?

As a result of a stimulating discussion atmosphere, the participants referred to numerous barriers hindering the developing countries from full participation in emission reduction targets. Meeting basic human and social needs comes at the forefront of these countries' concerns. Another barrier is presented in the reality of the difference in both developed and developing countries perceptions of the CO2 emission-related problems. This results in lack of full consideration of equity issues; i.e., reaching the same level of per capita GHG emissions.



Nevertheless, public awareness in this field contributes to exacerbating the gap in minimum knowledge required for developing countries to share the burden of mitigating GHG emission levels. Due to the awareness gap between scientists and policy makers with respect to climate change issue, situation is getting worse. However, countries' political and economic interests can be considered as further obstacles for addressing climate change debate. Yet, this fact is applicable to both developed and developing countries and stabilizing GHG emissions is not the sole responsibility of the developing countries. Indeed, the developed countries owning the required infrastructure still have difficulties in stabilizing their CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. So how can they expect the developing countries with all these barriers reduce theirs?

Access, distribution and level of information and knowledge as well as high transaction costs in getting access to resources (e.g. CDM, adaptation and mitigation funds) are also considered as top priority barriers that should be addressed by the developing countries.

On the other hand the inability of Kyoto mechanisms to take sufficient accounts of socio-economic impacts in developing countries creates another dilemma for these countries which suffer from the lack of sufficient incentives to take action both within countries and regionally.

What are the greatest needs in terms of capacity building to meet the challenges of climate change in developing countries?

In order for developing countries to meet challenges of climate change, capacity building is urgently needed in the following areas:

- Knowledge, information, and institutional strength
- Government policies
- Economic change

Is there opportunity in the response to climate change to contribute to the pressing economic challenges of developing countries to meet the basic needs of their citizens?

Compensation projects such as "MY CLIMATE" initiative would help to establish collaboration programs between developed and developing countries such as constructing waste water treatment plants with the aim of reducing water stress. At the same time local people should be trained to become familiar with methods and technology for maintenance.



Towards the end of the workshop, some conclusions and recommendations for possible future solutions summarized the workshop's output as follows:

- Developing countries should not change their priorities. Rather, incorporate climate change concerns and action into a comprehensive and coherent environmental strategy
- Developed countries should support the increase of resources and technologies needed for adaptation and mitigation initiatives in developing countries
  - ✓ Technologies should be modern and low-polluting
  - ✓ Adaptation may mean the application of currently available technologies and approaches, e.g. water and sanitation technologies
- Increase in resources for education, institutional capacity, and knowledge building must be a two-way communication
  - ✓ There is a need to assess the true capacity of developing countries to respond to climate change
  - ✓ Capacity building should be followed with transfer of technology
- Increase public awareness regarding opportunities as well as risks
- Increase direct participation of developing countries in decision making
- Tailor solutions according to developing countries' specific needs.
- Adapt local projects in accordance with the developing countries' priorities.
- Adaptation should be economically and socially considered.
- Involvement of media to enhance public participation

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