

Limited progress in UNFCCC Panama climate negotiations, but not enough to tackle the climate crisis



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Oct 17, 2011– The science on climate change continues to show that the world is in the grips of widespread and increasing global climate disruption. The latest round of UN climate negotiations seeking to find a global solution to the current crisis recently concluded in Panama ahead of the next UNFCCC session to be held in Durban Nov 28 - Dec 9, 2011. The Panama talks made progress on several areas including the development of draft text for discussion in Durban. However the current talks fall far behind what is needed to really tackle the climate crisis,; parties failed to lay foundations for agreeing a second commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol, agreeing binding emissions reductions targets or delivering tangible and urgently needed climate finance.

The onus of responsibility to act on emissions reduction is on those developed countries who have historically been responsible for greenhouse gas emissions and who have also failed to address the problem and stalled solutions to the current crisis. Representatives from the world's developing counties such as the Africa Group and Small Island Developing States were vocal in the negotiations. They continued to highlight their vulnerability and the potential severity of future impacts, whilst highlighting that these countries have done so little to cause the problem.

In order to make substantial progress at Durban, the world's developed countries must act upon their historical responsibilities for causing climate change and acknowledge that unregulated greenhouse gas emissions are damaging economies, ecosystems and the livelihoods of the world's poorest people. If these high emitting countries—together with rapidly industrializing countries—act now they can reduce the scale of impacts and the costs for adaptation, plus seize multiple opportunities that investments in low carbon and climate-resilient development pathways can provide. For the poorest and most vulnerable communities in developing countries, of whom many are already dealing with the impacts of climate change, it is critically important that developed countries make binding commitments to rapid global emissions reductions to minimize further climate damage as well as make commitments for *and* timely disbursement of long-term climate finance for pro-poor adaptation and Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+).

Prioritization must be given to the poorest and most vulnerable countries with scaled up support for low carbon and climate-resilient development pathways, integrating food and nutrition security, disaster risk reduction, gender equality and community based adaptation. The growing experience of CARE working with vulnerable communities in 34 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean demonstrates the key role that community-based adaptation and pro-poor carbon finance can play in strengthening resilience. This includes the importance of reducing social and gender inequalities, promoting poor people's access to climate finance mechanisms and stopping harmful cycles of poverty and ecosystem degradation.

All parties must come to Durban prepared to secure a binding deal on reducing global greenhouse gas emissions and providing, predictable, new and additional, and sustainable climate finance. There is no time to lose as the science already demonstrates the urgency to act! Without political will and clear commitments to tackle climate change, emissions from the world's developed countries will continue to severely impact those poorest countries and women, men and children who have done so little to cause the problem.

We have no space to negotiate with the planet. Without urgent action the consequences will be increasingly dire and reverse decades of development progress. All parties must act now with bold leadership for the sake of our global future.

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