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Welcome to the first Southern Voices News

On your screen or in your hand you are browsing the first issue of the newsletter of the Southern Voices Capacity Building Programme (Southern Voices in short). Southern Voices News will promote and distribute news from climate networks in the South – with a focus on advocacy for climate change policies and programmes that benefit poor and vulnerable people.

Developing countries are often portrayed as victims to the impacts of climate change to which most of them have contributed very little. Too seldom do people in the North hear what Southern actors themselves are doing to confront climate change; or about their fight for pro-poor and equitable climate change policies at the national and international levels.

With the Southern Voices News we wish to fill this gap: Here, you can learn how Southern civil society actors engage in the struggle for climate justice – focusing on the rights and interests of people most vulnerable to climate change. You will also learn about Southern Voices members' efforts to involve local communities in advocacy on climate change programmes addressing governments, donors and institutions – such as the World Bank and the UNFCCC.

The core task for Southern Voices News is to facilitate exchange of experiences, lessons and know-how on capacity building and advocacy interventions between the twenty or so climate policy networks involved in the Southern Voices Programme. In this first issue we start by presenting a few of the Southern Voices networks through interviews, and through their own articles.

We hope you will enjoy the reading and share the newsletter with friends and colleagues; and do not hesitate to send us your comments and feedback!



The Accra Caucus – one of the Southern Voices networks – meeting at the Bangkok UNFCCC intersessional, 2009

What is the Southern Voices Programme?

Brief introduction from Programme Coordinator Peter With, at Care Danmark

The “Southern Voices” is a programme aiming to strengthen climate networks of civil society organisations in developing countries. The full name is the “Southern Voices Capacity Building Programme” – and the focus is on building capacity for advocacy, for speaking up to promote pro-poor climate policies and programmes, and benefiting the groups most vulnerable to climate change.

As you will see from this newsletter, the networks involved are diverse – as there are many Southern Voices involved. The aim is promote and support the advocacy work of climate networks in the South with their different geographical and thematic perspectives.

Southern Voices was formed in late 2008 by the Climate Capacity Consortium with the common aim to promote participation of the civil society in the South in the climate negotiations leading towards COP15 in Copenhagen; the effort was supported by the Danish government hosting the climate summit.



The [Climate Capacity Consortium](#) supports the Southern Voices Programme. *Members include:* *Back (right to left):* David Turnbull, CAN-I; Poul Erik Lauridsen, CARE Danmark; Peter With, CARE Danmark; Helene Gjerding and Stine Krøijer, Ibis; Judith Szoleczky and Gunnar Olesen, OVE; Raju Chhetri, CAN-I; *Front right to left:* Malene Haakansson, DanChurchAid; Nanna Callisen Bang, Care Danmark; María Isabel Olazábal, Ibis Guatemala; Hannah Reid, IIED.

The first project running from 2009 – 10 sponsored more than 200 trips for Southern participants to UNFCCC and other climate meetings; more than 2,300 persons received training on climate change issues through the project; and more than 175 advocacy activities and 35 publications have been reported. Even if COP15 failed to produce the global climate agreement, the civil society – and governments – in the South was mobilized on the climate change and justice issue like never before.

The new “Southern Voices Capacity Building Programme” is meant to maintain and support that engagement. The strategy is to support the many civil society networks which were formed or which started to take up climate issues in the mobilization towards COP15. The organisations in the Consortium have selected 20 networks – 11 national, six regional and three thematic networks to be included in the programme.

The programme will promote exchanges and sharing of experiences between the Southern Voices networks – and with the many others that are actively involved on climate change issues.

The aim of Southern Voices is promote and support the advocacy work of climate networks in the South with their different geographical and thematic perspectives.

Contact information for all Southern Voices Climate Networks is available at www.climatecapacity.org

CANSA was formed in 1991 by South Asian NGOs and scientists prior to the UN conference on environment and development in Rio 1992.

Read more about
CANSA at
www.cansouthasia.net

“The key objective in our advocacy is to ensure that forest communities receive a fair share of the benefits from the forests.”

The challenge of regional networking

Interview with Sanjay Vashist from Climate Action Network South Asia



“The challenges of climate change cuts across borders,” Sanjay emphasizes. “That is why as a regional network CANSA has been advocating governments in the region to take up the climate change in regional bodies – in particular the Southern Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, the SAARC.”

A regional cooperation is essential to prevent the many latent conflicts which can arise: When the ice and snow in the Himalayas is melting, it will affect the waterways and access to water for farmers in several countries downstream from Nepal through India to Bangladesh. “We count it as a success for CANSA that climate change has actually become an important issue on the SAARC agenda; implementation is still slow, but it is happening,” Sanjay states. “Although we cannot take the full credit, CANSA’s involvement through lobbying the SAARC civil servants and our governments has certainly played a role in this development.”

Among the issues on the SAARC agenda, Sanjay mentions the discussions on a regional energy grid, an initiative for joint monitoring of GHG emissions in South Asia from a regional Met Lab in Islamabad; NGOs that constitute CANSA have been advocating independent data collection because most of the IPCC data are from Northern sources. Also within SAARC, funds are being mobilized for urgent action on climate threats in which India pledged USD 1 million USD for research in low carbon development in Small Island Developing States and LDC’s.

How does CANSA work as regional network? “To develop joint positions among NGOs in a region as diverse as South Asia is somewhat of a challenge,” Sanjay admits, “after COP15 we could not agree on a common statement on the Copenhagen Accord – ...”

Read the rest of the interview at climatecapacity.org/news/newsletter here

Benefit-sharing is the key issue

Interview with Rahima Njaidi from MJUMITA - Community Forest Network of Tanzania



MJUMITA is a network of around 500 community forest groups in 420 Tanzanian villages in 23 districts – with an estimated 6,000 individual members. Most members are small farmers or bee-keepers and other forest users living close to the Tanzanian forests, which are mainly government property. Ms. Rahima Njaidi is executive director at the MJUMITA secretariat, based in the capital Dar es Salaam, door to door with the Tanzanian Forest Conservation Group.

Why is a network of community forestry groups engaged in climate change issues? Southern Voices News asked. “The key task for MJUMITA is to act as an advocacy platform for

the communities living near the forest, on issues like forest management and governance,” Rahima explains. “Now that REDD mechanisms are being introduced in Tanzania, MJUMITA must ensure that the forest users are involved.” Since 2009

New website of the
Tanzanian Community
Forest Network at
www.mjumita.org

“The problem is that this is happening without the required consultation of the civil society, the NGOs and indigenous groups.”

the network has engaged its members in education on climate change and REDD through training workshops and community radio, supported through the previous Southern Voices project in the preparation towards COP15.

“The key objective in our advocacy is to ensure that forest communities receive a fair share of the benefits from the forests,” Rahima states. “REDD mechanisms are now being introduced in Tanzania, and since MJUMITA is involved, we are asking for representation on the national task force on REDD.”

The forest user networks were established more than 10 years ago as a central element in Tanzania’s policy of “participatory forest management (PFM). PFM is divided into two components: The Community Based Forest Management (CBFM) and the Joint Forest Management (JFM) where the communities help to protect the government owned forests against illegal logging and other illegal activities. In return for patrolling and protecting the forest and acting as forest guards, the communities are supposed to receive 40 percent of the income from the sale of forest products. “But that is not happening,” Rahima says, “so they have actually been protecting the forest for nothing, as volunteers.” Now MJUMITA engages in advocacy on REDD to ensure that the incomes expected from REDD mechanisms will be shared with the forest communities and provide income for their efforts.

In addition to the advocacy at national level, MJUMITA has also been engaged in promoting REDD in the international climate negotiations...

Read the rest of the interview at climatecapacity.org/news/newsletter here

NGOs oppose World Bank’s role in REDD policies

Interview with Monica López Baltodano from Sustainability Watch Latin America Network (SUSWATCH) / Nicaragua



“Right now our key priority is to question why our government is accepting the World Bank model for REDD policy development - without any consultation of the civil society or the public,” Mónica López Baltodano explains. Southern Voices News asked about which advocacy issues the SUSWATCH is engaged in these days. Mónica is working at the Centro Alexander von Humboldt, a national focal point of SUSWATCH, and is coordinating member Nicaraguan Alliance on Climate Change (ANACC) – Alianza Nicaraguense sur Cambio Climatico.

Early this year, ANACC discovered that the government had asked the World Bank for assistance to prepare a REDD+ strategy – based on a carbon finance model – despite the many uncertainties on the environmental and social impacts of REDD+; and the fact that the UNFCCC negotiations on REDD mechanisms are not yet concluded. “The problem is that this is happening without the required consultation of the civil society, the NGOs and indigenous groups,” Monica says, adding that most forests are indigenous people’s territory and that this process should involve a broad consultation.

Centro Humboldt was appointed as the new coordinator of the ANACC in late 2009 and has been busy during the first months of 2011 working with the network in analyzing the “readiness preparation proposal” (RPP) presented by Nicaragua to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) of the World Bank.

ANACC organized a public conference and a press briefing on the issue and has

Check out the website
of Sustainability Watch
www.suswatchla.org

*“So now civil society
will have a voice in
the preparation of the
national positions on
climate issues.”*

Download the
brochure of
Reso Climat Mali at
www.malifolkecenter.org

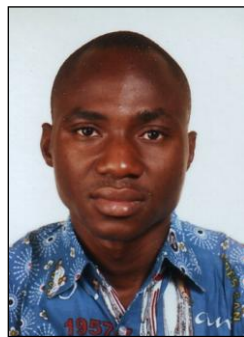
addressed both the Minister of Environment, the President of Nicaragua, the Secretary for the Presidency on Public Policies as well as the World Bank representative - asking for a public consultation in the process and to be heard and involved. But, “it is difficult to raise a lot of public attention to such a complex issue in a presidential election year,” Monica says, while insisting that they will continue making public these important matters.

The World Bank will provide 200,000 USD to fund the development of the readiness preparation proposal and another 3.4 million USD as a REDD Readiness Package as part of the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. “We want to avoid that Nicaragua, in this quest for funding, ends up accepting the World Bank’s ready-made model for a REDD policy – which puts at risk the rights and interests of the indigenous groups living in the forests.”

Read the rest of the interview at climatecapacity.org/news/newsletter here

Mali: Linking communities to government

Interview with Pierre Dembele from the Malian Civil Society Climate Network “Reso Climat Mali” and WANET - CSD



“It is a strong lobbying tool,” says Pierre Dembele from the Reso (network) Climat Mali, explaining the idea behind the “National Environmental Forum” in Mali. “Last time in 2010 we had around 3,000 participants from 11-13 November.”

Most people who participate in the forum are rural people involved in environmental protection projects like tree planting, gardening or traditional mining, but also local authorities, village chiefs, local radio and local NGOs. They share experiences and knowledge and engage in debates and dialogue with policy makers from the parliament and ministries. The local NGOs present their activities and products. “It is a mix of an exhibition fair, and a policy forum,” Pierre explains. The recommendations from thematic discussions are presented to the Ministry of Environment in the closing ceremony. “But what makes the event unique is the exposure to local initiatives and the informal setting allowing policy-makers to meet the grassroots people,” he states.

Pierre Dembele is the coordinator of the Reso Climat Mali. The Secretariat is based at the NGO Mali-Folkecenter Nyetaa – or MFC Nyetaa, which has worked on renewable energy solutions since in 1999. The MFC initiated the Environmental Forum in 2006 with support from a Finnish NGO. From 2008 climate change became the main issue discussed during the forum with active involvement of the climate network.

The Reso Climat Mali is organized with thematic subgroups on mitigation, adaptation, disaster prevention, technology transfer and on lobbying and advocacy. “From the climate network we have called on the government for the consideration of climate change impacts in the elaboration of sectoral development policies and for better coordination among the different stakeholders,” Pierre explains.

Coordination in the government ministries before COP meetings was weak, but in March this year the Prime Minister established a national climate change committee with the key actors at national level – including the institute of meteorology; the ministries of agriculture, environment and energy; the Reso Climat Mali and other

Raju Pandit Chhetri from Nepal is the new head of CAN's Southern Capacity Programme, from 20 Feb.

“In order to increase the Southern influence on policies, it is essential to build the capacity and confidence of Southern NGOs on climate policy issues.”

By courtesy of the ECSNCC, we present this piece of opinion from the “Climate Bulletin” where it appeared in the double issue February/March 2011. Find more information on the Ethiopian network at www.ecsncc.org

civil society organizations, etc. The national climate change committee will serve as a forum to discuss climate change issues throughout the year. “So now civil society will have a voice in the preparation of the national positions on climate issues,” Pierre Dembele emphasizes.

Read on the WANET-CSD in the last paragraph of the article [here](#)

Raju will strengthen the Global South in CAN

Interview with the new coordinator of CAN's Southern Capacity Programme



“It is key for me to help raise the voice and influence of the Global South within CAN; Southern perspectives are important to influence policies,” Raju says. “A lot has happened over the past two years. Civil society in the South became much more engaged in climate change issues in the run-up to COP15 in Copenhagen. But still many challenges remain.”

Many who have attended the UNFCCC meetings already know Raju Pandit Chhetri. Since March 2009, Raju has been around at almost every UNFCCC intersessional and COP as an active participant in the Climate Action Network's Southern Capacity Programme. Now – since 20th February – Raju is the new coordinator of the CAN programme, replacing Shruti Shukla who developed the programme from early 2009 to Oct 2010. She left to take the position as policy director in the Global Wind Energy Council.

“In order to increase the Southern influence on policies it is essential to build the capacity and confidence of Southern NGOs on climate policy issues,” Raju says. “In particular, I wish to strengthen CAN's regional and national nodes in the South, so they will work as platforms for advocacy on climate change policies.” He says that the focus should not only be on the international negotiations, but increasingly the nodes should also look at regional or national policies. He also mentions how CAN in South Asia has developed over the past years [see the interview with Sanjay Vashist in this issue].

Click to read the rest of the article at climatecapacity.org/news/newsletter

“Thank you Connie!”

By Negusu Aklilu, Co-Chair of ECSNCC & Director of Forum for Environment - The Ethiopian Civil Society Network on Climate Change



Thank you, Connie.

Europe's climate chief has beaten off intense lobbying from businesses to secure a key victory in the battle over greenhouse gas targets. This is great news that was aired following a report released by the EU climate change commissioner, Connie Hedegaard.

The report proposes that the EU could raise its current targets on emission cuts from 20 to 25 percent by 2020.

Despite pressure from business groups to remove the proposal, and retain a clear commitment to stick to the lower 20 percent target, it remained in the final draft of the “roadmap to 2050.”

In the context of energy crisis and protests in Uganda, Timothy Byakola from Climate and Development Initiatives describe the challenges of Uganda's energy system and presents an initiative to teach Ugandan school children sustainable energy solutions.

This is a kind of leadership we have been expecting from industrialized countries and the new move by the EU will play a very positive role in terms of setting a good precedent and injecting a fresh air of optimism into the negotiation process.

It wouldn't be fair to underestimate the influence of the business sector, which the commissioner has tried hard to overcome. A few months ago, it was disclosed that a few giant European businesses that have been pressing the EU to avoid such more ambitious targets in the guise of 'probable' loss of business competitiveness and 'faster de-industrialization in Europe,' have at the same time been supporting some US senators [who are known for climate denial and skepticism] during the US mid-term elections.

The proposed 25 percent target must pass several more obstacles before it can become adopted as the European Union's official policy. It will be the subject of intense negotiations on March 14, when member states will meet to discuss the European response to climate change. Shall we cross our fingers for the success of this proposal lest the emissions gap report by UNEP would still remain unaddressed?

Teaching energy, adaptation and climate change

by Timothy Byakola, *Climate and Development Initiatives, Uganda*



Barely two months after national elections in Uganda, has the month of April 2011 seen a series of nationwide 'walk to work' protests and riots against the rising cost of living. These riots have resulted in several deaths and destruction to property. The situation in Uganda is mainly blamed on the rising international petroleum prices, but to some extent it has been worsened by the country's poor capacity to deal with the vulnerabilities of its key energy systems – like the petroleum industry, a lot of which is imported and for which the national reserves are empty.

The country, like many of her neighbours, relies up to 94 percent on traditional biomass (unsustainably harvested wood and charcoal used for cooking and heating). Uganda is highly dependent on imported petroleum fuels for transportation, heating and lighting of buildings. For example, for the period 1990 to 2008, the proportion of imports of non-renewable energy supplied was 100 percent. With such figures, the threat posed by supply interruption due to unforeseeable international political situations – like the war in Libya, accidents, terrorism, system vulnerabilities, etc. – is a real one. Poorly maintained roads and bridges often destroyed by floods are further increasing the costs of fuel transportation in the country.

Read more details on Uganda's energy crisis in the [full article here](#)

The Schools Project – Adapting energy resources to climate change:

Against this background, Climate and Development Initiatives has started an energy adaptation project to climate change impacts to educate and create awareness among primary school children on how climate change is increasingly affecting some of their key energy sources and thus increasing the costs of this energy. The project is starting in eight primary schools around Wakiso district near Kampala city and Manafwa district near Mbale town in Eastern Uganda. The project is being implemented using a grant funding from *USA for Africa*.

Using visual aids made from locally available materials like sugar sacks, the pupils are educated through story cartoons, drama and seminars on the various adaptive

Contact and further information on INFORSE Africa at www.inforse.org/africa

“The experiences and lessons from the projects implemented through the SGP can provide important lessons for policy makers.”

Learn more on the GEF / UNDP small grants programme at www.sgp.undp.org

measures to manage energy demand in homes and schools. interventions include the promotion of improved energy saving stoves; the use of briquettes made from coffee husks; saw mills; the adoption of decentralised sources of electricity like solar panels for lighting; the planting of home and school fuel-wood plantations to relieve natural forests; and how school and home buildings can become more energy efficient and save money.

The schools are also educated on the broader issues of energy governance, corruption in the energy sector and how end users can get involved in priority setting especially at the lower levels of Government.

Timothy Byakola is the East African Regional Coordinator for the International Network for Sustainable Energy (INFORSE) – a Southern Voices member.

Small Grants for advocacy and policy dialogue

The GEF/UNDP Small Grants Programme opens for support to capacity building and advocacy

From 2011, the Small Grants Programme (SGP) will support community initiatives on capacity development. “Capacity development has now been added as a component for SGP grant making,” says Delfin Ganapin, the SGP Global Manager based at UNDP in New York. “From this year small grants can also support the objective of enhancing the capacities of community-based and non-governmental organizations to engage in consultative processes, apply knowledge management to ensure adequate information flows and help implement convention guidelines.”

With funding from the Global Environmental Facility (GEF), the SGP provides grants of up to 50,000 USD for projects in climate change, biodiversity, land degradation and forests, international waters, and persistent organic pollutants. The grants are provided for locally based organisations only, so international NGOs are not eligible.

The Programme is implemented by UNDP through National Coordinators and multi-sectoral National Steering Committees in 122 countries, and coordinated from the global office located at UNDP in New York. “The experiences and lessons from the projects implemented through the SGP can provide important lessons for policy makers,” Delfin says “for this reason, this additional component was added to the SGP’s grant making portfolio, to support activities of local communities, CSOs and NGOs that promote knowledge sharing and influence policy-makers.”

The new approach makes the SGP an interesting option for the climate policy networks and their member organisations. To investigate the potential, the Southern Voices Programme and SGP are considering setting up a partnership. To test it out, the SGP Central Programme Management Team and Southern Voices Secretariat will facilitate contact between SGP National Coordinators and a handful of pilot-networks identified by the Southern Voices Secretariat.

The dialogue at the local level will show where there are possibilities for the pooling of resources and sufficient ground for cooperation. The applicants will have to prepare first a concept note and later a project application for consideration by the SGP National Steering Committee in each country. It must fit within the SGP Country Programme Strategy and show strong grassroots participation.

Stay up-to date with what's new in Southern Voices at www.climatecapacity.org

Southern Voices News

Editor and writer: Peter With, Programme Coordinator, Care Danmark: pwith@care.dk. Unless another author is presented, all articles are prepared by Peter With. The Southern Voices News articles do not necessarily share the views of the other authors in the newsletter and SVN is not responsible for the expressed opinions.

Check out what's new at climatecapacity.org

Materials added in April and May

Adaptation

5th International Conference on Community Based Adaptation

17- page summary of the Conference held in Dhaka 28th - 31st March 2011. (.PDF, 9.3 Mb) Highlights including videos of contributions, press release and blogs available at [the IIED CBA5 Conference Site](#). Several organisations involved in Southern Voices participated.

Integrating Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation into Development Programme Guidelines

A practical guide to assist developers, managers and coordinators of community-level projects in their efforts to mainstream CCA and DRR in their programmes and projects. Developed by Climate Change Working Group (a Southern Voices network) - and other NGOs - in Vietnam.

REDD

Smoke and Mirrors: a critical assessment of the World Banks Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. Report by FERN and Forest Peoples Programme

New Website on REDD+ Social and Environmental Standards

This initiative aims to define and build support for a higher level of social and environmental performance from REDD+ programs

Southern Voices Calendar

- **JUNE 5: CAN capacity-building session and strategy meeting, Bonn** – further information raju@climatenetwork.org.
- **JUNE 6-17: UNFCCC Intersessional meeting in Bonn, Germany**
- **JUNE 15: Southern Voices meeting at Bonn Intersessional** - for member networks of Southern Voices, further information pwith@care.dk
- **JULY 11-15, Adapting to Southeast Asia's Climate Change Impacts**, Petaling Jaya, Malaysia. Workshop organized by CANSEA for members and self-paying non-member NGOs in the region. Contact CANSEA Coordinator Gurmit Singh at gs@cetdem.org.my
- **AUGUST 22-25: ALP Workshop on Gender and CBA** in Bolgatanga Ghana (Northern). Focus on sharing good practices. A few spaces open for qualified and self-funded people. Contact Sylvia at alp@careclimatechange.org



**Strengthening southern voices
in advocating climate policies that
benefit poor and vulnerable people**