

## **Global Commons Project: Update on International Climate Change Negotiations**

*May 2008*

The world community continues to progress toward a post-Kyoto climate change agreement with working sessions that will meet throughout 2008, the first of which was held last month in Bangkok. These meetings will develop the themes set by the “Bali Roadmap” last December. The nations that are members of the United Nations Convention on Climate Change, including the United States, committed to reach a new international accord on four aspects of climate change: reducing greenhouse gas emissions (“mitigation”), responding to the impacts of climate change (“adaptation”), transferring technologies and transferring financial resources to developing countries to help them with both mitigation and adaptation. The negotiations are intended to conclude at the fifteenth conference of the parties, December 2009, in Copenhagen, Denmark.

### Bangkok Session

Delegates to the April meeting in Bangkok agreed on a schedule to discuss key issues in 2008, with the emphasis on building a basis for agreement before the serious negotiations begin. Significantly, it was decided that all four Bali action plan elements (mitigation, adaptation, technology and financial resources) will be addressed concurrently. Possibly the most sensitive issue of all, discussion of “measurable, reportable and verifiable” mitigation actions by developed and developing countries, was deferred until next year.

While there was agreement on the process, there was less harmony on substantive issues. For example, Japan joined the United States in supporting transnational emission reduction targets for particular industrial sectors, like the cement industry, rather than setting national targets. But the developing countries and China expressed concern about the competitive disadvantage that sectoral policies pose to them. Another example - while all agree that new funds must flow to support resilience and low-emission energy in developing countries, there was considerable conflict over support for various funding sources which include: the Climate Change Convention funding mandates, a Clean Technology Fund proposed by the World Bank, private investment, the Adaptation Fund (financed by a fee on CDM offset credits as part of the Kyoto Protocol), or self-funding by India, China and Brazil.

Meanwhile, the Kyoto Protocol, which the United States signed but then repudiated, will likely continue after its first commitment period ends in 2012. That is the subject of parallel negotiations that meet at the same time as the meetings described above. All indications are that the market mechanisms (“cap and trade”), which are the hallmark of the Protocol, will be continued.

Upcoming United Nations climate change meetings

Bonn Germany, June 2-12, 2008

Workshops will be held on advancing adaptation through finance and technology; investment and financial flows to address climate change; mechanisms and means for scaling up the development and transfer of technology; and ways to accelerate deployment, diffusion and transfer of affordable environmentally sound technologies.

Accra, Ghana, August 21-27, 2008

Workshops will be held on policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries (REDD); and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries; and cooperative sectoral approaches and sector-specific actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Poznan, Poland, December 1-12, 2008

Workshops will be held on: Risk management and risk reduction strategies, including risk sharing and transfer mechanisms such as insurance; cooperation on research and development of current, new and innovative technology; and a shared vision for long-term cooperative action. This will also be the interim conference of the parties, halfway between the Bali Action Plan and the Copenhagen Protocol.

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