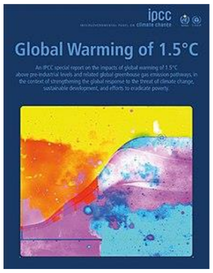
JUNE 2019

THE EAST AFRICAN SUSWATCH E-BULLETIN

(FORMERLY *THE LVEMPII CIVIL SOCIETY WATCH E BULLETIN*)

A *Monthly* from the East African Sustainability Watch Network founded by Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development (UCSD), Tanzania Coalition for Sustainable Development (TCSD) and SusWatch Kenya

'Negotiating Science' Masks the 2019 Bonn Climate Conference Outcome



The Bonn Climate Change Conference (held June 17-27 June) was expected to advance work on several issues to facilitate implementation of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Paris Agreement, due for completion at the Santiago Climate Change Conference in December 2019.

The talks at Bonn, it was hoped, could capitalize on the gains made at Katowice and focus on the finer details of the pressing issues. According to the IISD Reporting Services, delegates made progress on a number of issues, including:

- Paris Agreement Article 6 (market and non-market cooperative approaches): On the only outstanding issue from the Katowice Climate Package, the rulebook of the Paris Agreement, parties brought forward the work undertaken in Katowice and worked to ensure that all views were reflected in the draft texts produced by the Co-Facilitators. Parties agreed to work in Santiago on the basis the Co-Facilitators' texts;
- Terms of Reference (ToR) for the review of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts (WIM): The ToR were adopted, setting out the scope, inputs, and other aspects of the review of the WIM, a mechanism important to developing countries;
- Reporting tables and other issues related to the transparency framework under the Paris Agreement: Parties agreed to intersessional work, and to forward informal notes developed by the Co-Facilitators to advance discussions in Santiago at COP25; and
- Koronivia Joint Work on Agriculture: Countries welcomed and set the themes for an upcoming intersessional workshop on sustainable land and water management, and strategies and modalities to scale up practices and technologies to increase resilience and sustainable production.

However, IISD Reporting adds that several Parties were deeply disappointed with the outcomes related to scientific issues. Most notably, many delegates and civil society demonstrated and repeated the mantra "Science is not negotiable" to express their frustration with the outcome on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on 1.5°C of Global Warming.

"Disregarding or qualifying the best available science is tantamount to climate denialism," said Ambassador Lois Young from Belize, who is the chair of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) - an intergovernmental organization of low-lying coastal and small island countries, with the main purpose to consolidate the voices of Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to address global warming.

Sonam Phuntsho Wangdi (Bhutan) - Chair of the Least Developed Countries Group was equally dismayed," We came to Bonn with hope and expectations that we'll be able to provide assurances to people back home being impacted by these adverse impacts. For LDCs, questioning the science and negotiating on 1.5°C is negotiating on our survival. Let's not negotiate on our survival'

According to *The DownToEarth* Newsletter (India), considering the state of play of negotiations at Bonn and the outcomes achieved the urgency and political will for climate action is highly inadequate, especially in how the processes have dealt with science and the critical issue of loss and damage. Also, leadership at the global climate regime has now shifted to developing countries (the poor and island economies), with their commitments to ratchet up ambitions, as they bear the foremost brunt of climate impacts.

Read Carbon Brief's Key Outcomes from the June 2019 UN Climate Conference from here: https://tinyurl.com/y3w3md97

Agreement on Carbon Trading Rules Under the Paris Agreement Remains Sticky - Again

The twenty fourth UNFCCC Conference of Parties (UNFCCC COP24) postponed an agreement on implementation guidelines for the use of carbon markets and non-market approaches under Article 6. It is one of the most contentious issues in relation to the structure and implementation of carbon markets under the Paris Agreement Architecture and how they could function equitably while making real emission cuts - unlike in the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) under the Kyoto Protocol. There have been suggestions that many of the carbon credits generated by CDM scheme are effectively worthless.

Article 6 therefore sets out several routes through which countries may wish to cooperate in implementing their NDCs. Cooperation is to be on a fully voluntary basis and can help make countries' climate action more efficient, allowing in turn for ambition in both mitigation and adaptation actions to rise. **It sets out different approaches to carbon markets and non-market mechanisms under this International cooperation:**

1. Cooperative approaches under Articles 6.2 and 6.3: These provisions recognize that countries are implementing collaborative market mechanisms that will lead to internationally transferred mitigation outcomes (widely seen as establishing a "bottom-up" approach, whereby "mitigation outcomes," representing emission reduction credits, can be transferred internationally and then become ITMOs. It can be contrasted with other market-based approaches that are "top-down," involving centralized programs supporting emission reduction projects) that can be counted towards the achievement of their #NDCs. They offer a "decentralised" and country-led approach to the governance of cooperative approaches, but place safeguards at the level of the UNFCCC to ensure the integrity of mitigation outcomes when they are transferred internationally and used to help achieve NDCs;
2. The UNFCCC-governed crediting mechanism under Articles 6.4 to 6.7: This recognizes the value of having a centralized, international crediting instrument under the UNFCCC, with assured quality and fungibility of the emission reductions, which may be used by all countries to help achieve their NDCs and support their sustainable development.

Article 6 governs cross-border trade in carbon credits, was the only section of the rulebook to defy substantive agreement in Katowice last December due to disagreement on the rules to avoid double counting emissions reductions and sustainability standards for carbon offsets.

3. The framework for non-market approaches under Articles 6.8 and 6.9: This recognizes that the substantial portion of climate action does not engage market approaches, contributes to the achievement of NDCs, and needs promotion and coordination.

In Bonn, there appeared stark diversions on discussions on Article 6.2 [internationally transferred mitigation outcomes (ITMOs)], definition of ITMOs, how to obtain clarity on corresponding adjustments and avoiding double counting, particularly on single-year and multi-year accounting and scope of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC); transition from the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) projects into the new regime, linkages between Articles 6.2 and 6.4 (Sustainable Development Mechanism); governance and oversight.

According to Climate Action Network, strong environmental integrity principles are critical for the Article 6.4 rules so that parties are prevented from gaming their baselines, and instead adopt accurate and conservative baselines. Baselines should reflect a conservative emission pathway to avoid hot air and non-additional credits in the 6.4 mechanism. Baselines should be proposed by host countries, and approved by the Supervisory Body only if they are conservative, dynamic, and standardized. Ideally, they should be set at Business As Usual (BAU) or the level of policies incorporated into a host's NDC, whichever is lowest. Under no circumstances should baselines be set above BAU, which would lead to the issuance of hot air credits.

Read from ICTSD's Issues for Discussion to Operationalize Article 6 of the Paris Agreement: https://www.ictsd.org/sites/default/files/research/article_6_of_the_paris_agreement_iii_final_0.pdf

Time for hard cash for Poor Communities Losing Lives, Livelihoods & Homes to Loss and Damage!

Displacement by landslides in Bududa, Mt Elgon (Uganda). Photo: M.Mukhobeh

In Bonn, the discussion on Loss and Damage took place against a background of climate-linked disasters and extreme weather events, such as cyclone Idai in Mozambique and heat waves in India, hitting the world's most vulnerable. But such climate impacts are on the rise. According to Mattias Söderberg, ACT Alliance Head of Delegation to the 2019 Bonn talks, 'The issue of loss and damage is essentially an issue of life or death. It is critical that donor countries urgently mobilise to allocate the resources needed to respond to this issue."

Loss and damage (L&D) refers to impacts of climate change that occur despite adaptation and mitigation efforts. Article 8 of the Paris Agreement, agreed at the twenty-first Conference of the Parties (COP21) to the UNFCCC in December 2015, specifically recognised "the importance of averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including extreme weather events and slow onset events." As a result of the United States' intervention in behind-the-scenes negotiations, the Paris 2015 decision document (although declaratory only, and not legally binding) specifically states that "Article 8 of the Agreement does not involve or provide a basis for any liability or compensation".

The Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts has been mandated by the UNFCCC to facilitate financing to address the harms caused by climate change, which are occurring and deepening in East Africa and elsewhere across the globe.

Climate Action Network (CAN) suggests three criteria, or guiding questions, to help determine whether an impact counts as climate-induced loss and damage:

- Was the impact likely caused, or made worse or more pronounced, by climate change? One measure would be if some or all impacts fall outside of normal, historical parameters or if they can be attributed either wholly or partially to climate change based on established science.
- Does it involve losses, including livelihood assets, loss of something the community values and depends on, such as loss of fishing resource, loss of ancestral land, loss of culture associated with traditional activities and loss of the ability to undertake an activity, like the inability to herd cattle?
- Does the impact require a significant change in traditional or existing livelihoods or way of life, going beyond adaptation adjustments and instead require an altogether different reaction outside of the realm of traditional approaches?

According to ActionAid's Report (2019) titled: 'Market solutions to help climate victims fail human rights test', Natural disasters or weather-related events (whether or not attributed to climate change) already cause losses of more than USD$300 billion per year. It is estimated that by 2030, global loss and damage specifically associated with climate change will amount to between USD$300-700 billion, potentially increasing to about USD$1.2 trillion per year by 2060.

By 2030, global loss and damage specifically associated with climate change will amount to between USD$300-700 billion

According to CAN, six years after its establishment, it is high time to fully operationalize the WIM, by putting in place a finance arm and by agreeing on new scalable sources of finance. The review of the WIM that Parties will perform at COP25 in Chile needs to fulfill its promise to enhance action and support. For that, Parties need to engage in a full-fledged discussion on the availability of finance to address L&D beyond adaptation. The review must be also be inclusive and comprehensive, investigating the needs of developing countries and the solutions to close the gaps in existing finance streams to pay for climate destruction.

This is the very reason campaigners are demanding hard cash for poor communities losing lives, livelihoods and homes to climate change – something rich countries have dragged their feet on.