

IUCN UNFCCC Newsletter

Focus on: COP15 outcomes



Dear reader,

This is the fourth issue of the newsletter showcasing IUCN's and its Members' contributions to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process.

It focuses on the outcomes of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Copenhagen, 7th – 18th December. The conference brought together 115 Heads of State and over 40,000 participants.

IUCN observed the negotiation process throughout the two weeks and organized side events and press launches. IUCN promoted and supported nature-based solutions for adaptation and mitigation, in particular Ecosystem-based Adaptation and REDD, which we have covered in previous issues of this newsletter.

Please send us your feedback, comments, contributions, and inform us if there is any interesting activity, project or initiative you wish to feature in these newsletters or on our website!

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The Copenhagen Climate Conference

Over the past two years, the Copenhagen climate conference was widely heralded as an 'historic event' at which a new global change regime would be adopted by Heads of State and Governments of a large number of UNFCCC Parties. The CoP did not live up to the expectations, and ended with an unambitious, non-legally binding Accord. Due to lack of consensus, the plenary could just 'take note' of it, without translating it into a CoP decision.

Copenhagen is widely seen by political observers as having not only substantially changed the geopolitics of climate change, but also confirmed the geo-political changes observed in other global issues, such as trade. The final deal was sealed between the US and China, the latter assisted by the other BASIC countries (India, Brazil and South Africa).

31st January is indicated as the deadline for countries to associate with the Copenhagen Accord, and include their emissions targets or mitigation actions. The deadline is not mandatory; many countries could therefore join in the following months. Targets and actions by the major emitters are the most expected.

Beyond the Copenhagen Accord, topics on which substantial progress has been made by the Bali Action Plan process in 2008/2009 should come to conclusion in 2010. The COP took a Decision of extending the work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Co-operative Action (AWG-LCA) and of the Ad Hoc Working Group of the Kyoto Protocol (AWG-KP) until the end of 2010 on the basis of their reports at Copenhagen. This means, for example, that progress on topics such as REDD, adaptation and technology transfer under the AWG LCA will be taken up again during 2010. It is unclear what type of decisions or agreements could be reached at COP 16 in Mexico, including the prospect of a legally-binding agreement and the future of the Kyoto Protocol.



The Copenhagen Accord

"IUCN urges all countries to build on the Copenhagen Agreement and to find the common ground necessary to deliver an equitable, comprehensive and legally-binding agreement by the end of 2010"

Julia Marton-Lefèvre

IUCN Director General

What's in?

- Aspirational 2°C above pre-industrial level target for global temperature rise;
- Emissions 'to peak as soon as possible';
- Pledged quantified economy-wide emissions targets for 2020 by developed countries (yet to be filled in), to be reviewed every 2 years;
- Pledged nationally appropriate mitigation actions of developing country Parties (yet to be filled in), to be reviewed every 2 years;
- International monitoring, reporting and verifying (MRV) for developed countries;
- Domestic MRV plus "international consultations and analysis" for developing countries;
- US\$30 billion for 2010-2012 to developing countries;
- US\$100 billion yearly by 2020, to assist developing countries to adapt to climate change, reduce deforestation, and de-carbonize their development;
- REDD regime;
- North-South transfer of technology;
- Adaptation, with response measures;
- Use of markets;

What's out?

- No medium term emission goals, no practical pathway to the 2°C target;
- No commitment to halving global emissions by 2050, necessary for 2°C target;
- No agreement on specific emission reduction commitments;
- No deadline to complete a legally binding instrument;
- No requirement to review the agreement in the light of the latest science;
- No commitment to a compliance mechanism;
- No financial commitment for 2015-2020;
- No commitment that long term (post 2020) public finance for developing countries will be additional to existing development assistance.

There is no clarity on how the various 'decisions' in the Accord are to be taken forward. The Accord is 'homeless', it is not part of the UNFCCC's *acquis*, and people are now looking at ways to bring its provisions back into the UNFCCC process.





Where are we: REDD

“Reducing the rate of deforestation and restoring degraded forest are among the most effective mitigation solutions. A further push must be made in 2010 towards full development of a REDD regime”

Stewart Maginnis

IUCN Director of Environment and Development

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation in developing countries (REDD) was discussed in two bodies: the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-Term Cooperation Action (AWG-LCA).

The **Copenhagen Accord** indicates a clear intent to establish a REDD-plus mechanism, and states that “scaled up, new and additional, predictable and adequate funding” is to be provided to “developing” countries, “including substantial finance” for REDD.

Consistent with IUCN recommendations, the **COP decision** prepared by **SBSTA** recognizes the importance of promoting co-benefits including biodiversity, and requests developing country parties to identify drivers of deforestation and forest degradation. It encourages the development of guidance on effective engagement of indigenous peoples and local communities in monitoring and reporting, and recognizes the need for national circumstances to be taking into account when establishing national reference emission levels and forest reference levels.

The current **LCA text on REDD** includes the issue of safeguards and the broader scope for a REDD-plus mechanism (in line with the language of the Bali Action Plan). However, some important outstanding issues remain, for example with regard to prior informed consent for indigenous peoples; commitment to predictable and secure long term finance; and adequate measures to address leakage.



“Women’s roles in households, communities, and as wardens of natural resources puts them at the vanguard when it comes to developing strategies for adapting to changing environmental realities”

Lorena Aguilar

IUCN Senior Gender Policy Officer

Where are we: Ecosystem-based Adaptation

“Solid support was received from parties at COP 15 to include the concept of Ecosystem-based adaptation in the overall adaptation strategy that would form part of the post-2012 climate change regime... we need to ensure that progress to date results in a legally-binding deal on mitigation and adaptation as soon as possible”

Neville Ash

Head of IUCN Ecosystem Management Programme

Ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA), as defined by the Convention on Biological Diversity, is the use of biodiversity and ecosystem services as part of an overall adaptation strategy to help people adapt to the adverse effects of climate change.

It has been discussed under the UNFCCC AWG-LCA contact group on adaptation as part of the “adaptation framework”, which would determine what and how adaptation plans, policies and actions on the ground can be financed.

The current LCA text on adaptation makes reference, under adaptation action, to: “building resilience of socio-economic and ecological systems, including through economic diversification and sustainable management of natural resources”. This encompasses the notion of ecosystem-based adaptation, although IUCN would have preferred keeping direct reference to the role of ecosystem services.



IUCN at COP15

The Global Gender & Climate Alliance (GGCA), of which IUCN is a founding member, hosted a high level side event on **Investing in women's leadership for climate solutions**, on Thursday, 17th December, presented by the governments of Finland and Denmark in partnership with South Africa, Jordan, Grenada, Ghana, Lesotho, Costa Rica, AOSIS, and UN Foundation. A number of distinguished speakers were featured, including Tarja Halonen, President of Finland; Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, US; Ulla Tørnæs, Minister for Development Cooperation, Denmark; and Loren Legarda, Senator in the Philippines. Following the event, 100 women and men leaders from around the world gathered for a "Women as Agents of Change" photo shoot.



IUCN held a side event titled **Biodiversity in trouble: ways forward in a changing world** on Tuesday, 15th December. Speakers included Guy Midgley (IPCC AR4 Editor; CBD AHTEG Chair; SANBI), Camille Parmesan (University of Texas), Ove Hoegh-Gudberg (University of Queensland), Wendy Foden (IUCN Species Programme) and Brendan Mackey (Australian National University). The event was chaired by Neville Ash. The event was well attended and successful.

The presentations and a webcast of the event can be downloaded at:
www5.cop15.meta-fusion.com/kongresse/cop15/templ/play.php?id_kongressmain=1&theme=unfccc&id_kongresssession=2607

A special **event for IUCN Members** was hosted by the Copenhagen Zoo, IUCN National Committee of Denmark, and IUCN in the Elephant House of Copenhagen Zoo, on Wednesday, 16th December. The evening allowed representatives of Member organizations, Commissions, Council and IUCN partners to discuss the latest climate change developments and upcoming International Year of Biodiversity 2010, as well as marvel at the elephants Inda, Surin, Kungrao, Ida, and Gandhi.

The evening started in darkness in respect of Copenhagen Earth Hour. Thoughtful inputs were provided by the Zoo's Vice Director Bengt Holst, the Chair of the ICUN National Committee of Denmark Jan Eriksen, and IUCN President Ashok Khosla. Up-and-coming musician A J Moore accompanied the evening with a beautifully poignant acoustic performance featuring 'Take It All Away', a song written to raise awareness of climate change and originally inspired by the work of naturalist Sir David Attenborough. Members were then treated to a buffet made from local and organic produce.

For a full report, please visit:

<http://iucn.org/about/union/members/resources/news/?4406/Elephants-Earth-Hour-and-IUCN>



Gustavo Nicolás Páez Salamanca, a 19 year-old Colombian student is this year's grand prize winner of an international youth competition running on **connect2earth** an online started in 2008 by IUCN, WWF and Nokia to link young people with the world's top environmental experts to talk about headline-grabbing topics that they care about.

Distinguished by the quality and diversity of his contributions, as well as his high level of engagement in the community, he was awarded with hands-on experience at the 15th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP15), taking part in a variety of side events and sharing his experience with the connect2earth community through regular posts on the website.

Please visit:

<http://www.iucn.org/unfccc/resources/news/?4371/connect2earth-2009-prize-awarded>