

ECO



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Agents of Real Change

Today, a march by more than 100 women will focus attention on five key reasons why gender equality should be highlighted in the text of a good climate agreement in Copenhagen.

1. Women are often the key providers of food, water, and fuel in their communities. They provide up to 90% of food crops for the rural poor. They care for children, the sick, and elderly, and oversee the family's assets. As a result, women have direct knowledge about effective and innovative solutions. They know how to address resource constraints and respond to erratic environmental changes.

2. Women's empowerment is crucial to sustainable development. Women lead some of the most progressive efforts in response to environmental degradation and climate change impacts, even as their voices are often marginalized. Wangari Maathai started the

global Green Belt movement to plant trees in Kenya, and entered into an agreement with the World Bank to reforest regions of Kenya and secure significant emissions reductions - and that success is only one of many.

3. Women are disproportionately affected by climate change. Women make up an estimated 70% of those living below the poverty line; they have less access to resources; and they are more likely to die than men during natural disasters. Additionally, women typically lack access to essential services after disasters strike.

4. Of all the legally binding agreements that resulted from the 1992 Earth Summit, the UNFCCC is the only one not to incorporate gender issues. In contrast, the Convention on Biological Diversity has incorporated a gender plan of action that recognizes women's traditional knowledge and access to land assets.

5. Women are not adequately represented

in the UNFCCC negotiation process. In 2006, the percentage of female heads of delegation was about 15%, declining to a mere 12% the following year. Every global initiative must seek to provide opportunities for women to engage as principal stakeholders and help them build capacity in their communities and countries.

Currently there are 23 strong references to women and gender equity in the AWG-LCA INF.2 text. Iceland, along with other Nordic countries, emerged early on as the biggest champion on these issues and they have been joined by strong statements from the African Group and Least Developed Countries, the Philippines and Central American countries.

Gender equality is integral to sustainable development and poverty eradication goals, and is essential to effective implementation of Copenhagen's outcome. Let's keep building ambitious text on gender.

Opening Move in the US Senate

With so much doom and gloom about the prospects of the US Congress passing climate legislation before Copenhagen, you would think the Senate had closed up shop for the year. But the Senate is definitely open for energy and climate business. Yesterday, Senators John Kerry and Barbara Boxer unveiled their "Clean Energy Jobs & American Power Act," following in the footsteps of the House of Representatives where the Waxman-Markey bill passed in June.

The US emissions reduction target in the new Kerry-Boxer bill is stronger than the one in the House bill -- 7% below 1990 by 2020, rather than 4%. But that's still much less than what is needed from the world's larg-

est contributor to the climate crisis. The bill includes a placeholder (but not any brackets!) on the international climate financing sections because those issues are under the jurisdiction of a different committee. ECO expects to see action on those key finance issues very soon, and will be reporting back as forward progress is made.

Now that the bill has been introduced, what's next? Hearings are planned for next week and a committee vote may follow shortly after. Will a full Senate vote happen in November? Will the bill get bogged down? In the US Senate, truly nobody can easily predict. But for now, the Senate is back on track.

REDD: Turning Talk into Text

It's the talk of the hallways, and who could imagine it? Things are moving forward pretty smoothly in REDD. Parties swiftly agreed to consolidate the "Objectives, Scope and Guiding Principles" and start discussions on what needs to be done in Copenhagen and what can wait until after. ECO offers these tips for enhancing your ride on the REDD train.

On objectives: REDD should help developing countries do their part under Article 2 of the Convention, that is, keeping warming to as far below 2°C as possible. It should contribute to biodiversity conservation and combating desertification. And it should respect

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The Sleeping Giant Awakens

On Wednesday, UNFCCC executive secretary Yvo de Boer received the Interfaith Declaration on Climate Change from the leaders of Thailand's five major religions: Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism, in the company of Dr. Art-ong Jumsai Na Ayudhya, the noted Thai scientist who helped design NASA's Viking Lunar Lander.

One after another the leaders quoted scripture and religious tradition to underscore the imperative of an immediate response to the climate crisis and a strong, just, definitive deal in Copenhagen. They exhorted their followers to support a climate treaty by the end of this year, and to demand the same of their national leaders.

The alliance of religion and science, as

noted by Mr. de Boer, has the potential to be the messenger that wakes the sleeping giant. It is estimated the 85% of all people are adherents of the traditional religions. And they are but a wake-up call away from realizing the immensity of the climate catastrophe.

Additional signings are lined up for Barcelona and Copenhagen as new clerics and scientists join. Pope Benedict has been invited to participate, and a key IPCC scientist is said to be on board for the Copenhagen event. So don't be surprised if the Declaration is taped to the door of your local mosque, church, temple, ashram, meeting hall or synagogue. These are reminders that people of faith will hold accountable governments who fiddle while the Earth burns.

– REDD: Turning Talk into Text

the rights of indigenous peoples and local communities, and ensure their fair and effective participation.

This means that REDD must prioritize the conservation of natural forests, which support the largest carbon stocks, highest levels of biodiversity and untold ecosystem service co-benefits. Finally, people live in and around intact natural forests.

ECO was also very glad to hear the EU argue that Copenhagen must deliver more than text. Trees are being cut and carbon released - we need to start reducing emissions now. Parties must agree in Copenhagen to sufficient financing for fast-start action before 2012, as well as sustainable, predictable and additional financing in a new climate regime. The deal in Copenhagen also must lay out a process for further work under SBSTA on MRV and establishing robust baselines, to be finished by 2012.

Finally, money alone won't grease the wheels of a REDD mechanism. Developing countries need to put in place the necessary governance, sustainable development and equitable benefit-sharing policies. And all Parties need to address the international drivers of deforestation, and not contribute to the illegal practices that drive deforestation and undermine sustainable development.

The announcement by Indonesia for emissions reductions of 26% by 2020 from BAU levels (boosted to as much as 41% with sufficient international support) is highly encouraging. This shows how countries are gearing up to take meaningful action at home. With talk turning into real text, the promise shown by these new initiatives can turn into concrete results.

Where's the Aussie Dollars???

The rumour mill in the Australian capital says that Prime Minister Kevin Rudd was keen as mustard to see the G-20 make progress on climate finance behind closed doors. If this is true, it's all well and good, but ECO is still waiting to see anything more real than a wooden nickel on finance from Australia here in Bangkok.

The next few days will be a key test. As the AWG-LCA contact group on finance moves toward the core proposals in the

text, will Australia be a leader, laggard or simply off the field? It's high time Australia showed support for raising the funds needed, recognising the scale of funds required and committing to the principle that new and additional finance is needed. As the only country in the world not to go into recession during the ongoing financial crisis, we're pretty sure PM Rudd can throw some real Aussie dollars in the direction of saving the planet.

Fossil of the Day

30.10.09

1st Place

Eu, Norway, Canada, Australia

2nd Place

New Zealand

3rd Place

USA



Full details on Fossil of the Day will be available at:

www.climatenetwork.org/fossil

Weasels: you have been warned!

This is an article that almost writes itself. ECO was going to analyze the latest update from the "numbers group," but frankly, we're not going to bother. This isn't the fault of the Secretariat, they can only summarize what Parties put on the table. And so far, aggregate Annex I ambition is one whole percentage point higher than where we were in Bonn III, thanks to Japan.

ECO is inclined to agree with those who say, who cares? Glaciers are melting faster than progress in the KP negotiations. Annex I parties know what they must do: stop weaseling and set a top-down, science-based aggregate Annex I target of at least 40% below 1990 levels by 2020. After that they can begin the inevitable weaseling over a fair share of the effort. But keep weaseling over targets and your country's environmental reputation will be absorbed into the Fossil record.

