CCCCC Climate Change News Update- No. 14

August, 2011

The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) is pleased to provide to you its Climate Change News Update. This is a compilation of major new events internationally and regionally. It also includes updates on new studies, reports and resource material on climate change. Please note that information provided is sourced from other news links. The source and link to the original news material is provided.

International News

1. **Hopes low before South Africa climate change talks**

Source : Associated Press, August 22, 2011

Website: http://finance.yahoo.com/news/Hopes-low-before-South-Africa-apf-3494670329.html?x=0&.v=2

JOHANNESBURG (AP) -- South Africa's foreign minister said Monday she is hoping for compromise but expects only incremental progress in climate change talks she's hosting, further lowering hopes the Durban meeting will produce a dramatic agreement to stop global warming.

There are fears that "politics cannot deliver on what science requires," Maite Nkoana-Mashabane told South African business leaders in a speech Monday.

She was speaking three months before talks in Durban that follow a failed round in Copenhagen in 2009 that undermined confidence the world could produce a successor to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto provisions capping greenhouse gas emissions by industrial countries expire in 2012.

The industrialized world balks at legal restrictions that could hurt its economies, particularly when poorer countries like China and India, who have become some of the world's biggest polluters, also are resisting legal restrictions.

South Africa, the country with Africa's biggest carbon footprint, has identified clean energy as an industry that could create jobs in a country where more than a quarter of the work force is unemployed.

2. **Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon up 15%**

Source: AFP

Website: http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5j4SGXgy2rOF4JRVIeNpiMCwbX5DA?docId=CNG.b990893f53ecd8dbb389b03f5e073bc2.11

BRASILIA — Deforestation in Brazil's Amazon increased by 15 percent during the past 12 months, the National Institute for Space Research (INPE) said.

From July 2010 to July 2011 the vast South American rainforest lost 2,654 square kilometers (1,649 square miles) of vegetation in the states of Mato Grosso and Para, according to a preliminary analysis of satellite photos.

The year before, 2,295 square kilometers (1,426 square miles) were destroyed over that time period.

Brazil, the world's fifth largest country by area, has 5.3 million square kilometers of jungle and forests -- mostly in the Amazon river basin -- of which only 1.7 million are under state protection.

The rest is in private hands, or its ownership is undefined.

Deforestation has made Brazil one of the world's top greenhouse gas emitters, and the pace of deforestation peaked in 2004 at 27,000 square kilometers (10,000 square miles) a year.

The rate of deforestation has declined since then, in part because of DETER, and at the 2009 UN climate change summit in Copenhagen, Brazil committed itself to reducing Amazon deforestation by 80 percent by 2020.

Regional News

3. Caribbean Countries to Benefit from Partnership to Develop Climate Change Adaptation Strategies

Source: CCCCC & CCRIF, 23rd August, 2011
Website: www.ccrif.org or www.caribbeanclimate.bz.

Belmopan, Belize, August 23, 2011 – The Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC) and the Caribbean Catastrophe Risk Insurance Facility (CCRIF) have strengthened their partnership to be able to better assist Caribbean countries to develop climate change adaptation strategies. These two organisations currently play key roles in the collection and provision of critical information and knowledge on the impacts of climate change and by extension natural disasters on Caribbean countries. On August 9, 2011, the organisations signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to formalise this collaboration.

The MOU is designed to assist the governments of Caribbean States in understanding the risks of climate change to their economies and to the peoples of the region and will help to identify cost-effective adaptation measures to support greater climate change resilience at the local, national and regional level. This partnership therefore represents a timely intervention as it is well recognised and agreed that developing countries and small island nations like those in the Caribbean will be among the first and hardest hit by the adverse effects of climate change. In short, the relative burden of additional climate risk the region faces is the highest in the world, while at the same time we have fewer resources to adapt socially, technologically and financially. It is thus anticipated that climate change will have far-reaching effects on the sustainable development of the Caribbean, including our ability to realise the United Nations Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

To better address climate adaptation in the region, this MoU will enable the countries of the region to:

- benefit from capacity building through the elaboration and enhanced use of tools in the areas of catastrophe risk modelling, parametric insurance and alternative risk transfer;
- participate in new programmes and initiatives to assist Caribbean governments in better understanding and financing catastrophe risk exposures which will be increased as a result of climate change;

- pursue the development of common strategies for enhancing and leveraging support for adaptation to climate change by sharing knowledge and pooling resources and expertise;
- gain support for national policy frameworks aimed at enhancing adaptation; and
- access international funding for climate adaptation through mechanisms such as the Adaptation Fund.

At the signing ceremony of the MoU, which took place at the CCCCC office in Belmopan, Belize, Mr Milo Pearson, Executive Chairman of CCRIF signed on behalf of CCRIF while Dr Kenrick Leslie, Director of CCCCC signed for the CCCCC. Dr Leslie emphasised the importance of regional collaboration and said that the signing of the MOU will strengthen the partnership between the two organisations. Mr Pearson further noted that the MoU ***"affirms our mutual commitment to finding solutions that will enable the countries within the region to better manage the risk caused by natural hazards and climate change and to minimise the social, economic, physical and environmental damage caused by these events."***

This collaboration represents an important step where, in small countries and small economies like those in the Caribbean, a single-event catastrophe such as a hurricane can have devastating socio-economic effects. Furthermore, these effects are predicted to be exacerbated by the impacts of climate change. The changing climate is a global driver of increasing disaster risk and threatens to undermine the critical development gains made by the most vulnerable countries. In fact, this is supported by the preliminary results of a study on the Economics of Climate Adaptation (ECA) in the Caribbean conducted in 2010 by CCRIF, CCCCC, and other partners, with analytical support from McKinsey & Co. and Swiss Re. The results indicate that annual expected losses from wind, storm surge and inland flooding currently amount to up to 6% of GDP in some countries and that, in a high climate change scenario, expected losses could increase by 1 to 3 percentage points of GDP by 2030.

Dr Ulric Trotz, Science Advisor at CCCCC, welcomed the signing of the agreement. He indicated that the ECA study which determined the economic costs of adaptation promises to be of great value to the region and hoped that the MoU ***"would help our two organisations to work together to better define a risk profile for the Caribbean – a risk profile that can form a basis for the design and provision of a range of affordable insurance instruments for the region."***

4. World Bank, GEF Finance Protection of Marine Ecosystems in Eastern Caribbean

Source: IISD , 4 August 2011

Website:

http://larc.iisd.org/news/world-bank-gef-finance-protection-of-marine-ecosystems-in-eastern-caribbean/?referrer=latin-america-&-caribbean-regional-update&utm_source=lists.iisd.ca&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latin+America+%26+Caribbean+Regional+Update+-+16+August+2011+-+Latin+America+%26+Caribbean+Regional+Coverage

The World Bank approved a US$8.75 million grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) to establish trust funds for the long-term conservation and management of over 100,000 hectares of marine habitat in the Eastern Caribbean. The Eastern Caribbean is among the top five global biodiversity hot spots in the world, due to its marine and coastal ecosystems.

The Sustainable Financing and Management of Eastern Caribbean Marine Ecosystem Project will benefit Antigua and Barbuda, Grenada, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. The Project is part of a broader initiative, the Caribbean Challenge, which was launched in 2008 and seeks to legally protect 20 percent of near-shore areas by 2020.

The project will be implemented by The Nature Conservancy and plans to: facilitate the establishment and capitalization of a regional biodiversity fund (the Caribbean Biodiversity Fund) as well as national-level trust fund for protected areas; demarcate over 100,000 hectares of marine habitat; and implement a regional monitoring and information system, to facilitate monitoring of biophysical and social economic indicators in protected areas.

5. Caribbean and Pacific Regions work to reduce disasters

Source: Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

Website:
http://www.cdema.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=954:caribbean-and-pacific-regions-work-to-reduce-disasters&catid=35:press-releases

Bridgetown, Barbados, August 15, 2011 (SOPAC; CDEMA) - Common threats based on similar geography and vulnerabilities of small islands, have been a major influence on the increased cooperation between the Caribbean and Pacific Regions.

Two of the major players in this developing relationship are SOPAC, a division of SPC, and CDEMA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency).

The Executive Director of CDEMA, Jeremy Collymore has been instrumental in fostering the exchanges between the two regions that have led to a growing recognition of the range of learning capabilities, and practices for improving effective disaster prevention and management at the national level.

He was recently in Auckland to address the 3rd Session of Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk management, a meeting organized by SOPAC and ISDR.

Collymore told the 200 participants at the meeting that small island developing countries, like those in the Pacific and Caribbean, are widely acknowledged to be among the most likely to experience a range of natural disasters, including hurricanes, floods, landslides, and volcanic eruptions, as well as being disproportionately suffering by the adverse impacts of climate change.

The increasing frequency and magnitude of recent events require urgent action to address fundamental weaknesses with disaster response and management mechanisms, both nationally and locally.

"The message," he said, "is that the contingency planning systems must be capable of dealing with diversity, variability, and extreme nature of the threats we are likely to face."

Collymore pointed out that countries in the two regions often have entirely different impacts from damage caused by the same type magnitude of storms or earthquakes. This is because of lack of coordination, lack of communications, poor citizen participation and poor awareness from those responding to the event.

"This lack of capacity and capability gap of island nations in responding to climate changes and disaster risks has been a key factor in the establishment of regional agencies such as CDEMA and SOPAC."

He emphasized the need to look at response practices, mechanisms, products, tools and services that

serve to promote a culture of loss reduction, whether this is centred on the preparedness side, response side or the recovery side."
With an estimated three quarters of the population in small islands developing states living in at risk areas and one third in areas highly exposed to hazards governments are extremely challenged in meeting their responsibility to deal with these predicatable threats.

"There exists a gap between the will and the wallet," said Collymore.

He observed that politics is at the heart of vulnerability and disaster risk reduction and it starts with decisions about where to build, what to build and what incentives to offer and to whom.

He indicated that in the region, where there is demonstrated and sustained political support for DRM there is a dramatic shift in the loss reduction culture of the state.

Collymore highlighted the Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) Strategy as one of the key approaches being utilized in the Caribbean to accelerate the strengthening of sub-regional, national and community level capacity for DRM programmes. "The establishment of a CDM Governance Mechanism (the CDM Harmonization Council) has created a space for all key stakeholders at the DRR table," he said.

The model DRR policy being developed, leadership training for DRR managers, the ongoing collaboration among stakeholders on the integration of DRR with Climate Change Adaptation and the Climate Smart DRR Programmes are further indication of the regional recognition to build capacity and widen the scope and level of involvement in DRM.

Under this South-South cooperation both Caribbean and Pacific institutions will play a key role in furthering the development and implementation of DRR and climate change policies. In addition to CDEMA and SOPAC a division of SPC these institutions will include the CARICOM Climate Change Centre (CCCCC), the Caribbean Risk Management Institute (CRMI), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Caribbean Meteorology Organization (CMO), Caribbean Institute of Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH) and the Cuban National Institute of Meteorology (INSMET), University of the West Indies and other regional and international organisations associated with DRM

This collaboration on the challenges that disaster reduction measures must address allows for partnering with other programmes associated with climate change, sea-level, rise, poverty reduction, national development and investment planning. Initiatives being advanced by the alliance include, sharing of information on best practices, deepening of gender mainstreaming in DRR, transfer and exchange of technologies and lobbying for greater political action on coordination and prioritizing national risk

In reiterating his commitment, Collymore said, "We (CDEMA) share the vision of SOPAC on the need to work harder to protect communities from the potential dislocation from threats of all kinds especially those related to climate change. To this end CDEMA is resolved to continuing and deepening its cooperation." with the Pacific region"

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