Long WORKSHOP REPORT FORM

Number and title of workshop: Roundtable on Civil Society Actions and Needs to Promote Climate Change

Coordinators: Lisa Elges, TI-S

Date and time: 12 November 2010, 09:00-11:00

Moderator: Gareth Sweeney, TI-S

Rapporteur: Krina Despota, TI-S

Panellists

Tim Clairs (TC): Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP: Senior Policy Adviser (REDD)

Estelle Fach (EF): Bureau for Development Policy, UNDP: Programme Analyst (REDD)

Liz Gallagher (LG): E3G, Third Generation Environmentalism: Senior Researcher

Izabela Ratajczak-Juszko (IRJ): Oxford Climate Policy, Oxford Brookes University and RMIT University: Academic Researcher

Caio Luiz Carneiro Magri (CM): Instituto Ethos de Empresase Responsabilidade: Gerente Executivo de Politicas Publicas

Oscar Reyes (OR): Carbon Trade Watch: Programme Manager

Amelia Thorpe (AT): Environmental Defenders Office (Australia): International Programs Director

Jake Werksman (JW): World Resources Institute: Program Director for Governance and Access Program

Summary

The workshop considered how civil society (CS), including those not already engaged on the issue of climate change governance can better understand opportunities for and challenges to involvement. In particular, the roundtable discussion centred on two primary questions. First, what role can CS play in climate governance? Second, what concrete or proposed actions are there for CS engagement in climate change and what are the challenges to achieving these actions? Contributions from participants ranged from suggesting that CS can contribute to oversight and monitoring of climate change mitigation projects and disbursal of adaptation funds at local and national level, to how CS can and has provided inputs into international climate negotiations. Areas of agreement included the need for CS to support capacity-building at local and national level; the importance of coalition-building between CS groups with diverse expertise; and the need for CS to foster a human rights-based approach.

It was also emphasised that CS should continue to push for developed countries to meet their commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Among the most significant outcomes was a commitment by those present to work together to formulate possible recommendations or outcome for the COP16 in Cancun.

Summary of presentations

Oscar Reyes. CS has multiple roles to play. First, CS should defend multilateralism in the UN. At the COP15, a few powerful nations shaped the final outcome, undermining the process. Limited access for CS to participate in the COP15 was also disappointing. There are examples of CS having greater opportunities for participation, and for multilateralism between participating nations, such as the Convention for Biodiversity. Second, CS should monitor climate processes. Carbon Trade Watch, for example, takes a very critical stance on carbon trading, looking in particular at the environmental integrity of projects operating under the Clean Development Mechanism. For example, this year Carbon Trade Watch investigated HFC projects in the CDM and submitted a proposal to the Executive Board to demonstrate that these types of projects lack environmental integrity. This has triggered a debate as to whether HFC projects should earn credits under the CDM. Finally, CS can reframe the climate debate, to demonstrate that there are alternatives to many of the mechanisms now included under the UNFCCC. For example, there are different models of technology transfer and alternatives to the market-based mechanisms currently in place.

Liz Gallagher focused on the role of CS in Measuring, Reporting and Verifying (MRV), arguing that CS can incentivise governments to develop better methods and practices for MRV of emissions. Further, CS must disseminate the outcomes of this emissions reporting to campaigners who can hold Parties to account. CS must also play a role in addressing the fundamental barriers to a low-carbon economy and ensure that green solutions are properly governed, for example by looking at budget monitoring, national development planning and finding ways to help stakeholders overcome challenges associated with high-risk projects and initiatives. In short, there is a role for CS in 1) the shift to a low-carbon economy (for example, in making policy shifts away from fossil fuel subsidies), 2) aiding knowledge management of climate policy, 3) keeping an overview of all climate projects and initiatives and pushing the agenda forward in a unified way.

Lisa Elges. There are two basic areas in which CS can contribute. First, CS can participate in monitoring the generation, distribution and utilisation of finances for mitigation and adaptation activities. Second, CS can ensure emissions reductions are actually made and climate benefits achieved. CS has a role to play both in what the architecture of new institutions for climate change look like, and how they are developed. Significant deficits of transparency and integrity in the developing climate architecture can breed corruption. These shortcomings are particularly salient in the MRV systems currently in place.

Regarding actions, TI plans to work in coalition and via communities of practice to share expertise. TI's Bribe Payers Index identifies the most corrupt sectors as being construction, followed by the extractive industries. Adaptation will mean a lot of construction in the form of infrastructural development. This is also true on the mitigation side. If these sectors have difficulties with integrity they could pose an impediment to climate financing. To build capacity, TI is developing an e-training course on climate governance. TI will also do analysis of climate finance allocation and its expenditure and will need support to identify risks. Elges suggested that the workshop, and the IACC more broadly, could be used as an opportunity to consider what inputs CS could make at the COP16 to call for transparency in climate policy.

Amelia Thorpe. In the South Pacific, Small Island States are already feeling the effects of climate change, and people have in some cases been displaced from their traditional homes. But small island states in the South Pacific have limited capacity to deal with climate change. In some cases these governments may have only one person working on the issue of climate change, and sometimes these are not even full-time positions. There is therefore a great

opportunity for CS to work with the governments of these states to build capacity to engage in climate negotiations. CS also has a role to play in as a check on governments, serving in an oversight capacity, but the real opportunity present is to help develop capacity in national governments.

Tim Clairs. From the UN REDD perspective, there are a few observations as to where civil society could fit. Experience with REDD Readiness demonstrates that CS has a role to play at both global and national levels. REDD has made progress and is expecting some success in Cancun, in part because there have been a number of fora for trust and partnerships between different groups and this has helped further the issue. CS communications with negotiators has resulted in added safeguards to REDD, and CS has fed into governing bodies and has a role to play in reviewing and analysing multilateral initiatives. CS also can make links between international negotiations and local/nation civil society. At the national level, early CS engagement and inputs from CS in REDD+ have been essential. For example, Paraguay was a pilot country for REDD+ Readiness. That country had a national programme which they thought ready to present to the UN policy board, but it was recognised that they had not done enough to involve CS. Incorporating CS inputs retroactively ended up taking a further 18 months, demonstrating the importance of early collaboration.

Jake Werksman: In addition to the institutions specifically designed to respond to climate policy, CS will need to engage with day-to-day institutions, such as those that provide water, energy, electricity. Here CS needs to lay the groundwork for low-carbon society as these are the institutions already grappling with difficult trade-offs and in many cases are already struggling to deliver services. CS should ensure that the choices made are fair and effective and that corruption does not lead to "mal-adaptation", i.e. the wrong choices being made. Many of the most significant challenges are already familiar to institutions and groups that work on issues of transparency and accountability. For example, these issues are addressed as the international community designs adaptation funds and deals with their flows.
This presents significant challenges, as engagement with these industries requires technical expertise and understanding of complex systems in order for inputs to be meaningful. Therefore it will be necessary to combine sector-level expertise and anti-corruption expertise on issues such as budget monitoring, participatory budget processes, etc. These sorts of collaborations can produce results that are transparent and accountable and lead to low carbon.

The World Resources Institute will be reaching out to other CS groups, especially in countries where national climate institutions are being built and hope to be able to help strengthen capacity of those institutions.

Caio Luiz Carneiro Magri. CS needs to continue to exert pressure on societies, governments and institutions that have not met their emissions reductions commitments. CS needs to work with social movements and sustainability movements. CS must go to Cancun with concrete proposal that call for a shift from voluntary targets to obligatory frameworks with the tools necessary for implementation. The goal should not be just to build a low-carbon economy, but to build a sustainable and inclusive economy. This is the agenda that needs to be articulated in all of our movements. TI and other climate change movements have built tools but we must make these available to civil society. Tools also need to be simple enough to make them usable for agents of social change and so that people can use them. Therefore, anti-corruption groups must work hand-in-hand with social movements and not simply act as auditors of governments.

An example of CS's value: Six months before the COP15, Brazil had not decided what its position would be in the climate negotiations, and was pressured by many sides. Social movements, along with the social enterprise movement, launched a pact to get ahead in the COP which included voluntary reductions by companies and a national plan to reduce emissions. As a result of this collaboration, Brazil came to COP with the most advanced set of tools and policies for emissions reductions.

TI and other anti-corruption organisations should build proposals in countries to try to support new national-level initiatives. For example, for climate change funding in Brazil, civil society must be there to support, to monitor and to carry out joint actions.

Izabela Ratajczak-Juszko. The interventions at the workshop highlight how CS is divided into various communities: the anti-corruption community, the climate change community, etc. This presents an opportunity to work together. CS can make a difference at both small and large scales.

At the local level, CS could work as a united group to help leaders understand risks associated with poor practices and a lack of concrete actions. At the large scale, CS can help shift climate policy to help developing countries, particularly by helping small delegations to the UNFCCC strengthen their voice in the process. At present there are governance risks associated with the current structure for disbursing money for adaptation. The fast-track finance outlined in the Copenhagen Accord promises huge amounts of money to tackle climate change globally. Thirty-seven countries are struggling to deliver on their promises, but there are not yet enough funds raised. It also seems as though developing countries which are entitled to these funds may not understand how to go about developing applications for these funds. As the Adaptation Fund scales-up, CS could help countries develop applications for funds.

Estelle Fach. It is important to emphasise that CS is already playing a role, and that the workshop is not just about proposals. CS is engaged in REDD through multilateral institutions, but also on governance at the national level, for example, via participation in country-led governance assessments

A lot of attention is also being paid to MRV for REDD, with workshops on the topic currently taking place. In recently submitted national programmes for REDD, there was a renewed emphasis on governance. Because there are a multitude of support processes, there is also an increasing need for CS to help ensure that the multiplicity of standards is streamlined. UN REDD is engaged in ongoing work on 'free, prior and informed consent' and the right of indigenous peoples to determine what will happen in their territories. CS should help think through these and other issues together. Challenges for CS include capacity, and access to information. Sharing information includes not only what REDD can deliver but also on anti-corruption tools. This presents a significant capacity challenge. There is also the challenge of ensuring access to the proper networks. Here CS could help to ensure that feedback at the local level is fed-up to national and international levels.

Main Outcomes

Comments from the audience and echoed by the panel suggested that CS has a particular role to play in ensuring that solutions to climate change are made along a human rights-based approach. To this end, environmental goals and development priorities must complement, not undermine, one another. An example was given was that CS groups should protect people from unjust displacement or disadvantage caused in the name of environmental policies.

The idea that CS should help make a complex topic understandable to the layperson was also supported by many of the participants. This action is central in helping CS and people to hold government to account.

CS should also foster capacity-building at the national level. These efforts are especially important as national institutions are being developed to disburse and oversee climate financing, and can also be useful in helping smaller states in ongoing climate negotiations. In these and other efforts, CS involvement is better the earlier it comes.

Multiple times the level of technical knowledge needed for civil society to make meaningful contributions was noted. This pointed to the need for CS groups to build coalitions among

themselves and with experts at the sector level. In addition to climate change groups and the anti-corruption community, these groups could include sustainability movements and broader social movements.

Finally, CS should continue to remind both governments and people why responses to climate change can be opportunities, rather than burdens.

Recommendations, Follow-up Actions

- CS should defend multilateralism in the UN, and advocate for increased and meaningful public participation at the international level, in accordance with the Aarhus Convention
- CS should monitor all climate processes, looking in particular at the environmental integrity of projects
- CS in Cancun must call for a shift from voluntary targets to obligatory frameworks with the tools necessary for implementation
- CS can reframe the climate debate, to demonstrate that there are alternatives to many of the mechanisms now included under the UNFCCC
- CS can incentivise governments to develop better methods and practices for MRV of emissions, and disseminate the outcomes of this emissions reporting to campaigners who can hold Parties to account
- CS must play a role in addressing the fundamental barriers to a low-carbon economy and ensure that green solutions are properly governed, for example by the design of national looking at budget monitoring, national development planning and finding ways to help stakeholders overcome challenges associated with high-risk projects and initiatives
- CS can participate in monitoring the generation, distribution and utilisation of finances for mitigation and adaptation activities
- CS can ensure emissions reductions are actually made and climate benefits achieved
- CS has a role to play both in what the architecture of new institutions for climate change look like, and how they are developed
- CS has great opportunity to work with the governments of small island states to build capacity to engage in climate negotiations
- In REDD, CS has a role to play in reviewing and analysing multilateral initiatives, and can make links between international negotiations and local/nation civil society. At the national level, early CS engagement and inputs from CS in REDD+ have been essential
- CS needs to ensure that the multiplicity of REDD support processes for national programmes is streamlined
- CS should assist in the development of understanding of 'free, prior and informed consent' of indigenous peoples in practice
- Nationally, CS will need to engage with institutions that provide water, energy, electricity to lay the groundwork for low-carbon society, to ensure that the choices made are fair and effective and that corruption does not lead to "mal-adaptation" [Therefore it will be necessary to combine sector-level expertise and anti-corruption expertise on issues such as budget monitoring, participatory budget processes]
- TI and other climate change movements must build tools for civil society that are simple enough to make them usable for agents of social change. Therefore, anti-corruption groups must work hand-in-hand with social movements and not simply act as auditors of governments
- The international community should have monitoring system that measure transparency and the sustainability of the development process in each country as they relate to climate change and in line with human rights.

In addition to these broad recommendation. Lisa Elges and Caio Luiz Carneiro Magri (and any others) were to try to formulate a statement to contribute to outcomes of IACC on climate change that could be brought forward in the international climate debate.