

"Summary Statement and Conclusions of the International Conference on Evaluating Climate Change and Development, May 12, 2008."



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Ladies and gentlemen,

After more than two days of presentations and discussions, we are about to close the International Conference on Evaluating Climate Change and Development. What did we learn? What are the challenges for the future? How will we proceed? Let me address these questions in turn.

What did we learn?

This Conference has been built on the experiences of more than 400 reports and studies. A wealth of experiences has been shared. A wealth of issues has been discussed. A richness of important findings emerged. And we learned that monitoring and evaluation can help us cope with the uncertainties, the risks and sudden and long term changes associated with climate change.

As Bob Picciotto pointed out in his keynote address on Sunday morning, prevention is always cheaper than curing the problem. Reduction of green house gasses, or mitigation of climate change, as it is more technically known, is part of the prevention effort of the international community. We learned that project and program interventions to reduce green house gas emissions are generally successful. Internationally a success rate of 75% is deemed acceptable in development cooperation. We found that climate change mitigation efforts are successful at a higher rate of more than 80%. This is encouraging.

On energy efficiency efforts, we found that many interventions had succeeded in permanently changing the markets for specific products, such as more energy efficient light bulbs. This is encouraging as well.

We also now know more about which kinds of projects in carbon trading are more effective than others. By far the best in reducing green house gas emissions are projects that address methane emissions from landfills, achieving up to 160% more reduction than promised! Especially wind power and transport projects on the other hand have low rates of achievements, around 30%. These are important results that should be shared further in the carbon trading community. Details will be available in an upcoming evaluation report of the Independent Evaluation Group of the World Bank.

The new emerging issue is how to adapt to Climate Change that is already happening, that cannot be prevented any more. Here the international consensus is that developing countries,

which emit the lowest amounts of green house gasses, will actually bear the greatest costs of dealing with climate change. Egypt, our host country, may be a good example of this. Much more than many developed countries, Egypt is dependent on environmental goods and services – in fact the water in the Nile is the life saver of Egypt and its people. Climate change and the energy hunger of the developed world and newly emerging economies like China and India are driving forces behind higher food prices, which directly affect the poor in a country like Egypt. As the First Lady has stated it in her Opening Address on Saturday, the rich subsidize the transformation of food into biofuels, thus subsidizing the burning of food of the poor to drive the cars of the rich!

How will developing countries face the onslaught of higher temperatures, rising sea levels, changing waterfall patterns and increasing natural disasters? Societies will have to reduce the vulnerability to these changes, and this Conference has shown that there is a richness of efforts to address vulnerability in a systematic manner, in such a way that governments and local communities will better understand what is happening. Societies can then cope with these changes through adapting to them. This conference has also made available a rich variety of methods to assess adaptation through monitoring and evaluation, but it is clear that these methods are not yet fully developed.

These results, best practices and promising new avenues will need to be shared in the wider community of practitioners who are preparing new interventions. We will make efforts to do so, but I will come to that later.

What are the challenges for the future?

On the mitigation side, we know that the successes and results that we report on are just a drop in the ocean. This is the main problem that we are facing. Yes, our efforts to reduce green house gas emissions are effective, they bring results, but they are minute as compared to what is needed. In my report to the Assembly of the GEF in August 2006 I informed the member countries of the GEF that in 12 years time through its support emissions were reduced with less than 1% of what is actually needed annually. This challenge remains. And we should realize that developing countries cannot solve the high levels of emissions of developed countries.

Secondly, although we see successes in transforming markets to become more energy efficient, we also need to acknowledge that climate change still is, in the words of Sir Nicholas Stern, the single greatest market failure ever. Our successes need to be replicated and need to go to a higher level.

For adaptation and vulnerability to climate change, the challenge is immediate and urgent. In fact, we note that in many countries there is a decline in coping levels – an “adaptation deficit” – because of increasing pressure on local populations. New approaches in empowering local communities and countries to address these issues are emerging and should be shared and scaled up. We need further discussion and agreement on the best approaches and support practitioners with setting up monitoring and evaluation to better understand what is happening and what can be done.

An important challenge is to integrate social and biodiversity approaches. Let us not offer biodiversity on the altar of accommodating climate change.

On all of these issues the challenge is to support and further develop capacity in developing countries to ensure engagement at all levels, everywhere.

What we most importantly need, and this extends from the local to the global level, is better ways to deal with the many trade offs that local communities, governments and the global community are facing. Trade offs between mitigation and adaptation, between prevention and the cure, between development and the environment, between local and global benefits. On Sunday morning our keynote speaker, Bob Picciotto, made an appeal to use **human security** as a framework for evaluation. This would allow bringing in all aspects of global development that need to be addressed: poverty, food security, peace and freedom of violence and international trade, amongst others. Climate change can thus be looked at in a wider perspective of global inequities. This would also call for evaluations of the efforts of developed countries to stop climate change and to support developing countries in adapting to emerging climate challenges. Bob Picciotto called for more joint international evaluations to tackle the global problems.

Suggestions for other encompassing frameworks were made during the Conference and it is challenge to continue this discussion and see whether a common approach could emerge. We heard about a lifecycle approach. We discussed asset based approaches. We can build on an existing framework like the ecosystem services methodology. We were informed about risk screening. These discussions need to continue.

How will we proceed?

Summarizing, the following agenda for the future emerges:

1. We need to capitalize on our emerging **best practices in evaluating mitigation** of climate change. These best practices should be further developed into frameworks and guidelines that are internationally accepted by the professional community of evaluators. It is possible and it must be done.
2. The positive **results** that we can report on must be an inspiration for countries and communities to scale up their efforts.
3. On **adaptation and vulnerability**, a continuing effort must take place to **exchange experiences** and look for emerging best practices and frameworks. The urgency of the issue requires evaluators, practitioners and researchers to become involved in design and in empowering communities and governments.
4. These issues require a continuation of contact amongst evaluators, practitioners and researchers dealing with these issues, rather than a diaspora at the end of this meeting, where everybody goes their way and this Conference is written off as another one time ad hoc exercise. We need to establish an issues driven **community of practice**, a global network of evaluators, practitioners and researchers working on climate change and sustainable development. Through

this network we need to support evaluation capacity in developing countries.

5. This community of practice should involve and be supported by the **global and regional evaluation associations**, such as IDEAS, AFREA and IPEN, **and partnering associations**, such as the GEF Evaluation Office, the Fonds Français pour l' Environnement Mondial (FFEM) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD), DFID/IDRC' s climate change program in Dakar, and others.
6. This community of practice will need to **reach out** to other communities: other evaluation networks, other research communities, other communities of practitioners and users.
7. Our network would build on the results of this Conference, through a **repository of knowledge** of all documents gathered before the Conference, and the speeches, presentations and papers discussed here, and forthcoming evaluations and studies. The Bibliotheca and the GEF Evaluation Office, the World Bank, the Institute for Development Studies, DFID/IDRC and FFEM/AFD, and the evaluation associations, will discuss this further and ensure that this will happen.
8. In turn this repository of knowledge and the community of practice will ensure that best practices and results will be **communicated** to practitioners and governments and the global community involved in climate change action.
9. This would allow us to follow Bob Picciotto' s dictum, reinforced at this Conference by Leila Takla, that evaluation should **speak truth to power**.

It seems we have an impressive agenda for action. This conference has turned into a call for action rather than a passive look at past experiences. I hope this summary expresses the emerging consensus of this conference but would like to invite everybody to continue to discuss these issues and the agenda for the future on the website of the conference, which we hope to turn into an interactive mechanism for this purpose in the near future. We will be in contact with you!

