



CLIMATE – NEWS

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ICFRE – CLIMATE CHANGE NEWS From the Biodiversity and Climate Change (BCC) Division, Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education, P.O: New Forest, Dehra Dun – 248006

CLIMATE CHANGE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES URGE G8 TO IMPOSE 40% EMISSIONS CUT BY 2020

10 July, 2009

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/jul/10/developing-countries-emissions-cut-g8>

Developing nations are prepared to make concessions on climate change targets if the G8 fulfils its side of the bargain in the run-up to the climate change talks in Copenhagen in December, a key negotiator told the Guardian.

The developing countries want the G8 nations to sign up to a 40% cut by 2020, but that figure is off the radar of the EU and, given the unwieldy legislation laboriously passing through the senate, not a possibility for the US. In important forward steps this week, the G8 agreed to cut its emissions by 80% by 2050 and said worldwide emissions should fall 50% by the same date.

However, the value of this pledge has been reduced by the lack of an agreed start date from which the emission cuts should be measured, making it a distant promise.

Luis Alfonso de Alba, the lead co-ordinator on climate change for the developing countries at the G8, told the Guardian that their call for a 25-40 % cut in developed nations' emissions by 2020 was based on what UN climate change scientists had recommended.

The Mexican diplomat gave some ground, saying: "It does not have to be a specific target of 40%. "That is what we hope to achieve, but this is a process of negotiation." He said a G8 commitment to a 2020 target was "fundamental", adding: "It is logical that developing countries will commit once they have certainty that developed countries are committing themselves.

"We need to see the mid-term targets go much higher, and we want to see all the developed countries, including the US, move at the same pace. "We still need to see numbers. We respect the internal debate in the US, but it is important for the US to understand that this is a global issue and a multilateral negotiation."

He said developing nations could not "just sit and wait to see what the internal debate in the US resolves". He insisted the meeting chaired by Mr Barack Obama under the aegis of the Major Economies Forum this week had made progress in accepting common responsibility for the crisis and for the need for carbon emissions to peak.

"Climate change is no longer seen as a north-south issue," he said. "It is no longer a donor recipient relationship. "The most important message is that assuming individual responsibilities to fight climate change can start immediately, and by doing it immediately it will be easier to reach an ambitious agreement at Copenhagen."

GLOBAL WARMING SHRINKS GLACIER AT ALARMING RATE

9 July, 2009

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/globalwarming/5786588/Global-warming-shrinks-glacier-at-alarming-rate.html>

One of the world's largest glaciers, on the west coast of Greenland, is shrinking at an alarming rate as a result of global warming - with potentially dire consequences.

Ilulissat, a UNESCO-listed glacier, is shedding ice into the sea faster than ever before, according to one of Denmark's top experts on glaciology. Andreas Peter Ahlstrom, a researcher with the Geological Survey of Denmark and Greenland institute, said the glacier has receded by more than 10 miles (15 km) since 2001.

The Ilulissat glacier and icefjord have been on UNESCO's world heritage list since 2004 and it is the most visited site in Greenland. Its ice and pools of emerald-blue water are admired by tourists and studied by scientists and politicians around the world.

The Danish government chose Ilulissat as the venue for recent talks with some 30 countries to discuss ways to slow global warming - a place that Shfaqat Abbas Khan, a glacier expert from the Danish Space Centre, describes as the "most visible and striking example of climate change."

The glacier is the most active in the northern hemisphere, producing 85 million tonnes of icebergs per day, according to Mr Khan. He has been studying Ilulissat using satellites, GPS or through his own visits to the area and says December's UN climate change conference in the Danish capital of Copenhagen may come too late to save the glacier.

"A lot of glaciers in Greenland are melting at more or less the same pace and even with an ambitious agreement at the summit ... it will be impossible to stop this," Mr Khan said.

The melting ice is both a consequence and a cause of global warming: ice reflects heat, as opposed to water which absorbs it and warms up the climate, thus causing more glaciers and snow to melt. Khan explained that Ilulissat is losing more than 30 cubic kms (seven cubic miles) of ice a year, compared to 10 cubic kilometres in 2000 and just five in 1992.

TREES MADE IN LAB TO CAPTURE CO₂ FASTER – DON'T NEED SUNLIGHT OR WATER TO FUNCTION

15 July, 2009

The Times of India, New Delhi

The Thought of an artificial tree usually excites memories of building and ornamenting a chri-stmas centerpiece. But here's an innovation that will put those plastic branches to shame: scientists at Columbia University are developing a structure that can capture carbon 1,000 times faster than a real tree. Klaus Lackner, a professor of geophysics at the university, been working on the project since 1998, according to a CNN report, and is optimistic about a near-future application.

Modern improvement in coal-fired power plants have reduced carbon emissions, but Lackner is seeking a different function. "The tree "would be used to trap carbon that has already been emitted into the air by car gasoline or airplane fuel CNN reports.

Unlike the real thing the synthetic, "tree" does not needs direct sunlight, water, a trunk or branches to function, as it looks more a cylinder than a soaring Redwood. The concept which Lackner say is flexible in size and can be placed nearly anywhere, works by collecting carbon dioxide on a sorbent cleaning and pressurizing the gas, and releasing it. Similar to the way a sponge collects water, the sorbent would collect carbon dioxide. Resin filters on top would capture CO₂ from the ambient air. The CO₂ is then removed at the bottom using a series of moisture and compression steps, according to one of the concept's developers.

Each synthetic tree would absorb one ton of carbon dioxide per day, eliminating an amount of gas equivalent to that produced by 20 cars.

CLIMATE HAS NO IMPACT ON H1N1: WHO

24 August, 2009

The Times of India, New Delhi

The World Health Organization has said the swine flu virus is not affected by any variation in the temperature. Citing cumulative report of swine flu cases and deaths from different nations around the globe, WHO said the H1N1 virus has infected people from several countries with varying temperatures.

As per a WHO report, more than 18 lakh laboratories have confirmed cases of the pandemic influenza and nearly 1800 deaths registered from across 177 countries and territories around the globe.

Dr S J Habayeb, WHO representative in India, said, “H1N1 virus has no relation to weather. Swine flu cases have been heard from countries with cold and hot temperature.” Citing example, he said, “Swine flu cases have been equally reported from Texas, New York and California, through the temperature varies in all the three places. Texas are the warmer than New York”

CLIMATE CHANGE NATIONAL NEWS

‘CLIMATE PLAN NOT FOR WORLD SCRUTINY’

2 July, 2009

The Times of India, New Delhi

India’s national action plan on climate change will not be put up for international scrutiny or monitoring. This was stated by environment and forest Minister Mr Jairam Ramesh on 30 June. Internationally, there has been pressure building on developing countries like India to put their entire set of domestic actions on climate change up for international verification even though the money provided by the international community through the UN process may be limited to a part of it.

Taking a strong position ahead of the crucial July G8+5 meeting in Italy that the Prime Minister would be attending and where climate change is slated to be a key issue, Mr Jairam Ramesh told reporters that India would under no circumstances undertake any commitment for quantified reduction of greenhouse gases. Sharing India’s international climate stance for the first time, he laid down eight non-negotiable points that the country would stand by the negotiations progress towards the key meet in Copenhagen.

While asking for a new intellectual property regime on existing climate change technologies, he said India was asking for a collaborative approach on research for future technologies. He said India could itself become a technology leader in the climate business. He also reiterated India’s stand that the existing UN Framework Convention on Climate Change was not under renegotiation.

CLIMATE COMMITMENT MADE, BUT NO CONSENSSES ON BAU

25 July, 2009

The Times of India, New Delhi

India may have made a political commitment to reduce its emissions below the ‘business-as-usual’ (BAU) scenario but it has become difficult for the government to define what ‘business-as-usual’ really is. A meeting held at the environment ministry with all the experts working in the field was only able to conclude that it is not possible to define ‘business-as-usual’ for developing countries like India.

In order to expand the discussions on an issue that is bound to be central to climate change negotiations, the government has decided to compile and share the results of all the studies by August. Experts from The Energy Resource Institute (TERI), TNCCAER, Mckinsey and company, World Bank and IRADE attended the meeting. All these institutions have been , in

their private capacity or backed by funds from the government, carrying out detailed economic modeling to measure what volume of emission India would emit in future.

The economic models are used to project changes in various sectors of the economy in the year to come and based on the level of fuel consumption the future economy would need, are then utilized to estimate the total future green house gas emissions. But just as any other statistical model used to predict changes in economy, they are built on several basic assumptions about the levels of investments, possible growth rates and advances in technology. The half day meeting at the ministry saw each research group present its results as well as share its set of assumption for the first time.

Sources said it became evident during the presentations that the assumptions made and consequently the results varied substantially in the projections. the group of officials and experts accepted that it was extremely difficult to understand how changes in quantum and direction of investments and technological input in a developing economy could alter the scenarios. Earlier, one of the negotiators had also pointed out that the idea of ‘going below BAU’ was fraught with risk and India should instead push for energy intensity and poverty reduction as a measure of sustainable growth.

‘INDIA HASN’T AGREED TO BINDING EMISSION CAPS’

29 July, 2009

The Time of India, New Delhi

Environment and forest minister Mr Jairam Ramesh on Monday defended the government’s position on climate change, informing Rajya Sabha that India had not agreed to any bindings emission caps at the recently concluded G-8 meeting. He restated that India would not agree to any emission cut targets.

“ We have not taken any commitment in the G-8 statement (signed in Italy recently). In the statement, which is signed by heads of several countries, they have talked of aspiration targets for 2050. There is no mention of any move to put pressure on developing countries. I want to make it clear that India will not succumb to any pressure,” Mr Jairam Ramesh said.

The minister’s reply in the upper house carefully skirted around the fact that India is not even a member of the G-8 grouping and is therefore not a signatory to the G-8 statement. He was replying to Ram Gopal Yadav’s (SP) question whether the US had assured India that it would not put pressure for emission cuts. The controversy at Italy had started with India shifting from its non-negotiable position on climate change in another meeting—the US-backed Major Economic Forum—Which also held its sitting parallel to the G-8 conclave. The MEF is a mechanism supported by the Obama regime and comprises the G-8 countries and other emerging economies including India and China.

CLIMATE CHANGE: CHINA JOINS INDIA AGAINST WEST

26 August, 2009

The Times of India, New Delhi

India and China on Monday agreed to jointly fight any attempt by western national to link trade with Climate Change and impose trade-related penalties on developing countries that fail to meet environmental standards.

Union minister of state for environment and forest, Mr Jairam Ramesh, asked Chinese officials here whether they will stick to New Delhi's line during Climate talks in Copenhagen in December. India is worried that high-pressure attempts by Western nations to get developing countries to deviate from their stand might bear fruit.

"Chinese side assured me there will be no change in its stand. There is total convergence of views between India and China on Climate Change," Ramesh said after meeting Xie Zhen Hua, Vice chairman of China's National Development Reforms Commission.

Xie briefed the Indian delegation, which included environment secretary Mr Vijay Sharma and Climate Change Negotiator RR Reshmi, about a recent China-US accord on Climate Change issues. He assured Indian officials that the accord was on renewal energy and technological collaboration and nothing else should be read into it.

India and China have agreed to coordinate their views on different aspects of climate changer before every major international meeting on the subject. These conclusions reached between Mr Jairam Remesh and Mr Zie are expected to be spelt out in form of an agreement in the coming days. "Both countries want to negotiate with West for higher levels of financial assistance and technology transfer in return for promises to do their best to tackle environmental problems. China remains committed to principal of common but differentiated responsibilities of developed and developing nations" he said.

ON CLIMATE, FOLLOW THE CHINESE: JAIRAM Jairam Calls for Emulating Beijing on Emission Control

27 August, 2009

The Times of India, New Delhi

China has agreed to include India in a three-nation (China, Japan and South Korea) joint mechanism on climate control, minister of state for environment and forests Mr Jairam Ramesh said. "We must be plugged into what they are doing," he said.

Ramesh said India wanted to emulate China on the use of technology and management controls to reduce emissions and poisoning of rivers. He told his Chinese counterparts that India would like to be made part of a mechanism on climate control issues. China has promised to take up New Delhi's request with the two other member countries, he added. Impressed with the way Chinese have taken up cleaning up of rivers and lakes, Mr Jairam Ramesh said: "We do not have a major scientific institution in the area of environment."

Two Indian teams would be visiting China by the yearend to study Chinese methods of dealing with industrial pollution and cleaning up of lakes and rivers, Ramesh said. “China has followed a more scientific approach in cleaning up rivers and lakes,” he said, adding that hundreds of crores spent on the Ganga and Yamunna have not yielded significant results.

India and China are due to sign a collaboration agreement on several areas of climate change on Wednesday. Another agreement for joint research on Tibetan plateau will also be inked. New Delhi is also seeking Chinese participation in the research for management of coastal zones. It wants an institution from China to join hands with the National Institute of Sustainable Coastal Zone Management, which is being set up at Anna University, Chennai.

ICFRE NEWS

PARTICIPATION OF ICFRE AT BONN, GERMANY CLIMATE CHANGE TALKS, 10-14 AUGUST, 2009

Mr V.R.S. Rawat, Scientist 'D', Biodiversity and Climate Change Division, ICFRE participated in the meetings as part of the Government of India delegation.

UPCOMING EVENT

18TH WORLD CONGRESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL JOURNALISTS

19 - 22 October, 2009
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Working theme of the Congress is “Education to End Climate Poverty”. The Congress is organized by the Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists and supported by the Sri Lankan government and the United National Environmental Programme (UNEP). Aims to bring together journalists, writers environmental communicators, other media and educational professionals as well as NGO activists and government officials to discuss the role journalists and educators have in informing the public on climate change.

Details: Dharman Wicremarratne, Asia-Pacific Forum of Environmental Journalists, PO Box 26, Colombo, Sri Lanka.

Fax: +94-1-883187. Email: ejournalists@sltnet.lk
Web: www.environmentaljournalists.org

RESUMED AWG-LCA 7 AND AWG-KP 9:

2 - 6 November, 2009

Barcelona, Spain. A resumed seventh session of the AWG-LCA and the resumed ninth session of the AWG-KP are scheduled to take place from 2-6 November 2009, in Barcelona, Spain. For more information contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: <http://unfccc.int/>

TWENTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE MONTREAL PROTOCOL (MOP-21):

4 - 8 November, 2009

Port Ghalib, Egypt. This meeting is scheduled to take place from 4-8 November 2008, in Port Ghalib, Egypt. For more information contact: Ozone Secretariat; tel: +254-20-762-3850/1; fax: +254-20-762-4691; e-mail: ozoneinfo@unep.org; Internet: <http://ozone.unep.org/>

GREEN CONCLAVE

12 - 13 November, 2009
Delhi, India

Website: <http://www.greenconclave.in> Contact name: Mukta Rohra/ Padmapriya C

A platform where Earth System Sciences and research can integrate with industry and policy. It brings together people who can propose a holistic vision of a better, greener Earth and can be the frontrunners in achieving the vision.

Organized by: Gateway Media Pvt. Ltd.
Deadline for abstracts/proposals: Not available.

Check the event website for latest details.

CARBON CREDIT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

12 - 13 November, 2009

Delhi, India Website: <http://www.greenconclave.in>
Contact name: Mukta Rohra/ Padmapriya C

A platform where Earth System Sciences and research can integrate with industry and policy. It brings together people who can propose a holistic vision of a better, greener Earth and can be the frontrunners in achieving the vision.

Organized by: Gateway Media Pvt. Ltd.
Deadline for abstracts/proposals: Not available.

Check the event website for latest details.

FIFTEENTH CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE UNFCCC / FIFTH MEETING OF THE PARTIES TO THE KYOTO PROTOCOL

7 - 18 December, Copenhagen, Denmark

UNFCCC COP 15 and Kyoto Protocol COP/MOP 5 are scheduled to take place from 7 to 18 December 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. These meetings will coincide with the 31st meetings of the UNFCCC's subsidiary bodies. Under the "roadmap" agreed at the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali in December 2007, COP 15 and COP/MOP 5 are expected to finalize an agreement on a framework for combating climate change post-2012 (when the Kyoto Protocol's first commitment period ends). For more information contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2009

UNFCCC SUBSIDIARY BODIES:

31 May, 2010 - 11 June, 2010

Venue to be confirmed. The venue for the June 2010 meetings of the UNFCCC Subsidiary Bodies is likely to be Bonn, Germany. For more information contact: UNFCCC Secretariat; tel: +49-228-815-1000; fax: +49-228-815-1999; e-mail: secretariat@unfccc.int; Internet: http://unfccc.int/meetings/unfccc_calendar/items/2655.php?year=2010

SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CLIMATE, SUSTAINABILITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN SEMI-ARID REGIONS (ICID II):

16 - 20 August, 2010

Fortaleza, Brazil. ICID I was held in 1992 in the run up for the Rio Conference and delivered substantive technical inputs for the UN Convention to Combat Desertification negotiations.

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