

Key points raised in Working group III: Adaptation to Climate Change

Adaptation is already a reality for an increasing number of countries, especially for developing countries which will bear the brunt of climate impacts. Even with a global temperature rise limited to 2 degrees, adaptation will be a huge burden.

Adaptation and mitigation are of equal importance in the convention and adaptation can be a deal maker or breaker for the negotiations on a post 2012 regime. In addition, adaptation and mitigation are closely interlinked.

A main thrust of the debate was on about free standing adaptation activities versus mainstreaming adaptation in national planning and strategies. Various comments were made on this issue:

- In practice, there is a continuum between stand alone adaptation and mainstreaming. Free standing activities have a direct appeal to the population, but mainstreaming will be required to achieve the scale of adaptation action needed, to achieve an integrated approach and to prevent short term fixes and mal-adaptation.
- There is a need to be pragmatic: adaptation is very context-specific (local, regional, national priority setting needed).
- Mainstreaming actions will need to be monitored, verified and reported. The additional cost of mainstreaming adaptation needs to be evaluated and taken into account.

Technological cooperation-capacity building

- There are a lot of activities already happening, i.e. under the UNFCCC Nairobi Work Programme. There is a need to build on the good results obtained so far.
- There is a need to promote better North-South linkages in terms of research.
- There is a need to promote better linkages between policy makers at all levels and research community, notably with a shorter knowledge cycle: information needs to be passed on more swiftly to decision makers.
- Learning by doing, building on the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPAs) and further implementing them is the first step in right direction.
- Role of private sector in sharing know-how, i.e. in risk sharing, management and transfer.

Institutional architecture

Exploiting synergies further is needed:

- Between ODA and UNFCCC funds;
- Between UNFCCC and relevant conventions such as Convention on Biological Diversity;
- Between different governance levels, international to local/communities.

Getting the line ministries more deeply involved in climate negotiations.

Role of Public-Private Partnerships should be enhanced at all levels.

Governance of the Convention was a key point of discussion in relation to fund management. The Adaptation Fund was cited as a good example, which would still need to prove its capacity to deliver effectively and equitably.

Finance

It was recognised that we have ball-park figures which underline important adaptation needs.

- Some participants called for a hundred-fold increase of funding for adaptation, while others pointed to practical constraints.
- New and additional funds are needed. Innovative fund raising mechanisms should contribute to that. Adaptations levy is a good example, but it needs to be scaled up and explored beyond the CDM levy. Polluter pays principle should be applied.
- Due to concerns on absorptive capacity and aid effectiveness, move towards general budget support is desirable.

Role of the private sector should be enhanced, notably for risk sharing and financing new technologies.

Conclusion

Adaptation is not a subsidiary issue. It will be the key for concluding the negotiations and reconciling climate change and sustainable development issues (taking into account Millennium Development Goals). The forthcoming Commission communication should make a link to the real world of adaptation.