greenhouse gas management institute

Point of contact: Eros Artuso
Head of EU Office
Avenue du X Septembre, 140
L-2550 LUXEMBOURG
email: eros.artuso@ghginstitute.org

Contribution to the EU consultation on the 2015 International Climate Change Agreement: Shaping international climate policy beyond 2020

The Greenhouse Gas Management Institute welcomes the opportunity to contribute to discussion on the 2015 International Climate Change Agreement, which will determine the shape of international policy beyond 2020. At present, a global agreement is at an early stage of development under the UNFCCC process. Reaching consensus will be challenging and will require both the political will to agree on far-reaching changes in global production and consumption patterns and a robust technical foundation to support agreed actions.

Question: What should be the future role of the Convention and specifically the 2015 Agreement in the decade up to 2030 with respect to finance, market-based mechanisms and technology? How can existing experience be built upon and frameworks further improved?

The design of any new agreement should be sufficiently flexible to recognize various policy approaches at the UN level, encompass a broad range of activities (e.g., nationally appropriate mitigation actions and REDD+ activities), and recognize national and regional environmental, social, and economic barriers.

The success of any future agreement will rely on the willingness of all countries, taking into account their specific capacities and capabilities, to take action to reduce GHG emissions and enhance their removals while bolstering efforts to adapt to climate change's inevitable impacts.

We believe the cornerstone of global efforts to address climate change is the establishment of rigorous greenhouse gas (GHG) measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems. Just as other fields (e.g., engineering or financial accounting) rely on certified professionals, the implementation of robust MRV systems require a qualified professional workforce. The importance of a well trained, experienced, ethical workforce cannot be understated. The successful implementation of climate change programming —now and in the future— is contingent on a robust global community of GHG measurement and management practitioners.

Further, we believe it is of paramount importance to build, and provide the necessary support to, a global community of experts with the highest standards of professional practice in measuring, accounting, auditing, and managing GHG emissions. This effort is critical to ensuring that market mechanisms and policy responses to climate change are effective and credible, as well as a valuable source of new green jobs.

Concrete steps can be made to support the professionalization of GHG measurement and management yielding valuable policy relevant outcomes:

- Enhance governance and quality assurance through the establishment of capacity building infrastructure, ethical norms, competency standards, professional certification programs, and associated oversight mechanisms;
- Bolster public confidence, and therefore extend the range and political feasibility of policy, by establishing a competent and professional practitioner corps trusted with implementing the technical elements of climate policy;
- Catalyze the creation of entirely new curriculum on GHG management in the educational sector (primary and universities) making the discipline as tangible to young people as medicine or law complete with clearly identifiable professional roles.

Question: How could the 2015 Agreement further improve transparency and accountability of countries internationally? To what extent will an accounting system have to be standardised globally? How should countries be held accountable when they fail to meet their commitments?

In tandem with support for climate change practitioners, GHG data management systems deserve particularly close attention in a new climate change agreement. It is essential for reporters at all scales to account for their emissions in a format that can be universal understood.

Any new global agreement should support the development of best practices in the design and operation of market-based instruments to reduce emissions of GHGs in new jurisdictions that are developing emissions trading and carbon trading policies. The new agreement should aim to set up a framework to assist countries to start with the implementation of market and non-market-based approaches and over time to assist new initiatives such as the development of a forum and facility to help countries implement a broader mitigation and adaptation agenda.

We see numerous initiatives to establish national carbon market mechanisms, each with its own specific purpose. All of these new initiatives present myriad opportunities. For the business community this includes opportunities not only for low-carbon solution investors, but the implementation workforce and its attendant professional community. Further, as carbon markets are built on MRV, it is essential that their accounting rules and verification requirements are standardized and harmonious to ensure their environmental integrity and aid in the future linking of markets.

We again are grateful for the opportunity to share our brief views on these issues and look forward to continuing the exchange of ideas and further elaborating our proposals.

Annex I: Background on the Greenhouse Gas Management Institute

The Greenhouse Gas Management Institute was established as a not-for-profit organization in 2007 and currently includes staff and adjunct faculty around the world. From its founding, the Institute has collaborated with leading experts and institutions to develop technically rigorous GHG measurement and management training curriculum. The Institute's course catalogue is a combination of both general coursework developed to support the skills development of climate change practitioners and specialized courses for major GHG programs (e.g., UNFCCC national inventory review, UNFCCC Clean Development Mechanism, Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative) support compliance and auditing (i.e., verification) systems. Institute coursework is delivered globally through a combination of e-learning and onsite workshops — to date GHGMI has filled more than 3,000 course seats for learners in over 80 countries.

The Institute also fosters and connects its alumni and the broader community of GHG practitioners with dynamic online networking tools and important professional initiatives, including:

- EP(GHG): the only professional climate change certification to be accredited to ISO standards
- *Greenhouse Gas Measurement & Management*: an international peer-reviewed research journal
- GHGMI Code of Ethics: launched in 2009

Additionally, the Institute provides selected support to key climate change programs seen as critical to the development of a qualified professional climate change workforce. The Institute team draws on experience completing over 500 climate change assignments where it has been internationally recognized for its contributions to the field of GHG measurement, reporting, and verification. Clients have included UNFCCC, IPCC, US EPA, USAID, Government of Canada, RGGI, Standards Council of Canada, World Bank, ICAO, Thomson Reuters, Accenture, Transparency International, UNEP, REC Turkey, and many more.