

Brief Information on COP21/CMP11

Introduction

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is organizing its 21st session (COP21) in Paris, France from 30 November to 11 December 2015. Over 60 head of states and 195 ministers are expected to attend this conference. Climate Change is considered as one of the most burning issues that the world is facing today; hence, the United Nations is making every effort to agree on a global deal to address the problem.

Since the failure of Copenhagen climate summit in 2009, the pressure has mounted on world leaders to deliver an international climate agreement in Paris. Failure to agree on such a global deal will lead to a run away climate change where the vulnerable countries like Least Developed Countries (LDC) and low lying developing island states will suffer the most. Global leaders will have to agree to limit the global average temperature rise to 1.5 °C based on pre industrial levels as indicated by science and demanded by the most vulnerable countries. Since the adoption of UNFCCC in 1992, Paris meet will be the most important gathering to respond to the climate crisis.

Nepal is a party to the UNFCCC and its Kyoto Protocol. Though Nepal has contributed insignificantly to the causes of climate change, it is on the receiving end to its impacts. It already faces problems such as distorted monsoon rain, increasing floods and landslides, risk of glacial lake outburst floods, droughts, and other climate induced disasters. Nepal has been engaged in the climate negotiation process since the very beginning and attends its subsequent COP meetings. Nepal also successfully chaired the Least Developed Countries Group in the year 2013-2014 and continues to play an active role to meet its national and LDC interest. It is already making robust efforts to address climate change through national policy formulation, institutional strengthening and developing climate related programs in response to national needs and international commitments.

As climate change is a global problem, solutions will also have to be found at the global level. It is very crucial for a small and vulnerable country like Nepal that COP21 becomes a success. In order to agree to an international climate agreement, various issues will be discussed at COP21 meeting in Paris. For Nepal, the key issues will be the following:

Adaptation

- Bridge the funding gap for adaptation. Support for implementing adaptation programmes and country capacity including NAPA and NAP formulation.
- Need for supporting adaptation related technology development and transfer.
- Need for a special programme for LDCs.
- Support to identify, plan, implement and monitor adaptation actions.
- Anchoring Adaptation Committee and LEG with established compliance committee.

Loss and Damage

- Need to operationalize insurance facility by setting a mechanism to 'pay' insurance premium to the agriculture-dependent poor and climate-affected farmers.
- Advocate to develop user-friendly tools and methods for L&D assessment, including cost calculation and damage assessment.
- Build capacity and promote sharing of updated knowledge and information on risk reduction measures, and post-disaster rehabilitation measures.

- Ensure 'compensation and relocation of the climate victims'.
- Piloting of L&D activities in the mountains, well integrated with capacity building.
- Recognise Warsaw International Mechanism institutional arrangement, procedures and mechanisms in Paris agreement.

Climate Finance

- Scale and ambition must increase from developed country parties to meet the USD 100 billion commitments by 2020.
- Predictability, transparency, clarity on additionally and sources of climate finance.
- Balanced allocation of 50:50 of available finance for mitigation and adaptation.
- Adaptation financing must be grant-based. LDCs and SIDS should be prioritized.
- Country owned, country driven, and direct access is key to sustainable implementation. No conditionality for developing countries, especially on LDCs.
- A process must be in place to explore new and alternative source of finance.

Mitigation

- Need to advocate for a long term global temperature goal - 1.5 degree.
- A review system which would allow for ambition to be ramped up in light of insufficient mitigation commitments.
- Consistency is needed with the temperature goal, reduction of global GHG emission by a specific date, specific percentage rate and indication of the basis need to define obligations for parties to implement their commitments / contributions or to fulfill the obligations they have defined for themselves.
- Principles of progression, comparability and fairness, and Para 11 of Lima call for action needed for reference for additional flexibilities for LDCs.

Technology Transfer

- Capacities for low carbon climate resilient technologies.
- Intellectual property rights is a barrier for technology. This needs to be addressed.
- International and domestic enabling environments for technology absorption.
- A technology framework that is mandated to provide medium to long-term guidance to the Technology Mechanism. A research, development and demonstration facility.
- Strengthening the Technology Needs Assessment process for implementation.

Capacity Building

- Capacity building has to be country specific. Stand-alone approaches have to be developed into a dedicated international Capacity Building Mechanism.
- Establishment of a Capacity Building Coordination Committee.
- Obtain a mandate to develop modalities by the Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee (IPC) for the new agreement's consideration.
- Launch work program to implement capacity building framework agreed to, at COP7.
- Support language highlighting the special needs and situation of LDCs and SIDS.

Over all, COP21 should agree to a legally binding international climate treaty providing special focus on the vulnerable and poor countries like the Least Developed Countries. Countries like Nepal will no longer be able to shoulder the burden of climate change and achieve sustainable development at the same time.