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UN official exhorts countries to work harder to build climate change consensus



UNFCCC Executive Secretary Christiana Figueres addresses media on final day of negotiations at Climate Change Conference in Bangkok

8 April 2011 – The top United Nations climate change official today urged countries to work harder for further progress on combating global warming this year, saying there were positive discussions on the Kyoto Protocol on greenhouse gas emission reduction at this week’s meeting in Bangkok, Thailand.

“Discussions in Bangkok under the Kyoto Protocol importantly included not only a focus on what should happen with regard to the future of the protocol but also how it will happen,” [said](#) Christiana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change ([UNFCCC](#)), at the end of the six-day meeting.

“It is significant that there is a strong desire to build on the Kyoto rules and a desire to find a political solution in 2011,” she added.

The Kyoto Protocol is an addition to the UNFCCC that contains legally binding measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and whose first commitment period is due to expire next year. Negotiations on the second commitment phase of the Protocol continue.

Picking up on the climate change agreements reached in Cancún, Mexico last year, governments began organising their work for 2011 in Bangkok, including activities under the long-term cooperative action negotiating track of the convention, which brings countries together to decide collective solutions to climate change.

The UN climate change talks in Cancún concluded with a package of decisions to help countries advance towards a low-emissions future. Dubbed the “Cancún Agreements,” the decisions included formalizing climate change mitigation pledges and ensuring increased accountability for them, as well as taking concrete action to protect the world’s forests.

Ms. Figueres said that while developed countries were mainly focused on addressing the implementation of the Cancún Agreements, developing countries wanted to ensure that those issues that were not resolved in Cancún yet are part of the comprehensive Bali Action Plan that governments agreed to in 2007 are dealt with in a balanced way.

The result of this year’s work will culminate at the UN Climate Change Conference in Durban, South Africa, at the end of this year.

“What is clear from this week is that in Durban, governments will address both the work to complete what was agreed in Cancún and the work which Cancún left unresolved,” said Ms Figueres.

The Bangkok meeting was officially the first week of a three-week session, which will resume in Bonn, Germany, on 6 June.

Ms. Figueres pointed out that while Cancún was a significant step, meeting the long-term challenge of climate change requires increasingly strong international agreements, backed by national policies that give incentives to all sides to take aggressive and collective action on a global scale.

“The UNFCCC is the place where governments have committed to act together on climate change,” she said. “At home, under their different political systems, they need to back up collective action with strong domestic policies,” she added.

The Bangkok meeting was attended by around 2,000 participants from 175 countries, including government delegates, representatives from business and industry, environmental organisations and research institutions.

Cancun

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