

Recommendations

Development Cooperation Seminar

“Thai Voices are Heard in Copenhagen”

On Monday, 14 September, the UN Country Team, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment and the Thai working group for Climate Justice hosted a seminar in Bangkok that brought together government officials, international development agencies, civil society groups, including community's organisations and peoples' networks representatives, academics and other experts to establish a dialogue between government agencies and CSOs on national position towards international climate change negotiations, so as to enhance public participation in determining the country's position in the run up to the COP15 in Copenhagen. It was considered among the first public meetings on climate negotiations in Thailand to embrace such broad domestic stakeholders especially marginalized people. The other key stakeholders include civil society organizations, academia and the media. The Thai Working Group for Climate Justice, a loose coalition of Thai NGOs established in early 2008, is one of the key groups of CSOs working on climate change policy issues. They promote and facilitate people's participation to engage in climate change issues.

A number of short- and long-term policy recommendations emerged from the seminar, as highlighted below.

Measures for medium and long-term impact

Thailand needs to transform itself into a low-carbon, liveable, and equitable society pursuing a more sustainable development strategy:

1. Thailand should consider setting its own emission reduction targets or any comparable measures for emission reduction and control, regardless of the agreements reached at the international level, and keeping into consideration national poverty reduction goals. Emission reduction activities should focus first on the energy and industrial sectors and in the large-scale industrial farming sector.
2. Reduction in energy consumption and CO2 emission should be seriously implemented, particularly in urban areas and among higher income population.
3. Adopt a more sustainable and participatory energy development strategy, including support capacity of communities to utilize and manage local energy sources, moving away from a fossil-dependent economy.
4. Strengthen farmers' capacities to improve the quality of soil for carbon sink and protect the rights of small-scale farmers over the benefits from carbon by supporting sustainable agriculture.
5. Recognise communities increased adaptive capacity, guarantee support and strengthen their rights to access, utilize and manage local resources.
6. Fair and open patents and intellectual property rights systems over mitigation and adaptation technologies should be promoted in both domestic and international

agreements/ policies to transfer technology that is appropriate and applicable to local contexts, contributing to the overall local sustainability and livable society, not just to reduce emissions.

Measures for immediate and short-term implementation and impact

Negotiations in Copenhagen should be based on the principle of historical responsibility and climate justice:

7. Support the only existing legal instrument to fight climate change, the Kyoto Protocol (KP), ensuring the second commitment period of KP includes commitments with ambitious emission reduction targets of developed country parties.
8. Carbon trading schemes which hinder real progress in the reduction of Co2 emission, should not be further encouraged as a way to fulfill developed countries' commitments.
9. Ensure that financial transfers are in addition to ODA and that financial support is channeled in a transparent, democratic and responsive way; address the needs of the most vulnerable and operational modalities are simplified. Ensure a balance between finance for mitigation and adaptation and that climate change related finances are channeled and governed under COP guidance.

Establish participatory and consultative rights-based processes:

10. Continue on-going consultations with academia and civil society and include representatives from these groups in the negotiating team itself.
11. Establish communication and consultative mechanism to brief the public on the outcome of the negotiations and its implication for different groups of people living in Thailand.
12. Establish forums at local level where communities can raise their concerns and under which communities can more effectively be involved in the stewardship over forest areas and other natural resources. Adopt bottom-up, participatory, and rights-based planning; make easily available scientific data and information; facilitate access to funds for adaptation, including setting up of locally-managed funds.
13. Carefully review and recognize community rights and access to land and forests prior to considering the adoption and implementation of REDD programmes.
14. CDM at the current form and national process must be reviewed in a participatory and transparent manner.