



No time to lose: What can we expect from the UN climate talks in Bonn?

Climate change is increasingly threatening CARE's vision of a world of hope, tolerance and social justice, where poverty has been overcome and people live in dignity and security. In response, CARE wants to see urgent and significant emissions reductions, far greater support to help poor and vulnerable communities scale up their efforts to adapt to climate change and build their resilience, and new mechanisms to help manage the loss and damage that is already taking place as a result of climate impacts. CARE believes that these policy responses to climate change must also be equitable and contribute to improving the livelihoods and increasing the resilience of poor and marginalised people worldwide.

That's why the upcoming United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) negotiation session in Bonn, which takes place from 4 to 15 June 2014, is an important milestone as we head towards the UN climate conference in Peru (COP20, December 2014). Both events must result in substantial steps forward if governments are to agree on a new and ambitious climate change framework to tackle the growing climate crisis when they meet in Paris in 2015. This briefing outlines key issues on the agenda at the June negotiation session and summarises CARE's key demands.

1. TACKLING CLIMATE CHANGE: Will we see any progress to help limit global warming to a level that will avoid climate catastrophe for the planet's poorest people?

The recent report from the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) again highlighted that, as average global temperatures rise, the risks posed by climate change will increase disproportionately.¹ The recent surpassing of atmospheric CO₂ concentrations of 400 ppm is another stark warning.² Negotiators and ministers attending the upcoming UNFCCC session in Bonn must be clear that if they fail to raise their ambitions to reduce global emissions before 2020, according to the IPCC's latest assessment "the current level of expected actions can lead to temperature increases by 2100 of between 3.7 and 4.8°C".³ The IPCC report also contains strong evidence that 2 degrees C of warming above pre-industrial levels would certainly not constitute a "safe" level of warming. Therefore, global warming must be limited to 1.5 degrees. Hitting this target will require substantial global emissions reductions in the coming decades.⁴

Nationally, there are signs of both hope and despair. Overall, developed countries continue to lag far behind the scale of emissions cuts long hoped, and frequently called for, in COP decisions (25-40% reduction by 2020 based on 1990 levels). In some countries, governments are partially backtracking on previous commitments and lowering their ambition (Australia, Japan) or struggling to meet their targets (in Germany, for example, emissions have recently risen). The EU is likely to slightly exceed its promised reduction target of 20%, but due to ongoing internal disagreement between Members, a real increase in ambition before 2020 is still not in sight.⁵ In stark contrast, some emerging economies (such as Mexico, China and India) have recently announced increases to previously agreed emissions reductions targets.⁶ The US government's proposed new regulations, which aim to reduce emissions from existing power plants, are another important signal that climate change is being taken increasingly seriously, although more ambition is required to ensure US policy is in line with the need to urgently limit global warming.⁷

For CARE, and our work with poor and marginalised communities, it is critically important that ambitious steps to reduce emissions go hand in hand with promoting social justice and equity for poor women and men, and people's rights to development. Increasingly, the pressure is on rich country governments to show that they are serious about international climate action and that they are going to take the necessary steps to avoid dangerous climate change.

Negotiators meeting in Bonn will have their first joint opportunity to process the findings of the latest IPCC reports. A number of briefing sessions on the various assessment reports will be held by IPCC experts. The so-called Structured Expert Dialogue (SED) will review whether the long-term global goal of limiting global temperature rise to 2 or 1.5 degrees C remains adequate and assess overall progress towards achieving it. At the political level, two ministerial roundtables⁸ on 5 and 6 June provide an important chance for serious, high-level exchanges between governments. All ministers agreed at previous COPs to hold these special events, and pressure is expected to mount on those who have chosen not to attend.⁹ The first session will focus on those countries who have agreed to mitigation commitments under the Kyoto Protocol until 2020, most notably the EU. The second session will focus on all countries. Ministers will be expected to provide clear answers as to:

- The actions that are being taken to increase mitigation ambition before 2020;
- Their assessment of the implications of the IPCC's findings for mitigation and adaptation;

- Actions they are taking to increase financial and technical support to enable enhanced climate action in developing countries.

Governments, particularly from rich nations, must demonstrate leadership and use Bonn to signal their intention to seriously pursue actions, policies and initiatives to close the ambition gap.

2. THE NEW CLIMATE DEAL: What progress can we expect towards a new fair, ambitious and binding climate change agreement in 2015?

Building on agreements from the COP19 climate talks in Warsaw, Parties to the UNFCCC met in March in Bonn to make further progress towards a new climate change deal, to be agreed in Paris in 2015. The ambition, as set out in Warsaw, is to leave COP20 this December with a so-called 'draft negotiating text' which will lay the foundations of the new agreement. In essence, governments will have to accept the text as a basis for meaningful negotiations in Paris. In order to reach that objective, it is crucial for Parties to make effective use of the Bonn session, as only one joint session remains (in October) ahead of the Lima climate talks. The co-chairs of the ADP, which is the negotiation stream tasked with working on the 2015 agreement, have already compiled and clustered previous proposals and inputs from Parties in a "reflections" document.¹⁰ A number of countries (e.g. Japan) have also prepared new submissions outlining their views on the recent negotiations.¹¹

The second ministerial roundtable is also important in this regard as it aims to identify the key steps ministers need to initiate in order to deliver "ambitious nationally determined contributions (NDCs)"; in short, the proposed mitigation pledges for post-2020 which will need to be converted into commitments as part of the 2015 climate agreement. NDCs must be submitted no later than March 2015. The negotiations will also seek to determine what information will be required in these national pledge submissions in order to fully judge their implications.

In CARE's view, the discussions must clearly highlight that the overall goal in the development of Nationally Determined Contributions must be to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees C. Equity will be another defining parameter. The need for equitable responses to climate change mitigation in this

context should be addressed through (a) a global equity approach taking into account a dynamic interpretation of the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and (b) Nationally equitable responses which do not undermine the rights of poor people, but rather seek to improve their livelihoods.

Many clean energy and other solutions are available to help deliver both of the above, but there is also a risk of false solutions being promoted which ostensibly deliver emission reductions but which actually undermine the livelihoods of the poor. Thus, despite the tight timeframe for preparing NDCs, a decent consultative national process, which includes the voices of the poor, is important.

The session should also strengthen the profile of adaptation and loss and damage as part of the ADP discussions on a future global climate agreement. Climate Action Network International, of which CARE is a member, has recently laid out its expectations in this area.¹² The document provided by the co-chairs of the ADP again provides the basis for discussions in Bonn.

3. CLIMATE FINANCE: Can we expect any progress on developed countries' promises to deliver USD 100bn of climate finance by 2020?

The most positive news on climate finance has undoubtedly been the recent meeting of the Green Climate Fund Board on 21 May.¹³ While the GCF is not, as yet, fully operational, the Board has agreed on essential issues necessary to ensure the GCF can begin receiving funds. There is no longer any excuse for developed countries to postpone commitments to contribute to the GCF.

The major issue remains the continued lack of confidence that developed countries will actually deliver on their promises to mobilise USD 100bn of climate finance for developing countries by 2020. In Warsaw it was agreed that developed countries must report on their progress to scale up public resources towards the USD 100bn goal by COP20 (submissions are due on 24 September). Developed countries must also think seriously about how they can build confidence in their intentions and counter the perception that they are mostly concerned with finding ways to use private sector finance to make up the USD 100bn target, rather than generating public funds which can help trigger additional action and investment. These issues should be dealt with as core business in the long-term finance workshop to be held on 7 and 12 June.

4. ADAPTATION: What progress will we see to help strengthen support for the efforts of vulnerable developing countries to adapt to climate change?

The June negotiations will address both climate impacts and climate change adaptation. Again, the briefings on the IPCC assessment reports will provide important background.

With regard to **National Adaptation Plans**, Parties are expected to start taking stock of recent developments, in line with a key COP19 decision, which will also determine whether they will aim for a revision of the initial guidelines agreed at COP17. Reflecting the statements of some of the world's most vulnerable countries, increasing and more reliable financial support will be a key concern, despite the fact that NAPs are now receiving increased attention.¹⁴ Identifying areas where extension of the guidelines, rather than revising them, (e.g. in the area of support, assessing costs, activities beyond integration of development planning) may guide Parties' approaches. In CARE's view, promoting comprehensive and truly consultative pro-poor national planning for adaptation is an important task to help strengthen adaptive capacity in vulnerable countries, and while implementation of current priorities must proceed, progress on the longer-term NAPs is very important.¹⁵ The Bonn session, as well as COP20, must help raise further support for action on NAPs.

Under the **Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability (NWP)**, which aims to assist Parties in their adaptation planning and action from a scientific and technological point of view, an important task will be to agree on future activities (ca. for the next 2 years). At COP19, a new phase of the NWP was agreed in principle and a number of areas have been highlighted where specific activities should be undertaken (ecosystems; human settlements; water resources; health). To some extent, the choice of activities can build on previous measures. For example, in 2013, an NWP expert meeting on ecosystem-based adaptation took place which concluded with a number of recommendations for further actions, such as synthesising best practice, consideration of monitoring and evaluation approaches, promoting south-south cooperation etc.¹⁶ Assessing the implications of the recent IPCC reports, and responding to questions which emerge in ADP discussions on the 2015 agreement, can guide the framing of key activities.

In addition, the session must also consider recommendations from an expert meeting that took place in early April.¹⁷ The meeting addressed important matters with regards to the use of **indigenous and traditional knowledge and practices** for

adaptation, needs of local and indigenous communities, and the application of **gender-sensitive approaches and tools** for adaptation. The SBSTA should aim to adopt conclusions and a draft decision that includes these key recommendations. Some, for example, are relevant to institutions such as the Green Climate Fund, which must integrate a number of these key issues into its funding. If this is reflected in a COP decision at the end of the year, it could be an important element to help strengthen the importance of such issues, and promote adaptation actions that serve the needs of the most vulnerable.

The **Adaptation Committee**, which is the key body that promotes coherence on adaptation under the Convention, will hold a special event during the UNFCCC session for the first time and enter into dialogue with a range of organisations. The AC will primarily conduct its work in advance of COP20 in the run-up to its next meeting scheduled for this autumn and which must result in strong recommendations to the COP. This event is also a good opportunity to reach out and consult with experts present in Bonn.

5. LOSS AND DAMAGE: What progress can we expect on 'loss and damage'?

With the establishment of the Warsaw International Mechanism (WIM) on Loss and Damage, COP19 took considerable steps towards addressing the increasing loss and damage from climate change impacts. If developed effectively, this mechanism may be of real value to poor and vulnerable people and countries when it comes to preventing loss and damage, and also with regards to addressing loss and damage in cases where mitigation and adaptation efforts are insufficient.

In March 2014, the governing body of the WIM met for the first time in Bonn. Its main task for 2014 is to develop a two-year work plan to be approved at COP20.¹⁸ However, progress at the initial meeting of the WIM was limited and failed to deliver a clear draft of the work plan. No official communication on the outcomes of the initial meeting has yet been made available. However, the session should be used to report on progress and consult with Parties and observers on priorities.

Some of the key aspects that in CARE's view should be addressed in the work plan include ways to enhance the understanding of and promote action on:

- How L&D affects particularly vulnerable segments of society and what to do about it;

- How to promote functioning social protection systems in the face of loss and damage;
- How to enhance data collection on slow-onset events and expected economic and non-economic impacts;
- How loss and damage will affect patterns of migration, displacement and human mobility;
- How to address measures of rehabilitation, redress and compensation for loss and damage;
- How loss and damage affects adaptation planning and adaptation needs;
- Ways to mobilise additional financial resources, based *inter alia* on historical responsibilities to correct the injustice of climate impacts.

For the negotiations in June, the SBI and SBSTA are primarily tasked with considering the future composition of the Executive Committee, as well as further modalities for the work of the WIM. In designing this composition, the negotiators can rely on a range of models and experience from existing bodies. Key aspects that should be considered (and already partially applied in other bodies) are:

- The composition should cover a broad range of expertise in accordance with the mandate of the WIM and areas highlighted above; the current model, with representatives from different technical bodies, reflects some of the expertise required;
- It should be set up according to gender balance, thereby also respecting decision 23/CP.18;
- The composition used in the Adaptation Fund and the Adaptation Committee (16 members, slight majority for developing countries, regional groups and vulnerable countries) is a good example of a workable approach, but delegates might also want to think about a combination with the current approach with representatives from technical bodies; however the composition must clearly determine which groups people represent to allow effective working;
- Modalities should be applied which allow the effective engagement of technical experts and observers in order to make progress on difficult issues (e.g. through setting up specific task forces or working groups, webcasts of meetings etc.).¹⁹

Further operationalising the WIM is central to the success of COP20, and this session must make substantial progress

on the question of modalities and composition so that the mechanism can start its work in 2015.

6. GENDER EQUALITY: What progress do we expect when it comes to the promotion of gender equality in climate action?

Following on from COP18's landmark "Gender Decision", COP19 further strengthened the profile of gender concerns in the UNFCCC and the overall climate change context, although COP19 did not deliver a clear Gender Action Plan as demanded by the Global Gender and Climate Alliance (GGCA) of which CARE is a member. However, COP19 provided several "hooks" and provisions as opportunities to take this work forward and ensure stronger commitments around COP20. Furthermore, the integration of gender has moved forward through (1) including gender as a criterion in the 5th Review of the Financial Mechanism²⁰, (2) including gender as a guiding parameter in the Nairobi Work Programme on Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability²¹, and (3) the adoption of the Green Climate Fund Board's work plan. In its seventh meeting in mid-May, the GCF took a number of decisions on key issues that seek to integrate gender considerations. The recommendations issued by the gender workshop²² provide another basis to work towards a more comprehensive gender decision in 2014. In Bonn, negotiators should therefore consider potential core elements of a COP20 decision.

7. LAND-USE and FORESTS: Will we see any progress towards a framework that ensures the conservation of forests, including the reduction of emissions?

COP19 concluded with a set of decisions which outlined key parameters for the promotion of REDD+ (Reduced Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation). Their relevance has been further recognised through the recent Green Climate Fund decision; namely that its performance framework for results-based payments for avoided emissions will build on COP19 decisions. This year, the crucial issue of safeguards will be high on the agenda of the UNFCCC work on REDD+. Later this year (24 September), both governments and observer organisations will be asked to submit their views on experiences and lessons learned from the development of

information systems on addressing safeguards. They should also consider what type of information is required.

The Bonn June session can therefore help take steps towards the preparation of meaningful submissions if it provides a platform for exchange and, for example, by considering information that is already available. The framework for this discussion was set up via the COP decision in Cancun. The safeguards therein referred to aspects such as the inclusion of "respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities", taking into account relevant international obligations, and "the full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities." Unfortunately, there is an indication that these safeguards are not yet being taken seriously, causing concerns about the adverse effects of REDD+ approaches.

With regards to agriculture, the Bonn session is tasked with continuing where COP19 left off, where no decision could be reached apart from a mandate for SBSTA to consider the findings from last year's workshop related to adaptation in agriculture and potential co-benefits.²³ In particular, the role of mitigation in agriculture is a continuing issue of controversy among Parties. In CARE's view, a key guiding parameter for these discussions is the need to safeguard food security and the rights of small and marginalised farmers, and to avoid false solutions that might undermine these objectives.

8. OUTLOOK: From Bonn to Lima

In the run-up to COP20 in Lima, and roughly three months in advance of the extraordinary UN climate summit to be held on 23 September in New York, the Bonn negotiations must result in substantial technical progress on the key issues outlined above. The recent reports from the IPCC underline just how urgent it is that policy-makers take real and meaningful action to avoid catastrophic climate change. Governments, and particularly those from developed countries, have an obligation to lead from the front, and seriously step up their efforts – and ambitions – to promote low-emission development solutions and help the poorest and most vulnerable increase their resilience to climate change impacts. There is no time to lose.

Endnotes

- 1 IPCC, 2014: Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Summary for Policymakers. http://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/images/uploads/IPCC_WG2AR5_SPM_Approved.pdf
- 2 See http://www.wmo.int/pages/mediacentre/press_releases/pr_991_en.html
- 3 UNFCCC Information note on the session: http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/bonn_jun_2014/application/pdf/140514_kp_ministerial_infnote.pdf
- 4 IPCC, 2014: Climate Change 2014: Mitigation of Climate Change. Summary for Policymakers. http://report.mitigation2014.org/spm/ipcc_wg3_ar5_summary-for-policymakers_approved.pdf
- 5 http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/Lists/OSPSubmissionUpload/50_62_130447012389834989-20140430_eu.pdf
- 6 China upgraded its solar energy target to 70 GW (from 20 GW) and its wind power targets to 150 GW (from about 90 GW) by 2017. Mexico announced a doubling of its renewable electricity to 25% by 2017. The new Indian Prime Minister declared a few days after his election that he aims to deliver solar energy to an additional 400 million people by 2019, thereby improving the livelihoods of many poor people.
- 7 See e.g. <http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs/elements/2014/06/obama-follows-through-on-carbon-emissions.html>
- 8 http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/bonn_jun_2014/application/pdf/140514_dp_ministerial_infnote.pdf
- 9 <http://www.rtcc.org/2014/05/20/bonn-climate-talks-low-ministerial-turnout-expected/>
- 10 <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/adp2/eng/3infnot.pdf>
- 11 <http://unfccc.int/bodies/awg/items/7398.php>
- 12 See e.g. the submission by Climate Action Network International: <http://www.climatenetwork.org/publication/can-submission-adaptation-and-loss-damage-under-adp-2-june-2014>
- 13 See e.g. <http://www.rtcc.org/2014/05/21/uns-green-climate-fund-finalises-operating-procedures/>
- 14 See e.g. Submissions by the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS); the US submission provides interesting views on recent experiences in a number of countries. For the submissions see: <http://www4.unfccc.int/submissions/SitePages/sessions.aspx?showOnlyCurrentCalls=1&populateData=1&expectedsubmissionfrom=Parties&focalBodies=SBI>
- 15 CARE is also engaged in the Southern Voices project to develop adaptation principles for national adaptation planning. <http://southernvoices.net/en/home/sv-on-adaptation.html>
- 16 <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/sbsta/eng/02.pdf>; In 2012, an expert meeting on water and adaptation was held. <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2012/sbsta/eng/04.pdf>
- 17 <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2014/sbsta/eng/inf11.pdf>
- 18 See CARE blog: <http://www.trust.org/item/20140403125403-40so1/?source=search>

19 See CARE, WWF, ActionAid, 2013: Tackling the climate reality - A framework for establishing an international mechanism to address climate change loss and damage at COP19.

http://www.careclimatechange.org/files/tackling_the_climate_reality.pdf

20 http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/warsaw_nov_2013/decisions/application/pdf/cop19_fifth_review_finmech.pdf

21 http://unfccc.int/files/meetings/warsaw_nov_2013/decisions/application/pdf/cop19_nairobiwp.pdf

22 For more information on official gender activities:

http://unfccc.int/gender_and_climate_change/items/7516.php

23 http://unfccc.int/files/methods/redd/application/pdf/agriculture_workshop_report.pdf

Photos from left to right:

Heavy industry feeds high-carbon lifestyles which depend on energy from fossil fuels, driving climate change.

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Muahera Antonia works in her fields in Sinhanhe, in Northern Mozambique's Nampula province.

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Negotiators attend a plenary session during the March climate change talks held in Bonn, Germany.

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