

15 May 2009

## Poorest countries urgently need funds to combat climate change

Poor countries already suffering from the impact of climate change urgently need up to USD2 billion to help adjust and cope, according to a new report submitted to the United Nations.

The funds are needed to help the most vulnerable countries, mostly in Africa and small island states, the Stockholm-based Commission on Climate Change and Development (CCCCD) said, writes Reuters.

U.N. Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon** told a meeting in New York on the CCCCD report that effects such as droughts, floods, storms, forest fires and melting glaciers hit the poor most.

"Billions of people are at risk," he said. "That is why adaptation to climate change is a key element in the negotiations for a new climate deal."

Ban said simple community-based measures can save lives, such as early warning systems, disaster planning and improved management of crops and land.

The CCCCD report calls for donors to immediately mobilize USD1 billion to 2 billion. The commission said current financing mechanisms for adjusting to climate change are problematic and countries must be able to receive and distribute funds from multiple sources with a minimum of transaction costs.

The United Nations is striving for a new climate treaty to be agreed at a conference in Copenhagen in December. A new treaty would succeed the Kyoto Protocol, which limits climate-warming greenhouse emissions and expires in 2012.

Ban said the "clock is ticking" ahead of the meeting and urged U.N. member states to agree a deal that cuts greenhouse gas emissions, promotes green development and helps the most vulnerable countries adapt to a changing climate.

"We still have much work to do to seal the deal," he said.

U.N. climate chief **Yvo de Boer** told reporters it is essential that the Copenhagen meeting gives clarity on issues such as how much industrialized countries will reduce emissions and what major developing countries will do to limit growth of emissions.

It must also address developing countries' need for financial support to help them adjust to climate change, he said. "I do not believe developing countries will be willing to address climate change in a much more vigorous way unless there is international support," de Boer said.

De Boer said there is a strong commitment to reach an agreement in Copenhagen but added that a deal will not be easy to reach because the amount of time remaining is so limited.

**Gunilla Carlsson**, who chairs the CCCD and is Sweden's minister for international development cooperation, said that fighting poverty and climate change are "inseparable."

The CCCD, made up of 13 international experts including Carlsson, was established by the Swedish government with the aim of looking at how countries can adapt to climate change.

Sources: Reuters

#### **The Commission's conclusions**

**The Commission calls for the mobilization of new and additional climate adaptation money now, but not at the expense of ongoing development programs.**

By additional, the Commission means additional to the commitment of 0,7 % of gross national income (GNI) for official development assistance (ODA). The concept of additionality applies to the raising of funds but does not prescribe how new funds must be spent.

Priority should be given to the most vulnerable countries – African and small island states in particular. We must support existing National Adaptation Programs of Action as entry points to long term integrated plans and strategies.

Because the creation of new mechanisms might delay essential action, the Commission recommends a two-step approach to mobilizing new and additional funds for adaptation in developing countries.

As a first step, donors are urged to immediately mobilize USD1-2 billion to assist vulnerable, low-income countries that already suffer from climate change impacts.

In a second step, countries must agree on a mechanism with democratic and efficient governance, and the necessary flexibility to cater for the variety of needs.

At the national level, countries must be able to receive and allocate funds from multiple sources with a minimum of transaction costs. And local government and organizations must have access to the resources they need.

The Commission finds the current proliferation of financing mechanisms for adaptation problematic; it creates a coherence problem and puts pressure on the management capacity of developing countries. No further vertical funds should

be created for adaptation.

While more work is required to better estimate adaptation needs, there are promising options proposed to raise funds. Some could bring between USD5 and USD15 additional billion a year – which is in the lower range of estimated needs.

Source: CCD Commission

More information: [CCD Commission](#)