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"The connecting link: Water security & the Adaptation Committee's work programme" Side Event report

Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center, Japan (OECC)
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This is a report of a side event held at the 38th Session of the Subsidiary Bodies of the UNFCCC from June 3rd to 14th 2013, in Bonn, Germany.

- Title : The connecting link: Water security & the Adaptation Committee's work programme
- Date : 16:45 – 18:15, Monday, 10 June, 2013
- Organiser(s) : Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO)
- Venue : Room Wind at the Ministry of the Environment of Germany
- Presenter(s) : Dr Ursula Schaefer-Preuss (Chairperson of GWPO), Dr Ania Grobicki (Executive Secretary of GWPO), Fred Kossam (Malawi; member of the Adaptation Committee), Richard Sherman (South Africa: member of the Green Climate Fund), Alex Simalabwi (GWPO), and Rober Van Lierop (Vice chair of SBI)
- Abstract: Until water security is at the centre of development, economic growth will be reversed by extreme climate events. This side event showed innovative approaches in water management that help countries adapt to climate change through increased investments in water security, a key goal of the UNFCCC.

■ Summary

1. Ursula Schaefer-Preuss: Opening remarks
- In her opening remarks, Dr Schaefer-Preuss stated that adaptation issues are scattered among many different negotiation streams under the UNFCCC, and thus are not dealt with in a coherent fashion. She also stressed the importance of water resources management, which is not only a cross-cutting adaptation issue, but also relevant to mitigation

2. Fred Kossam: Presentation the Adaptation Committee
- Mr. Kossam gave explanations about the historical background of the Adaptation Committee as the following: the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) was established in 2001. And the Nairobi Work Programme started its work in 2006. Then

the Cancun Adaptation Framework (CAF) came into existence at COP16 in 2010. And as part of the CAF, the Adaptation Committee (AC) was established in order to promote enhanced adaptation action in a coherence manner.

■ The Adaptation Committee has met twice so far: October 2012 and March 2013. They have adopted the 3-year work programme, which was endorsed by the COP. To facilitate the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) process constitutes an important part of the mandate of the AC. The 3-year work programme includes many other elements, such as, building partnerships with regional institutions and UN bodies, working on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of adaptation, organising annual adaptation forums in conjunction with the COP to raise the profile of adaptation.

■ Water is definitely one of the key issues when it comes to adaptation. In effect, water is highlighted in many of the on-going NAPA projects.

3. Richard Sherman: Presentation on financing for adaptation

■ As a member of the Malawian delegation and the Green Climate Fund Board, Mr. Sherman presented on the views of the African Group on adaptation as well as the GCF's approach to adaptation financing.

■ The African Group is concerned about the currently low level of finance available for adaptation partially due to the low prices of CERs. They are trying to search for ways to maximise complementarities among different financing sources for adaptation. They feel that there needs to be an increased level of financing particularly for capacity building of existing institutions and projects at the national and regional levels. In light of these priorities, the African Group is currently drafting a COP decision text on adaptation financing.

■ In regard to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), they have already had several meetings. They agreed on country-driven approaches and business models among other rules and procedures. They still need to work on performance indicators, sectoral scope and access modalities. They are hoping to start distributing funds from September 2014 after they have successfully sorted out these remaining questions.

4. Alex Simalabwi: "Water and Climate Programme"

■ Mr. Simalabwi made a presentation on the Global Water Partnership Organisation (GWPO), focusing on their priorities and activities.

■ According to Mr. Simalabwi, the overall objective of the GWPO is to support countries to integrate water resources management into their development planning. The approach of the GWPO is partnership-based: linking different development agendas.

- Their key activities are: 1) building institutional capacity and knowledge; 2) developing tools and generating evidence base; and 3) strengthening partnerships and coordination.

- They are implementing many different water and climate development programmes, including, linking national planning on resilience at the trans-boundary and local levels; improving water security and climate resilience on the ground; integrating water security and climate resilience in development planning and decision-making processes; supporting development of "no regrets" investment and financing strategies for water security; and human and institutional capacity development.

- The events they have organised have attracted attention of high-level policymakers; a number of water-related ministers attended them. They are also planning to organise more than 40 workshops in Africa, launch a joint programme on drought in partnership with the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), build resilience in Delta regions in the world. In terms of regional coverage, they are planning to expand their activities to Latin America, the Caribbean and Asia.

- Mr. Simalabwi identified some challenges in carrying out their work, which include: low absorption capacity, inadequate institutional capacity, insufficient links between adaptation efforts and investment planning, inadequate coherence among different sectors. He underlined the importance of both bottom-up and top-down approaches, different UNFCCC mechanisms such as the Adaptation Committee and capitalising on the NAP process.

5. Robert Van Lierop: Presentation on his personal reflections on water security

- Mr. Lierop, vice chair of the SBI, made a brief presentation on his personal opinion on the issue of water security.

- He stated that he feels that scant attention has been paid to energy and water security. He also remarked that water should be placed in the centre stage in designing adaptation policy at different levels. He then went as far as affirming that water security constitutes one of the important bases for upholding human rights.

■ **Q&A**

Q. (Representative from One World): What would be the criteria set by the GCF for organisations to be qualified to be able to receive funds from the GCF?

A. Mr Sherman: We will set fiduciary requirements as well as social and environmental standards. We still need to discuss regional and sectoral preferences.

Q. (Unidentified): How do you measure complementarity in financing adaptation?

A. Mr Sherman: For example, while the GEF has mechanisms such as direct access to help countries have access to its funding, the GCF could focus on project-level financing. In other words, we can maximise complementarity by providing the type of funding that is not covered by other funds.

Q. (Representative from One World): How would it be possible to secure increased funding for adaptation worldwide? How is the Adaptation Committee planning to make a real change?

A. Mr Aimalabwi: Knowledge sharing is one of the keys to securing adaptation financing. For example, information on water security should be shared among all the relevant ministries.

Mr Kossam: The NAP process is going to be very critical in the work of the Adaptation Committee. They are also going to request other relevant organisations to submit information on their adaptation-related activities. They are also planning to establish a clearing-house type of mechanism on adaptation. In terms of finance, they have made a submission to the long-term finance work programme.

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