

Mainstreaming Climate Change in Development Planning and Policies

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1. Introduction

Global Warming has been accelerated since the Industrial Revolution in the U.K. in the 18th century. The average volume of CO₂ emission rose during the last 250 years from 8 million tons a year to 7.1 billion tons, raising the accumulated total around the Earth to 780 billion tons and during the last century alone the average temperature of the atmosphere rose by 0.6 degree centigrade. Since the oceans, lakes, rivers and forests can absorb only 3.1 billion tons of CO₂ emitted annually, the remaining 4 billion tons are expected every year to be accumulated in the atmosphere, contributing further to global warming, with all its implications to **Development**.

2. Impact of Global Warming

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1) On the World and Developed Countries

Unlike a few decades ago, the world has in recent years been experiencing a large number of typhoons, hurricanes and tornadoes every year, resulting in historically unprecedented incidence of natural and partially man-made disasters affecting the loss of homes, human lives, farm crops and fishery harvests. In 2002 there were widespread floods and heat waves all over western Europe. Those floods forced nearly half a million people to take a temporary refuge in uplands, resulting in the damages amounting to US\$20 billion. And in 2003 the heat wave raised the temperature in Paris to 40 degree centigrade, killing over 15,000 in France alone. In 2005 there was a strong hurricane hitting hard Louisiana and other coastal states along the Gulf of Mexico, killing more people than those killed by the 9.11 incident.

2. Impact of Global Warming

Furthermore, in Siberia underground icebed, once considered to be permanent, has now begun to melt, loosening up into the air the CO₂ accumulated for over tens of thousands of years, whereas an increasing portion of the iceberg in the North Pole and the glacier in Chile as well as the snowcap at the top of Mt. Kilimanjaro are melting, all interpreted to be the result of global warming during the last century. According to the recent publication of the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), it is not unlikely that at the end of this century the temperature of the atmosphere may rise by as high as 5.8 degree centigrade, producing heat waves all over the world, repeating incessantly the experiences in France in 2003, and exposing the population in the North to malaria and other tropical communicable diseases.

2. Impact of Global Warming

2) On Developing Countries

Global warming resulting from increasing GHG emission every year both in developed and developing countries has been inflicting untold damages in developing countries in many ways. Heat waves and the melting icebergs are already deteriorating water quality through frequent floods in low regions of developing countries as well as in small Island developing countries (SIDCs). It is also considered probable for the sea level to rise by 0.88 meters, either reducing fresh water supply and contaminating groundwater in many SIDCs or submerging them below the sea level and resulting in the loss of over 90 % of the long, white-sand beaches currently in use, producing millions of environmental refugees.

2. Impact of Global Warming

Floods, typhoons and other natural disasters including the Tsunami have become more frequent and more devastating in recent years, damaging not only agricultural crops, fishing villages but also human lives and precious cultural assets of historical significance in many developing countries of Monsoon Asia. Heat waves in Orissa, India in 2003 led to the death of 4,600 persons. Longer and harsher dry seasons have also been hitting hard particularly those developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa with low annual level of rainfalls, contributing further to scarcity and low quality of freshwater resources and threatening crop, cattle and agricultural production. There is a high probability of the poor, children and the aged exposed to famine, undernourishment, further poverty and increasing health risks.

2. Impact of Global Warming

Developing countries are making every adaptation effort in dealing with these enormous challenges of climate change. However, the situation facing them, particularly the poor is becoming increasingly untenable during the last decade or so, deteriorating from worse to worst. Developed countries and transition economies are urged to accelerate their efforts for reducing GHG emission at home and at their multinational corporations operating overseas. Together with international organizations, they are urged to expand their development assistance to developing countries for climate change adaptation.

3. Mainstreaming Climate Change (CC) in Development Plans and Policies in Developing Countries

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In SIDCs and LDCs, climate change adaptation has become a serious challenge to all stakeholders and they have been appealing both to developed countries to accelerate their efforts for GHG emission mitigation at home and to the international community to increase their financial and technical assistance for adaptation. In other developing countries, national efforts have just begun to accelerate adaptation to climate change and restrain and/or reduce GHG emission through technological development such as improved energy efficiency,

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and cleaner and renewable energy, as well as restructuring development policies in favour of sustainable development, low carbon society and resources recycling. It is reasonable to say, however, that none of these developing countries have so far yet mainstreamed climate change and global warming into their long-term development plans, policies and programmes, in spite of obvious benefits of mainstreaming CC. Uncertainty and unpredictability of climate change have to be reckoned with and overcome by preparedness.

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1) **Benefits of Mainstreaming CC**

- a) Development will be less vulnerable to climate change in the longer run.
- b) Development will be environmentally more sustainable and equitable between generations and between sub-national regions.
- c) Development will contribute more to people's income, employment and human security, thus leading to sustainable human development as well as less internal and border conflicts.

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2) Barriers to Mainstreaming CC

Reasons for insensitivity until recently to climate change in development plans and policies in most developing countries except for SIDCs and LDCs are six-folds. **First**, most of the developing countries have not perceived themselves as having been constantly exposed to adverse impact of global warming as much as their SIDC and LDC counterparts. **Second**, they have had to face more immediate challenges of poverty, illiteracy, access to drinking water and health facilities, HIV/AIDS incidence and other urgent domestic issues affecting their population. **Third**, there has still been an uncertainty as regards the causal relationships between global warming and those immediate development challenges facing them.

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Fourth, there is a lack of financial, human and institutional capacity to deal with major development challenges, let alone global warming in most developing countries. **Fifth**, political leadership in most developing countries has not recognized the gravity of social cost associated with the negligence of climate change adaptation until recently when they have been struck with an increasing volatility of climate change, e.g. temperature and precipitation, affecting their food and agricultural production and more frequent incidence of natural disasters. **Finally**, climate change mitigation and adaptation have remained a major concern to those in the Ministry of Environment, while the formulation of national development plans and policies has been a prerogative of Economic

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Planning Unit as in Malaysia, Bappenas as in Indonesia, or Economic and Social Development Board as in Thailand. Since the Ministry of Environment has been a relatively weak agency, oftentimes not even represented in the Cabinet, climate change has not been on the priority agenda for national development planners in most developing countries. The fact that the international community including bilateral donors have not been so aggressive in providing developing countries with long-term assistance in climate change adaptation, although quite positive in emergency assistance to natural disasters such as earthquakes and tsunami, may also have contributed in some ways to developing country's insensitivity to climate change issues.

4. A Proposal for National and Global Policy and Institutional Regimes for Integrating Climate Change with Development

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- 1) The international community must ensure that:
 - a) All countries prepare national plans, policies and programmes promoting sustainable development, integrating climate change concerns in every sectoral and regional (sub-national) development plans.
 - b) All countries must annually make peer reviews of all the stakeholder progress toward the above goals of integrating climate change with major development projects and programmes concerned with priority issues.
 - c) Development implementation authorities must take into account all the implications of climate change in carrying out their respective development projects, etc.

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d) Stricter enforcement of the existing national and international agreements and protocols on climate change and global warming is encouraged in all countries to be fair to all parties and stakeholders.

2) For this purpose, all Annex One countries and advanced developing countries should expand their bilateral assistance to developing countries and to multilateral agencies including technical assistance for strengthening research, planning and coordination capacity in development planning authorities. In doing, given the critical importance of community-based adaptation approaches, developing planning authorities could give priority to such approaches in every implementation agency, by using special funds created in Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other international development and

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3) More intense negotiation should be initiated by all countries concerned in the Asia-Pacific region for the installation of East Asian Community with regional environmental cooperation schemes including climate change mitigation and adaptation, and a Northeast Asian regime to facilitate the above. Both Asian Development Bank and relevant U.N. agencies are encouraged to cooperate in this important and urgent task.

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR
KIND ATTENTION AND
MANY QUESTIONS AND
COMMENTS.**

FOR FURTHER INQUIRY, PLEASE ADDRESS
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