

To be or not to be?

The Copenhagen Summit is finally upon us. Many of the world's leaders will be there, which is good news. Will it be the moment when, despite their many differences, they commit their countries to a common course?

Or will their political and financial differences be just too great to allow a collective response? That is, despite the overwhelming scientific evidence and the growing numbers of people whose health, lives and livelihoods are being destroyed by rising temperatures.

A muddled compromise would be a bad outcome. Decisiveness and hard edges to agreements are needed. It is difficult to see how the political will and organizational effort that has led to this moment can again be marshaled.

Expectations of what constitutes success have changed. A legally binding agreement is no longer realistic; positions remain too far apart (see APP info note). The goal now is a robust political agreement; one that fast forwards a treaty during 2010. While disappointing, this downgrade is a blessing in disguise.

An ambitious and detailed political deal covering adaptation, mitigation, finance and technology transfer is better than a half baked treaty, one that would not include the US. It could give the negotiators, locked and lost in rival texts and brackets, clear political guidance. And it gives LDCs, Africa and small island states, already at a disadvantage in terms of negotiating capacity, more time to consolidate their positions.

The issue now is to ensure the political agreement is comprehensive and fair. This means binding commitments by rich countries to capping emissions and clear plans to reduce emissions growth and intensity by the big emerging economies. It also means a timeline for delivering adequate technical and financial support, over and above existing ODA commitments, to support LDCs to adapt to climate change, and shift to low carbon growth, starting now.

Neither of these will be easy to secure. The history of broken promises is long. But without them, Copenhagen will be just more hot air.

Countdown to Copenhagen

Rich countries accept they must help poor ones to adapt to climate change but [there is a split in Europe as to whether funding should be in addition to or separate from ODA](#)

[IFIs pledge to use their organizations' mandates, expertise and resources to help confront the challenges of climate change](#) and to make the best possible use of available funding.

[Commonwealth nations agree to \\$10billion in climate funding to help poorer countries](#) develop their economies with modern green technologies. According to the declaration, there is strong support for a legally binding international agreement to be reached by the end of 2010.

[The Working Group on Climate Change and Development issued a new report calling for a radical re-envisioning of current economic models](#) in order to tackle poverty, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and solve other environmental problems.

[Even after the US and China unveiled targets to curb greenhouse gas emissions](#), the world's combined pledges ahead of COP15 still fall short of what experts say is needed to avert dangerous global warming. Still, emission promises by the world's biggest polluters add positive momentum to the negotiations and enhance prospects for success in Copenhagen.

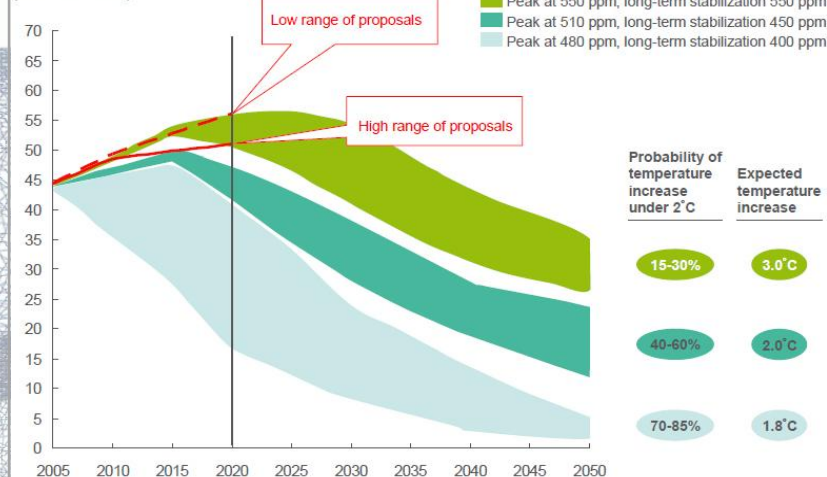
The APP Secretariat has issued the [2nd edition of an information note](#) addressing the key issues of relevance to least developed countries that are currently under discussion in the run up to Copenhagen.

The APP Secretariat held a workshop ['Kick-Starting Africa's Carbon Markets'](#) in which key stakeholders were convened to explore practical ways in Africa can increase its access and participation to carbon markets.

Potential emissions paths

Global GHG emissions and pathways for GHG stability, Gt CO₂e, 2020

(As of Nov. 2009)

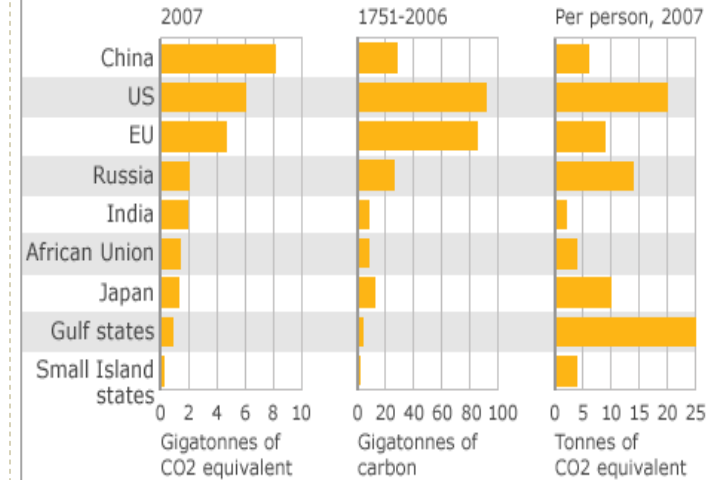


Quote

“ There are only two choices here: action or inaction. There's no middle path, and it is our responsibility as leaders to act. ”

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

Three different ways to look at carbon emissions



Election Watch

Namibia held parliamentary and presidential elections on 27-28 November. As widely expected, incumbent President Hifikepunye Pohamba and his ruling South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) won the majority of the votes.

On 1 December, incumbent Teodoro Obiang Nguema declared himself the winner in **Equatorial Guinea's** presidential election, despite only having a fraction of the votes counted.

The elections planned for 29 November in **Cote d'Ivoire** were once again postponed. On 2 December, President Laurent Gbagbo joined Blaise Compaore, the President of Burkina Faso and facilitator in the Ivorian crisis in Ouagadougou, to discuss the way forward and decide on a new date for the elections.

News Review

To mark **World AIDS Day**, [President Jacob Zuma announced major policy plans](#) regarding universal care and treatment for HIV-positive babies and pregnant women.

[Countries from the South are assuming leadership roles in decisions on global issues](#) ranging from economic recovery to food security, climate change and HIV/AIDS. They call for a new and inclusive partnership for development.

Mediator [Kofi Annan returns to Kenya](#) to review progress on reforms to avert a repeat of the deadly unrest.

[The admission of Rwanda into the commonwealth group of nations](#) is yet another sign of the progress the country has made economically, politically, and to some extent in human rights, over the past 15 years. It also is a clear break with the Francophonie to which it has belonged to since the 1970s.

28 African Ministers in charge of Gender Affairs met with other high level [participants from 43 African countries at the 'Beijing +15 eighth Africa Regional Review Conference,' confirming their commitment to mainstream gender into their national policies.](#)

[The EAC has signed a "Common Market Protocol,"](#) that allows free movement of goods, services, labour and capital. This is a major milestone towards achieving total integration of the region and is expected to accelerate economic growth and development.

[Mr. Obama has honoured 'Women of Zimbabwe Arise'](#) who have taken to the streets for years to call for democracy. This public recognition underlines international demands on President Mugabe to halt political arrests and honour the power-sharing agreement signed in September 2008.

[The final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia has been released.](#) It provides a historical analysis of the conflict in Liberia, its causes and 142 recommendations to redress Liberia's legacy of conflict, dysfunction, human rights violations and promote national peace, unity and reconciliation.

Research has shown that [climate change is a major driver of armed conflict in Africa](#), with the likelihood of conflict increasing by 50% in warm years. These findings could provide stronger impetus to ramp up investments in adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Opinions

[The New Times \(Rwanda\): Africa at Risk, 29 Nov. 2009](#)

Meles Zenawi notes that Africa will bear the brunt of the effects of climate change, and thus deserves adequate compensation for mitigation and adaptation. He chastises developed countries for prizing health of banks over health of Africans.

[New York Review of Books \(US\): Illicit Money: Can It Be Stopped? 3 Dec. 2009](#)

The outflow of illicit money is the most damaging economic condition in the developing world, with annual outflows of \$500-\$800 billion. The authors state that a 25% reduction would provide more money for poor countries than the total of ODA.

[All Africa: Continent has Central Role to Play over Climate Change, 2 Dec. 2009](#)

Director of UNDP's Regional Bureau for Africa, Tegegnetwork Gettu argues that finalizing a deal in Copenhagen is not just solely about responding to Africa's vulnerabilities but assessing how African countries can contribute to the solution.

[La Times \(US\): Copenhagen's Missing Ingredient: Water, 30 Nov.2009](#)

James Workman, author of *Heart of Dryness*, laments on how delegates at Copenhagen have suppressed important element- water, "forgetting how water is the planet's one common denominator.

G20 Update

A clutch of [major economies including China and India have forged a united front](#) to put pressure on developed countries at Copenhagen.

[S. Korea pledges to double its ODA to Africa](#), from last year's \$107m to \$214m in an effort to deepen economic partnership with the region.

[The Chinese government has decided it will continue participating in UN peacekeeping operations](#) for the maintenance of world peace.

[France will not fulfill its commitment to allocate 0.51% of its GDP to ODA in 2010, says Oxfam.](#)

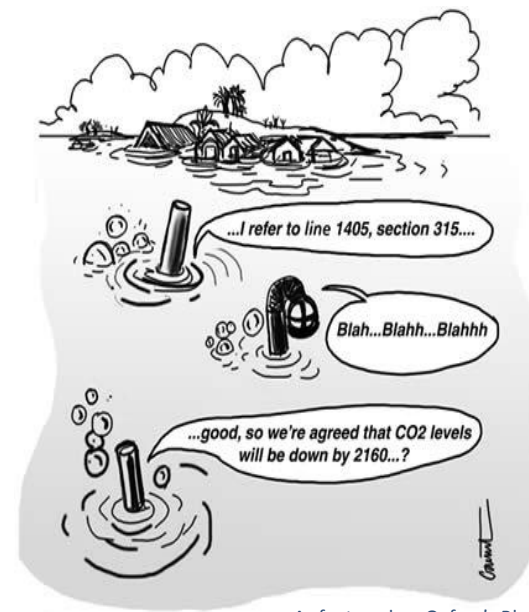
UN & Multilateral

[UNFPA's report argues that the international community's fight against climate change would be more successful if policies, programmes and treaties consider the needs, rights and potential of women.](#)

[1.5 billion people worldwide live in darkness, says UNDP-WHO report.](#)

According to new data in the [2009 AIDS Epidemic Update](#), HIV infections have reduced by 17% over the past 8 years – with the most progress in sub-Saharan Africa.

A new publication on climate change and agriculture [Agricultural Development under a Changing Climate: Opportunities and Challenges for Adaptation](#) reviews major impacts of climate change on the agricultural sector.



As featured on Oxfam's Blog.

Calendar

- 1-5 Dec AfDB meeting on the Harmonization for Health in Africa: Tunis, Tunisia
- 7-8 Dec OECD 8th Global Forum on International Investment: Paris, France
- 7-9 Dec Regional Seminar on the Contribution of Parliaments to Long-term Peace in the Extended Great Lakes Region: Nairobi, Kenya
- 7-18 Dec UNFCCC (COP15): Copenhagen, Denmark
- 8 Dec IPU Conference on "The Role of Parliament and the Media in Strengthening Democracy, National Development & Fostering Regional Stability": Dar es Salaam, Tanzania
- 9-11 Dec 2nd AU Conference of Ministers in charge of hydrocarbons (Oil & Gas) Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
- 14-16 Dec 2nd International Conference for Eau Africa (Africa Water): Libreville, Gabon
- 16 Dec Parliamentary meeting on the occasion of COP15: Copenhagen, Denmark
- 17-18 Dec WTO General Council: Geneva, Switzerland

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