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International Negotiation on Climate Change: Issues for Nepal



Organized by
Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN)
and Clean Energy Nepal (CEN)

Supported by
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1. Introduction

The seventeenth conference of the parties (COP 17) to United Nations Framework Conference on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the seventh Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP 7) was held in Durban, South Africa from 28 November to 11 December, 2011. After grueling negotiations the parties have agreed to fast track work on a legally binding agreement, which would cover all parties to reduce green house (GHG) emission. COP 17 also agreed on the second commitment period of Kyoto Protocol, operationalization of Green Climate Fund and decision to establish 16 members Adaptation Committee to manage adaptation initiatives among others.

As in the previous COPs, around 50 plus delegates from Nepal participated in COP 17 representing government and other civil society organizations. The rationale of Nepal's participation in the UNFCCC process and the effectiveness of the delegates to raise issues important for Nepal is being debated among the stakeholders since a couple of years. Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) on behalf of Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN) organized a one day "Post COP 17 Sharing Workshop" to facilitate this debate to strengthen the effectiveness of Nepal's delegation in future COPs and to share the outcome of Durban conference. The workshop was held on 6 January, 2012 in Hotel Everest, Kathmandu. Broader stakeholders representing government, civil society organizations, private sectors, bilateral organizations, research and academic institutions and federations participated in the program. The program was held with support from the European Union, Oxfam GB Nepal and ISET-Nepal.

2. Objectives of the Program

- To share the outcome of COP 17 held in Durban and evaluate its implication for Least Developed Countries and Nepal.
- To explore and recommend the way forward for strengthening Nepal's negotiating position in the UNFCCC and raise Nepal's issues effectively

3. Opening Session



Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, Coordinator of Climate Change Network Nepal (CCNN) chaired and facilitated the opening session. He started the session by inviting special guest, Honorable Ms. Pramila Rai (Member of Constituent Assembly, Nepal) and chief guest, Honorable Minister Mr. Hemraj Tater (Ministry of Environment) on the dais.

Then, Mr. Tuladhar welcomed all the participants of the program and shared the objectives behind organizing the program. The program would focus on what happened in Durban and Nepal's future strategy to

participate in the negotiations, he explained. He also added that Durban delivered far less than expected. He also raised the concern that lots of conferences have happened and conventions signed but lack strong efforts from the parties to work on the most important issues at ground.

a. Remarks by Ms. Pramila Rai, Honorable Member, Constituent Assembly of Nepal

Ms. Pramila Rai, Honorable Member, Constituent Assembly of Nepal began her speech by informing that she attended COP 17 in Durban representing Natural Resources Committee of the Constituent Assembly. She acknowledged the role played by government delegates including the Minister and Secretary and for working hard and active participation on negotiation process and putting forward the agenda for the benefit of the country. She outlined the following points in her speech:

- Bureaucrats being the permanent government, the experts and secretaries in the ministries has an important role to play to put forward the agenda, as the political leadership changes frequently. At the same time the system of transferring the officers frequently should be stopped to create a risk free work environment for the experts.
- Civil Society experts need to work more to facilitate the government for effective management of resources and forest and wild life conservation.
- As climate change is a complex issue, political parties and leadership have to be sensitized about it.
- There has to be a synergy and coordination between the civil society and government for the effective implementation of the programs launched by both sides.
- Everyone should take the environmental issue, more specifically climate change and melting of the Himalayas seriously as these problems are being multifaceted and there is also a need to mobilize people from different agencies.

b. Remarks by Mr. Hemraj Tater, Honorable Minister, Ministry of Environment, Government of Nepal

Mr. Hemraj Tater, Honorable Minister, MoE delivered a brief remarks in the program. He informed that the ministry has earlier organized a debriefing program among the government delegates who participated in COP 17 to review Nepal's role and participation. He added that he was happy to share his views among larger stakeholders. He highlighted the following points:

- Durban did not deliver satisfactory result though some progress happened.
- The negotiations are the fight between rich and poor; developed and developing countries.
- Despite the pressure from developing countries and civil society organizations, developed countries are not ready to bear the responsibility of reducing the emission green house gases and helping poor countries adapt to the impacts of climate change.
- This has helped realize that more pressure from developing countries is necessary and more preparation is needed for future meetings. He also emphasized on the need for homework before the negotiations and importance of including experts in the negotiation team.
- Nepal needs to start preparation for COP 18 immediately.

After the remarks, chair of the opening session, Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, on behalf of CCNN expressed his gratitude to honorable Constitution Assembly member and the Minister, secretary and other government representatives and participants for gracing the program.

4. Technical Session

The opening session was followed by technical session of the Post COP 17 Sharing Workshop. The session was facilitated by Mr. Manjeet Dhakal, Program Director, Clean Energy Nepal (CEN) and chaired by Mr. Krishna Gyawali, Secretary, Ministry of Environment.

a. Presentation: Overview of Durban Process and Outcomes in Bigger Picture



Mr. Ugan Manandhar, Manager, Climate Change, Energy and Fresh Water Programme, WWF-Nepal, delivered a brief power point presentation on "Overview of Durban Process and Outcomes in Bigger Picture", which covered following issues:

- Durban agreed on a deal to keep dealing, Durban deal is good in words but bad in numbers.
- Durban Platform has been agreed by all parties to work on a legally binding outcome which covers all the parties to reduce green house gas emission.
- This agreement can bring legally binding enforcement in 2021 but this may lead to 4⁰C rise in global temperature as it would be too late to act by then.
- The Kyoto Protocol has been extended but the second commitment period of 5 or 8 years was not clarified.
- It was interesting to see that India pushed for inclusion of nuclear projects for clean development mechanism (CDM). Also, Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) has been included in Kyoto Protocol
- The parties agreed to operationalize Green Climate Fund, but the debate over private or public source of finance forwarded to COP 18.
- Differences remained whether the funding for REDD+ would be market based or non market based.
- It's high time that the developing countries take the lead in low carbon development as the developed countries are not taking the action. The actions of the parties do not match the warnings of the science.

b. Plenary Session with Moderated Discussion

Mr. Ugan Manandhar's presentation was followed by the plenary session moderated by the facilitator in which the experts of thematic issues explained the Durban outcomes and responded to the queries of the participants.

The following experts delivered their insights in the session:

- Mr. Batu Krishna Upreti, Joint Secretary, MoE, on **Nepal's Overall Participation**
- Mr. Ram Lamsal, Under Secretary, Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation, on **REDD+**
- Mr. Bhaskar Karki, ICIMOD on **Mountain** issues
- Mr. Sandeep Chamling Rai, WWF International, on **Adaptation**
- Mr. Raju Pandit Chettri, Climate Action Network-International, on **Climate Finance**



Mr. Batu Krishna Upreti (Nepal's Participation)

Mr. Upreti said that COP is a regular process to implement the convention effectively. He informed that there were 31 members on the official delegation of Nepal. Also this time Nepal made a submission to UNFCCC on National Adaptation Plan (NAP). He also clarified that Nepal put forward its issues through the LDC chair, interventions on informals and contact groups and via side events. Nepal firmly stood for 1.5 degrees shared vision and legally binding outcomes. Minister of Nepal also joined the ministerial meeting that was held with ALBA and EU countries during the negotiations, he said. Nepal's delegation focused on Adaptation, Finance and Technology related informal discussions, he added. He also explained that Nepal has opted for the LDC chair in the UNFCCC process for the year 2013/14.

Mr. Ram Lamsal (REDD+)

Mr. Lamsal said that Nepal's preparation for COP 17 was fair enough as a team was formed with specific responsibilities to participate in a particular meetings related to specific subject matter during the negotiation. He also made clear that the Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation followed REDD

and LULUCF issues on different agenda items. REDD+ issues are negotiated under LCA and LULUCF is negotiated under KP in the UNFCCC, he elucidated. He stressed that Nepal should decide on whether to support market based approach or non market based approach for REDD financing. He further added, there is a challenge on how to know whether outcome of REDD negotiation process is going to be beneficial for countries like Nepal. He also emphasized on the need for starting preparation for COP 18 immediately.

Dr. Bhaskar Karki (Mountain)

Mr. Karki elaborated where the mountain issue stands in the UNFCCC negotiation process. As mountain issue is not much discussed at UNFCCC, ICIMOD is working for mainstreaming mountain agenda in the process, he said. Mr. Karki explained that Mountain day was observed to let the parties know the issues of mountainous countries and their people. As activism does not always work, ICIMOD launched 3 reports in the side event organized during COP 17 to provide research data for the evidence of impacts of climate change in the Himalayan region, he informed.



Mr. Raju Pandit Chettri (Finance)

Mr. Chettri explained about the issue of finance in the negotiation process. He further explained that negotiation is not on how much money Nepal can bring from COP meetings but deals with larger politico-economic issues. Though the convention has clearly stated that developed countries should help developing countries in the fight against climate change, the developed countries are reluctant to provide financial support, he said. Though, the Marakesh accord formed LCD fund, in Copenhagen the developed countries pledged 30 billion US dollar for three year and 100 Billion US dollar per year after 2020 support to the developing countries but it is yet to be materialized. Now with Green Climate Fund established, it has become like a bank account without money for developing countries, he added.

Mr. Sandip Chamling Rai (Adaptation)

Mr. Rai explained about where does the discussion about adaptation issues lies in the UNFCCC process. Adaptation is negotiated under both the tracks i.e. LCA and KP, he said. Relatively good progress has been achieved in the adaptation after Bali conference, he pointed. He explained that few countries have accessed funding from Adaptation Fund and Nepal is also in the process. Response measure has been wrongly brought in the negotiation because of the lack of the vision of political bodies, he said. He gave details that the adaptation issues is scattered in UNFCCC and Adaptation committee has been formed to bring coherence in the issue. He also added that Loss and Damage concept brought forward by AOSIS countries can also be beneficial for Nepal. Mr. Rai also talked about the finalization of modalities and process for long term adaptation planning using NAP.

Some Thoughtful Comments from the Participants



Representatives from Indigenous communities should be included in the expert panel and issues of indigenous people should be taken care by government and civil society organizations.

-Pema Dolma Sherpa, NEFIN

Dalit issues have been ignored in the climate discourse in Nepal, Dalits should be included in REDD process.

-Sunil Kumar Pariyar, DANAR

Delegates going to the COPs should learn from the good practices of the host countries such as generation of electricity from landfill sites in Durban.

-Hum Gurung, BCN

Nepal's preparation and strategies should be formed on the basis of the findings of science.

-Tek Jung Mahat, ICIMOD

Nepal's preparation to the negotiation process should be reflected in consultative process and common voice should be raised in the negotiation.

-Dil Raj Khanal, FECOFUN

Nepal has taken a good initiative as it is the second country to organize such a sharing program followed by Bangladesh in the region. The issue of environmental equity and integrity should be the common voice of south Asian countries.

-Trithankar Mandal, Climate Action Network-South Asia



We have to show the example by leap forwarding into green economy by taking Maldives's example.

-Shurhid Chapagain

There should not be overlap in adaptation work between MoEnv and MoFSC and moreover within the units in same ministries.

-Ramesh Prasad Bhusal, The Himalayan Times, daily

There should be a continuous discussion and deliberation between the COPs.

-Deepak Paudel, SOHAM

Climate negotiation should be backed up by science and academic experts should be included in the official delegation.

-Dinesh Raj Bhujju, NAST



Rather than waiting for the convention to come up with the perfect solutions, let's start working now. Doors should be opened for all the options for getting funding for REDD+

-Representative, The Mountain Institute

C, Way Forward and Recommendations by Experts Panel

The plenary session was followed by the way forward and recommendations proposed for the government and civil society by the expert's panel. The panel consisted of:

- Pro. Dr. Madan Lal Koirala, Faculty, Tribhuvan University,
- Mr. Ajay Mani Dixit, Director, ISET-Nepal and
- Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar, Coordinator, CCNN

Prof. Dr. Madan Lal Koirala

Professor Koirala proposed the following recommendations for the future participation in the negotiations:

- There should be enough thematic experts and followers in the negotiation.
- Research and Development should be prioritized for strengthening Nepal's position in negotiation. At least 1 percent of the total government budget should be allocated for R&D.
- Delegates should be provided with sufficient training before going to negotiations and issue wise homework should be done.
- Different stake holders together with youths should be included in the COP delegation.
- Permanent core negotiating team should be formed and continuous communication among the members should be ensured.

Mr. Ajay Mani Dixit

Mr. Dixit proposed following insights for the future negotiations:

- Government should have common voice in policy and strategy.
- There should be the continuity of the delegates, they should be well aware of the language of negotiation and diplomacy.
- Capacity building at institutional level.
- Immediate Discussion and research necessary on the implication of 2020 legally binding outcome for Nepal.
- Equity issue should be raised to check hegemonic dominance of developed countries.
- As the era of foreign aid is coming to an end, Nepal should think about international resource mobilization.
- Develop low carbon development, resilience vision.
- Scenario development on what would be the impact of 4 degree or 2 degree rise in global temperature for Nepal
- Evidence based on shared learning and community knowledge based scientific discourse necessary to strengthen Nepal's negotiating position

Mr. Bhushan Tuladhar

Mr. Tuladhar shared that he was excited by the quality of discussion in the program and committed to continue these kinds of programs in a regular and more frequent basis in the future. He made following recommendations for the future negotiations preparation by Nepal:

- Preparedness; Nepal's preparation should be focused on the prospect of being elected LSC chair under UNFCCC process. Researchers need to be included in the delegation.
- Focus on channelizing the received funding effectively in the 20-80 framework envisioned by Nepal's Climate change Policy.
- Ministry of Environment should also focus on environmental conservation and air pollution issues along with the climate change issue. Money collected through pollution tax should be utilized for environmental conservation and reduction of air pollution.

Former Minister of Environment, Science and Technology, Er. Ganesh Shah, present in the program also gave his insights for Nepal's future engagement in climate change process and diplomacy;

- Political leadership should be sensitized and made aware about the impacts of climate change.
- Fusion of traditional and scientific knowledge necessary.
- MoEnv should initiate establishment of Climate technology center.

d. Closing Remarks by Session Chair, Krishna Gyawali, Secretary, Ministry of Environment



The chair of the technical session, Mr. Krishna Gyawali, Secretary, Ministry of Environment delivered closing remarks. Secretary Gyawali started by praising the format of the program. He shared that the responsibility has increased for him and his ministry after returning from 17th Conference of the Parties and the recent government decision to organize Mountain countries conference in Nepal in early April. He agreed that the efforts of the government and the ministry are not sufficient and vowed to work in that direction. He presented the following points as way ahead for Nepal's effective participation in the UNFCCC negotiation process:

- Country Capacity Building; Government and non government institutions should work together for building all encompassing capacity of the country itself. The government is planning to form a 10 to 11 member permanent delegation team with representation from government ministries, INGO/IGO, NGO, academic institutions and international expert panel.

- Country consensus is necessary for important issues. For that regular consultations and dialogues will be held.
- Nepal will try its best to be selected as Chair of LDCs at the UNFCCC.
- Ability to utilize the resources that have come is important. LAPA as one of a tool to achieve that.
- Ministry of Environment ready to collaborate with organizations that bring technically viable and partnership based implementation projects on environmental conservation, pollution prevention, climate change and promotion of renewable energy.

5. Conclusion

The Post COP 17 Sharing Workshop was successful in bringing more than 90 representatives from different government agencies, non-governmental organizations, private sectors, research and academic institutions, federations/alliances and media in a single platform for discussion on climate change issues, COP 17 outcome, its implication for Nepal and the way forward for strengthening Nepal's position in UNFCCC negotiation process.

The program helped all the stake holders to realize the strengths and shortcomings on their part to work towards building country capacity for climate negotiation, research and evidence building and effective implementation of programmes and policies. The recommendations and insights resulted through the deliberations during the program will be helpful as the guideline for the government and the civil society organizations to work towards achieving the intended capacity strengthening goals and evaluating the progress made in the future.

The format of the program was also unique in itself such that the discussions were issue based and focused on strengthening Nepal's capacity for UNFCCC negotiations. Many participants expressed that such program should be continued and held on a regular basis.

For further detail, please contact



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