

CNI SBSS Live from COP 15

To safeguard, enhance and ensure the integrity of creation CNI SBSS, the justice and development wing of the Church of North India, continuously strives to align herself with organizations, movements and negotiations that are trying to address the environmental crisis and bring a positive change.

Towards this end Mr. Bibhudutta Sahu and Mr. Sudeep Tigga of CNI SBSS are participating in COP 15, the fifteenth Conference of the Parties (COP) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Copenhagen.



Day 1

Day one saw the team trying to adjust to the new environment, the prevailing damp weather could not dampen the spirit of the team as they developed their plan of action for the next two days, according to their area of interest and the available schedule. The amazing crowd, the multitude of people, made the team feel like a drop in the ocean.

Our Indian contingent was involved in symbolic gesture of carrying the burden of the world on its shoulders.

There were two separate events going on simultaneously with the Negotiations taking place at the Bella Center and the parallel voices at the KlimaForum. The team decided to focus on the concepts and perspectives of Climate Justice as well as Climate Change from the gender perspective at KlimaForum on the 8th Dec 2009.



While Mr. Sudeep attended the Climate Justice program the Bibhudutta Sahu attended the Gender in Climate Change

Climate Trade and development: Speakers Mariama Williams and Norma Maldonado

The talk was about how the resources of the world are being privatized and are becoming inaccessible for the poor and marginalized. Especially more for the women without whom **growth and development is not conceivable**.

It is a well known fact that where there is bio-diversity, there is water. This combination has been the lifeblood for the global south. With the crushing force of globalization, the companies are successfully attacking the very food baskets of the countries. First they attack the food, thereby owning the stomach, by owning the stomach, they own the will of the people. It is visible that the utilization of land for productive purposes is being whittled away from the poor. The erstwhile producers of the country are being converted to a reliant community of consumers.

Towards the end of the talk, Bibhudutta Sahu made an observation that the need to control the produce and convert it into products that would only lead to political power should be established early on. The focus should be on addressing the issue of food security and sustainable practices at the local level. The only way of changing the gender perspective is to bring in more women in the decision making process.

Putting Justice into the Climate debate: Speakers: Joannan Cabello and Kevin Smith

This session dealt with how for centuries, productivism and industrial capitalism have been destroying our cultures, exploiting our labour and poisoning our environment.

Now, with the climate crisis, the Earth is saying “enough”, **“Bahut ho Gaya”!** For us, the struggles for *climate justice and social justice* are one and the same. It is the struggle for *territories, land, forests and water, for agrarian and urban reform, food and energy sovereignty, for women’s and worker’s rights. It is the fight for equality and justice for indigenous peoples, for peoples of the global South, for the redistribution of wealth and for the recognition of the historical ecological debt owed by the North.*

Day 2

The COP-15 participants had a small meeting on day 2 to coordinate efforts and bring about some notion of a team. The team were divided into two groups- Bella Center and KlimaForum.

The main emphasis of the day was on Human Rights and



This session dealt with questions like is climate change not a human rights issue? It is time to transform the graphs to presenting people. As we delve deeper into the climate change debate, it is important to stand firm and reassert that climate change is intricately linked to Right to Life, Physical Integrity & Security.

Indigenous Peoples, Climate Change and Human Rights (Mr. John Henriksen)

Indigenous peoples depend on natural resources for their livelihood and they often inhabit diverse but fragile ecosystems. At the same time indigenous peoples are among the world’s most marginalized, impoverished and vulnerable peoples. While having hardly contributed anything to the cause of global warming, they are among the most heavily affected. However, they have minimal access to resources to cope with the changes.

Talks were delivered on the climatic change and its effect on Africa indigenous people (Mr. Joseph Ole Simel, Kenya) and Artic Indigenous people (Ms. Patrica Cochran)

Adaptation: Climate change is already having serious implications on the livelihoods and cultures of traditional and indigenous peoples. Even though these peoples have developed important strategies to adapt to these changes, the magnitude of future hazards may limit their capacity to adapt. Therefore, there is a need to further explore culturally appropriate ways to enhance the resilience of traditional and indigenous peoples and to reduce factors which are hindering adaptation.

Mitigation: Many of the climate change mitigation policies and schemes currently being developed have severe impacts on indigenous peoples. Nuclear energy, large-scale hydropower projects, agro-fuel plantations, the Clean Development Mechanism, and forest offsets coupled with carbon trading mechanisms are posing direct threats to indigenous peoples land, resources and their livelihoods.

Indigenous peoples are also opposed to many of these schemes because they do not address the real causes of climate change: the over consumption of the world’s resources by the few. Unfortunately, there is no political will among the rich and powerful nations to seriously address the underlying cause. Instead, they propose compensation schemes like carbon trading which allow those who can afford to buy cheap “carbon credits” in the Global South to continue emitting greenhouse gases.

Indigenous Peoples, Climate Change and Human Rights (Mr. John henriksen): There are various implications of climate change and mitigation measures for indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups' human rights. The climate change and the measures adopted to mitigate it threatens to undermine not only indigenous peoples' subsistence and livelihood, but also their cultural and social identity, and ultimately, their right to self-determination.

Participation in International Climate Change Processes

Indigenous peoples recognise the importance and urgency of developing policies and schemes to address climate change. Most of the concerns raised by indigenous peoples relate to the right to participate in decision-making and implementation, rights that are clearly recognized in international legal instruments such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

Despite the fact that climate changes are impacting intensely on indigenous peoples, they are very rarely considered in public discourses on climate change.

Women need to participate in mitigation and adaptation process on climate change in the area of food security. There should be a demand that womens rights should be acknowledged by the different states. The goal should be to explore new ways of utilizing the land and preserving it, draw on the sidom of the elders and save the identity of the people.

Ecosystems approach (Ms. Joji carino)

The challenge is to understand the causes of the problems, to harmonise the key elements of the international instruments, and to establish an effective partnership between stakeholders and rights holders at regional and national levels.

If we recognise the relationship between an ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation and traditional knowledge of indigenous peoples and local communities, we already have adequate solutions to current environmental challenges.

Plenary session of the COP-15 on CDM

This was the open session of the COP-15 nations who heard the report of the Executive Board of the CDM. The report consisted of the successes, the challenges and the roadmap ahead. It was emphasized the number of CDM projects has doubled in the past 3 years. They have also taken steps to improve the systems of approving the CDM projects. The floor was then open to the delegates from the various countries. The main concerns emerging from the discussions

- The disparity in the distribution of CDM projects with a majority of them coming to the south east region
- Lack of transparency, fairness and accountability in the approval of CDM projects.
- Growth of staff in certain regions monitoring the CDM.
- Cost and responsibility of transfer of technology for carbon capture & storage
- Code of conduct for the CDM Board
- Limits of credits for CDMs

Climate Change

It was interesting to note the power dynamics and the alliances forming during the discussions one could sense the regional camaraderie and networking between India, China.

Day 3

Plenary session – recognition of historical ecological debt and its repayment

As the third day of the Cop-15 had led to heated discussions during the plenary, we decided to attend the plenary sessions dealing with adaptation and amendments to the Kyoto Protocol.

It was interesting to witness the various members forming bloc of power through their words of support. The Brasil-China-India-Oman partnership is gaining strength in the COP-15 with a common voice emerging. There is also a cry for transparency and fairness from the least developing countries, who have begun forming their own bloc.



The suggestions of most of the members has been to be bold on the second commitment from 2013-2017.

There were objections to the manner in which the recommendations have been presented in the COP-15. It was reminded that the COP-15 is a multi-lateral process and not based on individual voices. Documents produced for the CO-15 need to be shared with the members and working ideas need to be discussed.

Climate change & Food Security

'FARMERS ARE THE LARGEST ECO-SYSTEM MANAGERS IN THE WORLD'

Farming practices that capture carbon and store it in agricultural soils offer some of the most promising options for early and cost-effective action on climate change in developing countries, while contributing to food security. Yet agriculture has been largely excluded from the main climate financing mechanisms

Day 4

Sunday was a day to gather our thoughts, energy and laze around. The spirit of Christmas has engulfed the city with lights, songs, festivities and great steaming hot-dogs on offer.



Agriculture & Forestry are part of the solutions

During COP15, the agriculture & forestry communities held three events to define priority actions for climate change adaptation and mitigation. The central point all agreed was that forestry and agriculture are where poverty reduction, food security and climate change come together and must be addressed in an integrated fashion. We have come together to share our common message.

The agricultural community sees it as critical that *food security be integrated in the shared vision of the long term cooperative action text*, in order to open the door to adaptation and mitigation support. The sector is committed to playing an *active role in reducing emissions, while increasing the productivity, land use efficiency and sustainability of agriculture*. We recognise that agriculture must nearly double food production to meet the demands of a growing population expected to reach 9 billion by mid-century while minimizing the sector's emissions.

The forestry community is committed to helping to *design and implement new mechanisms to mobilize forests for climate mitigation and adaptation, while exploiting synergies with sustainable development objectives and managing associated risks*. We recognise the forest based emissions and the cost effectiveness of early action to reduce them. The most important drivers of deforestation originate from outside the forestry sector, including agriculture. There are also significant opportunities to correct *current market and governance failures* that lead to perverse outcomes for climate change and food security. Forest and agriculture based adaptation strategies are available, but not yet fully appreciated by *policy-makers and the general public*.

Early adaptation actions-protecting the needs of the most vulnerable

Rachel Shebesh- member of parliament, Kenya and Regional Champion for Disaster Risk Reduction in Africa started the session with the declaration that “We are here to make a fair deal that deals with historical injustices. Not for political deal!” She talked about community resilience and identifying the critical issues of early adaptation. The role of the Africa parliamentarians is to ensure the focus remains on disaster risk reduction.

Mustapha Darboe- regional director, Southern, Eastern and Central Africa talking about the horn of Africa said that it consists of a majority of pastoralists and agro-pastoralists and this region is witness to endemic poverty. The droughts in this region are increasing in their incidences from once in 10 years to a yearly occurrence. The consequences are borne by the pastoralists and affects the livelihood and ability to cope with the changing climates. The challenges are to encourage and stimulate crop production, livelihood building, resilience strengthening and local production and procurement.

Walter Ricardo Cotte – secretary general, Colombian Red Cross society gave the approach towards disasters.

It is important to promote and build community based early warning systems while promoting and building access to relevant climate information. It is imperative that the climate change information should be presented in a practical manner.



