

# Summary

## of the Second Central Asian European Forum on Climate Change – CAEFOCC-II, 11. – 12. October, Almaty, Kazakhstan

The Climate Change Forum was initiated by civil society organisations to catalyze a dialogue and to exchange experiences and perspectives on national and international climate change processes, bringing together representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs), national government bodies, the European Union and international agencies<sup>1,2</sup>. A total of 56 participants from 14 countries<sup>3</sup> from Central Asia, the European Union and other regions took part at the forum.

### Key findings from the conference panel discussions

#### International process on climate change:

The negotiation process on developing a new international climate change agreement has achieved certain progress. However, there is a need to speed up the process in reaching the agreement, which will help to prevent dangerous climate change.

A possible outcome for Cancun COP-16 should be concrete decisions on the following issues: formalising targets of developed countries, defining the concept for measuring, reporting and verification of developed and developing country activities on reduction of GHG emissions, setting up a new fund and COP decisions on climate change adaptation, mitigation, technology transfer and capacity building, on an infrastructure for developing and implementing nationally appropriate mitigation actions, REDD plus and a mandate for a legally binding global agreement.

The COP 16 decisions and the continuing negotiations as well as a new legally binding agreement should recognise the importance of contributions of various stakeholders, including women and youth, in all activities related to climate change.

UN negotiations on climate change have to recognise the vulnerability and special needs of mountain landlocked developing countries.

#### National policies on climate change mitigation:

Participants discussed and explored the potential to develop and implement Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and strategies for low carbon development, especially measures, which provide win-win situations, economic benefits and that lead to an improvement of the living standards of the local population. Kazakhstan was highlighted

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<sup>1</sup> The documents of the conference are available under [www.wecf.eu/energy](http://www.wecf.eu/energy)

<sup>2</sup> This conference is part of a 1-year project supported by the Federal German Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety in the framework of the International Climate Protection Initiative (ICI), based on a decision of the German Parliament. Furthermore support for the Forum was received from ACT Alliance and Women in Europe for a Common Future (WECF) "Empowerment and Local Action" program funded by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, Netherlands, Germany, Finland, Italy, Norway, Australia, Russia, Ukraine, Switzerland and the USA

as a country aiming to move to a low carbon economy, which is economically beneficial. At the same time participants highlighted the domination of coal as the primary energy source in Kazakhstan's national energy sector and the increasing role of coal in energy security policies of some Central Asian states. CSOs believe that energy policies should be consistent with national GHG mitigation targets and renewable energy development plans. To make GHG reduction goals even more efficient and specific it was suggested to apply GHG inventories and mitigation at province/city/enterprise levels. Encouraging steps are being made by the Kazakh environmental authorities, who are pioneering in Central Asia the local GHG inventories and mitigation schemes. Participants noted the importance of developing regulatory approaches under national mitigation action plans, which bring higher results with scarce resources, enable private investment flows in the countries and reduce energy costs for consumers. Examples of such policy interventions are: energy efficiency standards in buildings and certification, appropriate tariff schemes for renewable energy sources and end use water management including fees, meters and integrated water management.

Participants emphasized a lack of integration of climate change considerations into different sectors of the economy and regional development programmes, especially in energy, agriculture and water. On the other hand, participants welcomed the progress achieved by the Central Asian governments and civil society organizations in understanding of climate change causes and impacts and moving towards real actions.

Participants clearly demonstrated that civil society organizations play an instrumental role in the promotion of small-scale renewable energies, improving energy efficiency policies and measures and public understanding of the importance of household-level measures.

#### **National policies on adaptation:**

There is a general agreement on high vulnerability of Central Asian countries against climate change impacts, which are especially important in agricultural, water and health sectors. Water resources are already scarce in the region largely due to inefficient management and the situation could exacerbate in the future due to rapidly melting glaciers, shifting precipitation patterns and increasing temperatures and weather extremes.

Effective adaptation depends on the integration of climate change issue into sectoral development programmes and broad public understanding and acceptance. There is also a need to strengthen inter-regional and regional cooperation on adaptation and mitigation.

Challenges to develop adaptation plans are the limited access to local-level information on climate change impacts, lack of understanding of benefits of implementing adaptation measures beforehand and lack of economic analysis for adaptation measures.

Mitigation and adaptation measures at community level targeting women and women-led associations and youth organizations are considered especially useful in Central Asian circumstances, since they are influential and important in educational, rural and household sectors. Such activities should be included in national programmes on adaptation and mitigation implemented with national and international funding.

### **EU-Central Asia cooperation:**

Following issues were part of the discussion on this topic: NGOs should fully participate in the EU-CA climate, environment ministerial process, particularly in the Working Group on Environmental Governance, Climate and Water, but also other WG, such as energy. Civil-Society Government dialogues, such as CAEFOCC II, should be supported on a regular basis, to allow the regional stakeholders to prepare input for the work of the WGs.

The “Green Bridge” (Astana Initiative) was mentioned as an initiative of the Republic of Kazakhstan between Asia, Europe and the Pacific region highlighting the need for support of innovative businesses in the area of climate protection.

*Gaps in knowledge:* Participants noted gaps in scientific and economic analysis for developing climate change mitigation and adaptation measures.

Specific recommendations for the WG are:

- To focus on promotion of technical skills and popularization in the area of renewable energy and energy efficiency and climate resilience solutions;
- To develop cooperation between EU and CA knowledge and innovation networks, promoting exchange of students and inter-sectoral cooperation between universities, NGOs, business on mitigation and adaptation solutions;
- To focus on energy efficiency measures in existing and new building stock.

For the EU

- To support CA governments in preparing NAMAs and low carbon development plans, and assure that 20% of funds for the NAMAs are allocated to small scale, community and household based, activities (e.g. biogas, solar heaters, biomass, wind, small and medium sized hydro and small hydro equipment);
- To support CA governments in preparing adaptation plans, and assure that 20% is allocated to «community based adaptation» activities (e.g. waste water reuse, resilient farming, water supply and refreshing of groundwater);
- To specific gender measures to be included to assure that women participate and benefit of the activities (e.g. aim 40% of employment for women);
- To support programmatic CDM projects which focus on community projects in the region.

### **Finance and technology for mitigation and adaptation activities**

It was noted that Central Asian countries underutilise the opportunities of the UNFCCC and associated climate funds (CDM, Adaptation fund, GEF).

Governments should better cooperate with NGOs, and better use their expertise, in developing CDM projects, especially on community level.

Countries should engage with the adaptation fund, in order to gain endogenous capacities, concrete project implementation should be achieved with local NGOs implementing entities included.

It was stated that carbon finance can help to disseminate proved decentralized household and community level sustainable energy technologies like energy efficient cook stoves. However, there exist still many obstacles for this kind of projects in order to receive CDM approval. The initiative “NEXUS”, not within the UNFCCC system, by the NGO Geres fosters these kind of projects.

So far only 1,17% of CDM projects are decentralized household and community level projects, but 58,33% of the programmatic CDM projects (status April 2010). There are still obstacles such as upfront funding and high transaction costs. This has to be improved. There is a high potential in Central Asia for this kind of projects (see feasibility study of atmosfair/WECEF), but still a lot of demonstration projects and capacity building is needed in order to disseminate technologies. Funding is needed for this first step.

### **Civil society participation**

Civil society proposed cooperation with governments on developing and implementation of national and regional climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes and highlighted the need to involve civil society in decision-making on different levels.

Civil society expects the governments to publish drafts of plans of national decisions on climate change and to organise public consultations. This will allow to address the needs of the target groups, inter alia, women and local communities.

Whereas in the first phase of the pilot project on climate resilience (PPCR) in Tajikistan NGOs were not included, some progress was made throughout 2010 to involve NGOs in the process, although much more should be done to address the challenges of vulnerable social groups (especially women and children in the rural and mountain areas) and local communities with direct involvement of the Tajik civil society organizations and ensure sharing of experience with NGOs across the region.